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# Amir performs Eid al-Adha prayer

**QNA**  
Doha

His Highness the Amir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani performed the Eid al-Adha prayer yesterday morning alongside his loyal people at Lusail Prayer Ground.

Joining His Highness the Amir in the prayer were His Highness the Personal Representative of the Amir, Sheikh Jassim bin Hamad al-Thani; His Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Khalifa al-Thani; HE Sheikh Jassim bin Khalifa al-Thani; HE the Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs, Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman bin Jassim al-Thani; HE the Speaker of the Shura Council, Hassan bin Abdullah al-Ghanem; along with a number of Sheikhs, ministers, and members of the Shura Council.

Also in attendance were several ambassadors and heads of diplomatic missions accredited to the Qatar.

The Eid sermon was delivered by Dr

Yahya Butti al-Nuaimi, who highlighted that Eid is a day of remembrance, joy, and gratitude. He noted that it coincides with the sacred rites of Haj, the blessed ten days of Dhul-Hijjah, and the virtuous fast of the Day of Arafah.

Dr al-Nuaimi stressed that gratitude is among the noblest acts of worship, one that God has enjoined upon His prophets, and that true gratitude involves expressing God's blessings through one's words, heart, and actions in full acknowledgment, submission, and obedience to the Almighty. He further explained that offering the Eid sacrifice is a manifestation of this gratitude and a deed that yields immense reward and virtue.

Dr al-Nuaimi emphasised that Eid is a time when souls are purified from base desires and hearts are cleansed of falsehood, hypocrisy, and resentment.

He stressed that the greatest form of Eid is the liberation of the besieged in Gaza from oppression, blockade, and longstanding hostility, as well as the emancipation of the courtyards and surroundings of the blessed Al-Aqsa Mosque. **(QNA) Page 12**

## Amir receives Eid al-Adha well-wishers

His Highness the Amir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani received Eid al-Adha well-wishers yesterday morning at the Lusail Palace.

Following the Eid prayer, His Highness received HE the Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman bin Jassim al-Thani, HE the Speaker of the Shura Council Hassan bin Abdullah al-Ghanem, as well as Sheikhs, ministers, under-secretaries, members of the Shura Council, and citizens.

His Highness also welcomed senior officers from the Armed Forces, the Ministry of Interior, and various security services, along with heads of departments and national institutions. His Highness the Amir further received heads of diplomatic missions accredited to Qatar.

The well-wishers conveyed their congratulations to His Highness, praying to Almighty God to return this blessed occasion and similar ones with continued goodness, blessings, and prosperity for His Highness, the State of Qatar, its honourable people, and the Arab and Islamic nations. The reception was attended by the Personal Representative of His Highness the Amir His Highness Sheikh Jassim bin Hamad al-Thani, His Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Khalifa al-Thani, HE Sheikh Jassim bin Khalifa al-Thani, along with a number of Sheikhs, ministers, and senior officials. **To Page 11**

**COMMUNITY**  
See Pages: 5, 6 & 7

**Amir extends greetings to citizens, residents, Arab and Islamic nations**

His Highness the Amir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani extended his greetings to citizens and residents of Qatar, and to the Arab and Islamic nations on the advent of Eid al-Adha.

In a post on his "X" account, His Highness prayed to the Almighty God to return the Eid to Qatar's citizens and residents, as well as to the Arab and Islamic nations with goodness, blessings, and prosperity. **(QNA)**



Eid al-Adha prayers held across Qatar



Tens of thousands of faithful converged at as many as 710 mosques and a number of prayer grounds across Qatar yesterday to participate in the Eid al-Adha prayers at 4.58am. After the prayers they exchanged Eid greetings. The historic prayer ground at Msheireb (pictured), now a part of Msheireb Downtown Doha, attracted a good number of worshippers. **PICTURES:** Shaji Kayamkulam





### Eid fireworks captivate at Al Wakrah Old Souq



Spectacular fireworks enthralled visitors at Al Wakrah Old Souq yesterday, on the occasion of the first day of Eid al-Adha. The fireworks will be held daily at 8.30pm until Monday. **PICTURES:** Shaji Kayamkulam



### Education City Stadium hosts Eid al-Adha prayer



Worshippers from across Qatar gathered at the Education City Stadium in their tens of thousands for the Eid al-Adha prayer. The iconic arena's size and safety has led it to becoming a familiar setting for Eid prayers in recent years, following its role as a FIFA World Cup Qatar 2022 venue. The Eid al-Adha gathering was organised by Qatar Foundation (QF)'s Minaretein Centre (Education City Mosque), in collaboration with the Ministry of Endowments (Awqaf) and Islamic Affairs. Following the prayer, families also enjoyed an array of cultural and entertainment activities, including henna artists, face painting, gifts of 'Eid Mubarak' balloons, and the chance to meet cartoon characters.







# Qatar welcomes ILO upgrading Palestine status to ‘non-member observer’

Qatar welcomed the announcement by the International Labour Organisation (ILO) to upgrade Palestine’s status from a “liberation movement” to a “non-member observer” state. Qatar said that voting to adopt this decision during the 113th session of the International Labour Conference an international recognition of the justice of the Palestinian cause and the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people.

In a statement, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs affirmed that the announcement aligns with the United Nations General Assembly resolution supporting Palestine’s right to full membership in the international organisation. It also reiterated Qatar’s call for the implementation of this resolution to strengthen Palestine’s position within the UN system. The ministry further reaffirmed Qatar’s consistent and unwavering stance in support of the Palestinian cause and the steadfastness of the Palestinian people, based on international legitimacy and the two-state solution, ensuring the establishment of an independent Palestinian state on the 1967 borders with East Jerusalem as its capital. **(QNA)**

## Simaisma Beach free of charge during holidays



The Ministry of Municipality, in co-ordination with the Private Engineering Office, announced that the Simaisma Beach (Family Beach and Women’s Beach) will be open free of charge from today (Saturday) until the end of the Eid al-Adha holiday, in order to provide a safe and comfortable environment for families and women.

## Official

### Amir sends cables of congratulations to king of Sweden

His Highness the Amir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani and His Highness the Deputy Amir Sheikh Abdullah bin Hamad al-Thani sent cables of congratulations to King Carl XVI Gustaf of the Kingdom of Sweden on the occasion of his country’s National Day. HE the Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs, Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman bin Jassim al-Thani, also sent a similar cable to Swedish PM Ulf Kristersson on the occasion. **(QNA)**



# Katara Eid festivities enthrall visitors

Katara Cultural Village was transformed into a vibrant festive scene on the first day of Eid al-Adha yesterday, with many families and visitors who converged to enjoy a wide array of cultural and entertainment experiences.

The festivities will conclude tomorrow (Sunday). Among the popular activities are Katara Eidiyah (Eid gift) which attracted children. Katara saw a diverse rhythm

of events blending traditional, artistic, and modern elements. The Arda (Qatari sword dance) and traditional folkloric performances captivated visitors with their authentic heritage on show, while street art performances added a lively modern flair to the squares and walkways, turning every moment into a unique entertainment experience.

Katara Beach also saw a significant turnout of families who chose

to spend the holiday by the sea, to relax and enjoy fun-filled activities in a safe and organised environment.

The Katara Hills provided green surroundings and picturesque views of the sea.

Katara’s restaurants welcomed guests with a rich selection of local and international cuisine, offering unique experiences of Qatari hospitality. The traditional food corner along the Corniche attracted

lovers of heritage flavours, enhanced by the sea breeze and festive aromas. Culture also remained at the heart of the celebration, with Al Thuraya Planetarium in Building 41 continuing to offer interactive scientific adventures that take visitors on a journey through stars and planets in a fun, educational way suitable for all family members. The celebrations conclude daily with spectacular fireworks at Katara Corniche.



# 21 PHCC health centres operational during Eid

As many as 21 out of 31 health centres, under the Primary Health Care Corporation (PHCC), are operational during the Eid al-Adha holidays.

The functional health centres are: Al Wakra, Al Mashaf, Al Thumama, Airport, Rawdat Al Khail, Omar Bin Al Khattab, Al Sadd, West Bay, Al Ruwais, Al Khor, Leabaib, Umm Slal, Gharrafat Al Rayyan, Madinat Khalifa, Abu Baker Al Siddiq, Al Rayyan, Mesaimmer, Muaitheer, Al Sheehaniya, Al Wajbah, in addition to Al Jumailiya Health Centre, which operates on an on-call basis 24/7.

Family medicine and support services are offered continuously from 7am-11pm at these centres. Dental services are available from 7am-10pm.

The centres that remain closed during the holidays are: South Al Wakra, Umm Ghuwailina, Al Waab, Abu Nakhla, Umm Al Se-neem, Al Ghuwairiya, Al Daayen, and Qatar University, in addition to Al Kaaban and Al Karaana centres, which will receive urgent cases only. Pre-scheduled appointments for patients in the specialised clinics – Ophthalmology, Dermatology, and ENT – are available in three health centres: Leabaib, Rawdat Al Khail, and Al Mashaf. These clinics operate in two shifts from 7am-2pm and 4pm-10pm.



The Premarital Clinics are operational at Al Wajbah Health Centre on June 8 from 4pm-10pm and Al Mashaf Health Centre on June 9, from 4pm-10pm. Urgent care services are available 24/7 at the following health centres: For adults at Gharrafat Al Rayyan, Al Sheehaniya, Abu Bakr Al Siddiq, Rawdat Al Khail, Al Kaaban, Al Karaana, Al Ruwais, Umm Salal, Leabaib, Muaitheer, Al Mashaf and Al Sadd and for children at Al Ruwais, Umm Salal, Leabaib, Muaitheer, Al Mashaf and Al Sadd.

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# Widam maintains steady supply of livestock for Eid

Widam Food Company has a comprehensive plan for the Eid al-Adha season to supply a large quantity of sacrificial livestock at reasonable prices, an official told local Arabic daily *Arrayah*.

Widam’s public relations director Mousa Ahmed al-Othman explained that Arabian sheep is priced QR1,400 per head, and Australian sheep at QR890, which can also be booked online.

Widam implemented an electronic pre-booking system that allowed customers to select the type of sacrifice, pay for it, and receive it on the first or second day of Eid through designated distribution centres.

Al-Othman pointed out that a portion of these sacrificial animals has been allocated to local charitable organisations as part of the company’s strong commitment to social responsibility. These animals

will be slaughtered and distributed to eligible beneficiaries on the third and fourth days of Eid, in co-ordination with the relevant authorities to ensure proper and dignified distribution.

Widam has also provided sufficient numbers of camels and calves at competitive prices, catering to those who prefer such sacrifices. These imported animals were available at several approved sales outlets and slaughterhouses.

The official affirmed that all slaughterhouses have been equipped with qualified veterinary staff and modern equipment to ensure the safety of the sacrificial animals and the quality of the slaughtering process, in compliance with Islamic and health standards. Widam continues to coordinate with the concerned regulatory bodies to uphold the highest standards of food safety and customer service.



## Qatar handball star in Doha College visit

Doha College recently welcomed Rafael Capote, a professional handball player for the Qatar National Team and Al Duhail SC, for a session with Year 10 students. Capote shared his remarkable journey in international sports, offering students insights into the dedication, discipline, and resilience required to succeed at the highest level. His message focused on the importance of perseverance and goal setting. Capote also emphasised the significance of healthy living, consistent training, and exploring a variety of sports. "Every skill you learn in sports contributes to your overall development, both as an athlete and as a person," he told students.

The visit culminated in a practical session where Capote coached students through passing drills and technique exercises. The experience ended with penalty shots, energising both students and staff. PE teachers also joined the session, seizing the opportunity as a form of continuing professional development. Capote's visit forms part of Doha College's broader initiative to enrich student experiences through its athlete engagement programme. By welcoming elite sports personalities to campus, the college aims to inspire students with real-world success stories while highlighting the importance of sport as a vital component of holistic development.



# Olympians inspire Doha College pupils

Doha College welcomed Olympians Hamish Kerr, Donald Thomas, and Zoe Hobbs to its campus last week. In town for the Diamond League, the elite athletes took time from their demanding schedules to inspire Doha College pupils through an exclusive Q&A session and an athletics masterclass.

Sprinter Hobbs led a session on sprint mechanics, offering students deep insight into the discipline, training, and rigorous warm-up routines that prepare her for competition at the highest levels.

Kerr, a Commonwealth Games gold medallist, and Thomas, a former World Champion in high jump, hosted a high jump clinic. Students were in awe as they observed and attempted the technical mastery, strength, and timing behind the sport.

The masterclass ended with a thrilling relay race. The crowd was on its feet as the race came to a dramatic photo finish, embodying the spirit of healthy competition and camaraderie.

As a British international school that prides itself on global reach and recognition — having earned accolades from the British Schools Overseas (BSO) inspection, a place in the Spear's Schools Index Top 100 schools in the World, and ranked among the top 15 schools in the Middle East by Carfax Education — Doha College consistently fosters opportunities that enrich student experience beyond the classroom.

Athletic excellence is deeply rooted in Doha College's history. Among its distinguished alumni is Nada Arakji, Qatar's first female Olympic swimmer — a testament to the school's legacy of developing athletes who succeed on the global stage. Her journey reflects the college's commitment to fostering determination, ambition, and personal growth through sport.

Events such as these are a shining example of how Doha College integrates real-world excellence into its educational model, providing students with transformative experiences that extend learning beyond the classroom, a statement added.



## Talents Day at NIS

The Talents Day at Noble International School (NIS) saw students from all four houses — Pintail, Teal, Frigate, and Eider — competing in activities including choral recitation, dramatic monologues, cinematic dances, and patriotic songs dedicated to Qatar and India. A highlight was the charity initiative 'Aiding Hearts' organised by class XII students to support the needy. The two-day fest was inaugurated by principal Dr Shibu Abdul Rasheed who

inspired students to embrace creativity, collaboration, and confidence. Vice principal (academics)

Jayamon Joy welcomed the gathering and vice principal (CCA) Shihabudheen proposed a vote of thanks.



## 10th anniversary celebrated

Anria-Qatar celebrated Angad-X (10th anniversary) recently. Indian embassy's head of chancery and consular Dr Vaibhav A Tandale inaugurated the event. Indian Cultural Centre president A P Manikantan and other guests were present. Anria-Qatar members staged a variety of performances. President Augustine C K presided.



## Environmental quiz held

Nammude Adukkalathottam Doha (Our Kitchen Garden Doha) organised the third edition of NAD Environmental Quiz for students of classes VI-X, in connection with the World Environment Day celebrations at Birla Public School (BPS).

Ahan Abhijith (MES Indian School) won the first prize, Ishan Shankar (Olive International School) was second and Maheshwari (Shantiniketan Indian School) third. Encouragement Awards went to Aris Masood Khan

(MES Indian School), Maira Zainab and Rudrajit Banerjee (both from BPS).

Dr Sharath Lal was the quiz master.

The event was inaugurated by Indian Cultural Centre president A P Manikantan. Indian Sports Centre president E P Abdurahman and Radio Malayalam deputy general manager Noufal offered felicitations. Organising committee president Jiji Aravind welcomed the gathering.



## Winners of Qur'an competitions feted

The Qur'an Study Center - Rayyan Zone honoured winners of various competitions during a special gathering of Holy Qur'an learners. The event was held in connection with three different Holy Qur'an exams, including Ramadan Qur'an exam.

A total of 26 individuals, including 11 first place winners, were felicitated for their outstanding performance in the competition based on Surah Al-Jasiya.

Winners of the top three positions in the Surah Ibrahim-based exam, as well as those who excelled in the Daily Holy Qur'an Recitation Contest, were also honoured.

The ceremony was presided over by Subul Abdul Azeez, with Yasir Arafat delivering the keynote address. The event began with a recitation by P C Rafeeq, and Abdul Jaleel M M welcomed the gathering.

Those honoured included: Afzal Malayil, B M Laila, Moideen Shah, Nasreen Abdul Salam, Raihath, Zainaba Ashraf, Shaheen K K, Shajudheen Haider, Suhail Mohammed, Sumayya Muhyuddeen, Tahseen, Shihab, Nasser, Rafeeq, Sulaikha Wahid, Aboobacker V, and Abdul Wahid V C.

The prizes were distributed by Yasir Arafat, Zainaba Abdul Jaleel, Nasser, Ismail, Siddiq Vengara, and Haris K.



## BPS hosts inter-school programming championship



Teams of 44 students from 11 Indian schools in Qatar participated in the Birla Competitive Programming Championship (BCPC)-2025 hosted by Birla Public School's department of computer science. The fast-paced two-hour contest, designed to test advanced skills in Python and C++ programming, was organised by a student-led team comprising Muhammed Rayan Savad, Raj Dave, and Yug Pratik Patel, under the guidance of department head Biswajit Mishra and programme-in-charge Arshi Habiba. The students set up two local servers that automated the process of submitting and judging solutions against different test cases, ensuring complete transparency and fairness throughout the event. It was studied with many features including a live leaderboard to see the progress of all the teams in real time and backup systems. Participants tackled seven problems covering complex topics including dynamic programming, graph theory, and real-world data structures. Competing in teams, the young coders showcased exceptional logic, collaboration, and problem-solving abilities, embodying the very spirit of innovation and resilience. The Team BugSquashers from Podar

Pearl School emerged as the champions, solving four problems with exceptional speed and accuracy. Team JURi and Team AlgoRhythm, both from BPS, bagged the second and third positions, respectively. The awards were presented by BPS principal Dr Anand R Nair, along with the senior leadership team.



# LIS Junior’s Reflections 2025 organised

Loyola International School (LIS)’s Oasis Campus hosted ‘LIS Junior’s Reflections 2025’, the annual STEAM exhibition for Classes 1-5.

The event brought together innovation, cultural awareness, and entrepreneurial spirit, transforming the campus into a vibrant showcase of student-led exploration and expression.

The event was inaugurated by Dr Fathelrahman Abbas Hamza Omar, private school senior expert from the Ministry of Education and Higher Education.

The Qatar National Identity Museum Corner was a standout feature of the exhibition. Assembled by students, the corner featured visual narratives, hand-made artifacts, and thematic installations capturing Qatar’s values, national vision, and cultural heritage.

“What impressed me most was not just the creativity, but the depth of understanding these young learners showed,” Dr Omar said while observing that LIS is



nurturing a generation that respects the past and is ready for the future.

Students presented a wide range of STEAM projects, some as conceptual



models, others as fully functional prototypes. Teachers contributed with large-scale installations, including a hydroponic farming model that drew attention

for its real-world relevance.

A three-day book fair offered a wide selection of titles for all ages. Adding rhythm to the day was the School Music

Band and Choir Corner, where students and music teachers performed at regular intervals.

The school’s Entrepreneurship Club added a fresh dimension to the day, with student-led stalls that reflected creative thinking, design skills, and an early understanding of business fundamentals.

Over 32 external judges, including professionals from scientific, artistic, and entrepreneurial backgrounds, engaged with the young presenters, offering feedback and celebrating their efforts.

Principal Bhavna V Sonkamble, said: “Reflections was an experience which brought out the joy of learning, the pride of cultural identity, and the power of collaboration.”

Sarat Koduru, director of operations, added: “Seeing the students engage so confidently with guests and judges shows how far they’ve come. It’s moments like these that define what learning looks like at Loyola.”

## MES Regalia 2025 concludes

A two-day youth festival, Regalia 2025, featuring over 2,000 students, concluded at MES Indian School.

The event brought together students, teachers, guests, and parents in a celebration of talent and creativity.

About 200 competitions across various categories were held in multiple venues, with the support of more than 200 teaching and non-teaching staff members.

The competitions included classical and folk dances, instrumental and vocal music performances, literary competitions, and offstage events.

The best individual artists were: Sub junior category-1 - Imran Hisham, Lahan Latheef; Sub junior-11 category - Dharanath Krishna, Fathima Faisal; Junior category - Abhinav Vijith, Hanan Mohamed Shameem; Intermediate category - Aasim Ismayil Parambath, Aasha Fathima Basheer; Senior category - Mukesh Adithyan Srinivasan, Evelyn Johnly.

MES governing board director Fasalu P P, the chief guest at the valedictory ceremony, presented mementos and certificates to the winners along with secretary Firos Kolathayil, directors Faisal Mayan, Hashim N M, Ansar T K, and governing board members M C Muhamed and Shahid Ali.

In her address, principal Dr Hameeda Kadar commended the winners. There was a video presentation on the highlights of Regalia-2025.

The cultural committee, led by Anver K and Sumitha Abdunnasser, and section co-ordinators Harshan V, Sijila Das and Uma Devi supported the event. Fiona D’ Cruz and Shalima Semeer welcomed and proposed a vote of thanks, respectively.



### Kids’ Fest at MES KG



MES Indian School hosted Regalia - Kids’ Fest for the Kindergarten section, featuring competitions in dance, nursery rhyme recitation, colouring, costume and pencil drawing, and shading.

### MES student qualifies for JMCWC

Muhammed Rehaan (10-E) of MES Indian School has qualified in the senior category of the Junior Mental Calculation World Championship 2025 (JMCWC), to be held in Germany later this year. He had qualified in 2024 too, in a first for Qatar. “Participating in the Mental Math World Cup is an intense and rewarding experience that exposes me to a highly competitive international environment,” said Rehaan. He also thanked his mentor, Kashish Lakhani, for guiding and providing technical support in his preparation for the contest. The school management and principal wished him good luck.



### MES sweeps speech contest

MES Indian School students bagged most prizes in the first I M A Rafeeq Memorial Malayalam Speech Competition organised by the Indian Media Forum (IMF).

In the higher secondary category, Muhammed Rizan (MES Abu Hamour branch) was first, followed by Lakshmi Suresh Kumar (MES) and Ayana Muhammed Ashiq (Olive International School).

In the high school category, Aasha Fathima Basheer was followed by Afina Faisal and Muhammed Nazar Anwar (all from MES).

From the preliminary round featuring more than 100 participants, seven were selected from the higher secondary category and 10 from the

high school category. The jury comprised Radio Malayalam 98.6FM CEO Anwar Hussain, writer-orator Sreenath Sankarankutty and Dr Prathibha Ratheesh.

In the valedictory function, Indian embassy second secretary Bindu N Nair gave away the prizes.

IMF president O K Parumala presided. Indian Cultural Centre president A P Manikantan, general secretary Abraham Joseph, secretary Pradeep Pillai, and Pravasi Welfare Board director E M Sudheer were among those present. IMF general secretary Shafeeq Arakkal welcomed the gathering and vice-president Sadiq Chennadan proposed a vote of thanks.







## Primary School investiture at BPS

Birla Public School (BPS) held its Primary School investiture ceremony celebrating the formal induction of the newly-elected student council for academic year 2025-26. The programme commenced with the school prayer, and a welcome song by

the Primary 1 choir. Vice-principal Edna Fernandez welcomed director Gope Shahani, management representative Chindhu Antony, principal Dr Anand R Nair, vice-principal Radhika Rele, headmistresses, heads of departments, parents, teachers, and students.



The inductees comprised school captains Mohith Muthu and Sneha Narangoli, vice-captains, sports captains, sports vice-captains, house captains and house vice-captains of various houses

prefects for Qatar national identity, discipline and cultural activities along with student council members from Classes I-IV. Following the oath-taking, the badges and

sashes were ceremoniously conferred upon the new office bearers. The Primary 2 choir performed. The ceremony concluded with a vote of thanks proposed by the school vice-captains.

# Teen warrior aims to become ‘the voice of the voiceless’

By Joseph Varghese  
Staff Reporter

Nathania Lela Vipin, a 13 year-old Qatar resident, is making her presence felt in the social and academic circles through her relentless pursuit of learning and excellence in various fields, braving many obstacles.

The 13 year-old Qatar resident has been recognised by the India Book of Records for ‘Maximum topics covered in a presentation for five-minutes by a teen’.

“I want to become the voice of the voiceless and provide guidance to many like me. I hope my life will be a motivating factor for many of them live a better life” Nathania told *Gulf Times* in an interaction.

Nathania was prematurely born at the sixth month of pregnancy at Hamad Medical Corporation. To add to the troubles, the premature birth resulted in cerebral palsy. The doctors were sceptical if the child would live long as baby Nathania weighed just 650gm at her birth.

She had to fight for her life in an incubator at the hospital for over four months. Her parents, Vipin and Neethu underwent a



Nathania Lela Vipin interacting with *Gulf Times*. PICTURES: Shaji Kayamkulam

tough ordeal as they also had to take care of Nathania’s brother, Naithan, who is just nine months elder to her.

Fighting the obstacles and overcoming them, Nathania was not willing to give up on life and decided to challenge herself to be someone different. As she grew into a teen, she is brimming with confidence and ably supported by her parents, teachers and friends and among others.

Today, Nathania has grown into an eloquent speaker and a motivational figure for others to

“I want to become the voice of the voiceless and provide guidance to many like me. I hope my life will be a motivating factor for many of them live a better life”

emulate. Her determination is paying off as she started to address small gatherings.

“A few years ago, I had a surgery and had to wear an iron cast on my leg. For six months I had to be carried by others and then the thought came up in my mind how people with handicaps need to depend on others for their daily activities,” Nathania recalled.

“This made me think that I should tell others that life has to be faced with all the realities and one should never give up. I wanted to tell this to the world and this made me become a motivational speaker,” she stressed.

Today, Nathania is a sought after speaker at various platforms in Doha. Her meeting with the renowned illusionist and motivational speaker, Gopinath Muthukad was another turning point in her life that made her all the more determined to continue with greater strides.

Then came the India Book of Records for covering the maximum number of topics in a presentation. Nathania covered 14 topics in five minutes. The citation on the India Book of Records says she covered various subjects “including ‘A warrior’, ‘A Social Issue’, ‘Special Education’, ‘Positive Thinking’ and ‘Water’, among others, at the age of 13 years and four days, as confirmed on March 27, 2025.”

Nathania, all confidence personified, is looking ahead for greater involvement in every aspect of her life. “I am just a little girl. I feel my life should be a lesson for others to face life with great confidence. Every person has a mission and purpose in this life and they should realise their potential accordingly. If I can be of little help and motivation for others, that gives me



Nathania Lela Vipin with the India Book of Records citation.

## MES honoured with Diamond Category by MoEHE

MES Indian School has been honoured with the Diamond Category recognition for the academic year 2024-25 with the evaluation grade brackets reaching between 91-100%. The school was selected among over 300 schools across Qatar for its outstanding creativity and effective execution of all five activities prescribed by the Tarbeya Centre under the Ministry of Education and Higher Education (MoEHE).

Principal Dr Hameeda Kadar, along with the co-ordinators from various sections, received the award and certificate from Private Schools director Dr Rania Mohamed and



Private Education Affairs assistant undersecretary Omar al-Naama. “This achievement not only highlights the school’s excellence in programme execution but

also reflects the dedication and collaborative efforts of the entire school community, including staff, students, and parents,” the principal said.

## MES evening shift holds PHL ceremony



MES Indian School, hosted the Principal’s Honours List (PHL) ceremony for the evening shift, recognising the top-performing students for their outstanding scholastic achievements. Special recognition was also given to the class toppers. A total of eight class toppers and 185 academic achievers were honoured. School governing board director Ashraf Sharafudeen, principal Dr Hameeda Kadar and senior vice-principal Shihabudeen Pulath feted the achievers.



## Kindergarten graduation day

Pak Shamaa Kindergarten Al Mashaf Branch organised its Graduation Day. The young learners will now enter prepare to enter primary school. The event was attended by the school management, teachers and the parents of the students. Co-ordinator Roohi Baber welcomed the gather-

ing. The tiny tots, dressed in gowns and caps, received their certificates. They performed too in colourful dresses.

Principal Madam Nabila Kaukab appreciated the efforts of the co-ordinator, teachers, staff and the students.



## Club honoured



Galfar Toastmasters Club was honoured at the District Toastmasters Annual Conference (DTAC) 2025 with a special appreciation award, recognising its outstanding contribution to personal development and leadership within the community. President Subramanya Hebbagelu and vice-president (education) Mohamed Samad Imran Mohsin received the accolade, a statement said.





# UK Labour gets rare boost with surprise election win

Reuters/AFP  
London

British Prime Minister Keir Starmer's Labour Party won a surprise victory yesterday in a fiercely fought by-election for the Scottish parliament, while support for the right-wing Reform UK party surged in a contest tainted by a row over racism.

After one of the most bitter election campaigns in Scotland, Labour won the seat of Hamilton, Larkhall and Stonehouse from the Scottish National Party (SNP) after it became vacant following the death of SNP lawmaker and government minister Christina McKelvie in March.

Labour won with 8,559 votes, overturning the comfortable majority of 4,582 earned by the Scottish National Party (SNP) in 2021.

The SNP were favourites going into the election, but saw their vote collapse by almost 17%, netting them 7,957 votes and delivering a heavy blow to the party that runs Scotland.

"People in Scotland have once again voted for change," Starmer wrote on X. "Next year there is a chance to turbo charge delivery by putting Labour in power on both sides of the border."

## Climate change keeping Pakistan students away from school

By Natasha Zai, Sameer Mandhro and Emma Clark  
AFP

Pakistan's children are losing weeks of education each year to school closures caused by climate change-linked extreme weather, prompting calls for a radical rethink of learning schedules.

Searing heat, toxic smog and unusual cold snaps have all caused closures that are meant to spare children the health risks of learning in classrooms that are often overcrowded and lack basic cooling, heating or ventilation systems.

In May, a nationwide heatwave saw temperatures up to seven degrees Celsius above normal, hitting 45° Celsius (113° Fahrenheit) in Punjab and prompting several provinces to cut school hours or start summer holidays early.

"The class becomes so hot that it feels like we are sitting in a brick kiln," said 17-year-old Hafiz Ehtesham outside an inner city Lahore school. "I don't even want to come to school."

Pakistan is among the countries most vulnerable to climate change, with limited resources for adaptation, and extreme weather is compounding an existing education crisis caused mostly by access and poverty.

"Soon we will have major cognitive challenges because students are being impacted by extreme heat and extreme smog over long periods of time," said Lahore-based education activist Baela Raza Jamil. "The poorest are most vulnerable. But climate change is indeed a great leveller and the urban middle class is also affected."

Pakistan's summers historically began in June, when temperatures hit the high 40s. However, in the last five years, May has been similarly hot, according to the Meteorological Department.

"During a power outage, I was

sweating so much that the drops were falling off my forehead onto my desk," 15-year-old Jannat, a student in Lahore, told AFP. "A girl in my class had a nosebleed from the heat."

Around a third of Pakistani school-age children – more than 26mn – are out of school, according to government figures, one of the highest numbers in the world.

And 65% of children are unable to read age-appropriate material by age 10.

School closures affect almost every part of Pakistan, including the country's most populous province Punjab, which has the highest rates of school attendance.

Classes closed for two weeks in November over air pollution, and another week in May because of heat.

In the previous academic year, three weeks were lost in January to a cold snap and two weeks in May due to heat.

Political unrest and cricket matches that closed roads meant more lost days.

In Balochistan, Pakistan's poorest province, May heatwaves have prompted early summer vacations for three years running, while in northwestern Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province, school hours are regularly slashed.

For authorities, the choice is often between sending children to school in potentially dangerous conditions or watching them fall behind.

In southern Sindh province, authorities have resisted heat-related closures despite growing demands from parents.

"It's hard for parents to send their children to school in this kind of weather," private school principal Sadiq Hussain told AFP in Karachi, adding that attendance drops by 25% in May.

"Their physical and mental health is being affected," added Dost Mohammad Danish, gen-

The result provides some relief for Starmer, whose party has suffered a steep fall in support since its landslide victory in a British parliamentary election last year after it raised taxes, cut welfare benefits and got into a row over donations.

Voters rallied around Labour in the closely watched contest after Reform UK, led by Nigel Farage, repeatedly referred to the ethnicity of the Scottish Labour leader Anas Sarwar, who is of Pakistani heritage, drawing criticism from the other parties.

The Labour candidate Davy Russell won 31.6% of votes in the election for the Scottish parliament, which has devolved powers over issues such as health and education.

The SNP won 29.4% votes and Reform finished third with 26.1% votes.

Russell told his supporters in the area south-east of Glasgow that his victory had "sent a message to Farage and his mob, the poison of Reform isn't us, it isn't Scotland and we don't want your division here".

However, a recent rise in support for Reform – which has overtaken Labour in opinion polls as the most popular party in Britain – suggests that it is making inroads in Scotland as well as England, a year before the Scottish parliament

elections are to be conducted.

John Curtice, Britain's most respected pollster, said although Labour had won an unexpected victory, the main takeaway from the result was the increase in support for Reform after the party won only 0.2% of the vote at the last election for the Scottish parliament in 2021.

Starmer may hope that the victory will ease Labour lawmakers' anxiety but the party's share of the vote is down compared with recent elections, Curtice said.

"There is nothing in this result that suggests that Labour have turned around the reverse in the polls," he said.

The support for Reform in Scotland is particularly surprising because the party's brand of low tax, anti-immigration, anti-EU politics, has often been more associated with English nationalism.

Farage visited Scotland on Monday, days after a row over an online video put out by his party that falsely claimed Sarwar had said he would "prioritise" the Pakistani community.

Labour branded the advert "blatantly racist" and SNP leader John Swinney urged voters to reject Reform's "gutter politics".

Farage responded by accusing Sarwar of introducing sectarianism into Scottish politics.



Students attend classes at a rural area, on the outskirts of Sukkur in Sindh province. - AFP

eral secretary of All Sindh Private Schools and Colleges Association. "Don't expect better scientists from Pakistan in the coming years."

Schools in Pakistan are overseen by provincial authorities, whose closure notices apply to all schools in a region, even when they are hundreds of kilometres apart and experience different conditions, or have different resources to cope.

Teachers, parents and education experts want a rethink of school hours, exam timetables and vacations, with schools able to offer Saturday classes or split the school day to avoid the midday heat.

Izza Farrakh, a senior education specialist at the World Bank, said that climate change-related impacts are affecting attendance and learning outcomes.

"Schools need to have flexibility in determining their academic calendar. It shouldn't be centralised," she said, adding that end-of-year exams usually taken in May could be replaced by regular assessments throughout the year.

Adapting school buildings is also crucial.

International development agencies have already equipped thousands of schools with solar panels, but many more of the country's 250,000 schools need help.

Hundreds of climate-resilient schools funded by World Bank loans are being built in Sindh.

They are elevated to withstand monsoon flooding, and fitted with solar panels for power and rooftop insulation to combat the heat and cold.

However, in Pakistan's most impoverished villages, where education is a route out of generational poverty, parents still face tough choices.

In rural Sukkur, the local school was among 27,000 damaged or destroyed by unprecedented 2022 floods.

Children learn outside their half-collapsed school building, unprotected from the elements.

"Our children are worried, and we are deeply concerned," said parent Ali Gohar Gandhu, a daily wage labourer. "Everyone is suffering."

## French grandmother files legal complaint over Gaza 'genocide'

The grandmother of two children with French nationality killed in an Israeli strike in Gaza has filed a legal complaint, accusing Israel of "genocide" and "murder", her lawyer said yesterday.

Jacqueline Rivault filed her complaint with the "crimes against humanity" hub of the Court of Paris, lawyer Arie Alimi said.

Rivault hopes the fact her daughter's children, aged six and nine, were French means the country's judiciary will decide it has jurisdiction to designate a magistrate to investigate the allegations.

Rights groups, lawyers and some Israeli historians have described the Gaza war as "genocide" and called for a ceasefire.

However, Israel, created in the aftermath of the Nazi Holocaust of Jews during World War II, vehemently rejects the explosive term.

The complaint states that "two F16 missiles fired by the Israeli army" killed Janna, six, and Abderrahim Abudaber, nine, in northern Gaza on October 24, 2023.

They and their family had sought refuge in another home "between Faluja and Beit Lahia" after leaving their own two days earlier due to heavy bombardment, the 48-page document stated.

One missile entered "through the roof and the second directly into the room where the family was", it said.

Abderrahim was killed instantly, while his sister Janna died shortly after being taken to hospital.

The complaint argues the "genocide" allegation is based on the air strike being part of a larger Israeli project to "eliminate the Palestinian population and submit it to living conditions of a nature to entail the destruction of their group".

The children's brother Omar was severely wounded but still lives in Gaza with their mother, identified as Yasmine Z, the complaint added. - AFP

## Myanmar arrests six-year-old girl over killing of general

Myanmar authorities have arrested 16 people including a six-year-old girl over the assassination of a retired general shot dead in Yangon last month, state media said.

Cho Tun Aung, a former ambassador to Cambodia, was gunned down outside his home on May 22 in an attack claimed by an anti-junta group calling itself the "Golden Valley Warriors".

Myanmar's military seized power in a 2021 coup, plunging the country into a complex, multi-sided civil war involving pro-democracy guerrillas and resurgent ethnic minority armed groups.

Most fighting is confined to the countryside and smaller towns but grenade and gun attacks on junta-linked targets are regularly reported in Yangon, Myanmar's largest city and commercial hub.

The *Global New Light of Myanmar* newspaper said that 16 members of the Golden Valley Warriors – 13 men and three females – had been arrested in various locations.

Those held include the wife and six-year-old daughter of the suspected shooter, identified as Myo Ko Ko, the state-run newspaper said, without explaining what the girl is accused of.

The report said Myo Ko Ko and another suspect rode to the general's home on bicycles and shot him before fleeing to a safe house.

In an accompanying graphic, the newspaper carried the image of the six-year-old child.

Her face was blurred in an online version of the newspaper seen by Reuters, but visible in other social media posts made by junta authorities. - AFP/Reuters

## Red Cross halts operations in Niger following govt directive

The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) says it has suspended its operations in Niger after the West African nation's government ordered the closure of its offices, citing alleged collusion with armed groups.

Niger junta leader Abdourahamane Tchiani said in an interview with state television in late May that the organisation had been expelled in February, accusing it of meeting and collaborating with Islamist insurgent leaders.

The ICRC denied the allegations.

"To fulfil its humanitarian mandate to protect and assist victims of armed conflict, the ICRC engages in a spoken or written dialogue with all parties to a conflict," it said in a statement on Thursday.

The organisation said it "never provides those parties with financial, logistical or other support".

The ICRC, which has worked in Niger for 35 years, said it regretted the government's decision. - Reuters

## Guatemalan volcano erupts

Guatemala's Fuego volcano shot ash miles into the air yesterday as authorities said they had evacuated more than 700 people from their homes as a precaution.

A lava stream was building up around the crater of the volcano, which lies about 18km (11 miles) from the central city of Antigua Guatemala, seismology agency INSIVUMEH said.

Fuego is known for its frequent activity. In June 2018, its most violent eruption in about four decades killed more than 200 people. - Reuters

# Trump asks Supreme Court to let him dismantle Education Department

Reuters  
Washington

Donald Trump's administration has asked the US Supreme Court to permit it to proceed with dismantling the Department of Education, a move that would leave school policy in the United States almost entirely in the hands of states and local boards.

The Justice Department asked the court to halt Boston-based US District Judge Myong Joun's May 22 ruling that ordered the administration reinstate employees terminated in a mass layoff and end further actions to shutter the department.

The Justice Department said the lower court lacked jurisdiction to "second-guess the Executive's internal management decisions", referring to the federal government's executive branch.

"The government has been crystal clear in acknowledging that only Congress can eliminate the Department of Education. And the government has acknowledged the need to retain sufficient staff to continue fulfilling statutorily mandated functions and has kept the personnel that, in its judgment, are necessary for those tasks. The challenged (reduction in force) is fully consistent with that approach," the filing said.

The department, created by a US law passed by Congress in 1979, oversees about 100,000 public and 34,000 private schools in the United States, though more than 85% of public school funding comes from state and local governments.

It provides federal grants for needy schools and programmes, including mon-

## Court blocks Trump's new ban on foreign students at Harvard

A court has put a temporary stay on Donald Trump's latest effort to stop foreign students from enrolling at Harvard, as the US president's battle with one of the world's most prestigious universities intensified.

A proclamation issued by the White House late on Wednesday sought to bar most new international students at Harvard from entering the country, and said existing foreign enrollees risked having their visas terminated.

"Harvard's conduct has rendered it an unsuitable destination for foreign students and researchers," the order said. Harvard quickly amended an existing complaint filed in federal court, saying: "This is not the Administration's first attempt to sever Harvard from its international students."

"(It) is part of a concerted and escalating campaign of retaliation by the government in clear retribution for Harvard's exercising its First Amendment rights to reject the government's demands to control Harvard's governance, curriculum, and the 'ideology' of its faculty and students."

US District Judge Allison Burroughs on Thursday ruled the government cannot enforce Trump's proclamation. Harvard had showed, she said, that without a temporary restraining order, it risked sustaining "immediate and irreparable injury before there is an opportunity to hear from all parties". The same judge had already blocked Trump's earlier effort to bar international students from enrolling at the storied university. The government already cut around \$3.2bn of federal grants

to pay teachers of children with special needs, fund arts programmes and replace outdated infrastructure.

It also oversees the \$1.6tn in student loans held by tens of millions of Americans who cannot afford college outright.

Trump's move to dismantle the department is part of the Republican president's campaign to downsize and reshape the federal government.

Closing the department long has been a

goal of many US conservatives.

Attorneys-general from 20 states and the District of Columbia, as well as school districts and unions representing teachers, sued to block the Trump administration's efforts to gut the department.

The states argued that the massive job cuts will render the agency unable to perform core functions authorised by statute, including in the civil rights arena, effectively usurping Congress's authority in

violation of the US Constitution.

Trump on March 20 signed an executive order intended to effectively shut down the department, making good on a longstanding campaign promise to conservatives to move education policy almost completely to states and local boards.

At a White House ceremony surrounded by children and educators, Trump called the order a first step "to eliminate" the department.



# Modi invited to attend G7 summit in Canada

**AFP**  
New Delhi

India's Prime Minister Narendra Modi yesterday said he will attend the Group of Seven leaders summit in Canada this month after receiving an invitation from the new Canadian premier.

"Glad to receive a call from Prime Minister Mark Carney of Canada," Modi said in a statement posted on social media platform X. "Congratulated him on his recent election victory and thanked him for the invitation to the G7 Summit in Kananaskis later this month... look forward to our meeting at the summit."

India is not a member of the G7 but Modi has been invited to attend previous summits since 2019, when France invited him to Biarritz. Modi also congratulated Carney in April on his election win, suggesting hopes of a possible reset of fraught relations between New Delhi and Ottawa. "As vibrant democracies bound

by deep people-to-people ties, India and Canada will work together with renewed vigour, guided by mutual respect and shared interests," Modi said yesterday. Ties between Canada and India were strained following accusations of New Delhi's involvement in the assassination of a Canadian Sikh, claims India denied.

Canada is home to the largest Sikh community outside India. That community includes activists for "Khalistan", a fringe separatist movement seeking an independent state for the religious minority carved out of Indian territory. Ottawa previously accused India of orchestrating the 2023 killing in Vancouver of 45-year-old natu-

ralised Canadian citizen Hardeep Singh Nijjar, a prominent Khalistan campaigner, and targeting other Sikh activists connected to the movement. India has repeatedly dismissed the allegations, which sent diplomatic relations into freefall with both nations last year expelling a string of top diplomats.

# India central bank cuts rates more than expected to boost growth

**AFP**  
Mumbai

India's central bank yesterday cut interest rates more than expected, citing muted inflation and a need to kickstart economic growth as the impact of US tariffs weighed on the country's outlook. The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) lowered the benchmark repo rate, the level at which it lends to commercial banks, by 50 basis points to 5.5%. A majority of analysts had expected 25-basis-point reduction. The cut was its third in a row and comes a week after government data showed India's economy expanded at its slowest pace for four years in the fiscal year that ended in March. And while the January-March quarter showed signs of a rebound, with forecast-topping 7.4% year-on-year growth, analysts said US President Donald Trump's sweeping tariffs posed risks to the outlook. Easing price concerns have also allowed the RBI to concentrate on growth, with retail inflation dropping to a near six-year-low of 3.16% in April. Bank governor Sanjay Malhotra said India's growth remained "lower than our aspirations" in a "challenging global environment" and that it was necessary to continue stimulating domestic consumption and investment. "This changed growth inflation dynamics calls for not only continuing with the policy easing, but also frontloading the rate cuts to support

growth," Malhotra said. He added that the monetary policy committee had changed its stance from "accommodative" to "neutral", which implies a rate cut is not guaranteed at its next review meeting. The central bank also threw in a liquidity-boosting measure by cutting the cash reserve ratio, the proportion of deposits that banks must set aside with the RBI, by 100 basis points to 3%. The RBI cut rates for the first time in nearly five years in February and followed up with another reduction in April. The Indian government has forecast above-average monsoon rains, which observers say should help growth, as higher agricultural output will aid the rural economy and keep vegetable prices stable. But Trump's protectionist policies could add to growth pressures. While New Delhi is not a manufacturing powerhouse, experts believe that US tariffs will hurt billions of dollars of Indian exports across different sectors including gems and jewellery, electronics and seafood. India is hammering out the first tranche of a trade deal with Washington and negotiators have made several trips over the past three months. Local media reports say that while the White House is pushing for India to drop levies on a range of products, including agricultural produce and automobiles, New Delhi is seeking greater access for labour-intensive exports such as textiles and footwear.



A security force personnel stands guard as India's high-speed train "Vande Bharat Express" arrives at Srinagar railway station after India's Prime Minister Narendra Modi flagged off the train services from the SMVD railway station in Jammu's Katra to Srinagar yesterday.

# India's prime minister opens strategic railway in Kashmir

**AFP**  
Srinagar, India

Prime Minister Narendra Modi made his first visit to Kashmir yesterday since a conflict with Pakistan, opening a strategic railway line to the region he called "the crown jewel of India". Modi launched a string of projects worth billions of dollars for the territory. India and Pakistan fought a four-day conflict last month, their worst standoff since 1999, before a ceasefire was agreed on May 10. The fighting was triggered by an April 22 attack on civilians in Kashmir that New Delhi accused Pakistan of backing, a charge denied by Islamabad. "Friends, this event is a grand festival of In-

dia's unity and firm resolve," Modi said after striding across the soaring bridge to formally launch it for rail traffic. "This is a symbol and celebration of rising India," he said of the Chenab Bridge which connects two mountains. "The atmosphere of development that emerged in Jammu and Kashmir will not be hindered by the attack... I will not let development stop here," Modi stressed. New Delhi calls the Chenab span the "world's highest railway arch bridge", sitting 1,117 feet above a river. While several road and pipeline bridges are higher, Guinness World Records confirmed that Chenab trumps the previous highest railway bridge, the Najehe in China. Modi called it "an extraordinary feat of architecture" that "will improve connectivity" by

providing the first rail link from the Indian plains up to mountainous Kashmir. With 36 tunnels and 943 bridges, the new railway runs for 272km and connects Udhampur, Srinagar and Baramulla. It is expected to halve the travel time between the town of Katra in Jammu region and Srinagar, the main city in Kashmir, to around three hours. The new route will facilitate the movement of people and goods, as well as troops, that was previously possible only via treacherous mountain roads and by air. Modi also announced further government financial support for families whose relatives were killed, or whose homes were damaged, during the brief conflict - mainly in shelling along the heavily militarised de facto border with Pakistan, known as the Line of Control. "Their troubles are our troubles," Modi said.

**India, US trade talks extended as deadline looms**

Trade talks between Indian and US officials have been extended into next week as both sides seek consensus on tariff cuts in the farming and auto sectors, aiming to finalise an interim deal before a July 9 deadline, Indian government sources said. A US delegation led by senior officials from the Office of the United States Trade Representative (USTR) held two days of discussions in New Delhi with Indian trade officials headed by chief negotiator Rajesh Agrawal, the sources said. "The two countries are actively engaged in focused discussions to facilitate greater market access, reduce tariff and non-tariff barriers, enhance supply chain resilience and integration," one Indian government official with direct knowledge of the talks, said. Negotiators, who had initially aimed to wrap up talks yesterday, will now continue discussions on Monday and Tuesday to resolve outstanding differences, a second Indian official said.



Royal Challengers Bengaluru's Nikhil Sosale (black T-shirt), along with three staff members of DNA Entertainment Networks are taken to court after their arrest at Cubbon Park Police Station in Bengaluru yesterday.

# Indian police arrest two after cricket stampede

**AFP**  
Bengaluru, India

Indian police arrested two people including a senior executive at Royal Challengers Bengaluru, reports said yesterday, after 11 fans were crushed to death during celebrations for the team's first IPL title. Hundreds of thousands packed the streets in the southern city of Bengaluru on Wednesday to welcome home their hero Virat Kohli and his RCB cricket team after they beat Punjab Kings in the final of the Indian Premier League. But the euphoria of the vast crowds ended in disaster when 11 mainly young fans died in a stampede near M Chinnaswamy Stadium, where the players were parading the trophy. Karnataka state's Chief Minister Siddaramaiah said yesterday he had directed police to arrest the representatives of RCB, event organisers DNA, and Karnataka State Cricket Association.

While there has been no official confirmation of the arrests, Siddaramaiah said a first information report, which marks the start of a police investigation, had been "registered against them". Media outlet India Today said that Nikhil Sosale, RCB's head of marketing, was arrested at Bengaluru's airport. The Indian Express newspaper also reported Sosale was arrested along with an executive from an event management company. The deaths have sparked widespread anger, and top police officers including the city's police commissioner have been suspended. Local media reported that the accusations include culpable homicide, not amounting to murder, among others. There was no immediate comment from RCB. Siddaramaiah also pointed the finger at some senior police. "These officers appear to be irresponsible and negligent and it has been decided to suspend them," Siddaramaiah said.

# Musk's Starlink 'gets India licence to offer satcom services'

**Reuters**  
New Delhi

Elon Musk's Starlink has received a licence to launch commercial operations in India from the telecoms ministry, two sources said yesterday, clearing a major hurdle for the satellite provider that has long wanted to enter the country. The approval is good news for Musk, whose public spat with President Donald Trump threat-

ens \$22bn of SpaceX's contracts and space programmes with the US government. Starlink is the third company to get a licence from India's department of telecommunications, which has approved similar applications by Eutelsat's OneWeb and Reliance Jio to provide services in the country. Starlink and the department of telecommunications did not immediately respond to a request for comment. The sources declined to be named

because of the sensitivity of the matter. Musk met Prime Minister Narendra Modi during his visit in February to the US, where the two discussed Starlink's launch plans and India's concerns over meeting certain security conditions. Starlink has been waiting since 2022 for licences to operate commercially in India, and although it has cleared a major hurdle, it is a long way from launching commercial services. It still needs a separate licence from India's space regulator, which

Starlink is close to securing, said a third source with direct knowledge of the process without giving details. Starlink will then need to secure spectrum from the government, set up ground infrastructure and also demonstrate, through testing and trials, that it meets the security rules it has signed up for, one of the two sources said. "This will take a couple of months at least and will be a rigorous process," said the person, adding that it can only begin selling its

equipment and services to customers once it gets an all clear from Indian security officials. Indian telecom providers Jio and Bharti Airtel, in a surprise move in March, announced a partnership with Musk to stock Starlink equipment in their retail stores, but they will still compete on offering broadband services. Musk and billionaire Mukesh Ambani's Jio clashed for months over how India should grant spectrum for satellite services. India's government sided with Musk that

spectrum should be assigned and not auctioned. India's telecom regulator in May proposed satellite service providers pay 4% of their annual revenue to the government for offering services, which domestic players have said is unjustifiably low and will hurt their businesses. Deloitte predicts India's satellite broadband service market will be worth \$1.9bn by 2030, making it lucrative for players like Starlink and Amazon's Kuiper, which is still awaiting a licence.



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GULF TIMES

China’s rare earth weapon changes contours of trade war battlefield

China has signalled for more than 15 years that it was looking to weaponise areas of the global supply chain, a strategy modelled on longstanding American export controls Beijing views as aimed at stalling its rise.

The scramble in recent weeks to secure export licences for rare earths, capped by Thursday’s telephone call between US and Chinese leaders Donald Trump and Xi Jinping, shows China has devised a better, more precisely targeted weapon for trade war.

Industry executives and analysts say while China is showing signs of approving more exports of the key elements, it will not dismantle its new system.

Modelled on the US’ own, Beijing’s export licence system gives it unprecedented insight into supplier chokepoints in areas ranging from motors for electric vehicles to flight-control systems for guided missiles. After Thursday’s call, Trump said both leaders had been “straightening out some of the points, having to do mostly with rare earth magnets and some other things”.

He did not say whether China committed to speeding up licences for exports of rare earth magnets, after Washington curbed exports of chip design software and jet engines to Beijing in response to its perceived slow-rolling on licences.

China holds a near-monopoly on rare earth magnets, a crucial component in EV motors. In April it added some of the most sophisticated types to an export control list in its trade war with the US, forcing all exporters to apply to Beijing for licences.

That put a once-obscure department of China’s commerce ministry, with a staff of about 60, in charge of a chokepoint for global manufacturing.

Several European auto suppliers shut down production lines this week after running out of supplies. While China’s April curbs coincided with a broader package of retaliation against Washington’s tariffs, the measures apply globally.

China mines about 70% of the world’s rare earths but has a virtual monopoly on refining and processing. Even if the pace of export approvals quickens as Trump suggested, the new system gives Beijing unprecedented glimpses of how companies in a supply chain deploy the rare earths it processes, European and US executives have warned.

Other governments are denied that insight because of the complexity of supply chain operations.

For example, hundreds of Japanese suppliers are believed to need China to approve export licences for rare earth magnets in coming weeks to avert production disruptions.

Fears that China could weaponise its global supply chain strength first emerged after its temporary ban of rare earth exports to Japan in 2010, following a territorial dispute.

As early as 1992, former Chinese leader Deng Xiaoping was quoted as saying, “The Middle East has oil, China has rare earths.”

Beijing’s landmark 2020 Export Control Law broadened curbs to cover any items affecting national security, from critical goods and materials to technology and data. China has since built its own sanctions power while pouring the equivalent of billions of dollars into developing workarounds in response to US policies.

In 2022, the US put sweeping curbs on sales of advanced semiconductor chips and tools to China over concerns the technology could advance Beijing’s military power.

But the move failed to halt China’s development of advanced chips and artificial intelligence, analysts have said.

Beijing punched back a year later by introducing export licences for gallium and germanium, and some graphite products. Exports to the US of the two critical minerals, along with germanium, were banned last December.

In February China restricted exports of five more metals key to the defence and clean energy industries.

Analysts face a hard task in tracking the pace of China’s approvals following the Trump-Xi call.

“It’s virtually impossible to know what percentage of requests for non-military end users get approved because the data is not public and companies don’t want to publicly confirm either way,” said Cory Combs, a critical minerals analyst with Trivium, a policy consultancy focused on China. - Reuters

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Information pollution undermining climate progress

By Lili Fuhr and Stephanie Hankey  
Berlin

The devastation caused by the 2024 flash floods in Valencia, Spain, was so surreal that some images sparked a global debate over their authenticity. In an era when AI technology can produce hyper-realistic fakes, photos showing cars piled haphazardly atop one another in narrow, mud-filled streets seemed almost too shocking to be true. Tragically, these images were all too real.

For years, climate activists believed that once the direct impact of climate change became undeniable – not just in the Global South, but everywhere – popular pressure for political and corporate action would surge. And indeed, polls show overwhelming public support for bold climate measures. But now that this long-anticipated moment has arrived, an equally urgent challenge has emerged: the information ecosystem we rely on to understand the world has become dangerously polluted.

The pollution metaphor is apt because it captures the chaotic and toxic nature of today’s information landscape, which is controlled by a handful of powerful companies that commodify attention and inundate our feeds with “AI slop” – low-quality, machine-generated content designed to mislead, distract, and distort.

Nowhere is this more evident than in the climate change debate. While climate misinformation has long been a concern, often mutating into full-blown conspiracy theories, the situation has deteriorated to such an extent that the term “misinformation” no longer reflects the scale, complexity, or urgency of the threat, much less points to potential solutions.

It is often said that the technologies needed to combat climate change already exist, and that what’s missing is the political will to deploy them. But while technology may be sold as the key to solving the crisis, it is also being used to slow the momentum needed to address it. Tech oligarchs with deep government ties and vested financial interests control the platforms that shape public opinion – from Elon Musk’s X (formerly Twitter) to Jeff Bezos’s Washington Post – enabling them to influence not just environmental policy, but the conversation about it.

As AI accelerates the global information crisis, climate issues are increasingly swept up in culture wars. This is further fuelled by data brokers that treat users’ views about climate change as proxies for political identity, thereby reinforcing echo chambers and deepening polarisation in the service of selling targeted ads.



An AI generated photo.



During the 2024 Atlantic hurricane season, user-generated content on Instagram and TikTok shifted from documenting the destruction to amplifying conspiracy theories about weather manipulation and secret geoengineering projects, stoking fear and destabilising an already fragile information environment. A similar dynamic played out during the recent power outages in Spain and Portugal, where misleading narratives blaming renewable-energy sources spread rapidly before any official investigation could determine the cause. Such rumours often lead to threats and harassment of scientists and activists, creating a chilling effect on research and advocacy, even as public support for climate action remains strong.

To be sure, rhetoric opposing climate action comes mostly from a loud minority. But it is being amplified by a media environment that thrives on outrage. Worse, the convergence of interests among far-right ideologues, Big Tech, and Big Oil – all of which profit from climate chaos, information pollution, and political instability – is contributing to the rise of “dirty tech” and accelerating the erosion of democracy and the rule of law.

In the US, the tech sector’s growing proximity to far-right politics has highlighted the role of platforms that shape public discourse and, by extension, the future of climate action. Civil-society groups that focus on digital rights and democratic advocacy have been grappling with these issues for years. Yet, much like microplastics, the problem has fragmented into countless smaller pieces, making it far more difficult to contain.

With power concentrated in the hands of those profiting from information pollution, it can feel as though we are at a dead end. But as disorienting as today’s social-media ecosystem may be, the sources – much like those of environmental pollution – can be identified, enabling accountability. Europe’s new digital rule book, which includes a recent legislation on digital services, competition, data protection, and AI, as well as the recent proposal of a “European Democracy Shield” to counter foreign information

interference, are vital first steps toward addressing the systemic effects of misinformation and the impact of Big Tech’s business models on public debate.

Still, the effectiveness of these regulations remains to be seen, and since enforcement currently stops at Europe’s borders, further action is needed. Demonetising climate disinformation and applying the “polluter pays” principle to the digital realm could help hold tech companies and advertisers accountable for the harm they inflict on the climate information ecosystem.

Protecting freedom of expression means defending both the right to speak freely and the right to receive accurate, undistorted information. If we fail to confront information pollution head-on, we risk not just stalling climate progress but reversing it altogether. That said, good information doesn’t rise to the top on its own. Those working to combat climate change and resist speculative technofixes like geoengineering can no longer rely solely on reaching wider audiences or refining their message.

Instead, climate activists must join forces with digital democracy advocates to challenge the algorithm-driven business models fuelling the twin crises of climate breakdown and information pollution. The full consequences of these converging crises are only beginning to emerge, but in the absence of concerted action, the writing is on the wall. - Project Syndicate

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How China won the clean-energy race

By Carolyn Kissane  
New York

In the coming weeks, the US Congress could cement China’s lead in the clean-energy race by passing the Republican Party’s “big, beautiful bill”, which, among other things, seeks to eliminate the Inflation Reduction Act’s clean-energy tax incentives. This would prompt America’s retreat from renewables such as solar, wind, and hydrogen, as well as electric vehicles (EVs) and the required charging infrastructure, fatally undermining its efforts to challenge China’s dominance in green industries.

The numbers are staggering. Globally, China accounts for 65% of manufacturing capacity for wind turbines and more than 80% for solar panels, in addition to dominating the production of energy-storage systems and EVs. China also largely controls the mining and refining of the minerals required for these green products, processing around 90% of rare-earth elements and 60-70% of cobalt and lithium.

Unlike oil and gas production, which is spread across many countries, China has become the world’s undisputed leader in clean energy – not just one technology or market segment, but almost the entire portfolio.

The Chinese industrial machine has thus played an indispensable role in the global energy transition. China’s massive domestic deployment of renewables – including its more than 800 gigawatts of installed solar and its world-leading onshore and offshore wind buildout – has dramatically lowered the costs of green tech. And its export capacity has made these products more accessible and affordable, particularly in the Global South.

China pursued this agenda not in response to climate change, but because of its own energy insecurity. In 2009, the Chinese government, recognising the vulnerability implied by its dependence on imported fossil fuels and foreign-controlled energy markets, adopted a long-term industrial strategy to become a global manufacturing superpower in clean tech.

At the time, Germany and Japan led the world in solar innovation. But, through state subsidies, regulatory co-ordination, and



Solar installers from Baker Electric place solar panels on the roof of a residential home in Scripps Ranch, San Diego, California, US.

strategic planning, China absorbed, replicated, and scaled up these existing technologies, while also innovating and developing new ones – especially for batteries. Today, China’s clean-tech sector is its most competitive, accounting for 10% of GDP.

China’s dominance rests on a deeply integrated, highly co-ordinated manufacturing ecosystem. Many of the critical inputs for solar panels, batteries, and EVs are located within a three-to-four-hour radius, enabling rapid production, tight quality control, and unmatched cost efficiency. This geographic density results in cheaper products, but also the ability to outcompete on speed. The country’s supply-chain optimisation was no accident – it was a deliberate policy choice that required regional co-ordination and billions of renminbi in infrastructure investment.

Government support went far beyond subsidies. As part of its broader economic strategy, China poured capital into research and development at universities, tech parks, and manufacturing zones, scaling innovation and driving cost parity faster than any other country. The state didn’t pick winners – it built them, and then doubled down when the model worked.

In 2021, Chinese President Xi Jinping told the

United Nations General Assembly that China would “step up support for other developing countries in developing green and low-carbon energy.” So far, the country has fulfilled its commitment: last year, nearly half of Chinese solar, wind, and EV exports went to the Global South, where energy demand is surging and capital is scarce.

China’s renewables push has been a boon for these growth-rich and energy-poor emerging economies. Rather than waiting on fragmented aid or high-cost Western solutions, many governments find China’s turnkey clean-energy projects to be the only option – when the choice is between no grid and a Chinese grid, pragmatism often trumps geopolitics. No other exporter can match China’s co-ordinated bundling, because few possess the industrial depth and the patient capital to underwrite entire systems.

As a result, almost all of Ghana’s solar installations use Chinese inputs. In Indonesia and Kenya, Chinese firms are helping to modernise grids and electrify rural regions. Across Africa, Chinese-built EVs – costing less than \$15,000 – are quickly becoming many people’s first vehicles. And that trend looks set to continue. The price points and production scale of BYD, China’s EV champion, are reshaping the global auto market and have made the country the world’s top car exporter. By 2030, Chinese automakers are expected to capture 39% of the market in Africa and the Middle East.

The US government’s policy whiplash – one administration’s zeal for clean energy followed by the next administration’s disdain for it – has squandered America’s opportunity to become the world’s low-carbon leader, not to mention its long-held advantage in innovation. China is now firmly in the driver’s seat, thanks to a multi-decade push to build its clean-tech industry, dominate supply chains, and export low-cost means of electrification to the world. - Project Syndicate

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# Amir receives Eid al-Adha well-wishers

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His Highness the Amir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani received more Eid al-Adha well-wishers including Sheikhs and citizens, yesterday afternoon at the Lusail Palace.

The well-wishers expressed their congratulations and blessings to His Highness the Amir on this happy occasion, praying to Almighty Allah to bring similar occasions back to Qatar, its people, and all Arab and Islamic nations with goodness, blessings, and prosperity.

The reception was attended by His Highness the Personal Representative of the Amir, Sheikh Jassim bin Hamad al-Thani, along with a number of Sheikhs. - QNA







## Amir performs Eid prayer at Lusail

His Highness the Amir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani performed the Eid al-Adha prayer at the Lusail Prayer Ground yesterday morning. His Highness the Amir was joined in the prayer by a number of sheikhs, government ministers, and members of the Shura Council, who included His Highness the Personal Representative of the Amir, Sheikh Jassim bin Hamad al-Thani; His Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Khalifa al-Thani; HE Sheikh Jassim bin Khalifa al-Thani; HE the Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs, Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman bin Jassim al-Thani; and HE the Speaker of the Shura Council, Hassan bin Abdullah al-Ghanim. Also in attendance were a number of ambassadors and heads of diplomatic missions accredited to Qatar. – QNA



## Amir receives well-wishers

His Highness the Amir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani received Eid al-Adha well-wishers yesterday morning at the Lusail Palace.



Some of the wellwishers at the Lusail Palace yesterday.