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Amir congratulates Australian PM on his re-election

His Highness the Amir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani sent a cable of congratulations to Prime Minister of Australia, Anthony Albanese, on his re-election for a second term. His Highness the Deputy Amir, Sheikh Abdullah bin Hamad al-Thani and HE the Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs, Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman bin Jassim al-Thani also sent cables of congratulations to Albanese, on his re-election for a second term. **(QNA)**

STEM-FD 4th edition camp launched

The Ministry of Education and Higher Education launched yesterday the fourth edition of the "STEM-FD" scientific camp at the Qatar Scientific Club, as part of the strategic project "After the School Bell." The camp brings together a group of Qatari students from grades eight, nine, and ten, aged between 13 and 15 years. The camp is organized in collaboration with the Qatar Scientific Club and Hamad Medical Corp, represented by the Prosthetics Center. It will run until May 17, with activities later moving to the Qatar Rehabilitation Center. **Page 2**

Halt Syrian attacks at once, Israel told

United Nations special envoy Geir Pedersen urged Israel yesterday to halt its attacks on Syria "at once", after it carried out multiple air strikes targeting the authorities following sectarian violence this week. "I strongly condemn Israel's continued and escalating violations of Syria's sovereignty, including multiple air strikes in Damascus and other cities," Pedersen said in a post on X, calling "for these attacks to cease at once".

Salem bin Buraik is new Yemen PM

Yemen's internationally recognised government named finance minister Salem bin Buraik as its new prime minister yesterday, after his predecessor quit saying he was unable to fully exercise his powers. Outgoing premier Ahmed bin Mubarak had disputed for months with Rashad al-Alimi, who heads the Presidential Leadership Council, two ministers and a member of the PLC told AFP. **Page 6**

Serbian president stable in hospital

Serbia's President Aleksandar Vucic was in a stable condition following his admission to a military hospital in Belgrade yesterday after cutting short a visit to the US, a doctor said. After coming home from the US without meeting US President Donald Trump following pain in his chest, Vucic was admitted to the Military Medical Academy immediately after landing in Belgrade. A cardiologist said that his state was "stable and satisfactory". **Page 9**

Singapore's PAP wins 87 of 97 seats

Singapore's People's Action Party (PAP) won its 14th successive election yesterday to extend its unbroken six-decade rule, delivering a strong mandate to its new premier as the city-state braces for economic turbulence from a global trade war. The PAP, which has ruled since before Singapore's 1965 independence, won 87 of the 97 parliamentary seats up for grabs. **Page 8**

Qatar tops in press freedom index in ME

Qatar once again climbs up RSF press freedom ranking for the 3rd year in a row by 5 positions to 79 in 2025 (84th in 2024). RSF (Reporters Without Borders) report yesterday shows Qatar at 79, highest in the region including Israel with the below important point: The Middle East-North Africa region remains the most dangerous in the world for journalists, harbouring the mass destruction of journalism in Gaza by the Israeli army. Every country in the region is in a "difficult" or "very serious" press freedom situation, except Qatar (79th), according to the RSF World Press Freedom Index 2025. Israel (112th) continued its decline in the Index, dropping 11 places. The press is caught between crackdowns from authoritarian regimes and persistent economic precariousness. Tunisia (129th, down 11 places), the only North African country to fall this year, recorded the sharpest drop in the region's economic indicator (down 7.97 points, down 30 places),



due to a political crisis where independent outlets are under direct threat. Iran (176th), where journalists are gagged and all critical viewpoints are suppressed, remains near the bottom of the Index, alongside Syria (177th), which is still awaiting a profound transformation of its media landscape post-Bashar al-Assad. In the Americas, the vast majority of countries (22 out of 28) have seen their economic indicators decline. In the United States (57th), Donald Trump's second term as president has brought a troubling deterioration in press freedom. "At a time when press freedom is experiencing a worrying decline in many parts of the world, a major - yet often underestimated - factor is seriously weakening the media: economic pressure."

Qatar slams attack on Gaza aid ship off Malta

Qatar has strongly condemned the attack on a humanitarian aid ship belonging to the Freedom Flotilla coalition, which was sailing in international waters off the coast of Malta, as well as the Israeli naval assault on fishermen's boats west of Khan Younis, southern Gaza Strip. In a statement issued yesterday, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs described the attack on the aid ship as a blatant violation of international law and a threat to maritime security and navigation. It also called for an urgent investigation into the incident and

for those responsible to be held accountable. The Ministry emphasised that the obstruction of humanitarian aid deliveries to Gaza and the targeting of fishermen's boats further aggravate the humanitarian crisis in the besieged enclave, which suffers from severe food shortages due to the ongoing Israeli blockade of border crossings for two months. The Ministry renewed Qatar's call on the international community to pressure Israel to ensure the safe, sustainable, and unrestricted entry of humanitarian aid to all areas of Gaza. **(QNA)**



The damaged vessel "Conscience" is anchored at sea outside Maltese territorial waters.

Qatar welcomes over 1.5mn visitors in Q1 '25

● Khor Al Udaid being developed as a premium desert tourism destination

Qatar's tourism sector began 2025 with strong momentum, welcoming over 1.5mn international visitors between January and March. This surge was driven by an integrated tourism strategy that combines high-profile events, strategic partnerships, and diversified destination experiences.

Visitors from GCC countries accounted for (36%), followed by Europe (28%) and Asia and Oceania (20%), reinforcing Qatar's growing appeal across varied markets. Visitor arrivals by air (51%), land (34%) and sea (15%) highlight the effectiveness of Qatar's diversified access strategy.

Notably, Eid al-Fitr 2025 delivered the highest holiday arrival figures in three years, with 214,000 visitors during the 8-day period, a 26% increase over 2024. GCC visitors accounted for 49% of the total, marking an 18% year-on-year increase, and hotel occupancy reached 77%, up 10% from the same period last year.

Strong performance across the hospitality sector accompanied this growth. Average hotel occupancy of 71% and 2.6mn room nights sold reflected heightened demand fuelled by key events including Web Summit Qatar, the Doha Jewellery & Watches Exhibition (DJWE), and the Qatar International Food Festival.

HE Saad bin Ali al-Kharji, Chairman of Qatar Tourism and Chair of the Board of Directors of Visit Qatar, said: "The achievements of the first quarter of 2025 demonstrate some of the planned outputs of our long-term approach to tourism development. Part of the development transcends into deepening collaboration across local, regional and international markets and continue to diversify source markets, enhance visitor experiences, and reinforce Qatar's position as a dynamic, year-round destination. We are excited to have welcomed 1.5mn in Q1 and look forward to welcoming more guests throughout this year."

As part of its commitment to responsible development, Qatar is also progressing the transformation of Khor Al Udaid into a premier desert tourism destination. Anchored in the Tourism Assets Masterplan, the project blends environmental preservation with upscale, nature-based visitor experiences - positioning it as a model for eco-tourism in the region.

To further elevate the visitor experience, Qatar Tourism has also launched the "Taste of Qatar" initiative in collaboration with the Ministry of Public Health and Ipsos, aimed at benchmarking and enhancing the country's dining landscape for both residents and tourists.

The Doha Jewellery & Watches Exhibition 2025 welcomed nearly 30,000 visitors, featuring over 500 international and local brands, and recorded sales exceeding QR246mn, up nearly 10% from last year. Visit Qatar's first-of-its-kind Ras Abrouq

QATAR'S TOURISM PERFORMANCE IN Q1 2025



visit QATAR

desert activation drew 55,000 visitors over 60 days, while Visit Qatar's Sealine Village attracted over 48,000 attendees.

Shop Qatar 2025 generated QR120mn in sales, a 50% increase year-on-year, and awarded QR2.5mn in prizes. The Qatar International Food Festival brought together 365,000+ visitors and 180 restaurants, including 28 international outlets, while the Throwback Food Festival welcomed over 100,000 to Doha's Old Port.

The 2024/2025 cruise season recorded 87 ship calls (up 19% from previous season), including five maiden voyages and 13 homeporting calls, bringing in over 360,000 cruise visitors, which is a 4% increase year-on-year.

At the regional level, tailored campaigns played a pivotal role in boosting visitation and engagement, particularly from the GCC, which accounted for 36% of all international arrivals in Q1.

Momentum is set to continue with a robust calendar of confirmed events. Qatar will host the T100 Triathlon World Championship Final in partnership with the Professional Triathletes Organisation annually until 2030.

Famine causes mortality rates surge in Gaza Strip

QNA
Gaza

The Euro-Mediterranean Human Rights Monitor has documented a severe upsurge in natural deaths among adult residents of Gaza, along with alarming levels of child mortality, during the longest uninterrupted all-out siege imposed by the Israeli occupation forces since the onset of the genocide. It warned that famine in the Gaza Strip is aggravating to catastrophic levels, amid the continued imposition of an unlawful, all-encompassing blockade by the Israeli occupation forces for 62 consecutive days, and the persistent obstruction of humanitarian aid, life-saving medicines, and essential supplies. Euro-Med Monitor recorded dozens of mortalities, either due to malnutrition or the dearth of essential healthcare and medicines.



A Palestinian inspects the site of an Israeli strike on a house, in Khan Younis in the southern Gaza Strip, yesterday.

It appealed to all world nations and relevant international organisations to act swiftly to break the unlawful Israeli land, sea, and air blockade imposed on the enclave, stressing that this act constitutes a flagrant violation of international humanitarian law and is being wielded as a tool to starve the civilian population in the context of the ongoing genocide.

In addition, Euro-Med Monitor called for ending the full closure of all crossings immediately and allowing the unhindered access of food, water, and medicines before the outbreak of severe malnutrition morphs into more lethal conditions.

Since March 2, Israel has barred the entry of all commercial and humanitarian supplies into the Gaza Strip. Food stocks are nearing depletion, while prices have surged by over 500% since October 2023, exacerbating malnutrition, particularly among children, pregnant women, the sick, and the elderly. **To Page 6**

'Qatar spares no effort in backing Arab solidarity, espousing Palestinian cause'

QNA
Algiers

HE Speaker of the Shura Council Hassan bin Abdullah al-Ghanem has affirmed that Qatar spares no effort in reinforcing joint Arab solidarity and co-operation, in addition to supporting the efforts to consolidate international peace and security, particularly in the Arab region.

Addressing the opening ceremony of the 38th Conference of the Arab Inter-Parliamentary Union (AIPU), held in Algiers under the theme 'The Role of the Arab Inter-Parliamentary Union Amid Regional and International Changes', HE al-Ghanem underscored Qatar's unwavering support for the Palestinian cause and standing in solidarity with the Palestinian people until they regain their legitimate rights, foremost of which is the establishment of their independent state on the 1967 borders with East Jerusalem as its capital.

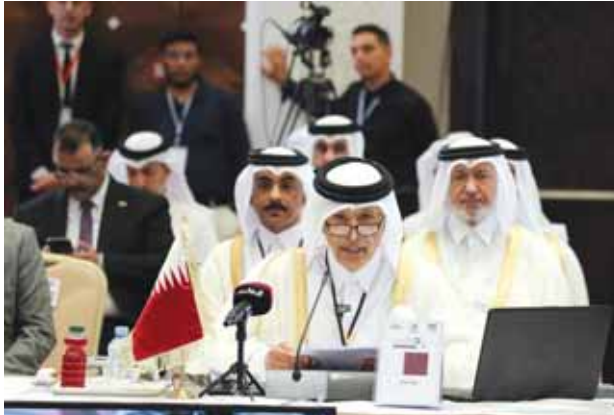
HE al-Ghanem talked about the parliaments' instrumental role in countering political, security, and economic challenges engulfing the Arab region, emphasising that Qa-

tar's enduring positions are aligned with AIPU in pursuit of enhancing joint Arab parliamentary action amid these rapid realignments.

The unrelenting Israeli occupation's racist policies and criminal practices pose one of the most formidable challenges that impede the path to development and the efforts for progress and stability in the Arab world, he pointed out. He called for a unified Arab parliamentary stance to stand in defiance of the Palestinian people and halt the ongoing violations of international legitimacy resolutions and the unconscionable Israeli aggression against the Gaza Strip that has been continuing since Oct 7, 2023.

The Speaker hailed the initiative of the Grand National Assembly of Türkiye to establish the Group of Parliaments in Support of Palestine, considering the move as a crucial step toward unifying parliamentary efforts in espousing the Palestinian cause and advocating for the Palestinian people's legitimate rights.

In addition, HE al-Ghanem called on all parliaments worldwide to join this group in order to strengthen a unified global par-



HE Speaker of the Shura Council Hassan bin Abdullah al-Ghanem speaking at the conference.

liamentary front that expresses the will of free peoples and coordinates international positions and initiatives. He highlighted the challenges facing the work of the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU), particularly the voting mechanism for the adoption of emergency items. He highlighted that the Arab Geopolitical Group, with backing from other regional blocs, had submitted proposals for emergency items addressing critical humanitarian concerns, including a call for a ceasefire in Gaza and the

criminalisation of blasphemy. However, these proposals were not endorsed due to the IPU's intricate voting system, albeit having garnered the highest percentages of votes, HE al-Ghanem noted.

He further underscored that the current voting mechanism governing the adoption of emergency items within the IPU, as laid down in Assembly Rule 11.2(a), obstructs the transmission of peoples' voices and effectively strips the process of its substantive purpose.

He called for a structural reform



Participants of the 38th Conference of the Arab Inter-Parliamentary Union.

of this mechanism by instituting the principle of 'one country, one vote' akin to the model employed by the UN General Assembly, thereby ensuring equitable representation and procedural justice among all member states.

HE al-Ghanem praised the AIPU's role during the current year in fostering Arab participation in the IPU's meetings and supporting the nomination of Arab parliamentarians for membership in the committees. Furthermore, he stressed the importance of backing the nomination of Arab talents

for the IPU's leading positions, chief among these is the post of secretary-general, which is set to become vacant in October 2025, alongside the post of President in the future, thereby shoring up Arab presence in international parliamentary institutions. The conference convenes speakers of Arab parliaments and legislative councils to discuss regional and global issues, as well as shared challenges, in addition to bolstering joint Arab parliamentary action and parliamentary diplomacy in addressing global realignments.



Ministry organises workshop on key hazards in workplace environment

The Ministry of Labour (MoL), in collaboration with the International Labour Organisation (ILO) and the Swedish Work Environment Authority (SWEA), organised a workshop on key occupational hazards in workplaces.

The event was part of the existing partnership between the MoL, the ILO, and the SWEA in the areas of occupational safety and health, in addition to sharing expertise and experience in pursuit of advancing the workplace environment.

Held in the presence of Assistant Undersecretary for Migrant Labour Affairs at MoL Hamad Faraj al-Dalmook, the



workshop was intended to train occupational safety and health administration inspectors and

enhance their knowledge about salient occupational risks, as well as ways to handle them, thereby reducing their adverse impacts on productivity.

The workshop deliberated on ways to protect against Musculoskeletal Disorders (MSDs) through the application of ergonomics, proper inspection techniques for such hazards, along with risk assessment methodologies. In addition, the workshop explored mechanisms to ensure the enforcement of essential preventive measures to protect workers from occupational diseases associated with the workplace environment. (QNA)

Fourth edition of 'STEM-FD' camp launched to design smart prosthetics

QNA
Doha

The Ministry of Education and Higher Education launched yesterday the fourth edition of the "STEM-FD" scientific camp at the Qatar Scientific Club, as part of the strategic project "After the School Bell." The camp brings together a group of Qatari students from grades eight, nine, and ten, aged between 13 and 15 years.

The camp is organised in collaboration with the Qatar Scientific Club and Hamad Medical Corporation, represented by the Prosthetics Center. It will run until May 17, with activities later moving to the Qatar Rehabilitation Center, which is part of Hamad Medical Corporation.

The camp aims to enhance students' skills in the fields of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM), along with financial and digital literacy.

Participants will use these skills to design and create smart and sustainable prosthetic



limbs, contributing to improved quality of life and cost reduction.

The camp's framework encourages innovation, scientific research, and the development of critical thinking and problem-solving skills.

Participants will face practical challenges that simulate real-world problems within an interactive learning environment, which fosters teamwork and engagement in hands-on scientific projects.

The camp is guided by a team

of expert trainers and professionals in the field of smart prosthetics.

This edition of the camp underscores the Ministry of Education and Higher Education's commitment to bridging theoretical education with practical application, providing inspiring educational experiences that enhance future competencies among students and contribute to the achievement of sustainable development goals by investing in national human capital.

MoPH joins simulation exercise to test collective pandemic response

The Ministry of Public Health (MoPH) recently participated in an exercise that simulated an outbreak of a fictional virus spreading across the world, coordinated by the World Health Organisation (WHO)'s Global Health Emergency Corps (GHEC).

The participating team from Qatar included representatives from the Health Emergency Department and the Health Protection and Communicable Diseases Control Department at the MoPH and Hamad Medical Corporation.

Representatives from the ministries of health in several countries in the region, including Saudi Arabia, Pakistan, Somalia, and Iraq, participated in the exercise.

Additionally, representatives from the WHO headquarters in Switzerland and its regional office in the Arab Republic of Egypt were also participating.

The simulation exercise aimed to test a coordinated response to a globally changing health threat, engaging the health emergency workforce and coordination structures under the WHO's GHEC. In addition, it will raise awareness among participating countries of the importance of exchanging valuable information aimed at enhancing co-operation between countries and of the importance of



strengthening co-ordination procedures between countries, networks, and the WHO.

This exercise was conducted in accordance with the strategic objectives of the GHEC, the regional director's initiative, and WHO's commitment to enhance global health emergency preparedness and response capabilities.

Dr Soha Albayat, director of Health Emergency Preparedness at the MoPH, said: "This kind of exercise demonstrated the critical importance of cultivating trust before a crisis occurs. The foundation of our collaborative efforts is significantly stronger than in years past. We've moved beyond reactive measures and are now proactively

anticipating, aligning, and coordinating our cross-border emergency response plans."

The MoPH was eager to participate in the exercise due to its belief in the importance of ongoing training for emergency and disaster preparedness.

The initiative aims to enhance co-ordination and communication among various sectors and institutions within Qatar, as well as on regional and global levels, to mitigate the impact of disasters under international standards.

Participation in the exercise demonstrates Qatar's commitment to strengthening its health sector's capacity to respond effectively to disease outbreaks.

HMC to host transplant experts in May

Hamad Medical Corporation (HMC) has announced hosting two internationally renowned consultants in the fields of kidney and liver transplantation to Hamad General Hospital this month. According to a press statement issued yesterday by HMC, the visits form part of its ongoing commitment to providing patients with enhanced access to leading global expertise while further strengthening the quality of transplant services across its hospitals. By hosting these renowned specialists, HMC aims to boost patients' access to the latest surgical techniques and best practices in transplantation care and contribute to the continued advancement of organ transplantation services in Qatar. Patients who are suitable to see the visiting consultants will be informed by their doctor, said HMC. (QNA)

QNL set to bring interactive experiences to Doha Book Fair

QNA
Doha

Qatar National Library (QNL) will participate in the 2025 Doha International Book Fair, offering a range of interactive activities designed to inspire and engage visitors of all ages.

This year, QNL's exhibit will blend technology with cultural engagement. Leading the lineup is an AI-powered book recommendation tool, which will offer attendees personalised suggestions based on their reading preferences.

Visitors can receive a curated reading list directly to their email, providing a seamless way to explore QNL's extensive collection. A 360-degree touchscreen virtual tour will provide guests with an immersive look into the Library's interior, services, and spaces.

QNL is inviting the public to shape its agenda through a dig-



ital poll. Attendees can vote for a book to be featured in an upcoming Library event and submit their own recommendations via the interactive platform. A story dispenser will allow visitors to take home a printed short story, featuring community-submitted tales through QNL's "Write to Inspire" initiative.

Families can enjoy a digital puzzle station.

Adults can solve puzzles featuring stunning images from the Library, paired with informative messages about the featured locations and completion time. A

simplified version for children will feature Ramly, the mascot of the Children's Library, with messages curated by the Children's Library team.

Ramly will make special appearances daily, engaging with school groups and families to add excitement and energy to the booth. The popular photo booth will return, allowing attendees to pose against Heritage Library-themed backgrounds. The photos will be displayed in real-time on an interactive screen, creating a collaborative artwork that forms the shape of the Library's iconic building.

Sidra Medicine to host first MENA ART conference from May 18

Sidra Medicine, a member of Qatar Foundation, will host its inaugural MENA ART (Advanced Research Technologies for Personalised Medicine) conference from May 18 to 19, 2025.

MENA ART will bring together leading scientists, clinicians, and industry experts from around the world to explore how flow cytometry and optical microscopy are shaping the future of precision medicine.

The conference theme, 'Innovation in Flow Cytometry and Optical Microscopy', will highlight how these technologies are transforming disease diagnosis, biomarker discovery, and the development of targeted therapies. It aims to foster cross-disciplinary dialogue and showcase pioneering research that is changing the

landscape of healthcare.

Dr Giusy Gentilcore, manager of the Flow Cytometry Core Facility at Sidra Medicine and co-chair of MENA ART 2025, said: "Flow cytometry and Optical Microscopy are at the heart of many breakthroughs in immunology and personalised medicine. "At MENA ART 2025, we are bringing together global experts to showcase how this powerful technology advances our understanding of diseases and improves patient outcomes. The hands-on workshops are a highlight, providing participants with the practical skills needed to maximise the impact of their research."

The conference will feature expert-led sessions on cutting-edge applications across cancer biology, immunology, small particles, digital pathology, and trans-

lational medicine. Attendees will gain valuable insights into the latest advancements in high-throughput imaging, spatial proteomics, and single-cell analysis.

Flow cytometry is a powerful tool that enables rapid, high-dimensional cell analysis, supporting breakthroughs in diagnostics and therapeutic innovation. Whereas optical microscopy provides detailed views into cellular structures and biological processes, allowing scientists to visualise disease mechanisms, track treatment responses, and drive discovery at the molecular level.

Dr Abhirami Sathappan, lead of the Advanced Imaging Core at Sidra Medicine, said: "The MENA ART 2025 conference represents a unique platform for researchers, clinicians, and

technology leaders to exchange ideas and explore the latest innovations in imaging.

"By focusing on the real-world impact of optical microscopy in diagnostics and translational research, we aim to drive meaningful conversations that inspire collaboration and accelerate scientific progress in the region and beyond."

Sathappan added: "In addition to the main conference, Sidra Medicine will host the region's first hands-on workshop of its kind from May 20 to 22, 2025, offering participants an immersive experience in flow cytometry and optical microscopy technologies.

"Led by expert instructors from around the world, the workshop will feature high-end demo equipment alongside cutting-edge platforms from our laboratories. Participants will gain direct, practical training in data acquisition, analysis, and interpretation, building essential skills to advance precision medicine research."

The MENA ART conference highlights Sidra Medicine's role in advancing precision medicine through research, innovation and collaboration. To be a part of this event and join the region's leading voices in precision medicine, registration must be done.



Mali's Minister for the Promotion of Women, Children, and the Family, Diarra Djeneba Sanogo, presenting the certificate of recognition to Qatar's ambassador to Mali, Ahmed Abdulrahman al-Sunaidi.

Qatar Charity initiative benefits vulnerable groups in Mali

Qatar Charity (QC) has implemented a relief and development initiative in Mali, benefiting 9,360 people, including internally displaced persons (IDPs), vulnerable groups, and sponsored individuals.

The initiative was carried out with support from Qatar's donors and in co-operation with Mali's Ministry for the Promotion of Women, Children, and Families. The initiative was launched under the patronage of Mali's Minister for the Promotion of Women, Children, and Families, Diarra Djeneba Sanogo, and in the presence of Qatar's ambassador to Mali, Ahmed Abdulrahman al-Sunaidi.

The initiative aims to provide shelter, economic empowerment, and improved living conditions for IDPs and vulnerable groups, including orphans, persons with special needs, students, teachers, and low-income families.

QC's relief and development initiative focuses on empowering women and youth through income-generating projects. These projects included the provision of 50 flour mills, 130 tricycles for goods transport, 130 tricycles for passenger transport, and 200 sewing machines, to boost livelihoods and promote self-reliance.

The initiative also delivered essential humanitarian and social aid, containing 1,000 school kits, 200 shelter kits for IDPs and flood victims, and mobility aid for persons with special needs, which included 600 standard wheelchairs and 100 electric wheelchairs.

Additionally, 900 water purifiers, 900 solar-powered camping lights, and 900 kitchen kits were distributed, along with 1,200 blood pressure monitors and 2,900 personal water



filters to enhance health and living conditions.

Sanogo expressed her gratitude for the humanitarian initiative, which aligns with the priorities of Assimi Goita, the interim president of Mali. She also extended her appreciation to Qatar Charity and Qatar, both the government and people, for their ongoing support and noble humanitarian efforts.

Al-Sunaidi noted that the project emphasises the efforts to strengthen the partnership between Qatar and Mali based on mutual trust in various areas of co-operation. He expressed his gratitude to the Government of Mali and all those who contributed to this noble humanitarian initiative.

Said Zoulgamai, director of QC's Mali Branch, emphasised the importance of the relief and development initiative, extending his sincere thanks to the philanthropists in Qatar for supporting the most vulnerable groups, and to the ambassador to Mali, acknowledging his pivotal role in the success of this vital project.

The launch event concluded with the honouring of QC, which was awarded a certificate of appreciation for its outstanding efforts in overcoming challenges, alleviating the suffering of people, and providing the best humanitarian services.



MENA ART will bring together leading scientists, clinicians, and industry experts from around the world to explore how flow cytometry and optical microscopy are shaping the future of precision medicine.

590 students compete for seats at Qatar School of Science and Technology

By Tawfik Lamari
Staff Reporter

The increasing demand for Qatar School of Science and Technology reflects a noticeable shift in students' orientation towards scientific and technological disciplines.

The school provides a modern educational environment that supports innovation and creativity, providing students with opportunities to explore fields such as programming, robotics, engineering, and the natural sciences, with a focus on developing critical thinking and problem-solving skills.

The increase in the number of applicants for the Qatar Science and Technology Secondary School for Boys reflects the success of awareness-raising efforts to encourage students to pursue scientific careers. Some 590 students are taking the admission tests for the new academic year 2025-2026.



Experts believe this demand calls for greater investment in developing science schools, increasing enrolment capacity, and expanding the establishment of specialised educational institutions to meet the growing demand. They emphasised that strengthening these pathways represents a fundamental step towards achieving sustainable development, building a knowledge-based economy, and enriching the labour market.

The Qatar Science and Technology Secondary School for Boys is a leading educational institution that aims to prepare a generation

of outstanding students in the fields of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM).

The school accepts Qatari students entering the ninth grade and offers them a specialised educational programme focused on developing their scientific and technical skills.

The school is an interactive learning environment that fosters innovation and creativity, providing students with opportunities to explore diverse fields.

It relies on modern curricula that focus on developing critical thinking and problem-solving skills, es-

sential for future academic and professional success.

For the 2024-2025 academic year, 450 students applied for admission to the school, and 64 were selected after passing various assessment stages, including tests in mathematics, English, and higher-order skills, as well as personal interviews.

The school places great importance on excellence and leadership. This is because it has won the Sheikh Hessa Salem Al-Sabah Award for Educational Leadership at the Gulf level, reflecting its commitment to providing quality education that keeps pace with global developments.

The Qatar Science and Technology Secondary School for Boys is a role model in specialised education, contributing to the preparation of a generation capable of competing in the global labour market and contributing to the development of society.

QU organises international conference on 'complementary medicine in Islamic civilisation'

Qatar University's (QU) Health Sector has organised the 'International Conference on Complementary Medicine in Islamic Civilisation: Elements of Integration and Development'.

The event is dedicated to exploring the historical significance and modern applications of complementary medicine within Islamic heritage with QNB and Primary Health Care Corp (PHCC) being the Gold Sponsors of the conference.

The event gathered scholars, healthcare practitioners, and policymakers to explore the integration of traditional healing practices with modern healthcare and represents an important platform for highlighting the contributions of Muslim scholars in medical fields.

Professor Asmaa al-Thani, QU vice-president for Medical and Health Sciences, said in her opening speech: "This gathering serves as an intellectual and scientific platform, drawing inspiration from our rich heritage of wisdom and knowledge."

"Through it, we aim to highlight how Muslim scholars contributed to laying the foundations of medicine with a holistic approach that integrates body and mind, treatment and prevention. In an era of rapid discoveries, the need for integrative medicine that cares for the whole person continues to grow."

She added: "This conference seeks to spotlight authentic knowledge treasures that can support the development of modern medicine and foster integration between modern and complementary practices within scientifically grounded, research-based frameworks."

Dr Zainab al-Musleh, Clinical Re-



The event gathered scholars, healthcare practitioners, and policymakers to explore the integration of traditional healing practices with modern healthcare and represents an important platform for highlighting the contributions of Muslim scholars in medical fields.

search assistant professor at QU and assistant chairman of the Research Network Group of Traditional Complementary and Integrative Medicine, stressed that the event marks a significant milestone in the ongoing focus on complementary and integrative medicine, reaffirming its growing role in healthcare and academic education.

Progress in this field, she said, can only be achieved by fostering a culture of scientific research and reinforcing the principle of evidence-based medicine. She emphasised that this conference represents a groundbreaking milestone in the Arab and Islamic world, dedicated to uncovering the deep-rooted legacy of complementary medicine within our civilisation.

By linking historical practices with modern medical advancements, it aims to harmonise ancestral knowledge with contemporary science. She also expressed pride in hosting the first conference of its kind delivered entirely in Arabic, cel-

ebating our linguistic and cultural identity while fostering wider community engagement. This initiative underscores QU's dedication to advancing scientific research, preserving cultural heritage, and positioning the region at the forefront of global integrative medicine.

The Research Network Group of Traditional Complementary and Integrative Medicine emphasised that this conference aims to promote a research-driven mindset and provide a platform for collaboration between academics and practitioners, both locally and globally.

Dr Mariam Ali Abdul Malik, managing director of PHCC, said: "Our participation in the conference through the awareness booth aimed to highlight one of the fundamental principles of healthcare: prevention is better than cure. This principle is deeply embedded in the teachings of our faith and serves as a cornerstone of our strategy to deliver comprehensive and sustainable healthcare services."

Awqaf opens new mosque in Mamoura

The Ministry of Endowments (Awqaf) and Islamic Affairs, represented by the Mosques Department, has officially inaugurated the Sheikh Abdullah bin Thani bin Jassim Al-Thani and Sheikhha Sheikhha bint Khalid bin Ahmed Al-Ahmad Al-Thani Mosque in the Mamoura area.

Endowed by Sheikh Ali bin Abdullah bin Thani bin Jassim al-Thani in memory of his late parents, the newly opened mosque stands as a testament to enduring faith and community service. It forms part of the ministry's strategic initiative to expand the network of mosques across the country, in alignment with Qatar's National Vision 2030, which aims to support population growth and urban development.

Spanning a total area of 1,933sq m, the mosque can accommodate up to 891 worshippers; 841 in the main men's prayer hall and 50 in the dedicated women's prayer area. Designed with both functionality and accessibility in mind, the mosque features a spacious ablution facility, public parking including designated spaces for people with disabilities, as well as clearly marked



entrances and exits for ease of access. A tall, prominent minaret further enhances the mosque's architectural presence in the neighbourhood. Additionally, the mosque includes a private residence for the imam, ensuring seamless religious service and community leadership. The Ministry's Engineering Affairs Department continues to play a vital role in this mission, handling the planning, construction, and maintenance of mosques and prayer facilities, including temporary structures and residences for imams. The department also co-ordinates with relevant stakeholders to ensure compliance with technical and engineering standards, prepares annual maintenance programmes, and maintains a comprehensive database of mosque infrastructure and personnel. (QNA)

THUMBAY FERGANA COLLEGE OF MEDICAL SCIENCES
FERGANA - UZBEKISTAN



THUMBAY
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2A Yangi Turon Street, Fergana 150100, Uzbekistan ☎+971 6 7030695 ✉admissions@tfcoms.uz
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'Hour and Hour' programme partners with QCS to create health awareness

In celebration of World Health Day, the International Day of Sport for Development and Peace, and the Thyroid Cancer Awareness Campaign, the "Hour and Hour" programme, in collaboration with Qatar Cancer Society (QCS), has organised a special event titled "A Healthy and Aware Society" under the theme "Window of Hope".



In his opening speech, QCS chairman Sheikh Dr Khalid bin Jaber al-Thani, stressed that organising this event stems from the productive co-operation between QCS and the "Hour and Hour" programme, aiming to instil the values of well-being and community solidarity, and to highlight the importance of health awareness as an effective tool in disease prevention, especially cancer.

Accordingly, he thanked "Hour and Hour" programme for organising the event, all partners and supporters, and everyone who contributed to its success. Meanwhile, Tamani al-

Yafie, CEO of the "Hour and Hour" programme, stressed the importance of reinforcing health awareness in the community and the vital role the programme plays in promoting a culture of prevention and supporting cancer patients. She explained that choosing the theme "Window of Hope" reflects the programme's vision of promoting physical and mental health within the community.

Azla al-Qahtani, head of Culture and Identity in Pre-University Education at Qatar Foundation, affirmed that the participation of Qatar Academy - Doha students stems from the Foundation's commitment to its vision of unlocking human potential through holistic education that connects knowledge, values, and community initiative.

Eventually, a special video about the "Window of Hope" initiative was presented, followed by a live musical performance by members of Shafallah Center for Persons with Disabilities, reflecting the event's commitment to inclusive community engagement.

The event featured a discussion panel titled "A Healthy and Aware Society - Under the Theme of Window of Hope," with the participation of a number of experts and specialists in the field, who explored the best ways to promote health awareness in society.

The event concluded with honouring the participating and supporting figures and organisations, followed by a group photo. Besides, the event enjoyed the attendance of a number of ambassadors, heads of diplomatic missions and other dignitaries, who toured the accompanying exhibition that highlighted the efforts of participating institutions in health, sports, and community awareness.



ARPM Tender Committee announces the following Tender

Tender No.	(Tender Title) Scope of work	Tender Fee	Tender Bond QR.	Opening Date	Closing Date
ARPM/215/2025/TEN/DOH	Supply of New Appliances for Madaf Tower Suites	1000	10,000	04-May-25	25-May-25
ARPM/216/2025/TEN/DOH	Supply and Installation of CCTV Camera Systems with MOI-SSD Certification for Diyafa Hotel	1000	10,000	04-May-25	25-May-25
ARPM/217/2025/TEN/DOH	Supply & Installation of Domestic Tank Chiller Coil System for Villas at Retaj Salwa Resort	500	5,000	04-May-25	25-May-25
ARPM/218/2025/TEN/DOH	Provision of Vessel Dry Dock Services on an On-Call Basis for Banana Island Resort	2000	20,000	04-May-25	25-May-25

1. Interested parties can collect copies of the tender documents from ARPM Purchasing Department, via email to m.aseef@arpm.com.qa and L.cabral@arpm.com.qa during working hours 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. (Fri & Sat Closed)

2. A payment of a non-refundable document's fees should be deposited in cash to:

- Beneficiary Name: Al-Rayyan Projects Management (ARPM)
- Account No. 0013-022375-004 (Qatar National Bank)
- IBAN No. QA86QNBA00000000013022375004

And the original deposit receipt should be submitted upon receiving of the terms and conditions.

- A tender bond (as stated above), issued by a bank operating in the State of Qatar and valid for 180 days from the closing date should accompany tenders. **The executed tender bond should be included with the technical offer.**
- All tenderers MUST collect their original bonds from ARPM - Purchasing department upon expiry of the Tender Bond, unless alternative instructions are issued by ARPM.
- Proposal to be submitted in sealed envelopes as per the RFP requirements in both HARD COPY & SOFT COPY on CD or USB.
- Copies of valid **Company Commercial Registration, Computer Card & Authorization Letter** must be submitted in order to collect the tender documents.
- The successful tenderer is required to submit a performance bond issued by a bank operating in the State of Qatar equivalent to 10% of the total contract sum and shall be valid for a period expiring 180 days after contract expiry.
- Offers should be valid for 180 days commencing from the closing date (as stated above).
- ARPM has the right to increase or decrease the scope of services by 20% with the same terms and conditions.
- ARPM is not bound to accept the lowest tender or any other tender and is under no obligation to show any reasons thereof.
- Bids should be submitted not later than 12:00 noon on the closing date and must be deposited into the Box, provided in the ARPM Purchasing office, located at the 9th Floor, ARPM, Head office and should be in sealed envelopes addressed to the Chairman - Tenders Committee, quoting the Tender Number and Subject.
- Offers arriving thereafter may not be considered.

CHAIRMAN - TENDER COMMITTEE
TEL: 40341804

INVITATION TO TENDER

Tender Reference	Description	Tender Fee (QAR)	Tender Bond Value (QAR)	Bid Closing Date
QF-RFQ-842	Provision of Company Registration (Formation) Services to QF-CSTP on call off basis for 3 years with option to extend for one (1) more year	500.00	N/A	29 th May 2025, 2:00 PM
CO-RFQ-308	Supply Installation & Commissioning of Schneider Harmonic Filters	500.00	N/A	29 th May 2025, 2:00 PM

Qatar Foundation (QF) Procurement Directorate is inviting companies to participate in the above listed public tenders. To receive the tender documents, please follow the below steps:

1) **Supplier Registration** It is mandatory to be registered as a supplier with QF in order to participate in the above tender(s). Only QF registered suppliers will be allowed to pay the tender fees online. Therefore, please visit QF website at <https://www.qf.org.qa/supplier-registration> to complete the Supplier Registration process.

Tender Fee: Interested bidders can sign in by visiting this link <https://suppliers.qf.org.qa/abstract> and pay the respective non-refundable and non-transferrable tender fee online.

All Tender Fees are to be paid using credit cards only.

Tender Fee Payment Dates: Payment of Tender Fee online will be from 4th May until 8th May 2025.

2) All bidders, who are registered and have paid the required tender fees online to QF, will then be granted access to download the Tender Document.

3) Technical and commercial bids need to be submitted and attached online in QF Supplier Portal as per instructions provided in the "Supplier Portal" work instruction.

- The commercial bid must be valid for 180 days from Bid Closing Date.
- The commercial bid must be accompanied by a bank guarantee (tender bond) issued by a local bank in Qatar and should be valid for 180 days from the bid closing date (where applicable as per the Tender documents).
- The successful tenderer will be required to submit a performance bond as prescribed in each of the above tender documents.
- Qatar Foundation special qualifications, terms and conditions shall apply as stipulated in the tender document.

Note: All work instructions for Supplier registration and Supplier portal can be found in below link: <https://www.qf.org.qa/supplier-registration>

Aman Center wins award for anti-violence initiative

The Protection and Social Rehabilitation Center (Aman), one of the centres under Qatar Foundation for Social Work, has been awarded a prize for best initiative to combat violence against women in the Arab world.

The award was granted for its women's support app during the 53rd International Conference of the Organisation for Women's Empowerment and Capacity Building (Tamkeen), held last week in Kuwait in partnership with National Association for Combating Societal Violence.

Commenting on the achievement, Acting Executive Director of Aman, Fadl bin Mohammed AlKaabi, emphasised the importance of participating in regional and international awards that highlight innovative efforts in protection and empowerment. He reaffirmed the centre's ongoing commitment to providing innovative services and initiatives that support women, children, and victims of violence and family breakdown, in line with technological developments and community needs.

He explained that app is designed to raise awareness of women's rights, facilitate access to counselling services, and empower users to face various forms of violence with awareness and confidence. Director of Communication and Media at Aman Hanan al-Ali, noted that winning this award reflects the centre's dedication to activating community and international partnerships relevant to its mission.

She highlighted its efforts to provide protection and social rehabilitation for target groups, aiming to reintegrate them into their families and society through high-quality, impactful programmes and services. (QNA)

ANNOUNCES THE ISSUE OF THE FOLLOWING TENDER:

Tender No.	Subject	Tender Bond (QRS.)	Closing Date
AAH/TC/08/2025	Supply, Installation, Configuration, and Maintenance of Firewall solutions for both perimeter and data center environments with Three (3) years support.	Qar. 20,000/-	18 th May 2025

The full documents for the above mentioned tender can be obtained from the PURCHASING DEPARTMENT of Al-Ahli Hospital from Sunday to Thursday, between 9:00AM to 4:00PM upon payment of non-refundable fee of QAR 2,000.00 to Accounts Receivables, Finance department Al-Ahli Hospital.

The tender should be accompanied by a Tender Bond issued by a Qatar Accredited Bank and acceptable to Al-Ahli Hospital. The bond should be valid for 120 days from the submission date of the tender.

The successful tenderer should submit a performance bond equivalent to 10% of the contract value, which should be valid for 90 days beyond the warranty period.

The tenders should submit in three (3) sealed envelopes: one (1) envelope for Technical Offer, one (1) envelope for Commercial Offer, and one (1) envelope for Tender Bond.

Tenders must be addressed to the Chairman of the Tender Committee, clearly indicating the Tender Number and Subject.

The Last date to purchase the tender documents will be on 08th May 2025.

The closing time for the submission of bid Tenders should be no later than 2:00PM of the Closing Date.

For further information please contact: **Purchasing Department**
Phone: +974 4489 8766 - Fax: +974 4489 8768
Email: henryr@ahlihospital.com

Al Jazeera Media Network announces the following tenders:

Sr. No	Tender Ref. No.	Description	Tender Bond (QAR)	Tender Fee Non-Refundable (QAR)	Bid Closing Date and Time
1	LTC030-25	Supply of Mineral Drinking Water for 03 Years - Call Off Agreement	Not Applicable	500/-	01-June-2025 (13:00 Hrs)
2	GTC007-25	Transportation Services to AJMN for 3 Years	120,000/-	1,000/-	02-June-2025 (13:00 Hrs)

Tender documents can be collected from Al Jazeera Media Network, Procurement & Contracts Directorate Building 1st Floor, behind Al Jazeera Media Institute Building, TV Intersection Area, Doha by submitting an authorization letter showing the tender number and ID number of collecting person under the company letterhead, after paying the tender fee (as applicable) at QIB Branch inside Al Jazeera's Support Services building.

Tender documents are to be collected from 04-May-2025 to 12-May-2025, between 8:00 AM to 1:00 PM (excluding Friday & Saturday).

The Bid must be submitted with a Tender Bond issued by a Qatari Bank or by a bank operating in Qatar and should be valid for a period of 180 days from bid closing date.

The offer must be valid for a period of 180 days from the bid closing date.

The Technical and Commercial offers shall be submitted as per the instructions in the tender documents which shall bear the tender number and bid closing date.

The last date for accepting the Tender offers shall be 01:00 PM of the bid closing date.

For more information, please call 44897131.

Range Rover Sport SV shatters Yas Marina lap record

The Range Rover Sport SV has shattered records at Yas Marina Circuit, cementing its place as the fastest SUV and fastest four-door production vehicle ever to lap the iconic track, a statement from Alfordan Premier Motors said.

Setting an outstanding 2:20.405-minute lap time, the high-performance luxury SUV has redefined what's possible in its segment.

The record-breaking run was completed by accomplished Emirati racing driver Saeed al-Mheiri, who unlocked the full potential of Range Rover's most powerful and dynamically capable vehicle to date.

The lap, set in standard production specification, underlines the ultimate

fusion of performance, capability, and luxury.

At its core, the Range Rover Sport SV's 635PS 4.4-litre twin-turbo mild-hybrid V8, with 750nm of torque – the most powerful engine ever fitted to a Range Rover.

With 750Nm of torque, it launches from 0-100kph in just 3.8 seconds.

"The Range Rover Sport SV represents the pinnacle of performance and innovation," JLR Mena managing director Bruce Robertson said.

"Breaking the record at Yas Marina Circuit is a testament to our commitment to pushing the boundaries of sporting luxury," he said. This achievement cements Range Rover Sport's position as

the benchmark for high-performance SUVs, delivering an unrivalled driving experience both on and off the track."

Fitted with Michelin Pilot Sport All-Season 4 tyres, specifically developed to optimise both high-speed handling and everyday usability, the Range Rover Sport SV delivers an unmatched balance of precision, control, and comfort.

An optional summer tyre, the Michelin Pilot Sport S5, designed to enhance performance in warmer conditions, will be available to customers in the Mena (Middle East and North Africa) region soon.

A key factor in the record-breaking lap is the revolutionary 6D Dynamics suspension – a world-first hydraulic inter-linked system that eliminates the need for traditional anti-roll bars.

It actively controls pitch and roll, keeping the SUV near-level during hard acceleration, aggressive cornering, and heavy braking.

This innovation ensures supreme stability, agility, and driver confidence, allowing the Range Rover Sport SV to carry more speed through corners while maintaining its legendary refinement.

The industry-first Brembo Carbon Ceramic Braking system, with its 440mm



front discs – the largest ever fitted to a production SUV – provides exceptional fade resistance and stopping power, even under extreme track conditions.

Paired with exclusive eight-piston Brembo Octyama front calipers, available in Yellow, Red, Carbon Bronze, and Black, the system delivers immediate and precise pedal response, allowing drivers to push the limits with confidence.

Aerodynamically honed, the Range Rover Sport SV cuts a muscular yet refined figure.

A carbon fibre bonnet, quad tail-pipe finishers, and sculpted bodywork enhance its dynamic capability, while exclusive colour choices ensure a commanding presence.

Inside, the SV Performance seats provide exceptional support and comfort along industry-first Body and Soul Seat system introduces haptic vibrations synchronised to music, offering an immersive sensory experience that enhances both well-being and in-car enjoyment.

The Range Rover Sport SV's Yas Marina Circuit record is more than a milestone – it is a statement.

It proves that a luxury SUV can excel on the track without compromising capability or refinement.

With its groundbreaking suspension, precision braking system, and world-class engineering, the Range Rover Sport SV redefines the future of high-performance luxury SUVs, the statement added.



CMU-Q set to graduate new class, says dean

The dean of Carnegie Mellon University in Qatar, a partner university of the Qatar Foundation for Education, Science and Community Development (QF), has announced that a new class of students is preparing to graduate this month, adding to its growing alumni network of around 1,500 graduates, most of whom live and work in Qatar.

In an interview with the Qatar News Agency (QNA), Dr Michael Trick (pictured) noted that the university initially graduated students in business administration and computer science.

In 2007, the Information Systems programme was added, followed by Biological Sciences in 2011, which significantly increased the number of graduates in the following years.

Since joining the CMU-Q in 2017, Dr Trick witnessed rapid student growth, reflecting the university's positive trajectory and its growing impact both within Qatar and globally.

He emphasised the university's commitment to maintaining strong, lasting ties with its alumni, many of whom regularly return to campus to engage with faculty, mentor students, and expand their professional networks.

He highlighted the uni-

versity's pride in its global alumni network of more than 120,000 graduates, which hosts events and meetups in various cities, offering a dynamic platform for career advice, job opportunities, and mutual support, which he considers a crucial resource for recent graduates entering the workforce.

Regarding partnerships with public and private sectors, Dr Trick explained that the CMU-Q signed over 50 memorandums of understanding with government entities, companies, and local institutions in Qatar.

These partnerships provide internships, mentorship, job placements, and support for student-led initiatives and events.

He added that the university's career development team plays a vital role in forging strong connections with employers in Qatar and abroad, preparing students with the skills and experiences needed to launch their careers with confidence.

Speaking about the most in-demand fields for graduates, Dr Trick said that artificial intelligence (AI) has become one of the most attractive areas for students in recent years.

All programmes at the CMU-Q include AI-related courses, with students in computer science and in-

Carnegie Mellon Qatar Dean: University Set to Graduate New Class. Expand Academic and Research Impact

An exclusive interview with Qatar News Agency |

- 1500 graduates from Carnegie Mellon University in Qatar
- +120 global alumni network
- The rapid student growth reflects the university's growing impact both within Qatar and globally
- +50 memorandums of understanding signed by the university with government entities, companies, and local institutions in Qatar
- The university plays an important role in innovation and research within Education City

The university offers a wide choice of disciplines which attract different student interests

AI-related courses are drawing increased attention across all majors

Qatar provides an exceptional educational environment and the future of higher education in the country is highly promising

The vision of Qatar Foundation has matured impressively and now extends beyond Education City

formation systems delving deeper into the field.

Many graduates now work in AI and related areas such as cybersecurity and data privacy.

What sets AI apart, he noted, is its wide applicability across sectors – from finance and healthcare to the arts – allowing graduates in biological sciences and business administration

to pursue careers in areas like precision medicine, fintech, and consulting.

He expects continued growth in these areas as AI tools and applications evolve globally.

On the university's role in innovation and research within Education City, Dr Trick emphasised the CMU-Q's active contribution to the QF research ecosystem.

He pointed to close collaboration with the Qatar Biomedical Research Institute (QBRI) and the Qatar Computing Research Institute (QCRI), both under Hamad Bin Khalifa University.

CMU-Q faculty engage in joint research projects, and students benefit from summer research opportunities, with some graduates now working at these institutes as researchers or graduate students.

He also underscored the value of ongoing partnerships with other Education City universities across multiple disciplines, enriching the academic environment and fostering knowledge exchange.

While each programme attracts different student interests, AI-related courses are drawing increased attention across all majors, reflecting a clear student desire to understand and ethically harness this important field.

Dr Trick praised Qatar's exceptional educational environment and expressing optimism for the future of higher education in the country.

He noted that the vision of Qatar Foundation, launched three decades ago to establish a beacon of knowledge and discovery, has matured impressively and now extends beyond Education City.

He said that during his eight years as CMU-Q dean, he witnessed the evolution and success of this vision in attracting top universities, thinkers, researchers, and innovators.

He also expressed excitement about continuing this academic momentum and look forward to the future with confidence and optimism. – QNA

45 doctors graduating from WCM-Q this year to boost healthcare sector

Weill Cornell Medicine – Qatar (WCM-Q) dean Dr Javaid Sheikh (pictured) has announced that the college will graduate 45 new physicians this year, raising the total number of alumni from 596 to 641.

He emphasised that the increasing number of graduates reflects the university's success in supplying the healthcare sector with highly qualified professionals.

In an interview with the Qatar News Agency (QNA), Dr Sheikh explained that the WCM-Q – a partner university of Qatar Foundation (QF) – began its academic journey in 2002, with the first graduating class of 15 doctors in 2008.

Since then, the number has grown steadily, culminating in the Class of 2024 – the largest cohort to date, with 50 graduates from 13 nationalities, including 18 Qataris.

He noted that this growth underscores the rising confidence in the college's academic programme and its ability to prepare doctors who are both scientifically competent and professionally equipped to meet the healthcare needs of Qatar and the region.

WCM-Q graduates, Dr Sheikh said, form a vital part of the local medical community.

He stated that they view their alumni as an extension of the university's mission, highlighting the role of the Alumni Affairs Office, which supports graduates with career guidance, training opportunities, and access to research and teaching roles, while fostering a strong sense of community.

The office also facilitated the return of many graduates from US residency programmes to Qatar, where they now work at institutions like Hamad Medical Corporation, Sidra Medicine, and Aspetar – helping build a sustainable "talent pipeline" for Qatar's healthcare system.

Dr Sheikh praised the strong collaboration with national entities such as the Ministry of Public Health, Hamad Medical Corporation, the Primary Health Care Cor-



poration, and private hospitals, which create promising career pathways for WCM-Q graduates and motivate them to grow within Qatar's healthcare ecosystem.

To new graduates, Dr Sheikh offered encouragement to remain resilient, stay connected with the college and alumni, and make use of the support network available.

He advised them to uphold medical ethics, prioritise patient well-being, and care for their own mental and physical health amid the demands of the profession.

Regarding in-demand specialities, he noted that while most graduates initially pursue clinical training, many combine it with research, education, or health leadership.

Internal medicine, neurology, paediatrics, psychiatry, emergency medicine, cardiology, ophthalmology, and orthopaedic surgery have all seen strong interest in recent years.

On research, Dr Sheikh highlighted the importance of the WCM-Q's Biomedical Research Programme, launched in 2009, which now includes 22 active labs and 135 researchers.

The college's cutting-edge labs support projects in genomics, proteomics, bioinformatics, medical imaging, and biostatistics, while fostering collaboration with Qatar Foundation institutions.

The WCM-Q does not offer traditional graduate programmes but provides a six-year integrated medical programme and a foundation programme, both of which attract top students from Qatar and abroad.

The college receives over 1,000 applications annually and admits about 40-50 students to its integrated programme and 3-5 to the four-year track for those with prior pre-med studies.

The dean also emphasised the college's ongoing efforts to adapt curricula to advancements in technology, precision medicine, and artificial intelligence (AI). – QNA

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TENDER ADVERTISEMENT

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

S. No.	Tender Ref.	Tender Title:	Tender Bond QAR	Bid Closing Date & Tender Bond Validity Period
1	STC-CN-003-25-HS	Call Off Contract for Smart Leak Detection and Repair (SMART LDAR)	45,500/-	28 May 2025 at 12:00 noon & 180 days

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

Tender Registration Fee	QAR 500/- (Non-refundable) per Tender
Payable to	ORyx GTL Limited
IBAN (29 Digits)	QA23QNBA00000000013010705001
Bank	Qatar National Bank – HQ or any branch (cash only)
Registration Dates	From 04 May 2025 to 08 May 2025 8:00 am to 1:00 pm
Registration Process and Requirements:	Write an e-mail to oryxgtltenders@oryxglt.qa with the following attachments: 1. Copy of Commercial Registration (CR) 2. Copy of bank deposit slip of the Tender Registration Fee. 3. Copy of ICV Certificate

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

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

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

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

مجلس الشورى
The Shura Council
دولة قطر - قطر
State of Qatar - Qatar

Announcement of open tender (Technical/commercial proposal)

Tender No.	Subject	Closing Date
1/2025	Provision and Operation of Cybersecurity Systems, Management of Monitoring Operations, and Delivery of Advisory and Governance Services for the Shura Council Duration: Three (3) Years Accepted Bidders : (A,B Categories)	29/5/2025

The Tenders/Auctions Committee at the Shura Council is pleased to invite you to participate in the above-mentioned tender in accordance with the following:

- The companies shall notify the Shura Council – Tenders and Auctions Committee – confirming receipt of the invitation, whether to participate or decline .
- Tender documents may be obtained from the Tenders and Auctions Committee at the Shura Council (The White Palace) upon payment of a non-refundable fee of 5,000 Qatari Riyals, to be deposited into the Shura Council's account No. (0013-005853-001) at Qatar National Bank.
- The tender must be accompanied by a temporary bank guarantee amounting to 5% of the commercial offer, enclosed with the company's financial proposal, and valid for (120) days. The awarded Tenders shall submit a final bank guarantee of 10% of the total awarded value, valid for (120) days after the completion of the contract execution period, prior to signing the contract.
- The offer should be valid for period of (120) days from the closure date and shall be considered binding and irrevocable during this period.
- The closing time will be at 12:00 pm on 29/5/2025. During the contract execution period, the Council reserves the right to increase or decrease the quantities or scope of work in accordance with the contract terms and prices.
- Bidders shall submit their offers at the shura Council in sealed envelopes and stamped by red wax, Addressed to the Tenders and Auctions Committee Chairman. The envelopes must clearly indicate the tender number, subject, and closing date, without mentioning the company name. Submission must follow registration with the Secretary of the Tenders and Auctions Committee.
- To obtain the tender documents, the following must be presented: proof of payment of the tender document fee as mentioned in item (2) above, a letter of authorization from the company, a valid copy of the commercial registration, and a valid ID card.
- Bidders may submit proposal for either one of the tenders or both combined as one service provide.
- For inquiries, please call phone number : 44221049-4422103
Email : Tender@shura.gov.qa



Arab League slams Israeli curbs on media, killing of journalists

QNA
Cairo

The Arab League has strongly condemned the unprecedented killing of Palestinian journalists and Israel's security clampdown on press freedom, including the ban on foreign media entry into Gaza.

In a statement marking World Press Freedom Day, Assistant Secretary-General and Supervisor of the Media and Communication Sector at the Arab League, ambassador Ahmed Rashid Khat-

tabi emphasised that this year's commemoration comes under exceptional circumstances, amid Israel's ongoing aggression on Gaza and daily attacks in the occupied Palestinian territories. The violence has resulted in thousands of casualties, mostly women and children, while humanitarian aid remains blocked.

He stated that Israel's actions, restricting press freedom and banning foreign media in Gaza, have led to the killing of an unprecedented 209 Palestinian journalists, in flagrant violation of international laws. Khattabi praised

credible independent journalism, which has challenged Israeli narratives, and urged serious consideration of legal mechanisms to protect journalists in conflict zones. He advocated for updating legislative frameworks to address modern challenges, through multilateral engagement within international and regional organisations to establish legal safeguards for journalists, ensuring their physical and moral safety while they perform their duties.

The Assistant Secretary-General stressed the importance of

free and independent journalism in building democratic societies and raising public awareness, underscoring the need for a balance between ethical journalism and professional integrity. He reiterated that a safe media environment is essential for freedom of expression and access to information, while emphasising responsible reporting, to prevent misinformation and protect liberties.

The international community commemorates World Press Freedom Day annually on May 3, following its designation by the UN General Assembly in December



A woman reacts as she attends the funeral of Palestinians killed in Israeli strikes, in Khan Younis, southern Gaza Strip, yesterday.

1993, based on a recommendation from Unesco's 26th General Conference.

The observance serves as a crucial occasion to honour media

professionals, particularly those who make significant sacrifices to report the truth and defend freedom of expression amid adversity worldwide.

PM of Yemen government announces resignation

AFP
Dubai

The premier of Yemen's internationally recognised government, former diplomat and foreign minister Ahmed bin Mubarak, announced his resignation yesterday saying he was unable to fully exercise his powers.

Bitter disputes had for months opposed bin Mubarak and Rashad al-Alimi, who heads the Gulf-backed Presidential Leadership Council (PLC), two ministers and a member of the PLC told AFP. They requested anonymity in order to speak freely.

After Houthi rebels seized the capital Sanaa in 2014, Yemen's government withdrew to Aden in the south. The rebels went on to control most population centres in the Arabian Peninsula country. A Gulf-led military coalition intervened in support of beleaguered government forces in 2015.

Yesterday, bin Mubarak posted on X that he had met the PLC's Alimi and resigned.

He also shared his resignation letter in which he said: "I could not exercise my constitutional powers and take the necessary decisions to reform government institutions or implement rightful governmental changes."

His move comes as the Houthis wage a campaign of missile attacks on Israel and target shipping in key waterways in what they say is a show of solidarity with Palestinians over the war in Gaza.

At least seven killed, 20 injured in bombings in South Sudan: MSF

Reuters
Johannesburg

At least seven people were killed and 20 injured and the last remaining hospital and pharmacy in the country's Fangak county were destroyed in bombings, medical charity Medecins Sans Frontieres said yesterday.

MSF said a bomb was dropped on the pharmacy, burning it to the ground and damaging the hospital, followed by another drone bomb on Old Fangak, a town in the Greater Upper Nile region, where at least seven people were killed.

"Old Fangak Hospital is the only hospital in Fangak county, serving a population of over 110,000 people who already had extremely limited access to healthcare," MSF said in a statement.

It was not immediately clear who carried out the attack or what the motive was.

Government and army spokespeople could not immediately be reached for comment.

South Sudan has formally been at peace since a 2018 peace deal ended a five-year



Fire burns following an aerial bombardment that resulted in casualties at the medical charity Medecins Sans Frontieres run facility destroying the last remaining hospital and pharmacy in the northern town of Old Fangak in Fangak county, South Sudan, yesterday.

civil war between forces loyal to President Salva Kiir and those loyal to First Vice-President Riek Machar.

However, the March arrest of Machar on charges of trying to

stir up a rebellion has sparked international concern that conflict could flare anew.

Famine causes mortality rates surge in Gaza

From Page 1

It further warned that the ramifications of this policy are not limited to the present but extend to undermining the future of the Palestinian people as a national group, by producing an entire generation at risk of long-term physical, psychological, and cognitive impairments as a result of chronic malnutrition, the collapse of healthcare services, and sustained collective trauma.

The rights monitor emphasised that these outcomes are not incidental, but rather constitute a direct manifestation of a policy intended to stunt individuals within the community and dismantle the biological and social foundations of the Palestinian group.

It added that such a policy is clearly embodied in the profound destructive intent that defines the crime of genocide under international law, particularly when executed through slow, cumulative

tools such as the unrelenting systematic blockade and deliberate starvation.

According to the Ministry of Health in the Gaza Strip, about 60,000 severely undernourished children are in need of treatment, while roughly 16,000 pregnant or breastfeeding women require urgent medical care.

Families across various parts of the Palestinian enclave are facing unimaginable hardships as the famine crisis intensifies in parallel with the continuous mass displacement, the collapse of the healthcare system, and the unabated Israeli military offensives, Euro-Med Monitor warned.

Community kitchens in the Gaza Strip have been among the hardest-hit sectors. Once a vital lifeline for hundreds of thousands of displaced and vulnerable individuals, providing tens of thousands of meals daily, they have now ceased operations entirely, with nothing left to distribute, rendering the impact of their loss

even more devastating amid the sweeping famine engulfing the Strip.

The tightened Israeli blockade on the enclave has triggered severe shortages of essential food staples needed for survival, such as grains, while agricultural infrastructure has been decimated by direct bombardment. Consequently, many Gazans have resorted to selling off their basic possessions to secure food, in a stark indicator of the impending collapse of coping mechanisms, Euro-Med Monitor said.

It added that families in Gaza have been forced to reduce their daily meals to the minimum threshold, drastically losing weight and relying almost entirely on canned goods amid widespread shortages of fresh, nutritious items, with Israeli forces escalating air strikes on charitable soup kitchens, depriving many families of their last remaining source of daily sustenance.

Iran says 'has every right' to enrich uranium, dismissing US concerns

AFP
Teheran

Iran defended yesterday its "right" to enrich uranium despite growing Western concern that Tehran may be seeking nuclear weapons and as talks with the US were delayed.

Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi said in a post on X that "Iran has every right to possess the full nuclear fuel cycle," citing Tehran's longstanding membership of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT).

"There are several NPT members which enrich uranium while wholly rejecting nuclear weapons," Araghchi said. Under the NPT, signatory states are obliged to declare their nuclear stockpiles

and place them under the supervision of the UN's nuclear watchdog, the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA).

The US and other Western countries have long accused Iran of pursuing nuclear weapons — a claim Tehran denies, insisting that its atomic programme is solely for civilian purposes.

Iran and the US have engaged in nuclear talks since April 12, their highest-level contact since Washington withdrew from a landmark deal with Tehran in 2018, during Donald Trump's first term as US president.

A fourth round of talks initially scheduled for yesterday has been postponed, mediator Oman said earlier this week, citing "logistical reasons".

GCC urges restraint, dialogue between Pakistan, India

QNA
Riyadh

The Gulf Co-operation Council (GCC) expressed the member states' grave concern over the worsening security situation in South Asia, urging restraint and the prioritisation of dialogue, as well as the resumption of urgent negotiations between Pakistan and India.

In a statement yesterday, GCC Secretary-General, Jassem Mohamed Albudaiwi condemned the terrorist attack that targeted tourists in Pahalgam in Jammu and Kashmir, resulting in the death and injury of dozens of innocent people.

He underlined the importance of resorting to peaceful means to resolve disputes, in accordance with the principles of international law and the UN Charter, in order to maintain security, peace, and stability in the region. He reaffirmed the Council's firm and principled position in rejecting terrorism in all its forms and manifestations.

He also reiterated the member states' call for the international community to enhance its efforts to find a peaceful solution to the Jammu and Kashmir issue, in accordance with the relevant UN Security Council resolutions.

Longtime Togo leader swaps top titles

AFP
Lome

Togolese leader Faure Gnassingbe, whose family has ruled the small west African country for nearly six decades, swapped titles yesterday to complete a constitutional reform hotly criticised by his political opponents.

Gnassingbe, who came to power on the death of his father Eyadema Gnassingbe in 2005, took the oath as the President of the Council of Ministers, now the highest executive office in the land following last year's reform, an AFP journalist saw. His opponents see Togo's shift from a presidential to a parliamentary system, enacted in May 2024 and completed by yesterday's swearing-in, as a means for Gnassingbe to extend his iron grip on power.

Following the reform Gnassingbe's original role of President of the Republic has become a ceremonial post, replaced as the executive office by the President of the Council of Ministers.

That office would be drawn from the majority party in the National Assembly — currently Gnassingbe's Union for the Republic party (UNIR), which won 108 of the 113 parliamentary seats last year in a vote dismissed by the opposition as a sham.

The UNIR likewise won 34 out of 41 seats in the Senate, though the main opposition parties boycotted the ballot.

Gabon ex-junta chief Oligui sworn in after election win



President of Gabon Brice Oligui Nguema (left) waves to the crowd from a vehicle as he parades around the arena during his swearing-in ceremony at a stadium in Libreville, yesterday.

AFP
Akanda

Gabon's Brice Oligui Nguema, whose coup ended 55 years of rule by the Bongo family, took oath as president yesterday before a packed stadium and more than a dozen African leaders.

The former junta leader, who won nearly 95% of the vote in last month's election, was sworn in for a seven-year term after 19 months of military rule since he

topped Ali Bongo in August 2023.

Sixteen African heads of state had arrived for the inauguration ceremony at a stadium north of the capital Libreville, with supporters decked out in T-shirts and flags bearing Oligui's likeness packing the 40,000-capacity venue.

Oligui, 50, entered the stadium on the back of a white, open-roof car at around 1:30pm (12:30 GMT), having eschewed his general's uniform in favour of a dark civilian suit with a red sash across his chest. Leaders in

attendance included Gambia's Adama Barrow, Senegal's Bassirou Diomaye Faye, Djibouti's Ismaïl Omar Guelleh and Teodoro Obiang Nguema Mbasogo from Equatorial Guinea.

The Democratic Republic of Congo's President Felix Tshisekedi likewise made his entrance around midday, followed by Rwanda's Paul Kagame.

Tickets were free to attend the investiture at the Angondje stadium, and spectators waited much of the day in a festive atmosphere for the stands to fill up.

US to stage military parade on Trump's birthday

Reuters/AFP
Washington

The US military is working on plans that could see more than 6,500 troops, about 150 vehicles and 50 aircraft moving to Washington, DC for twin celebrations of President Donald Trump's birthday and the Army's 250th anniversary, according to officials and documents.

US military service branches take pride in their history and anniversary celebrations, called birthdays in military circles, take place across the United States and on bases throughout the world.

The US Army had long been planning to move troops and equipment to the National Mall in Washington, DC in June as part of a celebration for the Army anniversary.

Officials, speaking on the condition of anonymity, said the planning now includes a military parade since the anniversary falls on Trump's 79th birthday.

According to a planning document seen by Reuters on Friday, there would be a week of celebrations by the Army which would culminate in the parade on June 14.

A US official said the most recent planning includes several thousand additional troops and dozens of military vehicles which would not have been needed if there was no parade.

The official said it was still in the planning phase and could change, adding that it was unclear if the parade was a request from the White House or something the Army had started to consider on its own.

The official added that the plan had not yet been approved by the White House or senior Pentagon leaders.

The White House confirmed that Trump would host a military parade for veterans and service members, but did not provide details.

Trump "will honour American Veterans, active-duty service-



This picture taken on July 14, 2017 shows (bottom row, from right) French Senate President Gerard Larcher, French First Lady Brigitte Macron, French President Emmanuel Macron, US President Donald Trump, US First Lady Melania Trump, French Prime Minister Edouard Philippe and French Defence Minister Florence Parly watching members of the 5e Regiment de Cuirassiers ride by in tanks as they attend the annual Bastille Day military parade on the Champs-Elysees avenue in Paris. -AFP

members, and military history with a military parade!" White House spokeswoman Anna Kelly wrote on X.

In addition to the parade, the celebration of the service's birthday will feature fireworks and a festival on the National Mall, US Army spokeswoman Heather Hagan said.

"Given the significant milestone of 250 years, the Army is exploring options to make the celebration even bigger, with more capability demonstrations, additional displays of equipment, and more engagement with the community," Hagan said. "Parade planning is actively underway, and we anticipate approximately 150 vehicles, 50 aircraft, and 6,600 soldiers."

It was unclear how much it would cost.

Trump has made no secret of his desire to hold military parades in the past.

During his first administration, he ordered the Pentagon to look into a display of military might af-

ter a 2017 trip to France where he and French President Emmanuel Macron reviewed that country's defence forces marching down the Avenue des Champs-Elysees in Paris.

That effort would have cost \$90mn.

Trump ultimately settled for a display of tanks and other armoured vehicles during a July Fourth celebration in 2019 in Washington, DC.

Washington Mayor Muriel Bowser raised similar concerns last month when asked by reporters about plans for a parade.

"Military tanks on our streets would not be good," Bowser said. "If military tanks were used they should be accompanied with many millions of dollars to repair the roads."

Military parades in the United States are generally rare.

Such parades in other countries are usually staged to celebrate victories in battle or showcase military might.

In 1991, tanks and thousands

of troops paraded through Washington to celebrate the ousting of President Saddam Hussain's Iraqi forces from Kuwait in the Gulf War.

On Thursday, Trump hinted at celebrating the military, though he did not mention June 14.

"Many of our allies and friends are celebrating May 8th as Victory Day, but we did more than any other Country, by far, in producing a victorious result on World War II," Trump said on Truth Social.

In a post, the US president downplayed the role of European countries - many of which suffered far more casualties and devastation than the United States - in the two global conflicts.

"We won both Wars, nobody was close to us in terms of strength, bravery, or military brilliance, but we never celebrate anything - That's because we don't have leaders anymore, that know how to do so! We are going to start celebrating our victories again!" Trump wrote.

CIA to reduce workforce by 1,200: report

The CIA plans to shrink its workforce by some 1,200 positions, while other intelligence agencies will also shed thousands of jobs, the *Washington Post* reported on Friday.

The Trump administration has informed lawmakers about the planned cuts at the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), which will take place over several years and be accomplished in part through reduced hiring as opposed to layoffs, the newspaper said.

Asked about the report, a CIA spokesperson did not confirm the specifics, but said that Director John Ratcliffe "is moving swiftly to ensure the CIA workforce is responsive to the administration's national security priorities".

"These moves are part of a holistic strategy to infuse the agency with renewed energy, provide opportunities for rising leaders to emerge, and better position CIA to deliver on its mission," the spokesperson said.

The CIA earlier this year became the first US intelligence agency to join a voluntary redundancy programme initiated by President Donald Trump, who has vowed to radically downsize the federal workforce.

Ratcliffe previously told lawmakers that under his leadership, the agency would "produce insightful, objective, all-source analysis, never allowing political or personal biases to cloud our judgment or infect our products".

Addressing CIA officers, he said: "If all of this sounds like what you signed up for, then buckle up and get ready to make a difference. If it doesn't, then it's time to find a new line of work." -AFP

Seven people killed in road crash near Yellowstone



Rescue services are seen, in this image taken from social media, at the scene following a two-vehicle crash with multiple fatalities, according to Idaho State Police, in Island Park, Idaho. -Reuters

Reuters
Washington

Seven people were killed and eight others injured after a van carrying more than a dozen tourists collided with a pickup truck in a fiery highway crash near Yellowstone National Park, Idaho state police said on Friday.

The cause of the accident, which occurred about an hour and 15 minutes before sunset on Thursday, remains under investigation, according to a state police news release.

The Mercedes passenger van was transporting a tour group with 14 people aboard near Henry's Lake when it collided with a Dodge Ram pickup, then burst into flames, police said.

Six people from the van as well as the pickup driver, its only occupant, were killed, according to police.

All eight of the survivors from the van were taken to hospitals with varying degrees of injuries, police spokesperson Aaron Snell said.

Information about the victims was being

kept confidential pending notification of next of kin.

The *New York Times* cited Fremont County coroner Brenda Dye as saying that the pickup driver was from Texas and that all six occupants of the van who died were from outside the United States, two of them from Italy.

The accident occurred on US Highway 20 near Henry's Lake in eastern Idaho, about 20 miles west of Yellowstone.

Weather conditions appeared clear in news video from the scene.

Authorities provided no details about the circumstances of the accident.

According to Dye, two eyewitnesses to the crash jumped out of their vehicle to pull victims from the van, and managed to extract eight people from the wreckage, including a child, before the van caught fire, the *Times* reported.

State police said the highway was closed in both directions for nearly seven hours while emergency and transportation crews worked to manage the scene and clear the roadway.

US worker safety agency notifies personnel of firings

Reuters
Washington

The Trump administration sent termination notices late on Friday to employees of a worker health and safety agency that provides research and services for coal miners, firefighters and others, despite appeals by a lawmaker from Trump's Republican Party to preserve its programmes.

Employees of the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) received reduction-in-force notices that said the job losses were necessary to reshape the workforce of the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS).

United Mine Workers of America International president Cecil E Roberts condemned yesterday the NIOSH firings in a statement, calling them an "attack on the very foundation of worker safety".

He said they included the dismantling of an agency division that oversees programmes protecting miners and other workers from black lung disease and other respiratory illnesses.

Roberts vowed the union would "fight tooth and nail" to restore the programmes.

Nearly all agency employees were placed on administrative leave in February, but around 40 who worked on coal-mining and firefighter safety were asked to return temporarily to work several days ago, the union for the agency's employees said.

At least two of those employees have now been notified of termination.

US Senator Shelley Moore Capito, a Republican from West Virginia, had lobbied Health Secretary Robert F Kennedy Jr to restore the programmes, including the coal-focused work of its Morgantown, West Virginia, office.

The Department of Health and Human Services, which oversees the agency, did not immediately respond to a request for comment after regular business hours.

A spokesperson earlier this week said that the agency's functions would join the new Administration for a Healthy America, alongside multiple agencies, part of plans by US Secretary of Health and Human Services Robert F Kennedy Jr to reshape

federal public health agencies.

It was not clear whether any of the terminated employees would be transferred elsewhere.

Reuters reported last month that the halting of the NIOSH's key services ended vital health and safety programmes for coal miners, such as mobile health and lung screenings, and a programme to relocate miners afflicted with black lung disease to less dusty parts of a mine.

There has been a resurgence of black lung disease in the last decade, including among young coal miners.

At the same time, President Donald Trump has led a high-profile campaign to revive coal mining and use, which had been declining in the US.

Probe opened after two Washington flights abort landings due to Army helicopter

Reuters
Washington

Federal investigators have launched a probe after two flights aborted landings at Reagan Washington National Airport on Thursday because a US Army Black Hawk helicopter too close.

The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) said on Friday that air traffic control told Delta Air Lines Flight 1671, an Airbus A319 that had originated in Orlando, and Republic Airways Flight 5825, an Embraer 170 that had departed from Boston, to perform go-arounds around 2.30pm due to a priority military air transport helicopter in the vicinity.

The National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) and the US Army are also investigating.

"While conducting flight operations into the Pentagon in accordance with published FAA flight routes and DCA Air Traffic Control, a UH-60 Blackhawk was directed by Pentagon Air Traffic Control to conduct a 'go-around,' overflying the

Pentagon heliport in accordance with approved flight procedures," the Army said in a statement. "As a result, DCA Air Traffic Control issued a 'go-around' to two civil fixed wing aircraft to ensure the appropriate deconfliction of airspace."

Following a January 29 mid-air collision of an American Airlines regional jet and an Army Black Hawk that killed all 67 people aboard the two aircraft, the FAA imposed permanent restrictions on non-essential helicopter operations around Reagan National Airport.

The FAA told Congress that it was reviewing the Army helicopter's route in the two "loss of separation" incidents on Thursday and whether the route violates an agreement with the Army.

"It appears the Black Hawk operation did not proceed directly to the Pentagon Heliport. Instead it took a scenic route around the Pentagon versus proceeding directly from the west to the heliport," the FAA memo seen by Reuters said.

Senate Commerce Committee chair Ted Cruz said that "the Army is once again putting the travelling public at risk... it's

time for the FAA to act swiftly and assert control over the national airspace so the Army stops running air taxis for military officials near Ronald Reagan Washington National Airport".

Transportation Secretary Sean Duffy said the Army had disregarded helicopter safety rules.

"No more helicopter rides for VIPs or unnecessary training in a congested DCA airspace full of civilians. Take a taxi or Uber - besides most VIPs have black car service," Duffy said.

Delta said there were five crew and 97 passengers aboard the flight.

"Nothing is more important at Delta than the safety of our customers and people. We'll co-operate with the FAA as they investigate," the airline said on Friday.

The Pentagon did not comment. A person involved said investigators are reviewing the helicopter's route and interactions with air traffic control.

A US official, speaking on the condition of anonymity, said that according to initial information, the military helicopter was doing an emergency evacuation rehearsal.

"It is outrageous that only three months after an Army Black Hawk helicopter tragically collided with a passenger jet, the same Army brigade again flew a helicopter too close to passenger jets on final approach at (Reagan Washington)," said Senator Maria Cantwell, the top Democrat on the Commerce Committee.

"This comes less than a week after this brigade resumed flights in the National Capital Region. It is far past time for Secretary Hegseth and the FAA to give our airspace the security and safety attention it deserves," she said, referring to Defence Secretary Pete Hegseth.

Republic Airways did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

The airport is located in northern Virginia, just outside Washington, DC, and about four miles (6.4km) from Capitol Hill, making it popular with lawmakers, tourists and local residents.

The FAA in March permanently closed one key route and prohibited the use of two smaller runways at the airport when helicopters conducting urgent missions are operating near the airport.

Since 2021, there have been 85 recorded events involving a potentially dangerous near-miss between a helicopter and a plane - defined as a lateral separation of less than 1,500' and a vertical separation of less than 200', the NTSB said in March.

A number of recent safety incidents at the airport have raised alarm, including a March 28 incident involving a Delta flight and a group of Air Force jets.

Airlines for America, a group representing American Airlines and other US carriers, in March urged the FAA to permanently reduce helicopter traffic around the airport.

The group called on the FAA to suspend some nearby helicopter routes with limited exceptions for essential military or medical emergencies.

The Army has also come under fire for routinely turning off a key safety system known as ADS-B during training missions in the Washington area.

The FAA is investigating helicopter traffic near other major airports and last week announced changes to address safety concerns in Las Vegas.



Ukraine soldiers to join UK VE Day parade: London

AFP
London

Ukrainian soldiers will join British military personnel next week for a historic parade in London marking 80 years since the end of World War II in Europe, the UK government announced yesterday.

Ukrainian personnel will join around 1,000 members of the Royal Navy, Royal Marines, British Army and Royal Air Force, "symbolising the global support for their continued fight for freedom against Russia's unprovoked, illegal invasion," the UK's Ministry of Defence said.

The Ukraine representatives on the VE Day march on Monday will comprise those deployed on Operation Interflex, the UK's training programme for Ukrainian recruits, delivered with 12 partner nations. "Eighty years after VE Day, we



A military band takes part in an overnight rehearsal for the VE Day 80 procession on Whitehall in central London.

will celebrate our wartime veterans, our Greatest Generation. We will ensure their spirit lives on, not just in our Armed Forces but also in our values and commitment to strength through unity," said UK

Defence Secretary John Healey.

"In the midst of the first full-scale war in Europe since the Second World War, it is fitting that the Ukrainian Armed Forces currently fighting on the frontline of free-



Members of the Household Cavalry take part in an overnight rehearsal for the VE Day 80 procession in central London.

dom are represented in Monday's event."

VE (Victory in Europe) Day itself is on May 8 but UK commemorations will begin on Monday with the military procession featuring

members of the Armed Forces and thousands of members of the public watching along The Mall in central London.

The procession will begin in Parliament Square when Big Ben

strikes midday and will conclude with a fly past featuring aerobatic team the Red Arrows and 23 current and historic military aircraft. The UK and partner nations have trained over 54,000 Ukrainians in frontline combat skills since Russia's full-scale invasion in 2022.

The operation has been extended to at least the end of 2025. "The participation of Ukrainian service personnel in the VE Day parade in London symbolises our strength, courage and resilience," said Major Pavlo, an officer of the Ukrainian marching contingent.

"It is a recognition that Ukraine and its heroes stand at the forefront of the fight for freedom and peace in the world. We are grateful to our allies for their support and solidarity," he added. Armed Forces personnel from Australia, Canada and New Zealand will also join the procession, which will feature the flags of every Commonwealth nation.

Left-leaning PM Albanese triumphs in Australian polls

AFP
Sydney

Australia's left-leaning Prime Minister Anthony Albanese triumphed yesterday in national elections, crushing his conservative rival in a contest swayed by economic upheaval and US President Donald Trump.

Albanese's slow-but-steady leadership resonated at a time of global tumult, analysts said, with voters deserting hard-nosed opposition leader Peter Dutton in droves. Not only was Albanese's Labor Party on track for an unexpectedly large parliamentary majority, but former police officer Dutton endured the rare humiliation of losing his seat.

Projections by national broadcaster ABC pointed to a landslide, with Labor taking 85 seats so far in the 150-member parliament. Dutton's coalition had 41, other parties nine, and another 15 were in doubt. "Today the Australian people have voted for Australian values. For fairness, aspiration and opportunity for all," Albanese told a raucous crowd in his victory speech.

"In this time of global uncertainty, Australians have chosen optimism and determination."

Elated Labor supporters swigged craft beers emblazoned with Albanese's face at an election party in Sydney, chanting his "Albo" nickname as results were declared on television. Albanese has promised to embrace renewable energy, tackle a worsening housing crisis, and pour money into a creaking healthcare system. Dutton wanted to slash immigration, crack down on crime and ditch a longstanding ban on nuclear power. Trump cast a shadow over the six-week election campaign, sparking keen global interest in whether his tar-

iff-induced economic chaos would influence the result.

Congratulations for Albanese came from US Secretary of State Marco Rubio, who called Australia a "valued ally, partner, and friend of the United States". Sydney politics lecturer Henry Maher told AFP that "in times of instability, we expect people to go back to a kind of steady incumbent". Dutton's policy to slash the public service rankled many as similar cuts, led by billionaire Trump advisor Elon Musk, brought chaos in the United States.

His flagship proposal to dot Australia with nuclear reactors was also widely seen as a liability.

"Our government will choose the Australian way," Albanese said late yesterday. "We do not need to beg, or borrow, or copy from anywhere else. We do not seek our inspiration from overseas." Hungry voters munched on barbecued "democracy sausages" after casting ballots - a polling day rite of passage - while others in bright swimwear crammed into voting booths after taking an early morning plunge. Before the first vote was even counted, speculation was mounting over whether Dutton could survive an election loss.

"We didn't do well enough during this campaign. That much is obvious tonight and I accept full responsibility," Dutton told supporters in a concession speech. Some pre-vote polls showed Dutton leading support because of Trump, whom he praised this year as a "big thinker" with "gravitas" on the global stage. "I mean, Donald Trump is as mad as a cut snake, and we all know that," voter Alan Whitman, 59, said before casting his ballot.

"And we've got to tiptoe around that."

Voting is compulsory, enforced with fines of A\$20 (US\$13), leading



Australia's Prime Minister Anthony Albanese celebrates with his partner Jodie Haydon and son Nathan after winning the general election at the Labor Party election night event in Sydney.

to turnouts above 90%.

As Australians soured on Trump, both Dutton and Albanese took on more pugnacious tones. Albanese condemned Trump's tariffs as an act of "economic self-harm" and "not the act of a friend", while Dutton said in April he would "in a heartbeat" fight any world leader, including Trump, to advance Australia's interests.

Economic concerns have dominated the contest for the many Australian households struggling to pay inflated prices for milk, bread, power and petrol. "The cost of living - it's extremely high at the moment... Petrol prices, all the basic stuff," human resources manager Robyn Knox told AFP in Brisbane.

Albanese's government has embraced the global push towards decarbonisation, warning of a future in which iron ore and polluting

coal exports no longer prop up the economy.

The 36-day campaign was a largely staid affair but there were moments of unscripted levity.

Albanese tumbled backwards off the stage at a heaving campaign rally, while Dutton drew blood when he hit an unsuspecting cameraman in the head with a stray football.

Rubio said that Washington hoped to "advance our common interests and promote freedom and stability in the Indo-Pacific and globally" - sentiments echoed by European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen and Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

An unnamed Chinese foreign ministry spokesperson said Beijing was "ready to work" with Australia's new government to further a "more mature, stable and productive" partnership, according to



Ali France of the Labor Party reacts while thanking supporters at Kallangur Bowls Club, on the day of the Australian federal election.

state news agency Xinhua. Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky said Kyiv "sincerely values Australia's unwavering support and its principled stance on ending Russia's war".

India bans imports from Pakistan amid tensions

Reuters
New Delhi

India said yesterday it had banned the import of goods coming from or transiting via Pakistan and barred Pakistani ships as tensions rise between the nuclear-armed neighbours in the wake of a deadly attack on tourists in the disputed Kashmir region.

India's Directorate General of Foreign Trade said in a notification that the ban would take effect immediately. "This restriction is imposed in the interest of national security and public policy," it said. Suspected militants killed at least 26 people in last week's attack on a mountain tourist destination in the Pahalgam area of the Kashmir valley.

The Muslim-majority Himalayan region is claimed by both India and Pakistan, and has been the focus of several wars, an insurgency and diplomatic standoffs. India has accused Pakistan of involvement in the attack, which Islamabad denies. Pakistan has said it has "credible intelligence" that India intends to launch military action.

Pakistan's retaliatory measures have included halting all border trade, closing its airspace to Indian carriers and expelling Indian diplomats. It has also warned that any attempt to prevent the flow of river water promised under a decades-old treaty would be considered an act of war. Yesterday, India said Pakistani-flagged ships would not be allowed to visit any Indian port, and Indian flagged-ships would not visit any ports in Pakistan. "This order is issued to ensure safety of Indian assets, cargo and connected infrastructure, in public interest and for interest of Indian shipping," the Directorate General of Shipping said in an statement. Trade between the two nations has dwindled over the last few years.

Gunman kills three in Thailand's conflict-hit south

A gunman has shot dead three people including a child in Thailand's insurgency-hit south, police said, as authorities pursued the suspect. The attacker opened fire late Friday in a residential area of Tak Bai district in Narathiwat province, one of three provinces in Thailand's far south gripped by a decades-long separatist insurgency. Three people were killed, including a nine-year-old girl and a 75-year-old man, police said. "One victim died at the scene, and two others succumbed to their injuries at the hospital," local police officer Wathana Thurarat told AFP, adding that two more people were wounded. Police believe the suspect, who remains at large, is linked to a rebel group, Wathana said. — AFP

Singapore ruling party headed for clear victory in test for new PM

AFP
Singapore

Singapore's ruling party headed for a crushing victory at general elections yesterday, sample counts showed, with voters giving Prime Minister Lawrence Wong the clear mandate he was seeking. Sample results showed the ruling People's Action Party (PAP) winning all but ten seats of the 97-seat parliament.

Wong was facing his first major test against a rejuvenated opposition and had urged voters for a strong show of support as he navigated the trade-oriented nation through global economic uncertainties brought by US tariffs. The PAP, which has steered the island to prosperity while being criticised for suppressing dissent, was always expected to easily retain a clear majority in parliament. However, its dominance has been increasingly challenged by a more vocal electorate over the years.

Popular after leading Singapore's Covid task force, Wong took over last year from his predecessor Lee Hsien Loong, the son of founding premier Lee Kuan Yew who ruled the island state after its bitter break-up with Malaysia in 1965. Wong had warned Singa-



Singapore's Prime Minister Lawrence Wong (centre) of the People's Action Party gestures as he arrives at the party's gathering awaiting the vote count for the general election in Singapore yesterday.

pore would be hit hard if Trump went ahead with the tariffs he announced and then paused for most countries, except China, and needed to stay open and competitive to counter their effects. He has also said the ructions caused may require a major restructuring of Singapore's economy.

The overwhelming PAP majority in Singapore's unicameral legislature has become a norm in the wealthy island's political landscape. But in the run-up to the latest polls, the PAP has faced a series

of controversies. Former premier Lee Hsien Loong is locked in a bitter feud with his brother Lee Hsien Yang who vehemently supports the opposition and who has sought political asylum in Britain.

The long-running family row centres on allegations made by Lee Hsien Yang that his brother is seeking to block the demolition of a family bungalow to capitalise on Lee Kuan Yew's legacy - something he has denied. Last year former transport minister S Iswaran was thrown in jail for graft and in 2023,



Singapore Senior Minister Lee Hsien Loong of People's Action Party waves to his supporters at the party's gathering during the general election results in Singapore.

the parliament speaker and an MP resigned over an "inappropriate" affair.

At the same time, younger voters showed increasing receptivity to alternative political voices. One voter told AFP she had been impressed by "refreshing and exciting" new candidates from across the political spectrum. "Whether or not they get elected, I hope we see and hear more of them, and get to know them better," said 40-year-old Shi'ai Liang.

In 2020, the country's larg-

est opposition group, the Workers' Party (WP), made historic gains, winning 10 of the 93 seats at stake - a significant jump from its previously held four seats. The WP - which has become politically slicker - has been hoping to build on that momentum with a slate of charismatic candidates, including a top lawyer. The party pulled in massive crowds at its rallies during the campaign, just like in previous elections, but those big numbers have seldom translated into electoral wins in the past.

Nordics eye US researchers alienated by Trump

AFP
Stockholm

With US universities facing challenges to their independence and funding, Nordic countries hope their emphasis on academic freedom and strong welfare societies can lure researchers seeking to leave the United States.

"To researchers in the United States: welcome," Sweden's Education Minister Johan Pehrson told AFP, reaching out to academics affected by a wave of measures under US President Donald Trump.

"We can offer trust and long-term investments. We've got academic freedom. If you are looking for a place to do your work and contribute to solving global challenges, we value your knowledge," the minister said in a written statement.

"Our aim is to make it easier for talented individuals to come to Sweden," he added. In late April, the American Association of Colleges and Universities published a

statement condemning an "unprecedented government overreach and political interference now endangering American higher education", which as of April 28 had gathered more than 500 signatures from leaders in the sector.

"It's a huge attack and most probably this will just increase," Lars Strannegard, president of the Stockholm School of Economics, told AFP.

"It's a battle actually, and probably the sort of real battle regarding how the US will develop as a country. A battlefield that will be at the universities," he added.

Experts have voiced concerns that Trump's cuts to American research threaten the United States' standing as a global science leader, and that a loss of research and data could lead to a lack of fact-based information and growing disinformation.

An analysis of application data by science journal Nature in April found that the number of US scientists applying for jobs abroad between January and March had increased by 32%, compared to the same

period a year earlier. Countries across Europe are now vying to recruit academics seeking to leave the United States.

French President Emmanuel Macron and European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen are due to take part in a conference in Paris next week aimed at getting foreign researchers, especially Americans, to "Choose Europe", the French presidency announced Wednesday.

Nordic countries have already begun taking such steps. The Research Council of Norway announced last week a 100mn kroner (about \$10mn) scheme to attract top international researchers.

"Academic freedom is under pressure in the United States, and it is an unpredictable situation for many researchers in what has been the world's leading research nation for many decades," Norway's higher education minister Sigrun Aasland said in a statement.

Similarly, the Swedish Research Council in mid-April announced a grant to help universities recruit international re-

searchers, paying out two million kronor (\$207,000) to cover recruitment costs and salaries.

The Danish Chamber of Commerce, along with a labour union, the Danish Society of Engineers, last week called on Danish politicians to raise awareness about Denmark among US researchers.

"We must do everything we can to ensure that Denmark, Danish science institutions and Danish companies are an attractive alternative," Brian Mikkelsen, CEO of the Danish Chamber of Commerce, said in a statement.

Karin Forsberg Nilsson, dean of the faculty of medicine at Uppsala University in Sweden, said that given the collaborative nature of science, cuts to funding in the United States will have knock-on effects in Europe.

"If our partners at laboratories and hospitals in the United States cannot conduct their research in the usual way because their funding is stopped or their employees are laid off, this will of course also affect the research we conduct here," Fors-

berg Nilsson told AFP.

"It also has a major impact on large shared databases and datasets," she added.

Always on the lookout for talented researchers, she said her department has already begun being "proactive in advertising job vacancies" to US researchers.

Forsberg Nilsson said they believe it could be easier to attract younger researchers who are less settled and might find Sweden's extensive childcare support and parental leave appealing for those planning to start families.

Anders Hagfeldt, vice-chancellor of Uppsala University, said he also thought that finding creative ways to attract researchers would be key.

"We don't have the same salaries as the best researchers in the United States, so we find it difficult to compete there," Hagfeldt told AFP.

"But researchers usually try to think about doing exciting research in an exciting environment. I think we can offer that," he said.

Serbian president stable in hospital

AFP
Belgrade



Serbia's President Aleksandar Vucic (pictured) was in a stable condition following his admission to a military hospital in Belgrade yesterday after cutting short a visit to the United States, a doctor said.

The news of Vucic's hospitalisation comes as he faces a widespread protest movement over a deadly accident at a train station in the northern city of Novi Sad.

After coming home from the United States without meeting US President Donald Trump following pain in his chest, Vucic "was admitted to the Military Medical Academy immediately after landing" in Belgrade, his office said.

Several hours after his admission, cardiologist Dragan Dincic told journalists that his state was "stable and satisfactory", which should allow him to be discharged within the day.

According to Dincic, who heads the Serbian army's health directorate, Vucic felt "intense chest pain" while in the United States, with American doctors registering a high blood pressure reading.

"The American doctors carried out all the necessary tests, and the president, contrary to their recommendation, decided to return home," he said.

But Dincic said it was unrealistic to expect the president to be able to fully resume his regular activities in the coming days, adding that Vucic had encountered "similar problems" three times in the past 10 years.

Vucic, elected in 2017 following three years as prime minister, was previously hospitalised in 2019 for heart issues.

Vucic has been confronted with a wave of demonstrations sparked by the roof collapse at the Novi Sad train station in November 2204, which killed 16 people.

Many in the Balkan nation blame the collapse on chronic corruption and a lack of oversight over construction projects.

Ahead of his trip to the United States, Vucic had said he planned to meet Trump twice, and hinted at "important meetings" with top Republican and US officials in a video published on his arrival in Florida.

Opposition figures were quick to brand Vucic's trip a failure.

"He's covering up his fiasco with a story about a sudden health problem forcing him to rush back to Belgrade. There are no medicines in pharmacies in America," quipped Zdravko Ponos, leader of the centrist Srce party and a fierce critic of Vucic, and who ran against him in the 2022 presidential vote.

The announcement also casts doubt over Vucic's promised visit to Serbia's traditional ally Russia for celebrations marking the 80th anniversary of the end of World War II in Europe on May 9.

Vucic said Thursday that he would keep his word to Vladimir Putin and join around 20 world leaders travelling to Moscow for the occasion, commemorated with great pomp and an army parade on Red Square.



The Neelum River and settlements along the Line of Control between India and Pakistan (left) are pictured yesterday from the Neelum Valley, a district in Pakistan-administered Kashmir. Hotels are empty and roads deserted at the start of what is normally peak tourist season amidst the towering peaks and lush valleys of Pakistan's Kashmir valley as the threat of attack from India looms. Right: Groom Chaudhry Junaid sits with his bride Rabia Bibi during their wedding ceremony in Ashkot village also in Neelum Valley. (AFP)

Pakistan in missile 'training launch'

AFP
Islamabad

Pakistan's military said it carried out a "training launch" of a surface-to-surface missile weapons system yesterday, further heightening tensions with India after last month's deadly attack in disputed Kashmir.

New Delhi has blamed Islamabad for backing an attack on tourists last month in Indian-administered Kashmir, sparking a fresh stand-off between the nuclear-armed neighbours.

Islamabad has dismissed the charges.

Pakistan's military said yesterday it conducted a "successful training launch of the Abdali Weapon System", a surface-to-surface missile with a range of 450km.

"The launch was aimed at ensuring the operational readiness of troops and validating key technical parameters, including the missile's advanced naviga-

tion system and enhanced manoeuvrability features," Pakistan's military said in a statement.

It did not say where the test took place.

The missile training launch comes after Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi said he has given his military "full operational freedom" to respond to the attack in Pahalgam in Indian-administered Kashmir, which killed 26 people, mostly Hindu tourists.

Pakistan has denied any involvement in the attack and called for an independent probe.

This week Islamabad warned of an imminent air strike from its neighbour, and has repeatedly made clear it will respond with force to any aggression by India.

International pressure has been piled on both New Delhi and Islamabad - who have fought several wars over the disputed Kashmir region - to de-escalate.

Neighbouring China has urged "restraint", with the European Union warn-

ing Friday that the situation was "alarming".

In an interview with Fox News, US Vice-President J D Vance called on India to respond to the attack in a way "that doesn't lead to a broader regional conflict".

He also urged Pakistan to "make sure that the terrorists sometimes operating in their territory are hunted down and dealt with".

Analysts in Pakistan told AFP the missile launch was a warning shot.

"It clearly indicates that we have resources to counter India. This is not a message only for India but the rest of the world that we are well-prepared," said Hasan Askari Rizvi, a military analyst.

On Friday, Pakistan's Chief of Army Staff General Syed Asim Munir presided over a meeting of his top commanders about the "current Pakistan-India stand-off", a military statement said.

Munir "underscored the critical im-

portance of heightened vigilance and proactive readiness across all fronts".

Since the attack - the deadliest in Kashmir on civilians in years - India and Pakistan have exchanged tit-for-tat diplomatic barbs and expulsions, and shut border crossings.

The two sides have exchanged gunfire for nine consecutive nights along the militarised Line of Control, the de facto border, according to Indian defence sources. Muslim-majority Kashmir, a region of around 15mn people, is divided but claimed in full between Pakistan and India.

Rebels on the Indian side have waged an insurgency since 1989, seeking independence or a merger with Pakistan.

India regularly blames its neighbour for backing gunmen behind the insurgency. Islamabad denies the allegation, saying it only supports Kashmir's struggle for self-determination and regularly denounces rights abuses in the region.

Russia drones hit apartment block in Kharkiv; 46 injured

Reuters
Kharkiv

Russia launched a mass drone attack late on Friday in Kharkiv, Ukraine's second-largest city, hitting a high-rise apartment block, triggering fires and injuring 46 people, officials said.

Mayor Ihor Terekhov, writing on the Telegram messaging app, said there had been strikes in 12 locations in four central districts of the city, a repeated target of Russian air attacks lying 30km from the country's northeastern border.

President Volodymyr Zelensky denounced the drone strikes, which hit Ukrainian cities several times a week. He said dozens of drones had been launched and Ukraine's allies were moving too slowly in helping beef up its air defence capability.

"There were no military targets, nor could there be any. Russia strikes dwellings when Ukrainians are in their homes, when they are putting their children to bed," Zelensky wrote on Telegram.

"As the world delays decisions, almost every night in Ukraine turns into a horror that results in the loss of lives. Ukraine needs stronger air defences. Stronger and real decisions from our partners: the United States, Europe, all our partners who seek peace," Terekhov said a house had also been hit. An 11-year-old child was among the injured. Eight of those hurt were being treated in hospital. Regional governor Oleh Syniuhubov said emergency crews were working through the night to tackle the aftermath of the attack despite fears of repeat strikes.

Pictures posted online showed firefight-



Ukrainian rescuers extinguish a fire at a house after a drone strike on Kharkiv early yesterday. (AFP)

ers battling flames, charred building facades with smashed windows and cars aflame in streets littered with rubble.

Regional authorities said four people were also injured in a Russian joint drone and artillery attack on localities east of Nikopol in southeastern Dnipropetrovsk region.

In southern Kherson region, a village resident died when a fallen drone detonated as he was trying to carry it away from a house.

Russia denies deliberately targeting civilians, though many thousands have been killed since it launched a full-scale invasion

of its neighbour in February 2022.

Russia's Defence Ministry, meanwhile, reported that its air defence units had destroyed 10 Ukrainian drones in an hour: eight over the border region of Bryansk and two over Crimea, a Black Sea peninsula annexed by Moscow in 2014.

Yuri Slyusar, acting governor of Rostov region, on Ukraine's eastern border, said air defence units had destroyed Ukrainian drones over five districts. Falling fragments had damaged some homes, he said, but there were no casualties.

Greek court finds held Georgian not guilty of spying

A Georgian man arrested in northern Greece for suspected espionage in the second such case in a week was found not guilty yesterday on grounds of reasonable doubt, court sources told AFP.

The 67-year-old was arrested on Friday outside a military camp in Serres for allegedly taking photographs in an area where it is forbidden.

The man was noticed by soldiers, who alerted the police. Appearing before prosecutors yesterday, the man apologised and claimed that he "did not realise that the place he was photographing was a military camp".

According to the same sources, he said that he only took two photos of the camp gate. When the judge asked him if it is legal in Georgia to photograph military installations he replied that "camps in his country are mostly located in forest areas and are not accessible to civilians".

The man claimed that he came to Greece on April 28 as a result of a close relative of his wife's serious health problem. The case follows that of a Greek man remanded in custody on suspicion of photographing supply convoys on behalf of Russia in the port city of Alexandroupolis.

Alexandroupolis has been a key gateway for the American military, used to transport supplies into Europe under a mutual defence pact.



CHAIRMAN

Abdullah bin Khalifa al-Attiyah

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

Faisal Abdulhameed al-Mudahka

Deputy Managing Editor

K T Chacko

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

Qatar's strategy to position renewable energy as core pillar in national energy mix

The commencement of operations at Ras Laffan and Mesaieed solar power plants constitutes an important step towards achieving the fourth pillar of the Qatar National Vision 2030, which is managing the environment in a manner that balances economic and social development and environmental protection.

On April 28, His Highness the Amir, Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani inaugurated the Ras Laffan and Mesaieed solar PV power plants with a combined capacity of 875 megawatts (MW), which will more than double Qatar's solar energy production to 1,675MW of renewable energy. One of the goals of QatarEnergy's Sustainability Strategy is to generate more than 4,000 megawatts of renewable energy in the country by 2030.

The construction of solar power plants is one of Qatar's most important initiatives to reduce carbon dioxide emissions, develop sustainability projects, and diversify electricity generation sources.

According to HE the Minister of State for Energy Affairs, Saad bin Sherida al-Kaabi, Qatar's existing three solar plants are expected to reduce carbon dioxide emissions by about 4.7mm tonnes annually.

QatarEnergy is also making strides in developing innovative solutions to reduce emissions through carbon capture and storage technologies, with a target of capturing more than 11mm tonnes of carbon dioxide annually by 2035.

The two solar plants at Ras Laffan and Mesaieed along with the Al-Kharsaah facility, will play a significant role in meeting the country's electricity demand, contributing about 15% of the total peak electricity demand.

Qatar has doubled its solar power capacity with Ras Laffan and Mesaieed plants, advancing its goal to produce 4,000MW of renewable energy by 2030

mega project at Dukhan, which will more than double the country's solar energy production, significantly contributing to lower carbon emissions in the framework of a realistic energy transition.

The new project will boost Qatar's PV solar power production capacity to about 4,000 megawatts by building one of the world's largest solar power plants in the Dukhan area, with a production capacity of 2,000 megawatts.

The new solar project will be added to QatarEnergy's solar power portfolio, which includes the existing Al-Kharsaah solar power plant, which was inaugurated in 2022 with a capacity of 800 megawatts of electricity, and to two solar power projects that QatarEnergy built in Ras Laffan and Mesaieed industrial cities with a total production capacity of 875 megawatts, and which were formally inaugurated by His Highness the Amir, Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani on April 28.

With the addition of the new Dukhan Solar Power Plant, QatarEnergy's portfolio of solar power projects in Qatar will reach a capacity of about 4,000 megawatts by 2030. This represents approximately 30% of Qatar's total electrical power production capacity. The country's strategy lays strong emphasis on positioning renewable energy as a core pillar in its national energy mix, showcasing economic diversification and commitment to achieving environmental sustainability in line with Qatar National Vision 2030. This milestone is central to Qatar's renewable energy strategy and QatarEnergy's sustainability strategy, both aiming to increase contribution of renewable energy sources to national energy mix, with solar energy being the most viable option given the country's climatic conditions.

Alongside this, Qatar is enhancing infrastructure to integrate renewable energy into the national grid, offering financial and legislative incentives to attract local and foreign investments.

Qatar is also supporting research and development in energy storage technologies and solar panel efficiency, forging partnerships with academic institutions and global research centres, while promoting community awareness programmes and strengthening national capacity in renewable energy operations, maintenance, and project management.

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Australia's richest person says she wants Trump-like reforms amid poll setback

By Melanie Burton
Melbourne

Mining magnate Gina Rinehart is calling for Australia to follow the US lead by embarking on Donald Trump-style leadership to cut government largesse while boosting defence spending and energy security, as the country headed to the polls.

A vocal Trump supporter who attended the president's inauguration party in Mar-a-Lago in January, Rinehart told Reuters that rather than "whine and whinge" about Trump and his policies, Australia could benefit from a similar approach.

"Australia must reduce its costs, cut government wastage and the expense of government tape, regulations, compliance, licences..." Rinehart said in exclusive comments sent to Reuters.

Rinehart is Australia's richest person with a net worth Forbes puts at \$30bn. Her flagship mining company, Hancock Prospecting Pty Ltd, is among the biggest donors to opposition leader Peter Dutton's Liberal Party, more than tripling donations in the 2024 financial year to A\$500,000 (\$320,000), according to Australian Electoral Commission data.

Voter concerns over the global fallout from Trump's stop-start tariffs and volatile diplomacy appeared to have hurt the prospects of Dutton's conservative coalition ahead of the May 3 vote, with the ruling centre-left Labour Party of Prime Minister Anthony Albanese cruising home.

The trend is similar to that seen in Canada this week where Prime Minister Mark Carney's Liberals staged a major political comeback, fuelled by a backlash against Trump.

Rinehart said the outcome of Trump's tariffs policies may take a few months to play out, noting "more than 75 countries had asked to meet with US Administration officials to negotiate on tariffs."

Dutton's office and the Labour party did not respond to requests for comment.

Rinehart's support of Dutton and the populist conservative movement in Australia

has echoes of the support for Trump by billionaire Elon Musk, who is now a key adviser to the president.

Rinehart did not publicly seek any Australian government role, but called for the establishment of a version of Musk's Department of Government Efficiency (DOGE). She also wants Australia to withdraw from the Paris Agreement to combat climate change, as Trump did during his first term.

When Trump was inaugurated in January, Dutton was ahead in opinion polls, as Australians expressed anger over the cost of living and housing affordability. That came to a sorry pass with him losing even his own seat in yesterday's election.

In the week after Trump and Musk arrived in the White House, Dutton criticised public servants hired as "culture, diversity and inclusion advisers." He later promised to set up a Ministry of Government Efficiency, but has since played down comparisons with Trump and his policies.

Rinehart suggested without providing detail, that in Australia "the Left" was resisting public sector cuts because they benefited from bureaucratic largesse.

"Perhaps not surprising the Left are also against Elon Musk and DOGE, you might think, wouldn't they like to see this taxpayer drain minimalised, but no, certainly not those with snouts in the trough. And not those who may be concerned they will have to pay money back where wrongly taken, or even go to jail."

Dutton had proposed cutting around 41,000 non-frontline government jobs in Canberra, a figure Labour said was impossible given the number of jobs in the capital fitting the criteria.

Fossil fuels, defence boost

Rinehart has been a vocal supporter of fossil fuels to boost energy security and lower prices. She was pictured during the Trump campaign smiling and wearing a sign that read "Drill Baby Drill."

Dutton has been a major backer of natural gas, pledging to incentivise more production, and wants to introduce nuclear power, in contrast to Labour which is relying

on renewables and batteries to lower power prices and meet carbon commitments.

"Probably the biggest single government tape that needs to be on pause, so our economy has the chance to recover, is the Paris Accord," Rinehart said.

"Could it be that the American public are ahead of us, they understand that cutting the mining and export of fossil fuels brings less revenue, less jobs and opportunities," she added.

Last month, in response to questions that Liberal Party policies had not gone far enough for Rinehart on gas, while at the same time had not ditched a commitment to net zero emissions, Dutton said: "We'll have points of difference with many people, but that doesn't mean that it impacts your friendship or your relationship with different business people."

Rinehart last week called for Australia, a key US security ally, to spend 5% of its gross domestic product on national security, in line with the Trump administration's policies.

Labour has pledged to boost defence spending by A\$50bn over the next decade, but would have to more than double its current spending to meet a 5% goal.

Rinehart's Hancock Prospecting in February disclosed for the first time a roughly \$1.3bn US investment portfolio, with many of the largest holdings in companies involved in energy, mining and rare earths - crucial for defence and aerospace technologies.

A Reuters analysis of the 10 top holdings show they are up 2.3% in the first four months of the year, in contrast to a 5.5% fall in the S&P 500, thanks largely to a 57% surge in shares of rare earths producer MP Materials.

"Americans may be ahead of us recognising they want strong leadership providing defence of their country and people, which President Trump is also busy doing," Rinehart said.

"Although, they may not want their taxpayers dollars and defence personnel's lives risked to help allies who don't understand them, whine and whinge and worse, are incredibly rude to them, and who do bugger all to provide their own defence."

- Reuters



Hancock Prospecting Executive Chairman Gina Rinehart speaks during the Lest We Forget sunset tribute on the eve of ANZAC Day at Sydney Opera House in Sydney last week. (Reuters)



Qatar plays pivotal role in supporting Syria's stability and reconstruction

QNA
Damascus

Amid the rapidly unfolding regional and global realignments, Qatar projects itself as a pivotal player in the endeavours to support regional stability through persistent diplomatic and humanitarian efforts aimed at rebuilding the relationship with Syria as well as breaking the political and economic isolation that has been imposed on Syria for over a decade.

A number of researchers and political analysts asserted that Qatar possesses meticulously learned engagement tools to ease the sanctions imposed on Syria and usher in a new era of Arab co-operation that puts economic recovery and reconstruction among its priorities, with particular emphasis on safeguarding Syria's unity and sovereignty.

Omar Adlbi, a researcher at the Harmoon Center for Contemporary Studies, highlighted to Qatar News Agency (QNA) that the Qatari engagement in convincing western partners, including countries of the European Union, Britain, and the US, of the significance of reviewing the sanctions regime imposed on Syria is not new but is an extension of a firm position expressed by the Qatari leadership since the start of the Syrian crisis to support the people of Syria and their legitimate rights.

Qatar has been leveraging international forums such as the UN General Assembly



A view of downtown Damascus. (File photo)

to hold those who perpetrated violations against the Syrians accountable. Today, Qatar sees that the end of the erstwhile regime in Syria opens the door to further reviewing the imposed sanctions, particularly those which stand as a harbinger of access to humanitarian aid and the recovery of the new Syrian statehood, Adlbi underlined.

He added that Qatar performs a key role in securing humanitarian exemptions from these sanctions, especially in critical fields such as energy and transportation, emphasising that this role has contributed to achieving primary milestones, including the recommissioning of the Damascus International Airport and supplying the nation with electricity –

steps that would not have been achieved without Qatari mediation.

Mousa al-Omar, a Syrian journalist, lauded the historic role Qatar has been performing to pitch in and support the people of Syria, as the only country that has never forsaken the Syrians during the toughest periods of the conflict.

He highlighted to QNA that the visit His Highness the Amir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani paid to Damascus is a landmark in the Qatar-Syria relationship and reflects a real desire to close the past chapter and open the apertures of Arab co-operation.

Qatar is currently at the forefront of efforts to support development in Syria, with a particular focus on the electricity sector and the rehabilitation of infrastructure, al-Omar underlined, affirming that this reflects Qatar's unflinching commitment to upholding the Syrians' right to live in dignity and stability.

For his part, Secretary-General of the Syrian National Movement, Dr Zakaria Malahifji, stated that Qatar's engagement on the Syrian issue is rooted in a clear-eyed strategic vision anchored in the support of peace and stability, noting that Qatar views Syria as a critical pillar of its strategic depth.

The Qatari diplomatic and economic initiatives aim to reinvigorate the bilateral relationship to herald a breakthrough in reconstruction and deepen Arab solidarity, he said.

Dr Malahifji praised Qatar's supportive positions towards the unity, sovereignty,

and territorial integrity of Syria, emphasising that it handles the Syrian issue in a highly responsible manner and has been keen to surmount the challenges that prevent Syria's recovery.

Hussam Taleb, a Syrian political analyst, emphasised that Qatar was among the first nations that scrambled to provide humanitarian aid to Syria through operating a relief air bridge following the fall of the previous regime.

Taleb pointed out that His Highness the Amir's visit has created an exceptional juncture in bilateral relations and contributed to unlocking strategic co-operation in the energy sector. He noted the pivotal role of Qatari diplomacy in securing partial exemptions from US and European sanctions, which enabled the recommissioning of vital facilities such as the international airport.

He indicated that the international community's confidence in Qatar constitutes an important pillar in reintegrating Syria into its Arab and international periphery.

Political and research perspectives unanimously suggest that the Qatari role in Syria goes beyond the conventional frameworks, whether for assistance or diplomatic mediation, earning a strategic nature that strives to build a new reality of enduring co-operation and significantly lay the groundwork for regional stability, in line with a clear Qatari vision that upholds the value of Arab solidarity and believes in the importance of supporting peoples in their ordeals for the sake of a better future.

Tesla without Musk? Board faces unique challenge whether he stays or goes

By Rachael Levy, Abhirup Roy and Isla Binnie

Tesla's board on Thursday rushed to defend its chief executive, Elon Musk, assuring he had the board's confidence amid rising investor worries about his prolonged absences, polarising politics and the EV maker's plunging sales and profit.

The board reacted after a *Wall Street Journal* report that it had considered replacing Musk, which board chair Robyn Denholm denied. Denholm herself has taken heat for her high compensation and perceived failures to hold Musk accountable to shareholders. The latest Musk drama underscores the unique dilemma Tesla's board faces in managing him as he oversees five other companies and, more recently, has focused primarily on advising Republican US President Donald Trump – alienating Tesla's politically liberal customer base. Yet seldom have a company's fortunes depended more heavily on the persona of its CEO, making even the notion of replacing him an enormous risk, according to investors, analysts and three people with knowledge of debates about Musk among Tesla executives.

Many analysts have attributed about three-fourths of Tesla's outsized stock-market value – which far outpaces its current earnings – to autonomous-driving technology and humanoid robots that Musk has promised but failed to launch for years. Tesla bulls view Musk as the singular genius who can deliver that future despite intensifying global competition on such technologies, especially from China, where automakers led by BYD have already blown past Tesla in producing low-cost EVs.

Denholm seemed to address the Musk faithful as she denied the *Journal* report, saying the board was “highly confident” he could execute “the exciting growth plan ahead.” The growth cannot come soon enough, as the fundamentals of Tesla's automotive business continue to deteriorate. Its EV sales declines have been especially sharp in Europe, where Musk's and Trump's politics have proved especially toxic.

Company insiders have suggested to Musk for years that he replace himself in a different way – by hiring a top executive as a day-to-day manager while Musk continues as more of a figurehead, two people familiar with the discussions told Reuters. Other Musk companies operate that way, most notably rocket-maker SpaceX, where Gwynne Shotwell serves as president and COO.

Musk has consistently refused to do the same at Tesla, the two people said.

The board would face immense difficulty replacing Musk, said Brian Mulberry, client portfolio manager at Zacks Investment Management, a Tesla investor. The “incredibly complex” challenge requires filling Musk's enormous shoes and bridging the financial chasm his leadership has left – keeping Tesla's struggling EV business profitable while delivering the long-promised “robotaxi network.” On a 10-point difficulty scale, replacing Musk would be an “eight or nine” Mulberry said, adding it would require someone with “a persona of their own who can step into that and won't always be in Elon's shadow.”

Gene Munster, managing partner at Tesla investor Deepwater Asset Management, called replacing Musk essentially impossible.

“Is Musk bigger than Tesla? The answer is yes,” he said.



Tesla CEO Elon Musk wears a “Trump Was Right About Everything!” cap while attending a cabinet meeting at the White House, in Washington, DC, last March. (Reuters)

Musk and Tesla's board did not respond to request for comment. Musk needed his critics at a White House Cabinet meeting Wednesday, placing two Trump-fan ball caps on his head, one reading “Gulf of America.”

“They say I wear a lot of hats,” Musk said, drawing Trump's laughter. “It's true.”

Executive exits

Any successor might then have to deal with Musk as a board member and the company's largest shareholder. He currently holds a 13% stake.

Tesla's executive bench has thinned in the past year as Musk pivoted the company away from its long-held goal of becoming an EV giant to focus on robotaxis, robots and artificial intelligence. The departures included senior leaders who had resisted shifting Tesla so forcefully away from its core business of human-driven cars, according to three people with knowledge of discussions among Tesla executives. Some of them presented their concerns to the board, which sided with Musk, the people said.

Gary Black – managing partner of the Future Fund, a Tesla investor – wrote on Musk's platform X that the company has no viable in-house executives to replace him.

“We do not see anyone inside (Tesla) with the broad range of technical, strategic, and execution skills.”

James McRitchie, a private Tesla investor, said he doubted board members would move against Musk because of his influence over their appointments and their unusually high compensation. McRitchie acknowledged the risks of replacing Musk.

“A lot of the share price is tied to the love of Elon and having robots do everything for us,” he said.

McRitchie compared Musk to legendary General Electric CEO Jack Welch.

“But when he left, it was a house of cards,” he said. “I think the same is probably true of Tesla. It's a good company, but it could be a much better company and it's over-valued.”

Mulberry, of Zacks, said Tesla can succeed with or without Musk.

“You've already got a great range of EVs, you've got the robotaxi and full self-driving,” he said, referring to Tesla's driver-assistance technology. “Now it's just about managing it to a point of completion ... Do you really need another wave of innovation from Tesla, or do you just need proper execution?” – Reuters

Climate action requires debt relief

By Vera Songwe and Moritz Kraemer
Washington, DC

Today's global economic turmoil is not just about trade. IMF Managing Director Kristalina Georgieva has warned that growing economic uncertainty and financial market stress pose serious threats to developing countries.

The danger is particularly acute for highly indebted economies, which are now facing weaker growth prospects and reduced financial support from the US and other donor countries. In February, the IMF estimated that nearly half of the lowest-income countries were at risk of debt distress, at which point they may no longer be able to meet their debt obligations. That number is expected to rise as conditions continue to deteriorate.

Compounding the crisis, the world's poorest countries – especially small island developing states – are highly vulnerable to climate change and biodiversity loss. Extreme weather events like hurricanes, droughts, and floods can wipe out critical infrastructure and cripple agricultural production in an instant, while slower-onset changes like rising temperatures and shifting rainfall patterns require continuous and costly adaptation measures.

The debt and climate crises are closely intertwined. As more public funds are diverted toward disaster relief and recovery, fewer resources are available for climate adaptation, nature conservation, and long-term investment. This, in turn, increases vulnerability, weakens growth prospects, and drives up borrowing costs, shrinking fiscal space even further. The result is a self-reinforcing, vicious circle.

But it doesn't have to be this way. Over the past year, we have co-chaired the Expert Review on Debt, Nature, and Climate – an initiative launched by the governments of Colombia, Kenya, France, and Germany. In our final report, “Healthy Debt on a Healthy Planet,” we outline several steps that emerging and

developing economies can take to break free from the debt-climate trap and move toward a virtuous cycle of low-carbon, climate-resilient, and nature-positive growth.

First, climate and nature considerations must be integrated into macroeconomic and fiscal analyses. This is especially critical in the debt sustainability frameworks used by the IMF and World Bank to assess developing countries' fiscal health. Although both institutions have made some progress in recent years, much more needs to be done to ensure that these frameworks fully account for climate-related risks. Equally important, such assessments must recognise not only the risks posed by climate change but also the economic benefits of investing in resilience. Their value – especially their potential to fuel medium-term growth and reduce a country's financial risks – must be properly reflected in economic and financial models to encourage governments to act.

Second, many developing countries need assistance in reducing their debt burdens. Some are already in debt distress, while others suffer from liquidity problems. Our report proposes new mechanisms for restructuring and refinancing debt in return for investments in climate adaptation and conservation projects that promote sustainable growth. Borrower countries, major global creditors, the IMF, and multilateral development banks (MDBs) must all champion such solutions.

Third, proven approaches to addressing debt, nature, and climate risks must be scaled up. These include contingency clauses in debt contracts that suspend repayments during natural disasters and various forms of sustainability-linked finance. While debt-for-climate and debt-for-nature swaps are not yet scalable due to a lack of standardisation, they have already delivered vital funding for environmental initiatives, demonstrating their value and warranting greater support.

More broadly, MDBs must significantly boost lending to

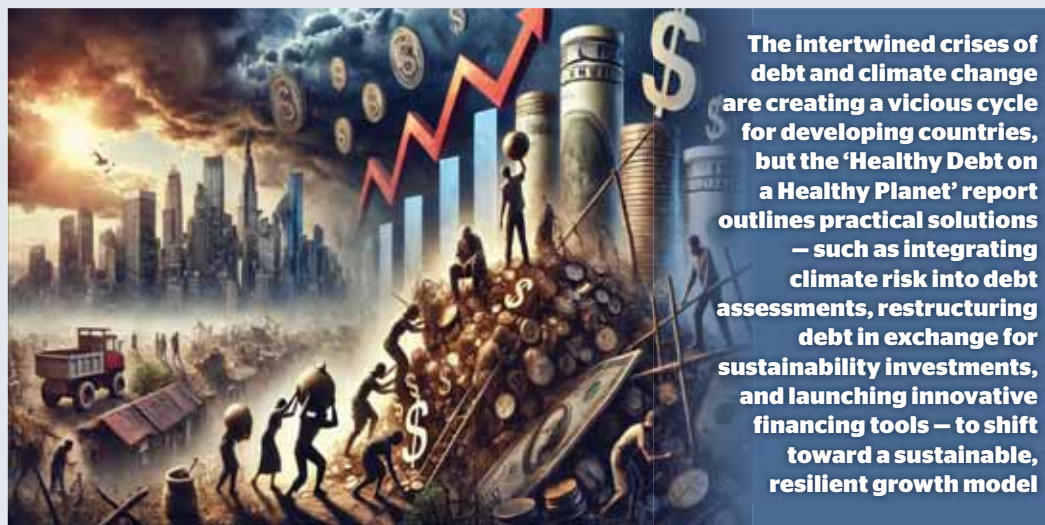
support low-carbon, climate-resilient, and nature-positive growth. While discussions on much-needed recapitalisation are ongoing, optimising MDB balance sheets remains the most effective way to stretch scarce public resources and accelerate sustainable development.

Lastly, our report calls for the development of new financing instruments aimed at mobilising private capital for climate mitigation and adaptation. For example, we propose establishing a Finance Facility against Climate Change (F2C2) – a special-purpose vehicle designed to issue green bonds backed by future donor commitments. The proceeds would be directed primarily toward climate-mitigation investments in developing countries. If successful, the F2C2 could unlock up to \$1tn in private financing.

We also propose a new kind of equity-like instrument to finance climate-resilient infrastructure. Investments in sea walls, flood defences, and similar systems can significantly reduce the costs of disaster relief and recovery. As the primary beneficiaries, insurance companies must work together with MDBs to develop an instrument capable of translating these savings into returns for investors.

These are all practical, actionable proposals. When combined with technical assistance and policy support, they could significantly improve the growth prospects of developing countries grappling with debt and climate risks. Making debt management both fiscally and environmentally sustainable is not only feasible but also essential to safeguarding global growth, which is in the interest of all countries – not just the poorest. – Project Syndicate

• Vera Songwe, a former under-secretary-general at the UN, is Founder and Chair of the Liquidity and Sustainability Facility and Co-Chair of the Expert Review on Debt, Nature, and Climate. Moritz Kraemer, a former global chief ratings officer at S&P Global, is Chief Economist at LBBW Bank and Co-Chair of the Expert Review on Debt, Nature, and Climate.



The intertwined crises of debt and climate change are creating a vicious cycle for developing countries, but the ‘Healthy Debt on a Healthy Planet’ report outlines practical solutions – such as integrating climate risk into debt assessments, restructuring debt in exchange for sustainability investments, and launching innovative financing tools – to shift toward a sustainable, resilient growth model

Alfardan Group wins 'Qatar CSR Award 2025' for sustainable basketball courts initiative

Alfardan Group has won the "Qatar CSR Awards 2025" for its contribution to environmental sustainability through its "From Tyres to Courts" initiative, Qatar's first basketball courts constructed from recycled tyre materials. As part of Athar, Alfardan Group's sustainability strategy, and developed in collaboration with Continental Middle East,



Alfardan Group's recognition highlights its leadership in sustainable innovation and community empowerment.

the leading German company for tyres and automotive technology, the project at AlGassar Resorts addresses urgent waste challenges through creative and sustainable solutions.

By transforming 500 used tyres into a safe, durable 175sq m sports surface using "green rub" tiles, the project reduced carbon emissions by more than 50% com-

pared to traditional materials.

The initiative also promotes community engagement, healthy living, and social unity through sports.

The Qatar CSR Awards recognise organisations and individuals advancing responsible, impactful practices across Qatar.

Alfardan Group's recognition high-

lights its leadership in sustainable innovation and community empowerment.

Alfardan Automotive chief executive Dr Ma'n Alhamawi, who is the company's Sustainability Committee chairman, said: "This recognition marks an important step in our journey to turn sustainability from a vision into a tangible impact."

"Our project 'From Tyres to Courts' re-

flects our commitment to innovative environmental solutions that address pressing challenges like waste management while bringing communities together through sports and wellness," he said. "Through collaborative efforts under the Athar strategy, we aim to take steady, responsible steps toward contributing to Qatar's sustainability goals."



Ali-Kuwari with Wright at the signing ceremony.

Msheireb Properties and TGP International to launch food hall

Msheireb Properties and TGP International have announced a strategic partnership to develop a world-class food hall in the heart of Msheireb Downtown Doha, bringing a unique culinary destination to Qatar's pioneering smart and sustainable city. In response to the growing demand for dynamic culinary spaces that bring communities together, Msheireb Properties has selected TGP International to conceptualise and deliver a new food hall destination within the thriving Msheireb ecosystem.

This space will offer a thoughtfully selected blend of local and international flavours under one roof, encouraging connection, exploration, and social interaction.

The food hall will be located within Msheireb Galleria, seamlessly integrating into a district that blends Qatar's cultural heritage with modern innovation.

As part of a diverse mix of residential, commercial, retail, and cultural offerings, the project aims to enrich the downtown's dining scene, creating a new focal point for culinary experiences in urban living.

"Our partnership with TGP International is an important step in expanding Msheireb Downtown Doha's retail and dining landscape," said Msheireb Properties chief executive engineer Ali al-Kuwari. "This new food hall aligns with our vision of a sustainable and inclusive urban community, creating a unique space where culinary traditions and contemporary experiences come together."

"Through this collaboration, we continue to celebrate heritage while embracing innovation, establishing Msheireb Downtown Doha as a distinctive destination," he said. "We look forward to creating a culinary hub that brings people together through exceptional food experiences."

TGP International, renowned for delivering award-winning food hall concepts across the Middle East, including Depachika Food Hall, Alkebulan, and Al Mamlaka Social Dining, will lead the concept development and creative direction for the new venue in close collaboration with Msheireb Properties.

"As advocates for the transformative power of strategic F&B in shaping urban communities, we are proud to partner with Msheireb Properties on this landmark project," said TGP International founder and chairman Simon Wright.

"Food halls perfectly capture the spirit of our time, offering diverse, high-quality culinary experiences in shared spaces that encourage connection and discovery," he said. "We look forward to delivering a destination that creates a meaningful and enduring addition to Msheireb Downtown Doha."

The world-class food hall is expected to add new dining experiences to Msheireb Galleria.

This development will offer a curated selection of local and international food options, contributing to the growth of Msheireb Downtown Doha as a leading hub for innovation and culture.



More than 150 engineers graduate from Tamuq

Texas A&M University at Qatar (Tamuq), a Qatar Foundation (QF) partner university, celebrated the graduation of 155 engineers during its commencement ceremony held at the Qatar National Convention Centre (QNCC).

The Class of 2025 includes graduates with bachelor's degrees in chemical engineering, electrical engineering, mechanical engineering, and petroleum engineering, as well as students who earned Master of Science and Master of Engineering degrees in chemical engineering.

This year's graduating class is comprised of 60% Qatari students, and includes 75 female graduates, and represents 18 nationalities.

Among the 91 Qatari graduates, 51% are women.

With this year's ceremony, the Tamuq has now awarded more than 1,800 degrees, further contributing to Qatar's human capital development and the global engineering community.

The evening's keynote address was delivered by HE the Minister of State Essa bin Hilal al-Kuwari, who shared a message of ambition, perseverance, and leadership with the new graduates.

In his remarks, HE al-Kuwari emphasised the critical role engineers will play in shaping a sustainable future for Qatar and beyond, and encouraged the graduates to embrace innovation and uphold their responsibility as stewards of national progress.

"Dear graduates, you are the next generation of problem-solvers, innovators, and leaders," he said. "The technical knowledge you've gained is powerful, but even more powerful are the values this institution has instilled in you: integrity, leadership, and service. And as you step into

this new chapter, I urge you to aim high."

"There are no limits to Qatar's ambitions – and there should be no limits to yours," HE al-Kuwari added. "Be bold in your vision, grounded in your values, and proud of who you are and who you will become. As you step forward into the world, I urge you to keep the pursuit of knowledge at the forefront of your journey."

"Congratulations once again, Class of 2025." Tamuq dean Dr César Octavio Malavé congratulated the Class of 2025 and recognised their resilience and accomplishments.

"As graduates of Texas A&M, each of you carries the legacy and values of Aggie engineers, both to the workplace and into top graduate programmes around the world," he said. "And as graduates of this campus, you also are ambassadors for Qatar Foundation and the State of Qatar, which has invested in each and every one of you."

"As you receive your diploma this evening, you take with you an obligation to uphold our Aggie core values – respect, excellence, leadership, loyalty, integrity and selfless service," Dr Malavé said. "In everything you do, demonstrate those values and show the world that Aggie engineers are today's experts and tomorrow's leaders of industry, government and academia."

"It's time for each of you to fulfil your potential as engineering leaders for Qatar's knowledge economy and the global energy transformation," he stated.

Representing the Class of 2025, chemical engineering graduate Amanda Cruz delivered an address reflecting on the journey, unity and transformative experience of earning an engineering degree from Texas A&M University.



"Every one of us here has faced obstacles – some that made us question our paths, others that made us question ourselves," she said. "But we kept going. Because the knowledge we contribute, the work we do, and the choices we make have the potential to change lives."

"So, as we step forward from this milestone, let's hold on to the curiosity that got us here – the kind that doesn't just ask why, but what's next? The kind that pushes us to explore, to question, to create," Cruz said. "Because curiosity doesn't just lead to answers; it should also lead to new beginnings. And today, that's exactly what we have. A new beginning."

The ceremony concluded with the traditional induction of graduates into the Association of Former Students, the university's global alumni network, which comprises more than 525,000 Aggies worldwide.



'Jiwan x Alee Pop-Up' concludes

Jiwan, the MICHELIN Bib Gourmand restaurant at the National Museum of Qatar (NMQ), has successfully wrapped up a collaboration with acclaimed Amman-based restaurant Alee.

The Jiwan x Alee Pop-Up brought together Jiwan's head chef, Morgan Perrigaud, and Alee's proprietor, Chef Ali Ghzawi, for a two-day celebration of Middle Eastern cuisine – past, present, and future.

Over lunch and dinner on May 1-2, Perrigaud and Ghzawi presented guests with a thoughtfully curated menu, reimagining regional flavours through a modern lens.

From delicate amuse-bouches inspired by Levantine Street food to reinterpretations of classic dishes, every plate told a story – each one rooted in heritage, layered with memory, and finished with creative flair.

The event received an enthusiastic response from both the local culinary commu-

nity and food enthusiasts, who praised the collaboration for its bold flavours, presentation, and cultural depth.

"More than just a pop-up, this was a true exchange of ideas, flavour, and identity – a journey through the Middle East on a plate, and a meaningful reminder of how food connects us all," said Perrigaud.

"It was an honour to bring Alee's vision to Doha and to work alongside Chef Morgan," Ghzawi said.

"Together, we created something that felt both new and deeply familiar," he added.

The Jiwan x Alee Pop-Up reaffirmed both restaurants' shared belief that Middle Eastern cuisine is a living dialogue – one that continues to evolve while staying deeply connected to its roots.

To stay updated on future events at Jiwan or to explore their ongoing menu offerings, visit jiwan.qa or call +974 4452 5725.

MIA hosts exhibition on culinary cultures of the Islamic world

The Museum of Islamic Art (MIA) has announced "A Seat at the Table: Food & Feasting in the Islamic World", a large-scale exhibition exploring the cultural role of food across the Islamic world and within Muslim traditions.

The exhibition is organised by the MIA in collaboration with the Los Angeles County Museum of Art (LACMA) and will be on view from May 22 until November 8, 2025.

It is curated by Lusail Museums senior curator (Decorative Arts & Design) Dr Tara Desjardins and Teslim Sanni, curatorial affairs researcher at the MIA.

This exhibition is also a legacy project of the Years of Culture initiative, a programme of collaborations between Qatar and partner countries that seeks to nurture mutual respect and understanding by building long-term cultural, social and economic ties.

"Food has always been a powerful expression of culture, identity, and hospitality across the Islamic world," said MIA director Shaika Nasser al-Nasser. "With 'A Seat at the Table', the MIA is proud to present an exhibition that not only celebrates the beauty of culinary traditions but also invites reflection on how this food continues to shape who we are today."

"This collaboration with the LACMA, inspired by their seminal 'Dining with the Sultan: The Fine Art of Feasting' exhibition, has allowed us to build

a uniquely local perspective, weaving together the historical and the contemporary to tell a story that is deeply resonant and richly layered," she said.

Featuring artworks and objects from the collections of the MIA, Qatar National Library, Mathaf: Arab Museum of Modern Art, Lusail Museum and Qatar Museums' General Collections, the exhibition highlights the central role dining plays in Islamic cultures.

Additionally, the exhibition delves into the evolving culinary traditions of the Islamic world, revealing both the distinctions and common threads that have shaped its rich gastronomic heritage over time.

"A Seat at the Table" is presented in five sections.

"Breaking Bread" focuses on continuity, change and community.

Designed as an immersive experience, this section is installed in a gallery representing a *tamur*, a traditional oven used by cultures around the world to bake different kinds of breads.

"Food and Faith" looks at Islamic religious practices and customs around dining.

Through manuscripts and objects featuring Qur'anic verses about food, it also discusses two of the most important festivals in Islam, both of which are connected to food: Eid al-Fitr, marking the end of Ramadan, and Eid al-Adha, which traditionally includes the sacrifice of an animal.

"Itinerant Ingredients" explores

the global trade in spices and ingredients.

It traces the expansion of Islam and trade networks across both nearby and faraway regions, including the introduction of foods such as wheat and barley grains and date seeds into Qatar, as well as the link between food and medicine.

"Dining with the Sultan" explores royal dining traditions where feasts represented wealth, power, and authority.

The grander the occasion, the more elaborate the dishes, prepared with the finest ingredients.

These opulent banquets were accompanied by extravagant attire, objects and entertainment, reinforcing the splendour of the ruler's court.

"Contemporary Cuisine: We Are What We Eat" examines contemporary dining customs.

This section explores three key themes: agriculture as a tool for nation-building and a way to shape identity; the growth of fast-food and food-truck cultures; and farm-to-table practices that emphasise a return to "slow food" and sustainability.

In conjunction with the exhibition, "A Seat at the Table: Food and Feasting in the Islamic World" will offer a series of public programmes designed to further explore the exhibition's themes and deepen the connection with the diverse cultural traditions highlighted.

– QNA