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SPORT | Page 1

Wathnan Racing's Lazzat powers to victory at Royal Ascot

Israeli fire kills 8 near aid centres; Gaza genocide toll rises to 55,908



Demonstrators demand to impose sanctions against Israel in Berlin, Germany, yesterday.

Gaza's civil defence agency said Israeli fire killed at least 12 people yesterday, including eight who had gathered near aid distribution sites in the Palestinian territory suffering severe food shortages. Three people were killed by gunfire from Israeli forces while waiting to collect aid in the southern Gaza Strip. In a separate incident, five people were killed in a central area known as the Netzarim corridor, where thousands of Palestinians have gathered daily in the hope of receiving food rations. Three people were killed on Saturday in an Israeli air strike on Gaza City and one more in another strike on the southern city of Khan Younis. Israeli forces also demolished more than 10 houses in Gaza City. The death toll from the ongoing Israeli aggression on the Gaza Strip since Oct. 7, 2023, has risen to 55,908 martyrs, in addition to 131,138 wounded. (**AFP**)

Israel seeks swift action before US' 2-week deadline

AFP/Reuters
Tehran/Jerusalem

●Iran warns of devastating response ●US moves B-2 bombers to Guam ●Fighting rages for the 9th day

Iran's President Masoud Pezeshkian warned yesterday of a "more devastating" retaliation should Israel's nine-day bombing campaign continue, saying the Islamic republic would not halt its nuclear programme "under any circumstances".

Israel said yesterday it had killed three more Iranian commanders in its unprecedented offensive, while Foreign Minister Gideon Saar claimed Tehran's alleged progress towards a nuclear weapon had been set back by two years.

Yesterday, Israel said it had attacked Iran's Isfahan nuclear site for a second time.

United States President Donald Trump warned on Friday that Tehran had a "maximum" of two weeks to avoid possible American air strikes as Washington weighed whether to join Israel's campaign.

Any US involvement would likely feature powerful bunker-busting bombs to destroy an underground uranium enrichment facility in Fordo.

US B-2 stealth bombers capable of carrying bunker busters have been moved to the Pacific island of Guam. The B-2 can be equipped to carry America's 30,000-pound GBU-57 Massive Ordnance Penetrator, designed to destroy targets deep underground, such as the one at Fordo.

Israeli officials have told the Trump administration they do not want to wait two weeks for Iran to reach a deal and Israel could act alone before the deadline is up, two sources said.

The sources said Israel had communicated their concerns to Trump administration officials on Thursday in a tense phone call.

A source in Washington said Israel has communicated to the US that it believes Trump's window of up to two weeks is too long and that more urgent action is needed.

During the call, Vice-President JD Vance pushed back, saying the US shouldn't be directly involved and suggesting that the Israelis were going to drag the country into war.

PM discusses Iran war with Erdogan, Araqchi





President of the sisterly Republic of Turkiye, Recep Tayyip Erdogan met yesterday with HE the Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs, Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman bin Jassim al-Thani, on the sidelines of the 51st Session of the Council of Foreign Ministers of the Organisation of Islamic Co-operation (OIC), which is taking place in Istanbul, Turkiye.

At the outset of the meeting, HE Sheikh Mohammed conveyed the greetings of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani to the Turkish president and his wishes of good health and happiness to Erdogan and continued progress and prosperity for the Turkish people.

For his part, Erdogan entrusted HE Sheikh Mohammed with his greetings to His Highness the Amir, wishing him good health and happiness, and further development and growth for the Qatari people.

The meeting discussed bilateral relations and ways to support and enhance them, as well as the latest developments in the region, particularly in Gaza and the occupied Palestinian territories, the continued Israeli aggression on Iran, in addition to a number of issues of mutual concern.

HE the Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman bin Jassim al-Thani also met yesterday with Iranian Foreign Minister Dr Abbas Araqchi. The meeting was held on the margin of the 51st Session of the Council of Foreign Ministers of the Organisation of Islamic Co-operation (OIC), currently taking place in Istanbul, Turkiye.

Discussions during the meeting focused on the latest developments in the region, particularly the continued Israeli aggression against sisterly Islamic Republic of Iran.

HE Sheikh Mohammed reiterated Qatar's strong condemnation and denunciation of the Israeli aggression against Iranian territory, considering it a flagrant violation of Iran's sovereignty and security, and a clear breach of the rules and principles of international law.

He stressed the need for concerted regional and international efforts to de-escalate tensions and resolve disputes through diplomatic means, affirming that Qatar is making strenuous efforts with its partners to return to the path of dialogue to address outstanding issues and consolidate security and peace in the region and the world. **(QNA)**



QATAR

Qatar participates in 51st session of OIC Council of Foreign Ministers in Istanbul





Qatar is participating in the ongoing 51st session of the Council of Foreign Ministers of the Organisation of Islamic Co-operation (OIC), currently taking place in Istanbul, Turkiye. HE the Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs, Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman bin Jassim al-Thani, is heading Qatar's delegation to the session. The meetings are addressing the latest developments in the region, with a particular focus on the situation in the Gaza Strip and the occupied Palestinian territories, as well as the continued Israeli aggression against the sisterly Islamic Republic of Iran and its serious regional and international implications. The discussions also centre on ways to de-escalate tensions and resolve disputes through diplomatic means, with the aim of promoting security, peace, and stability in the region and the wider world. **(QNA)**

Awqaf: Over 5,000 beneficiaries of endowment-based dialysis project

QNA
Doha

A total of 5,043 patients have benefited from the Endowment-Based Dialysis Project at Hamad Medical Corp (HMC) from 2020 to the end of 2024, supported by the Healthcare Endowment Fund under the General Directorate of Endowments at the Ministry of Endowments (Awqaf) and Islamic Affairs.

In a statement, the Ministry of Awqaf noted that the dialysis project, supported by the Healthcare Endowment Fund, serves as a pioneering humanitarian model of partnership between the healthcare and charitable sectors and has significantly contributed to improving the quality of life for thousands of kidney failure patients in Qatar.

Executive Director of the Social Service Department at HMC, Bashayer al-Rashed emphasized that the project aims to provide dialysis services to low-income patients, helping to improve their quality of life and ease the financial burden on them and their families. She pointed out that the endowment support covers the provision of medical equipment, supplies, and treatment costs for patients in need, which has strengthened the continuity and quality of services and enabled the Corp to meet the growing demand for dialysis sessions.

Al-Rashed explained that beneficiary selection is carried out according to clear criteria that consider health status, social circumstances, income level, and the number of required dialysis sessions, in co-ordination with the relevant authorities. Beneficiary data is also regularly reviewed to ensure fair and equitable distribution of support.

She added that the project has made a significant humanitarian impact by improving patients' psychological well-being and enabling them to resume their roles within their families and communities.

She also confirmed that a current study is underway to expand the project's scope to include psychological support and health education for patients and their families.

Al-Rashed further noted that the project contributes to achieving the third goal of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which focuses on ensuring good health and well-being, by providing treatment without financial burden to patients and enhancing access to quality medical services.

The Executive Director of the Social Service Department at HMC expressed her gratitude to the General Directorate of Endowments and all generous donors, praising the ongoing partnership that strengthens social solidarity and supports national efforts to advance healthcare development in Qatar.



NHRC chief elected to OIC rights commission

QNA
Istanbul

HE the Chairperson of the National Human Rights Committee (NHRC), Maryam bint Abdullah al-Attiyah, has been elected as a member of the Independent Permanent Human Rights Commission of the Organisation of Islamic Co-operation (OIC). The election took place on the sidelines of the 51st Session of the OIC Council of Foreign Ministers, currently underway in Istanbul, Turkiye.

This election stands as a testament to the distinguished position of Qatar in advancing and protecting human rights, and highlights the country's active, credible, and constructive role in international human rights platforms. It further reflects the international community's recognition and appreciation of Qatari expertise and national capabilities in this vital field.

The Independent Permanent Human Rights Commission serves as the OIC's principal advisory body on human rights.

MSDF gears up to launch its National Strategy 2025-2030



Under the auspices of HE the Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman bin Jassim al-Thani, the Ministry of Social Development and Family (MSDF) will launch today its new National Strategy for 2025-2030, under the theme "From Care to Empowerment".

This strategy reflects the ministry's commitment to enhancing the quality of life in Qatari society by establishing a comprehensive, sustainable social services system that aligns with the State's aspirations and Qatar National Vision 2030.

The strategy will introduce a series of key initiatives aimed at improving social services, developing the necessary infrastructure, and supporting target groups.

It also seeks to strengthen partnerships between the public and private sectors to drive development projects forward.

At its core, the strategy focuses on reinforcing family cohesion, promoting social justice, and raising living standards across society. It will offer a variety of programs, including family counselling and support services, parental education and awareness campaigns, and initiatives to promote mental health-contributing to the creation of a stable, adaptable family environment.

A central pillar of the strategy is the empowerment of Qatari women, supporting their active participation in economic and social spheres, and encouraging their leadership and decision-making roles. It will also prioritise supporting vulnerable groups, particularly persons with disabilities, by enhancing social integration initiatives and expanding service offerings in a manner that upholds dignity, justice, and equity.

The strategy places strong emphasis on fostering community engagement by empowering civil society organisations, promoting a culture of volunteerism, and encouraging sustainable charitable efforts. Additionally, it seeks to elevate citizens' living standards through economic empowerment programs, supporting productive families, and improving their overall quality of life.

The launch of this strategy underscores Qatar's steadfast commitment to sustainable social development and the creation of a prosperous society grounded in empowerment, participation, and social justice. **(QNA)**

Labour ministry launches heat stress awareness campaign

The Ministry of Labour, through its Department of Occupational Safety and Health and in partnership with the Workers' Support and Insurance Fund and the Cybersecurity Agency, launched a field campaign in Asian Town to raise awareness among workers about the risks of heat stress and effective prevention measures.

This initiative is part of ongoing efforts to ensure a safe working environment, educating workers on the dangers of direct sun exposure and high temperatures, and providing practical guidance to avoid heat-related health issues.

Specialists from the collaborating entities presented key summer workplace safety practices, emphasising avoidance of direct sun during peak hours, adherence to health and safety protocols, and recognition of early symptoms and first aid for heat stress.

The campaign included multilingual printed materials, visual aids, and on-site advice, encouraging hydration, regular breaks, use of appropriate protective equipment, and suitable clothing to reduce heat exposure contributing to a stronger safety culture across Qatar's workforce.

The ministry reiterated its commitment to ongoing awareness initiatives, in collaboration with public and private partners, to uphold occupational safety standards and protect worker health across the country. **(QNA)**

Shura takes part in conference on Interfaith Dialogue in Rome

The Shura Council has participated in the Second Parliamentary Conference on Interfaith Dialogue in the Italian capital, Rome. Held under the title 'Strengthening trust and embracing hope for our common future', the conference was organised by the Inter-Parliamentary Union, in partnership with the Parliament of Italy and with support from Religions for Peace.



Nasser bin Mohammed al-Nuaimi and Abdullah bin Nasser bin Turki al-Subaie, members of the Shura Council, represented the council at the three-day event.

The conference featured discussion sessions on ways to promote peaceful coexistence among peoples, prevent religious defamation, uphold shared values, and combat hate speech based on religion or belief.

It also discussed the importance of ethical leadership, investment in education for peace, and promotion of solidarity with vulnerable groups, including refugees, migrants, and people affected by humanitarian crises. It shared good practices for activating parliamentary co-operation with religious and social actors.

In the conference's closing statement, participants emphasised a number of shared principles, most notably: promoting the values of mutual respect and human dignity, rejecting the use of religion or belief to justify violence or incite hatred, and calling for the consolidation of a culture of dialogue and openness and building bridges of understanding between different societies.

The statement also emphasised the importance of supporting freedom of thought and belief and the need to strengthen partnerships between parliaments and religious leaders in addressing global challenges, thus contributing to building more just and cohesive societies. **(QNA)**

Action against violators of grazing ban



The Ministry of Environment and Climate Change (MoECC), represented by the Wildlife Protection Department, in co-operation with the Environmental Security Group of the Internal Security Force (Lekhwiya), has initiated legal action against several violations related to the grazing ban. According to a statement from MoECC, the violations were detected during a comprehensive inspection campaign covering various southern regions. The statement said the violators will be referred to the competent authorities to complete the prescribed legal procedures.

Shura delegation ends visit to Switzerland



A delegation from the Shura Council, headed by Yousef bin Ali al-Khater, Chairman of the Council's Internal and External Affairs Committee, concluded a visit to the Swiss Confederation. During the visit, the delegation met with President of the National Council of Switzerland, Maja Riniker, and Member of the Swiss National Council and President of the Swiss-Qatari Friendship Group, Hans Portmann.

The meetings addressed existing co-operation between the Shura Council and the Swiss Parliament, ways to develop them to serve mutual interests, and discussed a number of parliamentary issues of common interest. The delegation also discussed Qatari-Swiss relations as well as the latest regional and international developments during a meeting with Head of the Middle East and North Africa Department at the Swiss Federal Department of Foreign Affairs, Monika Kirgoz.

The delegation also met with Secretary General of the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU), Martin Chungog; Deputy High Commissioner in the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees, Kelly Clements; and Deputy UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, Nada al-Nashif.

Discussions during the meeting dealt with a host of topics of mutual interest.



Qatar Charity begins aid for Sudanese refugees in Chad

Qatar Charity has launched a relief mission in Chad to respond to the urgent needs of Sudanese refugees living in transit zones and overcrowded camps where basic services are scarce or nonexistent.

The field mission included visits to multiple border crossings between Sudan and Chad, as well as to a major refugee settlement in Wadi Sira — one of the key gathering points for newly displaced individuals.

This initial intervention aimed to assess the situation on the ground and identify the most pressing needs.

In co-ordination with local authorities, Qatar Charity's team conducted a comprehensive needs assessment, identifying critical gaps in shelter, food, water, and healthcare. Emergency food baskets were distributed to alleviate immediate suffering.

The visit exposed harrowing conditions facing tens of thousands of refugees who escaped the conflict with nothing but the will to survive. They now endure extreme shortages of food and clean water, lack access to safe shelter amid soaring summer temperatures, and suffer from inadequate healthcare. Meanwhile, children have been cut off from education, placing their futures at risk.

This visit marks the beginning of a phased emergency response by Qatar Charity, which aims to provide life-saving assistance in key refugee-hosting areas across Chad. The plan includes the delivery of essential supplies, food, shelter materials and medical support.

WCM-Q concludes 2025 cycle of biomedical research training programme



Four aspiring biomedical scientists have gained key research skills by completing the 2025 cycle of Weill Cornell Medicine-Qatar's (WCM-Q) Biomedical Research Training Programme (BRTP) for Nationals.

The interns who participated in this year's programme are Raghad Rabie El Ghali, Hadeel Alashwal, Maryam Ali, and Sara Muhamed Saleh.

The programme is designed to give Qatari nationals and long-term residents who have recently graduated from college a firm foundation in practical laboratory and research administration skills, and experience conducting real clinical research projects while working alongside WCM-Q's highly qualified scientific faculty in the college's state-of-the-art laboratories. To celebrate their successful completion of the programme, the interns were presented with certificates at a special graduation ceremony. This year marks the 13th annual cycle of the Biomedical Research Training Programme for Nationals, which was launched in 2011. To date, the programme has helped 62 graduates, including this year's cohort, take their first steps toward successful careers in research.

Dr Khaled Machaca, professor of physiology and biophysics/senior associate dean for research, innovations, and commercialisation at WCM-Q, said: "I am honoured to congratulate our latest cohort of talented graduates from the Biomedical Research Training Programme. These impressive young scientists have dedicated the last 10 months to acquiring the skills and knowledge needed to become not only exceptional scientists but also vital contributors to Qatar's thriving biomedical research sector."

This year's BRTP interns are graduates of Hamad Bin Khalifa University, Qatar University, the University of Zhengzhou in China, and the International Medical University in Malaysia.

Tembela Eweje, associate director, grants, contracts and research training, said: "This programme is more than just training; it's about building a diverse and capable biomedical workforce for Qatar. The programme is designed to equip emerging scientists with critical skills and provide the mentorship they need for their careers after completion. During the graduation ceremony, our trainees expressed their excitement about the future and their eagerness to engage in activities that will help them gain the expertise needed to lead transformative research."

The programme has become an established bridge for college graduates to transition to the workplace and kickstart successful careers in research. Graduates from previous cycles have gone on to publish in leading journals and have been accepted to graduate school programmes in Qatar and abroad.

Yemen's Houthis threaten to attack US vessels if it strikes Iran

AFP
Sanaa

Yemen's Houthi fighters threatened yesterday to attack US vessels in the Red Sea, despite a recent truce, should Washington get involved in Israel's bombardment campaign against Iran.

Israel launched unprecedented attacks on Iranian nuclear and military sites last week, drawing retaliation from Tehran.

The United States, a key Israeli ally, has been weighing getting involved in the war. Houthi military spokesman Yahya Saree, whose group is backed by Tehran, warned in a video statement that "if the United States gets involved in an attack and aggression against Iran with the Israeli enemy", the fighters "will target its ships and warships in the Red Sea".

The Houthis, who control swathes of Yemen, have launched missiles and drones targeting Israel and Israel-linked Red Sea shipping throughout the Gaza war, claiming solidarity with Palestinians.

After pausing attacks earlier this year during a two-month ceasefire in the Gaza war, which was sparked by an October 2023 storming by Palestinian group Hamas, the Houthis renewed threats to shipping in March over Israel's aid blockade of the Palestinian territory.

QNL 'Murshidi' programme offers weekly mentoring sessions



Qatar National Library (QNL) is organising weekly guidance sessions as part of its 'Murshidi' programme, which aims to support students and recent graduates in Qatar by providing academic and career guidance delivered by some of the most respected experts and educators across Qatar's leading institutions.

QNL explained in a statement that these sessions are held every Saturday, from 10:00am to 1:00pm, in the Library lobby. They provide a stimulating environment for constructive dialogue and learning, and expand participants' professional networks.

With more than 90 mentors from institutions such as Qatar Foundation, HBKU, Sidra Medicine, QCRI and more, 'Murshidi' offers access to a diverse network of professionals across fields like medicine, technology, law, innovation, policy and education.

According to QNL, mentees can choose their areas of focus and select 3 or 4 potential mentors. Based on availability and subject needs, each student is matched with a mentor for focused one-on-one sessions that address their individual goals and aspirations. 'Murshidi' ensures structure and professionalism. All communications are managed by QNL staff and mentees are expected to attend sessions on time and maintain respectful engagement throughout the programme. **(QNA)**

Qatar takes part in Arab League ministerial meeting





Qatar participated in the Extraordinary Meeting of the Council of the League of Arab States at the Ministerial Level, held in Istanbul on Friday.
Qatar was represented at the meeting by HE the Minister of State at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Dr Mohammed bin Abdulaziz bin Saleh al-Khulaifi.
The meeting discussed the latest developments in the region, primarily the Israeli attack on the territory of the sisterly Islamic Republic of Iran, ways to de-escalate tensions, and resolve disputes through diplomatic means. **(QNA)**

Qatar attends follow-up panel meeting on Libya in Berlin



Qatar participated in the meeting of the International Follow-up Committee on Libya, which was held in the German capital, Berlin. HE the Special Envoy of the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Ambassador Faisal bin Abdullah al-Hanzab represented Qatar at the meeting. In his speech at the meeting, he reaffirmed Qatar's steadfast commitment to continue to work with regional and international partners to achieve sustainable peace in Libya and support Libyan national institutions in a manner that serves the aspirations of the brotherly Libyan people, achieve national reconciliation, and build the Libyan state. He also emphasised Qatar's full support for Libya's sovereignty, independence, and territorial integrity, along with the importance of creating appropriate conditions for holding fair and transparent parliamentary, presidential elections based on a consensual constitutional framework. He added that Qatar values the United Nations-led process, the efforts of the UN Support Mission in Libya, and the role of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General. **(QNA)**

Turkiye says Israel leading Middle East to 'total disaster'

AFP
Istanbul

Turkish Foreign Minister Hakan Fidan yesterday accused Israel of leading the Middle East towards "total disaster" by attacking Iran on June 13.

Iran and Israel have been at war for nine days after Israel, claiming the Islamic republic was on the brink of acquiring a nuclear weapon, launched a massive wave of strikes on its rival, triggering an immediate response from Tehran.

"Israel is now leading the region to the brink of total disaster by attacking Iran, our neighbour," Fidan told a meeting of top diplomats of the Organisation of Islamic Co-operation (OIC) in Istanbul.

"There is no Palestinian, Lebanese, Syrian, Yemeni or Iranian problem but there is clearly an Israeli problem," he said.

He called for an end to the "unlimited aggression" against Iran. "We must prevent the situation from deteriorating into a spiral of violence that would further jeopardise regional and global security," he added.

Speaking after Fidan, Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan accused Western leaders of providing "unconditional support" to Israel.

A trenchant critic of Israel's actions in both Gaza and Iran, Erdogan called for "high-level peace talks" between Tehran and the US, according to his office, adding that Turkiye was ready to play a "facilitator" role to help bring an end to the war.

Tehran, however, has for the time being refused any return to the negotiating table with the US on its nuclear programme for as long as Israel maintains its attacks on Iran.

Erdogan, who met Iranian foreign minister Abbas Araghchi on the sidelines of yesterday's meeting, said Turkiye would not allow borders in the Middle East to be redrawn "in blood".

"It is vital for us to show more solidarity to end Israel's banditry — not only in Palestine but also in Syria, in Lebanon and in Iran," he told the OIC's 57 member countries.

The OIC, founded in 1969, says its mission is to "safeguard and protect the interests of the Muslim world in the spirit of promoting international peace and harmony". According to Qatar's foreign ministry, Araghchi also met the Gulf state's top diplomat in Istanbul, who said he was working to bring the sides "back to the path of dialogue".

UAE appeals for restraint in Iran-Israel conflict

AFP
Dubai

A senior United Arab Emirates official has urged a quick end to the Iran-Israel war, warning of a "difficult aftermath" if the conflict is prolonged.

Anwar Gargash, diplomatic adviser to UAE's President Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed al-Nahyan, said the war was "setting back" the wealthy Gulf region.

"The longer a war takes, the more dangerous it becomes," he told journalists in a briefing. "I think any extended confrontation or war between Israel and Iran will only bring a very difficult aftermath."

US President Donald Trump has given Iran a "maximum" of two weeks to negotiate before possible US air strikes, but Tehran said it would not hold talks while under attack. "De-escalation is extremely important," Gargash said. "We still feel that there is a path back to negotiations on these issues." The Middle East is still dealing with the repercussions of the 2003 US-led invasion of Iraq, which toppled Saddam Hussein but left the country divided and destabilised. One major risk of the current war is disruption to the Strait of Hormuz between Iran and the Arabian Peninsula, which carries one-fifth of global oil output.

"This war flies in the face of the regional order the Gulf countries want to build, which is focused on regional prosperity," Gargash said.

B-2 bombers moving to Guam amid Middle East tensions

The United States is moving B-2 bombers to the Pacific island of Guam, two US officials told Reuters yesterday, as President Donald Trump weighs whether the United States should take part in Israel's strikes against Iran. It was unclear whether the bomber deployment is tied to Middle East tensions. The B-2 can be equipped to carry America's 30,000-pound GBU-57 Massive Ordnance Penetrator, designed to destroy targets deep underground. That is the weapon that experts say could be used to strike Iran's nuclear programme, including Fordow. The officials, speaking on the condition of anonymity, declined to disclose any further details.

Iran warns of stronger response to Israel attacks

AFP
Tehran

Iran's President Masoud Pezeshkian warned of a "more devastating" retaliation should Israel's nine-day bombing campaign continue, saying the Islamic republic would not halt its nuclear programme "under any circumstances".

Israel said yesterday it had killed three more Iranian commanders in its unprecedented offensive, while Foreign Minister Gideon Saar claimed the campaign had delayed Tehran's alleged progress towards a nuclear weapon by two years.

"We will do everything that we can do there in order to remove this threat," Saar told the German newspaper Bild, asserting Israel would keep up its onslaught.

Israel and Iran have traded wave after wave of devastating strikes since Israel launched its aerial campaign on June 13, saying Tehran was on the verge of developing a nuclear weapon.

Iran denies seeking an atomic bomb, and yesterday Pezeshkian said its right to pursue a civilian nuclear programme "cannot be taken away... by threats or war".

In a phone call with French President Emmanuel Macron, Pezeshkian said Iran was "ready to discuss and co-operate to build confidence in the field of peaceful nuclear activities".

"However, we do not agree to reduce nuclear activities to zero under any circumstances," he added, according to Iran's official IRNA news agency.

Referring to the Israeli attacks, he said: "Our response to the continued aggression of the Zionist regime will be more devastating."

Israel's military earlier said that a strike in Qom, south of Tehran, killed Saeed Izadi, a top Revolutionary Guards official in charge of co-ordination with Palestinian Hamas group. Two other commanders were killed overnight, it added.

Israel said it had also attacked Iran's Isfahan nuclear site for a second time, with the UN nuclear watchdog later reporting that a centrifuge manufacturing workshop had been hit.

US President Donald Trump warned on Friday that Tehran had a "maximum" of two weeks to avoid possible American air strikes as Washington weighed whether to join Israel's campaign.



A crew repairs the underground pipes, at the impact site, where a building was damaged in a drone attack from Iran on Israel, amid the Iran-Israel conflict, in Beit Shean, in the Jordan valley, yesterday.

Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi arrived in Istanbul yesterday for a meeting of the Organisation of Islamic Co-operation to discuss the conflict.

Top diplomats from Britain, France and Germany met Araghchi in Geneva on Friday and urged him to resume nuclear talks with the United States that had been derailed by the war.

But Araghchi told NBC News that "we're not prepared to negotiate with them (the Americans) anymore, as long as the aggression continues".

Trump, dismissive of European diplomatic efforts, said he was unlikely to ask Israel to stop its attacks to get Iran back to the table.

"If somebody's winning, it's a little bit harder to do," he said of Israel's campaign.

Any US involvement would likely feature powerful bunker-busting bombs that no other country possesses to destroy an underground uranium enrichment facility in Fordo.

Iran's Houthi allies in Yemen yesterday threatened to resume their attacks on US vessels in the Red Sea if Washington joined the war, despite a recent ceasefire agreement.

At a Tehran hospital, Nasrin, a 39-year-old woman who gave only her first name, said she had been thrown across a room in her home by an Israeli strike. "I just hit the wall. I don't know how long I was unconscious. When I woke up, I was covered in blood from head to toe," she said from her hospital bed.

A US-based NGO, the Human Rights Activists News Agency, said on Friday that based on its sources and media reports at least 657 people have been killed in Iran, including 263 civilians.

Iran's health ministry yesterday gave a toll of more than 400 people killed and 3,056 in the Israeli strikes.

Iran's retaliatory strikes have killed at least 25 people in Israel, according to official figures.

Overnight, Iran said it targeted central Israel with drones and missiles. Israeli rescuers said there were no casualties after an Iranian drone struck a residential building.

Israel's National Public Diplomacy Directorate said more than 450 missiles had been fired at the country so far, along with about 400 drones.

In Tel Aviv, where residents have faced regular Iranian strikes for nine days, some expressed growing fatigue under the constant threat from Iran.

"In the middle of the night, we have to wake the children and take them to the shelter," Omer, who gave only his first name, told AFP.

"They are tired all day after that," he added, explaining he still supported Israel's war aim of denying Iran a nuclear weapon.

UN concerned over Palestinian refugee crisis

QNA
New York

The United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees (UNRWA) affirmed that the plight of Palestine refugees remains "the world's longest-running unresolved refugee crisis," calling on the international community to find a "just and lasting solution."

This came in a post by the UN agency on its X platform page, the day after World Refugee Day, which falls on June 20 each year. UNRWA added, "It is time to end this cycle. Displacement and war have affected the lives of generations of Palestinian families." It called on the international community to shoulder its responsibilities and contribute to finding a just and lasting solution to the plight of Palestine refugees.

In a statement published on Friday, the UN agency said, "In 1948, more than 700,000 Palestinians were displaced from their towns and villages." It added, "77 years later, Palestinians continue to be forcibly displaced."

UNRWA records as of August 2023 indicate that the number of registered Palestinian refugees is approximately 5.9mn, of whom approximately 2.5mn reside in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, representing approximately 42% of the total number of registered refugees (15% in the West Bank and 27% in Gaza), according to the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics.

Assad cousin linked to drug trade held in border ambush

Syrian authorities arrested Wassim al-Assad, a cousin of longtime ruler Bashar al-Assad, the interior ministry said yesterday, in one of the most high-profile arrests since the former president's ouster, AFP reported from Damascus.

Bashar al-Assad fled to Russia in December with only a handful of confidants, abandoning senior officials and security officers, some of whom have reportedly fled to neighbouring countries or taken refuge in the coastal heartland of Assad's Alawite minority. An interior ministry statement said that intelligence services and other authorities managed to "lure the criminal Wassim al-Assad", carrying out a "well-planned ambush that resulted in his successful arrest". He is "considered among the most prominent drug traffickers and people involved in a number of crimes during the period of the former regime", the statement said, without elaborating on the other allegations against him. While Wassim al-Assad did not hold high office, he is the first prominent figure from the Assad family to be arrested since rebel forces toppled the government on December 8, ending five decades of one-family rule. The US Treasury sanctioned him in 2023, saying he had led a paramilitary unit and was "a key figure in the regional drug trafficking network".

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-044-EGS-2025	Design, Supply, Installation, Testing & Commissioning of central Air Conditioning System for Mowasalat Central Warehouses	QAR 800	23 to 29 June 2025	QAR 32,000	17 July 2025
TC-037-MTS-2025	Provision of Maintenance services for Mercedes Light Vehicles	QAR 1,000		QAR 70,000	15 July 2025

CONDITIONS:

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

Beneficiary Name	MOWASALAT-KARWA COMPANY
A/C No.	0013 - 011272 - 060
IBAN	QA07 QNBA 0000 0000 0013 0112 7206 0
Swift Code No.	QNBAQAQA
Branch Address	Corporate Branch, P.O Box 1000, Doha - Qatar
Currency	QAR
CR No.	26887

- 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 **(i.e. 30 June 2025).**
- **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)
  - **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.

Tel.: 4458 8724 Fax: 4458 8850

Supplier Registration | Mowasalat Location

karwa | dohalimousine | karwa services | mowasalat medical center | Karwa Academy | Karwa Technologies

QAFCO
QATAR FERTILISER COMPANY

QATAR FERTILISER COMPANY
INVITATION TO TENDER

QAFCO ANNOUNCES THE FOLLOWING TENDER

TENDER NO.	DESCRIPTION OF WORKS	TENDER FEE (QAR)	TENDER BOND (QAR)	TENDER FEE RECEIPT SUBMISSION DATES	TENDER CLOSING DATE
RFQ-6000002825	LONG TERM FRAME CONTRACT FOR STEEL AND SPECIAL DOORS MAINTENANCE FOR 5 YEARS	500/- (Non-refundable)	300,000/-	22.06.2025 23.06.2025 24.06.2025 25.06.2025 26.06.2025 27.06.2025 28.06.2025 29.06.2025 30.06.2025	21.07.2025

GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS

- During the period this tender is offered, the interested bidders shall first deposit appropriate Tender Fee amount in cash (Cheque will not be accepted) into Company's following Account at any QNB branch:
  - Account Name : **QATAR FERTILISER COMPANY (QAFCO)**
  - Account Number : **0013-025828-058**
  - IBAN : **QA51QNBA000000000013025828058**
  - Bank Name : **QATAR NATIONAL BANK**
- The interested Bidders shall mention their company's name and Tender Number on the payment receipt provided by the bank and submit it as Tender Fee receipt.
- Besides the Tender fee receipt (which should have the Tender Number and bidder's name clearly mentioned on it), interested bidders shall also submit a copy of the valid Commercial Registration, an authorization letter from their company with the name, telephone, fax and e-mail ID of the focal point for this tender ***(Very Important)***, during the submission of Tender Fee Receipt for ensuring electronic receipt of the Tender Document.
- Tender Fee Receipt along with the specified documents shall be submitted to purchase@qafco.com.qa on the dates indicated above, after payment of Tender Fee (nonrefundable).
- After submission of the above documents to the above email, Tender Document will be provided through an electronic platform separately.
- For any queries related to non-receipt of the tender documents after the submission Tender Fee receipt at the QAFCO Housing Section, you may contact at 'purchase@qafco.com.qa' or on 44227797
- Technical & Commercial details and Submission Procedures will be specified in the Tender Documents.
- The Company will not consider any offer without the enclosure of the Tender Bond.
- Bids shall be submitted at QAFCO Tender Office, between 0930 – 1100 hours during the Holy month of Ramadan and 0930 – 1130 hours and 1230 – 1400 hours, of any working day of the Company, on/before the "Tender Closing Date".

QATAR FUEL ADDITIVES COMPANY LIMITED
QAFAC

TENDER ANNOUNCEMENT

The Tender Committee of QAFAC invites qualified local suppliers to participate in the following Tenders in accordance with QAFAC tendering procedures:

No.	Tender No.	Description	Collection Fee	Tender Bond	Bid Closing Date
1	QTC/056/25	Supply of Multifunctional Secondary Injection Kit	Qrs. 300/-	Qrs. 16,000/-	13th July 2025

Interested companies are invited to collect the above tender documents as follows:

- **Collection Date** : From **Sunday, 22nd June 2025** (QAFAC working days from Sunday to Thursday only)
- **Collection Time** : 09:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.
- **Location** : The Gate, Bay Tower 2, 13th Floor, West Bay, QAFAC
- **Tender Fees** : As shown above, **(non-refundable)** can be paid at QAFAC Doha Office
- **Validity** : Offers must be valid for 120 days from closing date.
- **Bid Bond** : Offers must include a Bid bond issued from a local bank and valid for 120 Days from closing date.
- **Authorization** : Tenders will be issued to authorized company personnel with the following:
  1. Official authorization on Company Letter Head
  2. Proper Identification
  3. Copy of Company's Commercial Registration
  4. Focal Point of Contact (Name, Telephone, Mobile & Email)

Suicide blast kills 20 anti-militant fighters in Nigeria

AFP
Konduga

A suicide attack in Nigeria's Borno state by a woman allegedly acting for Boko Haram insurgents has killed at least 20 anti-militant fighters, militia members told AFP yesterday.

Police have confirmed 10 people were killed and said the overall toll could be higher.

Boko Haram and its rival, the Islamic State West Africa Province (ISWAP), have in recent months intensified attacks on villages in Borno and neighbouring states.

They have also overrun military bases, killing soldiers and carting away weapons.

Late on Friday, a woman allegedly detonated explosives strapped to her body at a haunt for vigilantes and local hunters assisting the Nigerian military in fighting "militants" in the town of Konduga, the militia told AFP.

"We lost 20 people in the suicide attack which happened yesterday around 9:15pm (2015 GMT) while our members were hanging out near the fish market," said Tijjani Ahmed, the head of an anti-militant militia in Konduga district.

Konduga is about 40 kilometres from Maiduguri, the capital of the northeastern state of Borno.

Surrounding villages have been repeatedly targeted by suicide bombers said to be acting for Boko Haram, a group of armed militants that has been active in the area for at least 16 years.

Konduga town itself had seen a lull in such attacks in the past year.

"Eighteen people died on the spot, while 18 others were injured. Two more died in hospital, raising the death toll to 20," Ahmed said.

Sixteen were wounded, with 10 of them nursing severe injuries in two hospitals in Maiduguri, he said.

The dead were buried in a mass funeral yesterday, an AFP reporter saw.

Corpses wrapped in white cloths – some covered in bamboo mats – were laid out in rows on the ground on wooden biers ahead of the burial.

"The young men who lost their lives are those who, day and night, suffer while checking people entering and leaving the town," said 35-year-old Konduga resident Ali Kyari, who lost a brother.

"I was with him. It wasn't even 30 minutes after we parted ways when God took his soul in that suicide attack," he said.

The alleged bomber was dressed as a local heading to the crowded nearby fish market.

She detonated her explosives as soon as she reached the shed used by the militia fighters as a hangout, said militia member Ibrahim Liman.

He gave the same toll as Ahmed.

Borno state police spokesman Nahum Daso told AFP that 10 bodies had been recovered from the "suicide attack".

He said the toll could be higher as "details are sketchy".

Konduga's fish market, which is usually busy at night, has been the target of a series of suicide attacks in the past.

"I was in the market to buy fish for dinner when I heard a loud bang some metres behind me," Konduga resident Ahmed Mallum said.

"I was flung to the ground and I couldn't stand. I just lay down," Mallum said.

The conflict between the authorities and Boko Haram has been ongoing for 16 years.

In that time, more than 40,000 people have died and around 2mn have been displaced from their homes in the northeast, according to the United Nations.

The violence has spread to neighbouring Niger, Chad and Cameroon, prompting a regional military coalition to fight armed militant groups.

Blast leaves five dead near northern Nigerian city: police

An explosion inside a truck yesterday killed five people and injured 15 others on the outskirts of northern Nigeria's largest city of Kano, police said, AFP reported from Kano. The ordnance ripped through the truck inside a metal scrap collection yard as trucks laden with scrap metal took turns to offload their cargo. The victims were taken to a hospital in the city where "five people were confirmed dead while 15 others are receiving treatment", Ibrahim Adamu Bakori, Kano state's police commissioner said. "Our IED (improvised explosive device) unit is still at the scene conducting investigations to determine how the explosive detonated," Bakori said. The truck was coming into the city from northeastern Yobe state, among the state gripped by a 16-year-long insurgency, he added.

Ivory Coast election build-up



Supporters hold posters depicting Ivory Coast President Alassane Ouattara during the opening ceremony of the Second Ordinary Congress of the Rally of Houphouetists for Democracy and Peace (RHDP) to nominate incumbent President Alassane Ouattara (unseen) as its candidate at the Abidjan Exhibition Center, yesterday, ahead of the presidential election on October 25, 2025. Ivory Coast ruling party began a two-day congress yesterday at the end of which it is expected to nominate incumbent President Alassane Ouattara as its candidate for the presidential election. The political climate in Ivory Coast has been tense in recent weeks following court rulings that have excluded several opposition figures from the ballot.

Mob kills 8 wedding guests in violence-hit Plateau state

AFP
Jos, Nigeria

A mob stormed a bus carrying mostly wedding guests in central Nigeria's volatile Plateau state, killing eight people in the latest attack to hit the region, local sources said yesterday.

Residents in the area had been on edge after a series of bloody attacks in recent days, with ethnic Fulani nomadic herders suspected of killing dozens of people in Plateau's Mangu local government area. Fulani herders in the state have long clashed with settled farmers, many over access to land and resources.

Earlier this month, Nigerian President Bola Tinubu ordered a crackdown on violence in the region. Ibrahim Umar, who survived Friday's attack, said the 31 people aboard the bus were travelling from Zaria to Qua'an Pan for a wedding ceremony when their driver got lost and stopped to ask for directions. "We approached a community at about 6pm, stopped and asked for the way to Qua'an Pan. Some of them said: 'these are Hausa people so let us kill them'," he said by phone from a hospital, where he is being treated.

"They seized the bus that we were in, they started smashing it with sticks, machetes and stones. They beat us and eight among us died," he said, adding that four people were still missing. The bus and seven bodies were set on fire, he said. Mangu local government council chairman, Emmanuel Bala, said local villagers had been on high alert following the recent wave of attacks.

Kenyan leader addresses critics ahead of protest memorials

Kenyan President William Ruto condemned his critics yesterday ahead of planned rallies to commemorate last year's massive protests calling for change, AFP reported from Nairobi. The east African nation has seen violent clashes between protesters, the police and armed thugs known as "goons" in the run-up to the anniversary of 2024's youth-led demonstrations. Those rallies peaked on June 25 when protesters, angry over proposed tax rises and calling for Ruto's resignation, stormed parliament and were met with live fire from security forces. Activists and the families of those killed have vowed to march on June 25 in remembrance, urging police and politicians to allow the rally to proceed peacefully. Yesterday, Ruto addressed his critics during a speech in the town of Meru in eastern Kenya, saying they were "just speaking empty rhetoric and propaganda". "They have no agenda, and they have no plan, because when you ask them what alternative they are offering, they will tell you 'Ruto Must Go'," he said, a reference to a chant popular with protesters last year.

MWANI QATAR مـــوانـــي قـــطـــر

TENDERS AND AUCTIONS COMMITTEE

AUCTIONS ANNOUNCEMENT

SL no.	AUCTION FOR	AUCTION NO.	BOND	DOC FEES	CLOSING DATE
1	ARMOR ROCKS AT HAMAD PORT	MQ\TAC/AUCT \45\2024	QRS. 35,000	QRS. 300	20.07.2025
2	LEASING OF CAFTERIA SERVICES IN MQ BUILDING AT HAMAD PORT	MQ\TAC/AUCT \23\2024	QRS. 5,000	QRS. 200	19.08.2025
3	LEASING OF OURDOOR CAFTERIA AT VISITOR CENTRE BUILDING AT HAMAD PORT	MQ\TAC/AUCT \25\2024	QRS. 10,000	QRS. 300	20.08.2025
4	LEASING OF THE BUSINESS CENTER, AT HAMAD PORT (6 SHOPS)	MQ\TAC/AUCT \32\2024	QRS. 25,000	QRS. 500	21.08.2025
5	LEASING OF COMMERCIAL SPACE IN AL YEZWA PARKING AREA AT AL RUWAIS PORT FOR MOBILE CAFÉ AND CONVIENENCE STORE	MQ\TAC/AUCT \40\2024	QRS. 5,000	QRS. 200	24.08.2025
6	LEASING OF CAFTERIA SERVICES IN SHIPPING AGENTS BUILDING AT HAMAD PORT	MQ\TAC/AUCT \41\2024	QRS. 10,000	QRS. 300	25.08.2025
7	LEASING OF BANK SPACE IN SHIPPING AGENTS BUILDING AT HAMAD PORT	MQ\TAC/AUCT \42\2024	QRS. 25,000	QRS. 500	26.08.2025
8	LEASING OF COMMERCIAL ATM SPACE IN SHIPPING AGENTS BUILDING AT HAMAD PORT	MQ\TAC/AUCT \43\2024	QRS. 5,000	QRS. 200	27.08.2025
9	LEASING OF SPACE FOR CAFTERIAS/COFFEE SHOPS AT DOHA PORT CITY GALLERY	MQ\TAC/AUCT \44\2024	QRS. 25,000	QRS. 500	28.08.2025

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

1 - Auction documents can be obtained (via Email) from the Finance and Accounting Department Tel No. (40453724/568) , after depositing the non-refundable amount mentioned above at MQ A/C No. (0850 – 102030 – 060) at QNB and submitting the bank depositing receipt and copy of the Commercial Registration/ ID to : (tender.secretary@mwani.com.qa) Tel. (40453724/568 – 31265655 / 30121037) .

2 - Offer should be accompanied with a Bond / issued by one of the Banks operating in Qatar for the amount shown in the above table and valid for 120 days from the closing date. The offer which is not accompanied by the Bond will not be considered. The successful bidder should pay the total awarding amount within five working days from the awarding date.

3 - Offers should be valid for ninety (90) days commencing from the closing date.

4 - The deadline for submitting offers will be **02:00 pm** of the date shown above. Any offer arriving thereafter will not be considered.

5 - The offers should be deposited in the Tenders and Auctions Committee Box of MQ as per the address given above, The auction submitting party should confirm that he has received the receipt for delivering the offer. It should be in closed envelopes, sealed with red wax and addressed to the Chairman, Tenders and Auctions Committee of MQ , writing the number and subject of the auction.

6 - The offers must be submitted in One envelope system, (Original and Copy) The envelopes should not bear any mark denoting the name of the Company. The original bond must be attached with the Original offer.

7 - Mwani Qatar has the right to divide the auction among more than one bidder.

8- For Technical clarification please contact Finance and Procurement Dept. Tel. (40453404)
Email. (mqprocurement@mwani.com.qa).

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الشركة الوطنية للصرافة
NATIONAL EXCHANGE

Att: All the Clients of
NATIONAL EXCHANGE CO.WLL, DOHA, QATAR

Following unclaimed Remittance remains outstanding in our books completing 10 years. The purchasers are requested to contact us within 1 month from the date of this notice with relevant proof / document to claim the amount.

After the notice period it will be transferred to "General Authority for Minors Affairs"

S.N	AMOUNT IN QAR	PURCHASER/PB	S.N	AMOUNT IN QAR	PURCHASER/PB
1	244	ORLANDO D SUPAN	40	141	GABBY F SORIANO
2	818	NICOLAS . GADIA	41	500	SALMAN MOHAMMED SAID ALAVI
3	62	MOHAMED AHMED SULTAN	42	32	VIRA ANGELI MODESTO
4	87	NOMER L PEREZ	43	114	SHAKIR HUSSAIN PANJAJE
5	330	JESSE_VIC I ATIENZA	44	17	MAKHBOOL THACHOTH
6	775	JOSEPH BIJU JOBOY FERNANDEZ	45	11	MAKHBOOL THACHOTH
7	44	ABDUL JALEEL M M SAHIB	46	11	MAKHBOOL THACHOTH
8	178	MOHAMMED SAEED NAJMUDDIN ASSADI	47	693	FRENITA MALLARO
9	1687	DILUSHA ERANGANA BABARANDA	48	17	MAKHBOOL THACHOTH
10	90	MOHAMMAD SOHAIL AKHTAR	49	32	TERESITA . BANGAY
11	88	ABDURAHIMAN KANNAN KUNNMMAL	50	409	RAMIL LAPE MALNEGRO
12	890	JOSEPH BIJU JOBOY FERNANDEZ	51	182	EVELYNDA AZUR SALAZAR
13	290	MD MASOUD H H AL MARRI	52	414	WAHINGTON . YAP
14	294	KAPIL DEV HARIJAN	53	1540	KUGANESWARAN VELU
15	147	MANOHARAN KALIMUTHU	54	38	WASANTHA JAGATH R
16	82	JERICO P TANEGA	55	262	WARNASURIYA PATABENDIGE L
17	287	DILUSHA ERANGANA BABARANDA	56	57	JEAN . LUSTERIO
18	244	AGNES BONGCAWEL MAHOMOC	57	261	MAHENDRAN KUBERAN
19	42	EDELWARDO O INSERTO	58	991	RATHEESH RAVENDRAN PILLAI
20	26	EDELWARDO O INSERTO	59	460	AHMED MEERALI A LAI
21	1934	M M AMEEN	60	10990	LAKSHMESHA KITTAPPA
22	38	MARY-ROSE . MIRANDA	61	113	ANIL KUMAR SINGH
23	115	ANET ZEENA SEQEIRA	62	290	RICKY B LEANO
24	94	REY . SEMANING	63	363	MICON G SIERAS
25	20	SHAJI MANIPARAMBIL SHANMUGHAN	64	540	MUNISH KUMAR
26	1879	ABDUL RAB MOHD ABDUL KARIM	65	90	MADA DUWAGE R S
27	83	KASMA J. KISON	66	643	ANNALIZA REYES RAYOS
28	115	SANTHA KUMAR RATHINAM	67	1500	ALI MOHD AL SULAITI
29	100	VISHNUPRASAD VADAKKEDATH	68	455	A M PALITHA ATTHANAYAKE
30	166	GLENN S ORTEZA JR	69	90	RAGESH C ARAVINDAKSHAN
31	115	LALILA MARY MIRANDA	70	292	ELMER A ESPIRITU
32	5	B NISHANTHAN	71	165	SUNIL KUMAR KIZHAKKOODAN
33	91	ERLINDA J TORRES	72	658	ALFRED JOHN FERNANDES
34	5700	MURATHOTI GNANA MANOHAR	73	605	JEEPATI RAMARAO
35	141	MAKHBOOL THACHOTH	74	1274	MUHIBURRAHMAN YOUSUF ALI
36	297	S H P C RANASINGHE	75	599	SIVAKUMAR ARUNACHALAM
37	244	BILLIE_CARL A NACIONAL	76	722	MD HISHAM MOHAMAD HISMEER
38	91	ROY DR DOYONGAN	77	491	GURPREET SINGH ROOP CHAND
39	90	NANGALLAGE HASHAN			

P.O. Box: 6318, Doha-Qatar, Souk Al Jabor Road, Tel: 44408999, Fax: 44431023

WORLD

US troops still 'necessary' in LA: Vance

AFP/Reuters
Los Angeles

US Vice-President JD Vance has said that the thousands of troops deployed to Los Angeles this month were still needed despite a week of relative calm in the protest-hit city.

President Donald Trump has sent roughly 4,000 National Guard members and 700 Marines, purportedly to protect federal property and personnel, after demonstrations over immigration raids.

"Unfortunately, the soldiers and Marines are still very much a necessary part of what's going on here because they're worried that it's going to flare back up," Vance told reporters in Los Angeles.

He was speaking the day after an appeals court ruled that Trump could continue to control the California National Guard, which would normally fall under Governor Gavin Newsom's authority.

California officials have heavily criticised Trump over his use of the military, saying that it escalated protests that local law enforcement could have handled.

The demonstrations were largely peaceful and mostly contained to a small part of Los Angeles, the second-largest US city, although there were instances of violence and vandalism.

"If you let violent rioters burn Great American Cities to the ground, then, of course, we're going to send federal law enforcement in to protect the people the president was elected to protect," Vance said, adding that Trump would deploy them again if needed.

The Republican further accused Newsom – a possible contender for the Democratic presidential nomination in 2028 – and Los Angeles Mayor Karen Bass of encouraging protesters.

Newsom and Bass have both condemned rioting and violence towards law enforcement while accusing the Trump administration of manufacturing a crisis in the city.





Vice-President JD Vance speaks to the press following a tour of the multiagency Federal Joint Operations Centre at the Wilshire Federal Building in Los Angeles. **– *AFP***

Left: A woman holds a sign directed at US Marines that reads 'Waste of Money', as they stand by the federal building on the day of Vice-President JD Vance's visit in Los Angeles. **– *AFP***

Vance accused Newsom and Bass of failing to crack down on people in the city illegally, and of failing to support local and state law enforcement.

"They have treated Border Patrol and border enforcement as somehow an illegitimate force, instead of what they are, which is the American people's law enforcement trying to enforce the American people's laws," he said.

Diana Crofts-Pelayo, a spokesperson for Newsom, called Vance's claim "categorically false".

"The Governor has consistently condemned violence and has made his stance clear," she said.

She cited posts Newsom made on X, including one on June 9 when he said: "Foolish agitators who take advantage of Trump's chaos will be held accountable."

Newsom has said Trump's deployment of troops exacerbated the protests, increased tensions and is unconstitutional.

Bass hit back at Vance during a news conference on Friday, accusing him of openly lying and saying that local law enforcement agencies handled crowd control.

"How dare you say that city officials encourage violence," she said. "We kept the peace. You know that the federal officials that were here protected a federal building – they were not involved in crowd control."

Bass said that even when there was vandalism, at its height "you are talking about a couple of hundred people who are not necessarily associated with any of the peaceful protests".

"Los Angeles is a city that is 500sq miles and any of the disruption that took place took place at about 2sq miles in our city," she said, accusing Vance of adding to "provocation" and sowing "division".

Many in Los Angeles are angry about immigration raids carried out as part of Trump's ambition to deport vast numbers of undocumented migrants around the country.

Outrage at the use of masked, armed immigration agents also sparked protests in other cities, including San Francisco, New York, Chicago and San Antonio, Texas.

Tensions spiked when California Senator Alex Padilla, a Democrat, was handcuffed and forcibly removed last week when attempting to ask Homeland Security Secretary Kristi Noem questions during her news conference.

Vance misnamed the senator when referring to the incident, saying: "I was hoping Jose Padilla would be here to ask a question but unfortunately I guess he decided not to show up because there wasn't a theatre."

Bass reacted to the comment with outrage.

"How dare you disrespect him and call him Jose. But I guess he just looked like anybody to you," she said.

Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer had said Padilla's treatment "reeks of totalitarianism" while the White House claimed – despite video evidence to the contrary – that Padilla had "lunged toward Secretary Noem".

Voice of America parent terminates 639 more staff

Reuters
Washington

The parent agency of Voice of America (VOA) said on Friday that it had issued termination notices to 639 more staff, completing an 85% decrease in personnel since March and effectively spelling the end of a broadcasting network founded to counter Nazi propaganda.

Kari Lake, senior adviser to the US Agency for Global Media (USAGM), said the staff reduction meant 1,400 positions had been eliminated as part of US President Donald Trump's agenda to cut staffing at the agency to a statutory minimum.

"Reduction in Force Termination Notices were sent to 639 employees at USAGM and Voice of America, part of a long-overdue effort to dismantle a bloated, unaccountable bureaucracy," Lake said in a statement.

She said the agency had been "riddled with dysfunction, bias, and waste".

Lake said the move meant USAGM now operated near its statutory minimum of 81 employees.

She said 250 employees would remain across USAGM, Voice of America, and the Office of Cuba Broadcasting (OCB), which transmits news into communist-run Cuba.

She said none of OCB's 33 employees had been terminated.

The move likely marks an end to VOA, which was founded in 1942 to counter Nazi propaganda, operated in nearly 50 languages and reached 360mn people a week, many living under authoritarian regimes.

In May, nearly 600 VOA contractors were dismissed.

Some Republicans have accused VOA and other publicly funded media outlets of being biased against conservatives, and called for them to be shuttered as part of wider efforts to shrink the government.

Another USAGM station, Radio Free Asia, which has already been reduced to skeleton staffing, said in a staff e-mail on Friday that it was implementing additional furloughs in its human resources, ordinance, journalist security, and research, training & evaluation teams.

ANNOUNCEMENT

I, RAM KUMAR

holder of

Indian Passport No. M6168698
QID No. 27035605269

hereby change my name

from

RAM KUMAR

to

RAMAKUMAR KULAMPURATH RAMAKRISHNAN

Any objection, please contact
THE PERMANENT COMMITTEE FOR NATIONALITY AFFAIRS
within 15 days from the publication of this notice.

Trump disavows spy chief's take on Iran nuke programme

Reuters
Washington

US President Donald Trump said on Friday that Director of National Intelligence Tulsi Gabbard was wrong in suggesting that there was no evidence Iran is building a nuclear weapon.

Trump contested intelligence assessments relayed earlier this year by his spy chief that Tehran was not building a nuclear weapon when he spoke with reporters at an airport in Morristown, New Jersey.

"She's wrong," Trump said.

In March, Gabbard testified to Congress that the US intelligence community continued to believe that Tehran was not building a nuclear weapon.

"The (intelligence community) continues to assess that Iran is not building a nuclear weapon," she said.

On Friday, Gabbard said in a post on the social media platform X that: "America has intelligence that Iran is at the point that it can produce a nuclear weapon within weeks to months, if they decide to finalise the assembly. President Trump has been clear that can't happen, and I agree."

She said the media has taken her March testimony "out of context" and was trying to "manufacture division".

The White House has said Trump would weigh involvement in the Iran-Israel conflict over the next two weeks.

On Tuesday, Trump made similar comments to reporters about Gabbard's assessment.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has justified a week of air strikes on Iranian nuclear and military targets by saying Tehran was on the verge of having a warhead.

Iran denies developing nuclear weapons, saying its uranium enrichment programme is only for peaceful purposes.

In March, Gabbard also described Iran's enriched uranium stockpile as unprecedented for a state without such weapons and said the government was watching the situation closely.

She also said Iran had started discussing nuclear weapons in public, "emboldening nuclear weapons advocates within Iran's decision-making apparatus".

A source with access to US intelligence reports told Reuters that the March assessment presented by Gabbard has not changed.



This picture taken on February 12 shows Trump with Director of National Intelligence Tulsi Gabbard, on the day of her swearing-in ceremony, in the Oval Office at the White House in Washington, DC. **– *Reuters***

The source said US spy services judged it would take up to three years for Iran to build a warhead with which it could hit a target of its choice.

David Albright, a former UN nuclear inspector, questioned the revised view offered by Gabbard on Friday, estimating it would take Iran at least six months to produce a crude nuclear "device" that could not be delivered by a missile.

To produce a nuclear weapon that could be delivered on target by missile would take Iran at least one to two years, said Albright, president of the Institute for Science and International Security.

Trump has frequently disavowed the findings of US intelligence agencies, which he and his supporters have charged – without providing proof – are part of a "deep state" cabal of US officials opposed to his presidency.

Gabbard, a fierce Trump loyalist, has been among the president's backers who have aired such allegations.

The Republican president repeatedly clashed with US spy agencies during his first term, including over an assessment that Moscow worked to sway the 2016 presidential vote in his favour and his acceptance of Russian President Vladimir Putin's denials.

Mahmoud Khalil vows to resume pro-Palestinian activism

Mahmoud Khalil vowed to resume his pro-Palestinian activism as he returned to New York a day after he was released on bail from a jail for immigrants, even as US President Donald Trump's administration said it will continue its efforts to deport the recent Columbia University graduate.

He arrived at Newark Liberty International Airport in New Jersey yesterday afternoon to cheers and ululations from friends and supporters.

Khalil, 30, was reunited with his wife, a US citizen, and greeted at the airport by US Representative Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, a Democrat from New York.

"Not only if they threaten me with detention, even if they would kill me, I would still speak up for Palestine again," Khalil said, holding a bouquet of flowers. "I just want to go back and just continue the work that I was already doing, advocating for Palestinian rights, speech that should actually be celebrated rather than punished."

Khalil, who recently graduated from Columbia University in Manhattan, was a prominent figure in the pro-Palestinian and anti-Israel student protest movement that swept campuses last year.

Federal immigration agents arrested him in the lobby of his Columbia apartment building on March 8, making him the first target of Trump's effort to deport international students with pro-Palestinian or anti-Israel views.

Ocasio-Cortez, speaking alongside Khalil at the airport, condemned the Trump administration for what she called "persecution based on political speech".

"Being taken is wrong. It is illegal," she said. "It is an affront to every American."

"Free Palestine!" Khalil said with a raised fist as he left the airport.

Khalil was born and raised in a Palestinian refugee camp in Syria and became a US lawful permanent resident last year.

Nonetheless, citing an obscure part of federal immigration law that has not been invoked in more than 20 years, US Secretary of State Marco Rubio said he had determined that Khalil and several other foreign pro-Palestinian students at US schools must be deported because their presence here could harm the government's foreign policy interests.

Protesters, including some Jewish groups, say the government wrongly conflates their criticism of the Israeli government, one of the United States' closest allies, with antisemitism.

Earlier this month, US District Judge Michael Farbiarz in New Jersey ruled that the government could not detain or deport Khalil based on Rubio's determination, finding the Trump administration was violating Khalil's constitutional right to free speech.



Mahmoud Khalil raises his fist after speaking to the press as he arrives at Newark airport in Newark, New Jersey. **– *AFP***

On Friday, he ordered the Trump administration to release Khalil on bail while he continues to fight the government's deportation efforts and his lawsuit accusing the government of wrongful detention.

Louisiana's law on religious school display struck down by appeals court

A federal appeals court on Friday blocked Louisiana from enforcing a law requiring the display of the Ten Commandments in all classrooms of the state's public schools and universities.

Calling the law "plainly unconstitutional", a three-judge panel of the 5th US Circuit Court of Appeals in New Orleans unanimously upheld a November 2024 ruling by a lower court judge who enjoined the law's enforcement.

It is a victory for parents and students who accused Louisiana of trampling on their religious rights, and a defeat for Republicans and conservative groups trying to make expressions of faith more prominent in society.

The appeals court is widely considered among the country's most conservative, though two judges on Friday's panel were appointed by Democratic presidents.

According to published reports, Louisiana's Republican attorney-general, Liz Murrill, will ask the full appeals court and perhaps eventually the US Supreme Court, which has a 6-3 conservative majority, to review the case.

Murrill's office did not immediately respond to requests for comment.

Nine families, including several clergy, with children in public schools sued to block the law, saying that it violated the First Amendment prohibition against state establishment of religion.

"We are grateful for this decision, which honours the religious diversity and religious-freedom rights of public school families across Louisiana," said Darcy Roake, a Unitarian Universalist minister who with her Jewish husband Adrian Van Young is among the plaintiffs.

Louisiana's law requires the display of posters or framed versions of the Ten Commandments that are at least 11" by 14", with the Commandments being the "central focus" and printed in a large, easy-to-read font.

The law, signed by Republican Governor Jeff Landry, covers K-12 schools and state-funded colleges, and was scheduled to take effect on January 1. **– *Reuters***

Colombia's Petro scores as Congress adopts key labour reforms

AFP
Bogota

Colombian President Gustavo Petro called off plans for a controversial referendum on his trademark labour reforms after Congress adopted an amended version of the bill following months of debates and protests.

After months of wrangling, the lower house Chamber of Representatives backed changes made to the bill by the Senate, clearing the way for the text – a centrepiece of Petro's agenda – to become law.

The legislation marks a rare victory for Colombia's first left-wing president who has struggled to garner political support for his reforms since winning power in 2022.

With little more than a year left in his four-year term, the ex-guerrilla is racing to fulfil key pledges and cement his political legacy.

The Senate earlier this week approved the bill, which ends the working day at 6pm instead of 9pm, extends social security to some informal workers and creates a pension fund for farmers.

It also provides for workers to be paid extra for working nights, Sundays or public holidays.

The Chamber of Representatives, which had already backed the bill in October, endorsed the compromise text in a 126-2 vote.

Several opposition MPs abstained.

Petro hailed the compromise as the "first victory in 34 years" for Colombian workers and said he would repeal his decree calling for a referendum on the reforms, saying it was "no longer necessary".

The Senate had previously rejected the labour bill in April, but it was revived after Petro warned that he would declare a referendum to put the measure to a public vote.

The bill was approved in the absence of opposition senator and presidential hopeful Miguel Uribe, who is fighting for his life in the hospital after being shot while campaigning in Bogota on June 7.

US judge blocks Trump ban on foreign students at Harvard

AFP/Reuters
New York

A federal judge on Friday indefinitely paused Donald Trump's bid to block Harvard from enrolling foreign students as the US president said a "deal" with the Ivy League school was in the works.

The order by District Judge Allison Burroughs will allow international students to continue to attend the elite university while a lawsuit filed by Harvard plays out in the courts.

Trump, who has cut federal grants for Harvard and tried a host of different tactics to block the institution from hosting international students, said that his administration has been holding negotiations with Harvard.

"Many people have been asking what is going on with Harvard University and their largescale improprieties that we have been addressing, looking for a solution," Trump said in a post on Truth Social.

"We have been working closely with Harvard, and it is very possible that a Deal will be announced over the next week or so," he said. "If a Settlement is made on the basis that is currently being discussed, it will be 'mindbogglingly' HISTORIC, and very good for our Country."

Trump did not provide any details about the purported "deal".

Harvard had no immediate comment on Trump's post, but in a statement it welcomed Judge Burroughs' order, adding it "will continue to defend its rights-and the rights of its students and scholars".

The Trump administration has sought to remove Harvard from an electronic student immigration registry and instructed embassies to deny visas to international students hoping to attend the Massachusetts-based university.

Harvard has sued the Department of Homeland Security and other agencies to block the efforts, arguing that they were illegal and unconstitutional.

Harvard previously secured two temporary restraining orders from Burroughs against the government's move to bar international students, and the judge extended it with a preliminary injunction on Friday.

International students accounted for 27% of total enrolment at Harvard in the 2024-25 academic year and are a major source of income.

In court filings, Harvard argued that Trump's actions were "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".

Alongside the campaign against foreign students, the Trump administration has also cut around $3.2bn of federal grants and contracts benefiting the university and pledged to exclude it from any future federal funding.

Harvard has been at the forefront of Trump's campaign against top universities after it defied his calls to submit to oversight of its curriculum, staffing, student recruitment and "viewpoint diversity".

Trump and his allies claim that Harvard and other prestigious universities are unaccountable bastions of liberal, anti-conservative bias and anti-Semitism.

At least eight dead in Brazil hot air balloon accident

AFP/Reuters
Sao Paulo

At least eight people were killed yesterday when a hot air balloon with 21 passengers caught fire in southern Brazil, said the governor of Santa Catarina state, where the incident occurred.

"Eight fatalities and 13 survivors," Governor Jorginho Mello said on X.

Videos taken by bystanders and carried on Brazilian television showed the moment when the balloon erupted in flames above the coastal town of Praia Grande.

The weather conditions were clear.

The basket carrying the passengers plummeted dozens of metres to the ground in flames.

"We still have no information" about the condition of the survivors, a spokeswoman for Santa Catarina firefighters told AFP.

Praia Grande, on the Atlantic coast, is a popular destination for hot-air ballooning in Brazil.

The Santa Catarina government estimates that 25-30 hot-air balloons depart daily from Praia Grande in peak season, with most of them having capacity to transport as many as 25 people.

The survivors were being treated in area hospitals, firefighters said.

A spokesperson of the department told local news outlet CNN Brasil that none of them were with their lives at risk.

An investigation was launched to determine the cause of the accident.

"I want to express my solidarity with the families of the victims," Brazilian President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva said in a statement.

The pilot told officials that the fire was sparked by a blowtorch in the basket, Tiago Luiz Lemos, a police official in Praia Grande, told local media.



This photo released by the Santa Catarina Fire Department shows rescue teams and experts at the crash site after a hot air balloon carrying 21 people caught fire and plunged, in Praia Grande, State of Santa Catarina, southern Brazil. – ***AFP***

The pilot tried to bring the balloon down as soon as the fire erupted, "and once it was close to the ground, he told the passengers to jump from the basket".

"But some of them couldn't do it and the fire grew," the official said.

One witness told the *Razao* newspaper that he saw "two people falling, they were on fire, the basket broke off and the balloon fell".

It was the second fatal balloon accident in the country in just a few days.

Less than a week ago, a woman died during a ride in southeastern Sao Paulo state.

US Supreme Court curbs discrimination claims over lost retiree benefits

Reuters
Washington

Retirees cannot sue their former employers for disability discrimination after leaving their jobs, the US Supreme Court decided on Friday in a ruling against a disabled former Florida firefighter that could make it harder to bring lawsuits seeking to restore lost retiree benefits.

The ruling upheld a lower court's decision to dismiss a lawsuit by Karyn Stanley, who had worked as a firefighter in Sanford, that accused the city of discriminating against her by ending a health insurance subsidy for retirees.

Conservative Justice Neil Gorsuch, who authored the ruling, wrote that only job applicants and current employees are "qualified individuals" covered by the Americans with Disabilities Act, a landmark federal law that prohibits discrimination based on disability.

"In other words, the statute protects people, not benefits, from discrimination. And the statute also tells us who those people are: qualified individuals, those who hold or seek a job at the time of the defendant's alleged discrimination," Gorsuch wrote.

Gorsuch was joined by the court's five other conservative justices and liberal Justice Elena Kagan.

Liberal Justices Sonia Sotomayor and Ketanji Brown Jackson penned separate dissenting opinions.

While Stanley worked for Sanford, located in the suburbs of Orlando, the city changed its policy to limit health insurance coverage for disabled retirees to 24 months after they stopped working.

Stanley retired from her job after two decades because her Parkinson's disease had made it impossible for her to work, according to court filings.

She sued the city in 2020, claiming that it discriminated against workers who retired early because of a disability by giving them a smaller healthcare subsidy than employees who retired after 25 years of service.

The city in court filings has said its policy was lawful and necessary to contain costs related to employee benefits.

Sanford covers insurance costs for workers who retire after 25 years of service until they turn 65, and had previously done so for employees who retired due to a disability regardless of how long they worked for the city.

While Stanley worked for the city, it changed its policy to limit coverage for disabled retirees to 24 months after they stopped working.

Stanley was 47 when she retired.

Friday's decision will help reduce the legal risks that employers face when they change or terminate retirement benefits, according to Caroline Pieper, a Chicago-based lawyer with the firm Seyfarth Shaw, which represents employers.

"While there are certainly other considerations... this case should give employers more comfort under the ADA when they modify or reduce post-employment offerings," Pieper said, referring to the Americans with Disabilities Act.

Friday's ruling affirmed decisions by a judge in Florida and the Atlanta-based 11th US Circuit Court of Appeals, which had dismissed Stanley's lawsuit.

Argentina's Kirchner urges backers not to gather as police deploy



A supporter of Cristina Fernandez de Kirchner takes a selfie, as sympathisers gather outside her home, where the former Argentinian president is serving house arrest, in Buenos Aires. – ***Reuters***

AFP
Buenos Aires

Argentine ex-president Cristina Kirchner has urged supporters not to gather outside her Buenos Aires apartment, where she is serving a six-year fraud sentence, saying that she feared police violence.

Kirchner alleged on social media that the government had "orchestrated a police operation at the door of my house with the sole purpose of provoking conflicts".

She called on her backers, who held a days-long vigil outside her flat, to exercise "wisdom and restraint" and to organise a demonstration planned for Friday elsewhere.

AFP witnessed police barriers around the building, with several police trucks stationed nearby.

The 72-year-old, convicted of "fraudulent administration" over public works contracts awarded during her 2007-2015 two-term presidency, had an appeal overturned by the Supreme Court last week.

The court upheld her sentence and a life ban on holding public office.

A different judge allowed Kirchner to serve her sentence at home, which quickly became the scene of solidarity demonstrations.

On Wednesday, tens of thousands of people marched on a central square under the banner "Argentina with Cristina".

The following day, a judge ruled Kirchner may use her second-floor balcony, under which supporters had been keeping vigil and where she made several brief appearances.

A ban on "any behaviour that could disturb the peace of the neighbourhood" had led to fears she could be confined indoors.

Kirchner has challenged limited visitation rights ordered by the court, restricted to family members, doctors and lawyers in what her team described as "a totally arbitrary exclusion regime".

There has been speculation Brazil's President Luiz Inacio Lula Da Silva could try and visit her when he travels to Buenos Aires for a summit in July.

He would have to request a court's permission.



Mexico authorities rescue 3,400 trafficked baby turtles

Mexican authorities said on Friday that they had rescued over 3,400 protected baby turtles stuffed into cardboard boxes set to be trafficked.

During a roadblock in the southern state of Chiapas, agents found the critters "in overcrowded conditions" in boxes in a vehicle whose driver was arrested on wildlife trafficking charges, the environmental protection prosecutor's office said in a statement.

The baby animals were freshwater Meso-American sliders, native to Mexico, Central America and Colombia.

They are protected in Mexico against overexploitation.

"The specimens were transported without documentation proving their legal origin, which constitutes a violation of environmental regulations," the prosecutor's office said.

The turtles were taken to a specialised unit for rehabilitation and to determine whether they can be released back into the wild. – ***AFP***


This handout picture released by the Mexican Federal Environmental Attorney's office shows boxes with hatchlings of hicotea (*Trachemys callirostris*) turtles rescued in San Cristobal de las Casas, Chiapas state, Mexico. – ***AFP***

Trump administration suspends enforcement of Biden-era farmworker rule

President Donald Trump's administration said on Friday that it was suspending enforcement of a "burdensome" farmworker rule from former president Joe Biden's administration.

The 2024 rule provided protection for workplace organising to foreign farmworkers in the US on H-2A visas.

The US Department of Labour said that the rule had already been suspended because of federal injunctions.

"The decision provides much-needed clarity for American farmers navigating the H-2A programme, while also aligning with President Trump's ongoing commitment to strictly enforcing US immigration laws," the Department of Labour said in a statement.

"As multiple federal court injunctions have created significant legal uncertainty, inconsistency, and operational challenges for farmers lawfully employing H-2A workers, this field assistance bulletin clarifies that the department will not be enforcing the 2024 final rule effective immediately."

The H-2A visa programme allows farmers to bring in an unlimited number of foreign seasonal farmhands if they can show there are not enough US workers willing, qualified and available to do the job.

The programme has grown over time, with 378,000 H-2A positions certified by the Labour Department in 2023, three times more than the number in 2014.

That figure is about 20% of the nation's farmworkers, according to the US Department of Agriculture.

Trump said last week that he would take steps soon to address the effects of his immigration crackdown on the country's farm and hotel industries, which rely heavily on migrant labour. – ***Reuters***

WORLD

Europeans seek 'digital sovereignty' as US tech firms embrace Trump

Reuters
Berlin

At a market stall in Berlin run by charity Topio, volunteers help people who want to purge their phones of the influence of US tech firms. Since Donald Trump's inauguration, the queue for their services has grown.

Interest in European-based digital services has jumped in recent months, data from digital market intelligence company Similarweb shows. More people are looking for e-mail, messaging and even search providers outside the United States.

The first months of Trump's second presidency have shaken some Europeans' confidence in their long-time ally, after he signalled his country would step back from its role in Europe's security and then launched a trade war.

"It's about the concentration of power in US firms," said Topio's founder Michael Wirths, as his colleague installed on a customer's phone a version of the Android operating system without hooks into the Google ecosystem.

Wirths said the type of people coming to the stall had changed: "Before, it was people who knew a lot about data privacy. Now it's people who are politically aware and feel exposed."

Tesla chief Elon Musk, who also owns social media company X, was a leading adviser to the US president before the two fell out, while the bosses of Amazon, Meta and Google-owner Alphabet took prominent spots at Trump's inauguration in January.

Days before Trump took office, outgoing president Joe Biden had warned of an oligarchic "tech industrial complex" threatening democracy.

Berlin-based search engine Ecosia says it has benefited from some customers' desire to avoid US counterparts like Microsoft's Bing or Google, which dominates web searches and is also the world's biggest e-mail provider.

"The worse it gets, the better it is for us," founder Christian Kroll said of Ecosia, whose sales pitch is that it spends its profits on environmental projects.

Similarweb data shows the number of queries directed to Ecosia from the European Union has risen 27% year-on-year and the company says it has 1% of the German search engine market.

But its 122mn visits from the 27 EU countries in February were dwarfed by 10.3bn visits to Google, whose parent Alphabet made revenues of about $100bn from Europe, the Middle East and Africa in 2024 — nearly a third of its $350bn global turnover.

Non-profit Ecosia earned 3.2mn euros ($3.65mn) in April, of which 770,000 euros was spent on planting 1.1mn trees.

Google declined to comment for this story.

Reuters could not determine whether major US tech companies have lost any market share to local rivals in Europe.

The search for alternative providers accompanies a debate in Europe about "digital sovereignty" — the idea that reliance on companies from an increasingly isolationist United States is a threat to Europe's economy and security.



"Ordinary people, the kind of people who would never have thought it was important they were using an American service are saying, 'hang on!'," said UK-based Internet regulation expert Maria Farrell. "My hairdresser was asking me what she should switch to."

Use in Europe of Swiss-based ProtonMail rose 11.7% year-on-year to March compared to a year ago, according to Similarweb, while use of Alphabet's Gmail, which has some 70% of the global e-mail market, slipped 1.9%.

ProtonMail, which offers both free and paid-for services, said it had seen an increase in users from Europe since Trump's re-election, though it declined to give a number.

"My household is definitely disengaging," said British software engineer Ken Tindell, citing weak US data privacy protections as one factor.

Trump's Vice-President JD Vance shocked European leaders in February by accusing them — at a conference usually known for displays of transatlantic unity — of censoring free speech and failing to control immigration.

In May, Secretary of State Marco Rubio threatened visa bans for people who "censor" speech by Americans, including on social media, and suggested the policy could target foreign officials regulating US tech companies.

US social media companies like Facebook and Instagram parent Meta have said the European Union's Digital Services Act amounts to censorship of their platforms.

EU officials say the Act will make the online environment safer by compelling tech giants to tackle illegal content, including hate speech and child sexual abuse material.

Greg Nojeim, director of the Security and Surveillance Project at the Center for Democracy & Technology, said Europeans' concerns about the US government accessing their data, whether stored on devices or in the cloud, were justified.

Not only does US law permit the government to search devices of anyone entering the country, it can compel disclosure of data that Europeans outside the US store or transmit through US communications service providers, Nojeim said. Germany's new government is itself making efforts to reduce exposure to US tech, committing in its coalition agreement to make more use of open-source data formats and locally-based cloud infrastructure.

Regional governments have gone further — in conservative-run Schleswig-Holstein, on the Danish border, all IT used by the public administration must run on open-source software.

Berlin has also paid for Ukraine to access a satellite-Internet network operated by France's Eutelsat instead of Musk's Starlink.

But with modern life driven by technology, "completely divorcing US tech in a very fundamental way is, I would say, possibly not possible," said Bill Budington of US digital rights nonprofit the Electronic Frontier Foundation.

Everything from push notifications to the content delivery networks powering many websites and how internet traffic is routed relies largely on US companies and infrastructure, Budington noted.

Both Ecosia and French-based search engine Qwant depend in part on search results provided by Google and Microsoft's Bing, while Ecosia runs on cloud platforms, some hosted by the very same tech giants it promises an escape from.

Nevertheless, a group on messaging board Reddit called BuyFromEU has 211,000 members.

"Just cancelled my Dropbox and will switch to Proton Drive," read one post.

Mastodon, a decentralised social media service developed by German programmer Eugen Rochko, enjoyed a rush of new users two years ago when Musk bought Twitter, later renamed X. But it remains a niche service.

Signal, a messaging app run by a US nonprofit foundation, has also seen a surge in installations from Europe. Similarweb's data showed a 7% month-on-month increase in Signal usage in March, while use of Meta's WhatsApp was static.

Meta declined to comment for this story. Signal did not respond to an e-mailed request for comment.

But this kind of conscious self-organising is unlikely on its own to make a dent in Silicon Valley's European dominance, digital rights activist Robin Berjon told Reuters.

"The market is too captured," he said. "Regulation is needed as well."

Pakistan to nominate Trump for Nobel prize

- **Nomination follows Trump's role in India-Pakistan ceasefire**
- **Move could make US president rethink Iran strikes: analysts**

Reuters
Islamabad

Pakistan said yesterday it would recommend US President Donald Trump for the Nobel Peace Prize, an accolade that he has said he craves, for his work in helping to resolve the recent conflict between India and Pakistan.

Some analysts in Pakistan said the move might persuade Trump to think again about potentially joining Israel in striking Iran's nuclear facilities. Pakistan has condemned Israel's action as a violation of international law and a threat to regional stability.

In May, a surprise announcement by Trump of a ceasefire brought an abrupt end to a four-day conflict between nuclear-armed foes India and Pakistan. Trump has since repeatedly said that he averted a nuclear war, saved millions of lives, and grumbled that he got no credit for it.

Pakistan agrees that US diplomatic intervention ended the fighting, but India says it was a bilateral agreement between the two militaries.

"President Trump demonstrated great strategic foresight and stellar statesmanship through robust diplomatic engagement with both Islamabad and New Delhi, which de-escalated a rapidly deteriorating situation," Pakistan said. "This intervention stands as a testament to his role as a genuine peacemaker."

Governments can nominate people for the Nobel Peace Prize. There was no immediate response from Washington. A spokesperson for the Indian government did not respond to a request for comment.



US President Donald Trump talks to reporters upon his arrival at Morristown Municipal Airport in Morristown, New Jersey. (**Reuters**)

Trump has repeatedly said that he's willing to mediate between India and Pakistan over the disputed Kashmir region, their main source of enmity. Islamabad, which has long called for international attention to Kashmir, is delighted. But his stance has upended US policy in South Asia, which had favoured India as a counterweight to China, and put in question previously close relations between Trump and Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

In a social media post on Friday, Trump gave a long list of conflicts he said he had resolved, including India and Pakistan and the Abraham accords in his first term between Israel and some Muslim-majority countries. He added: "I won't get a Nobel Peace Prize no matter what I do."

Pakistan's move to nominate Trump came in the same week its army chief, Field Marshal Asim Munir, met the US leader for lunch. It was the first time that a Pakistani military leader had been invited to the White House when a civilian government was in place in Islamabad. Trump's planned meeting with Modi at the G7 summit in Canada last week did not take place after the US president left early, but the two later spoke by phone, in which Modi said "India does not and will never accept mediation" in its dispute with Pakistan, according to the Indian government.

Mushahid Hussain, a former chair of the Senate Defence Committee in Pakistan's parliament, suggested nominating Trump for the peace prize was justified.

"Trump is good for Pakistan," he said. "If this panders to Trump's ego, so be it. All the European leaders have been sucking up to him big time."

But the move was not universally applauded in Pakistan, where Trump's support for Israel's war in Gaza has inflamed passions.

"Israel's sugar daddy in Gaza and cheerleader of its attacks on Iran isn't a candidate for any prize," said Talat Hussain, a prominent Pakistani television political talk show host, in a post on X".



Protesters hold a sign reading "Stop genocide in Gaza, Free Palestine" during a demonstration called by "War on War" collective against "war economy" and "death business" on the sideline of the 55th edition of the International Paris Air Show in Bobigny, a surburb of Paris, yesterday. (**AFP**)

Protesters slam war profiteering and Israel at French air fair

AFP
Bobigny

Thousands marched yesterday outside a French trade fair, calling for an end to war profiteering and Israel's offensive in Gaza in the latest demonstration to hit the event.

The long-planned protest at the Paris Air Show outside the French capital also comes as Israel's war with Iran drags on into a ninth day, with Tehran threatening to hit back in force at Israel's offensive against its arch-rival.

The presence of Israeli defence firms at the show has already become a bone of contention, with the French government on Monday sealing off the booths of five Israeli firms on the grounds that they were displaying offensive weapons that could be used in Gaza.

"Their wars, their profits, our deaths, stop the genocide in Palestine," read the banner at the head of the march, which organisers claimed drew more than 4,000 protesters.

"As we speak, people are dying and our governments are not doing anything to stop it," Nora, 29, told AFP at the protest.

Draped in a Palestinian flag, the project leader in the pharmaceutical industry said that she felt "rage" at the footage coming out of Gaza, including that of "mothers kissing their dead children" in the besieged Palestinian territory.

Police have arrested seven people aiming to disrupt the trade fair, the Paris public prosecutor office said, with officers discovering a helium canister and nearly 200 balloons during the searches.

Six of the arrests were made on Friday and the other yesterday, the prosecutor's office added.

Drawing some 100,000 visitors a day, the Paris Air Show at the Le Bourget airfield, 9km to the north of the capital, is usually dominated by displays of the aerospace industry's latest cutting-edge planes.

But Monday's shuttering of the stands of Israel Aerospace Industries (IAI), Rafael, UVision and Elbit, as well as Aeronautics, which make drones and guided bombs and missiles, sparked a row with Israel.

Israel's President Isaac Herzog branded Paris's closure of the Israeli firms' booths "outrageous", comparing it to "creating an Israeli ghetto".

It came days after Israel, claiming Iran was on the verge of obtaining a nuclear bomb, launched a surprise barrage on June 13 which killed top Iranian commanders and nuclear scientists.

Tehran immediately hit back with a flurry of missiles, with the two countries trading wave after wave of devastating strikes since.

Belarus frees jailed opposition leader after appeal from the US

Belarus freed top opposition figure Sergei Tikhanovsky and over a dozen other political prisoners yesterday following an appeal from the White House, Minsk said, a sign of warming ties between Washington and Belarus-ally Moscow.

The release came just hours after US special envoy Keith Kellogg met Belarusian President Alexander Lukashenko in Minsk, the highest-profile visit of a US official to the authoritarian state in years.

Tikhanovsky's wife Svetlana Tikhanovskaya, who took the mantle of the opposition movement after her husband's jailing, thanked US President Donald Trump directly for brokering the deal.

European politicians and members of Belarus's exiled opposition also welcomed the news.

The European Union hailed Tikhanovsky's release as a "symbol of hope" and a leading activist calling it an "important moment".

Tikhanovsky, 46, had been imprisoned for more than five years.



Svetlana Tikhanovskaya

The popular YouTuber had planned to run against Lukashenko in the August 2020 presidential election, but was arrested and detained weeks before the vote. He was sentenced in 2021 to 18 years in prison for "organising riots" and "inciting hatred", then to another 18 months for "insubordination".

Svetlana — a political novice at the time of his arrest — ran against Lukashenko in her husband's place but lost after what the opposition described as widespread falsification. She later fled Belarus.

"It's hard to describe the joy in my heart," she said in a post on X following her husband's release.

Among the 13 others freed were Radio Liberty journalist Igor Karnei, arrested in 2023 and jailed for participating in an "extremist" organisation.

They have now been transferred from Belarus to Lithuania, where they were receiving "proper care", Lithuanian Foreign Minister Kestutis Budrys said.

Swedish-Belarusian citizen Galina Krasnyanskaya, arrested in 2023 for allegedly supporting Ukraine, was also freed, said Swedish Prime Minister Ulf Kristersson.

Belarus, ruled by Lukashenko since 1994, has outlawed all genuine opposition parties. It is the only European country to retain the death penalty as a punishment.

The eastern European country still holds more than 1,000 political prisoners in its jails, according to local human rights group Viasna.

Lukashenko's spokeswoman said the Belarusian leader ordered the release of the prisoners on Trump's "request", Russian state media reported.



Protesters wave Palestinian and Iranian flags as they take part in a march through central London, yesterday at a demonstration organised by the Palestinian Solidarity Campaign, calling for "No War On Iran", "Stop Arming Israel", "Stop Starving Gaza" and an end to "the Genocide".



Former Labour leader Jeremy Corbyn speaks as pro-Palestinian demonstrators protest through central London, calling for the UK government to stop allowing arms exports and military co-operation with Israel, in London.

Protesters call for end to war in Gaza, Iran

AFP
London

Tens of thousands of pro-Palestinian protesters marched in London yesterday calling for an end to the war in Gaza, amid concerns that the Iran-Israel conflict could spark wider regional devastation. Protesters waved Palestinian flags, donned keffiyeh scarves and carried signs including "Stop arming Israel" and "No war on Iran" as they marched in the sweltering heat in central London.

"It's important to remember that people are suffering in Gaza. I fear all the focus will be on Iran now," said 34-year-old Harry Baker, attending his third pro-Palestinian protest. "I don't have great love for the Iranian regime, but we are now in a dangerous situation," he added. There have been monthly protests in the British capital since the start of the 20-month-long war between Israel and Hamas, which has ravaged Gaza.

Saturday's march comes amid heightened global tensions as the United States mulls joining Israel's strikes against Iran. Cries of "Palestine will be free" rang out as protesters carried signs saying "Hands off Gaza" or "Stop starving Gaza".

Gaza is suffering from famine-like conditions according to UN agencies in the region following an Israeli aid blockade.

Gaza's civil defence agency has reported that hundreds have been killed by Israeli forces while trying to reach the US- and Israeli-backed aid distribution sites. "People need to keep their eyes on Gaza. That's where the genocide is happening," said 60-year-old protester Nicky Marcus. "I feel frustrated, angry because of what's happening in Gaza," said 31-year-old data analyst Jose Diaz.

"It's in everyone's eyes. It's still on after so many months," Diaz added. The overall death toll in Gaza since the war broke out has reached at least 55,637 people, according to the health ministry.

A 31-year-old Iranian student who did not want to share her name, told AFP she had family in Iran and was "scared". "I'm worried about my country. I know the regime is not good but it's still my country. I'm scared," she said. Tehran said over 400 people have been killed in Iran since Israel launched strikes last week claiming its arch-foe was close to acquiring a nuclear weapon, which Iran denies. Some 25 people have been killed in Israel, according to official figures. Meanwhile, British media reported that the UK government was planning to ban a pro-Palestinian campaign group, which on Friday broke into the UK's largest air force base and vandalised two planes. Home Secretary Yvette Cooper was planning to begin the process on Monday to proscribe Palestine Action — effectively designating it a terrorist organisation and making it illegal to join, according to UK media.

Britain has announced sanctions against two Israeli cabinet ministers, suspended free-trade negotiations with Israel and summoned its ambassador over the conduct of the war in Gaza. It has also urged de-escalation in the Iran-Israel war, while expressing concerns about Tehran's nuclear programme.



Members of the Neturei Karta, a fringe Jewish group that opposes the state of Israel, attend a pro-Palestinian protest, calling for the UK government to stop allowing arms exports and military co-operation with Israel.

Civil aviation regulator orders Air India to remove officials

AFP
New Delhi

New Delhi's civil aviation regulator has ordered Air India to remove three officials from their roles over "systemic failures", according to a directive seen by AFP yesterday, as the carrier comes under scrutiny after a deadly crash.

The instruction from the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) did not detail whether it was linked to the June 12 crash in Ahmedabad, which killed all but one of the 242 people on board. At least 38 others on the ground were killed.

The DGCA directive noted that the airline's voluntary disclosures "point to systemic failures in crew scheduling, compliance monitoring, and internal accountability".

"Of particular concern is the absence of strict disciplinary measures against key officials directly responsible for these operational lapses," said the order, which was issued on Friday. "These officials have been involved in serious and repeated lapses," it said.

The regulator has directed Air India to remove three officials named in the order "from all roles and responsibilities related to crew scheduling", take disciplinary action, and report on steps taken within 10 days.

Future violations could also result in "licence suspension".

The airline said yesterday it had implemented the order. "Air India is committed to ensuring that there is total adherence to safety protocols and standard practices," it said in a statement. Investigators are attempting to find out what caused the airline's London-bound plane to hurtle to the ground moments after takeoff in Ahmedabad.

Air India said on Thursday that the Boeing 787-8 Dreamliner plane was "well-maintained" and that the pilots were accomplished flyers.

The cockpit voice recorder and the flight data recorder have been recovered from the crash site.

India says it will never restore Indus water treaty with Pakistan

Reuters
New Delhi

India will never restore the Indus Waters Treaty with Islamabad, and the water flowing to Pakistan will be diverted for internal use, Home Minister Amit Shah said in an interview with *Times of India* yesterday.

India put into "abeyance" its participation in the 1960 treaty, which governs the usage of the Indus river system, after 26 civilians in Indian Kashmir were killed in what Delhi described as an act of terror. The treaty had guaranteed water access for 80% of Pakistan's farms through three rivers originating in India. Pakistan has denied involvement in the incident, but the accord remains dormant despite a ceasefire agreed upon by the two nuclear-armed neighbours last month following their worst fighting in decades.

"No, it will never be restored," Shah told the daily. "We will take water that was flowing to Pakistan to Rajasthan by constructing a canal. Pakistan will be starved of water that it has been getting unjustifiably," Shah said, referring to the northwestern Indian state.

The latest comments from Shah, the most powerful cabinet minister in Prime Minister Narendra Modi's cabinet, have dimmed Islamabad's hopes for negotiations on the treaty in the near term. Last month, Reuters reported that India plans to dramatically increase the water it draws from a major river that feeds Pakistani farms downstream, as part of retaliatory action.

Pakistan's foreign ministry did not immediately respond to Reuters' request for comments. But it has said in the past that the treaty has no provision for one side to unilaterally pull back and that any blocking of river water flowing to Pakistan will be considered "an act of war".

Islamabad is also exploring a legal challenge to India's decision to hold the treaty in abeyance under international law.

Bomb threat diverts airplane of Haj pilgrims in Indonesia, second in days

AFP
Jakarta

A plane carrying hundreds of Haj pilgrims back to Indonesia from the Middle East was diverted yesterday after a bomb threat, the transport ministry and police said, the second such incident in a week.

Saudia Airlines flight SV5688 had flown from the Saudi city of Jeddah to the Omani capital Muscat before travelling on to Indonesia where it was due to land in Surabaya, a city on the main island Java. But air traffic control officers in the Indonesian capital Jakarta received a call about a bomb threat for the flight, prompting its diversion to Kualanamu International Airport in Medan city yesterday morning, the Directorate General of Civil Aviation said.

Regional airport authority head Asri Santosa said in a statement officers were checking the plane after its arrival but the airport on Sumatra island remained operational. All 376 passengers, Haj pilgrims from Java, and 13 crew members were safe at the airport, North Sumatra police spokesman Ferry Walintukan told AFP. He said a bomb squad was deployed to sweep the aircraft. The passengers are due to resume their journey Sunday, said Asri. On Tuesday a plane carrying 442 Haj pilgrims back from Saudi Arabia to Jakarta was also diverted to Medan after an e-mail bomb threat was sent to authorities.

Thai PM will not resign or dissolve parliament: official

Reuters
Bangkok

Thailand's embattled Prime Minister Paetongtarn Shinawatra will not resign or dissolve parliament, a senior official from the ruling Pheu Thai party said yesterday, risking a prolonged political crisis in Southeast Asia's second largest economy.

Sorawong Thienthong, who also serves as Thailand's tourism minister, said in a Facebook post that the prime minister would not quit, despite growing calls for her resignation after her apparent mishandling of a border dispute with neighbouring Cambodia.

"The prime minister has clearly confirmed to us that she will continue to perform her duty to resolve various crises that the country is facing to the best of her ability," he said.

"The government confirms that it will continue to work, not resign, and not dissolve parliament."

Paetongtarn, daughter of divisive tycoon and former premier Thaksin Shinawatra, is facing domestic anger over the leak of a phone call between her and Cambodia's influential former leader Hun Sen, in which she appeared to kowtow before the veteran politician and denigrated a senior Thai military commander.

The Bhumjaithai Party, which was the second-biggest partner in Thailand's ruling coalition, withdrew from the alliance late on Wednesday, citing the leak earlier that day. Another coalition member, the United Thai Nation party, looked set to demand Paetongtarn's resignation in return for backing the Pheu Thai-led ruling coalition and securing its narrow parliamentary majority. Paetongtarn has apologised for the call with Hun Sen, but not commented on the crisis so far.

Activists have also scheduled a protest in Bangkok starting on June 28 to ask for Paetongtarn's resignation, among them groups with a history of influential rallies against Shinawatra administrations.

Indian students evacuated from Iran



Indian nationals from Iran landed at the Indira Gandhi International Airport in New Delhi yesterday on an evacuation flight from Turkmenistan's capital Ashgabat. Around 110 students who fled Iran over the land border with Armenia have landed in New Delhi, an Indian foreign ministry spokesperson said. There are around 10,000 Indian citizens in Iran caught up in the rapidly spiralling Israel-Iran conflict.





COMMENT

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GULF TIMES

Melting glaciers have profound and far-reaching impacts on Earth

The world's glaciers are melting faster than ever recorded under the impact of climate change, according to the most comprehensive scientific analysis to date.

Mountain glaciers – frozen rivers of ice – act as a freshwater resource for billions of people worldwide and lock up enough water to raise global sea-levels by 32cm, if they melted entirely.

But since the turn of the century, they have lost more than 6,500bn tonnes – or 5% – of their ice.

And the pace of melting is increasing. Over the past decade or so, glacier losses were more than a third higher than during the period 2000-2011. The study combined more than 230 regional estimates from 35 research teams around the world, making scientists even more confident about exactly how fast glaciers are melting, and how they will evolve in the future. Glaciers are excellent indicators of climate change, Environment scientists say.

"In a stable climate, they remain roughly the same size, gaining about as much ice through snowfall as they lose through melting," according to BBC.

Melting glaciers have profound and far-reaching impacts on the Earth, affecting ecosystems, sea levels, climate patterns, and communities around the world.

Glaciers around the world are now melting at twice the rate measured just two decades ago. Between 2000 and 2023, they lost an ice mass equivalent to 46,000 Great Pyramids of Giza

Glaciers and ice sheets store about 70% of the world's freshwater reserves. High-altitude regions are often dubbed the world's "water towers" because they gradually release meltwater in the summer, sustaining towns and farms downstream.

Data reveal nearly 2bn people globally rely on glacial melt for their day-to-day water needs, researchers say. Yet, as the world gets hotter, the ice is thawing.

Glaciers around the world are now melting at twice the rate measured just two decades ago. Between 2000 and 2023, they lost an ice mass equivalent to 46,000 Great Pyramids of Giza.

And this is affecting communities worldwide. Some regions are left with too little water, while others struggle with too much.

As glaciers shrink, they eventually reach a threshold — known as peak water — at which runoff declines, points out Katharina Schantz, prominent environment journalist Katharina Schantz.

As a result, less meltwater flows downstream, with potentially far-reaching consequences.

Reduced water supply has forced local farmers, who traditionally grew corn and wheat, to change both their crops and water management. Some communities in the Andes have now switched to growing a bitter potato variety that is more resilient to drought, she noted. Unstable water supply is also stalling electricity production. In Chile, 27% of power is generated by hydroelectric dams which critically depend on meltwater. Environment scientists say melting glaciers contribute directly to rising sea levels, especially those in Greenland and Antarctica. Coastal cities and island nations are increasingly at risk of flooding, land erosion, and even disappearance over time. Many regions rely on glacier meltwater for fresh water, especially during dry seasons. Reduced glacier mass can lead to water shortages for drinking, agriculture, and hydropower in places like South Asia, the Andes, and the Alps.

Freshwater from melting glaciers dilutes ocean salinity and can alter thermohaline circulation. This affects global climate patterns, including potentially weakening the Gulf Stream, which would bring colder weather to Europe and disrupt weather systems globally.

Glacial regions are home to specialised species of plants and animals. As glaciers disappear, so do the habitats, leading to biodiversity loss and ecosystem imbalance.

Glacier retreat destabilises mountain slopes and creates glacial lakes that can burst. This increases the risk of floods and landslides in mountain communities, endangering lives and infrastructure.

Ice reflects sunlight, a phenomenon, which is called Albedo Effect. As glaciers melt, darker land or water surfaces are exposed, which absorb more heat. This accelerates global warming in a feedback loop, worsening climate change. Glaciers hold cultural, spiritual, and historical significance for many communities. Their loss affects cultural identity and tourism, impacting local economies.

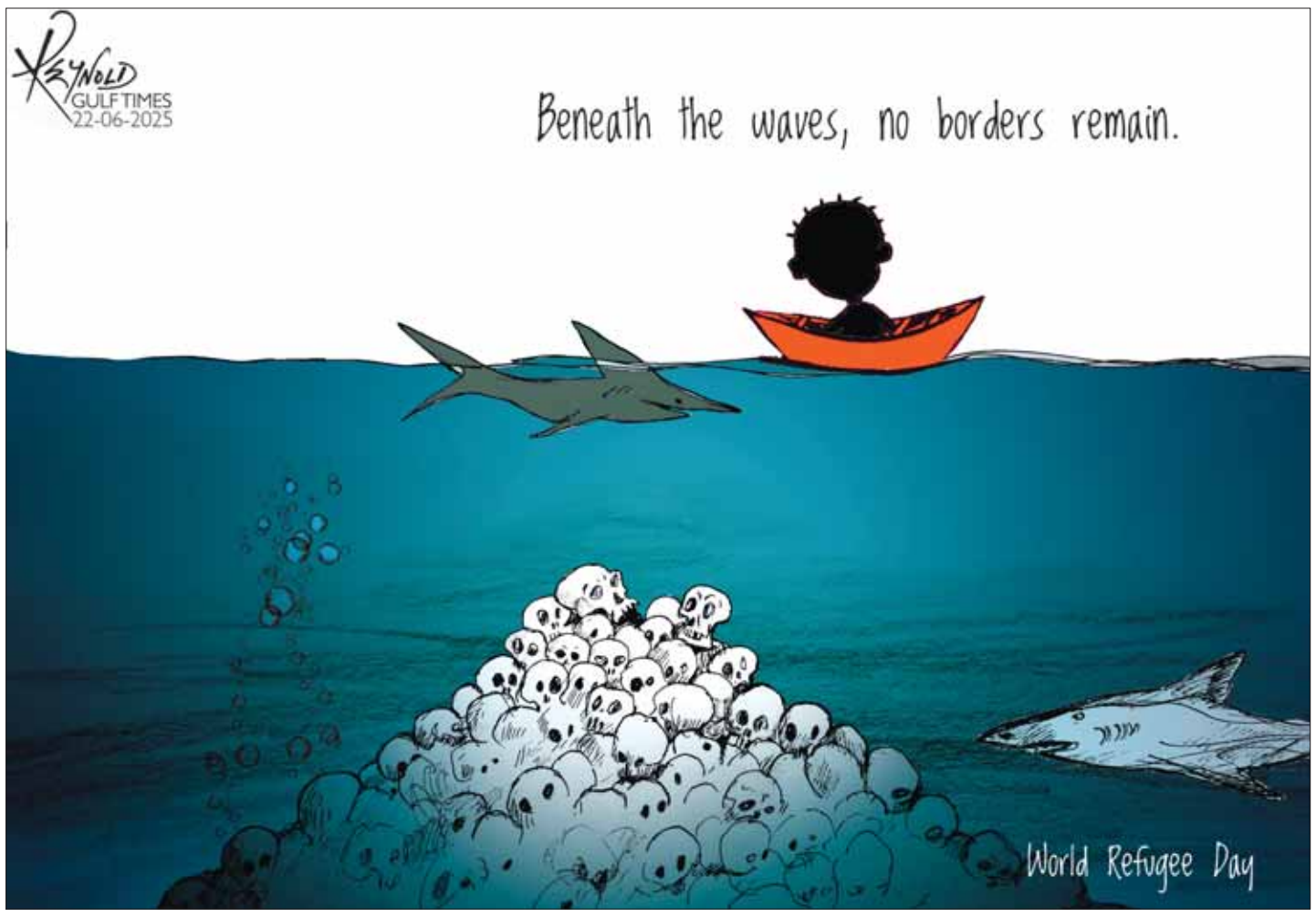
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The weak strongman: How Trump in effect undermines, not furthers American power

By Timothy Snyder
Toronto

Over the past two months, financial investors have hit upon a new trading strategy, based on a simple rule: TACO – Trump Always Chickens Out. America's president threatens to slap massive import tariffs on friends and foes alike, or to remove the Federal Reserve chair, only to back down when the whip of the market imposes its uncompromising discipline. Then he switches back to tariffs, only to back down yet again.

It's a pattern that extends beyond the economy. In fact, it's the defining feature of Donald Trump's presidency. He is a weak strongman, and America's adversaries may understand that better than most Americans.

Many Americans fear Trump, so they imagine that others must, too. But no-one outside America fears Trump as such. America's friends fear an arsonist – someone who destroys what others have created. And America's enemies welcome the destruction wrought by Trump and by Elon Musk's Department of Government Efficiency. When Musk recently stepped down, the leading Kremlin ideologue Alexander Dugin lamented his departure: "DOGE made a great favour to the entire world liquidating USAID, Health department and Department of education."

Trump is strong in a relative sense; after he destroys institutions, what remains is his presence. But he is weak because, having destroyed the government departments overseeing money, weapons, and intelligence, the United States has no actual tools to deal with the rest of the world. He plays a strongman on television, and he is a talented performer. But his strength consists solely in his audience's submissiveness. His performance arouses a dream of passivity: Trump will fix it.

To be sure, Trump's charisma is a kind of strength. But it cannot be brought to bear on any problem, and it is irrelevant outside the US. Trump's supporters might think that America needs no friends because it can intimidate its enemies without help. But we already know that Trump cannot make Canada or Mexico – much less China, Iran, or Russia – do his bidding.

That only works at home. For years, Trump has used rallies and social media to inspire random violence against his domestic opponents. This has led to a self-purge of the Republican Party and forged a docile cohort of congressional cadres. The people who submit to Trump perceive him as a strongman, but what they are experiencing is their own weakness. And their weakness cannot magically become strength in the wider world.

The capital letters and exclamation points in social-media posts that Trump has directed at Russian President Vladimir Putin in recent months, demanding that he stop the war in Ukraine, have had no effect on Putin's emotional state, let alone on Russian policy. And inciting stochastic violence won't work on foreign leaders. No-one in Irkutsk is going to threaten or harm Putin because Trump posted something on the internet.

One could be generous and interpret a Trump post threatening sanctions as an act of policy. But words matter only when there is actually a policy, or at least the possibility that one might be formulated. But for there to be a policy, there must be institutions staffed with competent people. And Trump's first policy was to fire those who would be competent to design and implement a policy. Many of the people who knew anything about Ukraine and Russia, for example, are simply gone from the ranks of his administration.

In their place came Trump's flailing efforts to make concessions to Russia regarding Ukrainian sovereignty on his own – without Ukraine and without any allies. It didn't work. His position was so weak that Putin naturally assumed he could get more and duly escalated Russian aggression in Ukraine.

It's an obvious point, but it must be made clearly: no-one in Moscow thinks that Trump is strong. Even if he wanted to, Trump cannot credibly threaten Russia without functioning institutions and competent civil servants. To make sanctions work, for example, he would need more people on the job, not fewer. Moreover, foreign powers would need to believe that the Department of the Treasury is more than an American billionaire's plaything. Unfortunately, their intelligence agencies read the newspapers.

Americans can choose to ignore that the state capacity needed to deal with adversaries has been gutted and/or entrusted to people whose only qualification is absolute fealty to Trump. But the destruction of the institutions of US power creates a very simple incentive structure for America's enemies. The Russians hoped that Trump would return to the White House precisely because they believe he weakens the US. Now, as they watch him dismantle the CIA and FBI, putting the likes of Tulsi Gabbard, Kash Patel, and Pam Bondi in charge of intelligence and federal law enforcement, they can only think that time is on their side.

That is why Putin has ignored Trump's demand for a ceasefire in Ukraine, and why Russia will use any ceasefire that may occur to prepare for the next invasion. Putin is justifiably confident that a US neutered by Trump will be unable to respond, that the Europeans will be distracted, and that the Ukrainians, after years of war, will find it harder to mobilise again.

What is true for Russia also holds for China. The weak strongman helps the People's Republic. Time was not really on China's side before Trump. While a generation of Americans had feared that China would surpass the US economically and militarily, the trend lines in recent years were no longer so clear, or indeed had reversed. But now that Trump has set a course to destroy America's state capacity, China can simply take what it once would have had to struggle to gain.

Wall Street might profit from the TACO trade in the short term, but a weak strongman brings only losses. While Trump's supporters might be tempted to believe that he has made America a titan among nations, the opposite is true. As a strongman, Trump destroys the norms, laws, and alliances that held back war. As a weakling, he invites it. — Project Syndicate

• Timothy Snyder, the author or editor of 20 books, holds the inaugural Chair in Modern European History at the Munk School of Global Affairs and Public Policy at the University of Toronto and is a permanent fellow at the Institute for Human Sciences in Vienna.



US President Donald Trump attends UFC 316 at the Prudential Center in Newark, New Jersey. (**AFP**)

COMMENT

Brazil's soy farmers raze Amazon despite deforestation pact with global traders

By Stefanie Eschenbacher
Santarem



A drone view shows the Vitalina Motta school, surrounding soy fields and trucks loaded with soybean passing along the road, where the farming expanded in the Amazon, in Belterra, Para state. (**Reuters**)



Paulo da Silva Bezerra, 62, a subsistence farmer stands in his fields near dried out leaves and fruit, after talking about how plants are suffering by the expansion of soy in the region that was once a humid, lush forest with abundant rain, in Santarem, Para state. (**Reuters**)

Brazilian soy farmers are pushing further into the Amazon rainforest to plant more of their crops, putting pressure on a landmark deal signed two decades ago aimed at slowing deforestation.

Many are taking advantage of a loophole in the Amazon Soy Moratorium, a voluntary agreement signed by the world's top grain traders in 2006 that they would not buy soy grown on land deforested after 2008.

The Moratorium protects old-growth rainforest that has never before been cleared, but excludes many other kinds of vegetation and forests that have regrown on previously cleared land, known as secondary forests.

While this land is also important for preserving the fragile Amazon biome, farmers can raze it and plant soy without violating the terms of the Moratorium and could even market it as deforestation-free.

The most recent official annual report on the Moratorium, which covers the crop year 2022-2023, showed that soy planted on virgin forest has almost tripled between 2018 and 2023 to reach 250,000 hectares, or 3.4% of all soy in the Amazon.

Its study area is limited to municipalities that grow over 5,000 hectares of soy.

However, Xiaopeng Song, a professor at the geographical sciences department of the University of Maryland who has tracked the expansion of soy over the past two decades, found more than four times that forest loss.

Satellite data he analysed exclusively for Reuters shows 16% of Brazilian Amazon land under production for soy, or about 1.04 million hectares, is planted where trees have been cleared since 2008, the cutoff date agreed in the Moratorium.

"I would like to see secondary forest and recovered forest included in the Moratorium," said Song. "It creates loopholes if we only limit it to primary forest."

Abiove, the soy industry body overseeing the Moratorium, said in a statement that the agreement aims to rein in deforestation of old-growth forests while other methodologies have broader criteria that could lead to "inflated interpretations."

Reuters was unable to make a detailed comparison because Abiove declined to share granular data.

Data in the Moratorium report comes from Brazil's National Institute of Space Research, and its assessments are recognised internationally and monitored independently.

Abiove said it was aware that some soy was planted in areas where regrown forests had been cut.

The discrepancy over how to define a forest has huge implications for conservation. Deforestation, drought and heat driven by climate change bring the rainforest closer to a tipping point beyond which it starts an irreversible transformation into a savannah. Most scientists are calling not only for a halt to all deforestation but also for increased efforts to reforest.

Viola Heinrich, a post-doctoral researcher at the GFZ Helmholtz Centre for Geosciences, who has extensively studied secondary forests in the Amazon, said these were "crucial" in limiting global warming even if initially less biodiverse.

"We cannot achieve the goals of the Paris Agreement without actively increasing the carbon sink," she said, referring to regenerating ecosystems that rapidly absorb and store carbon.

Secondary forests absorb carbon at a faster rate than old-growth forests, but store less of it.

On a scorching afternoon late last year, on the outskirts of Santarem, a port city by the Amazon River, farmers were in the last stages of clearing land. Felled trees were neatly stacked up in rows, ready to be burnt. Some of these trees were around three decades old, part of a secondary forest on land that was once razed to make way for cattle but later abandoned, satellite images showed.

"What can be stolen once, can be stolen again," said Gilson Rego, of the Pastoral Land Commission, a church-affiliated group working with locals affected by deforestation, as he pointed to surrounding areas where soy had been planted.

In the last five years, Rego saw the area dedicated to the crop soar.

More than a dozen soy and subsistence farmers who spoke to Reuters said the main draw was the nearby Cargill terminal from where soy is shipped worldwide because it reduces costs for logistics. Cargill did not respond to requests for comment.

The boom helped Brazil overtake the United States in 2020 as the world's largest soy exporter.

About two thirds of it ships to China, whose largest buyer, Cofco, has signed up to the Moratorium and said earlier this year that it was committed to it. Nearly all of it is used to fatten animals for meat production.

Still, Song estimated an additional 6 million hectares of the rainforest would have been lost to soy in Brazil without the Moratorium and related conservation efforts, considering the pace of expansion elsewhere. Neighbouring Bolivia, he said, had become a deforestation hot spot.

Brazilian farmers have always opposed the Moratorium and complained that even a small amount of deforestation can lead traders to block purchases from entire farms, a policy that Abiove is considering changing.

Thousands of properties that cover some 10% of soy's footprint in the region are currently blocked.

Adelino Avelino Noimann, the vice-president of the soy farmers association in Para state, where Santarem is located, said the soy boom was creating opportunities in a poor country.

"It's not fair that other countries in Europe could deforest and grow, and now we are held back by laws that are not even ours," said Noimann.

Farming groups allied with right-wing politicians, once a fringe movement, have launched lawsuits and legislative attacks on the Moratorium in the capital Brasilia, and half a dozen major agricultural states, seeking to weaken its provisions. At the end of April, a justice from Brazil's Supreme Court said it would allow the country's biggest farming state, Mato Grosso, to withdraw tax incentives from signatories of the Moratorium.

The ruling still needs to be confirmed by the full court.

Andre Nassar, the president of Abiove, the soy industry body that oversees the Moratorium, has already hinted that it could weaken rules to appease farmers.

"The solution is not ending the Moratorium or keeping it as it is," Nassar told senators in April. "Something needs to be done." Global traders including ADM, Bunge, Cargill, Cofco and Louis Dreyfus Company had all signed up back in 2006. Abiove and the grain traders it represents have declined to publicly discuss details but environmental group Greenpeace, which is part of some discussions, said last year that behind closed doors there was a push from traders to weaken it.

Environmentalists like Andre Guimaraes, an executive director at IPAM, another nonprofit that monitors the agreement, said that even with its faults it was important.

"We still see the expansion of soy in the Amazon," he said. "But it could be worse." Other environmentalists said it should be reinforced by closing loopholes.

Abundant water and nutrient-rich soil are the main reasons farmers from other parts of the country, including the soy heartland Mato Grosso, have moved to Para.

"Here, we can have as many as three harvests," said Edno Valmor Cortezia, the president of the local farmers union, adding that farmers there can grow soy, corn and wheat on the same plot in a single year.

In the municipality Belterra near Santarem, soy expansion stopped short only at a local cemetery and school.

Raimundo Edilberto Sousa Freitas, the principal, showed Reuters court records and supporting evidence for two instances when 80 children and teachers had symptoms of pesticide intoxication last year.

One farmer was later fined, the records showed, but the crop continues to claim more of the area every year.

Occasionally, a few imposing trees that are protected by law are left in sprawling fields of soy, the last reminder of the lush biome that was once there. – Reuters

How world's top ad agencies aligned to fix prices in India

Advertising industry faces antitrust scrutiny

Watchdog reviews ad executives' WhatsApp chats detailing co-ordination

Meeting records show ad executives celebrated pricing pact

Regulator determined on initial basis that conduct breached competition law

By Aditya Kalra
New Delhi



An Indian flag and advertising companies' logos are seen in this illustration taken June 18, 2025. (**Reuters**)

Omnicom Media's India chief was frustrated. It was October 5, 2023 and a rival was trying to poach the US firm's client by offering lower prices, just weeks after global advertising agencies and broadcasters struck secret pacts on ad rates in the South Asian country.

The attempt to woo the client violated the agencies' agreement, Omnicom Media's India CEO Kartik Sharma wrote in a WhatsApp group comprising a who's who of advertising, according to excerpts of the discussion documented by antitrust investigators and verified by Reuters.

"This kind of practice is not in the spirit of what we are collectively trying to achieve," Sharma wrote, without identifying the parties.

Shashi Sinha, then India CEO of New York-based IPG Mediabrands, suggested an industry group should "admonish the agency".

The exchanges form part of a confidential dossier compiled by India's antitrust watchdog that chronicles how global advertising companies, including leading US and European firms, co-ordinated to rig prices in the world's most populous nation.

Reuters reviewed evidence from the Competition Commission of India (CCI) investigation, including a 10-page document with messages and records of meetings between top advertising executives, and two industry agreements under scrutiny for antitrust violations; and interviewed two people familiar with the probe. The key details, which haven't been previously reported, centre on WhatsApp interactions involving 11 industry executives. They include the top India or South Asia executives of WPP's GroupM; US-based Omnicom Media and Interpublic's IPG Mediabrands; France's Publicis and Havas Media; Japan's Dentsu and India's Madison World.

Over WhatsApp and in meetings, the executives co-ordinated responses to clients, which "resulted in alignment of competing advertising agencies," CCI officials said in the August 9 dossier, determining on an initial basis that the conduct contravened competition law.

The firms agreed to co-operate on pricing, including not to undercut each other; colluded with broadcasters to deny business to agencies that didn't comply; and discussed financial terms involving at least four Indian clients over conference calls, according to the investigation documents.

The documents don't indicate whether the agencies' foreign headquarters were aware of the executives' actions.

A spokesperson for WPP Media, which until May was known as GroupM, told Reuters it was aware of the investigation but declined to comment further. A Dentsu India spokesperson confirmed Reuters reporting that it had disclosed industry practices to the CCI in February 2024 under the regulator's leniency programme, which enables lesser penalties for firms that share evidence of malpractice. The spokesperson didn't address specific evidence raised in the dossier but said the firm had implemented stricter audits and controls.

The other agencies and their executives didn't respond to Reuters questions about the antitrust probe and information in the dossier. The regulator also didn't respond to queries. Reuters has reported that in March, as part of the continuing investigation, the regulator raided the Indian offices of many advertising firms and an industry group that represents broadcasters, including the Reliance-Disney venture and Sony.

CCI investigations typically take several months. The regulator can't press criminal charges, but can impose financial penalties on the media agencies of up to three times their profit or 10% of an Indian entity's global turnover, whichever is higher, for each year of wrongdoing.

WPP Media, the world's largest media buying agency, last year — when it was still known as GroupM — won new India business worth $447mn, followed by Omnicom's $183mn, according to research firm COMvergence.

But India's near-$30bn media and entertainment sector is grappling with weak consumer sentiment. Ad spending will rise 7% to $19bn in 2025, the slowest growth in three years, according to GroupM estimates.

The CCI is investigating the role of two industry bodies, the Advertising Agencies Association of India (AAAI) and the Indian Broadcasting & Digital Foundation (IBDF), in orchestrating the suspected cartel.

The former group is led by WPP Media India head Prasanth Kumar, while the broadcasting body's president is Kevin Vaz, a top Reliance-Disney venture executive. Neither industry group responded to requests for comment.

The dossier shows the AAAI circulated guidelines to ad agencies in August 2023: They must charge clients whose annual spending exceeds $29mn a minimum 3% commission for digital ads and 2.5% for traditional media. Lower-spending clients would pay higher minimum commissions of up to 8%.

A month later, the industry associations entered a joint pact, agreeing no agency would "unilaterally offer any discount" on rates while pitching for business.

The pact, reviewed by Reuters, declared its aim was to eliminate "lower pricing as a reason to award a pitch".

The advertising firms began co-ordinating their activities at least as early as August 2023, according to the CCI documents. Ad executives who met on December 1 that year hailed their collaboration as a "great success" and resolved to continue, according to meeting minutes cited in the CCI's evidence.

In the US, the Federal Trade Commission this month sought information from advertising agencies as part of a probe into whether they co-ordinated boycotts of certain sites. The Justice Department in 2016 probed agencies it suspected of rigging bids to favour in-house units, but eventually closed the case without bringing charges. Brewer Anheuser-Busch InBev used CCI's leniency programme to blow the whistle on an industry cartel in India in 2017.

In the case of the ad industry, Dentsu India told Reuters it filed its leniency application with the CCI not as a reaction to external pressure but out of a decision to "support reform from within".

Two people with knowledge of the matter told Reuters the evidence Dentsu submitted included a transcript of the WhatsApp group. The group, formed in August 2023 and reviewed in part by Reuters, was named "AAAI media agencies" and contained scores of chat messages.

Participants included Kumar of WPP's media company, Sharma of Omnicom Media, IPG Mediabrands' Sinha, Havas Media India CEO Mohit Joshi, Dentsu South Asia CEO Harsha Razdan and then-media business CEO Anita Kotwani, Publicis South Asia chief Anupriya Acharya and Madison boss Sam Balsara, the investigators' evidence shows.

Members of the group discussed advertising pitches and co-ordinated on interactions with clients such as food delivery giant Swiggy, drug maker Cipla, SoftBank-backed e-commerce firm Meesho, and Kshema Insurance.

In Swiggy's case, the AAAI arranged a Zoom call with media agency heads to discuss the company's advertising pitch. Later, GroupM's Kumar, as AAAI president, suggested an e-mail response to Swiggy explaining the industry's agreed position on rebates.

"Ok all aligned thanks," he wrote after a consensus emerged.

Kshema told Reuters the insurer was unaware of the matter. The other clients didn't respond to questions.

During another discussion on client rebates, an unspecified Dentsu executive told rivals over WhatsApp that "the lowest we go to is retain 30% and 70% we pass back to the client," according to the CCI dossier.

CCI officials noted in the document that advertisers and the broadcasters' group had sought to penalise enterprises that didn't comply with the pricing pacts.

In an email to Walt Disney in August 2023, Kumar wrote that broadcasters should refrain from granting business to a firm that had breached the pacts, ITW Consulting, though he said it had later agreed not to approach clients directly.

ITW didn't respond to Reuters questions. Tensions heated up again over WhatsApp three months later.

Sharma, of Omnicom Media, learned that ITW had done another "direct deal with a client of ours" for advertising on streaming platform Hotstar, which was run by Disney.

This irked Sharma, as Hotstar had the rights for the cricket World Cup held in India at the time.

"This nuisance has to stop," he wrote in the group. — Reuters

QATAR

Old Doha Port launches Mina Corniche Marina



Old Doha Port has launched the Mina Corniche Marina, a new marina destination located within the Mina Basin beside the Mina Hotel and Residences, offering enhanced berthing capacity for yachts up to 70m alongside a suite of integrated premium services.

Positioned in one of Doha's most iconic waterfront districts, the newly opened marina introduces a distinctive experience for yacht owners and guests, designed with both functionality and luxury in mind, featuring a distinctive view of Doha's iconic skyline.

The Mina Corniche Marina introduces a host of premium services, including dedicated power and water infrastructure, complimentary private parking for yacht owners, and a first-of-its-kind onboard food and beverage delivery service from surrounding restaurants across Mina District, providing an exceptional experience that blends comfort and luxury.

"We're incredibly excited about this next chapter for Old Doha Port," said Old Doha Port chief executive Mohammad al-Mulla.

"These upgrades are not just about expanding capacity; they're about crafting exceptional experiences for our yacht owners, visitors, and partners," he said. "The new berths, and the upgraded infrastructure cater to the needs of yacht owners with supporting facilities and enhanced utility connections that enable us to serve larger vessels more efficiently and comfortably than ever before."

"Meanwhile, features like our floating café reflect our ambition to lead in luxury, leisure, and innovation," al-Mulla added. "Our vision has always been to offer a world-class marina that evolves with the needs of its users – through creating a vibrant, inclusive space where maritime excellence meets unforgettable waterfront moments."

The launch is closely aligned with Old Doha Port's broader mission to connect local and international communities to a lifestyle destination where maritime tourism thrives.

It reflects the port's core values of pioneering innovation and crafting exceptional experiences, establishing a new benchmark for marine hospitality in the Gulf.

Old Doha Port continues to redefine what a waterfront destination can offer, blending authentic maritime heritage with bold, forward-thinking innovation.

From streamlined arrival experience powered by Minakom to the thoughtful addition of open-air cooling along the promenade, every detail is curated to enhance the visitor experience.

The Port brings together expanded utility infrastructure, increased berthing capacity, and a scenic floating cafe to create a dynamic environment where leisure, lifestyle, and marine excellence meet.





The Linear Park at Al Hilal in Doha continues to attract a good number of visitors despite the summer heat. **PICTURES:** Shaji Kayamkulam





Doha's Linear Park a major draw despite summer heat

The Linear Park at Al Hilal in Doha, spread across 75,000sq m, continues to attract a good number of visitors despite the summer heat.

The 1.5km long and 50m wide park sees many regular visitors on a daily basis and is a popular destination for families and friends at the weekends.

A riot of colours, green lawns and trees beckon visitors to the park.

Many families and children could be seen at the park, especially in the afternoon, walking, jogging, or cycling, one end of which is located behind The Mall and the headquarters of Qatar Charity.

The Linear Park is surrounded by lush greenery and has several types of trees providing a pleasant atmosphere though abutting a busy road.

The Public Parks Department, in collaboration with the Public Works Authority (Ashghal), built the park and opened it in February 2019, marking the launch of a new idea that involves making use of the space along the sides of roads and highways and converting them into green areas and environment-friendly spaces.







Recycling Towards Sustainability Conference to focus on five themes

By Shafeeq Alingal
Staff Reporter

The fifth edition of the "Recycling Towards Sustainability Conference and Exhibition" will focus on five key themes while discussing the innovations and sustainability in waste management.

The Ministry of Municipality, the organiser of the event, said in an X post that spotlight will be on "waste treatment projects", "recycling in construction and demolition", "extended producer and supplier responsibility", "the path to an inclusive circular economy that fosters innovation and sustainability", and "the role of education and academic research in recycling".

"The speakers will delve into the latest advancements and technologies in the recycling industry," the ministry said urging the public to register for the event at https://rts-doha.com

To be held under the patronage of HE the Minister of Municipality Abdullah bin Hamad bin Abdullah al-Attiyah, the event takes place on June 25-26 at Raffles Doha Hotel.

It features the participation of prominent officials from Qatar and several countries worldwide as well as a distinguished group of experts, specialists and representatives of companies and institutions operating in the waste management and recycling sector at the local and international levels.

The latest edition will focus on showcasing the latest technologies and practices in waste management.

It will also promote the concept of a circular economy, highlight the importance of expanding the use of recycled materials, and encourage public-private partnerships to launch innovative recycling and sustainability initiatives, in line with the goals of Qatar National Vision 2030.

It will feature more than 35 speakers including senior local and international officials and experts, as well as representatives from companies and institutions operating in this vital sector.

The conference will address key topics, including waste treatment projects, recycling of demolition and construction waste, extended producer and supplier responsibility, and the role of education and academic research in supporting recycling efforts.

The conference will be accompanied by an exhibition featuring more than 40 exhibitors from the public and private sectors including the Ministry of Municipality, several government agencies, specialised companies and factories, as well as individual and community initiatives in the field of waste sorting and recycling.