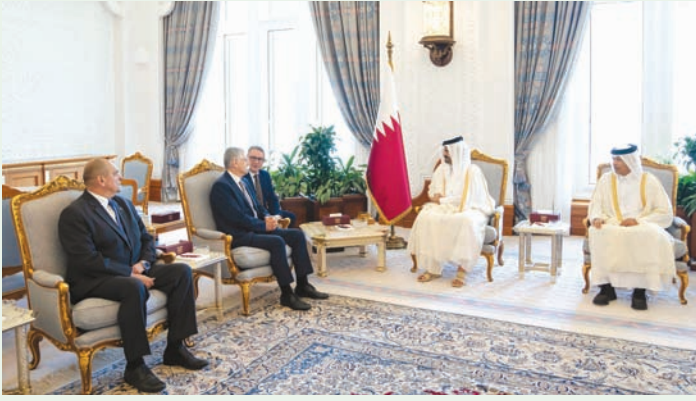


Initially soft-launched during the FIFA World Cup Qatar 2022, the service has since been enhanced based on user feedback. Since its inception, Minakom has digitally processed more than 250 vessels, significantly improving visitor experience. **To Page 7**



Deputy Amir meets speaker of Hungarian Parliament; German envoy

His Highness the Deputy Amir Sheikh Abdullah bin Hamad al-Thani met at the Amiri Diwan office yesterday with Speaker of the Hungarian Parliament Dr Laszlo Kover, and the accompanying delegation, on the occasion of their visit to the country. During the meeting, the two sides discussed co-operation relations and ways to develop them, in addition to topics of mutual interest. HE the Speaker of the Shura Council Hassan bin Abdullah al-Ghanem attended the meeting.



His Highness the Deputy Amir Sheikh Abdullah bin Hamad al-Thani met at the Amiri Diwan office yesterday with Ambassador of the Federal Republic of Germany Lothar Freischlager, who called on His Highness to greet him on the occasion of the end of his tenure in the country. His Highness the Deputy Amir expressed his wishes for the ambassador's success and for further development and growth of relations between the two countries. For his part, the ambassador expressed his thanks and appreciation to His Highness the Amir, His Highness the Deputy Amir, and the country's officials for the co-operation he received, which contributed to facilitating and ensuring the success of his work in the country. **(QNA)**

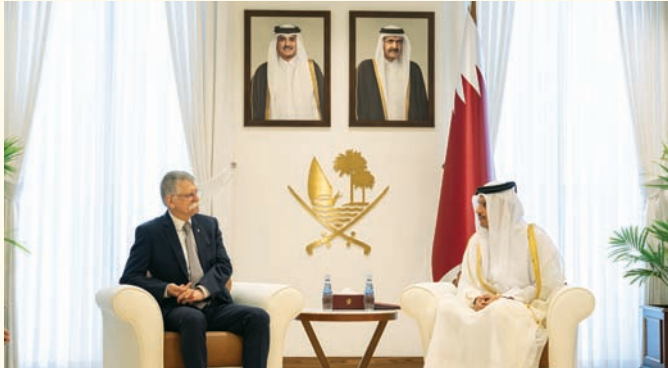
Qatar participates in Arab Media Summit 2025 in UAE

Qatar has participated in the Arab Media Summit 2025 at the Dubai World Trade Center. HE the Minister of Culture Sheikh Abdulrahman bin Hamad al-Thani headed the country's delegation to the summit. The summit, which continues until May 28, attracts prominent figures, political and media figures, editors-in-chief, and leaders of media institutions. The summit is attended by approximately 8,000 media professionals and those interested in the media sector from within the UAE and across the Arab world, in addition to content creators, influencers, media technology experts, and academics, to discuss the prospects for media development in the coming period. **(QNA)**



PM meets Speaker of Hungarian Parliament

HE the Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman bin Jassim al-Thani met yesterday with Speaker of the Hungarian Parliament, Dr Laszlo Kover, who is visiting the country. During the meeting, they discussed co-operation relations between the two countries and ways to support and strengthen them, in addition to a number of topics of common interest. **(QNA)**



Labour minister meets Palestinian counterpart

HE the Minister of Labour Dr Ali bin Smaikh al-Marri met yesterday with Minister of Labour of the State of Palestine Dr Enas Hosni al-Attari, who is visiting the country. During the meeting, the two sides discussed bilateral relations between the two countries in labour fields and ways to support and develop them. **(QNA)**



Qatar, Palestine sign agreement to enhance co-operation in labour fields

The governments of Qatar and the State of Palestine have signed an agreement to enhance mutual co-operation in the fields of labour and to regulate the recruitment of Palestinian workers.

The agreement was signed by HE the Minister of Labour, Dr Ali bin Smaikh al-Marri, and his Palestinian counterpart Dr Inas Hosni al-Attari. The agreement aims to support the Ministry of Labour's strategy to attract skilled and qualified workers, strengthen their presence in the local labour market, improve private sector productivity, and advance the work environment. Under the agreement, both parties will facilitate the recruitment procedures for skilled labour from the State of Palestine and supply the local



market with the required expertise based on qualifications, experience, and specialisations. Additionally, they will review available job opportunities in

Qatar, assess the skills and expertise required, and explore their availability in the State of Palestine to benefit from them. **(QNA)**

Speaker stresses on moral, political responsibility of parliaments toward Gaza

QNA
Doha

HE the Speaker of the Shura Council Hassan bin Abdullah al-Ghanem met yesterday with Speaker of the Parliament of the friendly Republic of Hungary Dr Laszlo Kover, who is currently visiting the country at the head of a parliamentary delegation. The visit comes at the invitation of the Shura Council, as part of strengthening parliamentary co-operation between the two countries.

At the beginning of the meeting, HE the Speaker of the Shura Council welcomed the Speaker of the Hungarian Parliament, praising the positive growth in Qatari-Hungarian relations at various levels, particularly in the parliamentary field.

He emphasised that this visit represents an advanced step in developing bilateral co-ordination and exchanging legislative expertise.

For his part, Dr Laszlo Kover lauded the remarkable development of bilateral relations between the two countries in various fields, especially in light of the momentum they have gained in recent years. He emphasised his coun-



try's keenness to expand the scope of parliamentary co-operation between the two sides, in a way that enhances mutual understanding and supports the interests of the two friendly countries.

The main focus of the discussion was the deteriorating humanitarian situation in the Gaza Strip. HE the Speaker of the Shura Council reviewed the extensive efforts made by Qatar, under the leadership of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani, to mediate a ceasefire, secure humanitarian aid, and alleviate the suffering of the Palestinian people under the ongoing aggression.

HE al-Ghanem stressed that parliaments bear a moral and po-

litical responsibility regarding the events in Gaza, calling for unified parliamentary positions in international forums to achieve justice, end violations, and protect the rights of the Palestinian people. In turn, Dr Kover commended Qatar's role in humanitarian mediation, praising its active endeavours at the regional and international levels, and stressed the importance of continued parliamentary consultations between the two sides to enhance security and stability.

The two sides also discussed ways to enhance bilateral co-operation in the legislative field and intensify co-ordination between the two councils to serve their common interests.

Speaker emphasises importance of Arab parliamentary co-ordination

HE the Shura Council Speaker Hassan bin Abdullah al-Ghanem held talks yesterday with Arab Parliament Speaker Mohammed Ahmed al-Yamahi and his accompanying delegation.

HE al-Ghanem hailed the Arab Parliament's role in supporting joint Arab action and enhancing co-ordination of national parliaments on issues of shared concern.

Meanwhile, al-Yamahi commended Qatar's positions, led by His Highness the Amir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani, on Arab, regional, and international issues, primarily the Palestinian cause. In this context, he hailed Qatar's efforts to halt the aggression on the Gaza Strip and continue providing humanitarian and relief aid to the Palestinian people.

The Arab Parliament Speaker and his accompanying delegation have expressed their appreciation for the prominent role played by the Shura Council in strengthening Arab solidarity and co-ordinating and unifying par-



liamentary positions among Arab legislative bodies, enabling them to confront various challenges and support central Arab and Islamic issues, primarily the Palestinian cause.

The agenda included topics of Arab parliamentary interest, with both sides exchanging views on mechanisms for developing joint parliamentary action and activating Arab presence in regional and international forums to serve the supreme interests of Arab countries and peoples. They emphasised the importance of continuing

the co-ordination and co-operation achieved during the joint parliamentary process, and working to co-ordinate parliamentary positions to enhance the effectiveness of joint Arab action and contribute to supporting pivotal issues, foremost among which is the Palestinian cause. At the conclusion of the meeting, HE al-Ghanem voiced hopes the visit would contribute to elevating Arab parliamentary co-operation to broader horizons and unifying efforts to confront current regional and international challenges. **(QNA)**

Health minister holds meeting with Russian president's adviser



HE the Minister of Public Health Mansoor bin Ebrahim bin Saad al-Mahmoud met in Doha yesterday with Igor Levitin, adviser to the Russian President. They reviewed bilateral relations and discussed ways to enhance them, particularly in healthcare.

Minister meets Armenian FM

HE the Minister of State at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Dr Mohammed bin Abdulaziz bin Saleh al-Khulaifi met yesterday with Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Armenia Ararat Mirzoyan, in Yerevan, Armenia. During the meeting, the two sides discussed co-operation relations between the two countries and ways to support and develop them, in addition to the latest developments in the regional and international arenas. During the meeting, HE the Minister stressed the importance of concerted regional and international efforts in the process of



establishing peace and confronting crises through

dialogue and peaceful means. **(QNA)**



Dignitaries at the opening session of the conference yesterday. **PICTURES:** Shaji Kayamkulam



HE Dr Hamad bin Abdulaziz al-Kawari, HE Lolwah bint Rashid bin Mohammed AlKhater and HE Maryam bint Abdullah al-Attiyah touring booths at the conference.

NHRC conference highlights transformative force of AI, impact on human rights, dignity

Artificial intelligence (AI) has become a transformative force reshaping lives and influencing decisions that directly impact human dignity, noted HE the Minister of Communications and Information Technology Mohammed bin Ali al-Mannai yesterday.

Speaking at the international conference titled “Artificial Intelligence and Human Rights: Opportunities, Risks, and Visions for a Better Future” organised by the National Human Rights Committee (NHRC), HE al-Mannai said that artificial intelligence has evolved beyond being a tool for service enhancement and efficiency.

The minister highlighted that society has moved past mere fascination with AI’s capabilities and must now confront essential questions about its real impact, questioning who will safeguard human

rights when algorithms dictate decisions and how fairness, inclusivity, and accountability can be ensured for every individual. The minister also announced the launch of Qatar’s Principles and Guidelines for Ethical AI Development and Use, a national reference promoting responsible AI innovation and safe applications.

NHRC chairperson HE Maryam bint Abdullah al-Attiyah in her address emphasised that choosing AI as the central topic of this conference reflects its growing significance and the necessity of deeply understanding its current and future implications. She noted that AI presents immense opportunities to enhance various human rights, including healthcare, education, access to information, freedom of expression, and personal security.

The opening ceremony of the



A section of the participants.

conference was attended by the HE the Speaker of the Shura Council Hassan bin Abdullah al-Ghanem, HE the Minister of Social Development and Family Buthaina bint Ali al-Jabr al-Nuaimi, HE the Minister of Labour Dr Ali bin Saeed bin Smaikh al-Marri, HE the Minister of Education and Higher Educa-

tion Lolwah bint Rashid bin Mohammed AlKhater, HE the Minister of State for Interior Affairs Sheikh Abdulaziz bin Faisal bin Mohammed al-Thani, and HE the Minister of State and President of Qatar National Library Dr Hamad bin Abdulaziz al-Kawari and a number of senior officials.

The NHRC chairperson also warned of the potential ethical risks, such as bias and discrimination, the widening digital divide, privacy violations, increased unemployment due to job losses, and the severe consequences of AI systems that pose direct threats to human life.

She emphasised that addressing these concerns requires a human rights-based approach to AI development, ensuring transparency, oversight, evaluation, accountability, and remedies in cases of AI-related human rights violations.

She added that the conference aims to outline a roadmap for AI governance grounded in human rights, stating that NHRC remains committed to working alongside its partners to advance international frameworks, including the adoption of a binding global treaty

regulating AI applications, ensuring the optimal balance between technological advancement and the protection of human dignity and rights.

The UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, Volker Turk, addressed the conference via video, acknowledging AI’s potential benefits in healthcare, development, and education, but warning of escalating threats to human rights and freedom.

The Global Alliance of National Human Rights Institutions president Amina Bouayach, the Arab Parliament president Mohammed Ahmed Mohammed al-Yamahi, Qatar’s National Cyber Security Agency chairman Abdulrahman bin Ali al-Farahid al-Maliki, and UNDP’s Arab States Regional Hub director Dr Mary Kavar also addressed the opening session of the conference.

Develop AI regulatory frameworks to ensure rights, inclusion of marginalised, says expert

By Shafeeq Alingal
Staff Reporter

There is a need to develop AI regulatory frameworks that are based on a comprehensive understanding of systemic racism and grounded in the international human rights framework, urged Ashwini K P, UN Special Rapporteur on Contemporary Forms of Racism, yesterday.

“There is a dire need to establish mechanisms to enable individuals and groups who are affected by AI-driven systemic racism and racial discrimination,” she told a session on ‘The Power of Artificial Intelligence and Human Rights: Risks and Opportunities’ at the International Conference on ‘Artificial Intelligence and Human Rights: Opportunities, Risks and Visions for a Better Future’.

The UN official noted that the risks of AI are multifarious. “The rise of artificial intelligence systems and machine learning algorithms has led to the digitisation of data on a massive scale. Algorithms use that data to make decisions and engage in actions across several sectors. However, the data sets on which algorithms are trained are often incomplete or under represent certain groups of people including along racial and ethnic lines, resulting in algorithm bias,” she said. “Technology is never neutral. It reflects the values and interests of those who influence its de-



UN Special Rapporteur on Contemporary Forms of Racism Ashwini K P addressing the session yesterday. **PICTURE:** Shaji Kayamkulam

sign and use, and is fundamentally shaped by the same structures of inequality that operate in society,” she explained adding that AI results in discriminatory outcomes in critical areas such as employment, law enforcement, healthcare, and education since AI systems learn from historical data, which often contains embedded societal biases.

In the context of risk posed by AI, Ashwini said, the spread of misinformation has had a serious impact on the social fabric of society. “The ability of AI to produce incredibly lifelike text, pictures, and videos has presented information integrity with previously unheard-of difficulties. AI-generated media and deepfakes can be used as weapons to sway public opinion, pose as people or interfere with democratic processes,” she said.

The UN official noted that AI’s benefits are not equitably distributed and marginalised communities often lack the infrastructure,

digital literacy or localised tools to engage meaningfully with AI technologies. “Technological space has always been occupied by the privileged resulting in the digital divide. This digital divide reinforces existing social disparities and limits its participation in an increasingly automated world,” she said.

Ashwini who underlined the need for proactive safeguards against the threats that AI poses, said governments must enact enforceable laws that centre human dignity and prohibit discriminatory uses of AI. “Developers should ensure that AI decisions are explainable. Affected individuals must have access to remedies, including appeals and human oversight. AI systems must incorporate data minimisation, encryption and purpose limitation to safeguard user privacy. Systems with unacceptable risks must be banned.”

Chaired by Mohammad Alnsour, OHCHR, Mena Section Chief - Geneva, the session was attended by Rapporteur: Nicole Chaaya, Civil Society and Technical Cooperation Unit, OHCHR Syria Office; Reem Alsalem, UN Special Rapporteur on Violence Against Women and Girls; Matthew Hervey, AI and IP Expert, Head of Legal and Policy at Human Native AI - UK; Abdel Basset Ben Hassen, Chair of the Board, Arab Institute for Human Rights - Tunis; and Azin Tadjidini, Human Rights Officer, Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights - Geneva.

AI capabilities to breach into human rights are huge, says UNDP official

By Joseph Varghese
Staff Reporter

The potential of artificial intelligence (AI) to breach into human rights are very huge, a top official of United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) told *Gulf Times* yesterday. “AI has the capacity to get into human rights in a big way and data protection is a big challenge in the era of AI. There is the possibility of AI machines and algorithms to produce information which does not stick to reality or influence electoral processes,” Dr Mary Kavar, director, Arab States Regional Hub, UNDP, told *Gulf Times*.

She was speaking on the sidelines of the International Conference on Artificial Intelligence and Human Rights organised by Qatar National Human Rights Committee.

“Since the capacity of AI to breach human rights are huge we need to put the citizens at the centre and have policies and strategies that are human rights based and designed around human beings,” explained, Dr Kavar.

The official said that AI unleashes several opportunities for development, for efficiency of governments, for service delivery, for improving the quality of life



Dr Mary Kavar addressing the International Conference on Artificial Intelligence and Human Rights yesterday. **PICTURE:** Shaji Kayamkulam

of citizens. “But at the same time it comes with some deep risks in terms of data breaching, in terms of replacement of human capabilities for the labour force and in terms of control.

So, the overall goal of this conference is to bring people together to strategise an opportunity to make AI benefit communities and not be a challenge and a risk to our life,” she continued.

Dr Kavar noted that at the level of strategies, policies and technical support, there should be efforts of making sure that there is awareness of human rights risks in this sphere. “This goes from support

to governments and in terms of building coalitions that bring different stakeholders together and finally at the global level through initiatives, resolutions and global movements. They are all geared towards making sure that AI is at the service of citizens.”

“Also, at UNDP, we had a recent report, the Human Development Report, which focused on AI and digitalisation. The idea was that how we can accelerate the implementation of the sustainable development goals, how digitalisation and AI can be for the benefit of human development, especially in terms of health and education and basic rights,” she highlighted.

Dr Kavar stated that the conference will be a pointer to the way forward in protecting human rights while making use of AI.

“The event will end with a declaration that will set the way forward and that is why it is very important. Through the sessions people from around the globe will share best practices and will discuss avenues for making use of AI in a way that is sensitive to human rights. These all discussions will end up in a declaration that will help all the stakeholders to define the way they believe artificial intelligence should be designed and approached,” she added.

AI’s economic boom demands urgent human rights safeguards

By Joey Aguilar
Staff Reporter

While artificial intelligence (AI) is set to inject trillions into the global economy and transform sectors like health and education, experts warned that its rapid rise urgently requires legally binding frameworks to protect human rights, particularly privacy.

Dany Wazen, Digital Transformation Specialist with United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) – Lebanon, highlighted AI’s huge economic potential, saying a 2025 UNDP Human Development Report projected that AI could contribute \$15.7tn to the global economy by 2030, with some local economies seeing up to a 26% boost in gross domestic product.

He noted that AI and machine learning specialists are already among the top 10 fastest-growing jobs globally, underscoring the urgent need for workforce adaptation, as 60% of workers worldwide will

require formal training by 2027 to meet evolving job demands. Wazen, joined by a panel of international experts, was speaking at a session at the International Conference on “Artificial Intelligence and Human Rights: Opportunities, Risks, and Visions for a Better Future” yesterday at the Ritz-Carlton Hotel, Doha. The event, concluding today, brought together global leaders and specialists to tackle AI’s complex impact.

The session, titled “Artificial Intelligence: Concept, Capabilities and Governing Values”, was chaired by Dr Stephen Rainbow, High Commissioner for Human Rights in New Zealand, and Yasmine Hamdar, AI Specialist at UNDP – UAE. According to the UNDP report, AI-powered automation tools have significantly reduced administrative workloads in healthcare by up to 70%, freeing professionals to focus more on patient care. It added that this efficiency is expected to translate into substantial savings, with AI potentially generating up to

\$150bn in annual savings for the US healthcare system alone by 2026. In the education sector, Wazen said growth projections, with the global AI in education market expected to skyrocket from \$5.18bn in 2024 to \$112.3bn by 2034.

He underlined AI tools’ critical role in student success, with 71% of teachers and 65% of students deeming them essential for college and work. Wazen cited real-world applications across various sectors, including improved loan granting and fraud detection in finance, personalised interactions in customer service via chatbots, and optimised traffic flow and logistics in transportation.

However, experts also issued stark warnings, cautioning that the optimistic outlook in this digital age was shadowed by the potential for human rights abuses. Prof Alena Douhan, UN Special Rapporteur on the Negative Impact of Unilateral Coercive Measures on the Enjoyment of Human Rights, raised serious concerns that states are misusing references to “malicious cyber activity”

to introduce unilateral sanctions, bypassing established legal norms.

“The problem with unilateral sanctions is that states do not qualify it as a crime. They punish people and companies without due process, without the presumption of innocence...” she said, noting that it is a contrast with the recently adopted United Nations Convention against Cybercrime. This, she pointed out, mandates adherence to domestic law and due process.

Prof Douhan also questioned the concept of state sovereignty in cyberspace, recalling that the UN General Assembly has already recognised threats from the malicious use of cyber technologies by terrorist and extremist groups, and urged adherence to the principle that “The Right to privacy in the digital age” calls for the same rights online as offline.

To safeguard privacy in the AI, Dr Ana Brian Nougères, UN Special Rapporteur on the Right to Privacy, called for a concrete action, saying: “We must move beyond soft ethical



A panel of experts discussing ‘Artificial Intelligence: Concept, Capabilities and Governing Values’ at the conference in Doha yesterday. **PICTURE:** Shaji Kayamkulam

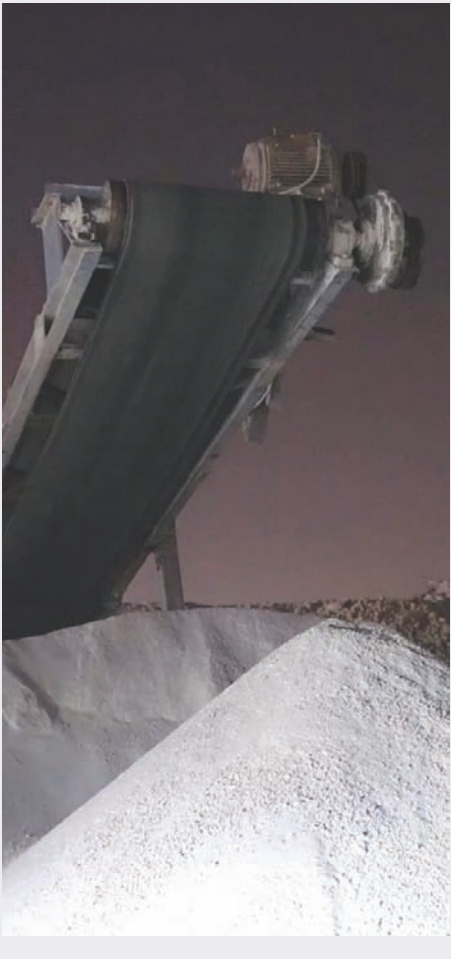
principles and adopt a binding legal framework grounded in international human rights law.”

She emphasised that AI systems must respect the principles of legality, necessity, and proportionality, stressing that any privacy interference must have a legal basis. “Privacy should not be an afterthought or optional feature; it must be a core part of the architecture of any AI system,” she said. Developers and companies, she added, must be legally mandated to build systems that minimise data collection, restrict access to sensitive informa-

tion, and ensure privacy settings are enabled by default, free from deceptive design. “As AI becomes more powerful and pervasive, the stakes for privacy and other fundamental rights grow exponentially... We need concrete and enforceable measures to ensure that AI technologies serve humanity rather than erode the rights and freedoms that define us. “Let us ensure that innovation does not come at the cost of human dignity. Let us build an AI future rounded in transparent, accountability and respect for human rights,” Dr Nougères said.

Illegal exploitation of natural resources detected

The Ministry of Environment and Climate Change (MoECC)'s Wildlife Development Department has carried out an extensive inspection campaign that covered all the parts of the country to detect violations related to the exploitation of natural stone resources. Department personnel detected several violations, including the unauthorised extraction, sale, and transportation of stone and landfill materials from government project sites, without obtaining the necessary official permits. These actions constitute a clear violation of Law No 3 of 2007 on the Exploitation of Natural Resources, and Law No 30 of 2002 Promulgating the Law of the Environment Protection. Violation reports were issued in co-operation with the Ministry of Interior, and the violators referred to the competent authorities to complete the necessary legal procedures.



Marine survey by specialised team

A specialist team from the Ministry of Environment and Climate Change (MoECC)'s Marine Protection Department has carried out a field survey of the seabed, as part of the regular monitoring programme for wildlife and marine resources. The survey is part of the ministry's efforts to monitor the condition of natural habitats and biodiversity in the marine environment, aiming to detect any violations or changes that may occur, which contributes to the protection and sustainability of marine ecosystems.



Food safety inspections underway ahead of Eid

As part of preparations for the upcoming Eid al-Adha holidays, Doha Municipality, represented by the Municipal Control Department's Health Control Section, has launched daily morning and evening inspection campaigns.

These will continue until the end of the Eid holiday, with the aim of enhancing food monitoring, ensuring its safety and suitability for consumption, and preventing the circulation of any food items that do not comply with health regulations.

The campaign includes 14 field inspection initiatives and around 10,000 monitoring visits targeting various food establishments.

In addition, 250 food samples will be collected for laboratory testing to ensure their compliance with standards.

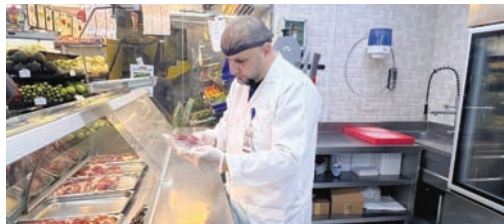
The inspections focus on traditional kitchens that prepare feasts and banquets, butcher shops – where displayed meat is checked for safety and freshness, as well as live poultry shops, food production, distribution, and repackaging companies, in addition to hotels, restaurants, fruit and vegetable shops, sweets stores, and nut retailers.

The campaign also covers food outlets in public places such as parks and beaches, which are popular family destinations during Eid, as well as tourist and entertainment areas like Souq Waqif, the Old Doha Port, Msheireb, Katara, and the Pearl.

The inspections further extend to women's salons, men's barbershops, and laundries, ensuring that workers comply with health regulations.

Educational and awareness materials are provided to both workers and consumers regarding proper health practices.

Al Wakrah Municipality's Health Control Section of the Municipal Control Department has meanwhile launched an inspection and awareness campaign targeting traditional kitchens within its jurisdiction in preparation for Eid al-Adha.



Tender - Waseef

Waseef Asset Management (Waseef) would like to invite competent Service Providers for the below Open Tenders:

Tender Number	Subject	Bid Bond (QAR)	Non-refundable Tender Fee (QAR)	Bid Submission Closing Date
GTC/WSF/POI/38/2025	TENDER FOR THE PROVISION OF DESIGN & BUILD, INSTALLATION, TESTING, COMMISSIONING, INTEGRATION & MOI HANDINGOVER OF POI CAMERA SYSTEM AS PER MOI-SSD REGULATIONS FOR VARIOUS PROJECTS MANAGED BY WASEEF	650,000	5,000	July 3, 2025
GTC/WSF/MAD/GC/40/2025	TENDER FOR THE REPLACEMENT OF EXISTING GYPSUM CEILING WITH RUST-RESISTANT ALUMINUM CEILING FOR 339 NOS. BUILDINGS IN MADINATNA PROJECT	10,000	500	July 3, 2025
GTC/WSF/MAD-ARG/EEL/41/2025	TENDER FOR THE SUPPLY, INSTALLATION, TESTING AND COMMISSIONING OF EMERGENCY AND EXIT LIGHTS AT MADINATNA AND ARGENTINE NEIGHBORHOOD PROJECTS	35,000	500	July 3, 2025
GTC/WSF/AKC/RENOV/42/2025	TENDER FOR RENOVATION (CIVIL & MEP WORKS) OF AL DHAKIRA HEALTH CLUB & AL NAKHEEL CLUB BUILDINGS AT AL KHOR COMMUNITY	100,000	1,000	June 19, 2025

The Tender Document will be available from May 28, 2025 onwards upon submission of the below documentation to tender@waseef.qa.

To collect please provide the following:

1. Authorization Letter on Company letterhead, copy of Commercial Registration and valid Identification of the representative.
2. Bank deposit slip carrying tender number and subject details. Tender fee shall be deposited to Account Name - Waseef Asset Management Co., Account Number 0002-105222-200 with Masraf Al Rayan Bank.

To collect please provide the following:

1. Bidders should submit a bid bond issued by a bank operating in the State of Qatar and valid for 120 days from the closing date.
2. Technical and Commercial offers must be submitted in separate sealed envelopes and delivered to the below-mentioned address: GTC Secretary, 10th floor, Waseef Head Office, Al Owaina Tower, Old Salata, Museum Park Street, Doha, Qatar.



LET US MANAGE YOUR WORLD



The Transport Company MOWASALAT (KARWA)

Mowasalat (Karwa) announces the following tender:

Tender Ref. No.	Tender Title	Tender Fee	Electronic Tender Fee Payment Dates	Tender Bond	Bid Closing Date
TC-033-MTS-2025	Supply & Installation of Vinyl sticker (Bus Wrap)	QAR 800	29 May to 4 June 2025	QAR 6,000	25 June 2025

CONDITIONS:

► Interested bidder shall pay the tender fee to Mowasalat Bank Account details as shown:

► Bidder must submit proof of tender fee payment (Bank Deposit Slip + a Signed & Stamped Expression of Interest (indicating Tender Ref. No. and Title / Company Name and details of nominated contact person i.e., Tel. No., Fax No., and Email address) + Copy of valid Commercial Registration to Mowasalat Secretary - Tender Committee at email: tenders@mowasalat.com

► Tender documents will be released via email on the next working day after the tender fee payment date to all bidders who have submitted the bank deposit slip and other documents requested.

► **Bonds: Tender Bond & Performance Bond:** Bids must be accompanied by Bonds issued by a local bank operating in the State of Qatar as per the Qatar Central Bank template. Further details of bonds can be found in the tender documents. *Bids without Tender Bond shall not be considered.*

► **Tender validity:** Bid validity period shall be 180 days from the bid closing date.

► **Tender documents submission:** Bids must be submitted in 3 separate sealed (IN RED WAX) envelopes addressed to **Secretary - Tender Committee** clearly highlighting the Tender Ref. No. & Tender Title:

- **Envelope 1#** must include the Technical Bid submission (1 Original + 1 non-Editable copy in a USB)
- **Envelope 2#** must include Commercial Bid submission (1 Original + 1 Editable MS Excel spreadsheet copied in a USB)
- **Envelope 3#** must include the **Tender Bond (1 Original) + 3 years Audited Financial Statements.**

- **Bid Closing Date:** Bid submission deadline is **12.00 noon Doha Local Time** as on the Bid closing date shown above. The 3 envelopes must be handed over to the Office of The Secretary - Tender Committee, located at Mowasalat Head Office, Industrial Area. Any tender submitted after the deadline will not be considered.



Supplier Registration



Mowasalat Location

Tel.: 4458 8724 Fax: 4458 8850



Recall orders issued for Toyota, Ford models

The Ministry of Commerce and Industry (MoCI), in co-operation with Al Abdulghani Motors, has announced the recall of Toyota Raize, 2022-2024 models, over a possible defect in Engine ECU programming which causes the brake booster to not maintain negative pressure under certain driving conditions and thereby could increase pedal force and extend the stopping distance.

The ministry, in co-operation with Almana Motors Company, also announced the recall of Ford Edge, 2021 model, as it is possible that in the affected vehicles the rear-view camera will display a distorted image or a blank screen with a message that the "Camera is unavailable", thereby reducing the driver's view of what is behind the vehicle.

Consumers can report violations or breaches by contacting the Consumer Protection and Combatting Commercial Fraud Department, through the following communication channels: Call Centre: 16001, e-mail: info@moci.gov.qa, ministry's accounts on social media: @mociqatar, ministry's Mobile App: MOCIQATAR (available on iOS and Android devices).



QAPCO invites qualified suppliers / service providers to participate in the following tender:

Effective from 01st July 2023, Bids from Local Suppliers and Contractors (companies established under the Law of State of Qatar) who are not in possession of an ICV score in the ICV portal (<https://icv.qa/en-US/>) by Tender closing date (or commercial bid submission date if separately mentioned / notified) will not be accepted. Local companies that have been established for less than 2 years are exempted from this requirement. For further details, please visit ICV portal (<https://icv.qa/en-US/>).

SI No.	Tender Reference and Description	(i) Deadline for Submission of Information & Interest for Bidding	(ii) Tender Fee & Payment date	(iii) Tender Publication on ARIBA	(iv) Tender Bond	Bid Closing Date
1	RFP: P10-01-342 Provision of Database Activity Monitoring, Data Masking, and Encryption for a period of Three years	02 nd June 2025	QAR. 750. 00 (Seven hundred and fifty) 02 nd June 2025	03 rd June 2025	QAR. 100,000 (One Hundred Thousand)	25th June 2025 12:00 Noon Qatar LT

- Interested bidders to communicate their willingness to bid and contact details to QAPCO Procurement (procurement@qapco.com.qa) indicating company name, address, telephone, official E-mail, etc. latest by the deadline for Submission of Information & Interest for Bidding indicated above. Reference Number and Description of the tender must be mentioned in the email.
- Non-refundable tender fee as indicated above is payable to QAPCO through **QNB account # 0013-001688-060** only at any QNB branch latest by 02 June 2025. (Tender Number, Subject and bidder name are to be stated in the payment receipt)
- Tender link will be sent via email notification from ARIBA system to the confirmed bidders. Tender Document will be accessible only after attaching the evidence of the tender fee payment in ARIBA by the bidder followed by Qapco approval.
- QAPCO shall reply with the access to "ARIBA eSourcing RFP event" along with necessary instructions and guidelines for the bid submission.
- Tender Bond (Bank Guarantee):** Original tender bond must be submitted by hand to the following address latest by the Bid closing date & time:

Qatar Petrochemical Company (QAPCO) Q.P.J.S.C.
P. O. BOX 756, QAPCO Doha Office, The Gate Mall, Bay Tower 2, 11th Floor
Tel.: +974 4033 8109 / 102
Attention: Procurement Group Manager

Bidder to attach copy of tender bond to the offer in ARIBA. Offer without Tender Bond will not be considered.

Clarifications: Please send your queries with tender reference and description to email procurement@qapco.com.qa.

Note: Bidders who are not registered in QAPCO are requested to complete the supplier registration process during the tendering period (Detailed steps about ARIBA registration can be accessed via QAPCO website www.qapco.com)

For more information about QAPCO please visit our website: www.qapco.com



Discounts up to 50% on offer with 'LuLu on Sale' promotion

Leading retail chain LuLu Hypermarket has launched its "LuLu on Sale" promotion, offering discounts of up to 50% on ready-made garments, sarees, churidars, footwear, ladies bags, baby accessories, and sunglasses.

Running until June 18, this campaign is available across all LuLu Hypermarket outlets in Qatar, a statement said.

Timed ahead of the upcoming Eid al-Adha celebrations, the promotion is especially appealing to families and individuals looking to refresh their wardrobes with fashionable and comfortable summer wear.

The major sale includes an impressive lineup of international brands, such as Louis Philippe, Van Heusen, Allen Solly, Arrow, Reebok, Lee, Wrangler, Sunnex, Crocs, Reo, Eten, John Louis, Marco Donatelli, Cortigiani, Blue Seven, Debackers, Peter England, Oxemberg, Sero, Twills, River Blue Sin, Ruff, Killer X, Tom Smith, Sapatoterapia, Freshers, Piccadilly, Arezzo, Woodland, Adidas, Sports IC, Dr Jell's, Doc & Mark, Umbro, Von Wellx, Hush Puppies, Puma, Ipanema, Rider, Da Naturo, Lacalle, Anta, Lotto, and Bata.

"We are delighted to introduce one of our biggest sale events of the year, crafted to coincide with a key season for shoppers in Qatar," a spokesperson for LuLu Hypermarket said.

"The promotion covers a wide range of fashion and lifestyle products, with a broad selection of international and local brands. There's something for every customer at LuLu," the spokesperson added.

In addition to the "LuLu on Sale" campaign, LuLu Hypermarket is also running two promotions until June 10.

"Toy Fest" offers a wide variety of popular toys and games from global brands such as Barbie, Xiaomi, Hummer, and Monopoly, catering to all age groups with educational toys, ride-on cars, and board games.

Simultaneously, the "Tech Deals" promotion features great discounts on the latest smartphones, laptops, and accessories, helping customers stay up to date with cutting-edge personal technology.

LuLu Hypermarket is also hosting the "Travel Fest" promotion, until June 7, offering a premium collection of travel and lifestyle accessories including four-wheel trolleys, backpacks, kids' trolleys, pillows, and laptop bags from brands like Wagon-R, American Tourister, Delsey Paris, Carlton, VIP, Wildcraft, Giordano, Ricardo, and Beelite, the statement added.

Guyana's 59th Independence Day celebrated in Qatar



Guyana's 59th Independence Day was celebrated in Qatar yesterday with a reception. Ambassador Safraaz Ahmad Shadood was joined by Qatar's Minister of Labour HE Dr Ali bin Saeed bin Smaikh al-Marri and other dignitaries in cutting a ceremonial cake. **PICTURE:** Thajudheen

New cohort graduates from Dreama media programme

By Tawfik Lamari
Staff Reporter

The Dreama Orphan Care Centre has concluded the "Media Ambassadors Dreama" programme, held in partnership with Al Jazeera Media Institute (AJMI).

"This initiative offered our children a space to grow and express themselves, and an opportunity to discover their potential and refine their abilities in the fields of media and communication," said Dreama executive director Sheikha Najla bint Ahmed al-Thani during the graduation ceremony.

"The 'Media Ambassadors' programme was not just a technical training – it was a human experience that reflects our vision at Dreama: to raise a generation that believes in itself, possesses the tools to tell its story, and participates in society not as passive recipients, but as active contributors," she said.

This initiative aimed to empower participating youth by strengthening their media skills, self-expression, communication, and content creation capabilities.

The collaboration reflects both institutions' shared commitment to preparing a confident generation capable of creating positive change in society.



The graduation ceremony in session.

Over the course of several months, the participants took part in a series of specialised training workshops that cover areas such as Arabic language, building self-confidence, youth broadcasting, artificial intelligence (AI), voice and presentation techniques, and the funda-

mentals of media production.

A team of expert trainers from the AJMI led the workshops, guiding the youth in developing key skills such as presenting, filming, and scriptwriting, while also introducing them to modern AI tools used in media.



Qatar's ambassador attends inauguration ceremony of Romanian president

Qatar's ambassador in Bucharest Osama bin Yousef al-Qaradawi (**pictured**) attended official joint session of the Senate and Chamber of Deputies of the Romanian Parliament, held at the Palace of Parliament, to mark the inauguration and swearing-in of Nicusor Dan as President of Romania. - **QNA**

One of the pioneering students of QF's first school recounts journey

As Qatar Foundation (QF) marks its 30th anniversary and prepares to celebrate the latest batch of graduates from the schools within its ecosystem this week, surgeon and equestrian Dr Maryam al-Mahmoud has reflected on her historic journey as a member of the first class at Qatar Academy Doha (QAD), the first school in Education City.

The QF Schools Commencement ceremony will honour the Class of 2025 graduates from schools under the QF's Pre-University Education.

It was in 1995 that Dr al-Mahmoud joined the QAD as a 16-year-old.

"We began our studies in a small compound called Al Ali, and about a year-and-a-half later, once the new Qatar Academy building was completed, we moved there," she recalled. "We felt we were part of a national milestone."

"At the time, Qatar's education system was largely segregated – some schools followed a fully English curriculum, while others taught exclusively in Arabic," Dr al-Mahmoud said. "The QF leadership then introduced the visionary idea of bridging this gap between the two systems. It was something entirely new and transformative. That's how the QAD was born."

Reflecting on the early days of the school, she recalled being the youngest in her batch.

"We were just 11 students from different backgrounds – some from English-speaking schools, others, like myself, from Arabic schools," she said.

"However, my English was strong, and the education approach was exhilarating," Dr al-Mahmoud added. "I was in a place where communication with teachers was encouraged – that was revolutionary. In most schools back



Surgeon and equestrian Dr Maryam al-Mahmoud.

then ... students and teachers were so separate; we could barely talk to our teachers."

"At the QAD, we were treated like young adults," she said. "It was empowering to have that level of dialogue at that age."

By integrating extracurricular activities into the learning experience, the QF's ecosystem goes beyond traditional classroom education, offering students opportunities to explore their passions and develop a broad range of skills.

"When I joined the QAD, they offered horse riding lessons," said Dr al-Mahmoud. "I eagerly signed up for every available class, and because I was at an advanced level, I was entrusted with riding young Arabian mares that had just recently been trained."

"This hands-on experience not only deepened my love for equestrianism, but also reflected how the QF encourages students to grow in every aspect of their lives," she said.

Dr al-Mahmoud's time at the QF taught her how to balance ambition with well-being, nurturing both her intellect and her passions.

It was there that she discovered the discipline to pursue a career in medicine.

"Combining my career with my love for riding hasn't been easy," Dr al-Mahmoud said. "I ride at 5am or 5.30am, before work. After work, I make sure my horses are cared for. Even on weekends, when I'm exhausted, I still get up early – it's a commitment I love."

"My friends from the QF have each followed their own paths in life," she continued.

"When I come across one of their names – whether in a newspaper, at a ministry, or through word of mouth – I feel proud of them. They've all achieved so much, and it's especially inspiring knowing that each one of them has grown into a remarkably successful woman."

FREE VEHICLE RECALL

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Ford Edge

Manufacturing Year 2021



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Ministry of Commerce and Industry
دولة قطر - دولة قطر

HEC Paris in Doha, Malomatia conclude training programme

QNA
Doha

HEC Paris in Doha, a global leader in executive education, has successfully concluded the custom-designed 'Mastering the Future' programme for senior executives at Malomatia, Qatar's leading systems integrator.

In a statement published yesterday, the institute said that this achievement marks another milestone in HEC Paris's ongoing mission to empower high-impact leadership across the region.

Delivered between November 2024 and May 2025, the programme brought together senior leaders from Malomatia for a five-module journey focused on developing the strategic capabilities re-



quired to lead in a rapidly evolving business environment.

The curriculum encompassed personal leadership, business strategy, operational excellence, performance management, and marketing management, equipping participants with practical tools, actionable frameworks, and future-ready insights.

The programme was designed and led by Associate Professor of

Information Systems and Operations Management at HEC Paris Professor Dimitrios Andritsos, in collaboration with Malomatia's Talent Development Department, blending academic excellence with real-world relevance to ensure immediate impact on participants' day-to-day leadership roles.

Commenting on the programme, Dean of HEC Paris, Doha Dr Pablo Martin de Holan said: "At HEC Paris, Doha, we don't just teach leadership, we help leaders find purpose and the courage to lead transformative change. Our collaboration with Malomatia reflects a shared vision: leadership today must be proactive, principled, and future-focused.

"As we celebrate 15 years of presence in the region, pro-

grammes like this remind us why we are here, to serve as a partner in shaping the next generation of changemakers."

Malomatia CEO Khalid Mohammed al-Kubaisi, said: "The Mastering the Future programme delivered substantial value to our leadership teams. It enhanced their ability to think strategically, lead confidently, and contribute meaningfully to Qatar's digital transformation journey. The experience has strengthened our commitment to continuous learning and innovation."

This initiative is part of HEC Paris, Doha's portfolio of over 90 customised executive education programmes delivered across the region, having trained over 2,000 professionals in sectors critical to national and regional development.

Qatari Success Festival 2025 begins at UDST

The 7th edition of Qatari Success Festival kicked off yesterday at the University of Doha for Science and Technology (UDST), welcoming institutions, youth organisations, social initiatives, universities, and innovative minds from across the country.

As part of Qatar's national efforts to spotlight achievements and inspire future generations, Qatari Success serves as a dynamic platform that celebrates outstanding stories, showcases homegrown talent, and fosters collaboration between innovators, entrepreneurs, and thought leaders.

Vice-President of the Festival's Organising Committee Sheikh Abdullah bin Nawaf al-Thani emphasised the festival's commitment to empowering youth, amplifying Qatar's success stories, and reinforcing the culture of leadership and innovation.

He noted that hosting this year's edition at Doha University of Science and Technology reflects Qatar's dedication to investing in young talent, cultivating forward-thinking leadership, and providing a space where ambition turns into tangible success.

He added that with specialised forums covering diverse interests, the festival encourages engagement in areas like scientific innovation, entrepreneurship, environmental sustainability,

and digital transformation. Sheikh Abdullah highlighted that Qatari Success is more than an event, it's a movement that listens, inspires, and nurtures ideas into reality.

Director of Youth Affairs at the Ministry of Sports and Youth Fawaz al-Misfri reinforced the government's belief that investing in young people and their initiatives is an investment in Qatar's future.

He described Qatari Success as a powerful example of creativity, entrepreneurship, and community engagement, demonstrating the nation's readiness to support emerging talent.

The Ministry of Sports and Youth officially sponsors and actively participates in Qatari Success 2025, contributing to the event through forums, workshops, mentorship programmes, and a closing ceremony honouring Qatar's top achievers.

The ministry encourages youth to take advantage of the festival's opportunities, network, share knowledge, and develop projects that align with Qatar's Vision 2030.

Since its establishment in 2017, Qatari Success has become a cornerstone event, spotlighting the inspiring journeys of Qatar's youth across multiple sectors. This year's edition arrives at a pivotal moment, as Qatar undergoes transformational growth, relying on the next generation to shape its future. **(QNA)**

UDST, NTUA agreement to advance technology education

The University of Doha for Science and Technology (UDST) has signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with the National Technical University of Athens (NTUA), one of Greece's most prestigious and oldest higher education institutions.

This collaboration marks a significant milestone in UDST's international partnership strategy, aimed at enriching education, research, and training in the fields of engineering and technology, a statement said yesterday.

Under the MoU, UDST and NTUA will collaborate on various initiatives, including joint research, academic exchanges, and the development of technical, professional, and customised training programmes. The collaboration also promotes the exchange of expertise in education, training, and development to foster innovation and lifelong learning.

The agreement was signed by Dr Salem Al-Naemi, president of UDST, and Prof Ioannis K Chatjigeorgiou, rector of NTUA, during a ceremony in Athens.

The partnership brings together two academic institutions committed to excellence, combining deep industry knowledge, academic expertise, and technological capabilities to create new opportunities for students, faculty, and



Dr Salem Al-Naemi and Prof Ioannis K Chatjigeorgiou at the signing ceremony.

the broader community.

Dr Al-Naemi highlighted the importance of the partnership. "This MoU marks a new milestone in UDST's international collaboration strategy. It reflects our commitment to keeping pace with global advancements in science and technology, and to preparing our students with the knowledge and skills needed to thrive in an ever-evolving world. Together with NTUA, we aim

to create a future-proof educational experience that benefits not just our institutions, but our wider communities."

Prof Chatjigeorgiou, noted: "We are pleased to be collaborating with the University of Doha for Science and Technology. Through this partnership, we seek to empower future generations with the skills and technical expertise required to lead, innovate and support economic development."

'Quiz on Korea' fosters cultural ties



By Joey Aguilar
Staff Reporter

The South Korean embassy in Doha and Hamad bin Khalifa University (HBKU) recently co-hosted the inaugural "Quiz on Korea" preliminary round in Qatar, attracting

eight Qatari participants.

The event was part of the globally televised KBS (Korean Broadcasting System) show. The winner secured a round-trip ticket and accommodation in Seoul, along with the opportunity to participate in the final round of the '2025 Quiz on Korea,' to be broadcast glo-

bally this autumn.

Pil-ho Kang, deputy chief of mission of the embassy; and Dr Boualem Yahiaoui, head of Language Teaching, Learning, and Assessment at the Language Centre, attended the event and highlighted its importance with their remarks.

Pil-ho Kang also touched

upon the growing popularity of Korean culture in Qatar, noting the high demand for K-beauty products among Qataris visiting Korea and the increasing interest in learning the Korean language, citing her frequent greetings of "annyeonghasaeyo" (hello) from Qataris since her arrival.

MoT inspection campaigns target passenger transport companies

The Ministry of Transport (MoT) has conducted inspection campaigns in lockstep with the Ministry of Interior's relevant departments to verify that companies offering pre-scheduled passenger transport services have duly secured necessary legal licences from the MoT, along with their adherence to all statutory rules laid down in the law and its executive regulation.

During the inspections one of the companies was intercepted. It was operating passenger transport services via online applications without having secured the requisite prior authorisation from the MoT, the ministry said.

The ministry added it had cracked down on 11 infractions on the part of licensed limousine company drivers, along with 13 violations by individuals operating unlicensed passenger transport using private vehicles, in contravention of the provisions of Law No. 8 of 2019 regulating land transport and its executive regulations.

Conducted during the first quarter of 2025, the campaigns resulted in the detection of 66 infractions committed by licensed limousine companies engaged

in passenger transport services via online applications, the ministry said.

The ministry emphasised it would embark on enforcing the laws and legislations issued against the non-compliant companies. It called upon passenger transport companies to abide by the enforced laws with respect to the utilisation of online applications and to obtain prior licences from the ministry to operate transportation services across the nation and to avoid the violations outlined in the aforementioned law.

In addition, the ministry stressed its keenness to ensure that companies which engage in passenger transport via online applications are committed to safety standards, as well as the conditions set out in this law and its executive regulations issued under MoT's Decision No. 13 of 2024. The bottom line is to ensure the highest standards of service delivered by duly licensed companies within a fair competitive environment, the ministry stressed, asserting that it will crack down on unlicensed companies and subject them to maximum penalties as stipulated in the law. **(QNA)**

All-new Lynk & Co 06, a stylish B-Segment SUV

Auto Class Cars, the authorised general distributor of Lynk & Co in Qatar, has revealed the all-new Lynk & Co 06 in Qatar, described as a stylish and high-quality B-segment SUV.

The Lynk & Co 06 and a wide range of the brand's models are available at Auto Class Cars' showroom on Salwa Road in Doha, a statement said.

Lynk & Co 06 distinguishes itself through its 'Mega-city Contrast' design philosophy, capturing the spirit of urban exploration and the boundless possibilities of city life. Among the range of colour options offered for Lynk & Co 06 in Qatar, are the striking hues of Sonic Green and Pastel Lilac.

The front grille, inspired by urban skylines, harmonises with the energy cube taillights, which draw inspiration from city lights reflecting on water. The refined interior's highlights include a B-pillar coat hook, power-adjustable leather seats featuring 6-way electric adjustment, 4-way lumbar support, and a 4-way passenger power adjustment, a 12.3-inch central display, antibacterial



steering wheel and ambient lighting system with 72 customisable colours. Lynk & Co 06 is equipped with a B Plus 1.5TD engine delivering a maximum of 181ps and 290Nm of torque. The chassis system incorporates an advanced

four-wheel independent suspension, with a MacPherson strut at the front and a multi-link axle at the rear, enhancing both smoothness and agility. The braking distance is just 36.2m at 100km/h.



Lynk & Co 06 has already received widespread acclaim in different markets. The launch in Qatar underscored the significant interest and anticipation for this modern high-end international brand in the GCC market. Lynk & Co, born in

2016, has achieved remarkable growth and progress in record time. The values of the company are to present efficient powertrains with European technology, combining high performance, luxury, and safety, the statement added.

Malaysia PM hails Qatar’s role in global peace

QNA
Kuala Lumpur

Malaysian Prime Minister Dr Anwar Ibrahim has emphasised that the visit of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani to Malaysia, to participate in the 2nd Asean-GCC Summit and the 1st Asean-GCC-China Economic Summit, is a high-level occasion that reflects the deep bilateral relations. He praised His Highness personally and his esteemed position in the Islamic world, appreciating Qatar’s firm stances on issues concerning the Muslim community and its active role in achieving global peace.

In an interview with Qatar News Agency (QNA) on the sidelines of the Amir’s visit to Malay-



sia, the Malaysian prime minister said that it is a rare privilege to receive His Highness the Amir, adding that he is looking forward to enhancing the bilateral collaboration and economic investments.

He said that the relations between Malaysia and Qatar are friendly and successful, noting that Malaysians consider Qatar a great friend of their country.

Regarding regional issues, the Malaysian prime minister highlighted the great esteem Qatar enjoys within the Islamic world, stating that what is of particular importance is the position taken by Qatar and His Highness the Amir on issues affecting the Ummah, particularly the Palestinian cause, and the tireless and continuous efforts to achieve peace, ceasefire in Gaza, and recognition of the State of Palestine. This position has been greatly appreciated by many Muslims, including Malaysians, he affirmed.

He also praised Qatar’s successes in hosting global events, pointing to Qatar’s outstanding success in organising the FIFA World Cup Qatar 2022, which received admiration from the entire world.

In a separate context, Dr Ibrahim praised Qatar’s role in medi-

ating a ceasefire in the Gaza Strip, pointing out that Qatar continues to engage with all parties to end the war in Gaza, in co-operation with the US and Egypt.

He added that Qatar, without exaggeration, has played a pivotal role in a very difficult time and has had to take a tough diplomatic path, noting that without the involvement of the Palestinians and their representatives, no meaningful progress in negotiations can be achieved.

The Malaysian prime minister reaffirmed his support for Qatar’s peace efforts, condemning the atrocities committed against innocent civilians, and rejecting the principle of occupation, adding, “I told His Highness the Amir that we really appreciate his immense contribution to try and resolve this conflict.”

Qatari Haj Mission unveils new app for pilgrims

The Information Systems Unit of the Qatari Haj Mission announced the rollout of the 7th edition of the Murshid Al-Hajj guidance application, marking a significant milestone in leveraging cutting-edge technology to serve Qatar’s pilgrims.

The app offers an integrated suite of guidance, health, and communication services that accompany the pilgrim throughout the various phases of the pilgrimage journey.

Head of the Information Systems Unit at the Qatari Haj Mission, Ghanem Rashid al-Kubaisi, highlighted that the application serves as a “smart digital companion” for pilgrims from Qatar. He noted that it constitutes the mission’s unwavering efforts to enhance services, indicating that the application is available on both the Apple App Store and Android platforms, ensuring broad accessibility for all pilgrims from Qatar.

The application also benefits Arabic-speaking pilgrims of various nationalities by providing them with credible and reliable informational content, he outlined.

Al-Kubaisi further pointed out that the application features a dedicated ‘Pilgrim’s Toolkit’ section comprising instructional videos in Arabic, English, and sign language.

It offers smart communication services, including the option to share one’s live location and contact number with the mission’s unit via WhatsApp or SMS, ensuring swift response and timely assistance in both emergency and non-emergency situations, he added.

As part of the on-ground preparations, the mission’s Information Systems Unit has outfitted its key facilities in Saudi Arabia with a state-of-the-art internal network.

This infrastructure has been seamlessly integrated across all administrative, technical, and service units within the facilities, in pursuit of accelerating the operational workflows and fostering a diligent, advanced work atmosphere that ensures optimal service delivery to the pilgrims.

In addition, the mission intended to provide modern devices that track the traffic of the campaigns’



buses while en route, with the aim of facilitating traffic flow between the holy sites.

It also connected these devices with the Communication Unit to provide prompt services to pilgrims so as to easily accomplish the pilgrimage rituals and simultaneously ensure their safety and provision of support when needed.

The application includes a comprehensive health guide developed in collaboration with the Ministry of Public Health and the Ministry of Endowments. It offers pre- and post-ritual health tips, safety and first aid instructions, as well as key recommendations for the pre-pilgrimage phase.

It also incorporates smart services that were specifically catered to pilgrims in order to facilitate their experience, mostly the circumambulation around the Ka’aba ‘Tawaf and Sa’i’, along with an electronic rosary for reciting supplications.

It features an interactive map of the Grand Mosque displaying gate locations, ablution areas, and security offices, offering audiovisual educational videos that explain the Haj rituals in a clear and accessible format.

Furthermore, the application provides essential information such as the Qibla direction, prayer times, and real-time weather updates. Pilgrims may also electronically generate and print an official Haj completion certificate through the campaign management system linked to the Department of Haj and Umrah Affairs.

To ensure prompt communication, the application likewise offers direct contact via the free hotline 132 in Qatar and 8003040444 inside Saudi Arabia, to serve the pilgrims from Qatar around the clock and provide the required support through the competent units escorting the Haj mission. (QNA)

‘Amir’s participation in Asean-GCC Summit highly significant’

Malaysian Minister of Higher Education Dr Zambry Abdul Kadir emphasised the great significance of the participation of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani in the second Asean-GCC Summit, held yesterday in Kuala Lumpur. In his remarks to Qatar News Agency (QNA), the minister said that the participation of the Amir will contribute to strengthening bilateral relations, which have developed greatly and grown steadily over the years. “Qatar has always played very important roles internationally and in that regard, the presence of His Highness the Amir at the summit also shows the strategic importance of Asean and GCC as a whole and in particular between

Malaysia and Qatar. There are many strategic interests that we can work together in terms of enhancing our cooperation in many sectors, including in trade area, in education and as well as in human capital development,” he added. He emphasised the keenness of both GCC and Asean to expand their existing partnership, saying: “We need to expand our relations, especially that the GCC and Asean are two emerging and very dynamic regions in the world. So, for us to have this summit between GCC and Asean is quite timely for both parties.” Regarding educational cooperation between Qatar and Malaysia, Dr Abdul Kadir said that it is primarily achieved through



partnerships between institutions, people-to-people contacts, student mobility, and research exchange. These are the areas the two countries focus on in their collaboration. For example, there are Qatari students studying in

Malaysia, and Malaysia also has a campus in Qatar. There is also an opportunity to collaborate on developing technical and vocational education. He praised Qatar’s experience in the education sector, saying that the country is witnessing significant development in this field, and tremendous efforts are being made to raise the level of education, which is exciting because it keeps pace with the requirements of the present and prepares for the requirements of the future. It is clear that Qatar is moving in the right direction, and Malaysia hopes that both countries can co-operate to achieve this goal of producing more human competencies in both countries.

Significant Argentine presence at Project Qatar Smart Manufacturing Exhibition

Highlighting cutting-edge showcases at the ongoing Project Qatar and the Smart Manufacturing Exhibition 2025, Argentina is demonstrating a clear commitment to deepening trade ties, advancing innovation, and engaging with Qatar’s long-term development goals, a statement said yesterday. Hernán Lombardi, Minister of Economic Development for the City of Buenos Aires, will represent Argentina among a roster of international business leaders at the event. Argentina is the guest country this year at the event taking place until May 29 at Doha Exhibition and Convention Centre. Seven Argentine companies are headlining the national pavilion: SphereBio (a new mechanism for vaccine creation, programming immune cells to detect and destroy infected or cancerous cells), NoBac (sustainable low-tech water filters for safe drinking water), AVaTAR MedTech (cardiac surgical innovation, transforming paediatric and adult heart valve surgery), Greempact (data-driven energy efficiency solutions that contribute to environmental sustainability), Focus Infrastructure Monitoring (unlocking satellite intelligence for safer cities, critical infrastructure, and key assets) and Pala Blockchain (tokenising real-world assets through scalable and legally-backed innovation).

Sidra Medicine in Mideast first to perform new therapies for neurological disorders

Sidra Medicine, a member of Qatar Foundation, is the first hospital in the Middle East to successfully perform two Intraventricular Baclofen therapies. The milestone highlights Sidra Medicine’s commitment to pioneering advanced neurosurgical treatments for children and young people with severe movement disorders.

The procedure was performed on two young people with Dystonia. Dystonia is a neurological condition that causes uncontrolled muscle contractions. Following the procedure at Sidra Medicine, both adolescents experienced a remarkable improvement in their condition, demonstrating the effectiveness of this innovative therapy.

Dr Ian Pople, Chief of Neurosurgery at Sidra Medicine, who led the procedure and emphasised its significance said: “The neurosurgery performed on both patients was highly successful. Unlike traditional intrathecal Baclofen therapy, which delivers the drug into the spinal fluid via a pump in the lower back, the intraventricular approach administers the medication directly into the brain’s ventricles, allowing for more effective treatment of severe dystonia affecting the entire body. This approach underscores the importance of integrating neurosurgical precision with rehabilitation, ensuring patients receive the most advanced care available.”



Intraventricular Baclofen Therapy begins with the placement of a ventricular reservoir to allow for a trial of Baclofen therapy. This minimally invasive procedure is performed in the operating room using neuronavigational equipment, and the patient stays overnight for monitoring.

Once the surgical site has healed, the patient undergoes a three-day trial in the neurosurgical ward, where an external pump delivers Baclofen similarly to the fully implanted device. Regular assessments help determine the patient’s response to the medication. If the trial is successful, a permanent Baclofen pump is implanted to provide continuous therapy. The dosage is gradually adjusted to optimise symptom control, significantly improving the patient’s quality of life.

Sidra Medicine features Qatar’s first paediatric-focused Movement Disorders Clinic, offering advanced

care for children and young people with spasticity (uncontrollable muscle stiffness) and dystonia. The clinic takes a multidisciplinary approach, with specialists in rehabilitation medicine, neurology, neurosurgery, and therapy. It provides surgical and non-surgical interventions for patients who have not responded to medications and conventional therapy. The clinic is a key part of Sidra Medicine’s commitment to pioneering paediatric neurology care.

Adam was one of the young patients who underwent the groundbreaking Intraventricular Baclofen therapies.

Speaking about the impact of the treatment, Adam’s mother said: “Before the surgery, Adam’s condition affected nearly every part of his day. His limbs moved constantly, making it difficult for him to concentrate, rest, or participate in school like other children his age.

“After his surgery at Sidra Medicine and thanks to the Movement Disorders Clinic, Adam’s movements began to settle, and he gained a level of control we had not seen in years. These small improvements transformed how he interacts with the world. It has brought hope back into our home, and I truly believe this procedure and the supporting rehabilitative support can help many more children like Adam.” (QNA)

Old Doha Port unveils digital customs, immigration service

From Page 1

He said Old Doha Port is set for significant physical expansion and a vibrant calendar of events. Responding to strong demand from yacht owners, the port will add new berths within the port basin and upgrade marine infrastructure in the Mina Corniche area, including enhanced water and power supply. A new service featuring sea tours and internal transportation across the port will also be introduced, offering stunning views of the Doha Corniche skyline.

To promote year-round mari-

time tourism, Old Doha Port also announced a variety of summer activities including jet ski races, kayak rentals, stand-up paddling, diving experiences, and dedicated fishing days, offering accessible ways for residents and visitors to enjoy the sea.

Upcoming attractions would include the 2nd edition of the Qatar Boat Show on November 5-8, promising more exhibitors, additional event space, and new experiences.

“So much has happened over the past few months,” al-Mulla said, pointing to key milestones including hosting the inaugural Qa-

tar Boat Show, launching the Old Doha Port Fishing Exhibition, and introducing the Mina Pre-Owned Boat Show. These initiatives, he said, have steadily reshaped the port “into a regional hub for marine tourism, recreational boating, and cultural engagement”.

“Old Doha Port is more than a destination, it’s a living, breathing ecosystem. Every service we introduce, every partnership we foster, and every event we host is part of a larger vision to restore the historic bond between the city and the sea, and to share it with the world,” al-Mulla said.

Al Wakra Hospital recognised for age-friendly care of elderly

Hamad Medical Corporation (HMC)’s Al Wakra Hospital has been officially recognised as an Age-Friendly Health System Participant by the US-based Institute for Healthcare Improvement (IHI), one of the founding partners of the Age-Friendly Health Systems movement. IHI is a leading, globally recognised not-for-profit healthcare improvement organisation that has been applying evidence-based quality improvement methods to meet current and future healthcare challenges for more than 30 years. This recognition highlights Al Wakra Hospital’s steadfast commitment to delivering high-quality, age-friendly care to older adults. Al Wakra Hospital joins this important movement to provide high-quality care for people 60 and over across HMC, alongside Rumailah Hospital, by integrating these essential, evidence-based practices into patient care. Dr Hanadi Khamis al-Hamad,

HMC’s Deputy Chief for Long-Term Care, Rehabilitation, and Geriatrics, and Medical Director of Rumailah Hospital, has been a driving force behind this initiative. Her leadership and commitment to enhancing older adult care in Qatar were instrumental in earning this recognition. “We are incredibly honoured that Al Wakra Hospital has received this prestigious recognition for our care of senior citizens,” said Dr al-Hamad. “This acknowledgment from IHI reflects the dedication and hard work of our multidisciplinary healthcare teams at Al Wakra Hospital in ensuring elderly patients receive timely, high-quality services. As Qatar’s elderly population continues to grow, we remain committed to advancing specialised healthcare services and promoting healthy lifestyles for those over 60.” Dr Omar Mohd al-Qahtani, CEO and Medical Director of Al Wakra Hospital, added: “Earning this participant status marks an important step forward in

our journey toward excellence in age-friendly healthcare. This achievement reflects the commitment and dedication of our entire team.” Nasser al-Naimi, Chief of Patient Experience and Director of Hamad Healthcare Quality Institute at HMC, commented: “Our longstanding strategic partnership with IHI has led to meaningful advancements in Qatar’s healthcare sector, including at Al Wakra Hospital. This recognition ensures that our patients receive care aligned with the highest international standards.” Melissa Panagides-Busch, Chief Operating Officer and Interim CEO of the IHI, said: “We are proud to welcome Hamad Medical Corp – Al Wakra Hospital as a participant in the Age-Friendly Health Systems initiative. Achieving this status demonstrates their commitment to delivering age-friendly care, and we look forward to supporting them on their journey toward health care excellence for older adults.” (QNA)

QC calls for supporting children in disaster-stricken areas

Qatar Charity (QC), emphasised the importance of strengthening partnerships between humanitarian organisations to create sustainable solutions that support children in areas affected by crises and disasters. This came during a joint session held by QC in collaboration with Save the Children, titled ‘Building Resilient Childhoods in Afghanistan’. Officials from both organisations, alongside representatives from diplomatic missions, Qatari government bodies, the UN, and partners in humanitarian and development work attended the session. Chief Global Operation Officer at QC Nawaf Abdulla al-Hammadi during his opening remarks at the session said: “At a time when global crises are escalating, partnerships like this one are not just valuable, they are essential. Together, we can move beyond raising concerns to driving real solutions and impact for children growing up in adversity.” He also thanked Save the Children for actively



taking part in the session which comes amid escalating global crises, reinforcing the need for concerted efforts to achieve a tangible positive impact. As Afghanistan faces multiple challenges which significantly impact the well-being of children and communities, the session discussed key topics, including different models for religious schools (Madrasas), protecting vulnerable groups, especially women and girls, and the impact of climate change on children in Afghanistan, with a focus on sustainable solutions for humanitarian and developmental challenges. For her part, Chief Operating officer at Save the Children

Gabriella Waaijman said: “This session comes at a critical time, as the humanitarian sector faces unprecedented financial shocks and uncertainty. Strong and strategic partnerships, like the one between Save the Children and Qatar Charity, are essential to protect the progress we have made and to reimagine a future where children not only survive but thrive.” Director of External Affairs at QC Mana Mohammed al-Ansari affirmed the charity’s commitment to supporting children in Afghanistan. “The children of Afghanistan, like children everywhere, have a right to a life of safety, dignity, and opportunity.” (QNA)

Charles underpins Canadian ‘self-determination’

King Charles III stressed Canada's proud independence yesterday as he delivered a major speech to open parliament in Ottawa set against US President Donald Trump's threat to take over the country. "Democracy, pluralism, the rule of law, self-determination, and freedom are values which Canadians hold dear, and ones which the government is determined to protect," Charles said, adding that Canada was facing a "critical moment". Prime Minister Mark Carney invited the 76-year-old British monarch — who is the Canadian head of state — to the capital, accompanied by Queen Camilla. The king has never publicly commented on Trump's repeated talk of making Canada the 51st US state, but his language was closely watched for veiled references. Although the speech was read by the king as if his own words, it was written by the prime minister's

office to set out the government's priorities to "build Canada strong" and how it aims to achieve them. In addition to his annexation threats, Trump has also launched tariff wars, particularly targeting Canada, a member of the 56-nation British Commonwealth. "The system of open global trade that, while not perfect, has helped to deliver prosperity for Canadians for decades, is changing," Charles said, in cautious words. "We must be clear-eyed: the world is a more dangerous and uncertain place than at any point since the Second World War." The speech was delivered in the Senate — a former railway station that has been converted while parliament undergoes renovations — with past prime ministers, Supreme Court justices and Indigenous leaders in feather headdresses in attendance. "You see the enthusiasm for our institutions," Carney said in reference to cheering



Canadian Prime Minister Mark Carney speaks with Britain's King Charles ahead of the latter's speech from the throne in the Senate in Ottawa yesterday. (Reuters)

crowds awaiting the king. "Our sovereignty is strong." King Charles' "speech from the throne" was the first by a monarch

in nearly half a century. It was delivered by Charles's mother, the late Queen Elizabeth II, in 1957 and 1977.

"In terms of symbolism, it's extraordinary," said Felix Mathieu, a politics professor at the University of Quebec in Outaouais. Yesterday's event, Mathieu said, was a message to Trump to show him that "Canada is not alone in this fight." Carney has vowed to oversee the biggest transformation of Canada's economy since the end of the Second World War to enable it to "stand up" to Trump. Charles said in the speech that Canada would also "build new alliances" and seek out "reliable trading partners and allies around the world," while reinvesting in its military and Arctic defence. "Canada is ready to build a coalition of like-minded countries that share its values, that believe in international co-operation and the free and open exchange of goods, services, and ideas," he said. Thousands gathered along a

parade route for a chance to see their monarch arriving in a carriage escorted by Royal Canadian Mounted Police horses. The atmosphere was festive with people waving Canadian flags, a 21-gun salute and a fighter jet flypast. The king stopped several times to speak with people along a security fence before and after his speech. Kirsten Hanson, 44, said she welcomed the king's show of support as the pressure grows from the United States. "If there's anything that he can do to demonstrate Canada's sovereignty I think that that's fantastic," she told AFP. "Nobody wants to be absorbed into the US." "Elbows up," said Marion Hand, 88, in reference to Carney's battle cry in the face of Trump's annexation threats. She travelled from Mississauga, Ontario for the event and was visibly giddy after a handshake with the king and queen.

France detains suspects in crypto kidnapping plots

AFP

Paris

France has arrested more than 20 people over two recent kidnapping plots targeting crypto traders in Paris and another attempt in western France, a source close to the case said yesterday, asking not to be named.

The arrests are part of an investigation by France's organised crime office into the May 1 abduction of a crypto-millionaire's father who was later rescued by French police, the May 13 attempted kidnapping this month of a French cryptocurrency entrepreneur's daughter and grandson, and a new plot that was foiled on Monday near the western city of Nantes, the source said.

The incidents have raised concerns about the security of wealthy crypto-tycoons who have notched up immense fortunes from the booming business.

The arrests of groups of suspects were made on different occasions over the last month and not simultaneously. The two Paris plots were revealed at the time but this is the first time details of the incident outside Nantes have emerged.

According to the source, six people have been charged in connection with the May 1 kidnapping in Paris of the father of a man who made his fortune in cryptocurrency. The victim, for whom a ransom of several million euros was demanded by his captors, was freed during a raid on May 3 by the security forces on a house in the Essonne region outside Paris where he was being held.

The victim was abducted in front of witnesses by four hooded men who bundled him into a delivery van and injured him.

A few days later, on May 13, the daughter and grandson of the chief executive of a cryptocurrency company escaped a street kidnapping in Paris, an incident that received wide coverage as dramatic images were posted on social media.

The entire team of aggressors involved in that plot were arrested, said the source, without giving further details on the number of people involved.

Freedom from hard summer yards



Students rejoice as they leave school for their summer vacation in Lahore yesterday. Soaring temperatures in April and May are becoming more common in Pakistan, which usually sees summer begin in early June. Temperatures reached near-record levels in April, as high as 46.5C (115.7F) in parts of Punjab. Schools in Punjab and Balochistan have announced early summer vacations because of the heat (AFP)

Scheduling of new US student visa appointments halted

Reuters

Washington

President Donald Trump's administration has ordered its missions abroad to stop scheduling new appointments for student and exchange visitor visa applicants as the State Department prepares to expand social media vetting of foreign students, according to an internal cable seen by Reuters yesterday.

US Secretary of State Marco Rubio said in the cable that the department plans to issue updated guidance on social media vetting of student and exchange visitor applicants after a review is completed and advised consular sections to halt the scheduling of such visa appointments.

The move comes as the Trump administration has sought to ramp up deportations and revoke student visas as part of its wide-ranging efforts to fulfil his hardline immigration agenda.

In the cable, first reported by Politico, Rubio said appointments that have already been scheduled can proceed under the current guidelines, but available appointments not already taken should be

pulled down. "The Department is conducting a review of existing operations and processes for screening and vetting of student and exchange visitor (F, M, J) visa applicants, and based on that review, plans to issue guidance on expanded social media vetting for all such applicants," the cable said. State Department spokesperson Tammy Bruce declined to comment on reports of the cable, but said the US will use "every tool" to vet anyone who wants to enter the United States.

"We will continue to use every tool we can to assess who it is that's coming here, whether they are students or otherwise," Bruce told reporters at a regular news briefing.

The expanded social media vetting will require consular sections to modify their operations, processes and allocation of resources, according to the cable, which advises the sections going forward to take into consideration the workload and resource requirements of each case before scheduling them.

The cable also advises consular sections to remain focused on services for US citizens, immigrant visas and fraud prevention.

Trump administration officials

have said student visa and green card holders are subject to deportation over their support for Palestinians and criticism of Israel's conduct in the war in Gaza, calling their actions a threat to US foreign policy and accusing them of being "pro-Hamas".

Trump's critics have called the effort an attack on free speech rights under the First Amendment of the US Constitution.

A Tufts University student from Turkey was held for over six weeks in an immigration detention centre in Louisiana after co-writing an opinion piece criticising her school's response to Israel's war in Gaza. She was released from custody after a federal judge granted her bail.

Last week, the Trump administration moved to revoke Harvard's ability to enrol international students. Those roughly 6,800 students make up about 27% of Harvard's total enrolment.

The Republican president's administration has moved to undermine the financial stability and global standing of the nation's oldest and wealthiest university after it pushed back on government demands for vast changes to its policies.

Trump says Putin ‘playing with fire’

Reuters

Washington/Kyiv

US President Donald Trump yesterday said Vladimir Putin was "playing with fire" by refusing to engage in ceasefire talks with Kyiv as Russian forces made gains in Ukraine's northeast.

With his frustration increasing, Trump has lashed out at the Russian president as Moscow has hit Ukraine with some of the three-year-old war's deadliest drone and missile attacks while not moving forward on ceasefire efforts.

"What Vladimir Putin doesn't realise is that if it weren't for me, lots of really bad things would have already happened in Russia, and I mean REALLY BAD. He's playing with fire," Trump said in a Truth Social post yesterday.

The president, who prides himself on having friendly relations with Putin, did not elaborate.

Trump in a post on Sunday said Putin had "gone absolutely CRAZY" by unleashing a massive aerial attack on Ukraine.

Putin said after a two-hour call with Trump last week that Russia was ready to work with Ukraine on a memorandum about a future peace accord. The Russian leader said part of this work would be defining a possible ceasefire, including its time frame. Ukraine, its European allies and the US have all urged Putin to accept an immediate, unconditional ceasefire lasting at least 30 days.

The Kremlin has said it could not estimate how long drafting the memorandum would take, and it said yesterday it was still working on it. Kyiv and European governments have accused Moscow of stalling while it advances on the battlefield.

Trump's social media blast yesterday came as Kyiv suffered another battlefield setback with Russian forces capturing four villages in Ukraine's northeastern Sumy region.

Trump has so far held off on major new sanctions against Russia, though US officials say a package of sanctions has been prepared should he decide to do so. Trump is also under pressure from Ukraine President Volodymyr Zelensky to increase military assistance to Ukraine.

The Russian advances follow some of the biggest drone and missile attacks on Ukraine since Russia began the full-scale war in early 2022, although the level dropped markedly overnight from Monday to yesterday.

Ukraine has also fired dozens of long-range drones into Russia in recent days, forcing some Moscow airports to close temporarily.

Sumy Governor Oleh Hryhorov wrote on Facebook that the villages of Novenke, Basivka, Veselivka and Zhuravka had been occupied by Russia, although residents had long been evacuated.

Russia's Defence Ministry said on Monday it had taken the nearby village of Bilovody, implying a further advance in the more than three-year war.

Ukrainian officials have said for weeks that Russian troops are trying to make inroads into Sumy region, the main city of which lies less than 30km from the border.

Russian forces, attacking in small groups on motorcycles and supported by drones, have been widening the area where they have been carrying out assaults, a spokesperson for Ukraine's border guard service said.

Ukrainian forces used Sumy region as a launch pad to seize a chunk of Russia's neighbouring Kursk region last year before being largely driven out by April. The area has been pounded for months by Russian guided bomb attacks and other strikes.

"The enemy is continuing attempts to advance with the aim of setting up a so-called 'buffer zone'," Hryhorov wrote on Facebook. During a trip to the Kursk region in March, Putin repeated a call for his military to consider establishing a "buffer zone" along Russia's border.

Though Russia's offensive activity is concentrated in the eastern Donetsk region, Moscow's inroads into northeastern Ukraine show how it is stretching Kyiv's forces on multiple fronts.

Zelensky has repeatedly warned that Russia is preparing new offensives against Sumy as well as the northeastern Kharkiv and southeastern Zaporizhzhia regions.

"There is much evidence that they are preparing new offensive operations. Russia is counting on further war," he said on Monday, without elaborating.

Trump administration to cut all remaining federal Harvard contracts



Students walk on the campus of Harvard University in Cambridge, Massachusetts. (Reuters)

Reuters

Washington/Boston

US President Donald Trump's administration plans to terminate the federal government's remaining contracts with Harvard University, according to a letter set to be sent to federal agencies yesterday.

The letter, from the US General Services Administration, directs all federal agencies to review and potentially terminate or reallocate their contracts with Harvard, which an official valued at about \$100mn.

Harvard did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

The move marked the latest in-

stance of the Republican president's administration moving to undermine the financial stability and global standing of the nation's oldest and wealthiest university after it pushed back on government demands for vast changes to its policies.

The government has already terminated nearly \$3bn in federal research grants for the Ivy League school and moved last week to revoke its ability to enrol international students. Those roughly 6,800 students make up about 27% of Harvard's total enrolment.

A federal judge in Boston on Friday temporarily blocked the US Department of Homeland Security from revoking foreign student

enrolment ahead of a Thursday hearing. During a brief hearing yesterday, a lawyer with the US Department of Justice said the administration is complying with that order and was weighing its options.

Yesterday's letter from the GSA accused the school of engaging in discriminatory admissions practices even after the US Supreme Court in its 2023 decision ending affirmative action in higher education rejected Harvard's use of race as an admissions factor to boost campus diversity.

The letter from Josh Gruenbaum, commissioner of the GSA's federal acquisition service, also accused Cambridge, Massachusetts-based Harvard of discriminatory hiring

practices and of "failing to protect Jewish students from harassment".

Two officials familiar with the matter said the letter was to be sent to agencies yesterday. The letter directs agencies to submit a list of contract cancellations by June 6 and says contracts for critical services would be transitioned to other vendors.

Harvard, which is suing to challenge the administration's actions, has argued the administration in its rush to punish the school has run afoul of various procedures and is violating its free speech rights under the US Constitution's First Amendment by trying to assert control over its staff, curriculum and enrolment.

ACCIDENT

Five dead, six missing after China chemical plant blast

An explosion at a chemical plant in the eastern Chinese province of Shandong killed at least five people, with 19 injured and six missing, the state-run Xinhua agency said. The blast occurred a few minutes before noon yesterday, shaking part of a chemical plant operated by Shandong Youdao Chemical in the city of Weifang. Videos circulating on Chinese social media and verified showed plumes of orange and black smoke billowing into the sky. Windows of nearby buildings were ripped from their hinges by the explosion, one of the videos showed. More than 200 emergency workers responded to the blast.

PEOPLE

Far-right figure Robinson released early from jail

British far-right figurehead Tommy Robinson was freed from prison yesterday after winning his plea for early release after being convicted of contempt of court. Robinson, whose real name is Stephen Yaxley-Lennon, 42, thanked X owner Elon Musk and slammed the UK government in the video titled "Tommy freed from prison" posted on his social media. The video appeared to be filmed outside Woodhill Prison in southeast England, where Robinson was sentenced to spend 18 months in October. Robinson had breached a court order barring him from repeating false allegations he had made about a Syrian refugee.

DECISION

UK to spend billions on job training

Britain will spend a record £3bn (\$4bn) to boost training opportunities, the government said yesterday, part of a broader strategy to train locals to fill gaps in the labour market and reduce reliance on foreign workers. The investment will "refocus the skills landscape towards young, domestic talent" by creating 120,000 new training opportunities in key sectors such as construction, engineering, health and social care, and digital, a statement from the government's education department said. More than one in five working-age Britons do not have a job and are not seeking one, with the latest official data showing the inactivity rate at 21.4%.

TRAGEDY

Teenager dies after taking part in rugby-inspired craze

A teenager has died in New Zealand after taking part in a rugby-inspired craze that sees participants sprint into each other head-on with no protective gear, police said yesterday. Fuelled by social media and sometimes playing out in front of large crowds, the "run-it-straight" challenge has swept across New Zealand and Australia. Organised run-it-straight competitions offer thousands of dollars in prize money but the trend has ignited fears of concussion and other serious injuries. A 19-year-old died in New Zealand's North Island after playing the game with friends over the weekend, police said in a statement.

Man arrested for attempted murder after Liverpool parade crash

Reuters
Liverpool, England

A 53-year-old man was arrested on suspicion of attempted murder, dangerous driving and driving while unfit through drugs after a car ploughed into a crowd of Liverpool fans during a Premier League title parade, injuring more than 50, British police said.

Eleven victims remained in hospital in a stable condition yesterday, police said, adding that they all appeared to be recovering well.

British police believe the incident, in a packed Liverpool city centre on Monday, was isolated and not an act of terrorism.

They said the driver of the grey Ford Galaxy people-carrier involved in the incident was believed to have followed an ambulance into a closed street when a road block was lifted to allow paramedics to attend to a suspected heart attack victim.

Videos posted online showed the vehicle driving through the street crowded with fans, sending several flying into the air and dragging at least four under its wheels.

When the vehicle stopped, angry people converged on it and began smashing the windows as police officers battled to prevent them from reaching the driver.

Police said 50 people, including children, had been treated for their injuries, with 11 still in hospital.

"They are all in a stable condition, and I am pleased to say that

they appear to be recovering well," deputy chief constable Jenny Sims said.

King Charles, who is visiting Canada, said he was "deeply shocked and saddened to hear of the terrible events". With most people off work for the Spring Bank Holiday, officials estimated that around 1mn people descended on the 16km parade route to watch the Liverpool team travel through the city on an open-top bus with the Premier League trophy.

Liverpool last won the league in 2020, ending a 30-year-wait, but fans were unable to celebrate due to lockdowns during the pandemic.

Police said the car hit the spectators as the event was winding down. In the aftermath, a Reuters photographer saw emergency services carrying victims on stretchers and in their arms to nearby ambulances.

One source told MailOnline that it looked like the driver panicked when he realised he was in the crowd and people started banging on his car. The driver, who was sounding his horn, reversed and then accelerated forwards, according to reports from other witnesses.

Police were unusually quick to provide a description of the man they arrested, saying around two hours after the incident he was a "53-year-old white British man from the Liverpool area."

Former police officers and local politicians said that statement was needed to cool social media speculation that the episode was an Islamist attack.

UK royals wrap up whirlwind visit to Canada



Britain's King Charles III and Queen Camilla lay a wreath at The Tomb of the Unknown Soldier at the National War Memorial in Ottawa, Canada yesterday. King Charles III was given an enthusiastic welcome on May 26 by Canadians who turned out in droves to see their monarch on his historic visit to open parliament, as part of the pushback against US President Donald Trump's annexation threats. The 76-year-old king, who is Canada's head of state as part of the Commonwealth, was greeted at the airport by Prime Minister Mark Carney, who has invited him to give an address opening Canada's new legislature yesterday. King Charles later left Canada after a visit that barely lasted 24 hours.

India approves stealth fighter jet programme

Reuters
New Delhi

India's defence minister has approved a framework for building the country's most advanced stealth fighter jet, the defence ministry said yesterday, amid a new arms race with Pakistan weeks after a military conflict between the neighbours.

Indian state-run Aeronautical Development Agency, which

is executing the programme, will shortly invite initial interest from defence firms for developing a prototype of the warplane, envisaged as a twin-engine 5th generation fighter, the ministry said. The project is crucial for the Indian Air Force, whose squadrons of mainly Russian and ex-Soviet aircraft have fallen to 31 from an approved strength of 42. Pakistan has one of China's most advanced warplanes, the J-10, in its arsenal. Militaries of India and Pakistan

faced-off in four days of fighting this month, which saw use of fighter jets, missiles, drones and artillery by both sides. It was the first time both sides utilised drones at scale and the South Asian powers are now locked in a drones arms race, according to Reuters' interviews with 15 people, including security officials, industry executives and analysts in the two countries. India will partner with a domestic firm for the stealth fighter programme, and companies can bid

independently or as a joint venture, the defence ministry said in a statement, adding that the bids would be open for both private and state-owned firms.

In March, an Indian defence committee had recommended including the private sector in military aircraft manufacturing to shore up the capabilities of the Indian Air Force and reduce the burden on state-owned Hindustan Aeronautics, which makes most of India's military aircraft.

Filipino singer Aguilar dies at 72



Filipino singer-songwriter Freddie Aguilar, best known for his chart-topping international hit *Anak*, died in Manila yesterday aged 72. He had been receiving treatment at the Philippine Heart Center, according to social media posts uploaded by his wife, Jovie Albao-Aguilar. The one-time street musician was one of the leaders of the locally based Original Pilipino Music movement that emerged in the 1970s, and was known for his political activism, often tackling social issues through song. In the 1980s, he lent his voice to the People Power Movement that overthrew then-dictator Ferdinand Marcos, with his rendition of the patriotic ballad *Bayan Ko* (My Country) serving as an anthem.

Record feat



Nepali climber Tashi Gyalzen Sherpa (centre) arrives at the Tribhuvan International Airport in Kathmandu yesterday, after he made a record-breaking four summits of Everest in 15 days. Nepal has issued more than 1,100 permits for mountaineers this season, including 458 for Everest, earning more than \$5mn in royalties. The country is home to eight of the world's 10 highest peaks and welcomes hundreds of adventurers each spring, when temperatures are warmer and winds typically calmer.

UK mulls ditching two-child cap on benefit payments

Reuters
London

Britain's Labour government is considering whether to abolish a two-child limit on welfare payments to parents as it reassesses several unpopular policies to reverse a slide in its poll ratings, in the second potential policy shift in as many weeks.

Labour suffered a bruising set of local election results earlier this month after less than a year in power, losing ground to Nigel Farage's right-wing Reform UK party, which also now leads in national opinion polls and has challenged Labour on its spending decisions.

Last week Prime Minister Keir Starmer signalled he was open to reversing a cut in winter fuel payments to the elderly, and the government is now considering whether to scrap the two-child

benefit cap, which think tanks and critics say fuels poverty.

Asked if the government would scrap the cap, which was introduced by the Conservative government in 2017, Education Minister Bridget Phillipson said: "It's on the table."

"No measures are off the table," she told Times Radio, adding that a child poverty taskforce was looking at "lots of ways" to tackle the issue and could not ignore the impacts of the policy.

Starmer's spokesperson said the taskforce would consider all available levers, but would not comment on possible individual measures.

Labour cut winter fuel payments and refused to scrap the two-child benefit cap after being elected in July, arguing the spending reductions were necessary to fix a hole in government finances left by the previous Conservative administration.

Asean leaders agree tariff deals with US should not harm fellow members

Southeast Asia is among the regions hardest hit by the tariffs, with six of its countries facing levies of between 32% and 49% in July if negotiations on reductions fail

Reuters
Kuala Lumpur

Southeast Asian leaders reached an understanding yesterday that any bilateral agreements they might strike with the US on trade tariffs would not harm the economies of fellow members, Malaysia's premier Anwar Ibrahim said.

Anwar, the current chair of the Association of Southeast Asian

Nations, said there was consensus during an Asean summit in Kuala Lumpur that any deals negotiated with Washington would ensure the interests of the region as a whole were protected.

The Asean meeting came at a time of global market volatility and slowing economic growth, and amid uncertainty over a trade war that has ensued since US President Donald Trump's announcement of sweeping "Liberation Day" tariffs.

Southeast Asia is among the regions hardest hit by the tariffs, with six of its countries facing levies of between 32% and 49% in July if negotiations on reductions fail.

"While proceeding with bilateral negotiations ..., the consensus

rose to have some sort of understanding with Asean that decisions should not be at the expense of any other country," said Anwar, who on Monday said he had written to Trump requesting an Asean-US meeting on the tariffs.

"So we will have to protect the turf of 650mn or 660mn people," he said of Asean.

Asean, a region with combined gross domestic product of more than \$3.8tn, is in a precarious position in relation to the US, which is the biggest market for the region's exports, key drivers of its growth.

The 10-member bloc yesterday released a five-year strategic plan to better integrate its economies, citing challenges that meant "car-

rying on business as usual will not suffice". Yesterday's meetings also included an economic gathering of leaders of the Asean, Gulf countries and China, which was represented by Premier Li Qiang.

One absentee was Brunei's 78-year-old ruler, Sultan Hassanal Bolkiah, who was admitted to a Kuala Lumpur hospital after feeling tired, but was in good health according to his office.

At a dinner event late yesterday, China's Li urged Gulf and Asean countries to remove trade barriers and expand liberalisation in the face of rising protectionism and unilateralism.

"We all need to firmly maintain the multilateral trading system with the World Trade Organisation

as the core, and promote the creation of a stable and orderly international market environment," he said.

Asean leaders also called for a temporary ceasefire in Myanmar to be expanded nationwide, to enable warring sides to build trust and work towards convening dialogue.

Myanmar has been in crisis since its military overthrew an elected civilian government in 2021, triggering pro-democracy protests that morphed into a widening rebellion, with more than 3.5mn people displaced.

A devastating earthquake in March that killed more than 3,800 people led to a series of temporary ceasefires in affected areas of My-

anmar, but the military government has continued air strikes and artillery attacks.

"We further called for the sustained extension and nationwide expansion of the ceasefire in Myanmar, as an initial step towards the cessation of violence," Asean leaders said in a statement.

"We encouraged all relevant stakeholders in Myanmar to build trust towards convening an inclusive national dialogue."

Anwar hailed "significant" engagement steps on Myanmar on Monday after last month holding a closed-door meeting in Bangkok with junta chief Min Aung Hlaing and virtual talks with the rebel-aligned shadow National Unity Government.

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GULF TIMES

Moody's downgrade signals rising alarm over US debt

International credit rating agency Moody's has dealt a blow to the US with a downgrade, warning about rising levels of government debt and a widening budget deficit.

The downgrade has exacerbated investor worries about a looming debt time-bomb that could spur bond market vigilantes who want to see more fiscal restraint from Washington.

Moody's cut America's pristine sovereign credit rating by one notch, the last of the major agencies to downgrade the country.

The US national debt is currently about \$36tn. It's the equivalent of about \$106,100 for every single person in the country, according to the Peter G Peterson Foundation, a research group.

S&P Global Ratings downgraded the US back in 2011, and Fitch Ratings did so in 2023.

Debt interest costs have been swallowing a growing chunk of government revenues since the era of ultra-low rates vanished in a wave of inflation.

Moody's said federal interest payments are likely to absorb around 30% of revenue by 2035, up from about 18% in 2024 and 9% in 2021.

The federal government spent in excess of \$1.8tn more than it received in the aa2024 fiscal year, marking the fifth year in a row of fiscal deficits above \$1tn.

Moody's had flagged as far back as November 2023 that it might lower the US credit rating, when it changed its outlook on the rating to negative from stable.

The Aa1 rating now given to the US by Moody's is its second-highest rating, and is equivalent to the AA+ sovereign grade assigned to the nation by Fitch and S&P.

The US national debt is currently about \$36tn, the equivalent of about \$106,100 for every single person in the country



and the preferred unit of exchange for a large proportion of global trade, has helped to keep a lid on US borrowing costs even as federal deficits ballooned.

A rating from a credit scorer is meant to be an independent appraisal of an entity that sells debt.

Ratings companies assess the financial strength of borrowers and give them scores ranking their ability to meet debt payments.

Investors often rely on credit ratings when making decisions around purchasing new debt from the issuer, so the ratings can play an important role in determining how much interest a borrower needs to pay to raise funds in capital markets.

The US federal government benefits from a reputation of not having defaulted on its debts and is still viewed as highly unlikely to do so. Asked about the Moody's downgrade during an interview, US Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent said, "Moody's is a lagging indicator — that's what everyone thinks of credit agencies."

The downgrade from Moody's, which follows similar moves from Fitch in 2023 and Standard & Poor's in 2011, will "eventually lead to higher borrowing costs for the public and private sector in the United States," according to Spencer Hakimian, founder of Tolou Capital Management in New York.

Even so, the ratings cut is unlikely to trigger forced selling from funds that can only invest in top-rated securities, says Gennadiy Goldberg, head of US rates strategy at TD Securities, as most funds revised guidelines after the S&P downgrade.

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On Greek island, new migrant camp sparks wildfire fears



EU-funded camp being built in forest



Opponents say site at risk of fire



Lawsuits filed to halt construction

By Alexander Durie and Goldy Levy
London/Madrid

The pristine pine forest of Vastria on the Greek island of Lesbos is known for its size and beauty, but it has attracted harsher attention more recently as the planned site of a European Union-funded migration centre that islanders say increases the risk of wildfires.

About 24 hectares (59 acres) of forest area have been cleared for prefabricated containers that will house around 5,000 asylum seekers, with barbed-wire fencing and high-tech surveillance surrounding the camp.

Over the past decade, hundreds of thousands of migrants have used Lesbos as an entry point to Europe, and the Greek government says it needs a new, high-security facility to better manage migration on the Aegean island.

The Closed Controlled Access Centre, at a cost of about €76mn (\$85.5mn), looks like a "detention centre" and a "prison in the middle of the forest," said Michalis Bakas, an environmental expert and leader of Lesbos' Green Party.

A 45-minute drive from Lesbos' capital Mytilene and the nearest hospital, the Vastria camp is surrounded by trees prone to wildfires, next to a landfill and a protected Natura 2000 reserve full of endangered species.

It is so remote, locals say, that it will be difficult for emergency services to get there.

"This is a trend across Europe to build camps out of sight and out of mind, where refugees don't have a chance to build a life," said Lorraine Leete, co-ordinator of the Legal Centre Lesbos, which provides migrants with free legal assistance.

A local forestry expert, who asked to remain anonymous for contractual reasons, said that the pine forest grows on or near volcanic rock, which "is the most flammable type of ecosystem in the Mediterranean".

Normally, these forests take three to four decades to recover from fires, but with increasingly frequent heatwaves and droughts due to climate change, it is unclear how this ecosystem will cope with the disruption caused by the camp.

Another reason locals fear fires is because the Moria migrant camp on Lesbos was shut after a deadly blaze in 2020.

Moria was Europe's biggest migrant camp, a sprawling and overcrowded town of tents and improvised shelters, notorious for its poor and often dangerous living conditions.

The new camp is in a zone designated as "high risk" by the European Forest Fire Information System, according to the Legal Centre Lesbos.

"(Vastria) is the only forest remaining in Lesbos," said Liza Papadimitriou, advocacy manager for Lesbos Solidarity, a non-governmental organisation supporting refugees since 2012. "It will impact future generations for years if burned down."

Citing fire department figures, Papadimitiou said Moria recorded 247 fires from January 2013 to September 2020.

Leete noted there is evidence that "fires always happen in refugee camps due to poor conditions, no safe cooking and electrical shortages."

Migration hotspot

Greece has long been a favoured gateway to Europe for migrants and refugees from the Middle East, Africa and Asia. In 2015, nearly 1 million people landed on its islands, half of them on Lesbos.

Since then, the number of arrivals has fallen on Lesbos but is at the highest level since 2019 across Greece, with around 54,000 people arriving by sea in 2024.

The Vastria camp is part of the European Commission's wider scheme to modernise migration management through the EU Pact on Migration and Asylum, which comes into effect in 2026. It and similar centres on other Greek islands are funded by the European Commission's Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund and with emergency assistance monies.

When plans for the camp were unveiled in 2020, European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen promised to "bring decent conditions to migrants and refugees who arrive, as well as supporting the communities on the Greek islands."

Authorities in Greece have since been under pressure to deliver the facility, but construction has repeatedly halted due to lawsuits from authorities from the island and neighbouring communities.

Papadimitriou said the Greek government had not consulted island authorities properly.

"It shows complete disregard for the public interest," she said.

An EU spokesperson said that Greece's migration ministry chose a site on Lesbos after meeting with local representatives.

"Greek authorities are responsible for setting up the necessary infrastructure and meeting all legal, safety and security requirements, including fire protection. They also need to secure all building and environmental permits and comply with all relevant laws," the spokesperson said, requesting to be unnamed.

The spokesperson said the Commission provided €155mn for

centres on Lesbos and the island of Chios.

Greece's Ministry of Migration and Asylum did not respond to a request for comment.

In 2023, its then minister, Dimitris Kairidis, said: "We want European solutions, we want European co-operation, and that is Vastria."

Rare flora and fauna

Opponents of the camp say a mandatory environmental impact assessment was only conducted by authorities after building had begun, raising concerns over procedural violations and a disregard for the site's wildfire risks.

The centre is almost finished, but the Greek Council of State, the country's highest administrative court, is set to rule on a case brought by islanders and others against the construction.

An environmental impact assessment in 2022 conducted for a legal appeal by the Mytilene municipality found "the licensing and execution of the project was carried out in violation of the applicable legislation."

The report, which was shared with the Thomson Reuters Foundation, also said the centre was being built near an EU-protected site for migratory birds, such as the black vulture, that is also home to the rare Kruper's nuthatch.

Christos Tsvigoulis, the deputy mayor for environment at the Mytilene municipality, said the migration ministry was "downplaying the potential impacts on the forest ecosystem" and that a special assessment required for EU-protected areas was never conducted.

"The government's handling of the issue so far has been marked by consistent unreliability," he said. — Thomson Reuters Foundation



A view of the Closed Controlled Access Centre construction site in Vastria forest in Lesbos.



Qatar Foundation champions inclusive education through specialised schools

By Noor Al-rawi
Doha

As part of its strategic vision to build a more inclusive and equitable society, Qatar Foundation for Education, Science and Community Development places great emphasis on promoting inclusive education and educational integration. This ensures that all children – including those with disabilities, autism, and learning difficulties – have equal opportunities for quality education and individualised support.

Driven by a strong belief that diversity is a source of strength, Qatar Foundation works to provide flexible learning environments that respect individual differences and support student development across academic, behavioural, and social dimensions. Initiatives such as Awsaj, Renad, and Warif academies stand as living examples of Qatar Foundation's commitment to fostering a culture of inclusion and empowering those who have historically faced barriers to equitable education – making education a bridge to empowerment and full societal integration.

Awsaj Academy: one of the region's leading institutions specialising in serving students with learning difficulties

Mohammed al-Janahi, Elementary School Principal at Awsaj Academy (part of Qatar Foundation's Pre-University Education), affirmed that the academy is one of the region's leading institutions specialising in serving students with learning difficulties that may hinder their full potential in regular classroom environments.

In an exclusive statement to *Gulf Times*, al-Janahi explained that the academy, established nearly 20 years ago, currently serves over 600 Qatari students in its morning programme. It provides a specialised educational environment that caters to the individual needs of each student.

He emphasised that the academy focuses on empowering students who benefit from intensive support to meet academic standards through tailored teaching methods and diverse life experiences. This helps enhance their chances of pursuing academic or professional pathways alongside their peers.

Al-Janahi highlighted the importance of customised educational programmes that address students' unique abilities and challenges while offering diverse learning opportunities through cultural events and art exhibitions that align with local and global occasions.

The academy applies a hybrid academic approach combining the American curriculum – which provides a progressive educational framework – with the Qatari Ministry of Education and Higher Education curriculum in core subjects such as Arabic, Islamic Studies, and Qatar History. This aims to strengthen students' national and linguistic identity while ensuring fluency in both Arabic and English.

He added that the academy pays special attention to recruiting qualified educators, requiring teaching staff to hold degrees in special education and



Mohammed al-Janahi

Awsaj Academy focuses on empowering students who benefit from intensive support to meet academic standards through tailored teaching methods and diverse life experiences. This helps enhance their chances of pursuing academic or professional pathways alongside their peers



Lulwa al-Darwish

Each student challenges our creativity and expands our understanding every day. We aspire to see more Qatari educators and specialists leading and innovating in this field, grounded in a deep understanding of our culture and the needs of our children

behaviour modification. The presence of skilled Qatari teachers has also proven effective in supporting this student group. Small classroom sizes – usually no more than 10 students – ensure personalised instruction and close monitoring of individual student progress.

Al-Janahi also pointed to supplementary programmes such as after-school support sessions arranged in co-ordination with parents, as well as sports and art activities that help develop students' social and motor skills.

He noted that the academy has witnessed numerous inspiring success stories, with many students overcoming their learning challenges and enrolling in reputable colleges in various fields. The academy has also received multiple awards, reflecting the effectiveness of its educational programs and the supportive environment it provides.

Al-Janahi concluded by emphasising the need to change the stereotypical perceptions of students with learning difficulties, stressing the importance of raising public awareness of the academy's vital role in preparing these students and integrating them into society. He affirmed that the academy constantly strives to provide an inclusive learning environment that respects differences and helps students realise their full potential – contributing to a brighter future for Qatari society.

Renad Academy: Specialised environment for children with autism

Lulwa al-Darwish, Curriculum Co-ordinator at Renad Academy, part of Qatar Foundation's Pre-University Education, confirmed that the academy is a leading national model for the empowerment of children with autism spectrum disorder. It offers specialised academic and behavioural programmes to gradually prepare children for societal integration.

She said that the academy, founded in

2016, currently serves 140 Qatari students aged 3-14 years. It follows carefully designed individual education plans that address each child's specific needs and abilities, helping them build essential academic, social, and life skills.

The academy uses a holistic approach that integrates academic instruction with positive behaviour strategies, sensory interventions, occupational and speech therapy, as well as mental health and overall well-being support – delivered through a scientifically grounded educational environment.

Al-Darwish stressed the academy's strong focus on parental involvement by offering educational programs that emphasise early intervention and home support strategies. Regular meetings with families and continuous communication ensure parents remain key partners in their children's learning journey.

She also highlighted the importance of investing in training qualified national staff in autism and special education. Building local capacities in occupational therapy, speech-language pathology, and positive behavioural support is essential for ensuring sustainability and encouraging innovation – supported by external collaborations to exchange expertise and stay updated with the field.

She concluded: "Each student challenges our creativity and expands our understanding every day. We aspire to see more Qatari educators and specialists leading and innovating in this field, grounded in a deep understanding of our culture and the needs of our children."

Warif Academy: A global model for empowering children with disabilities

Hamad al-Obaidly, parent of a student enrolled at Warif Academy, praised the academy's pioneering educational and developmental programmes. He shared that his daughter's experience marked a turning point in her life after years of



struggle finding a safe and supportive learning environment.

He explained that Warif Academy is the result of a strategic partnership between Qatar Foundation's Pre-University Education and the Ministry of Education and Higher Education. It was founded to be a centre of excellence in providing educational and therapeutic services to students with severe and multiple disabilities.

"Before joining Warif Academy, we lived in constant worry," he said. "There was no school equipped to accommodate her condition, and she struggled with communication and social engagement. This affected her confidence and interaction with her surroundings. We felt like we were in a race against time to find a glimmer of hope."

He continued: "When we heard about Warif Academy, it was the first time we felt there was a place truly designed for children with disabilities – not just a conventional school. From the first day, we saw the difference. She began to thrive

in an educational setting that understood and responded to her unique needs.

"I can honestly say the academy saved her from isolation. It gave her a sense of acceptance and belonging. Today, she is a more stable and confident child who can express herself and interact with others."

Al-Obaidly noted that Warif Academy doesn't only offer academic programmes but also provides integrated services in behavioural rehabilitation, life skills development, and psychosocial support. The use of modern teaching tools based on play and hands-on learning motivates children to learn in their own ways.

He concluded by emphasising that what truly sets Warif Academy apart is its human-centred approach. "The team doesn't see children as medical cases but as individuals deserving of care, respect, and empowerment. This is reflected in how teachers interact, how activities are designed, and how the school works to integrate students into society through visits and shared events with other schools."





Amir at Asean-GCC Summit in Malaysia

Above: His Highness the Amir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani leading the delegation from Qatar at the Asean-GCC summit, held at the Kuala Lumpur Convention Centre.

Right: His Highness the Amir with Malaysian Prime Minister Anwar Ibrahim.

Left: His Highness the Amir with Malaysia's Minister of Plantation and Commodities Johari Abdul Ghani at Kuala Lumpur International Airport.



2025 QU humanities and social sciences research grants awardees named

Qatar University (QU) announced the names of the awardees of the QU Humanities and Social Sciences Research (QUHSS) grants for the year 2025 during a scientific gathering organised by the university, attended by a distinguished group of researchers and academics.

The announcement comes as part of the university's commitment to supporting scientific research in areas that directly impact society in Qatar and contribute to public policy development and sustainable development.

"I am pleased to welcome you today to this distinguished scientific meeting, where we announce the names of the awardees of the Humanities and Social Sciences Grants for the year 2025, as part of the pioneering initiative launched by the QU to support and advance the humanities

and social sciences," said QU president Dr Omar al-Ansari. "The QU has paid special attention to these sciences, believing that they represent a cornerstone in building a comprehensive knowledge-based society."

He further emphasised that these grants reflect the university's orientation toward empowering interdisciplinary research teams.

"Through this programme, we aim to enhance academic performance, achieve excellence in research, education, and community service, address societal challenges, nurture talent, build capacities, and actively contribute to shaping effective policies that support decision-makers," Dr al-Ansari said.

He explained that the QU, through this programme, seeks to expand academic collaboration, and effectively contribute to public policy formulation – supporting

the goals of Qatar National Vision 2030.

Dr al-Ansari concluded his speech with an open invitation to all researchers: "I invite everyone to seize this opportunity to produce high-quality, impactful research outputs and to actively participate in the Annual Humanities and Social Sciences Forum and all related activities."

This year's winning projects included distinguished studies on critical topics such as integrating national identity into educational curricula, empowering Qatari women in both public and private sectors, preserving national cultural heritage, enhancing financial literacy among youth, and the role of the family in social stability.

Additionally, there are studies focused on environmental sustainability and the impact of climate change on local communities.

These projects were notable for their



interdisciplinary nature, combining expertise from the humanities and social sciences with applied sciences, engineering, health, and information technology – reflecting the integrated research approach that the QU aims to achieve.

In his remarks, Prof Aiman Erbad, the vice-president for Research and Graduate Studies at the QU, highlighted the university's research priorities for the 2025-2030 period.

"As part of its firm commitment to supporting the national research ecosystem, the university has outlined its research priorities for the period 2025-2030 in alignment with the strategic directions of the state," he said, adding: "These priorities cover key areas such as health, resource sustainability, digital technology, society, and energy – reflecting the university's central role in addressing national

challenges and fostering innovation."

Dr Saeed al-Meer, the director of Research Support (Grants and Contracts), honoured the awardees.

The winners of the Humanities and Social Sciences Grants were:

☞ Dr Turki Obaid al-Marri, assistant professor of Fiqh and Usul Al Fiqh at the College of Sharia and Islamic Studies

☞ Dr Shaikha al-Kuwari, assistant professor of Sociology at the College of Arts and Sciences

☞ Dr Israal al-Muftah, assistant professor of Educational Sciences at the College of Education

☞ Dr Hamad al-Ghadeed, assistant professor of History at the College of Arts and Sciences

☞ Dr Amna Sadiq, assistant professor of Gulf Studies at College of Arts and Sciences. – **QNA**

Qatar 2025 FIFA Volunteer Programme registration launched

FIFA and the Local Organising Committee (LOC) of the FIFA U-17 World Cup Qatar 2025 and FIFA Arab Cup Qatar 2025 launched the registration process for the Qatar 2025 FIFA Volunteer Programme yesterday.

The organisers have invited volunteers interested in supporting the delivery of both events, taking place in November and December, to register their interest.

Around 4,000 volunteers across 30 roles will be selected to support 20 functional areas including tournament and media operations, spectator services, accreditation, hospitality, and more.

"Volunteers have been the heartbeat of all major tournaments we have organised over the last decade, playing a crucial role not only in event operations but also in sharing our rich culture and renowned hospitality with fans and guests," said LOC chief executive Jassim al-Jassim.

"The upcoming FIFA Arab Cup and FIFA U-17 World Cup will be no exception, and carry forward the volunteering legacy left by the FIFA World Cup and AFC Asian Cup," he said. "We look forward to working with Qatar's dynamic volunteering movement to deliver unique experiences and stand-out tournaments later this year, and have no doubt that it will once again prove one of our most suc-



FIFA and the Local Organising Committee (LOC) of the FIFA U-17 World Cup Qatar 2025 and FIFA Arab Cup Qatar 2025 have launched the registration process for the Qatar 2025 FIFA Volunteer Programme. **PICTURE:** Thajuddeen

cessful delivery partners."

"I hold a special connection to this movement," al-Jassim said. "I started my career in mega-sporting events as a volunteer. It is inspiring to see how this spirit and tradition continues to grow, and I have no doubt the volunteers will make these tournaments truly extraordinary."

"We are pleased to launch yet another opportunity for Qatar's volunteering community to get involved in our delivery of two important tournaments in the country's events calendar," said LOC Ad-

ministration executive director Haya al-Nuaimi.

"Over the years, we have built a dynamic and excited volunteer base that has contributed to the country's growing culture of volunteerism, which extends to all sectors and events and acts as the backbone to every success achieved."

Applicants must be residents of Qatar, at least 18 years of age, have a good command of English (knowledge of additional languages such as Arabic is a bonus) and be available for the duration of the tour-

nament they are selected for, including pre-event training sessions.

Prior volunteering experience is not required.

Registration will be open for two weeks, and selection will begin in June.

In-person interviews will take place at the Volunteer Recruitment Centre, located at Lusail Stadium.

Volunteers with prior experience in FIFA events held in Qatar will be exempt from the interview stage.

A single application will cover both



events, and candidates can indicate their preferred option. Roles will be assigned to a one event due to overlapping schedules, and selection will be based on availability, profile matching and operational needs.

Volunteers will get benefits including training to prepare for their roles, an official volunteer uniform, meals during their shifts, free public transportation to and from event venues, and limited-edition gifts and memorabilia.

Registration should be made at volunteer.fifa.com/invite/qatar2025



Prof al-Fayyad (left), Dr Medhat Issa, and Dr Imtenan al-Samadi (right).

Arab Book Award symposium held in Egypt

By Tawfik Lamari
Staff Reporter

The Bibliotheca Alexandrina in Egypt has hosted the Arab Book Award symposium.

The Arab Book Award, one of the most important cultural awards in the Arab world, was established in 2023 under the patronage of His Highness the Father Amir Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa al-Thani.

Participating in the symposium were the award's media adviser Prof Hanan al-Fayyad, media co-ordinator Dr Imtenan al-Samadi, and Dr Medhat Issa, the direc-

tor of the Manuscript Centre and Museum at the Bibliotheca Alexandrina.

Bibliotheca Alexandrina director Prof Ahmed Zayed said that the Bibliotheca Alexandrina is keen to support the Arab cultural movement and promote intellectual and knowledge initiatives that contribute to raising cultural awareness and promoting serious scientific production.

Prof al-Fayyad spoke about the award's objectives and categories, and called for the advancement of written Arabic content and encouraging writers and research institutions to continue contributing in light of current challenges.

She emphasised that the award seeks to

encourage authentic intellectual production and support research projects that contribute to building knowledge, developing awareness, and fostering a scientific and intellectual renaissance.

It also encourages, she said, publishers and those involved in the book industry to promote and develop Arabic publishing, enabling it to compete globally.

Prof al-Fayyad said that the judging of works competing in the award is carried out by specialist committees according to precise, transparent, and objective criteria, including academic originality, research depth, quality of presentation, treatment, documentation, and other criteria.

Furthermore, participation must fall within one of the five fields of knowledge covered by the award: literary and linguistic studies, Sharia and Islamic studies, historical studies, social and philosophical studies, dictionaries and encyclopedias, and text editing.

Dr al-Samadi presented a paper on *The Role of Awards in the Book Industry and Stimulating Quality Authorship (Intellectual, Cognitive, and Creativity)*, where she reviewed the history of writing.

At the conclusion of the symposium, Prof al-Fayyad presented honorary shields and certificates of appreciation to a number of institutions and writers.