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SPORT | Page 1

Qatar set to learn route to World Cup as AFC Playoff draw takes place today



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Missile debris compensation team holds first meeting

As part of implementing the mechanisms and regulations approved by the Civil Defence Council to address reports of damage resulting from the interception of Iranian missiles, the specialised team tasked with reviewing affected individuals' claims held its first meeting at the National Command Center (NCC). In a statement yesterday, the Ministry of Interior (MoI) indicated that the meeting reviewed the fieldwork plan, documentation and assessment procedures, and the organisation of field visits to the reported sites submitted via the Metrash application, in co-ordination with the relevant authorities, to ensure efficient processing and accurate follow-up. The MoI noted that this meeting comes as a continuation of the urgent measures and procedures approved by the council to compensate those affected and expedite the response in addressing the incident's aftermath in accordance with established protocols. (QNA)

10-member jury for QT Awards unveiled

Qatar Tourism (QT) has revealed a distinguished ten-member jury panel of local and international experts for its third edition of the Qatar Tourism Awards. These eagerly awaited awards honour organisations and individuals known for consistently delivering exceptional tourism experiences in Qatar. The Qatar Tourism Awards is an initiative by Qatar Tourism, developed in collaboration with the World Tourism Organisation (UN Tourism). Page 6

Palestine statehood summit in September

International envoys will discuss a two-state solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict at UN headquarters in New York this month, before national leaders meet in September, a French diplomatic source said yesterday. The French source said this month's meeting would be at ministerial level. French Foreign Minister Jean-Noel Barrot would attend, his office said. It would seek to "advance the recognition of a Palestinian state for a certain number of states who have not yet recognised it, including France," the source said. Page 8

Not planning to fire Fed's Powell: Trump

US President Donald Trump said yesterday he is not planning to fire Federal Reserve Chair Jerome Powell even as he unleashed a fresh round of criticism against the central bank chief and declined to completely reject the possibility of ousting him. A Bloomberg report earlier yesterday that the president is likely to fire Powell soon sparked a drop in stocks and the dollar, and a rise in Treasury yields. Business Page 4

Drone strikes shut Kurdistan oilfields

Drone attacks for a third day on oilfields in Iraq's semi-autonomous Kurdistan region have slashed crude output by 140,000-150,000 barrels per day, two energy officials said yesterday, as infrastructure damage forced multiple shutdowns. It was not immediately clear who was behind the attacks, and no group has claimed responsibility.

Gaza aid point crush kills 20; talks stuck at Israeli withdrawal

AFP
Gaza City

A crush at an aid centre in southern Gaza killed at least 20 people yesterday, with the site's operator blaming "agitators" within the crowd and the Palestinian territory's civil defence agency attributing the panic to Israeli gunfire. It was the first time that the Gaza Humanitarian Foundation (GHF), backed by the United States and Israel, acknowledged deaths at one of its distribution sites after weeks of chaotic scenes and near-daily reports of Palestinians being killed nearby while waiting to collect rations. AFP footage showed lifeless bodies taken to a nearby hospital, in the city of Khan Younis, with some placed on the floor and others on already-bloodied beds. Abdullah Alian, a witness, said that mayhem unfolded as the crowd of aid-seekers was hit with stun grenades and pepper spray. The latest deaths came as in-

Raouf Najib Abdel Rahman al-Maliki, Palestinian ambassador to Colombia, uses a bullhorn during a protest outside the Colombian foreign ministry in Bogota, yesterday.

direct negotiations between Israel and Palestinian resistance group Hamas were ongoing in Qatar, aiming to seal a deal for a 60-day ceasefire, the release of hostages held in Gaza and the unfettered flow of much-needed aid into the territory. Hamas has accused Israel of wanting to retain long-term

military control of Gaza - a key sticking point in the talks, which are now in their second week in Doha. On Tuesday, the UN said it had recorded 875 people killed in Gaza while trying to get food since late May, including 674 "in the vicinity of GHF sites". In the truce negotiations, Hamas is seeking a full Israeli withdrawal from Gaza, and last week rejected an Israeli proposal that it said would have kept troops in more than 40% of the territory. Israeli public broadcaster Kan reported yesterday that work was ongoing to revise Israeli pullback maps, citing an unnamed foreign official. Bassem Naim, a member of Hamas's political leadership, told AFP that Israel "has not yet delivered any new or revised maps regarding military withdrawals". Speaking in Gaza yesterday, Israel's army chief Eyal Zamir said that "in the coming days, we will know whether or not we have an agreement", according to a military statement. Page 8

Qatar slams Israeli strikes on Syria as violation of sovereignty, int'l law

Qatar condemned the attacks launched by the Israeli occupation forces on the sisterly Syrian Arab Republic, considering them a blatant attack on Syria's sovereignty, a serious violation of international law and the UN Charter, and an assault on the security and stability of the region. In a statement yesterday, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs affirmed that the occupation's repeated attacks on the new Syria clearly reflect its defiance of the international will to support its construction and renaissance, and to establish the foundations of peace in the region. In this context, the ministry called on the international community to take decisive measures against the occupation forces to deter their aggressive policies and irresponsible actions, which pose a serious threat to regional and international security. The ministry also reiterated Qatar's full support for Syria's sovereignty, independence, and territorial integrity, as well as the aspirations of its brotherly people for a dignified life. (QNA)

Smoke billows following Israeli strikes in Damascus yesterday.

Sidra Medicine finds gene link to rare condition

Sidra Medicine, a member of Qatar Foundation, has contributed to a study that uncovers new genetic causes and disease mechanisms behind Ritscher-Schinzel Syndrome (RSS), a rare multi-system congenital disorder. The study, published in *Science Translational Medicine*, is one of the first from the region to identify the genetic basis of RSS, marking a significant advancement in the global understanding of this condition. Titled "Ritscher-Schinzel syndrome can be characterised as an endosomal recyclinopathy," the study was led by researchers from Sidra Medicine, the University of Bristol, and leading academic and clinical institutions across Japan, the Netherlands, and Egypt. Dr Aljazi al-Maraghi, staff scientist at Sidra Medicine said: "This research revealed multiple

novel disease-causing genes in patients with RSS and uncovered how disruptions in a critical cellular system, known as the Commander complex, which is responsible for recycling proteins within cells, can lead to disease. When this system fails, essential proteins don't reach the organs where they're needed, resulting in impaired development of the brain, kidneys, and bones. Our joint efforts will help accelerate progress in understanding rare diseases laying the groundwork for the future development of therapeutic strategies." Researchers studied newly identified patient groups, including three siblings from a consanguineous Arab family enrolled in Sidra Medicine's Mendelian and Metabolic disorders Translational Research Programme. As a result of their collaboration, RSS is now recognised as a 'recyclinopathy', a disorder caused by de-

Dr Ammira Akil and Dr Aljazi al-Maraghi.

fects in cellular recycling. Prof Khalid Fakhro, chief research officer and chair of the Precision Medicine Programme at Sidra Medicine, said: "This study demonstrates how our Mendelian and Metabolic disorders Programme is transforming the landscape of genetic research and

diagnosis in the region. By investigating families with rare conditions, particularly in communities with high rates of consanguinity, we are uncovering novel disease genes and mechanisms that were previously unknown." The study used genetic, cellular, proteomic, and animal model ap-

Sheikh Joaan announces candidacy for president of Olympic Council of Asia

QNA
Doha

HE the President of the Qatar Olympic Committee (QOC) and Senior Vice-President of the Association of National Olympic Committees (ANOC) Sheikh Joaan bin Hamad al-Thani has officially announced his candidacy for the Presidency of the Olympic Council of Asia (OCA), reaffirming his commitment to contributing to the development and unity of Asian sport in the years ahead. The announcement follows the Olympic Council of Asia's official call for nominations for the presidential elections, issued on Tuesday, in preparation for the upcoming General Assembly, which will be held in January 2026 in the city of Tashkent.

HE Sheikh Joaan affirmed that his candidacy is rooted in a strong belief in the power of sport to foster development and unity among nations

On this occasion, HE Sheikh Joaan expressed his sincere gratitude and appreciation to the current OCA President Raja Randhir Singh for his significant contributions and dedicated leadership in advancing Asian sport, as well as his unwavering commitment to strengthening solidarity and co-operation among National Olympic Committees across the continent. His Excellency also fully supported the OCA Executive Board's decision to appoint Raja Randhir Singh as Honorary Life President of the Olympic Council of Asia, in recognition of his longstanding service and enduring legacy within the Olympic Movement in Asia. HE Sheikh Joaan affirmed that his candidacy is rooted in a strong belief in the power of sport to foster development and unity among nations. He emphasised the potential of Asian sport to achieve transformational progress in areas such as governance, sustainability, digital transformation, and athlete empowerment.

HE Sheikh Joaan bin Hamad al-Thani

He also highlighted the importance of promoting fairness in opportunity distribution, strengthening collaboration among NOCs, enhancing sports infrastructure, and creating greater platforms for youth and women to take part in shaping the future of sport in Asia. His Excellency's candidature is built on an ambitious strategic vision for Asian sport, grounded in five core pillars: solidarity, digital transformation, sustainable development, credibility, and economic and financial resilience. It is underpinned by His Excellency's extensive experience in sports, his proven track record at the helm of the Qatar Olympic Committee, and his active role within the international Olympic Movement, particularly as senior vice-president of ANOC. The upcoming OCA election is expected to draw significant interest from the international sporting community, amid growing global challenges and the need for dynamic leadership that promotes transparency, cooperation, and innovation across the Asian sports landscape. Founded in 1982 and headquartered in Kuwait City, the Olympic Council of Asia is one of the most prominent continental sports organisations. The OCA also oversees the organisation of major multi-sport events including the Asian Games, Asian Winter Games, Asian Indoor and Martial Arts Games, Asian Beach Games, and the Asian Youth Games - competitions that continue to elevate Asia's sporting profile on the world stage.



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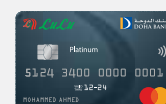


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Municipality
ministry gets
SAG Award



The Ministry of Municipality, represented by the Urban Planning Affairs Sector, received the Special Achievement in GIS (SAG) Award, presented by the Environmental Systems Research Institute (Esri), during the Esri User Conference which is being held in San Diego, California, until July 18. Director of the Survey Department at the Ministry of Municipality Ali al-Marzouqi received the award from the CEO of Esri Jack Dangermond, in the presence of a number of ministry officials during the conference's general session. The Ministry of Municipality ex-

Interior ministers of Rwanda and DRC in Doha meetings



HE the Minister of State for Interior Affairs Sheikh Abdulaziz bin Faisal bin Mohammed al-Thani met separately with Minister of Interior of Rwanda Dr Vincent Biruta and Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior, Security, Decentralisation, and Customary Affairs of the Democratic Republic of the Congo Jacquemain Shabani Lukoo. The two meetings discussed ways to strengthen co-operation and enhance joint work mechanisms and explored a range of topics of mutual interest. (QNA)



Syria minister discusses
challenges facing media

Dr Hamza al-Mustafa, the Syrian Minister of Information, has discussed with members of the Syrian Media Club in Qatar the most pressing challenges and issues facing the media sector in Syria.

Discussions were held during a meeting at the Sheraton Doha Hotel, attended by Alaa Barsilo, chairman of the General Authority for Radio and Television in Syria, alongside the president and members of the Syrian Media Club in Qatar.

Addressing the meeting, Dr al-Mustafa stressed the role of media in building the new Syria and gave a presentation of the strategic plan adopted by the Syrian Ministry of Information to advance the national media.

The meeting also explored the potential areas of co-operation between the Ministry of Information and the



Syrian Media Club, while focusing on enhancing communication and integration to serve the development of media work in Syria.

The Syrian minister addressed the numerous challenges facing state media institutions as a result of the heavy legacy left by the ousted regime, noting that the ministry has already begun restructuring its departments and divisions to keep pace with new changes and emerging needs.

He stressed that the Ministry of Information is giving special attention to training and qualifying human resources, recruiting fresh talents into the sector aiming to improve performance and develop the institutional and administrative work accordingly.

He emphasised the ministry's commitment to supporting all Syrian media professionals and praised the initiative of the Syrian Media Club in Qatar, describing it

as a pioneering experience launched during the transitional phase following the fall of the ousted regime.

Meanwhile, Omar Zakzouq, vice-president of the Club, welcomed Dr al-Mustafa, Alaa Barsilo, and the accompanying delegation.

Further, Shaker al-Masri, vice-president of the Club, presented an introductory overview of the Syrian Media Club in Qatar and its objectives.

Qatari rescue teams help fight Syrian forest fires

Commander of the Qatari International Search and Rescue Group (QISRG) Major Khalid al-Humaidi affirmed that the participation of the QISRG in extinguishing the forest fires in Latakia Governorate in Syria was an implementation of the directives of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani as an expression of Qatar's continued support for the brotherly Syrian people.

In remarks to Qatar News Agency (QNA), al-Humaidi noted that the Qatari team was comprised of 130 specialised rescuers and equipped with the latest



firefighting equipment and helicopters, adding the team carried out ground and airfield operations in direct co-ordination with the Syrian Ministry of Emergency and Disaster Management and Latakia Governorate, and with continuous monitoring

from the Qatari embassy in Damascus.

He pointed out that the operations included the use of aerial firefighting helicopter and thermal drones for early detection of fire outbreaks, in addition to co-ordination with the central operations room to monitor the wildfires' developments as they unfolded. This contributed to enhancing the speed of response and controlling the fire under challenging field conditions, including rugged terrain and volatile winds.

For his part, Syrian Minister of Emergency and Disaster Management Raed al-

Saleh announced the end of fire suppression operations in all areas of the fire after 12 days of continuous field work. He extended his thanks and appreciation to Qatar for its rapid and effective support as well as commended the Qatari teams for standing by their Syrian counterparts during this ordeal.

Al-Saleh noted that more than 16,000 hectares of forests were damaged by the fires, adding that the challenges included the dangers of mines and remnants of war that disrupted some operations, in addition to an unprecedented drought in the region. (QNA)

Environmental
violations across
south of Qatar



The Ministry of Environment and Climate Change patrols of the Land Protection Department in co-operation with the Environmental Security Forces (Lekhwiya) has carried out an extensive inspection campaign covering several areas in the south of the country, including Wadi Jalal, Al Rakbah, Mekaines, Umm Uwaynah, Bayda Al Qaa, Al Karaana, Umm Al Jamajim, Al Sabsab, and Al Tuwar.

The campaign resulted in spotting a number of environmental violations in different sites that cause direct harm to the natural environment in such areas. Accordingly, all the necessary legal measures were taken against the violators in accordance with the applicable regulations.

Real estate and
vehicle online
auctions

Real estate and vehicle auctions of the Public Prosecution, in co-operation with the Supreme Judicial Council, will be held through the Court Auctions application on July 23 from 4pm-7pm.



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INVITATION FOR AUCTION

SER. NO.	AUCTION NO.	DESCRIPTION	QUANTITY	EXPECTED SELLING	AUCTION CLOSING DATE
1	Mob/Auc-01/25	Hyundai Accent (1), Hyundai Creta (2)	3 Units	Lumpsum Price	20/07/2025
		Mitsubishi Pajero (1)	1 Unit		
		Nissan Kicks (1), Nissan Patrol V6 - SE Platinum (1), Nissan Sunny (48), Nissan Urvan (1), Nissan Urvan Panel Van (1)	52 Units		
		Toyota Corolla (3), Toyota Hiace (1), Toyota Landcruiser GXR R6B (1)	5 Units		

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- Offer must be submitted to Mobility Car Rental L.L.C. office at the below address between 9:00 AM to 3PM:
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- Offer submission date is within 24 hours from the date of inspection, any offers after this date and time will be automatically rejected
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Tender No	Description	Bid Closing Date
INT-PR-RFP-0006-2025	INTALEQ Social Media Management Service	10 August, 12:00 PM Doha local time

- Intaleq Technology Consulting and Services "INTALEQ" invites qualified and experienced marketing agencies to express their interest in participating in the Tender for the Social Media Management services.
- Interested agencies must email commercials@intaleq.qa with the subject: "RFP No. INT-PR-RFP-0006-2025 – Expression of Interest" and attach the payment receipt to receive the official RFP document.
- Tender Fee:** QAR 1,000 (non-refundable).
- Payment Method:** Payable to Intaleq Technology Consulting and Services, Bank :MASRAF AL RAYAN, Account No : 0003-103482-001, IBAN No : QA48 MAFR 0000 0000 0003 1034 8200 1, Swift Code: MAFRQAQA

Minimum requirements to participate in the Tender:

- Valid commercial registration and tax card in the State of Qatar
- Relevant experience in managing professional social media accounts.
- Portfolio of similar projects executed in the last 3 years.
- Proven capability to deliver bilingual content (Arabic & English)



QAPCO invites qualified service providers to participate in the following tender

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

SI No.	Tender Reference and Description	(i) Deadline for Submission of Information & Interest for Bidding	(ii) Tender Fee	(iii) Tender Publication on ARIBA	(iv) Tender Bond	Bid Closing Date
1	RFQ: P06-01-217 5 Years Contract for Provision of Employees Transportation Services with CNG/Non-CNG Buses and Small Cars	23-Jul-2025 12:00 PM	QAR 1,000	24-Jul-2025	QAR 250,000	21-Aug-2025, 12:00 PM, Qatar Local Time

- Interested bidders to communicate their willingness to bid and contact details to QAPCO Procurement (procurement@qapco.com.qa) indicating company name, address, telephone, official E-mail, etc. latest by the deadline for Submission of Information & Interest for Bidding indicated above. Reference Number and Description of the tender must be mentioned in the email.
- Non-refundable tender fee as indicated above is payable to QAPCO through **QNB account # 0013-001688-060** only at any QNB branch latest by 23 July 2025. (Tender Number, Subject and bidder name are to be stated in the payment receipt)
- Tender link will be sent via email notification from ARIBA system to the confirmed bidders. Tender Document will be accessible only after attaching the evidence of the tender fee payment in ARIBA by the bidder followed by Qapco approval.
- QAPCO shall reply with the access to "ARIBA eSourcing RFP event" along with necessary instructions and guidelines for the bid submission.
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Attention: Procurement Group Manager**

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

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

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HUAWEI WATCH 5 Launches with Smart Health Functions and Intelligent Interactions

Huawei today has announced the launch of the HUAWEI WATCH 5, the latest addition to the WATCH Series smartwatches. Since its debut in 2015, the HUAWEI WATCH Series has set industry benchmarks by blending cutting-edge technology with intuitive and futuristic aesthetic design. The latest generation, HUAWEI WATCH 5, elevates this legacy, introducing sophisticated multi-sensing X-TAP technology, revolutionary health monitoring capabilities, intuitive gesture interactions, and exceptional design craftsmanship.

HUAWEI WATCH 5 will be available for pre-order through HUAWEI Experience Stores in Doha Festival City, Place Vendôme, Al Nasr Street, and HUAWEI online store, as well as at Lulu Hypermarket, Jarir Bookstore, Carrefour Qatar, with price 1599 QAR along with free gifts worth 349 QAR including HUAWEI Scal + Exclusive Coupon 200 QAR.

HUAWEI X-TAP: A New Era of Health Monitoring and Interaction

At the heart of the HUAWEI WATCH 5 experience is the innovative Multi-sensing X-TAP technology. This groundbreaking feature integrates ECG, PPG, and tactile sensors in a single streamlined interface, extending health monitoring capabilities beyond traditional wrist-based detection to precise fingertip sensing. The introduction of this industry-first distributed sensing module significantly enhances the accuracy, speed, and comprehensiveness of health data collection.



The HUAWEI X-TAP technology distinguishes between varying levels of touch and pressure, enabling unique interactions across multiple smartwatch functions. By simply holding the X-TAP sensor for three seconds, users gain immediate access to Health Glance, a comprehensive health report encompassing 11 key metrics such as heart rate variability (HRV), emotional wellbeing, and blood oxygen saturation, all delivered within 60 seconds.

Powered by X-TAP, HUAWEI WATCH 5 introduces an industry-leading fingertip blood oxygen (SpO2) monitoring capability, delivering accurate results in under 10 seconds. The fingertip sensor greatly enhances the quality of pulse wave detection by leveraging the dense vascular distribution and thinner skin at the fingertip.

Precision Craftsmanship Meets Future-Forward Design

Inspired by the Kármán Line, the boundary between Earth's atmosphere and outer space, HUAWEI WATCH 5 features a sleek, integrated case design in two distinct sizes: the HUAWEI WATCH 5 42mm and the HUAWEI WATCH 5 46mm. Both models blend polished exteriors and finely detailed crowns, delivering a seamless balance between aesthetics and function.

Huawei's long-standing expertise in colour development culminates in the Beige edition, available for the 42mm model, and the Purple and black edition available for the 46mm model. Crafted from 904L stainless steel, these editions offer superior durability and corrosion resistance, maintaining a refined appearance over time. The 42mm variant uses 904L stainless steel, while the 46mm adopts aerospace-grade titanium, a material 45% lighter and nearly twice as strong as stainless steel. Both sizes are also available in 316L stainless steel with minimalist designs, offering users a choice of premium materials across compact and larger styles.

Each version is equipped with a robust spherical sapphire glass, known for its impressive hardness and clarity.

HUAWEI WATCH 5 comes with three strap materials: titanium, fluoroelastomer, and composite materials. The new composite strap mimics leather's texture while being odour-free, waterproof, and stain-resistant. The high-tech plain leather straps come in denim (beige) and silk (purple) textures, suiting a wide range of fashion styles.

Simple Gestures, Powerful Results

To simplify everyday interactions, HUAWEI WATCH

5 introduces intuitive gesture controls, Double Slide and Double Tap. Users can easily handle calls, manage music playback, and even remotely control their smartphone camera. These gestures are particularly useful in situations where hands-on interaction with the screen is challenging or limited, greatly enhancing convenience and user experience. The intuitive gestures are also supported across multiple smartwatch applications, allowing the use of features with ease.

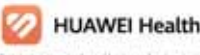
HUAWEI WATCH 5 Series also supports eSIM, keeping users connected even without their smartphones, perfect for outdoor activities or busy days. The smartwatch also features a dual-mode battery, allowing flexible switching between Standard and Battery Saver modes. Users can enjoy up to 4.5 days of use on the 46mm model and up to 3 days on the 42mm in Standard Mode, while Battery Saver Mode extends battery life up to 11 and 7 days, respectively.

Through continuous innovation in wearable technology, including pioneering features like Multi-sensing X-TAP, advanced health monitoring, and intuitive gesture interactions, HUAWEI WATCH 5 Series reinforces Huawei's leadership and commitment to enhancing users' daily lives and wellbeing, allowing them to tap into the limitless potential of tomorrow.



HUAWEI WATCH 5

Pre-order Now From QAR 1599

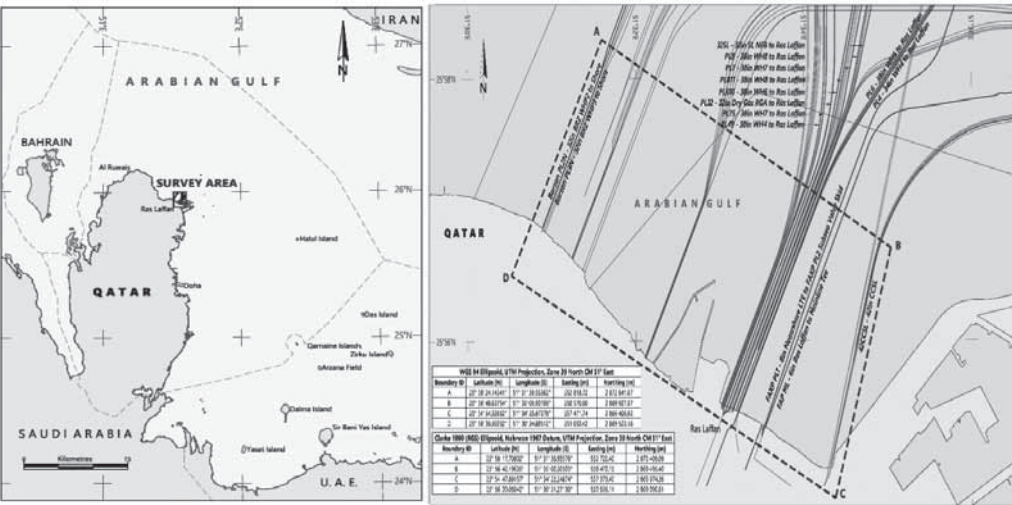


Public Announcement

To all Ships, Fisherman and Mariners
Geophysical & ROV Survey Works in
Nearshore - Raslaffan & North Field, Qatar
By the Vessel “CASA SUBATHU” from
17th Jul 2025 to 30th Sep 2025

In pursuant and under directives from the Seafarers Affairs and Registration Department, Ministry of Transport, State of Qatar, this announcement is to inform all Vessels, Mariners and Fisherman that QatarEnergy LNG intends to undertake subsea survey works by the vessel “CASA SUBATHU” in Nearshore - Raslaffan & North Field, Qatar, bound by the coordinates and location map shown below.

Corner Coordinates Covering Survey Area					Clarke 1880 (RGS) Ellipsoid, Nahrwan 1967 Datum, UTM Projection, Zone 39 North CM 51° East				
WGS 84 Ellipsoid, UTM Projection, Zone 39 North CM 51° East					Clarke 1880 (RGS) Ellipsoid, Nahrwan 1967 Datum, UTM Projection, Zone 39 North CM 51° East				
Boundary ID	Latitude [N]	Longitude [E]	Easting [m]	Northing [m]	Boundary ID	Latitude [N]	Longitude [E]	Easting [m]	Northing [m]
A	25° 58' 24.14541"	51° 31' 39.55362"	552 818.72	2 872 841.67	A	25° 58' 17.70802"	51° 31' 35.93578"	552 720.40	2 872 409.09
B	25° 56' 48.63754"	51° 35' 05.93196"	558 570.50	2 869 927.97	B	25° 56' 42.19620"	51° 35' 02.30503"	558 472.15	2 869 495.40
C	25° 54' 54.33962"	51° 34' 25.87278"	557 471.74	2 866 406.92	C	25° 54' 47.89157"	51° 34' 22.24874"	557 373.40	2 865 974.36
D	25° 56' 36.50332"	51° 30' 34.88512"	551 033.42	2 869 523.18	D	25° 56' 30.05942"	51° 30' 31.27130"	550 935.11	2 869 090.61



All Vessels, Mariners and Fishermen are expected to keep clear of the survey locations during the operations. QatarEnergy LNG takes no responsibilities for any loss or damage caused to outside parties in association with this operations following publication of this notice.

For more details contact 7048 9890

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QT reveals panel of judges for third edition of Qatar Tourism Awards

Qatar Tourism has revealed a distinguished 10-member jury panel of local and international experts for its third edition of the Qatar Tourism Awards.

These awards honour organisations and individuals known for consistently delivering exceptional tourism experiences in Qatar.

The Qatar Tourism Awards is an initiative by Qatar Tourism, developed in collaboration with the World Tourism Organisation aimed at recognising individuals and businesses across the tourism and hospitality sector in Qatar for their remarkable contributions to service excellence.

The panel is tasked with carefully evaluating tourism businesses that demonstrate excellence across seven primary categories: service excellence, gastronomic experiences, iconic attractions and activities, world-class events, digital footprint, smart and sustainable tourism, and community leadership.

These categories, along with 37 sub-categories, reflect key dimensions of both the visitor and resident experience.



The jury includes the following distinguished members: Hamad al-Mulla, vice-chairman of the Education, Culture, Sport and Information Committee of the Shura Council and the chairman of the External Affairs,

Political and National Security Committee of the Arab Parliament; Andrew Stokes, OBE – Visit England director; Aurélie Bouti, travel content creator; Dr Hamad Salem Megjheer, executive director SME Development at Qatar Development Bank; Gregor Rankin, Food and Travel Magazine, Publisher & CEO; Samer al-Kharashi, director – Regional Office for the Middle East UN Tourism; Marcel Leijzer, deputy director, Technical Co-operation and Silk Road Department – UN Tourism; Dr Abdulla al-Mehshadi, CEO of Al Wa'ab City; Ramzan al-Naimi, innovation expert and Prof Rana al-Sobh, dean of the College of Business and Economics at Qatar University.

The panel of judges will evaluate submissions expected to surpass last year's total of over 800 entries from across the sector. Winners will receive extensive promotion locally, regionally, and internationally to enhance their visibility. The winners of the third edition of the Qatar Tourism Awards will be revealed during a formal ceremony taking place in November 2025.

Qatar's Unesco envoy makes the case for cultural diplomacy

As the international community concludes 47th Session of the World Heritage Committee in Paris, HE Dr Nasser bin Hamad al-Hanzab, Qatar's Permanent Representative to Unesco, shares a powerful opinion article in The New Arab, calling for deeper global investment in cultural diplomacy as a pathway to lasting peace.

In the op-ed titled "Qatar's Experience Shows World Peace Requires Cultural Diplomacy," Dr al-Hanzab reflects on the role of heritage in international co-operation, stressing that the preservation of cultural identity is not merely an act of remembrance but a blueprint for a more interconnected, resilient future.

He writes, "Protecting heritage is as much about securing a shared future as it is about preserving the past," framing culture as a critical tool for multilateral dialogue and global solidarity. The article highlights Qatar's own contributions to cultural diplomacy, particularly through its Years of Culture initiative, which has brought meaningful engagement with countries such as France, Morocco, India and the US through shared



HE Dr Nasser bin Hamad al-Hanzab

exhibitions, youth exchanges and entrepreneurial events. Dr al-Hanzab also points to Qatar's domestic efforts, including the 20th anniversary of Qatar Museums and the 50th anniversary of the National Museum of Qatar, as examples of how culture serves as a civic and international platform. Dr al-Hanzab concludes with a reminder rooted in Unesco's founding vision: "Peace must be founded upon the intellectual and moral solidarity of mankind."

Qatar participates in Cairo workshop

Qatar participated in a joint workshop between the Legal Affairs Sector of the Arab League and the European Union Agency for Co-operation in Criminal Justice (EUROJUST), which kicked off yesterday at the headquarters of the General Secretariat of the Arab League in Cairo.

Qatar is represented at the two-day workshop by a delegation from the Ministry of Justice. Representatives from Arab ministries of justice and a number of officials from the EUROJUST and the CT JUST project, funded by the European Union and concerned with combating terrorism and strengthening criminal justice, will also participate in the workshop. The workshop aims to strengthen co-operation between the European Union and the Arab



League in various fields and discuss challenges in the field of criminal justice and judicial work. The workshop's agenda includes several topics, particularly the role of the EUROJUST, international legal co-operation, liaison judges, relations with third world countries, joint investigation teams, and the Arab Judicial Co-operation Network in the fight against terrorism and organised crime. (QNA)

MoT urges public to take part in transport usage survey

The Ministry of Transport (MoT) has urged the public to take part in the Public Transport Usage Survey. This is, according to an X post by MoT, in order to enhance public transport services.

The survey questions can be filled at <https://ee.kobotoolbox.org/x/7Xv2iw2M>

The survey is carried out as part of efforts to develop the Qatar Public Transport Master Plan (QPTMP) that aims to provide solutions that meet society's transport needs. The survey gathers data on people's mobility preferences and opinions on public transportation modes.

The QPTMP aims at improving accessibility and coverage, raising service reliability, and exploring innovative mobility solutions that keep pace with the latest advancements.

Bypassing conventional frameworks, the QPTMP will strategically guide the evolution of the transit system to address challenges associated with escalating vehicular dependency, congestion and environmental impact.

The QPTMP will study the status quo of traffic congestion of both private vehicles and public transportation and carbon emission along with its impact on Qatar's climate quality with a view to suggesting suitable solutions. Leveraging advanced and efficient public transportation solutions,



and sustainable and eco-friendly infrastructure is among QPTMP's top priorities through providing advanced electric transportation systems to help lower carbon footprint and, consequently, improve Qatar's climate quality in step with the QNV 2030's pillar of environmental development, in addition to serving a diverse audience, including policymakers, government officials, developers, investors, consultants, engineers, and planners by equipping those stakeholders with actionable frame-works and guidelines for effective planning, design, implementation, and operation of public transit services.

The QPTMP will also encompass prescriptive policies, laws and regulations, accompanied by a robust monitoring programme for integrated and comprehensive solutions through harnessing innovation to meet the growing needs for a coherent, advanced and sustainable national public transportation system.

Al Rawabi Group launches 'Hot Pass' loyalty card

The Al Rawabi Group of Companies has launched its exclusive loyalty programme 'Hot Pass'. The programme is tailored for valued customers of its three popular food and beverage divisions – Hot Chicken, Hot Tea and Café Lovella.

The Hot Pass was launched yesterday at the Rawabi Hypermarket Izghawa in a vibrant ceremony attended by Ajmal Abulla, executive director of Al Rawabi Group, Kannu Baker, group general manager, Muhammed Sinan, management executive, Rahees EM, admin manager, Shanavas Raja Salim, HR manager, Navas KP, assistant finance manager, Reneesh P, assistant IT manager and Sajith EP, assistant marketing manager.

Upon registration, every Hot Pass member will receive 500 bonus points as a welcome gift. In addition, members will receive a special birthday bonus of 300



points, making each visit even more rewarding.

"With the launch of Hot Pass, we're not only introducing a loyalty card – we're building stronger connections with our customers. This programme is our way of saying thank you for the trust and love our patrons have shown across all our food and beverage outlets," Abdulla said.

The Hot Pass programme is

available to any individual aged 16 or above with a valid Qatari mobile number. There are no membership or joining fees. Enrolment is simple and automatic – customers are enrolled by simply providing their mobile number during any dine-in or takeaway transaction at participating outlets. Points can be earned at a rate of 10 points for every QR1 spent, calculated on the subtotal after

discounts or combo offers. Customers can start redeeming their points once they accumulate a minimum of 800 points, which can be tracked either at the outlets or via the official website. All points earned will remain valid for 365 days from the date of transaction. The Hot Pass is valid across all three divisions under the Al Rawabi Group's F and B portfolio.

QCSF team at FISU Summer World University Games in Germany

The Qatar Collegiate Sports Federation (QCSF) team is participating in the 2025 FISU Summer World University Games, hosted by Germany from July 16 to 27, with more than 8,500 athletes representing 150 countries taking part in 18 different sports over 12 days at 23 sports facilities across several German cities.

Qatar will be represented by seven male and female athletes competing in four sports.

Abdullah Khalifa and Khaled Hussein will compete in fencing, while Abdullah Abdulwahab, Youssef Magdy, and Maryam Ali will compete in table tennis. Maryam Fatnassi will also participate in taekwondo, and Mubarak al-Nuaimi will compete in tennis.

The QCSF team departed for Germany yesterday to participate in the tournament.

Concurrently with the start of the Games, the General Assembly of the International University Sports Federation will be held, and the World University Sports Congress will be organised from July 17-19.

Secretary-General of the QCSF Rashid Saeed Adiba emphasised that the participation comes within the federation's strategy aimed at honing



the skills of QCSF players and preparing them for international competitions.

He said they are not participating just for the sake of being present but rather out of keenness to provide the players with quali-

tative experience through direct interaction with the international elite, which contributes to developing their technical and mental level, enhances their self-confidence, and instils in them a spirit of challenge. (QNA)

ANNOUNCEMENT

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holder of

Indian Passport No. B6734903
QID No. 30635600197

hereby change my name

from

AHANA MURALIDHAR RAMANATH RAO

to

AHANA MURALIDHAR

Any objection, please contact
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within 15 days from the publication of this notice.

ANNOUNCEMENT

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holder of

Philippines Passport No. P6541086B
QID No. 29560801471

hereby change my name

from

CLARISSE ANNE MICHAELA VELASCO BOCOBO

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CLARISSE ANNE MICHAELA BOCOBO MAGTIBAY

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‘Shabab Lad3m’ app launched to promote youth engagement

QNA
Doha

The Ministry of Sports and Youth has launched the mobile application “Shabab Lad3m” to facilitate interaction between the youth and youth-related entities by means of an integrated digital platform that provides access to events, programmes, and youth-related news in Qatar.

The announcement was made during a press conference held at Lusail Multipurpose Hall, attended by representatives from the Ministry of Sports and Youth, prominent youth leaders, in addition to youth centre and body representatives.

The platform was launched under the initiative of the Ministry's Youth Affairs Department's Youth Centers and Bodies section, in collaboration with other relevant ministry departments, yesterday.

The project's manager Abdulah Ahmed al-Kathiri gave a detailed presentation on the app's features, highlighting the ease of signing up, the ability to explore events and programmes, interact with youth institutions and services, and communicate directly with relevant authorities.

Head of the Youth Centers and Bodies section Mubarak Jaithan al-Dosari said that the app's

launch is a strategic step toward empowering the youth and strengthening their connection to youth centres, thus, integrating youth work.

Director of the Youth Affairs Department Fawaz Abdullah al-Musifri stated that the launch of “Shabab Lad3m” is part of the ministry's broader move to use technology to enhance youth work, in line with the development goals of the Qatar National Vision 2030 and the national youth policy.

The Ministry of Sports and Youth called on all the youth and on those interested in youth work to download the app via digital stores and benefit from the app's services.

Empowering next generation through art and design

By **Joey Aguilar**
Staff Reporter

Architect Abdulrahman al-Ishaq and arts advocate Daria Kalinina stand as two distinct but complementary forces in Qatar's burgeoning creative landscape, their personal journeys offering powerful blueprints for the next generation.

In a dialogue highlighting the human stories where art, youth, and Qatar's cultural vision meet, both leaders peel back the layers of their professional personas to reveal the formative memories and core values that drive them.

The result is a candid portrait of inspiration, resilience, and two profound philosophies on what it truly means to empower young minds. For al-Ishaq, a key figure in Qatar's architectural development, inspiration began not with a blueprint, but with a feeling. "I remember when my father took me to my first Jumaah prayer," he recalls, his voice painting a vivid picture. "I went to the mosque, masjid, it was huge and there were a lot of people and it was overwhelming. That's something in my memory."

This early encounter with monumental space and community shaped a worldview rooted in personal experience and self-discovery. It's a theme that echoes in his advice for today's youth. When asked what museum every teen should visit, he dismisses the idea of a one-size-fits-all answer.

"Teenagers would usually find their own spaces," he says with a knowing confidence. He speaks of his own past, not as a polished executive, but as a young man finding his place along the Doha waterfront. "I had many memories in the Corniche, at Al Bandar, when I didn't go to school for some reason," he admits with a laugh. "I would go to Al Bandar or somewhere like that, and sometimes go fishing or have karak... a good place to go is anywhere with your friends."

This glimpse into his past reveals an unexpected, relatable twist. "What would surprise us about teenage Abdulrahman?" he is asked. "I was a delinquent," he states plainly, "but I was a smart one, so I did good in school but I was a problem-maker outside of school."

This history informs his fierce-



Daria Kalinina and architect Abdulrahman al-Ishaq.

ly independent philosophy. He doesn't believe in following idols. "We should build our own view of the world and respect those who fall in line with our perspectives," he asserts. This principle is the bedrock of his definition of youth empowerment. For him, it's not about guidance or support, but agency.

"Empowerment is, instead of giving someone a fish, is teaching them how to fish," al-Ishaq explained. "If someone wants to empower youth Abdulrahman, they would just provide me with the tools to reach where I want to reach... Supporting them is not empowerment, because if you are not there to support them then they lose."

While al-Ishaq champions the power of tools and self-reliance, Daria Kalinina, the St Petersburg-native founder of the Teen Art Awards and Art.Coordinate Foundation, champions the power of belief. Her own turning point was a testament to the magic of human connection.

"I think Hermitage Museum absolutely changed my life," she says, her words infused with the passion that now fuels her work. It wasn't just the masterpieces, but a chance encounter. "I was so lucky and I met an art historian, she was an old lady... we were walking in a hall at Hermitage and we discussed art. This kind of conversation changed me and my attitude towards art and I decided to start my professional life."

This single transformative moment is the seed from which the Teen Art Awards grew. The project aims to be that life-changing "right person" for young artists facing a common hurdle: parental doubt. "They come to their parents and say, 'I want to be an art-

ist,' and parents would say, 'please choose something serious,'" she explains. "In this age, it is very important to give support. This is the reason why we decided to establish Teen Art Awards."

The awards provide tangible career-starters — exhibitions, catalogues, grants, even a documentary. But at its core, Kalinina says, "This is a project about inspiration, dream, and support."

Working with young artists from over 60 countries, she's identified a universal trait: a powerful mix of ambition and persistence. She tells the story of one participant who failed to win in the first and second seasons, only to clinch first place in the third. "This is a story that you never give up, you try again and again."

Her advice to a 15-year-old struggling with confidence is direct and heartfelt: "Never give up. Believe in yourself, because believing is a magical thing. It is like a wind scrolling behind your back." She adds a crucial lesson: "Do not be afraid to commit mistakes, because mistakes will build your future success."

Two leaders, two paths. One, a former rule-bender who upskilled his way with his friends forward on the shores of the Corniche, now building the future and urging youth to develop their agency upskill. The other, an art historian whose life was changed by a mentor, now creating a global platform to tell young people they are not alone in their dreams.

Together, their stories offer a rich and nuanced vision for Qatar's creative future — one that has space for the self-reliant innovator and the supported dreamer, providing both the blueprints and the belief to build something truly extraordinary.

GCC in pact with Malomatia to develop unified platform for customs data exchange

QNA
Riyadh

The GCC Customs Union Authority and Malomatia company have signed a contract to build a unified central platform for the exchange of customs data among GCC countries.

This strategic step aims to modernise and develop the digital infrastructure for customs procedures and enhance joint customs work, within a shared vision that reflects the aspirations of GCC countries towards a more interconnected and efficient Gulf economy.

A statement issued by Malomatia company indicated that the platform project contract, which was signed yesterday at the headquarters of the Customs Union Authority in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, represents a qualitative shift in the path of Gulf customs co-operation, by enabling a secure and immediate exchange of customs data between customs authorities and administrations in the GCC countries. This will contribute to accelerating the flow of customs data, streamlining the movement of



goods, improving risk analysis tools, raising compliance levels, and providing accurate data to support decision-making, in line with the best international standards and contributing to achieving the strategic objectives of the Customs Union Authority.

Executive Director of the GCC Customs Union Authority Dr Suleiman bin Masoud al-Ghafri emphasised that this project embodies the commitment of the GCC countries to building a unified and flexible customs system, within a comprehensive strategic vision led by the authority to support Gulf customs integration and consolidate the position of the GCC countries as an effective economic group in the fields of trade and logistics services at the regional and international level. This vision is based on dig-

ital transformation and institutional integration, and enhances the region's ability to efficiently deal with the variables of global supply chains through electronic connectivity and effective co-ordination between customs authorities and administrations.

CEO of Malomatia Khalid bin Mohamed al-Kubaisi said the customs data exchange platform will provide integrated and secure technical solutions that connect relevant entities, expedite customs clearance processes, and ensure a smooth and accurate flow of data to support regional co-operation and foster economic growth. The platform will also work to achieve digital customs integration among GCC countries, enhancing operational efficiency and supporting regulatory compliance through a unified data exchange platform.

Closure of Exit No 32 at Al Thumama Stadium Interchange

The Public Works Authority (Ashghal) has announced a temporary closure of Exit No 32 at Al Thumama Stadium Interchange for those coming from the Mesaieed Road towards Al Wakra from 2am on July 18 till 2am on July 19. The closure that will be implemented in co-ordination with the General Directorate of Traffic has been announced to carry out necessary maintenance work. During the closure, road users coming from Mesaieed Road towards Al Wakra should turn right onto Sabah Al Ahmad Corridor, then take the U-turn at Ahmad Bin Seif Al



Thani Interchange to reach their destination as indicated on the map. Ashghal will install road signs advising motorists of the temporary closure and has requested all to abide by the speed limit to ensure safety.

Katara Hospitality launches “Stay Your Way” Summer Edition Package 2025

Katara Hospitality, a leading global hotel owner, developer, and operator based in Qatar, is thrilled to announce the launching of its highly sought-after “Stay Your Way” summer edition package. The summer Katara Hospitality designed packages that fits your preferability, whether its short city escape or an indulgent extend staycation, exclusive privileges and tailor-made experiences with up to 40% saving. Katara Hospitality's prestigious portfolio of hotels in Doha is unparalleled luxury experience.

Valid until August 31st, 2025, “Stay Your Way” summer package invites guests to indulge in a truly bespoke escape with discounts and exclusive privileges designed for ultimate experience. This initiative underscores Katara Hospitality's commitment to the local community and its dedication to providing exceptional hospitality experiences.

Participating Hotels:

Guests can experience this exclusive offer at 15 distinct destinations across Doha, each offering unique charm and world-class amenities. Participating hotels include:

Al Messila, a Luxury Collection Resort & Spa, Doha, Hilton Salwa Beach Resort & Villas, Jouri, a Murwab Hotel, Fairmont Doha, Raffles Doha, Mövenpick Hotel Doha, Rixos Gulf Hotel Doha, Sealine Beach, a Murwab Resort, Sharq Village & Spa, a Ritz-Carlton Hotel, Sheraton Grand Doha Resort & Convention Hotel, Simaisma, a Murwab Resort, Somerset West Bay Doha, The Ritz-Carlton, Doha

Indulge in Award-Winning Spa Experiences:

Several Katara Hospitality properties boast exceptional spa facilities, inviting guests to embark on a journey of relaxation and rejuvenation:

- **Al Messila, a Luxury Collection Resort & Spa, Doha:** Discover a haven of tranquility with its spacious women's spa featuring 14,000 square feet of dedicated space, diverse treatments, and four “Worlds” of water health care areas.
- **Sharq Village & Spa, a Ritz-Carlton Hotel:** One of Qatar's most luxurious spa facilities, offering 23 treatment rooms, four distinct spa areas reflecting local heritage, and dedicated ladies' areas.
- **Hilton Salwa Beach Resort & Villas:** Euphoria Spa presents 8 treatment rooms and a VIP room, providing unique relaxation experiences including volcanic stone massages and honey bath rituals.
- **Raffles Doha Spa:** A sanctuary of luxury and rejuvenation, offering transformative treatments in private suites designed for ultimate relaxation.



Qatar Airways to restart flights to Aleppo from Aug 10

QNA
Doha

Qatar Airways yesterday announced the resumption of three weekly flights to Aleppo, Syria from August 10, 2025.

The flights will be increased to four weekly flights from September 1, 2025.

Qatar Airways operations to the city first began in 2011. The airline resumed flights to Damascus in early 2025, making Aleppo the second Syrian destination to connect to the airline's global network, the airline stated in a statement yesterday.

Aleppo will join Qatar Airways' vast network of more than 170 global destinations. The resumption represents the airline's commitment to increasing connectivity in the region and the world through Qatar Airways' award-winning hub, the world-class Hamad International Airport in Doha, Qatar.



Qatar Airways Privilege Club members can make their trips more rewarding by collecting Avios on their flights as well as shopping and dining at Qatar Duty Free at Hamad International Airport.

Members can spend their Avios on travel and lifestyle rewards of their choice including bidding on money-can't-buy experiences with Privilege Club Collection.

Khamenei says Israel war meant to ‘overthrow system’ in Iran

AFP
Tehran

Iran's supreme leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei said yesterday that Israel's attacks during last month's 12-day war were intended to weaken the Islamic republic's system and spark unrest to topple it.

"The calculation and plan of the aggressors was to weaken the system by targeting certain figures and sensitive centres in Iran," said Khamenei during a meeting with judiciary officials.

During the meeting, excerpts of

which were published in videos on his website, he said the move was meant to stir "unrest and bring people into the streets to overthrow the system".

Israel launched an unprecedented bombing campaign against Iran on June 13, killing top military commanders and nuclear scientists.

Iranian authorities said more than 1,000 people were killed in Iran.

During the war, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu told Fox News that the Israeli strikes "certainly could" bring about a change in the Iranian system.

Iran responded to the Israeli attacks with drone and missile fire, killing 28 people in Israel, according to Israeli authorities.

On June 22, Israel's ally the United States launched unprecedented strikes of its own on Iranian nuclear facilities at Fordo, Isfahan and Natanz.

Iran hit back with missile strikes on US Al Udaid airbase in Qatar, which Khamenei described yesterday as a "big blow" to the US and warned that "even greater strikes can be dealt to the US and others." A ceasefire between Iran and Israel has been in place since June 24.



Summit on Palestinian statehood ‘planned for September’

AFP
Paris

International envoys will discuss a two-state solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict at UN headquarters in New York this month, before national leaders meet in September, a French diplomatic source said yesterday.

A conference, co-chaired by France and Saudi Arabia, was planned for June to revive a diplomatic path for Israeli and Palestinian states to live side-by-side in peace. It was postponed at the last minute because of Israel's military campaign against Iran. Last week, diplomatic sources said the conference had been rescheduled for July 28-29, but did not say who would attend. The French source said this

month's meeting would be at ministerial level. French Foreign Minister Jean-Noel Barrot would attend, his office said. It would seek to "advance the recognition of a Palestinian state for a certain number of states who have not yet recognised it, including France," the source said. Heads of state and government would meet in either Paris or New York, before the UN General Assembly, which

will be attended by world leaders on September 22, the source added. Last week, French President Emmanuel Macron called for joint recognition of a Palestinian state by France and Britain. Before the June conference was postponed, Barrot said France would not recognise a Palestinian state alone, in a possible reference to France's desire to see any recognition matched by some Gulf allies

recognising Israel. US President Donald Trump during his first term promoted the "Abraham Accords" in which the United Arab Emirates, Bahrain and Morocco became the first Arab countries in decades to normalise with Israel. Saudi Arabia has made clear that it cannot normalise with Israel until the Gaza war ends and progress is made toward a two-state solution with the Palestinians.

UN expert on Palestinians says US sanctions are a ‘violation’ of immunity

AFP
Bogota

The UN's unflinching expert on Palestinian affairs Francesca Albanese has said that Washington's sanctions following her criticism of the White House's stance on Gaza are a "violation" of her immunity. The United Nations' Special Rapporteur on the occupied Palestinian territories made the comments while visiting Bogota, nearly a week after US Secretary of State Marco Rubio announced the sanctions, calling her work "biased and malicious."

"It's a very serious measure. It's unprecedented. And I take it very seriously," Albanese told an audience in the Colombian capital. Albanese was in Bogota to attend an international summit initiated by leftist President Gustavo Petro to find solutions to the Gaza conflict.

The Italian legal scholar and human rights expert has faced harsh criticism for her longstanding accusations that Israel is committing "genocide" in Gaza. "It's clear violation of the UN Convention on Privileges and Immunities that protect UN officials, including independent



UN Special Rapporteur for the occupied Palestinian territories Francesca Albanese speaks during a press conference following an Emergency Conference of States, in Bogota, Colombia.

experts, from words and actions taken in the exercise of their functions," Albanese said. Rubio on July 9 announced that Washington was sanctioning Albanese "for her illegitimate and shameful efforts to prompt (ICC) action against US and Israeli officials, companies, and executives." The sanctions are "a warning to anyone who dares to defend international law and human rights, justice and freedom," Albanese said.

On Thursday, the UN urged the United States to reverse the sanctions against Albanese, along with sanctions against judges of the International Criminal Court, with UN chief Antonio Guterres's spokesman calling the move "a dangerous precedent." On Friday, the European Union also spoke out against the sanctions facing Albanese, adding that it "strongly supports the United Nations human rights system." Albanese, who assumed her mandate in 2022, released a

damning report this month denouncing companies – many of them American – that she said "profited from the Israeli economy of illegal occupation, apartheid, and now genocide" in the occupied Palestinian territories. The report provoked a furious Israeli response, while some of the companies also raised objections. Washington last month slapped sanctions on four ICC judges, in part over the court's arrest warrant for Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, barring them from the United States. UN special rapporteurs like Albanese are independent experts who are appointed by the UN human rights council but do not speak on behalf of the United Nations. The war in Gaza was triggered in October 2023 after Hamas fighters stormed Israel and took hostages, according to an AFP tally based on official figures. More than 58,479 Palestinians have been killed in ongoing retaliation operations, according to data from the Health Ministry of the Hamas government, considered reliable by the UN. Israel has occupied the West Bank since 1967 and violence has surged in the territory since October 2023.



A youth rides a bicycle in front of the heavily damaged Syrian army and defence ministry headquarters complex in Damascus, following Israeli strikes, yesterday.

Turkiye says Israeli strikes on Damascus ‘act of sabotage’

AFP
Istanbul

Turkiye yesterday condemned Israel's strikes on Syrian army headquarters in Damascus, saying they undermine stability in the war-torn country and must stop. "Israel's attacks on Damascus, following its military interventions in the south of Syria, constitute an act of sabotage against Syria's efforts to secure peace, stability, and security," the foreign ministry said in a statement.

Foreign Minister Hakan Fidan told his Syrian counterpart, Asaad al-Shaibani, that Israel's strikes in southern Syria and Damascus were "alarming," a Turkish diplomatic source said. Israel bombed the Syrian army headquarters in Damascus yesterday after warning the government to leave the Druze minority alone in its Sweida heartland. Israel has presented itself as a defender of the Druze, although analysts say that is a pretext for pursuing its own military goal of keeping Syrian government forces as far from the border as possible.

US deports 5 migrants convicted of crimes to African kingdom

AFP
Mbabane

The United States has deported five migrants convicted of crimes to the small African kingdom of Eswatini, ruled by an absolute monarch accused of human rights abuses, officials have said. The deported migrants are nationals of Cuba, Jamaica, Laos, Vietnam and Yemen. The deportation of migrants to countries which are not their own is part of US President Donald Trump's campaign promise to expel millions of undocumented migrants from the United States. His administration has de-

fended so-called third-country deportations as necessary, since the home nations of some of those targeted for removal sometimes refuse to accept them, despite criticism. "These criminal illegal aliens are so uniquely barbaric that their home countries refused to take them back," the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) wrote on Tuesday on X. They were convicted of violent crimes such as child abuse and murder, according to the DHS. Eswatini's government said the five men were being held in isolated units at a correctional facility and would "facilitate the transit of these inmates to their countries of origin".

Bahrain reveals \$17bn in US deals during Trump talks

Reuters
Washington

Bahrain's crown prince announced yesterday plans to invest more than \$17bn in the United States at a meeting with President Donald Trump focused on trade, Iran and regional security issues. Under the plan, Bahrain was expected to sign a deal valued at about \$7bn for its national carrier, Gulf Air, to buy 12 Boeing aircraft with an option for six more and 40 General Electric engines, according to a White House official. "We're very happy to be announcing \$17bn worth of deals that are coming to the United States," said Crown Prince Salman bin Hamad al-Khalifah. "And this is real. These aren't fake deals." The announcement from Prince Salman came during an Oval Office visit on the heels of foreign investment deals Trump made during a trip to the Middle East in May. During a visit to Riyadh, Trump secured a \$600bn commitment from Saudi Arabia to invest in the United States and agreed to

sell the Saudis an arms package worth nearly \$142bn. Bahrain is an important security partner of the United States, hosting the US Navy's Fifth Fleet. Bahrain's exports face a 10% baseline tariff under Trump's trade policies but have been spared larger levies imposed on other countries' exports. Trump said the two men would privately discuss Iran, which is under pressure to resume nuclear talks with the US as Washington and three major European countries have agreed to set the end of August as the deadline for a deal. Israel and the US launched strikes on Iran's nuclear facilities last month, saying that they were part of a programme geared towards developing nuclear weapons. Tehran maintains that its nuclear programme is purely for civilian purposes. The US official said the new Bahrain deal will support 30,000 American jobs and was secured with help from Trump and Commerce Secretary Howard Lutnick. Bahrain is expected to sign deals with Oracle and Cisco,

with plans to replace Chinese servers with Cisco products, the official said. Bahrain also seeks to increase its investments in US energy, tech, and manufacturing sectors. The official said the crown prince intends to deploy capital to increase US domestic aluminium production, invest in US LNG production to secure energy supplies and purchase cutting-edge AI chips, partnering with US hyperscalers. During the visit, the crown prince signed various deals and memoranda of understanding confirming those arrangements. One of these memos seeks to advance peaceful nuclear partnership between Bahrain and the US. It was signed by US Secretary of State Marco Rubio and Bahraini Foreign Minister Abdullatif bin Rashid al-Zayani during a State Department visit before the Oval Office meeting. Later this year, the king of Bahrain will visit Washington to finalise these agreements and solidify the progress made in building the two nations' economic prosperity, the US official said.

Cameroon's Biya, 92, reshuffles military top brass ahead of vote

Reuters
Yaounde

Cameroon's 92-year-old President Paul Biya, the world's oldest head of state, has overhauled the military's top ranks in what analysts say is an effort to ensure the armed forces back his bid for an eighth term after a public outcry. The personnel moves, announced late on Tuesday in a series of presidential decrees, affect nearly all branches of the armed forces. They include the appointment of new chiefs of staff for the infantry, air force and navy as well as the promotion of eight brigadier generals to the rank of major general. One of the promoted generals is the co-ordinator of the elite Rapid Intervention Battalion (BIR), a special forces unit often deployed in counter-terrorism operations and seen as central to Biya's security apparatus. The decrees also named a new special presidential military adviser. The decrees were published two days after Biya, in power since 1982, announced he would run for his eighth term in office in Cameroon's presidential election scheduled for October 12. The seven-year term could keep him in office until he is nearly 100. The announcement prompted an unprecedented public outcry in the press and on social media in Cameroon, where Biya's age and long absences have raised questions about his fitness to rule. The government has said Biya is in good health and dismissed any suggestions otherwise. The decrees concerning the armed forces reflect "a strategy by President Biya and his collaborators to consolidate power by building a fortress of loyal army generals around him" that can suppress any protest to his continued rule, said Anthony Antem, peace



File photo of Cameroon President Paul Biya.

and security analyst at the Nkafu Policy Institute in Yaounde. Celestin Delanga, researcher at the Institute for Security Studies (ISS), said the decrees "come in a unique political and security context." Biya wants to ensure stability during and after the election and "additional trusted personnel are needed" for that, he said. The cocoa and oil-producing Central African nation also faces a host of serious security challenges, notably a conflict with Anglophone separatists and threats from Nigeria-based hardline fighters in the north. The government gave no explanation for the overhaul. The last significant military shake-up in Cameroon came just last year, shortly after Biya returned in October from his latest extended stay abroad which revived speculation about his health.

Clashes between rival Somali militias kill 8

Clashes between pro-government and separatist militias in a north-eastern Somali region have killed at least eight people and wounded 24 more, a local elder said yesterday, AFP reported. The fighting erupted late Tuesday in Puntland's Dhahar district, roughly 260 kilometres from Garowe, between a militia aligned with the federal government and one connected to a push for independence. Oil-rich Puntland declared its autonomy in 1998 and the region has had strained relations with the central government in Mogadishu.

VERDICT

Harry Potter stars banned from driving

Two stars of the *Harry Potter* films, including actress Emma Watson, were each banned from driving for six months yesterday after being caught speeding in separate incidents. Watson, 35, who played Hermione Granger, the friend of Potter in the movie franchise, was banned for driving at 38 miles an hour in a 30-mile zone in southeastern Banbury last July. Zoe Wanamaker, 76, who played Quidditch teacher Madame Hooch in *Harry Potter And The Philosopher's Stone*, was banned for six months for her offence. She had been caught driving at 46 miles an hour in a 40-mile zone of the M4 motorway in Berkshire last August.

LAW AND ORDER

Cambodia arrests 1,000 in cyberscam crackdown

Cambodian authorities have arrested more than 1,000 people in raids on Internet scam centres, police said yesterday, as Prime Minister Hun Manet ordered a crackdown on cybercrime sweatshops. The United Nations has described Southeast Asia as the "ground zero" of scam centres, where workers typically use romance or business cons to defraud social media users of an estimated \$40bn annually. Over three days, authorities raided sites across the country, including in the capital Phnom Penh, the Thai border city of Poipet and the coastal city of Sihanoukville. Just over 1,000 suspects were detained, according to police reports.

CRIME

Man irked by go-karting noise arrested for attempted arson

A Japanese man enraged by the noise of go-karting popular with foreign tourists was arrested yesterday for trying to set fire to the motor vehicles, according to police and local media. Go-karting is a popular sight in Japan with tourists allowed to manoeuvre their way through Tokyo streets. The 28-year-old Japanese man was arrested on charges of attempted arson, Tokyo police said. Police said the man was suspected of setting fire last month to waste on the premises of a Tokyo company that operates go-karting tours, with flames spreading to its parked go-karts. Nearby walls were also burned, but the fire was quickly extinguished.

PEOPLE

Australia's 'Outback Killer' dies in custody

An Australian man who murdered a British backpacker on a remote highway in 2001 has died without revealing where he left his victim, police said yesterday. Former mechanic Bradley Murdoch killed Peter Falconio in 2001, shooting him dead after waving his car down on a deserted road in the vast Australian outback. Falconio had been driving with his British girlfriend Joanne Lees, who fled into the bush after Murdoch tried to abduct her. Murdoch - who would come to be known as Australia's "Outback Killer" - was in 2005 convicted of Falconio's murder. Police never found his 28-year-old victim's body.

Afghan data breach raises serious questions for Tories: PM

AFP
London

Ministers in the UK's last Conservative government have "serious questions to answer" over a secret resettlement plan for thousands of Afghans after a data breach endangered their lives, Prime Minister Keir Starmer said yesterday.

Parliamentary speaker Lindsay Hoyle said the affair raised significant constitutional issues" after it emerged that the previous government had obtained a court order banning media coverage and preventing any scrutiny by parliament.

Thousands of Afghans who worked with the UK and their families have been brought to Britain under the programme following the leak. But the 2022 breach and the resettlement plan to protect those involved from potential repercussions only came to light on Tuesday after a court super-gag was lifted.

Defence Minister John Healey told parliament a UK official had accidentally leaked a spreadsheet containing the names and details of almost 19,000 Afghans who had asked to be relocated to Britain.

It happened in February 2022, just six months after Taliban fighters seized Kabul, he said.

In parliament yesterday, Starmer said his government supported the principle of fulfilling "our obligations to Afghans who served alongside British forces" in the post 9/11 conflict in the South Asian country.

Healey had "set out the full extent of the failings that we inherited: a major data breach, a super-injunction, a secret route that has already cost hundreds of millions of pounds", he added.

"Ministers who served under the party opposite have serious questions to answer about how this was ever allowed to happen," he said.

The nearly two-year-long court ban secured by the previous government prevented any media reporting of the leak.

In addition, parliament was not briefed and there was no public knowledge of the resettlement plan and the costs involved.

Speaker of Parliament Lindsay Hoyle, who is responsible for the proper administration of the House of Commons, also commented on the affair. "This episode raises significant constitutional issues. I have therefore asked the clerks to consider whether any lessons need to be learned from this case," he told lawmakers.

Under the Conservatives the secret programme was put in place in April 2024 to help those "judged to be at the highest risk of reprisals", Healey said told parliament.

Some 900 Afghans and 3,600 family members have now been brought to Britain or are in transit under the programme known as the Afghan Response Route, at a cost of around £400mn (\$535mn).

Applications from 600 more people have also been accepted, bringing the estimated total cost of the scheme to £850mn.

Britain's changing climate



A car drives across a bridge over Baitings Reservoir. Water levels at the reservoir near Ripponden, northern England, is at a low. Extremes in temperature and rainfall are becoming increasingly frequent in the UK, the nation's meteorological service said this week in a report on Britain's changing climate. Records were now being broken "very frequently", said Mike Kendon, Met Office climate scientist and lead author of the Met Office's State of the UK Climate report.

UK's Starmer suspends several Labour rebels

AFP
London

British Prime Minister Keir Starmer yesterday suspended several lawmakers as he tried to reassert his authority over his ruling Labour party following a rebellion over welfare reforms.

Starmer was forced to backtrack on plans to slash disability and sickness benefits earlier this month after dozens of his own MPs threatened to vote against the proposals.

MPs Brian Leishman, Neil Duncan-Jordan, and Rachael Maskell said they had been suspended while the Times newspaper reported

that Chris Hinchliff had suffered the same fate.

All four voted against the welfare reforms on July 1 after Starmer made his authority-sapping climbdown to avoid a humiliating defeat in parliament.

Leishman's office confirmed that the Scottish MP had been temporarily suspended from the party.

Duncan-Jordan, the representative for Poole in southern England, said he understood that voting against the government "could come at a cost, but I couldn't support making disabled people poorer".

Starmer has endured a difficult first year in power and has made several damaging U-turns in recent weeks. Political scientist Steven

Fielding said the purge was a bid by Starmer to reinforce party discipline.

"He wants to send a signal to all the others that rebelled over the welfare bill and have rebelled on other things that, 'Okay, you've got away with this one, but if you keep going, this is going to be your fate,'" Fielding said.

But the University of Nottingham politics professor added it was a risky strategy considering the large numbers of lawmakers who had opposed the welfare reforms.

"I think he's going about it in the wrong way. He needs to talk (to) and understand why the MPs are doing this," Fielding said.

Labour did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

Violence erupts at Bangladesh rally, four killed

Violence erupted yesterday at a rally of Bangladesh's youth-led National Citizen Party in the town of Gopalganj, with four people killed and more injured according to local media. Student-led protests forced prime minister Sheikh Hasina to flee to India in August last year, and since then there have been delays over promised reforms, growing protests and political division. Nobel peace laureate Muhammad Yunus, who took over as interim head, said that members of the NCP, police and media were attacked during a peaceful rally yesterday, with cars vandalised and individuals assaulted. "Preventing young citizens from peacefully holding a rally to commemorate the one-year anniversary of their revolutionary movement is a shameful violation of their fundamental rights," he said, blaming Hasina's political party the Awami League and its student group for the violence.

Salman Khan unveils ISRL team jersey



Bollywood actor Salman Khan (centre), brand ambassador of the Indian Supercross Racing League (ISRL), unveils the official jersey of his team during an event in Mumbai yesterday. The ISRL is an Indian motorcycle racing league.

India June gold imports fall to a two-year low

Reuters
Mumbai

India's gold imports in June fell 40% from a year ago to their lowest level in more than two years, as a price rally to a record high sapped demand, a government and two industry officials said.

Imports to India, the world's second-largest gold consumer, fell to 21 tonnes, the lowest since April 2023, said a government official, who declined to be named as he was not authorised to talk to the media.

In value terms, gold imports fell to \$1.84bn in June from \$2.48bn a year ago, the official said. In the past decade, on average, India imported 52.4 tonnes of gold in June.

In the first half of 2025, India's gold imports fell 30% from

a year ago to 204.1 tonnes, the lowest since the first half of 2020, when the Covid-19 outbreak led to lockdown, the trade ministry data showed.

The rapid surge in prices has been discouraging retail buyers from making jewellery purchases, said Ashok Jain, proprietor of Mumbai-based gold wholesaler Chenaji Narsinghji.

Domestic prices hit an all-time high of Rs101,078 per 10 grams in June. Gold prices have risen 27% so far this year after rising 21% in 2024.

Gold imports would remain subdued even in July, as demand is still tepid because of higher prices, Jain said.

Silver imports in June nearly doubled from a year ago to 197 tonnes, but were significantly lower than the 544 tonnes imported in May, the government official said.

Thaksin testifies in court in royal defamation case

AFP
Bangkok

Former Thai prime minister Thaksin Shinawatra testified in court yesterday, seeking to defend himself against royal defamation charges in a watershed case for his faltering political dynasty.

Thaksin faces up to 15 years in prison if he is convicted in the closed-door trial in Bangkok, where he stands accused of breaching strict lese majeste laws that shield Thailand's royal family from abuse and criticism.

For the past quarter-century, the 75-year-old telecoms magnate has

been a defining figure of Thai politics, founding a political clan which has jostled with the traditional pro-royal, pro-military elite.

But his prosecution - combined with the suspension of his daughter, Prime Minister Paetongtarn Shinawatra, this month -- represents a dramatic waning of their family's political fortune, analysts say.

The prosecutors' case revolves around remarks Thaksin made to South Korean media a decade ago.

Thaksin's lawyer Winyat Chatmontri said he gave testimony in the morning "and will continue throughout the rest of the day".

The court has scheduled the ver-

dict for August 22, he told reporters.

Around 50 Thaksin supporters gathered at the courthouse wearing red shirts -- the colour of his political movement -- emblazoned with his portrait.

"He is a very talented guy," 79-year-old retired accountant Vaew Wilailak said. "But from past experience, bad people just want to get rid of him."

Thaksin returned to Thailand in August 2023 after 15 years in exile, following a military coup which ousted him from the premiership he was twice elected to.

He returned the day his family's Pheu Thai party took office at the head of a coalition govern-

ment backed by their conservative former enemies, fuelling suspicions a backroom deal had been struck.

Thaksin was immediately sentenced to eight years in prison on graft and abuse of power charges -- later reduced to one year by a pardon from King Maha Vajiralongkorn. But political analyst Yuttaporn Issarachai said: "There is always someone within the establishment who sees him as a threat to Thai society."

In recent interviews, Thaksin affirmed his loyalty to the monarchy and expressed gratitude for the king's pardon.

Speaking outside the court on the trial's opening day on July 1,

Thaksin's lawyer Winyat said his client appeared "chill" despite the seriousness of the case.

On the same day, Thaksin's daughter Paetongtarn was suspended by the Constitutional Court pending an ethics probe into her conduct during a leaked diplomatic phone call discussing a deadly border clash between Thailand and neighbouring Cambodia.

In the call, Paetongtarn addressed Cambodian ex-leader Hun Sen as "uncle" and described a Thai military commander as an "opponent" -- sparking backlash for seeming to kowtow to a foreign statesman and undermine her own country's military.

Pheu Thai's coalition has been abandoned by key conservative backers over the call, leaving it with a razor-thin parliamentary majority steered by a caretaker prime minister.

Thailand's parliament yesterday threw out a draft amnesty bill in its first reading that would have released more than 30 people in prison for royal defamation.

According to Thai Lawyers for Human Rights, at least 280 people have been prosecuted under the kingdom's strict lese majeste law since 2020, which shields the king and his close family from any criticism and carries a maximum sentence of up to 15 years per offence.

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GULF TIMES

Trump tariffs put
Bolsonaro, Brazil
right in a bind

US President Donald Trump pitched his 50% tariffs against Brazil as a way to support former president Jair Bolsonaro, but three people close to the right-wing ex-president said they were stunned by the move and fear it may do more harm than good.

Announcing the higher tariffs in a letter last week, Trump cast them as a pressure tactic to help Bolsonaro, who is on trial before the Brazilian Supreme Court for allegedly plotting a coup to overturn his loss in the 2022 presidential election.

Bolsonaro has described the accusations as baseless and insisted he will run for president in 2026, despite a court decision that bars him from the race. In his tariff letter, Trump said his ally Bolsonaro is the victim of a “witch hunt.”

Brazil’s leftist President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva, who defeated Bolsonaro in 2022, has neither the interest nor the ability to interfere in the case. Last week, he dismissed Trump as an unwanted “emperor” and threatened retaliation if trade negotiations do not advance.

Bolsonaro allies fear the steep tariffs, likely to hurt Brazilian sectors from coffee and orange growers to cattle ranching and the aviation industry, could rally national pride behind a defiant Lula, supporting his sagging popularity.

Backlash against Trump has already given a boost to several of his ideological foes abroad. Left-of-centre parties surged to victory in Canadian and Australian elections this year, riding a wave of opposition to Trump’s policies, while hard-right Trump allies have struggled in Romania and Hungary.

Bolsonaro’s inner circle had been eager for a display of Trump’s support since he returned to the White House. Lawmaker Eduardo Bolsonaro, one of the former president’s sons, took a leave of absence from Brasilia

and moved with his family to rally support for his father in Washington.

But the thrill of catching Trump’s attention soon curdled as the Bolsonaros realised the crushing weight of the tariffs tied to their cause, according to the sources, who said the family had expected targeted sanctions against one judge

People close to
the ex-president
said they were
stunned by the
move

overseeing the Supreme Court case.

Now the Bolsonaro clan has no alternative but to support Trump and his letter, even while understanding that the move “could provoke negative reactions,” said one of the sources, requesting anonymity to discuss private conversations.

Last week, in the wake of Trump’s tariff announcement, leaders of Brazil’s Congress who had been fighting Lula on several fronts issued statements supporting him.

“The banner of nationalism holds a very significant appeal, especially within the right-wing camp,” said Graziella Testa, a professor of political science at the Getulio Vargas Foundation in Brasilia.

A close association with Trump may prove electorally toxic for allies of Bolsonaro, whose political future was already clouded by the threat of a possible prison sentence and the court decision barring him from public office until 2030.

“It is absolutely deplorable that there are still people in Brazil who defend Trump,” wrote the conservative opinion page of major Brazilian newspaper *O Estado de Sao Paulo* in an editorial last week. “Wearing Trump’s cap today means aligning oneself with a troglodyte who could cause immense damage to the Brazilian economy.”

Bolsonaro representatives declined to comment on the newspaper’s editorial.

On Sunday, the former president tried to show empathy for his supporters without alienating Trump.

“It doesn’t make me happy to see our rural and urban producers, as well as the people, suffer with this 50% tariff,” he said on social media, adding: “The solution is in the hands of the Brazilian authorities.”

Other conservative politicians in Brazil are also trying to strike a tricky balance in their public comments.

Sao Paulo Governor Tarcisio de Freitas, who launched his political career from Bolsonaro’s cabinet and is now seen as a possible heir to his electorate, initially blamed Lula’s ideology for the tariff hike on social media.

By Friday, he was shifting focus to Washington, saying on X that he had met with the head of the US embassy in Brasilia to “open a dialogue ... based on data and consolidated arguments.”

The lawmaker Bolsonaro criticised his former ally’s efforts to negotiate a compromise and pinned the blame for the situation squarely on Lula’s administration, which the hard-right has sought to characterise as a leftist dictatorship.

“I’m sorry, but there is no way to ask President Trump — or any remotely decent international authority — to treat a dictatorship as if it were a democracy,” he wrote on X. — Reuters

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Unfazed by Trump, Putin will fight
on and could take more territory

By Guy Faulconbridge and
Darya Korsunskaya
Moscow

President Vladimir Putin intends to keep fighting in Ukraine until the West engages on his terms for peace, unfazed by Donald Trump’s threats of tougher sanctions, and his territorial demands may widen as Russian forces advance, three sources close to the Kremlin said.

Putin, who ordered Russian troops into Ukraine in February 2022 after eight years of fighting in country’s east between Russian-backed separatists and Ukrainian troops, believes Russia’s economy and its military are strong enough to weather any additional Western measures, the sources said.

Trump on Monday expressed frustration with Putin’s refusal to agree a ceasefire and announced a wave of weapons supplies to Ukraine, including Patriot surface-to-air missile systems. He also threatened further sanctions on Russia unless a peace deal was reached within 50 days.

The three Russian sources, familiar with top-level Kremlin thinking, said Putin will not stop the war under pressure from the West and believes Russia — which has survived the toughest sanctions imposed by the West — can endure further economic hardship, including threatened US tariffs targeting buyers of Russian oil.

“Putin thinks no one has seriously engaged with him on the details of peace in Ukraine — including the Americans — so he will continue until he gets what he wants,” one of the sources told Reuters on condition of anonymity due to the sensitivity of the situation.

Despite several telephone calls between Trump and Putin, and visits to Russia by US special

envoy Steve Witkoff, the Russian leader believes there have not been detailed discussions of the basis for a peace plan, the source said.

“Putin values the relationship with Trump and had good discussions with Witkoff, but the interests of Russia come above all else,” the person added.

Asked for a comment on the Reuters reporting, White House spokeswoman Anna Kelly blamed former President Joe Biden for allowing the war to erupt during his administration.

“Unlike Biden, President Trump is focused on stopping the killing, and Putin will be faced with biting sanctions and tariffs if he does not agree to a ceasefire,” she said.

Putin’s conditions for peace include a legally binding pledge that Nato will not expand eastwards, Ukrainian neutrality and limits on its armed forces, protection for Russian speakers who live there, and acceptance of Russia’s territorial gains, the sources said.

He is also willing to discuss a security guarantee for Ukraine involving major powers, though it is far from clear how this would work, the sources said.

President Volodymyr Zelensky has said Ukraine will never recognise Russia’s sovereignty over its conquered regions and that Kyiv retains the sovereign right to decide whether it wants to join Nato. His office did not respond to a request for comment for this story.

A second source familiar with Kremlin thinking said that Putin considered Moscow’s goals far more important than any potential economic losses from Western pressure, and he was not concerned by US threats to impose tariffs on China and India for buying Russian oil.

Two of the sources said that Russia has the upper hand on the battlefield and its economy, geared towards war, is exceeding

the production of the US-led Nato alliance in key munitions, like artillery shells.

Russia, which already controls nearly one-fifth of Ukrainian territory, has advanced some 1,415sq km in the past three months, according to data from the DeepStateMap, an open-source intelligence map of the conflict.

“Appetite comes with eating,” the first source said, meaning that Putin could seek more territory unless the war was stopped. The two other sources independently confirmed the same. Russia currently controls Crimea, which it annexed in 2014, plus all of the eastern region of Luhansk, more than 70% of the Donetsk, Zaporizhzhia and Kherson regions, and fragments of Kharkiv, Sumy and Dnipropetrovsk regions. Putin’s public position is that those first five regions — Crimea and the four regions of eastern Ukraine — are now part of Russia and Kyiv must withdraw before there can be peace.

Putin could fight on until Ukraine’s defences collapse and widen his territorial ambitions to include more of Ukraine, the sources said.

“Russia will act based on Ukraine’s weakness,” the third source said, adding that Moscow might halt its offensive after conquering the four eastern regions of Ukraine if it encounters stiff resistance. “But if it falls, there will be an even greater conquest of Dnipropetrovsk, Sumy and Kharkiv.”

Zelensky has said Russia’s summer offensive is not going as successfully as Moscow had hoped. His top brass, who acknowledge that Russian forces outnumber Ukraine’s, say Kyiv’s troops are holding the line and forcing Russia to pay a heavy price for its gains.

The United States says 1.2mn

people have been injured or killed in the war, Europe’s deadliest conflict since the Second World War. Neither Russia nor Ukraine give full figures for their losses, and Moscow dismisses Western estimates as propaganda.

Trump, since returning to the White House in January after promising a swift end to the war, has sought to repair ties with Russia, speaking at least six times by telephone with Putin. On Monday, he said the Russian leader was not “an assassin, but he’s a tough guy.”

In an abrupt break from his Democratic predecessor Joe Biden, Trump’s administration has cast the war as a deadly proxy conflict between Russia and the United States, withdrawn support for Ukraine joining Nato and floated the idea of recognising Russia’s annexation of Crimea.

Putin portrays the war as a watershed moment in Moscow’s relations with the West, which he says humiliated Russia after the 1991 fall of the Soviet Union by enlarging Nato and encroaching on what he considers Moscow’s sphere of influence, including Ukraine and Georgia.

Putin has yet to accept a proposal from Trump for an unconditional ceasefire, which was quickly endorsed by Kyiv. Recent days have seen Russia use hundreds of drones to attack Ukrainian cities. However, Trump told the BBC in an interview published on Tuesday that he was not done with Putin and that a Ukraine deal remained on the cards.

The first source rejected Trump’s assertion last week that Putin had thrown “BS” around, saying there had been a failure to transform positive talks with Witkoff into a substantive discussion on the basis for peace.

A White House official said on Monday Trump was considering 100% tariffs on Russian goods as well as secondary sanctions on other countries that buy its exports as a means to drive Moscow to the negotiating table. China and India are the biggest buyers of crude.

Despite existing sanctions and the cost of fighting Europe’s biggest conflict since World War Two, Russia’s \$2tn economy has performed far better than many in Russia or the West expected. The economic ministry forecasts a slowdown to 2.5% annual growth in 2025 from 4.3% last year.

The second person said that Trump had little leverage over Putin and suggested that even if Washington imposed tariffs on the purchasers of Russian crude then Moscow would still find a way to sell it to world markets.

“Putin understands that Trump is an unpredictable person who may do unpleasant things but he is manoeuvring to avoid irritating him too much,” the source said.

Looking ahead, one of the sources said there was likely to be an escalation of the crisis in coming months, and unscored the dangers of tensions between the world’s two largest nuclear powers. And, he predicted, the war would continue. — Reuters



US President Donald Trump (right) and his Russian counterpart Vladimir Putin during the G20 leaders summit in Buenos Aires, Argentina in 2018. (Reuters)

Pakistan’s quiet energy revolution boon for many

AFP
Karachi

Pakistanis are increasingly ditching the national grid in favour of solar power, prompting a boom in rooftop panels and spooking a government weighed down by billions of dollars of power sector debt.

The quiet energy revolution has spread from wealthy neighbourhoods to middle- and lower-income households as customers look to escape soaring electricity bills and prolonged power cuts.

Down a cramped alley in Pakistan’s megacity of Karachi, residents fighting the sweltering summer heat gather in Fareeda Saleem’s modest home for something they never experienced before – uninterrupted power.

“Solar makes life easier, but it’s a hard choice for people like us,” she says of the installation cost.

Saleem was cut from the grid last year for refusing to pay her bills in protest over enduring 18-hour power cuts.

A widow and mother of two disabled children, she sold her jewellery – a prized possession for women in Pakistan – and borrowed money from relatives to buy two solar panels, a solar inverter and battery to store energy, for Rs180,000 (\$630).

As temperatures pass 40 degrees Celsius (104 degrees Fahrenheit), children duck under Saleem’s door and gather around the breeze of her fan.

Mounted on poles above homes, solar panels have become a common sight across the country of 240mn people, with the installation cost typically recovered within two to five years.

Making up less than 2% of the energy mix in 2020, solar power reached 10.3% in 2024, according to the global energy think tank Ember.

But in a remarkable acceleration, it more than doubled to 24% in the first five months of 2025, becoming the largest source of energy production for the first time.

It has edged past gas, coal and nuclear electricity sources, as well as hydropower which has seen hundreds of millions of dollars of investment over the past decades.

As a result, Pakistan has unexpectedly surged towards its target of renewable energy, making up 60% of its energy mix by 2030.

Dave Jones, chief analyst at Em-

sumers has crept up on an unprepared government burdened by \$8bn of power sector debt, analysts say.

Pakistan depends heavily on costly gas imports, which it sells at a loss to national energy providers.

It is also tied into lengthy contracts with independent power producers, including some owned by China, for which it pays a fixed amount regardless of actual demand.

A government report in March said the solar power increase has created a “disproportionate financial burden onto grid consumers, contributing to higher electricity tariffs and undermining the sustainability of the energy sector”.

Electricity sales dropped 2.8% year-on-year in June, marking a second consecutive year of decline.

Last month, the government imposed a new 10-percent tax on all imported solar, while the energy ministry has proposed slashing the rate at which it buys excess solar energy from consumers.

“The household solar boom was a response to a crisis, not the cause of it,” said analyst Jones, warning of “substantial problems



A technician installs solar panels on the rooftop of a factory in Pakistan’s port city of Karachi. (AFP)

ber, told AFP that Pakistan was “a leader in rooftop solar”.

Soaring fuel costs globally, coupled with demands from the International Monetary Fund to slash government subsidies, led successive administrations to repeatedly hike electricity costs.

Prices have fluctuated since 2022 but peaked at a 155% increase and power bills sometimes outweigh the cost of rent.

“The great solar rush is not the result of any government’s policy

push,” Muhammad Basit Ghauri, an energy transition expert at Renewables First, told AFP.

“Residents have taken the decision out of clear frustration over our classical power system, which is essentially based on a lot of inefficiencies.”

Pakistan sources most of its solar equipment from neighbouring China, where prices have dropped sharply, largely driven by overproduction and tech advancements.

But the fall in national grid con-

for the grid” including a surge during evenings when solar users who cannot store energy return to traditional power.

The national grid is losing paying customers like businessman Arsalan Arif.

A third of his income was spent on electricity bills at his Karachi home until he bought a 10-kilo-watt solar panel for around Rs1.4mn (around \$4,900).

“Before, I didn’t follow a timetable. I was always disrupted by the power outages,” he told AFP.

Now he has “freedom and certainty” to continue his catering business.

In the eastern city of Sialkot, safety wear manufacturer Ham-mad Noor switched to solar power in 2023, calling it his “best business decision”, breaking even in 18 months and now saving Rs1mn every month.

The cost of converting Noor’s second factory has now risen by nearly Rs1.5mn under the new government tax.

“The tax imposed is unfair and gives an advantage to big businesses over smaller ones,” he said.

“Policymakers seem completely disconnected from the public and business community.”

PIA to fly again to Britain after a five-year gap



AFP
Islamabad

Britain has lifted restrictions on Pakistani airlines, the UK embassy in Islamabad said yesterday, ending a five-year ban on the country’s beleaguered national carrier.

Flag carrier Pakistan International Airlines was barred from flying to Britain in June 2020, a month after one of its aircraft plunged into a Karachi street, killing nearly 100 people.

The disaster was attributed to human error by the pilots and air traffic control, and was followed by allegations that nearly a third of the licences for its pilots were fake or dubious.

The UK Air Safety Committee had decided to lift the ban following aviation safety improvements in Pakistan, the British High Commission in Islamabad said, adding that decisions on de-listing states and air carriers were made “through an independent aviation safety process”.

“Based on this independent and technically-driven process, it has decided to remove Pakistan and its air carriers from the (UK Air Safety) List,” it said in a statement.

The move comes after European regulators lifted a four-year ban on PIA, with the Pakistani state-

owned carrier resuming flights to Europe in January.

Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif welcomed the lifting of the ban as “an important milestone for the country”.

“The lifting of the ban on Pakistani flights by the UK is a source of relief for Pakistanis residing in Britain,” he added in a statement.

PIA said it would resume services to Britain in “the shortest possible time” with the first flights operating from Islamabad to Manchester.

Aviation minister Khawaja Asif acknowledged the ban had caused losses.

“Confidence is being restored in Pakistani airlines once again,” he said at a news conference in Islamabad.

PIA, which employs 7,000 people, has long been accused of being bloated and poorly run – hobbled by unpaid bills and regulatory issues.

Pakistan’s government has said it is committed to privatising the debt-ridden airline and has been scrambling to find a buyer.

In 2024, a deal fell through after a potential buyer reportedly offered a fraction of the asking price.

PIA came into being in 1955 when the government nationalised a loss-making commercial airline, and enjoyed rapid growth until the 1990s.

EU again fails to approve new Russia sanctions

Reuters
Brussels

The European Union failed for a second day to approve a new package of sanctions against Russia yesterday as Slovakia continued to seek concessions over gas supplies, four EU diplomats told Reuters.

Slovakia vetoed the approval of the sanctions during a meeting of EU countries’ ambassadors, the diplomats familiar with the talks said. Two of the diplomats said Malta had also raised an objection.

Slovakia’s government has said it will not approve the sanctions before the country receives more guarantees that it would not be harmed by a separate EU plan to phase out Russian gas by the end of 2027.

Those phase-out plans need to be approved in the EU by a reinforced majority of countries, meaning Slovakia alone cannot veto them. However, sanctions require unanimity.

“We consider this (Russian energy phase-out) proposal to be a sanction and therefore naturally link it to the proposal for the ... package of sanctions,” Fico said, in a letter to European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen released by his office yesterday.

“We therefore expect that the vote on the 18th package can only take place after a substantial part of the risks... in the area of gas supplies from 2028 have been resolved.”

The sanctions would be the EU’s 18th package of such measures against Russia over its 2022 full-scale invasion of Ukraine.

The Commission, the EU’s executive arm, had sought to win Slovakia’s support on Tuesday in a letter saying it would work to address its concerns.



Spain’s Guardia Civil officers patrol in the San Antonio district in Torre Pacheco, southeastern Spain, yesterday, ahead of a rally called by far-right groups following four days of anti-migrant unrest. (AFP)

Spain clashes highlight rising migration tensions

AFP
Madrid

Several days of unrest in a Spanish town have highlighted rising tensions over immigration, an issue which the far-right has pushed to the centre stage. Fourteen people have so far been arrested, according to officials.

Torre Pacheco, a town of 40,000 in the southeastern region of Murcia, has seen at least three nights of unrest between far-right groups and immigrant residents, mainly of Moroccan origin.

The violence was sparked by the assault of a 68-year-old man on July 9. He told Spanish media three men of North African descent attacked him without provocation.

In response, the town hall – led by the conservative Popular Party (PP) – organised a protest against insecurity on Friday. The demonstration escalated when far-right groups joined in, chanting anti-immigrant slogans.

Clashes have broken out on several nights since, though a strong police presence helped prevent serious confrontations.

The authorities said 14 people have been detained, including three men suspected of involvement in the assault on the 68-year-old who do not live in Torre Pacheco.

Among those arrested was a leader of the far-right group “Deport Them Now” which had called online for a “hunt” of immi-

grants in the town. The mayor of Torre Pacheco appealed for calm and warned against blaming the town’s immigrant community for the incident.

Around 30 percent of Torre Pacheco’s population is foreign-born, with many working in the region’s key agriculture sector.

But the far-right Vox party, the third-largest force in Spain’s parliament, has stepped up its anti-immigration rhetoric.

Vox’s regional leader, Jose Angel Antelo, blamed the unrest on “illegal immigration”, claiming that migrants had assaulted the elderly and committed sexual violence against women.

Vox’s national leader, Santiago Abascal, called for “immediate deportations” in response to what he called a “criminal migrant invasion”.

Prime Minister Pedro Sanchez’s Socialist party strongly condemned the remarks, accusing Vox of “pouring fuel on the fire”.

Prosecutors have opened an investigation into Antelo’s statement to see if they constitute a hate crime.

“This is a clear example of growing tension over immigration issues in Spain,” Paloma Roman, a political scientist at Madrid’s Complutense University, told AFP.

Traditionally a country of emigrants, Spain has seen a recent influx of foreign arrivals as living standards improved.

In 1998, there were 637,000 foreigners in the country – about 1.6% of the population. There are

6.95mn today, or 14% of the total, including some 920,000 Moroccans, the largest foreign community. Spain’s leftist government, which aims to regularise up to 300,000 undocumented migrants per year through to 2027, argues immigration helps offset population decline and fill gaps in the labour market.

Sanchez is the only leader of a major European nation to champion migration and its economic benefits even as several countries move to tighten their borders against newcomers.

According to Spain’s national statistics institute, immigration has been a key driver of Spain’s buoyant economy, which grew 3.2% last year.

A recent Ipsos poll found that only 34% of Spaniards feel the country would be “stronger” with fewer migrants – the lowest figure in the European Union.

Still, social tensions are mounting. Roman linked the trend to the rise of the far-right, which has placed immigration at the centre of its agenda.

Vox has seized on public unease, recently proposing a sweeping “remigration” plan to deport foreign nationals.

“In a country whose growth depends on immigration, this is somewhat contradictory,” said Roman, who attributed the polarisation to a political tug-of-war between the mainstream conservative PP and Vox.

This is compounded by corruption scandals that have weakened Sanchez’s government, she added.

Trump slams ‘stupid’ Republicans over Epstein row

US President Donald Trump blasted “foolish” Republican supporters yesterday as he went on the attack against anyone questioning his administration’s handling of the case of dead sex criminal Jeffrey Epstein. After days of struggling to brush off what he now claims is a Democratic hoax, Trump took his most combative tone yet to try and shut down the issue.

“It’s all been a big hoax, it’s perpetrated by the Democrats. And some stupid Republicans and foolish Republicans fall into the net and so they try and do the Democrats’ work,” Trump told reporters when asked about Epstein. But Trump is facing the most serious split in his loyal right-wing base since he returned to power, over claims that his administration is covering up lurid details of disgraced financier Epstein’s crimes to protect rich and powerful figures. Epstein died by suicide in a New York prison in 2019 – during Trump’s first term – after being charged with sex trafficking for abuse by the rich and powerful. The Trump-supporting far-right has long latched on to the scandal, claiming the existence of a secret list of Epstein’s powerful clients and that the late financier was in fact murdered in his cell.

Trump supporters expected the Republican to answer their questions on his return to office this

January but now find themselves being told the conspiracy theories are false.

Trump, 79, began yesterday by dismissing what he called “my PAST supporters” in a post on his Truth Social network. He said they had “bought into this ‘bs’ hook, line and sinker.” He doubled down when he faced repeated questions on the issue in the Oval Office during a visit with Bahrain’s visiting crown prince, pinning the blame for the wild conspiracy theories on his opponents. He then sought to deflect, rattling off what he said were a list of his economic and foreign policy achievements and complaining that people were instead “talking about a guy who obviously had some very serious problems who died three, four years ago.”

“And the sad part, it is people that are really doing the Democrats work. They’re stupid people.” Asked if his post describing supporters who questioned the White House’s line as “past” was effectively disowning them, Trump replied: “No but I lost a lot of faith in certain people.”

Trump – who was one of the many currently famous people who were formerly friends with Epstein, but denies having gone to his notorious US Virgin Islands home – said ahead of the election he would have “no problem” releasing files on the case.

UN experts demand probe into Belarus deaths in custody

United Nations experts yesterday demanded transparent investigations into the deaths of people detained in Belarus for voicing political dissent.

Ruled by President Alexander Lukashenko since 1994, Belarus has outlawed all genuine opposition parties and faces accusations of persecuting dissidents. “Over the past four years, several individuals identified by human rights defenders as political prisoners have died in custody or shortly after being released,” the UN experts said in a joint statement. They said the dead included people who took part in protests surrounding the 2020 presidential elections, which rights groups and critics said Lukashenko had rigged. The call for investigations

came from Nils Muiznieks, special rapporteur on human rights in Belarus, plus the rapporteurs on freedom of expression, protecting rights while countering terrorism, and on extrajudicial executions. UN special rapporteurs are independent figures appointed by the Human Rights Council to report in their field of expertise. They do not speak for the United Nations itself. The experts raised the cases of three individuals who died in custody. “It is of the utmost importance to thoroughly investigate the alleged instances of ill-treatment and neglect that resulted in the deaths,” they said, while highlighting the deaths of others designated as political prisoners by human rights defenders.



36,000 birds captured amid drive to curb myna invasion

The Ministry of Environment and Climate Change has announced significant progress in the national project to curb and control the invasive myna bird population in Qatar, with nearly 36,000 birds captured since the campaign's launch. The ministry pointed out that the trapping operations were carried out across 35 locations using 611 cages, resulting in the capture of 9,416 birds between January and June this year, such figures reflect the growing pace and effectiveness of

environmental control efforts. The myna bird, native to South Asia, is classified as an invasive species that disrupts local ecosystems by displacing native birds, feeding on their eggs and chicks, and rapidly reproducing in urban areas. Its spread leads to increased competition for food, the transmission of diseases, and a threat to biodiversity. The ministry noted that this is not just a challenge for Qatar, as several GCC and Arab countries are facing similar



issues with the species, which has adapted quickly to local environments. The national campaign includes monitoring and surveying programmes to track the bird's spread, trapping initiatives, and public awareness drives to educate the community on its dangers and encourage reporting sightings. Accordingly, the ministry urged residents to support the effort by reporting the bird's presence, avoiding leaving food sources, covering garbage

bins, sealing building openings, and trimming trees to reduce nesting sites. It also warned against tampering with cages and traps placed by specialised teams, stressing that handling the birds should be left to the authorities to ensure public safety and the success of the campaign. The ministry stressed that community awareness and co-operation are essential to curb the spread of this invasive species and protect Qatar's biodiversity.

Sales cross 123 tonnes at Pakistan Mango Festival

The sales at the second edition of Pakistani Mango Festival (Al Hamba Exhibition) have crossed 123 tonnes on the first six days. According to figures, released by the Souq Waqif Management, the sales stood at 123,767kg while drawing a total of 59,000 visitors.

The festival opened last Thursday at Souq Waqif to feature an array of mangoes along with its products. Held at the Eastern Square of Souq Waqif, the festival is organised by the Private Engineering Office (PEO) in co-ordination with the embassy of Pakistan.

General supervisor of the exhibition Khalid Saif al-Suwaidi, in a statement from PEO, said the turnout has exceeded the expectations from day one. "Visitors are eager to try the premium varieties flown in daily specifically for the exhibition alongside the strong interest in participating restaurants and shops offering innovative mango-based desserts and dishes. We are committed to delivering a comprehensive and exceptional experience to all Souq Waqif visitors," he said.

To run until July 19, the exhibition sells Sindhri, Chaunsa, Safed Chaunsa, Anwar Ratol and Dusseri 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.



HOTSELLER: Chaunsa.



The festival has seen 59,000 visitors so far.

The exhibition is open daily from 4pm-9pm 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.



Prospective buyers at the Al Hamba exhibition.

WEEKEND DEALS

16 QR.75

لحم بقرى باكستاني بالعظم ١ كجم
Pakistani Beef with Bone 1 kg
Per Customer 2kg Only*

19 QR.75

جمبري اماراتي (٤/٣) ١ كجم
Fresh Prawns (30/40) UAE 1 kg

17 QR.75

سلمون اماراتي ١ كجم
Fresh Salmon UAE 1 kg

4 QR.75

سمك صافي اماراتي ١ كجم
Fresh Safi Fish UAE 1 kg

22 QR.75

سمك يومفريت اسود اماراتي ١ كجم
Fresh Pomfret Black UAE 1 kg

7 QR.25

بيض ابيض ٢٥ حبة
Fresh White Eggs 25's Tray
Per Customer 2 Tray Only*

4 QR.75

برياني دجاج ٥٠٠ جم
Chicken Biryani 500 gm

1 QR.00

بصل هندي ١ كجم
Onion India 1 kg
Per Customer 3 kg Only*

1 QR.50

بطاطس باكستاني ١ كجم
Potato Pakistan 1 kg

4 QR.75

موز اصفر كبير هندي ١ كجم
Yellow Big Banana India 1 kg

16 QR.50

ايو فوس حليب مجفف كامل الدسم ١ لتر x ٣ حبة
Rainbow Organic UHT Milk Full Fat 1 Ltr x 3 pcs

8 QR.75

مالتيبرز كيس ١٧٥ جم
Maltesers Pouch 175 gm

17 QR.50

كوهينور ارز بسمتي ٥ كجم x ١ حبة
Kohinoor Everyday Basmati Rice 5 kg x 1 pc

18 QR.75

صلي زيت طهي ٤ لتر x ١ حبة
Sunny Cooking Oil 4 Ltr x 1 pc

11 QR.00

جوز صيني ٥٠٠ جم
Walnut China 500 gm

5 QR.50

برديكس دجاج شوي ٧٠٠ جم x ١ حبة
Perdix Chicken Griller 700 gm x 1 pc

54 QR.75

انكور حليب مجفف ٢٢٥٠ كجم
Anchor Milk Powder 2.25 kg

QR 22

خلاط اوسكار ٣٥٠ واط مشكل
Oscar OBL211SP Blender Asrtd. 350 Watts

QR 99

طعم عربى ليون صلبة دوارة مشكل ٣ حبة
Leon ABS Hard Spin Trolley 3pcs Set Asrtd.

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