



QIB and Visa launch ‘Summer Spend’ drive, offering 100mn loyalty points

Qatar Islamic Bank (QIB), in collaboration with Visa, has launched an offer for its existing and new Visa debit and credit cardholders.

Running until October 14, the campaign rewards a total of 370 customers over a period of three months with 100mn loyalty points prize pool.

QIB is rewarding international spends this summer, giving a chance to 70 winners to walk away with 1mn loyalty points each, in addition to a total of 300 monthly winners with 100,000 loyalty points each.

The loyalty points will be offered as Absher, Avios, Marriott Bonvoy or Meera Rewards based on the QIB card used to enter the draw.

“At QIB, we believe that every payment should offer our customers more – more value, more convenience, and more possibilities,” said QIB general manager (Personal Banking Group) D Anand. “The ‘Summer Spend’ campaign is part of our long-term vision to transform everyday banking into meaningful experiences.”

“Together with Visa, we are enabling our customers to turn their international spending into real rewards, wherever their journeys take them,” he said.

Cardholders will automatically qualify for the monthly draw when spending a total of QR1,000 per month on international transactions.

Every additional QR1,000 spent within the same month increases their chances to win 100,000 loyalty points.

Cardholders who spend a total of QR15,000 internationally during the campaign period will have a chance to win 1mn loyalty points.

Every additional QR15,000 spent during the campaign period will increase their chance to win the grand prize.

“We are thrilled to partner with QIB on this exclusive campaign,” said Shashank Singh, Visa’s vice-president and general manager for Qatar and Kuwait. “It reflects our shared vision of delivering rewarding experiences and supporting cardholders during their travels with secure and seamless payment options.”

“And thanks to Visa’s acceptance at more than 150mn merchant locations worldwide, QIB’s customers can also enjoy the confidence and convenience of using their Visa cards wherever their travels take them,” he said.

Qatar Investment and Innovation Conference returning in November

Msheireb Properties and The Business Year have announced that the Qatar Investment and Innovation Conference, will take place on November 3 at Barahat Msheireb, under the theme *Driving GCC Entrepreneurial Growth*.

The second edition of the conference will focus on advancing the Gulf region’s startup landscape and expanding regional collaboration.

The event will bring together senior government representatives, investors, and business leaders from Qatar, and the GCC region, with an emphasis on youth participation and emerging enterprises shaping the next phase of growth.

“Following the success of January’s edition, we’re pleased to welcome the event back to Msheireb Downtown Doha,” said Msheireb Properties senior director (Corporate Communication) Dr Hafiz Ali Abdullah.

“As the district continues to establish itself not only as a centre for dialogue but also as a hub for business, culture, design, and technology, it offers a fitting setting for regional stakeholders to exchange ideas and shape future opportunities,” he said.

“Furthermore, the Qatar Investment and Innovation Conference has served as a meeting ground for investors, entrepreneurs, and policymakers to advance the GCC’s economic diversification goals,” Abdullah added. “The upcoming edition in November will provide another opportunity to deepen these conversations and expand regional collaboration.”

Vanessa Rameix, regional director at The Business Year, said: “While the world



watches the GCC’s economic transition, real change happens when boardrooms meet government offices.”

“This is where Qatar’s startup revolution gets its roadmap – not from oil barrels, but from the partnerships forged at events like this,” she said. “This conference will highlight the importance of collaboration between public and private sectors to build an ecosystem that nurtures start-ups and accelerates business growth.”

This year’s conference will adopt an entrepreneurs-driven format aimed at energising the region’s emerging community.

It will showcase how the GCC’s burgeoning startup ecosystem can serve as a viable alternative to established global markets while capitalising on the unique advantages of each member country.

It will also feature a live startup pitch competition, featuring emerging companies from across the GCC, alongside main



Dr Rayaz Malik

WCM-Q scientist is top medical researcher in Qatar for the third year

Dr Rayaz Malik, professor of medicine and assistant dean for clinical research partnerships at Weill Cornell Medicine - Qatar (WCM-Q) and senior consultant physician in endocrinology and diabetes at Hamad Medical Corporation, has been ranked the number one researcher in medicine in Qatar for the third year in a row by Research.com, an independent research portal that compiles a global list of high-achieving scientists each year.

The Research.com list also ranked Dr Malik among the top 10,000 researchers in medicine in the world, placing him at number 8,350.

The ranking is based on an analysis of the number of influential pieces of research authored by the scientist, combined with awards, fellowships and academic recognition they have received from leading research institutions and government agencies.

To date, Dr Malik has published 729 scientific papers, and his work has been cited 40,188 times.

The majority of his research (over 350 papers) has been published since he joined the WCM-Q from the University of Manchester, UK, in June 2014.

“Our clinical research programme is now recognised internationally, with Qatar ranking second in the world for publications in diabetic neuropathy, with a Relative Publication Output per capita (RPOP) of 18.01 publications per inhabitant,” Dr Malik said. “I am very grateful for the support from the WCM-Q and the investment in research infrastructure made by Qatar Foundation and the Ministry of Public Health.”

Dr Malik and his team have pioneered use of the Corneal Confocal Microscope, a rapid eye scan to diagnose and predict progression of diabetic neuropathy, Parkinson’s disease, multiple sclerosis, dementia, schizophrenia and autism, among other conditions.

Qatar takes part in forum on sustainable development in New York

Qatar is participating in the 2025 High-Level Political Forum (HLPF) on Sustainable Development, which began yesterday at the UN headquarters in New York and will run until July 23.

HE the National Planning Council (NPC) Secretary-General Abdulaziz bin Nasser bin Mubarak al-Khalifa is heading Qatar’s delegation to the forum.

He will present Qatar’s Voluntary National Review (VNR) at the HLPF, which serves as the UN’s central platform for reviewing global progress on the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the NPC said in a statement yesterday.

The HLPF brings together heads of member states, international organisations, and civil society to assess performance and

accelerate action toward the realisation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

“Qatar’s participation in the HLPF reflects its commitment to implementing the Sustainable Development Agenda as an integral part of its national development journey, guided by Qatar National Vision 2030 and the Third National Development Strategy,” said HE al-Khalifa.

“By showcasing the progress made in advancing the Sustainable Development Goals, Qatar’s Voluntary National Review highlights the strong alignment between national and global development objectives, broadening avenues for international co-operation and partnership to secure a prosperous and sustainable future for generations to come,” he added.

In addition to presenting Qatar’s 2025 Voluntary National Review, HE al-Khalifa will take part in ministerial roundtable sessions, bilateral meetings, and expert panels taking place throughout the forum.

Prepared under the leadership of the National Planning Council, Qatar’s 2025 VNR comprises a 297-page national report that documents over 900 data points, 251 indicators, and 30 case studies.

This marks Qatar’s fourth VNR, reflecting broad-based contributions from over 100 stakeholders, including youth, the private sector, ministries, academia, and civil society organisations.

This VNR provides a data-driven account of how Qatar is translating its long-term vision into

measurable progress.

Under Qatar National Vision 2030 and the Third National Development Strategy (2024-2030), more than 60 national strategies have been aligned with the SDG framework.

On the international front, the report showcases Qatar’s growing global sustainable development footprint.

Since 2020, Qatar has disbursed \$4.8bn in foreign aid, with 90% directed to Least Developed Countries and 64% aligned with SDG targets, particularly in poverty reduction, healthcare, and education.

Initiatives like Education Above All have reached more than 10mn children across more than 60 countries.

Qatar has also hosted key glo-

bal platforms including the Fifth UN Conference on the Least Developed Countries (LDC5) and WFCC 2025 (International Conference on Water and Food Security in the Face of Climate Change).

Qatar had previously prepared three VNRs: the first in 2017, the second in 2018, and the third in 2021.

These VNRs highlight the progress made in achieving the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, which comprises 17 goals, 169 targets and 248 indicators.

They also showcase Qatar’s wide-ranging national efforts toward achieving comprehensive sustainable development and realising Qatar National Vision 2030. – QNA

QPC highlights pacifist journalist denied the Nobel Peace Prize

By Tawfik Lamari
Staff Reporter

In a series highlighting prominent figures who have left their mark and contributions in the development of journalism and media, the Qatar Press Centre (QPC) has continued its “Pioneers of World Journalism”.

The centre is showcasing the stories of media figures, their successes, and their inspiring experiences for generations of journalists and media professionals.

Among these is Carl von Ossietzky, the German journalist and activist who won the Nobel Peace Prize in 1935, despite being arrested on charges of high treason for publishing information related to Germany’s secret military rearmament.

Ossietzky was born in Hamburg, Germany, in 1889.

He was not particularly good at studies, and left school at the age of 17 to become a government administrative official.

Ossietzky soon pursued a career in journalism and succeeded in it.

His first journalistic article was published in the pages of the newspaper *Free People*.

Ossietzky later wrote on topics about theatre, women’s issues, and the early problems of automobile use.

He also focused on political and cultural developments during the Weimar period.

On July 5, 1913, he wrote an article criticising a pro-military court ruling in Erfurt, and was subsequently summoned to appear before the court.

His opposition to Germany’s military policy in its final years and its armaments led him to become a pacifist, opposing all forms of war and violence.

In 1916, he was drafted into the army despite his deteriorating health and was forced to join the army during WWI.

The massacres left him alarmed.

Ossietzky became a voice against militarism and Nazism, becoming the secretary of the German Peace Society in Berlin, where he founded the monthly *Mitteilungsblatt*, which first appeared in 1920.

He also became a regular contributor, under the pseudonym Thomas Möerner, to the monthly *Moisten Monatsheften*.

Ossietzky later served as foreign editor of the *Berliner Volkszeitung*, the Berlin people’s newspaper, which is known for



Carl von Ossietzky

its anti-war, neutral, and democratic editorial policy.

He joined the *Tagebusch*, a political weekly, in 1924.

In the same year, Siegfried Jacobson

took over as editor of *Die Weltbühne*.

During his tenure, a series of investigations were published on Germany’s violation of the Treaty of Versailles by rebuilding its air force and training pilots in the

Soviet Union. He also published an article by Walter Kreiser.

However, Ossietzky, as the editor-in-chief, was tried for high treason and sentenced to 18 months in prison.

He was mistreated in prison by the guards, forced to perform hard labour despite suffering a heart attack. He also contracted tuberculosis, and the government refused to release him.

In 1934, his colleagues in the German League supported the idea of nominating him for the Nobel Peace Prize.

The Nobel Committee praised him as a defender of freedom of expression and a symbol of peace.

This was the first time the award was given to an individual at odds with his country, and it helped mobilise public opinion in the fight against Nazism.

When he was announced as the winner of the Nobel Prize in 1935, the German government prevented him from travelling to Norway to receive his award.

The German press was also prohibited from commenting on the award.

Ossietzky remained under constant surveillance until his death from tuberculosis in a Berlin hospital in 1938, after five years in prison.



Environmental Summer Club's second season concludes

The Ministry of Environment and Climate Change has concluded the second season of the 2025 Environmental Summer Club, which spanned two weeks and saw the participation of 20 male and female students.

The programme included a series of awareness lectures, specialised workshops, and field visits aimed at promoting environmental sustainability concepts and enhancing participants' awareness of climate change issues.

The Environmental Summer Club is part of the ministry's efforts to engage young people in the environmental initiatives and empower them to actively contribute to achieving the goals of Qatar National Vision 2030, particularly those related to the environmental development pillar.

The first week of the programme featured a variety of educational and awareness activities, including lectures, interactive workshops, and field visits. These focused on enhancing environmental awareness, reinforcing sustainability principles among participants, introducing current environmental challenges, and highlighting the role of individuals in supporting national efforts in this field.

These activities also gave students the opportunity to observe real-life examples that enriched their understanding of environmental issues and the impor-



ance of sustainable practices.

In the second week, the educational and field activities continued, with additional lectures, hands-on activities, and field visits covering topics such as wildlife protection, environmental innovation, and sustainable development. These events contributed to deepening the participants' environmental awareness and encouraged them to adopt responsible behaviours that support the country's sustainability journey.

Ahmed Mohammed al-Sada, assistant undersecretary for Climate Change Affairs at the Ministry of Environment and Climate Change, said that the Environmental Summer Club is one of the dis-



tinctive initiatives contributing to raising environmental awareness among youth through educational and field activities that highlight contemporary environmental challenges.

He stressed that the participants were able to closely learn about national efforts in green development and the smart city ecosystem and its role in supporting environmental sustainability.

Al-Sada explained that the programme included simplified scientific lectures delivered by climate change specialists, which helped students aged between 14 and 18 gain a deeper understanding of environmental issues and their role in supporting ecological balance. He noted

that the participants' engagement with the lectures reflects the new generation's interest in sustainability issues, which encourages the ministry to continue supporting youth initiatives aligned with the objectives of the National Climate Change Strategy.

He also expressed his gratitude to all partners, especially the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation praising its contribution through specialised workshops on the green economy and climate change, which added a global dimension to the participants' experience.

Meanwhile, Dr Farhoud Hadi al-Hajri, Director of the Public Relations and Com-

munications Department at the ministry, expressed his satisfaction with the positive outcomes achieved by the Environmental Summer Club in instilling a culture of sustainability among participants. He affirmed that the programme diverse activities enjoyed strong engagement from the students.

He pointed out that the success of the second edition of the club reinforces the direction toward expanding youth participation in environmental initiatives. He called on all young people to contribute innovative ideas and environmental initiatives to become active partners in preserving Qatar's environment and supporting national efforts in climate change and green development.

QIIB names winners of the 'Luxury Shopping Trip' campaign in collaboration with Visa

QIIB has named the four winners of its exclusive promotional campaign launched in collaboration with Visa, awarding them with luxury shopping trips to London and Paris.

The prize package includes business-class airfare, stays at five-star hotels, and curated shopping experiences at some of Europe's most iconic retail destinations.

The draw took place at QIIB's headquarters in the presence of a representative from the Ministry of Commerce and Industry and several senior bank officials.

The campaign, which ran from May 1 to June 30, 2025, saw strong engagement from a large number of customers. The winners are Omar Ahmed al-Halabi, Abdulla Ebrahim Ahmad, Turki Yousuf al-Subaey and Muneera Almass al-Qubaisi.



Each of the four winners met the minimum spending threshold required to enter the draw, in accordance with the campaign's terms and conditions.

"I extend my warmest congratulations to the four winners of this exceptional campaign and wish them an unforgettable travel experience in London and Paris. We were truly pleased with the

enthusiastic response from our customers, and we designed this campaign as a token of appreciation for their loyalty and continued interest in our offerings," said Talal al-Jaidah, Head of Banking Products at QIIB.

This campaign comes as part of QIIB's commitment to offering high-quality promotions that enhance the customer experience and provide rewarding opportunities that reflect their valued relationship with the bank. It also forms part of a broader series of initiatives aimed at strengthening customer engagement and achieving the highest levels of satisfaction and interaction.

Highlighting that QIIB valued its strategic partnership with Visa, which played a key role in the resounding success of this campaign; he said "we look forward to continuing this collaboration to deliver more tailored offers that meet our customers' evolving needs and deliver meaningful added value."

"All QIIB customers – both existing and new – will continue to enjoy fresh opportunities to benefit from our ongoing rewards programmes and promotional offers, in line with our vision of enhancing our customers' modern lifestyles," al-Jaidah said.



QRCS supports disability rehabilitation, prosthetics services in Syria's Idlib

Qatar Red Crescent Society (QRCS) has completed a project in Syria to support the Rehabilitation and Prosthetics Centre in Idlib amid difficult humanitarian conditions due to the war and earthquake.

In a press statement, QRCS said the project helped enhance the specialised medical services provided for persons with disabilities, in the face of inadequate rehabilitation and prosthetic services.

The Rehabilitation and Prosthetics Centre in Idlib is the government's only provider of comprehensive and free-of-charge prosthetic services.

A total of 2,200 direct beneficiaries and more than 11,000 indirect beneficiaries received a diverse array of health, psychological, and social services, with a view to improving the quality of life, independence, and social integration of persons with disabilities.

Over the project's duration, 216 prosthetic limbs were fitted for persons who lost limbs due to war or earthquake. The remaining of the available 350 limbs were left to the centre for later fitting. Also, 82 splints/orthoses were fitted for persons with physical deformities.

Other results of the project include: (1) provision of 21,183 physiotherapy sessions for 1,680 beneficiaries, under the supervi-



sion of a specialised team of therapists who designed tailored treatment plans; (2) distribution of 229 assistive devices based on accurate medical and physical assessments to meet individual needs; and (3) implementation of 2,500 psychosocial support sessions for 650 persons with disabilities and their families, to boost their mental health and social adaptation/integration.

Hygiene materials were also dis-

tributed to the beneficiaries, in an attempt to improve public health conditions and reduce the risk of diseases associated with poor hygiene.

This accomplishment is part of QRCS' ongoing efforts to back the most vulnerable groups in Syria and alleviate their suffering, by providing specialised and comprehensive humanitarian services that make them more resilient and able to live better.

Maserati unveils new MCPURA super sports car

Maserati has launched the new MCPURA super sports car and the new masterpiece, 100% made in Italy, was unveiled at the Goodwood Festival of Speed 2025, the international event that every year celebrates the most iconic cars and the most extraordinary performances.

An evolution of the MC20 Halo Car, the new MCPURA takes up its spirit and amplifies it to its most intense and refined form. The work has focused on the exterior design, materials and interior finishes, but the core remains the same: the powerful and unmistakable 630-CV V6 Nettuno engine, a symbol of Maserati's passion for performance.

MCPURA encompasses everything that makes the Maserati driving experience unique, i.e. the ability to connect without filters with the driver, transmitting the most extreme elegance, exhilarating driving performance and timeless artistry.

The name itself reveals the essence of a model designed to



Maserati-MCPURA-Cielo.

embody, in its most concentrated form, the most authentic values of the Trident. It is no coincidence that an iconic formula was chosen for the launch campaign: E = MCPURA. Powerful hyperbole, inspired by Einstein's theory of relativity, which celebrates an energy with the capacity to multiply until it becomes a pure expression of excellence.

Santo Ficili, Maserati COO, stated: "With MCPURA, Maserati is once again regaining its rightful place: at the top and in its stomping ground. Both versions – coupé and Cielo – are created at our historic Modena facility, where the heart of the Trident has been beating for almost 90 years. We produce the Nettuno engine, assemble each component and carry out the most exclusive customi-



Maserati-MCPURA.

sation at the Maserati Officine Fuoriserie."

The new super sports car was presented in the sophisticated Ai Aqua Rainbow body colour – designed as part of the Maserati Fuoriserie customisation programme, in a matte version for the coupé and in gloss for the MCPURA Cielo – which, in its very name, is reminiscent of light in movement. It is a blue that

changes in the sun, producing a rainbow effect.

Available immediately in coupé and convertible versions, the new MCPURA has four distinctive features: the carbon-fibre body; the Maserati-patented V6 Nettuno engine; the "Butterfly" doors; and the retractable glass roof, for the convertible version (MCPURA Cielo).

The colour palette available for

the MCPURA is eye-catching and evocative; it consists of a selection of different body colours specially designed for the new super sports car, with a strong reference to both the Italian spirit and Maserati's iconic heritage.

Three innovations stand out: the brand-new Devil Orange, a combination of vibrant energy and audacity; and the elegant dual-layer metallic Verde Royale and Night Interaction, two sophisticated and luxurious shades to emphasise the role of the MCPURA as the Maserati brand's new standard-bearer, the epitome of Italian luxury around the world..

The third hallmark of the MCPURA is the "Butterfly" doors, to improve access to the passenger compartment and simultaneously reveal the carbon-fibre structure of the chassis. Finally, in the Cielo version, MCPURA introduces a retractable roof in polymer-dispersed liquid crystal glass, the first to do so in its class, with the ability to switch from opaque to transparent in one second.

Al-Muraikhi meets Spain's envoy, bids farewell to Lebanese diplomat



HE the Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Sultan bin Saad al-Muraikhi met yesterday with Spanish ambassador Alvaro Renedo Zalba. The meeting reviewed co-operation relations between the two countries.

*HE Sultan bin Saad al-Muraikhi also met with acting charge d'affaires of the Lebanese embassy in Qatar Farah Berri, on the occasion of the end of her tenure in the country. HE al-Muraikhi thanked Farah Berri for her efforts in supporting and strengthening bilateral relations, wishing her success in her new duties. (QNA)



French National Day celebrated in Doha



French National Day was celebrated yesterday in Doha. HE Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdullah bin Mohammed al-Thani, Minister of Transport; Director of the Protocol Department, Ibrahim Yousif Abdullah Fakhro; and Patrick Poinot, chargé d'affaires at the embassy of France were present at the event. The dignitaries cut a cake to mark the occasion and a large number of diplomats, special invitees and guests attended the programme. **PICTURES:** Shaji Kayamkulam

Ministry launches awareness drive for workplace safety

The Ministry of Labour has launched a field awareness campaign aimed at educating workers in Qatar's construction and service sectors on the risks of musculoskeletal disorders (MSDs) in the workplace and how to prevent them.

Organised by the Occupational Safety and Health Department, the campaign is part of broader efforts to improve workplace safety and reduce injuries linked to environmental conditions or unsafe practices during day-to-day tasks.

The initiative focuses on promoting healthy and safe working habits among private sector employees. It also highlights the importance of taking regular breaks to reduce physical fatigue and avoid injuries caused by extended periods of sitting or standing - factors that directly impact worker wellbeing, productivity, and the overall work environment.

During the campaign, ministry inspectors delivered practical advice and safety guidelines to workers. These included the benefits of scheduled rest, safe lifting techniques, and ergonomic practices - designed to adapt the workspace to human capabilities, reduce physical strain, and prevent repetitive stress injuries and awkward working postures.

The campaign also addressed the risks associated with manual handling tasks performed without proper equipment or assist-



ance. Workers were encouraged to follow safe handling methods, especially when carrying out physically demanding jobs.

The Ministry of Labour reaffirmed its commitment to building a culture of prevention and occupational safety across all sectors. It continues to implement strategies based on international best practices and national standards, while working closely with employers to ensure healthy, safe, and productive work environments for all. (QNA)

Registration for Katara Prize for Qur'an Recitation opens today

Katara Cultural Village has announced that registration for the 9th Katara Prize for Qur'an Recitation will open today, and remain available until Sept 30.

The prize aims to encourage and discover exceptional talents in Qur'an recitation, to identify the most beautiful and melodious voices, and to present distinguished reciters who adhere to the rules of Tajweed.

It also seeks to honour excellence and creativity in reciting the Holy Qur'an while inspiring younger generations to remain committed to their faith and recognise their responsibilities toward their Islamic beliefs and message.

Katara said that a dedicated committee will evaluate all submissions and select 100 participants to advance to the qualifying rounds, which will be held in Doha.

The qualifiers will compete in 20 televised episodes, with five contestants in each episode. One winner from each episode will advance to the semifinal stage.

In the semifinals, 20 contestants, joined by five reserves, will compete in five additional episodes, with five participants in each. One contestant from each episode will advance to the final round, where the winners from first to fifth place will be announced.

The episodes will be broadcast as part of a special program in collaboration with Qatar TV during the holy month of Ramadan.

The judging panel consists of six members: three experts in Qur'anic recitation and the rules of Tajweed, and three specialists in vocal performance, melody, and voice aesthetics.

Katara will also produce and release a full audio recording of the Holy Qur'an recited by the first-place winner, recorded at its in-house studios.

The total prize pool is QR1.5mn: the first-place winner receiving QR500,000; second QR400,000; third QR300,000; fourth QR200,000; and fifth QR100,000.

The General Directorate of Endowments at the Ministry of Endowments (Awqaf) and Islamic Affairs has been the official sponsor of the prize since its launch in 2017. (QNA)

Registration for Qur'anic sessions

The Department of Da'wah and Religious Guidance at the Ministry of Endowments (Awqaf) and Islamic Affairs announced the opening of registration for morning Qur'anic sessions, which it organises in a number of centres across the country until next Thursday.

This is part of the programme's efforts to utilise the summer vacation to develop educational and religious aspects among young people.

The ministry said in a statement yesterday that the programme targets boys aged five years and above and includes teaching basic spelling lessons and reviewing

the Holy Qur'an, along with accompanying educational programmes to reinforce Islamic values and positive behaviour among participants.

The sessions are scheduled to begin next Sunday morning and continue until the end of the month in 14 Qur'anic centres distributed across various regions, ensuring easy access and benefit for the largest possible number of students.

The sessions will be held four days a week, from Sunday-Wednesday, from 9am-11am, under the supervision of a select group of teachers specialising in teaching the Holy Qur'an and its sciences. (QNA)

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-6000003322	RENOVATE, SUPPLY AND INSTALLATION OF TENNIS, MINI-FOOTBALL, INDOOR PADEL, BEACH VOLLEYBALL	500/- (Non-refundable)	64,000/- (sixty-four thousand Only)	15.07.2025 16.07.2025 17.07.2025	31.07.2025

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 : QA51QNBAA00000000013025828058
 - 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 after the last date of Tender Fee Receipt Submission Date.
- For any queries related to non-receipt of the tender documents after the last date of Tender Fee Receipt Submission Date, 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.
- The Tender shall be strictly submitted using the QAFCO's Supply Chain Portal - SAP / Ariba, on or before the "Tender Closing Date". Tenderers who fail to adhere to this requirement will result in the disqualification of their Tender.

Qatar Foundation

INVITATION TO TENDER

Tender Reference	Description	Tender Fee (QAR)	Tender Bond (QAR)	Bid Closing Date
HBKU-RFQ-1301	HPC Cluster and Storage System	2000	110,000	31st Aug-2025, 2:00pm
HBKU-RFQ-1280	Provision of Laboratory Safety Specialist Services to QF-HBKU Research and Development Complex (RDC) for 3 years	2000	50,000	31st Aug-2025, 2:00pm
HBKU-RFQ-1302	Appointment of an Agency to provide Translation and Interpreting Services to TTC - CHSS - HBKU for a period of 3 years with the option to extend up to 1 year.	2000	90,000	31st Aug-2025, 2:00pm

HBKU-University Procurement Service (UPS) is inviting companies to participate in the above list public tender. To receive the tender documents, please follow the following steps:

- Supplier Registration:** It is mandatory to be registered as a supplier with QF in order to participate in the above tender(s). Only QF registered suppliers will be allowed to pay the tender fees online. Therefore, please visit QF website: <https://www.qf.org.qa/supplier-registration> to complete the Supplier Registration process.
Tender Fee: Interested bidders can Sign in by visiting this link <https://Suppliers.qf.org.qa/abstract> and pay the respective non-refundable and non-transferrable tender fee online.
All Tender Fees are to be paid using credit cards only.
Tender Fee Payment Dates: Payment of Tender Fee online will be from 15-Jul-25 Until 31-Jul-25
- All bidders, who are registered and have paid the required tender fees online to QF, will then be granted access to download the Tender Document.
- Technical and Commercial bids need to be submitted and attached online in QF Supplier portal as per the instructions provided in the "Supplier Portal" work instruction.
 - The Commercial bid must be valid for **180 Days** from the Bid Closing Date.
 - The Commercial bid must be accompanied by a Bank Guarantee (Tender Bond) issued by a local bank in Qatar and should be valid for **180 days** from the bid closing date (where applicable as per the Tender documents)
 - The successful tenderer will be required to submit a Performance Bond as prescribed in each of the above tender documents.
- Qatar Foundation special qualifications, terms and conditions shall apply as stipulated in the tender document.

Note: All work instructions for Supplier registration and Supplier portal can be found in the link below

<https://www.qf.org.qa/supplier-registration>



Public Announcement

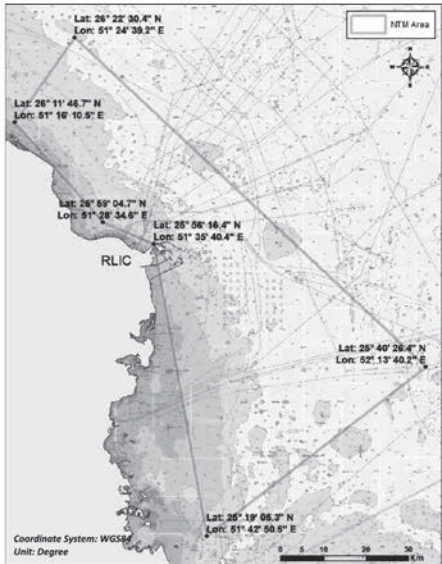
To all Ships, Fishermen and Mariners
Seismic Survey Acquisition by Vessels AOS Glory, Stanford Hawk, GMS Apollo, Voyager Explorer, BGP Innovator and Safa Searcher
Seismic Survey Works Offshore Qatar from 27th November 2024 - 27th November 2025

Pursuant to and under directives from the Department of Seafarers Affairs & Registration, Ministry of Transport, State of Qatar, this announcement is to inform all Vessels, Mariners and Fishermen that QatarEnergy LNG intends to perform Ocean Bottom Node Seismic Survey Works with Vessels AOS Glory, Stanford Hawk, GMS Apollo, Voyager Explorer, BGP Innovator and Safa Searcher in the locations bound by the coordinates shown in the diagram below.

All Vessels, Mariners and Fishermen are expected to keep clear of the survey locations during the operations.

QatarEnergy LNG takes no responsibility for any loss or damage caused to outside parties in association with this operation, following publication of this notice.

Point	LATITUDE	LONGITUDE
1	26° 22' 30.4"N	51° 24' 39.2"E
2	25° 40' 26.4"N	52° 13' 40.2"E
3	25° 19' 05.3"N	51° 42' 50.5"E
4	25° 56' 16.4"N	51° 35' 40.4"E
5	25° 59' 04.7"N	51° 28' 34.6"E
6	26° 11' 46.7"N	51° 16' 10.5"E



Any further inquiries should be addressed to: Tel. +974 44531797

Israeli forces arrested 3,850 Palestinians in first half of year in West Bank

QNA
Occupied Jerusalem

Palestinian Prisoners' Institutions revealed that Israeli occupation forces carried out 3,850 arrests in the occupied West Bank, including occupied Jerusalem, during the first half of this year, amid an unprecedented escalation in violations inside occupation detention centres and camps.

The arrested include approximately 400 children and 125 women.

The institutions, namely the Commission of Prisoners' and Ex-Prisoners' Affairs, the Palestinian Prisoners' Club, and Addameer Prisoner Support and Human Rights Association, stated in their semi-annual statistical report yesterday that the arrest campaigns carried out during this period were accompanied by serious violations, including field investigations, physical abuse, forced detention, theft of property, and the detention of citizens as human shields, in addition to attacks on and vandalism of homes, particularly in Jenin and Tulkarm, which re-

corded the highest number of arrests, with 920 and 455 cases, respectively.

The report indicated that March saw the highest number of arrests, reaching 800 cases, covering various categories, with a focus on youth and former prisoners.

It indicated that the occupation continued to expand its use of administrative detention, with the number of administrative detainees reaching 3,629 by the beginning of July, including 87 children and 10 women.

Meanwhile, 2,454 detainees were classified as "unlawful combatants," the highest number since the beginning of the last war.

The institutions recorded the deaths of 19 detainees during the first half of the year, including ten from the Gaza Strip and nine from the West Bank.

The report explained that there are numerous field testimonies documented by the institutions regarding the circumstances of the deaths, medical violations, and cruel treatment, while the occupation authorities continue to withhold the bodies of detainees, particularly from

the Gaza Strip. According to the report, the number of detainees in Israeli prisons rose to approximately 10,800 by the beginning of July 2025, the highest number since 2000, excluding those held in military camps.

Among the detainees are at least 50 female prisoners and 450 children.

The report also noted the continued spread of diseases inside prisons, such as scabies, due to harsh detention conditions and poor medical services, leading to the deterioration of the health of thousands of prisoners.

Updated data indicates that the number of arrests in the West Bank and Jerusalem since the beginning of the recent war has exceeded 18,000. The number of women arrested since October 7 has exceeded 560, compared to more than 1,450 children.

Prisoner organisations emphasized that these figures reflect the escalation of the occupation's policies and systematic violations, both inside prisons and during arrest operations, calling for immediate international action to protect prisoners and hold accountable those responsible for these crimes.



Displaced Palestinian man Akram al-Manasra and his children make their way to collect water from a distribution point amid shortages, in Gaza City, yesterday.

Gazans' daily struggle for water after deadly strike

Reuters
Gaza City

The Al-Manasra family rarely get enough water for both drinking and washing after their daily trudge to a Gaza distribution point like the one where eight people were killed on Sunday in a strike that Israel's military said had missed its target.

Living in a tent camp by the ruins of a smashed concrete building in Gaza City, the family say their children are already suffering from diarrhoea and skin maladies and from the lack of clean water, and they fear worse to come.

"There's no water, our children have been infected with scabies, there are no hospitals to go to and no medications," said Akram Manasra, 51.

He had set off yesterday for a local water tap with three of his daughters, each of them carrying two heavy plastic containers in Gaza's blazing summer heat, but they only managed to fill two – barely enough for the family of 10. Gaza's lack of clean water after 21 months of war and four months of Israeli blockade is already having "devastating impacts on public health" the UN humanitarian agency OCHA said in a report this month.

For people queuing at a water distribution point on Sunday it was fatal. A missile that Israel said had targeted fighters but malfunctioned hit a queue of people waiting to collect water at the Nuseirat refugee camp.

Israel's blockade of fuel along with the difficulty in accessing wells and desalination plants in zones controlled by the Israeli military is severely constraining water, sanitation and hygiene services according to OCHA.

Fuel shortages have also hit waste and sewage services, risking more contamination of the tiny, crowded territory's dwindling water supply, and diseases causing diarrhoea and jaundice are spreading among people crammed into shelters and weakened by hunger.

"If electricity was allowed to desalination plants the problem of a lethal lack of water, which is what's becoming the situation now in Gaza, would be changed within 24 hours," said James Elder, the spokesperson for the UN's children's agency Unicef.

"What possible reason can there be for denying of a legitimate amount of water that a family needs?" he added.

Cogat, the Israeli military aid co-ordination agency, did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

Last week, an Israeli military official said that Israel was allowing sufficient fuel into Gaza but that its distribution around the enclave was not under Israel's purview.

THIRSTY AND DIRTY

For the Manasra family, like others in Gaza, the daily toil of finding water is exhausting and often fruitless.

Inside their tent the family tries to maintain hygiene by sweeping. But there is no water for proper

cleaning and sometimes they are unable to wash dishes from their meagre meals for several days at a time.

Manasra sat in the tent and showed how one of his young daughters had angry red marks across her back from what he said a doctor had told them was a skin infection caused by the lack of clean water.

They maintain a strict regimen of water use by priority.

After pouring their two containers of water from the distribution point into a broken plastic water butt by their tent, they use it to clean themselves from the tap, using their hands to spoon it over their heads and bodies.

Water that runs off into the basin underneath is then used for dishes and after that – now grey and dirty – for clothes.

"How is this going to be enough for 10 people? For the showering, washing, dish washing, and the washing of the covers. It's been three months we haven't washed the covers, and the weather is hot," Manasra said. His wife, Umm Khaled, sat washing clothes in a tiny puddle of water at the bottom of a bucket – all that was left after the more urgent requirements of drinking and cooking.

"My daughter was very sick from the heat rash and the scabies. I went to several doctors for her and they prescribed many medications. Two of my children yesterday, one had diarrhoea and vomiting and the other had fever and infections from the dirty water," she said.



Mourners chant during the funeral of dual US-Palestinian citizen Saif al-Din Kamil Abdul Karim Musalat in the Palestinian village of Al-Mazraa Al-Sharqiya in the occupied West Bank.

Blast caused by gas leak injures seven in Iranian city of Qom

Reuters
Dubai

An explosion at a residential building injured seven people in the Iranian city of Qom, Iranian state media reported yesterday, with the fire department blaming a gas leak and Qom's governor ruling out any "terrorist" action.

Since the end of a 12-day air war last month between Iran and Israel, in which Israel and the United States attacked Iran's nuclear facilities, several gas

explosions have occurred in Iran, and the authorities have not blamed Israel. Qom Governor Akbar Behnamjoo was quoted by state media as saying: "The cause of the explosion in a residential building of Pardisan was not terrorism."

The director of Qom's fire department told the semi-official Fars news agency four residential units were damaged in the blast in the Pardisan neighbourhood.

"Initial assessments show that the cause of the incident was a gas leak, and follow-ups are continuing in this regard," the director said.

Iran says no N-talks if US insists it stop enrichment

AFP
Tehran

Iran said yesterday there would be no new nuclear talks with the US if they were conditioned on Tehran abandoning its uranium enrichment activities.

Washington and Tehran had been engaged in several rounds of negotiations seeking to strike a deal on the Islamic Republic's nuclear programme, but Israel derailed the talks when it launched a wave of surprise strikes on its regional nemesis, touching off 12 days of war.

Since the end of the hostilities, both Iran and the US have signalled willingness to return to the table, though Tehran has said it will not renounce its right to the peaceful use of nuclear power.

"If the negotiations must be conditioned on stopping enrichment, such negotiations will not take place," Ali Velayati, an adviser to supreme leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, was quoted as saying by the state news agency IRNA.

The remarks came after foreign ministry spokesman Esmail Baqaei said Iran had not set a date for any meeting with the US.

"For now, no specific date, time or location has been determined regarding this matter," Baqaei said of plans for a meeting between Iran's top diplomat Abbas Araghchi and US envoy Steve Witkoff.

Araghchi and Witkoff had pre-

viously failed to conclude a deal after five rounds of talks that began in April and were the highest-level contact between the two countries since Washington abandoned a landmark nuclear agreement in 2018.

The Omani-mediated negotiations were halted as Israel launched its surprise attack on Iranian nuclear and military facilities on June 13, with the US later joining its ally and carrying out limited strikes.

"We have been serious in diplomacy and the negotiation process, we entered with good faith, but as everyone witnessed, before the sixth round the Zionist regime, in co-ordination with the US, committed military aggression against Iran," Baqaei said. Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian said in a statement yesterday that Iran "supports diplomacy and constructive engagement".

"We continue to believe that the window for diplomacy remains open, and we will seriously pursue this peaceful path," Israel and Western nations accuse Iran of pursuing nuclear weapons, a charge Tehran has consistently denied.

While it is the only non-nuclear weapons power to enrich uranium to 60% purity – close to the level needed for a warhead – the UN's atomic energy watchdog has said it had no indication Iran was working to weaponise its stockpiles.

Syria government forces take over Druze village in south

AFP/Reuters
Al Mazra'ah, Syria

Syrian government forces were advancing toward the southern city of Sweida yesterday after taking control of a Druze village nearby, an AFP correspondent said, on the second day of sectarian clashes there.

Security forces were deployed in Sweida province following clashes between Druze fighters and tribes that killed at least 89 people since Sunday.

The AFP correspondent saw forces under the Syrian defence ministry deployed in Al-Mazraa village, where fighters were also located. The forces continued to advance in the direction of Sweida city.

A commander, Ezzeddine al-Shamayer, told AFP the forces "are heading toward Sweida".

The Israeli army said yesterday that it struck several tanks between the villages of Al-Mazraa and Sami that were heading to Sweida.

It added that it would not allow "the establishment of a military threat in southern Syria and will operate against it".

Druze spiritual leaders called for calm and urged Damascus to intervene.

But Sheikh Hikmat al-Hijri,



A member of the Syrian security forces walks past a burning car in the Mazraa area, near Sweida, yesterday.

one of the three Druze spiritual leaders in Sweida, expressed his "rejection of the entry" of general security forces into the province, demanding "international protection".

The fighting underscores the challenges facing interim Syrian leader Ahmad al-Sharaa, whose forces ousted president Bashar al-Assad in December.

Earlier, sixteen members of Syria's security forces have been killed in the predominantly Druze city of Sweida, the defence ministry said, after they deployed

to quell deadly sectarian clashes that local media reported had resumed yesterday, Reuters reported from Damascus. In a statement to Reuters, the defence ministry said "outlawed groups", which it did not identify further, had attacked a number of its units at dawn.

It said its forces responded to the attack and had pursued those groups that refused to halt hostilities and continued to target security forces.

The fighting on Sunday left 30 people dead and prompted

Syria's security forces to deploy units to the city to restore calm and guarantee safe passage for civilians looking to leave, the defence ministry said in an earlier statement.

But intense clashes broke out again yesterday, local news outlet Sweida24 reported.

Another security source said that Syrian troops would aim to exert state control over the whole province to prevent any more violence, but that this could take several days.

It marked the latest episode of sectarian bloodshed in Syria, where fears among minority groups have surged since rebels toppled President Bashar al-Assad in December, installing their own government and security forces.

In southern Syria, efforts have been further complicated by Israel's stated policy that it would not allow Syria's new army to deploy south of Damascus and that Sweida and neighbouring provinces should make up a demilitarized zone.

Interior Minister Anas Khat-tab said in a written statement carried on state media that the "absence of state institutions, especially military and security institutions, is a major cause of the ongoing tensions in Sweida and its countryside."



QATAR

Discover Waldorf Astoria Doha Lusail—where every detail is designed to elevate your journey.



WALDORF ASTORIA®
الدورف أستوريا الدوحة لوسول • DOHA LUSAIL

DOHA LUSAIL • الدوحة لوسيل

ENDLESS SUMMER ADVENTURE AWAITS

DAMSA BOULEVARD, ENTERTAINMENT CITY - LUSAIL, DOHA | +974 4456 5656 | @waldorfasteriadohalusail

RAWABI

1 WIN 1 MILLION

أربح مليون

إجمالي 528 فائز
TOTAL 528 WINNERS
 احتفل تسوق، اربح جوائز كبيرة!
CELEBRATE · SHOP · WIN BIG!



٣ فائزين

3 WINNERS



٣ تانك ٥٠٠

GMW TANK 500



أجرى راي تسوق
في متجر راي
Spend QAR 50
at Rawabi Store



أجرى راي تسوق
في متجر راي
Get more at Rawabi
shopper instantly



أربح
Win
Amazing Prizes

٣٥ فائزين

35 WINNERS

جائزة تسوق راي بقيمة
٢٠٠ ريال سعودي لكل فائز
Rawabi Shopping Voucher
QAR 2000 each

٧٠ فائزين

70 WINNERS

جائزة تسوق راي بقيمة
١٠٠ ريال سعودي لكل فائز
Rawabi Shopping Voucher
QAR 1000 each

١٤٠ فائزين

140 WINNERS













جائزة تسوق راي بقيمة
١٠٠٠ ريال سعودي لكل فائز
Rawabi Shopping Voucher
QAR 1000 each

٢٨٠ فائزين

280 WINNERS

جائزة تسوق راي بقيمة
٩٥٠ ريال سعودي لكل فائز
Rawabi Shopping Voucher
QAR 950 each

العرض ساري من ٢٠٢٤/١٢/٢٤ إلى ٢٠٢٥/٠١/٢٥
 Promotion valid from 26.01.2025 to 31.12.2025.
 *Terms & conditions may differ. اقرأ شروط العرض.

 <p>QAR 17.50 ^{IPC}</p> <p>Parliament Daily Delight Basmati 4.54 Kg</p>	 <p>QAR 7.75 ^{IPC}</p> <p>Hershey's Kisses 100gm Assorted</p>	 <p>QAR 13.00 ^{1SET}</p> <p>Kidd Ice Cream 1ltr + 500ml Assorted</p>	 <p>QAR 10.00 ^{1SET}</p> <p>Raja Potato Crisp 20 x 12gm Assorted</p>
 <p>QAR 14.00 ^{IPC}</p> <p>M&M's Chocolate Bag Twin 150g x 2 Pieces</p>	 <p>QAR 14.75 ^{1SET}</p> <p>President Labneh 180gm x 3 Pcs</p>	 <p>QAR 8.75 ^{1SET}</p> <p>Malabar Frozen Kappa 700gm x 3 Pcs</p>	 <p>QAR 34.50 ^{IPC}</p> <p>Al Rabwah Filled Milk Powder Pouch 1.8kg</p>
 <p>QAR 5.25 ^{IPC}</p> <p>Coffee Mate Coffee Creamer 170gm</p>	 <p>QAR 32.00 ^{IPC}</p> <p>Fann Zaharat Edo 100ml</p>	 <p>QAR 20.00 ^{IPC}</p> <p>Ucb Edo 100ml</p>	 <p>QAR 30.00 ^{IPC}</p> <p>Mens Shirt</p>

ندفع عنك النصف

HALF PAYBACK

اشترى -إريال فطري واسترجع ٥٠ ر. في قسيمة تسوق مجانية
على ملابس والأحذية وحفائب السيدات

Spend QR.100 and get back QR.50
Shopping voucher Free

Garments, Footwear & Ladies Bags

01.07.2025 to 29.07.2025 عر. ٧.٢٩ إلى عر. ٧.١

Shop with
Confidence
16001



Every great business starts with a conversation.

Bring your ideas to the table, and let us help you turn them into opportunities. Whether you're in automotive, services, or tech, publishing your ad here ensures you're seen by the right audience.

Let's start the conversation. Publish your ad now.

Contact us on gtadv@gulf-times.com or 444 666 21

WHY YOU WANT TO PURCHASE A COPIER / PRINTER?

TRY OUR COPIER / PRINTER WITHOUT INVESTMENT

- ☒ NO RENT
- ☒ NO INITIAL INVESTMENT
- ☒ 24/7 SUPPORT TEAM
- ☒ FREE REPLACEMENT FOR OBSOLETE MACHINES
- ☒ NO MINIMUM CONTRACT PERIOD
- ☒ FREE UPDATE PRINT SOFTWARE

CONDITIONS APPLY

TEL. 4476 5000, MOB. 7446 9442, E-MAIL: WESTBAY@ASTQATAR.COM

39
YEARS
EXPERIENCE

AST

Doha | Abu Dhabi | Dubai | Sharjah | Riyadh




UFC Refresh
100% THAI COCONUT, NATURALLY REFRESHING

Exclusive Distributor:
Al Maya International WLL, Doha-Qatar
T: 4441 6441 / 4441 0890
E-mail: almaya@almayaqatar.com.qa

Al Maya International WLL
المصرية الدولية للتجارة
Al Maya International WLL

TIGGO9 | ONE STEP AHEAD

A full tank will last you more than 1,300 km
without stopping **CSH**
CHERY SUPER HYBRID

Start From
109,900 Q.R

☎ 77039936 - 66793039 - 77757494 - 31182151



ELITE MOTORS | CHERY



People react while reading newspaper headlines reporting the news of the death of Nigerian former president Muhammadu Buhari at a newspaper stand in Ojuelegba, Lagos, yesterday.

Nigeria’s former leader Buhari to be buried today: official

Reuters
Lagos

Nigeria’s late former president Muhammadu Buhari, who died in a London clinic on Sunday aged 82, will be buried in his northern home state of Katsina today, the state governor said.

Buhari, a former military ruler after a coup in the 1980s, returned to frontline politics to become the first Nigerian president to oust an incumbent through the ballot box in 2015. He was re-elected for a second term four years later.

Nigeria’s Vice-President Kashim Shettima and government officials were in London yesterday to organise the repatriation of the former president’s remains.

Katsina state governor Dikko Umaru Radda said after consultation with Buhari’s family it was

agreed the body would arrive in Nigeria today for burial the same day in his home town of Daura.

Among those who paid tribute to Buhari was Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi, who posted on X platform that “his wisdom, warmth and unwavering commitment to India-Nigeria friendship stood out.”

Buhari earned a devoted following for his brand of anti-corruption conviction politics, especially in Nigeria’s north.

He referred to himself as a “converted democrat” and swapped his military uniform for kaftans and prayer caps.

Ibrahim Babangida, another former military ruler who toppled Buhari in a coup in 1985, said he knew Buhari as a deeply spiritual and humble man.

“We may not have agreed on everything – as brothers often don’t – but I never once doubted his sincerity or his

patriotism,” Babangida said in a statement. After leaving office in 2023, Buhari spent most of his time in Daura, away from the public eye.

His successor Bola Tinubu inherited a country grappling with double digit inflation, foreign exchange shortages, economic hardship, low oil production and insecurity that had spread to most parts of Nigeria.

Buhari’s supporters, however, viewed him as Nigeria’s conscience because he had a reputation for shunning the corruption and ostentatious lifestyles often associated with the country’s political elites.

To his critics, Buhari was “an absentee landlord – a leader who governed by delegation, who disappeared for long stretches (often to London for medical treatment), and whose aloofness felt like abandonment,” the local *BusinessDay* newspaper said.

South Africa police minister suspended after graft allegations

AFP
Johannesburg

South Africa’s President Cyril Ramaphosa has suspended his police minister over corruption allegations “with immediate effect”, a week after accusations made by a provincial police chief.

In a country facing endemic corruption, Sun-

day’s presidential speech was highly anticipated after a week of speculation over the fate of Senzo Mchunu, who became police minister a year ago following the general elections.

In a televised address Sunday, Ramaphosa announced the creation of a “Judicial Commission of Inquiry” charged with investigating “the role of current or former senior officials in certain institutions who may have aided or abetted the alleged criminal activity”.

Cameroon’s Biya, 92, brushes off health fears in bid for new term

Reuters
Yaounde

In June 2004, on returning from yet another extended stay abroad, Cameroon President Paul Biya came down from his plane and poked fun at rumours he was dead.

“People are interested in my funeral,” he told reporters. “I’ll see them in 20 years.” That was 21 years ago, and the world’s oldest serving head of state still has no plans to go anywhere. On Sunday he announced on X he would run in Cameroon’s presidential election scheduled for October 12, seeking an eighth term that could keep him in office until he is nearly 100.

Biya has held a tight grip on power since taking over as president in 1982 from his one-time mentor Ahmadou Ahidjo, whom he later sidelined and forced into exile.

Now, an unprecedented public outcry in the press and on social media since his announcement suggests cracks in that power base, and doubts in his ability to keep going, may be growing.

A front-page headline poked fun at the decision in yesterday’s edition of *Le Messager* newspaper next to a picture of Biya.

The cocoa- and oil-producing Central African nation faces a host of economic and security challenges, notably a conflict with Anglophone separatists and threats from Nigeria-based hardline

fighters in the north.

Meanwhile Biya, 92, remains largely out of public view, spurring widespread speculation over who is really in charge. “Most of us don’t believe Biya is actually running the country anymore. His decision to run again, if it’s really his, shows just how out of touch the system is,” tech entrepreneur Rebecca Enonchong told Reuters.

Communications Minister Rene Emmanuel Sadi did not immediately respond to a request for comment yesterday. He has previously said Biya is in good health and that speculation to the contrary was “pure fantasy and imagination” by critics aiming to destabilise the country.

Last year, the government banned public discussion of Bi-

Ethiopian militias attack Sudan border villages

AFP
Port Sudan

Sudanese farmers and activists said yesterday that Ethiopian militias had conducted cross-border raids on agricultural villages, disrupting the sowing season in a country already at war and suffering a dire hunger crisis.

For decades, both Ethiopia and its neighbour Sudan have claimed the fertile border region of Al-Fashaga, and in recent days several villages in the contested area have come under attack.

Farmers told AFP that militias entered villages along the border, opened fire with automatic weapons, and looted livestock and farming equipment before retreating back into Ethiopian territory.

“They attacked us yesterday (Sunday) while we were working in the fields,” said a 29-year-old farmer from Wad Kouli, a village about 11 kilometres (seven miles) from the Ethiopian border.

“They surrounded the village,

opened fire and stole cattle and tractors at gunpoint,” the farmer told AFP by phone, requesting anonymity for fear of retaliation.

Just north, in Wad Aroud, farmers rushed home from their fields at the sound of gunfire, “fearing for our families”, said a 32-year-old farmer.

“When we arrived, we found the (fighters) had looted cows and sheep from the village” before fleeing towards the border.

The local resistance committee, one of hundreds of volunteer civilian groups co-ordinating aid across Sudan, said yesterday that three villages across Gedaref state had “witnessed repeated and dangerous violations” by Ethiopian militias. No casualties were immediately reported from the attacks on Wad Kouli, Wad Aroud and Barakat Nourain.

But the volunteer group said the attacks were “devastating for food security and the livelihoods of people in the region”.

Residents told AFP they were now unable to work their fields during the crucial sowing season, which coincides with the rainy

season from July to September.

Cross-border clashes are common in the area, with Sudanese villagers often reporting armed incursions coinciding with the agricultural season.

Sudan, battered by a war between army and paramilitary forces since April 2023, has faced the world’s largest hunger crisis with nearly 25mn people suffering dire food insecurity.

Gedaref state, where Al-Fashaga is located, is an important breadbasket for resource-rich Sudan, but also home to an estimated mn people suffering acute hunger, according to UN figures.

The disputed Al-Fashaga is adjacent to Ethiopia’s conflict-ridden Tigray region, where a bloody war between rebels and federal forces since 2020 killed at least 600,000 people. Over the years, tens of thousands of refugees and farmers from Ethiopia have crossed the porous border into Sudan.

The Sudanese government in 2020 sent forces to secure the area, expelling thousands of farmers and recapturing territory.

Ivory Coast extradites journalist critical of Benin’s president

AFP
Cotonou

Ivory Coast has arrested and extradited to Benin a journalist critical of the small west African country’s president, the reporter’s lawyers said late on Sunday.

Benin was once seen as a thriving multi-party democracy but critics say President Patrice Talon, in power since 2016, has become increasingly repressive.

Hugues Comlan Soussoukpe, the publishing director of online newspaper Olofofo, had been living in exile in Togo, where he has held refugee status since 2019, according to his lawyers.

At the invitation of Ivory Coast’s digital transition ministry, he travelled to Abidjan on July 8 for an online innovation forum.

On July 11, Benin’s press began reporting that he had been arrested in the Ivorian economic capital and extradited.

Soussoukpe’s lawyer, Charlemagne Dagbedji, confirmed on Sunday that he had been arrested.

He demanded that his client’s “fundamental rights be strictly respected” and accused Ivory Coast of inviting the journalist “for him to then be captured by the Beninese authorities”.

Soussoukpe’s legal team said in a statement on Sunday evening that he had been imprisoned in

Ouidah, south Benin. Condemning the arrest and his extradition, Reporters Without Borders urged Benin to release Soussoukpe immediately. “What was supposed to be a professional assignment turned into a trap,” added the press freedom watchdog, known by its French acronym RSF.

Neither Benin nor Ivory Coast had commented on the journalist’s arrest by yesterday morning.

Benin has previously been accused of kidnapping online activist Steve Amoussou from neighbouring Togo.

Amoussou was detained in August 2024 and in June this year handed a two-year jail sentence for criticising the authorities.



File photo of Cameroon President Paul Biya.

of the president from the public is enough evidence that age is not on his side.” Prominent human rights lawyer Alice Nkom published a video last week on YouTube appealing to Biya to step aside.

“The legs are no longer holding up, the brain is no longer working. I’m telling you this because I’m in this situation, because I’m in my 80s,” she said.

“I know what has changed in me and what I can no longer give to Cameroonians.” Perhaps more worrying for Biya, two former allies have recently quit the ruling coalition and announced plans to run in the election separately.

Enonchong, the tech entrepreneur, told Reuters she did not think Cameroonians would accept another Biya term.

But analyst Raoul Sumo Tayo said that, despite the many obstacles, Biya should not be counted out.

“The ruling party can successfully rally the administrative elite and utilise outdated electoral practices,” he said, referring to what he described as fraudulent tactics.

“It might just secure an eighth term for Paul Biya.”

Benin bets on free vets and schools to turn people away from militancy

AFP
Cotonou

In militant-threatened north Benin, the army is waging a campaign away from the front – a programme of social projects, including free veterinary care, to tempt locals away from extremism.

Located just south of Niger and Burkina Faso – which together with neighbouring Mali form the world’s terrorism epicentre – Benin’s north has come under increasing pressure from extremists, many of them linked to Al Qaeda.

Besides fighting off the mili-

itants, the 3,000 Beninese soldiers deployed to the region have worked to win the trust of northern communities both threatened by the militants’ advance and courted by well-funded groups.

In May, the army provided free treatment to more than 4,000 cattle belonging to herders in the Materi commune and delivered medical care to 1,700 patients in another village in the Atacora region bordering Burkina Faso.

“These projects show an obvious desire to restore trust between the defence forces and communities,” Lieutenant-Doctor Mordochée Avlessi said in early June.

The army medic, who is in



Benin’s north has come under increasing pressure from extremists.

charge of a joint civilian-military committee in Materi, said the army wanted to work in the “spirit... of building security together”.

In this, the west African coun-

try hopes to learn from the errors of its neighbours in the Sahel – the army cannot root out militancy by itself.

Part of the problem is the lack of

development in the region.

“The places which are the most insecure are the least developed in Benin,” said Mathias Khalfaoui, a specialist in west African security.

And as the UN points out, Benin’s north is the least developed part of the country.

Militants are winning over hard-up communities with cash, rather than ideological or religious arguments, a UN report dated May argued. “In exchange for supplies and information, terrorist groups offer money to young locals,” the report found. The most influential group in the north is an Al Qaeda-affiliated group, known by its Arabic acronym JNIM. By exploiting

frustrations, the JNIM has managed to rally Beninese to its cause after years of working to establish itself in the north.

“If we do not bring a response from the state and public services in these regions, where there is already a local sentiment of sometimes feeling perhaps a bit abandoned, it’s sure that the fight against militancy will become impossible,” said Khalfaoui, the security researcher.

Besides militants putting down local roots, the suspension of military co-operation between Benin and Niger and Burkina Faso has helped fighters launch ever-increasing assaults.

PROPOSAL

New Zealand aims to double international education market

New Zealand plans to double its international education market by 2034 by offering incentives that include relaxing rules around foreign students working part-time while studying, the government said. Education Minister Erica Stanford said that with international student enrolments steadily increasing since 2023, the government wants to “supercharge that growth track” to reach \$4.32bn by 2034. The announcement comes as popular student destinations Australia and the US look to reduce foreign students. “In the short term, Education New Zealand will focus its promotional efforts on markets with the highest potential for growth,” Stanford added.

ANNOUNCEMENT

Cambodia to implement military conscription in 2026

Cambodia’s military will begin conscripting civilians next year, Prime Minister Hun Manet said yesterday, citing rising tensions with Thailand as the reason for activating a long-dormant mandatory enlistment law. Cambodia’s parliament in 2006 approved a law that would require all Cambodians aged 18 to 30 to serve in the military for 18 months, although it has never been enforced. Relations with neighbouring Thailand have been tense since May. “This episode of confrontation is a lesson for us and is an opportunity for us to review, assess and set our targets to reform our military,” Hun Manet said.

POLICY

Malaysia clamps down on export, transit of AI chips

Malaysia yesterday clamped down on the export, transshipment and transit of all US-made artificial intelligence chips, seeking to stop illegal trade to countries including China. “Effective immediately, all exports, transships and transits of high-performance AI chips of US origin are subject to a strategic trade permit,” the investment, trade and industry ministry said. “This initiative serves to close regulatory gaps while Malaysia undertakes further review on the inclusion of high-performance AI chips of US origin” into its so-called Strategic Items List, the government said.

CLAIM

Suspended Thai PM ‘hit by ethics investigation’

Thailand’s anti-graft body will investigate suspended prime minister Paetongtarn Shinawatra for alleged ethnics violations over a leaked phone call with Cambodia’s influential former leader Hun Sen, an official and local media said. The investigation will be another blow to the beleaguered government of 38-year-old Paetongtarn. The leaked June 15 call, during which Paetongtarn appeared to kowtow before Hun Sen and criticised a Thai army commander, triggered a major backlash at home, with allegations she had undermined Thailand’s integrity and sovereignty amid a heated territorial dispute with Cambodia.

India orders its airlines to check fuel switches on Boeing jets

Reuters
New Delhi

India yesterday ordered its airlines to examine fuel switches on several Boeing models, while South Korea said it would order a similar measure, as scrutiny intensified of fuel switch locks at the centre of an investigation into a deadly Air India crash. The moves by India and South Korea came despite the plane-maker and the US Federal Aviation Administration telling airlines and regulators in recent days that the fuel switch locks on Boeing jets are safe. The locks have come under scrutiny following last month’s crash of an Air India jet, which killed 260 people. A preliminary report found that the switches had almost simultaneously flipped from run position to cutoff shortly after takeoff. The report noted a 2018 advisory from the US Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), which recommended, but did not mandate, operators of several Boeing models including the 787 to inspect the locking feature of fuel cutoff switches to ensure they could not be moved accidentally. India’s directorate general of civil aviation said it had issued an order

to investigate locks on several Boeing models including 787s and 737s, after several Indian and international airlines began making their own inspections of fuel switches. The regulator oversees the world’s third-largest and fastest-growing aviation market and its move raises the stakes for Boeing, whose aircraft are used by three of the country’s four largest airlines. A spokesperson for the South Korean transport ministry said checks there were in line with the 2018 advisory from the FAA, but did not give a timeline for them. Boeing referred Reuters’ questions to the FAA, which was not immediately available to comment outside regular hours. The company’s shares were up 1.4% in US premarket trading. Some other global airlines were weighing their own inspections or had begun their own checks. In a statement, Japan’s JAL said safety was its top priority, adding, “We are closely monitoring the investigation into the incident and will implement any necessary inspections based on its findings.” Over the weekend, Air India Group started checking the locking mechanism on the fuel switches of its Boeing 787 and 737 fleets and has discovered no problems yet, a source familiar with the matter said.

About half the group’s 787s have been inspected and nearly all its 737s, the source added, speaking on condition of anonymity. Inspections were set to be completed in the next day or two. On Sunday, citing a document and sources, Reuters reported that the plane-maker and the FAA had privately issued notifications to airlines and regulators that the fuel switch locks on Boeing planes were safe and checks were not required. The Air India crash preliminary report said the airline had not carried out the FAA’s suggested inspections as the FAA’s 2018 advisory was not a mandate. It also said maintenance records showed that the throttle control module, which includes the fuel switches, was replaced in 2019 and 2023 on the plane involved in the crash. In an internal memo yesterday, Air India CEO Campbell Wilson said the investigation into the crash was far from over and it was unwise to jump to premature conclusions, following the release of the preliminary report. The preliminary investigation released by India’s Aircraft Accident Investigation Bureau on Saturday depicted confusion in the cockpit shortly before the crash of the Boeing Dreamliner.

Sacked teachers protest in Kolkata



Taxi drivers watch as demonstrators shout slogans as they march towards the state secretariat building, demanding job reinstatement for eligible teachers whose jobs were annulled following a Supreme Court order, in Howrah on the outskirts of Kolkata, India, yesterday.

Avoiding trade curbs vital for normalising ties, India tells China

Reuters
Beijing/New Delhi

India and China must resolve friction along their border, pull back troops and avoid “restrictive trade measures” to normalise their relationship, India’s foreign minister told his Chinese counterpart in Beijing yesterday. India’s Subrahmanya Jaishankar met Wang Yi in Beijing during his first trip there since 2020 when a deadly border clash between their troops led to a four-year military standoff and damaged ties until a thaw began in October. “Good progress” in the past nine months for normalisation of relations is a result of the resolu-

tion of friction along their border, Jaishankar told Wang. The positive momentum in bilateral relations is “hard-won and should be cherished”, Wang said, adding that the two countries should enhance political trust, properly handle differences and expand exchanges and cooperation. China and India should “adhere to the direction of good-neighbourliness and friendship” and “find a way for mutual respect and trust, peaceful coexistence, common development and win-win co-operation”, Wang said, according to Xinhua. “The two sides should trust each other rather than suspect each other, co-operate with each other rather than compete with each other,” Wang said, according

to a readout from his ministry. India and China share a 3,800km border that is poorly demarcated and has been disputed since the 1950s. They fought a brief but brutal border war in 1962 and talks over the decades to settle the dispute have made slow progress. Last month, Indian Defence Minister Rajnath Singh told his Chinese counterpart that the two countries should seek a permanent solution to the border dispute. “It is now incumbent on us to address other aspects related to the border, including de-escalation,” Jaishankar said, adding that it was also critical that restrictive trade measures and roadblocks be avoided to foster mutually beneficial co-operation.

Thames Water imposes hosepipe ban as drought hits

Britain’s Thames Water yesterday announced a temporary “hosepipe ban”, aimed at cutting water usage across large parts of southern England, following the country’s driest and warmest spring in over a century. Thames Water, Britain’s biggest water supplier which has 16mn customers, said the ban would take effect on July 22, and apply to households across several counties including Oxfordshire, Wiltshire, Gloucestershire and Berkshire, but not in London. Under the ban, customers are prohibited from using hosepipes for activities such as washing cars, watering gardens or allotments, filling paddling or swimming pools, and cleaning windows. Other water suppliers in England have also introduced bans this month, with Yorkshire Water and South East Water both announcing temporary restrictions last week. “This has been a challenging spring and summer,” Nevil Muncaster, Thames Water’s strategic water resources director, said.

Joint war fighting exercise



HIMARS rockets are fired by Australian, US and Singapore defence forces as part of the Talisman Sabre 2025 joint war fighting exercise, at Shoalwater Bay, Queensland, Australia, yesterday.

South Korea medical students end class boycott

AFP
Seoul

Thousands of South Korean medical students are set to return to classrooms after a 17-month boycott, an industry body said yesterday, ending part of a standoff which also saw junior doctors strike. South Korean healthcare was plunged into chaos early last year when then-president Yoon Suk-yeol moved to sharply increase medical school admissions, citing an urgent need to boost doctor numbers to meet growing demand in a rapidly ageing society. The initiative met fierce protest, prompting junior doctors to walk away from hospitals and medical students to boycott their classrooms, with operations cancelled and service provision disrupted nationwide. The measure was later watered down, and the government even-

tually offered to scrap it in March 2025, after Yoon was impeached over his disastrous declaration of martial law. “Students have agreed to return to school,” a spokesperson for the Korean Medical Association said yesterday, adding that it was up to each medical school to decide the schedule for student returns. The Korean Medical Students’ Association said in an earlier statement that the students had reached this decision because a continued boycott “could cause the collapse of the fundamentals of medical systems”. Some 8,300 students are expected to return to school, but no specific timeline has been provided. Prime Minister Kim Min-seok welcomed the decision, calling it a “big step forward” in a Facebook post, adding President Lee Jae-myung was deliberating ways to solve the issue.

UK aristocrat found guilty over baby daughter’s death

AFP
London

A jury yesterday found a British woman from an aristocratic family and her convicted rapist partner guilty of manslaughter after their newborn daughter died while they were living off-grid in freezing temperatures. Constance Marten, 38, and Mark Gordon, 51, were arrested after a seven-week police hunt in January and February 2023 during which they spent time living

in a tent. The pair were convicted at London’s Old Bailey court where they had faced a retrial after another jury last year failed to reach a verdict on the manslaughter charge. Marten and Gordon, who had denied all the charges against them, went on the run after police found a placenta in their burnt-out car by a motorway outside Manchester in northwest England. Marten had told the court they absconded because they wanted to keep their daughter Victoria, after their other four children

were taken into care. The couple were eventually arrested nearly two months later, in Brighton on England’s southern coast. Days later, baby Victoria’s badly decomposed body was found in a shopping bag on a vegetable patch. But taking the witness stand at her first trial Marten, whose family has historic ties to the royal family, insisted she and Gordon were loving parents. “Mark and I love our kids more than anything in the world,” she told the court. “I did nothing but

show her love.” The couple were found guilty of perverting the course of justice, concealing the birth of a child and child cruelty at their earlier trial. Marten had told police Victoria died when she fell asleep in the tent while holding her under her jacket. Detective superintendent Lewis Basford of the Metropolitan Police welcomed the verdict. “Today, the justice we have long fought for... has finally been served for baby Victoria,” he said. “The selfish actions of Mark Gordon and Constance Marten

resulted in the death of a newborn baby who should have had the rest of her life ahead of her.” He said the conviction was a vindication of the authorities’ decision to take Marten’s four other children into care. The pair will be sentenced on September 15. Jurors at the first trial in 2024 were not told about Gordon’s violent past in the US which was only partly revealed at their second trial. The prosecution told the court that in 1989, Gordon, then aged 14, held a woman against her

will in Florida for more than four hours and assaulted her while armed with a “knife and hedge clippers”. Within a month, he entered another property and carried out another offence involving aggravated battery. He was sentenced to 40 years in jail but was released after serving 22 years. In 2017, Gordon was also convicted of assaulting two female police officers at a maternity unit in Wales where Marten gave birth to their first child under a fake identity.

CHAIRMAN

Abdullah bin Khalifa al-Attiyah

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

Faisal Abdulhameed al-Mudahka

Deputy Managing Editor

K T Chacko

- P.O.Box 2888, Doha, Qatar
- editor@gulf-times.com
- 44350478 (News),
- 44466404 (Sport),
- 44466636 (Home delivery)
- 44350474
- facebook.com/gulftimes
- twitter.com/gulftimes_Qatar
- instagram.com/gulftimes
- youtube.com/GulftimesVideos

GULF TIMES

Why Trump is attacking the academy

The resignation of University of Virginia President James E Ryan under political pressure from US President Donald Trump's minions and the Virginia state government is the latest shocking turn in the administration's all-out attack on American higher education. Officials from Trump's Justice Department and members of the University's Board of Visitors – several of whom were appointed by Republican Virginia Governor Glenn Youngkin – accused Ryan of moving too slowly to dismantle the university's diversity, equity, and inclusion programmes. By the end of June, Ryan had announced his departure.

It is highly unusual for politicians to call the shots at major universities in the United States. But such interference is common in failing democracies. Power-hungry presidents and prime ministers replace university leaders with partisan loyalists. They defend or dismantle universities – often the most elite ones. Trump's assault on the University of Virginia – as well as on Harvard, Columbia, and many others – is following this playbook and should be understood as a measure of America's slide into autocracy.

Trump's rationale for the crackdown is that many of the top US universities are bastions of "woke" culture and have become dominated, as he put it in 2023, by "Marxist maniacs and lunatics". The universities can't be trusted, the argument goes, to protect students from biased treatment and harassment. The administration's ostensible aim is to make these institutions more "viewpoint-neutral".

As the US careens toward autocracy, Trump has set his sights on other independent institutions as well

Other right-wing autocrats around the world have made the same argument – that universities are too progressive – when attacking higher education. But that is far from the only justification. Leftist autocrats have complained that universities are too conservative.

Some politicians might deem universities too secular or too religious. Universities' real threat to autocrats, though, lies in their independence as sites of critical inquiry, which implies an institutional check on these regimes' authority.

During his tenure as Mexico's president between 2018 and 2024, Andrés Manuel López Obrador (widely known as AMLO), a populist who raised the minimum wage and increased pension payments as he consolidated his power, disparaged top Mexican universities' "neoliberalism". The hostility went beyond rhetoric: Mexico's attorney general made repeated attempts to arrest a group of 31 top scientists on corruption charges, spawning enormous controversy.

AMLO's attacks roiled Centro de Investigación y Docencia Económicas, one of Mexico's top public-research centres and universities. CIDE students protested the government's appointment of a new director, who demoted several administrators. Over the course of its conflict with López Obrador, many CIDE faculty members departed for other schools.

Some autocrats are not satisfied with merely changing the leadership of annoyingly independent universities. Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orbán forced the Central European University out of Budapest; it moved to Vienna, where its faculty continues to engage in excellent research and teaching. At the opposite end of the ideological spectrum, Nicaraguan President Daniel Ortega assumed control of the Jesuit-run Central American University, fired the university's leadership and staff, hired party loyalists, and changed its name. Only the buildings remain the same.

When politicians try to muzzle universities by ousting their leaders, interfering with their research and teaching, and cutting off their funds, the writing is on the wall – and not only for once-great academic institutions. As the US careens toward autocracy, Trump has set his sights on other independent institutions as well. From media outlets to law firms and judges, the president is trying to demolish the pillars of democracy.

Many are resisting, but many are capitulating, normalising Trump's anti-democratic behaviour in the process. In the case of the University of Virginia, founded by Thomas Jefferson, the principal author of America's Declaration of Independence, the submission to despotism is particularly poignant. – Project Syndicate

To Advertise

gtadv@gulf-times.com

Display

44466621 44418811

Classified

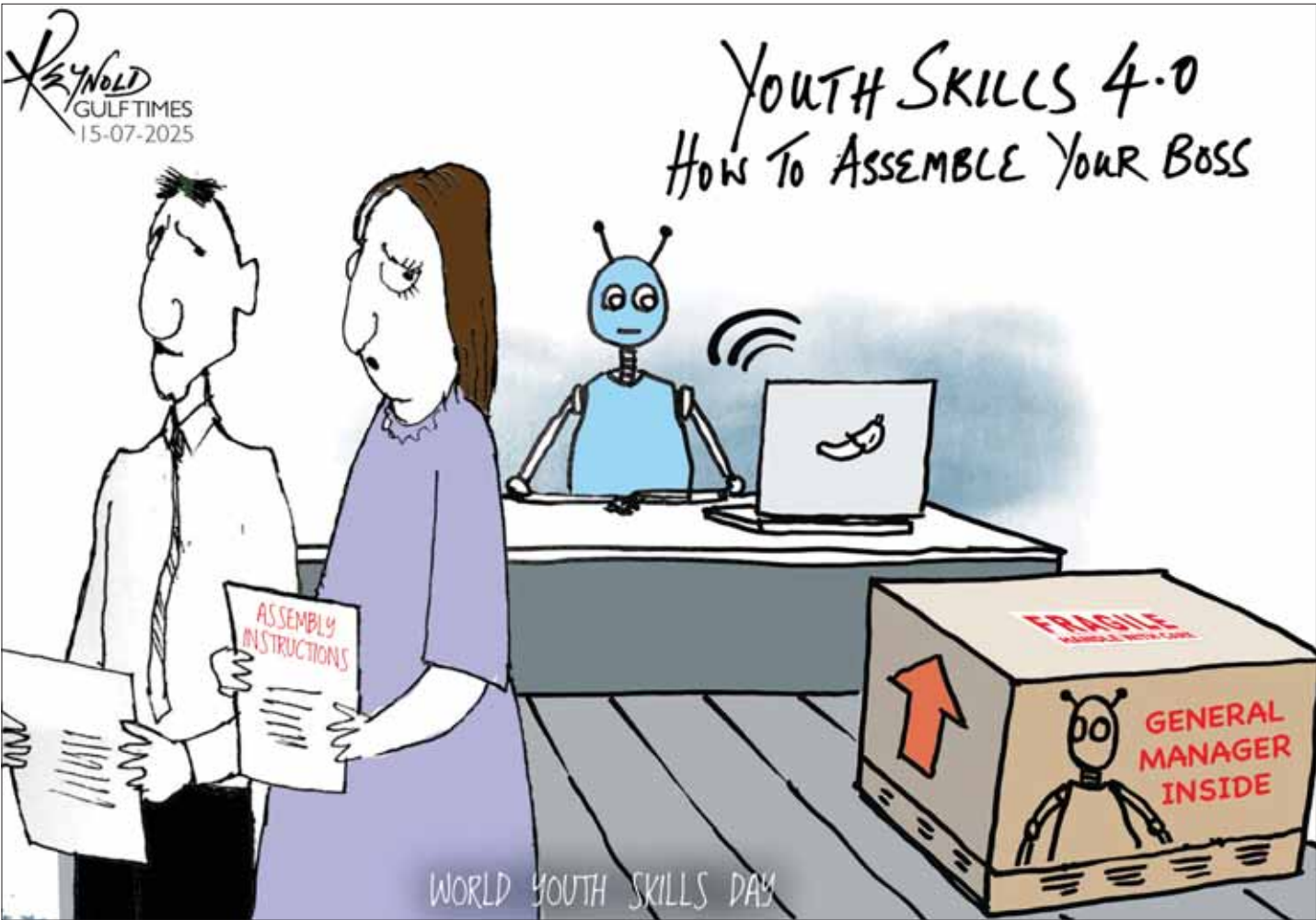
44466609 44418811

gtcad@gulf-times.com

Subscription

circulation@gulf-times.com

© 2025 Gulf Times. All rights reserved



Musk faces a daunting path in challenging US two-party system

By James Oliphant, Bo Erickson

Washington

Building a new US political party from scratch is a daunting task, even for the world's richest man. But that is what Elon Musk, the billionaire behind Tesla and SpaceX, said he plans to do in the wake of his falling out with President Donald Trump. Musk last weekend announced the birth of the "America Party" – dedicated, he said, to defeating Republicans who backed Trump's massive tax-cut and spending bill.

Musk described his new party on his platform X as tech-centric, budget-conscious, pro-energy and centrist, with the goal of drawing both disaffected Democrats and Republicans. Musk has criticised the tax-cut bill, which is forecast to add about \$3.4tn to the United States' debt.

Breaking the two-party system's grip on US federal elections would take tremendous resources and a long-term commitment, political experts say. Similar attempts have failed, underscoring how difficult it is to gain a foothold in a country where elections are organised on a state-by-state level.

"There are just very, very significant barriers to the creation of a viable third party," said David A Hopkins, a Boston College political science professor. He said challenges include building party infrastructure, organising volunteers and qualifying for the ballot.

David Jolly, a former Republican congressman from Florida who left the party over Trump, said Musk can provide what has long been required for such a push: money.

"What the independent space has been lacking has been resources," Jolly said. "It's more than filing with the Federal Election Commission. It's really starting 50 state parties. You're talking about \$100mn just to enter the space with real serious intent."

Jolly considered returning to politics as an independent, but he concluded that staying within the two-party system would be a more effective way to reach unhappy voters. He is now running for governor of Florida as a Democrat.

In 2016, former New York Mayor Michael Bloomberg, another billionaire, made a similar conclusion, rejecting the idea of running for president as an independent, saying that such a



US President Donald Trump's then-adviser Elon Musk waves on the day of a rally in support of a conservative state Supreme Court candidate of an April 1 election in Green Bay, Wisconsin. (Reuters)

candidate would have "no chance of winning." Jolly estimated it would take Musk 10 years and perhaps \$1bn to build a viable national party – and said Musk's recent history with his Department of Government Efficiency suggests the billionaire may not be in it for the long haul. Musk left DOGE after just a few months in Trump's administration, having delivered little of the savings he promised.

"What we have seen is an Elon Musk who is not disciplined ... enough to change American politics," Jolly said. Musk's office did not respond to a request for comment. Tesla shares closed nearly 7% lower on Monday as Musk reignited investors' worries about his focus on the company.

Playing spoiler

Musk could have chosen a more traditional path, using his political action committee to back Republican challengers to incumbents in the party primaries ahead of next year's midterm elections, which will determine control of Congress. He was the largest donor in the 2024 US campaign cycle, making nearly \$300mn in contributions, mostly focused on helping Trump return to the White House.

Not all his political efforts have paid off. He poured millions of dollars into a Wisconsin

Supreme Court election in April, only to see his preferred candidate fail. His efforts to convince Republicans in the US Congress not to pass Trump's tax bill also fell flat.

It is unclear how effective he would be in backing independents in a handful of competitive US House of Representatives races.

As it is, the roughly three-dozen races deemed competitive by nonpartisan analysts are often already swamped with cash from political parties and outside fundraisers, and the candidates themselves typically are ideologically more moderate – which would make it harder for Musk's candidates to differentiate themselves.

Historically, congressional candidates outside the two parties have struggled to overcome disadvantages in local efforts to organise and get out the vote. More often, independents have served as spoilers – siphoning away votes from either the Democrat or Republican.

In the 2024 election for a House seat in Ohio, independent candidate Dennis Kucinich, a former Democratic congressman, captured more than 12% of the general election vote. The Republican, Max Miller, won by 15 percentage points.

Trump has mocked Musk's efforts. "Third parties have never worked, so he can have fun with it, but I think it's ridiculous," he told reporters.

Complicating Musk's plans is that many voters dislike him. Any role he plays in an election is sure to become part of the debate.

Musk is viewed less favourably than Trump by the American public at large – just 36% of respondents to a June Reuters/Ipsos poll had a favourable view of Musk compared with 42% who viewed Trump favourably, while 59% of respondents have an unfavourable view of him compared with 55% who viewed Trump unfavourably.

But his biggest liability may be that he is trying to challenge Trump politically while relying on support from Trump's own voters. Musk enjoyed his strongest level of support – 78% favourability – among people who voted for Trump in November.

"Musk himself is not very popular, and his appeal has a huge overlap with the existing Republican coalition," said Hans Noel, a political scientist at Georgetown University. "There really isn't an unrepresented movement that he's speaking for... he's unlikely to elect many America Party candidates." – Reuters

Sudan conflict tests global resolve for peace

Dr Mohamed al-Baroudi

War in Sudan has captured the attention of global and regional hubs in New York, Brussels, and Washington during the past days. "De-escalation is urgently needed, as the warring parties appear 'unrelenting' in their resolve to pursue military objectives" Martha Pobe Assistant UN-SG for Africa told the Security Council, warning of the growing risk of regional instability and conflict spillover.

Statements of SC members reiterated familiar positions by UK calling for unfettered access for humanitarian assistance, US accusing warring parties of diverting aid, Russia and China focusing on the sovereignty of Sudan and urging support for the new civilian government of Prime Minister Kamil Idris. However, a sense of urgency is clear among Council's 15 members.

Similarly, the Consultative Group for the Coordination of Peace Efforts in Sudan

gathered in Brussels to discuss the situation in Sudan with the participation of the EU, UN, AU, IGAD, Arab League, US, Saudi Arabia, and Egypt as well as Angola, Djibouti, and Iraq. The meeting stressed that inaction would worsen the world's most devastating humanitarian crisis and impede recovery efforts.

Through three sessions at the EU headquarters, partners discussed the pathways for de escalation, inclusive civil and political dialogue, humanitarian access and strict adherence to International Humanitarian Law. Participants agreed to hold the fifth meeting of the Group in Addis Ababa, hosted by the AU, to uphold the momentum and search for solutions.

Internally, the country is expected to face tough times with Washington sanctions coming into effect to make the economic and financial situation more thwarted. The "Independent newspaper of London has published a report titled "Starving Sudanese people eating weeds to survive amid brutal war". The "Washington

Post said: "In Sudan, where children clung to life, doctors say USAID cuts have been fatal". International organisations working in Sudan for decades are now struggling to secure funds for projects necessary to support people and keep hope alive for millions.

According to regional forecast Sudan is expected to face flood risk this year. IGAD Climate Prediction and Applications Centre anticipates higher chance of above-normal rainfall across much of the northern Greater Horn of Africa during the critical June to September rainy season. The outlook raises fears of widespread disruption and humanitarian challenges in already vulnerable areas.

Suffering from declining economic situation, humanitarian catastrophe, and continuing war compounded by disastrous ecological changes, the people of Sudan need a moment of selflessness consideration from regional and international powers for serious steps to negate the consequences of famine and war on children and helpless citizens.

Trump gives Russia 50 days to make Ukraine deal or face sanctions

■ In policy reversal, US to now arm Ukraine through Nato

AFP
Washington

US President Donald Trump told Russia yesterday to end its Ukraine war within 50 days or face massive new economic sanctions as he laid out plans for new infusions of weaponry for Kyiv via Nato.

Trump said he was “very, very unhappy” with Vladimir Putin, underlining his insistence that his patience had finally snapped with the Russian leader’s refusal to end his three-year-old invasion of Ukraine.

“We’re going to be doing very severe tariffs if we don’t have a deal in 50 days, tariffs at about 100%,” Trump said during an Oval Office meeting with Nato Secretary General Mark Rutte.

The 79-year-old added that they would be “secondary tariffs” that target Russia’s remaining trade partners — thereby seeking to cripple Moscow’s ability to survive already sweeping Western sanctions.

Trump and Rutte also unveiled a deal under which the Nato military alliance would buy arms from the United States — including Pa-

triot anti-missile batteries — and then send them to Ukraine to help it battle Russia’s invasion.

“This is billions of dollars’ worth of military equipment is going to be purchased from the United States, going to Nato... and that’s going to be quickly distributed to the battlefield,” Trump said.

Rutte said Ukraine would get “massive numbers” of weapons under the deal, which is aimed at placating Trump’s long-held complaints that the US is paying too much to aid Ukraine.

However, EU foreign policy chief Kaja Kallas said Trump’s deadline, while “very positive,” was too far into the future.

“Fifty days is a very long time if we see that they are killing innocent civilians every day,” Kallas said.

Trump launched a bid at rapprochement with Putin shortly after starting his second term in January, as he sought to honor his election campaign promise to end the Ukraine war within 24 hours.

His pivot towards Putin sparked fears in Kyiv that he was about to sell out Ukraine, especially after Trump and his team



US President Donald Trump, flanked by Vice President JD Vance and Secretary of State Marco Rubio, meets with Nato Secretary General Mark Rutte in the Oval Office at the White House yesterday. (Reuters)

berated Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky in the Oval Office in February.

But Trump has indicated he is increasingly frustrated with Putin in recent weeks as the Russian leader, instead of halting his invasion, instead stepped up attacks to record levels.

The US leader gave an intriguing

personal insight into how First Lady Melania Trump had helped changed his thinking about Putin, a man for whom he formerly expressed admiration.

“I go home, I tell the First Lady, ‘you know, I spoke to Vladimir today, we had a wonderful conversation,’” Trump said. “And she said, ‘Oh really? Another city

was just hit.’”

He added of Putin: “I don’t want to say he’s an assassin, but he’s a tough guy.”

Trump said he had believed they had sealed a deal with Putin four times, only for them to fall through.

The US president had last week teased that he would make

a “major statement” on Russia yesterday.

Washington has also U-turned from an announcement earlier this month that it would pause some arms deliveries to Kyiv, announcing on Sunday that it would send vital Patriot air defense systems.

Trump’s special envoy Keith Kellogg meanwhile arrived in Kyiv to meet Zelensky. The Ukrainian leader hailed the “productive meeting” and said he was “grateful” to Trump for his support.

One Ukrainian soldier deployed in the war-scarred east of the country, who identified himself by his call sign Grizzly, welcomed Trump’s promise of fresh air defence systems. “Better late than never,” the 29-year-old told AFP.

Russian forces meanwhile said yesterday they had captured new territory in eastern Ukraine with the seizure of two villages, one in the Donetsk region and another in the Zaporizhzhia region.

Its forces also killed at least three civilians in the eastern Kharkiv and Sumy regions yesterday, regional Ukrainian officials announced.

In Kyiv, Zelensky also proposed a major political shake-up, recommending economy minister Yulia Svyrydenko take over as the country’s new prime minister.

Svyrydenko said on social media that Ukraine was facing a “crucial time”.

Zelensky proposes Shmyhal as new defence minister; Svyrydenko as PM

Ukraine’s President Volodymyr Zelensky yesterday proposed current Prime Minister Denys Shmyhal as Ukraine’s new defence minister.

“The vast experience of Denys Shmyhal will certainly be valuable in the position of minister of defence of Ukraine. This is precisely the area where the country’s maximum resources, maximum tasks and a great deal of responsibility are currently concentrated,” Zelensky said in his nightly video address.

Zelensky said he counted on backing from parliament for the new configuration of his government. He earlier proposed Yulia Svyrydenko, currently first deputy prime minister, to head the new government as prime minister. “I have proposed that Yulia Svyrydenko lead the government of Ukraine and significantly renew its work,” Zelensky wrote on social media, posting a picture of the two.

“I look forward to the presentation of the new government’s action plan in the near future,” Zelensky added. Svyrydenko, 39, gained prominence this year during fraught negotiations around a rare minerals deal with the United States that nearly derailed ties between Kyiv and its most important military ally. Shortly after Zelensky’s announcement, she said Ukraine faced a “crucial time” and listed her priorities as “strengthening” Ukraine’s economy, expanding domestic support programmes and scaling up weapons production.

German customs net tarantulas in cookie shipment

German customs officers have discovered a massive haul of about 1,500 tarantulas hidden inside a shipment disguised as cookies, authorities said yesterday. The 7kg shipment from Vietnam was intercepted at Cologne-Bonn airport and emitted a strange smell when opened, customs officials said. Inside the found the venomous arachnids packed into plastic tubes and said that many had not survived the flight, with the remaining spiders placed into professional care. “This unusual discovery left even the most experienced officers speechless,” customs spokesman Jens Ahland said. It was “deeply troubling what some people do to animals purely for profit”, he added. A criminal investigation has been launched into the package’s intended recipient for failing to pay duties and make the proper declarations.

Pakistan to create new paramilitary force ahead of more protests from PTI

Reuters
Islamabad

Pakistan said yesterday it was creating a national paramilitary force, prompting concern among opposition parties and human rights groups that it could be used as a tool of political repression.

The move turns an existing paramilitary force deployed on Pakistan’s northwestern border with Afghanistan into a national security force that will be called the Federal Constabulary, State Minister for the Interior Talal Chaudhry told a press conference in the eastern city of Faisalabad.

Its new duties will include internal security, riot control and counter-terrorism, according to a copy of the amended law reported by the local Dunya News TV.

The announcement came after Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) party of former jailed Prime Minister Imran Khan said it would stage nationwide protests starting on August 5, the second anniversary of his arrest.

Several such protests since his August 2023 arrest have turned violent, in some cases paralysing the capital Islamabad for days.

“This will be a new force. This will be a stronger force. We need this force for internal security,” Chaudhry said, adding that President Asif Ali Zardari had already approved amendments in the law introducing changes in the paramilitary force.

The new force replaces the Frontier Constabulary (FC), whose cadres were previously recruited only from tribes in the northwestern province, Chaudhry said. Training of the new force will bring it into line with other national law enforcement agencies, he added.

Khan’s party spokesperson Zulfikar Bukhari said the changes should be subject to parliamentary discussion.

The new force “should not be used as a gimmick to silence political opponents, as has been previously witnessed when the government applied such laws against a large number of the PTI leadership and supporters,” he said.

His concern was echoed by Haris Khalique, secretary of the Human Rights Commission of Pakistan, an independent body.

“We are alarmed by the changes being made to the security and law enforcement structure of the country without any debate in parliament,” Khalique said.

111 monsoon-related deaths in Pakistan since late June

AFP
Islamabad

Monsoon rains in Pakistan have been linked to more than 110 deaths including dozens of children since they arrived in late June, according to government figures released yesterday.

Data from the national disaster agency between June 26 and July 14 showed that electrocution was the leading cause of fatalities, followed by flash floods.

In late June, at least 13 tourists were swept to their deaths while sheltering from flash floods on a raised river bank. In its latest report, the disaster agency said 111 people including 53 children have been killed, with the highest number of deaths in the most populous province of Punjab.

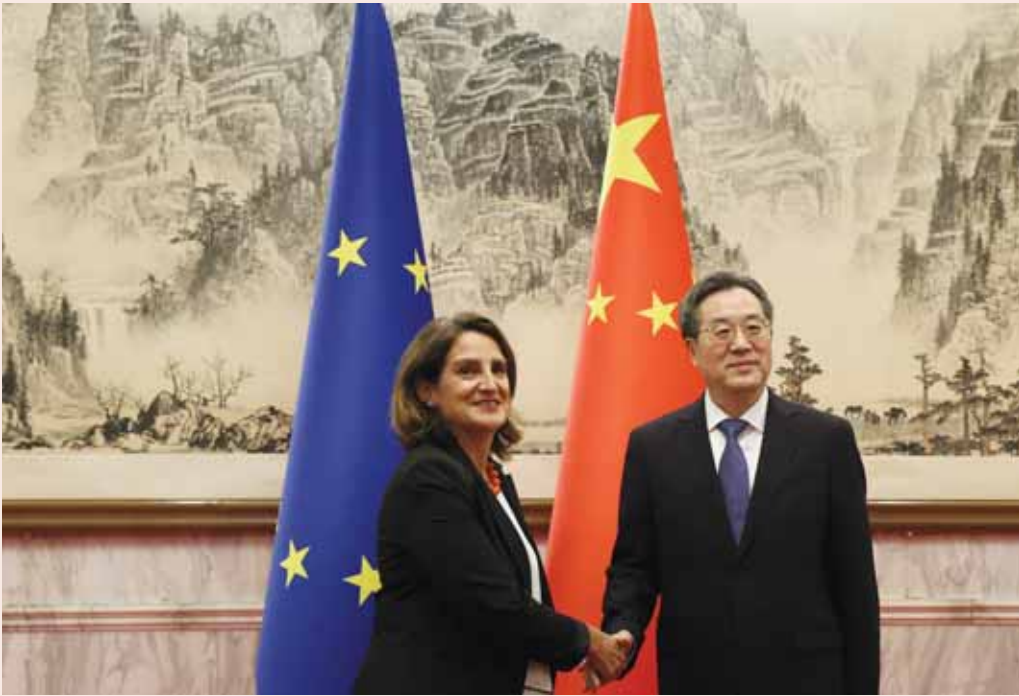
Meanwhile, the national meteorological service has issued a warning for further heavy rainfall in the northern and eastern regions of the country, with the potential for urban flooding, landslides, and infrastructure damage due to strong winds. Monsoon season brings South Asia 70-80% of its annual rainfall, arriving in early June in India and late June in Pakistan, and lasting through until September.

The annual rains are vital for agriculture and food security, and the livelihoods of millions of farmers.

But it brings with it flooding, landslides and causes buildings to collapse.

Pakistan is one of the world’s most vulnerable countries to the effects of climate change, and its 240mn residents are facing extreme weather events with increasing frequency.

China-European Commission talks



Chinese Vice-Premier Ding Xuexiang and European Commission Executive Vice-President for a Clean, Just and Competitive Transition Teresa Ribera shake hands at the Diaoyutai State Guesthouse in Beijing yesterday. (Reuters)

China steps in as US pulls back from diplomacy

■ As US cuts food, health aid, China offers rice, financing

Reuters
Washington,

China is increasing its diplomatic reach as President Donald Trump’s administration pares back America’s international presence, Democrats from the US Senate Foreign Relations Committee said in a report released yesterday.

The report, the result of months of staff travel and research, was released as the Trump administration makes deep cuts to the State Department, including beginning on Friday to fire more than 1,350 US-based employees, part of a total reduction of nearly 3,000 people for the US-based workforce. The administration has also cut billions of dollars in foreign aid, effectively shutting down the US Agency for International Development, which funded the majority of US humanitarian and development assistance worldwide. That led to the firing of thousands of its employees and contractors and the slashing of more than 80% of its programmes. Critics said the cuts would undermine Washington’s ability to defend and promote US interests abroad. Research published in

The Lancet medical journal said the cuts to USAID and its dismantling could result in more than 14mn additional deaths by 2030.

“Within days of the Trump administration taking office and starting to roll back our commitments around the world, China was already labelling the United States an unreliable partner,” Senator Jeanne Shaheen, the top committee Democrat, told reporters on a conference call about the report.

“At a time when we’re retreating, they are expanding their footprint,” she said.

The Trump administration says its changes help align foreign policy with Trump’s “America First” agenda, and are part of a push to shrink the federal bureaucracy and cut what Trump officials say has been wasteful spending.

Trump has said the US pays disproportionately for foreign aid and he wants other countries to shoulder more of the burden.

The Democrats’ 91-page report listed ways, from broad-casting to health programmes and development efforts, that committee researchers said China is expanding its influence.

It lists dozens of cases in which the committee research-

ers found that China had stepped in as the US eliminated or cut back international programs, from funding vaccines and providing food to infrastructure development.

For example, in Africa, as the US terminated food assistance programs, China in March donated \$2mn in rice to Uganda. In May, after the US terminated a \$37mn HIV/AIDS grant in Zambia, China said it would help the African nation fight HIV/AIDS, including by donating 500,000 rapid HIV testing kits and planning more meetings to discuss its continued partnership on the issue.

In Southeast Asia, Chinese President Xi Jinping embarked on a tour to meet with leaders in Vietnam, Cambodia and Malaysia, the report said. The trip yielded an agreement in Vietnam for railroad connections, 37 co-operation agreements in Cambodia in sectors including energy, education and infrastructure and technical and manufacturing exchanges in Malaysia.

And in Latin America, China in May hosted the “China-Latin American and the Caribbean Forum” and announced it would provide a \$9bn credit line and additional infrastructure investments for the region.



The first batch of 84 participants has completed the programme.

Qatar Tourism launches front office hospitality programme



Qatar Tourism (QT)'s Service Excellence Academy has recently launched "The Art of Front Office Hospitality", a new in-person training initiative aimed at training 400 frontline hotel staff from properties rated four stars and below.

Officially introduced on July 9, the two-day training programme is designed to address the specific needs of this segment, and is focused on guest relations, cultural sensitivity, and operational efficiency.

The first batch of 84 participants has successfully completed the programme and received certification.

This initiative is part of the QT's broader Service Excellence strategy and contributes to the objectives of Qatar National Vision 2030 by fostering professional development and raising service standards across the tourism sector.

Ministry plans trip to historical landmarks in South Africa

With the aim of building bridges of human and cultural communication between peoples, and contributing to building a thoughtful and aware personality among participants, through openness to diverse cultures, acquiring new experiences in an educational and interactive context, and introducing them to Qatari culture and traditions, the Ministry of Culture, represented by the

ministry's Nomads Centre, is organising a cultural trip to South Africa, from August 1-9, under the theme of *Science, literature and the company of Majid* for the age group of 9-14.

Nomads Centre director Ghanem Abdulrahman al-Kuwari said that this trip, which brings together a group of children from various age groups, builds on previous trips that the centre has organised to

Norway, Malaysia, and Uzbekistan.

The goal is for the participants to learn about other cultures and exchange cultures.

Al-Kuwari said that such trips provide children with various skills, particularly self-reliance and the discovery of an aspect of South African culture.

He revealed that the itinerary will include field visits to several of Cape Town's

key cultural and tourist attractions, including the Castle of Good Hope, one of Africa's oldest colonial forts, and the Zeitz Museum of Contemporary Art, which celebrates modern African art.

Participants will also visit the Cape Town Science Centre, where they will engage in interactive science experiences that foster critical thinking and exploration. - QNA



Recycling workshops organised for children

The Ministry of Environment and Climate Change (MoECC) is organising a series of recycling workshops as part of the summer camp by the Qatar Chess Association (QCA).

The initiative by the Environmental Awareness Section of the ministry's Public Relations and Communications Department aims to instil environmental concepts in children by in-

troducing them to the importance of recycling paper, cardboard, plastic, and electronic waste, and transforming it from an environmental burden into innovative and usable creative models.

The workshops seek to open new horizons for children to unleash their imagination through engaging and interactive educational activities presented in an enjoyable and stimulating manner.

This contributes to fostering their spirit of innovation and linking environmental values to their daily behaviour.

At the conclusion of the workshops, a presentation will showcase a number of models and structures made by the children themselves, reflecting the direct positive impact of the activity and how well they absorbed the environmental concepts presented.



Sales at Pakistani Mango Festival cross 82 tonnes



Sales at the second edition of the Pakistani Mango Festival (Al Hamba Exhibition) have crossed 82 tonnes in the first four days.

According to figures released by the Souq Waqif management, the sales reached 82,654kg.

The festival has also recorded more than 42,000 visitors.

The festival opened on Thursday at Souq Waqif to feature an array of mangoes along with its products.

On the first day, a total of 16,186kg mangoes were sold, while on the second day and third day the festival recorded 29,091kg and 19,606kg in sales, respectively.

The fourth day recorded sales of 17,771kg.

On the first and second days, the festival received 10,000 and 13,000 visitors, respectively.



On the third and fourth days, the festival received 11,000 and 8,000 visitors, respectively.

Held at the Eastern Square of Souq Waqif, the festival is organised by the Private Engineering Office in co-ordination with the embassy of Pakistan.

To run until July 19, the exhibition sells Sindhri, Chaunsa, Safed Chaunsa, Anwar Ratool and Duseri along with Pakistan seasonal fruits such as black plum, peach, plum and falsa and peaches-all freshly flown exclusively for the festival.

A number of mango products including juices, ice creams and cakes are also available on sale.

The exhibition is open daily from 4pm-

10pm except on public holidays when it receives visitors until 10pm.

The second edition of the festival boasts of 74 sellers, with a number of companies from Pakistan with track record of producing high-quality mangoes.

The exhibition also features more than 25 restaurants and shops that offer Pakistani culinary experience with dishes and a variety of mango products.

The organisers have put in place strict conditions for participation in the festival to ensure the quality of the displayed items.

The prices were set to be affordable, with an emphasis on products unavailable in local markets.