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Amir, Deputy Amir and PM condole with Kuwait Amir

His Highness the Amir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani and His Highness the Deputy Amir Sheikh Abdullah bin Hamad al-Thani sent cables of condolences to the Amir of Kuwait Sheikh Meshal al-Ahmad al-Jaber al-Sabah on the death of Sheikha Suad Abdullah al-Ahmad al-Sabah, wife of Sheikh Fadhel al-Khaled al-Jaber al-Sabah. HE the Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman bin Jassim al-Thani also sent a similar cable to the Kuwait Amir on the demise of Sheikha Suad Abdullah al-Ahmad al-Sabah. **(QNA)**

Texas adopts electoral map aimed at Trump's grip of Congress

The governor of Texas said yesterday he will sign into law an electoral map aimed at carving out five new Republican-leaning state seats to help the party retain control of Congress in next year's midterm elections. Texas legislators overnight gave final approval to the redistricting effort, in a boost for President Donald Trump. The state senate voted along party lines to pass the map 18-11, following more than eight hours of heated debate.

Former Sri Lanka president rushed to intensive care

Sri Lanka's jailed former president was rushed to intensive care at a state hospital yesterday, a day after being charged with misusing government funds for foreign travel. Ranil Wickremesinghe, who was remanded in custody on Friday night, was severely dehydrated and required close monitoring, the deputy director-general of Colombo National Hospital told AFP. "He has to be closely observed and treated for acute dehydration to prevent serious complications," Rukshan Bellana said. **Page 7**

Nigerian air force kills over 35 militants near Cameroon border

Nigeria's air force said it had killed more than 35 jihadists in raids yesterday on militant fighters that had gathered near the Nigeria-Cameroon border following an attempted attack on ground troops. "Acting on multiple intelligence from several sources, the Air Component executed precision strikes in successive passes, engaging the terrorists and neutralising more than 35 fighters at four identified assembly areas," said a Nigerian Air Force statement.

Pakistan FM arrives in Bangladesh on landmark visit

Pakistan's foreign minister flew to Bangladesh yesterday as the nations, once bitter enemies after they split in 1971, seek to rebuild ties with regional power balances shifting. Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar is the most senior Pakistani official to visit Dhaka since 2012, with Islamabad calling it a "significant milestone in Pakistan-Bangladesh relations". The two Muslim-majority nations are expected to sign several agreements including on trade today. **Page 9**

The flag of resistance



Demonstrator holds a Palestinian flag while he swims during an event to show solidarity with Palestinians in Gaza and to protest against Israel, in Istanbul yesterday. **(Reuters)**

Palestinian photo journalist killed by direct Israeli fire

Palestinian photo journalist Khaled al-Madhoun, a cameraman for Palestine TV, was killed yesterday by direct Israeli fire while covering events in the northern Gaza area of Zakim, according to the Palestinian Journalists Syndicate.

The syndicate said al-Madhoun was killed while performing his professional duties, condemning the targeting of journalists as a persistent crime aimed at silencing Palestinian voices and obscuring the truth.

It emphasised that such attacks would not break the resolve of Palestinian media workers who continue their mission despite grave risks.

According to figures from Gaza's Government Media Office, the number of Palestinian journalists killed by Israeli forces has risen to 240.

Among the most recent victims were Al Jazeera correspondents Anas al-Sharif and Mohammed Qreiq, along with four of their colleagues, prior to al-Madhoun's death.

The syndicate called on the international community to condemn these killings, pursue legal action against Israeli officials, and exert pressure to halt what it described as ongoing acts of extermination and to ensure the protection of Palestinian journalists. **(QNA)**



Khaled al-Madhoun

OIC: Famine in Gaza a war crime that needs urgent world action

QNA
Jeddah

The Organisation of Islamic Co-operation (OIC) has expressed profound concern regarding findings from the United Nations-supported Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC) confirming the spread of famine throughout the Gaza Strip.

The organisation holds Israel, the occupying power, fully responsible for this crime and its consequences, stating it results directly from Israeli policies of starvation, illegal blockade, systematic destruction, and prevention of humanitarian access – actions that collectively constitute war crimes and crimes against humanity.

The OIC emphasised that the famine declaration represents a global alarm regarding humanitarian, political, and legal crimes demanding urgent and unprecedented international action. It called for the activation of all international emergency mechanisms to ensure the immediate, safe, and unhindered flow of humanitarian and

food assistance to save the lives of besieged civilians in Gaza.

The organisation further stressed the necessity of referring the crimes of blockade and deliberate starvation perpetrated by Israeli occupation forces, which have caused famine in Gaza, to the International Criminal Court.

It urged all nations to assume their legal, political, and moral responsibilities by taking effective measures, including imposing sanctions on Israel, prohibiting the supply or transfer of weapons to it, supporting international justice mechanisms to ensure accountability, and guaranteeing compliance with international humanitarian law.

The OIC renewed its call for the international community to compel Israel, the occupying power, to immediately cease its aggression and lift its blockade on Gaza, open all border crossings, allow permanent and adequate humanitarian access, and enable UN agencies, particularly UNRWA, and all international organisations to operate without obstruction while meeting Gaza's urgent humanitarian needs. **(QNA)**

Palestinians despair at 'far too late' declaration of famine by the UN

AFP
Gaza City

Desperate Palestinians clutching pots and plastic buckets scrambled for rice at a charity kitchen in Gaza City yesterday, a day after the United Nations declared a famine in the war-battered territory.

AFP footage from Gaza's largest city, which Israel plans to seize as part of an expanded military offensive, showed women and young children among the chaotic jostle of dozens clamouring and shouting for food.



A Palestinian boy extends an empty pot in front of a charity kitchen to receive cooked rice in Gaza City yesterday. **(AFP)**

12 Palestinians killed in Israeli strikes; 8 more starve to death

QNA
Gaza

Twelve Palestinians were martyred and others injured yesterday as a result of air strikes and shelling carried out by the Israeli occupation army on various locations across Gaza Strip.

Local sources reported that two young brothers were killed when occupation aircraft targeted a group of civilians in Jabalia Al-Nazla in the northern Gaza Strip. Two other civilians were martyred and others injured in artillery shelling on Al-Sudaniya area in the northwest.

The same sources indicated that two brothers and a woman were martyred in an Israeli strike on a residential home in Al-Sabra neighbourhood in southern Gaza City, while another civilian was martyred in a strike targeting a house in Al-Touba area in western Deir Al-Balah in central Gaza.

In the southern Gaza Strip, sources confirmed that two civilians were martyred in Israeli strikes on Al-Mawasi area and near Al-Tina aid centre southwest of Khan Yunis, while another civilian succumbed to wounds sustained days earlier from Israeli army fire near the aid centre in Rafah.

A Palestinian child was also killed yesterday in an Israeli air strike targeting a residential building in Gaza City, according to local

sources. The strike hit a building on Al-Thalatheeni Street in the Sabra neighbourhood, in the southern part of the city.

Meanwhile eight people in the Gaza Strip died yesterday due to starvation and malnutrition, which have been worsening in the region for the past six months as a result of the blockade imposed by the Israeli occupation.

The humanitarian crisis in Gaza continues to deteriorate amid the blockade and severe shortages of food and medical supplies imposed on the Strip since March 2.

The United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees (UNRWA) has said that stopping the famine in Gaza City is possible, provided Israel allows the immediate and large-scale entry of humanitarian aid.

Gaza death toll reaches 62,622

The death toll from the ongoing Israeli aggression on the Gaza Strip since October 7, 2023, has risen to 62,622 martyrs and 157,673 injured, most of whom are children and women. A number of victims remain trapped under the rubble, with ambulance and civil defence crews unable to reach them. Medical sources reported that Gaza hospitals received 61 martyrs and 308 injured in the past 24 hours. **(QNA)**

from dizziness, unable to wake up because of the lack of food and water," she said.

The UN officially declared a famine in Gaza on Friday, blaming the "systematic obstruction" of aid by Israel during more than 22 months of war.

The Rome-based Integrated Food Security Phase Classification Initiative (IPC) said famine was affecting 500,000 people in Gaza governorate, which covers about a fifth of the Palestinian territory including Gaza City.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu rejected the report as "an outright lie".

Yesterday, the head of the UN agency for Palestinian refugees said it was "time for the government of Israel to stop denying the famine it has created in Gaza".

"All of those who have influence must use it with determination & a sense of moral duty," UNRWA chief Philippe Lazzarini posted on X.

The IPC projected that the famine would expand to Deir Al-Balah and Khan Yunis governorates by the end of September, covering around two-thirds of Gaza.

Israel, meanwhile, kept up its bombardment of the Palestinian territory, with AFP footage showing heavy smoke billowing above the Zeitoun district of Gaza City as Palestinians picked through the wreckage of buildings.

QU opens its doors today to welcome over 29,000 students

QNA
Doha

Qatar University (QU) will open its doors today to welcome more than 29,000 male and female students, marking the beginning of the new academic semester across various colleges and academic levels.

Vice-President for Student Affairs Dr Mohammed Diab confirmed that all preparations for the start of the new academic semester have been completed, emphasising that the university is fully ready across its colleges and service and administrative units to ensure a smooth and effective start for stu-

dents, especially the more than 6,000 new students. He explained that the QU places the success and empowerment of its students at the forefront of its priorities through a comprehensive system of academic advising, psychological and social support, in addition to specialised centres for learning, skill development, and employment.

The Vice-President for Student Affairs added that the university has prepared various facilities and services to make campus life a holistic experience that enriches the student's journey both inside and outside the university, through diverse cultural, sports, artistic, and research activities.

These activities serve as an

important channel for discovering abilities, nurturing talents, refining character, and developing leadership and social skills, preparing students for academic excellence, professional success, and community service. Dr Diab pointed out that QU's mission goes beyond classroom education; it aims to equip students with the tools needed to choose specialisations aligned with the needs of the Qatari labour market, thereby enhancing their future opportunities and ensuring their academic path aligns with national development requirements.

He also noted that the Student Employment Center at Qatar University offers practical pro-

grammes to prepare students for the labour market through training workshops, field training, and meetings with experts, which enhance their employment prospects and refine their professional skills.

The Vice-President for Student Affairs urged all students to take advantage of the various services and opportunities provided by the university to ensure a successful start to their academic journey.

He also encouraged them to complete course registration requirements, verify lecture schedules and locations, and maintain regular attendance, in addition to actively participating in university activities that enrich their experience.



Suhail star to appear in Qatar's sky

QNA
Doha

Qatar Calendar House (QCH) announced that Suhail star will be visible in Qatar's skies today, the 1st of Rabi' al-Awwal 1447 AH, corresponding to Aug 24, marking the beginning of the Suhail season in Qatar and most of GCC states.

On this occasion, Executive Director of the Qatari Calendar House Eng Faisal al-Ansari said that the people in the Gulf region eagerly anticipate the appearance of the Suhail star because of its importance to them; its rising is seen as a sign of gradually moderating weather in the region. This event signals the start of the Suhail season, which lasts 52 days, during which seasonal change begins, the hot desert winds (Al-Simoom) fade, and the intensity of heat gradually decreases, especially at night.

Nights become longer, days shorter, with increased chances of rainfall. He pointed out an old saying about Suhail: when Suhail rises, the nights get cooler and floods may occur. This reflects that the star's appear-



The rising of Suhail has long been linked to many aspects of Arab life, past and present. Farmers prepare to plough and sow their fields upon its appearance to be ready for the rainy season. Desert dwellers relied on it to determine grazing seasons and travel times

ance signals gradual changes in temperature and humidity, particularly at night. Meanwhile, Dr

Bashir Marzouk, an astronomical expert at the Qatari Calendar House, confirmed that residents of Qatar will be able to see Suhail with the naked eye toward the southern horizon during the first week of September. It can be located with the help of the brightest nighttime star, Sirius (Al-Shi'ra al-Yamaniya).

He added that the annual rising of Suhail on Aug 24 each year marks the start of the Suhail season and the Suhail year, which lasts 365 or 366 days. This calendar includes various sub-seasons such as Al-Murabba'aniya, Al-Wasmi, Al-Safri, and Al-Kinna.

The rising of Suhail has long been linked to many aspects of Arab life, past and present. Farmers prepare to plough and sow their fields upon its appearance to be ready for the rainy season. Desert dwellers relied on it to determine grazing seasons and travel times. Sailors used it and other stars to guide fishing schedules and navigation. Astronomically, Suhail is the brightest star in the constellation Carina (the Keel of the Ship) and the second-brightest star in the night sky after Sirius. It lies about 300 light-years away from Earth.

QC provides modern equipment to support kidney patients in Sudan

Qatar Charity has provided modern dialysis machines to the dialysis centre at Eldamer city Hospital and Elbauga district Hospital in River Nile State, Sudan.

This support is aimed at alleviating the suffering of thousands of patients with kidney failure in Sudan, while enhancing the

overall quality of healthcare services offered to them. In a statement yesterday, Qatar Charity stated that 14 dialysis machines for kidney patients were provided as part of a project to equip the country with medical equipment, funded by benevolent individuals in Qatar. The patients have expressed their deep appreciation

for the newly provided machines. For her part, Minister of Health in River Nile State Dr Magda Abdullah said that Qatar Charity's provision of dialysis machines supports River Nile State's approach to enhancing health services, appreciating Qatar's efforts in this area which represent a true addition to the State. (QNA)



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GPPC Opens Doors to Innovation

A space where media makers find tools, guidance, and inspiration

The Gulf Publishing and Printing Company (GPPC), publisher of Gulf Times and Al-Raya newspapers, has opened a new chapter in its media journey with the launch of advanced new studios. These studios offer creators of media and artistic works a professional, fully integrated environment that combines technical expertise with design flexibility, enabling them to transform ideas into tangible and impactful products.

This endeavour reflects Gulf Times and Al-Raya's belief that today's media is a dynamic world where sound, image, visual experience, and expressive photography seamlessly integrate with written text. The launch of these studios embodies the vision of both newspapers to serve as true partners in the creative process—showcasing talent and ideas, while not merely providing a space but also fostering an atmosphere that inspires innovation and experimentation.

The studios support young people and institutions alike in producing quality content that matches the spirit of the age. They also provide appropriate media consultations that can contribute to developing content, granting creators an integrated environment designed to the highest standards—whether for personal media projects or professional productions aimed at the general public.

Built to serve every kind of storyteller, from the established to the emerging.



Tradition on One Side, Technology on the Other

The studios were designed in a spirit that combines authenticity and modernity, with corners that grant the space wide and varied possibilities. One corner, the “Arab Tent”, evokes traditional heritage with its warmth and sense of intimacy, visually reflecting cultural identity and local nature in all its details.

Another corner, the “Green Screen”, enables modern Chroma Key visual effects, making it an ideal choice for producing news bulletins, programs, or digital content, as different backgrounds can be projected as needed.

Beyond the ready-made decor, the studios are equipped with artistic props and accessories that make it easy to change the studio's character depending on the project at hand. In addition, meeting rooms have been prepared to provide a suitable environment for project owners to exchange ideas, hold brainstorming sessions, and set production plans. These facilities make the studios not only a place for filming but also a complete center that offers supportive services, enhancing the quality of work through the latest photography, lighting, and sound technologies. Flexible solutions



are also available to meet different production needs, whether technical or stylistic. This opens the door for producing interviews, short programs, talk videos, or even interactive content for a variety of media platforms, including social media.

Although the studios rely on the latest production technologies, they remain tied to Qatari identity. Some corners preserve a heritage-inspired touch, not just as an aesthetic aspect, but as a message that modern content can still remain deeply rooted in the culture and values of the community.



A Place Where Creativity Feels at Home

The studios open their doors to anyone with a media or artistic project. They can be rented along with their facilities, as well as the latest cameras, sound systems, and all necessary equipment. Media consultancy is also available.

This step reflects Gulf Times and Al-Raya's commitment to being an open platform that does not monopolize or reserve these tools for itself, but instead makes them available to anyone wishing to create—whether institutions, teams, or individuals, even small groups looking for a fully equipped place to move from idea to execution.

The inauguration of these studios represents a qualitative leap in Qatar's media scene, reflecting a new trend of newspapers being more open to



different media formats. Gulf Times and Al-Raya aspire for the studios to become a creative hub where media professionals, content creators, and artists meet, offering a professional environment for both amateurs and professionals.

With their flexibility and variety of spaces, the studios provide practical and professional alternatives for anyone seeking a suitable environment to film programs, produce digital clips, or even record interviews and meetings.

Studios designed to bring out the best in every idea

To watch a video showcasing the studio facilities, please scan the QR code.

For more information and studio booking, please contact: 55718622



More Than Just a Studio – A National Step Forward

The launch of these studios aligns with Qatar's national vision, which encourages support for cultural and media industries. Creative industries today are considered one of the main drivers of the global economy. Through this direction, Gulf Times and Al-Raya contribute to providing an environment that supports practical initiatives and helps launch small and medium-sized projects in media and arts.



Supporting Qatar's growth in media and arts

For the Students Who Dream Big

The importance of the Gulf Times and Al-Raya Studios is not limited to their professional side but extends to represent a real opportunity for ambitious Qatari youth interested in media.

They are especially suited for university students working on projects, many of whom have ideas and talents but face obstacles such as the lack of proper spaces or necessary equipment.

These new studios bridge that gap by offering a professional environment that helps them develop skills and refine their productions under conditions close to international standards.

While continuing their pioneering journalistic role, the Gulf Times and Al-Raya open the studios' doors to all, reaffirming that today's media is more inclusive and participatory.

Anyone with an idea, message, or content can find in the Gulf Times and Al-Raya the technical and visual support they need.



Spaces that make projects feel professional, not just academic

From the Newspaper Page to Your Screen

Turning stories into videos, podcasts, and digital content

The studios form a real bridge between traditional media—credible and established—and digital media, flexible and fast. For decades, print journalism has been the primary source of news and analysis, but with the rise of digital platforms and visual media, the time has come to expand this presence through a fully integrated production environment inside the Gulf Times and Al-Raya. This allows content to be transformed quickly from a written idea on paper to video, digital platforms, or even podcasts reaching audiences anywhere. Thus, the studios serve as a tool for media transformation itself, reshaping the relationship with the audience in more effective and open ways. A reader who once only browsed the paper in the morning can now watch the same story in a visually engaging format.

This transformation is not limited to the newspaper's own journalists and editors but also extends to young content creators and enthusiasts from outside the institution, allowing them to use these advanced spaces to bring their ideas to life. The studios are designed to be flexible and adaptable, accommodating rapid transformations—from recording podcasts, educational videos for schools and universities, youth programs, short commercial ads, social media content, to even small-scale drama productions.

MoECC issues Q2 report on conservation efforts, development of natural reserves

QNA
Doha

The Ministry of Environment and Climate Change (MoECC), represented by the Natural Reserves Department, has issued its Q2 2025 report outlining its efforts in wildlife conservation, development of natural reserves, and enforcement of environmental violations. The report addressed ways to enhance environmental awareness and community participation, as part of the ministry's plans to achieve the goals of Qatar National Vision 2030.

It stated that the Wildlife Development Department recorded 218 sea turtle nests this season and released 3,287 hatchlings. The department also received 7 requests to visit Fuwairit Beach, designated for turtle nesting and protection. In the field of plant wildlife development, the report noted that the department

ment supplied and planted 2,835 trees and seedlings during May and June, and fenced two Rawdas.

The department conducted 251 field visits to fenced Rawdas and designated planting sites, carried out 132 environmental impact assessments for development projects, removed 72 invasive Prosopis trees, issued 25 permits for activities in vegetation zones, and expanded Rawda areas outside reserves in 20 locations.

Regarding animal wildlife and border control, the report indicated that the department imported 24,634 live organisms and 1,301 items of products, derivatives, and taxidermy specimens. Additionally, the Wildlife Development Department issued 149 falcon crossing documents, 618 CITES import certificates, 7 export certificates, and 136 re-export certificates. It also received 11 applications to register dangerous animals before the registration deadline in April.

On the Myna bird control project, the report stated that the department successfully captured 5,093 birds over three months as part of a plan to limit the spread of this environmentally challenging species, through 6 external missions and 37 events and meetings.

In terms of natural resources, crushers, and quarries, the report noted that the department received a request to establish a new quarry and another to relocate an existing one.

It renewed two permits for mobile crusher units and two for sand screening units. It also renewed and issued 79 permits for sand transport, conducted 216 site visits, and recorded 144 violations related to crushers and quarries.

The report stated that the department received 11 plant-related reports, 114 animal-related reports, 2 marine-related reports, and 61 reports concerning natural resources during Q2. The Land Protection Department recorded

265 environmental violations, including 64 for unauthorised camps and farms, 30 for camel releases, 33 for littering, 4 for using bird-calling devices, 15 for dust generation due to uncovered trucks, 7 for unauthorised entry into Rawdas, 85 for unlicensed activities, 12 for soil excavation, and 6 for cutting wild trees.

The department organised 78 cleanup campaigns in Rawdas and wilderness areas and received 1,100 requests to refund winter camp security deposits. Regarding marine protection, the report stated that the department conducted 3,404 hours of monitoring, including 3,316 daily field patrols, 68 hours of surprise inspections, and 20 hours of diving. It prepared 5 statistical studies and issued 829 marine visit reports, totalling 834 reports and statistics.

It recorded 148 violations, including the use of illegal tools affecting marine life, damage to coral reefs, use of banned nets and

equipment, and fishing within reserves. The teams confiscated 86 banned fishing nets, 11 long fishing lines, 25 fish traps, 6 lighting tools, and 2 violations involving illegal seabird hunting equipment.

The report noted that the department received a total of 36 requests, reports, and inquiries, including 17 requests to remove encroachments, 11 reports, 3 inquiry calls, and 5 service requests. Activities included 3 training workshops, 4 cleanup campaigns, 3 inspection campaigns, and 4 work meetings. The Natural Reserves Department continued its efforts to develop and expand protected areas by improving infrastructure and enhancing environmental management.

The department developed an artificial hatchery for ostrich eggs and implemented 8 breeding and rehabilitation programmes for endangered species such as the Arabian oryx and wild ostrich, supporting wildlife sustainability.

It also continued developing

Al Shahaniya Reserve for wildlife breeding, worked on nominating Al Thakhira Reserve for Unesco World Heritage status, prepared the development plan for Khor Al Udaid, and readied Bin Ghannam Island as part of environmental protection projects.

In the context of community partnership, the report highlighted a series of awareness lectures for various community groups, cleanup campaigns in land and marine areas, and numerous events and programs with wide participation from volunteers and local entities, reflecting the community's role as a key partner in environmental conservation efforts.

The report showed that the department handled 227 environmental complaints, issued 85 permits for national development projects within reserve boundaries, processed 183 inquiries and complaints, and intensified field visits to Al Shahaniya and Al Thakhira reserves.

AI in Project Management summit announced

By Joseph Varghese
Staff Reporter

Government Engineering College, Thrissur Alumni, Qatar Chapter (Qget) has announced Qatar Engineers Summit (Qest) 2025, centred on the theme 'Artificial Intelligence (AI) in Project Management and Engineering'. The Qest 2025 logo was launched and details announced at a press conference by Qget officials yesterday.

Speaking on the occasion, Qget president Tomy Varkey, said: "The summit on October 12 will be inaugurated by Indian ambassador Vipul and a number of leading technocrats will speak on various themes. The session is open to engineers of all nationalities and the participation is by invitation and nomination by various organisations in Qatar."

Qest spokesperson Kshema Andrews highlighted the activities of the summit and explained it will throw light on the use of AI in project management and engineering with the latest developments.

"There will be several high-profile speakers during the conference and many of them are known globally for their expertise in the field.

"They include Dr Saurabh Mishra, founder & CEO, Taiyo. AI, California, US; Susanth Kurunthil, chief executive officer, Infopark & Cyberpark Kerala, India; and Shijaz Abdulla Abdul Kareem, regional director, AI Apps, Microsoft Middle East & Africa among others," she said.

Qest 2025 will bring together over 250 technocrats and leaders from around the world, including leaders from government, oil and gas, public sector undertakings, international construction firms, and consultancy organisations, she added. Qget general-secretary Gopu Rajasekhar spoke about the salient features of the conference and noted that opportunities are available to showcase the products of any company and lead a workshop session as part of the event.

Qget comprises more than 400 alumni from Government Engineering College, Thrissur, working across various entities in Qatar, including both government and private sectors. In 2012,

Qget launched its flagship initiative Qest as a way of giving back to the engineering community. The previous summits had attracted leading experts in various fields providing a rich learning experience for the attendees.



MGD holds blood donation drive

Malabar Gold & Diamonds (MGD), the fifth largest jewellery retailer globally with over 400 showrooms across 13 countries, organised a blood donation drive at its showroom in Barwa Village in association with Hamad Medical corporation.

The initiative was conducted by the brand's Environmental, Social & Governance (ESG) wing to raise awareness among Qatar residents about the importance of blood donation and to encourage maximum people to join.

A total of 59 donors, including 15

MGD staff members, participated in the drive. "At Malabar Gold & Diamonds, we believe true success is measured by the positive impact we create beyond business," said regional head Santhosh T V.

"Guided by our strong commitment to sustainability and social responsibility, we continue to drive initiatives that uplift communities in every region we serve.

"Our collaboration with Hamad Medical Corporation reflects this vision — together, we aim to inspire individu-

als to take meaningful steps that can save and transform lives," he added.

MGD's ESG organises blood donation drive periodically in all their regions of operation with support of authorised blood banks as a part of its ongoing ESG activities. Since its inception in 1993, Malabar Group has been setting aside 5% of net profits for such initiatives in each country of operations.

The key focus is in the areas of health, hunger free world, housing, education, women empowerment and environment, a statement added.



Qget officials launching the logo of Qest 2025 yesterday. PICTURE: Thajudheen

Joint inspection by Al Rayyan, Doha municipalities



Al Rayyan and Doha municipalities launched their first joint inspection campaigns by the health control sections on food establishments in the New Industrial Area. The campaign included the participation of 11 food inspectors and a veterinarian aiming to exchange inspection expertise between both sides, in addition to sharing knowledge in planning and managing inspection campaigns, improve the quality and performance of regulatory work and contribute to raising efficiency and performance standards. During the campaign, awareness and inspection activities were carried out on commercial establishments operating in the field of food handling to ensure their compliance with the required health requirements in accordance with Qatari, GCC, and international standards.

Al Meera launches 'Back to School' campaign

Al Meera Consumer Goods Company has launched its 'Back to School' campaign, 'Get Ready for School - Save More with Al Meera'. The campaign offers customers the chance to win school tuition and enjoy a wide range of exclusive offers and discounts. It also features special rewards for Meera Rewards members and in-store activations and competitions.

Running until September 30, the campaign spans over 69 Al Meera branches and is also available online at

www.almeera.online The campaign offers 10 lucky Meera Rewards members an opportunity to win a prize of up to QR20,000 in school tuition fees. The e-affle will be held on October 2, 2025. If the prize is not redeemed for tuition fees, the winner will receive the equivalent amount in an Al Meera gift card, redeemable at any of its branches.

In addition, Meera Rewards members will earn 10% back in points on all school-related items including backpacks, stationery, lunchboxes, and more.

Shoppers holding the Al Meera-QIB co-branded credit card can also enjoy 15% back in points. Customers can also look forward to in-store activations at Hyatt Plaza and Ain Khaled, supported by supplier partners including Baladna, Mazraati, Unilever, and Johnson & Johnson. There will be product sampling, themed promotions, and competitions where participants can win Al Meera gift cards. A dedicated Friday competition series will also take place during the campaign period.





QatarEnergy LNG Tender Invitation

No.	TENDER NUMBER / DESCRIPTION	TENDER ISSUE PERIOD	TENDER FEE (QAR)	TENDER BOND (QAR)	TENDER CLOSING DATE
1	SUP/P/OFS/7314/25, B65 Supply of CABLES 1.5 MM2,100 M ROL,ORANGE,FIRE	24/08/2025 to 31/08/2025	0	40,000	08/09/2025

Scope of Work:
CABLE, SIZE: 1.5 MM2, LENGTH: 100 M ROLL, COLOR: ORANGE, WHERE USED: FIRE AND GAS, ADDITIONAL FEATURES: THREE CORE.

Bid Validity: Bid Offer should be valid for 180 calendar days from the Tender Closing Date.

Place for Tender Collection and Bid Submission:
ITT document for this tender will be available in QatarEnergy LNG website under Suppliers tab >Current Open Tenders. The bids shall be submitted through the QatarEnergy LNG online platform (SMART by GEP).

Note: Local Companies (established under the Laws of State of Qatar with local Commercial Registration) are advised to refer to the tender documentation and In-Country Value (ICV) Digital Portal: - <https://icv.qa/en-US/> for details of ICV compliance that may be applicable.



QSFA wraps up Summer Sports programme

Qatar Sports For All Federation (QSFA) has concluded the Summer Sports for All 2025 programme at Lusail Sports Hall.

The programme featured a wide swath of sporting, recreational, and cultural events that drew participants from a variety of community members and wrapped up by honouring 27 stakeholders and institutions, as well as 42 success partners from different ministries, federations, sports clubs, youth centres, and other organisations.

The programme gave special recognition to outstanding children participating in this camp and exceptional training programmes, including swimming and Muay Thai self-defence.

Adviser to the Minister of Sports and Youth and President of QSFA, Abdulrahman bin Muslim al-Dosari, expressed his delight at the tremendous success of this program, in terms of record numbers and societal interaction.

He affirmed that the number reached 32-plus participants because the activities were diverse and distributed across over 30 zones at halls, playgrounds, youth centres, and public parks, along with the overwhelming support from the Ministry of Sports and partners' interaction.

This overall programme was intended to convert the summer break into an opportunity for practising physical activities and bolstering public health, culminating in acquiring novel skills through capitalising on leisure time in beneficial activities, al-Dosari highlighted.

He pointed out that the programme is part of the ministry's strategy to expand the grassroots of athletes and provide societal platforms capable of absorbing all



community members for this goal, noting the efforts of all stakeholders.

Executive Director of QSFA, Abdullah al-Dosari, affirmed that the event was interspersed with over 180 activities, which garnered children, young people, women, and the elderly in a safe and entertaining environment. He added that the camp at Lusail Hall saw the participation of 4,300-plus children, while the programme that was jointly organised with the Ministry of Education and Higher Education drew over 1,800.

Al-Dosari further highlighted that the programme has successfully proved its ability as a perfect platform to spend summer breaks and helped consolidate sports as

a daily health activity among all community members.

President of the Qatar Chess Association (QCA), Mohammed al-Mudahka, said he was delighted to be a partner in the successful event. He lavished praise on the efforts undertaken by the Ministry of Sports and QSFA, which have profoundly contributed to organising terrific programmes that incredibly drew record numbers of age groups. This year, QCA organised a special chess tournament, alongside a comprehensive summer programme at the training centre, which drew a record turnout from children who approached to learn the sport, al-Mudahka said. He added that QCA aims to leverage these kinds of events to promote chess. (QNA)

Leading the Next Generation Smartphone Imaging: HUAWEI Pura 80 Series Pre-orders Start in QATAR

Huawei's photography-focused Pura Series has unveiled the latest smartphone in the region at its Dubai launch event. The HUAWEI Pura 80 Series, as it's called, brings a new glaze texture design and exceptional camera capabilities. The combination of a 1-inch Ultra Large Sensor of the main camera and the variable F1.6-F4.0 aperture lends the Pura 80 Ultra phenomenal low-light performance. But the biggest leap comes with the Switchable Dual Telephoto camera, which brings a first-of-its-kind dual telephoto camera system that shares a sensor that's as good as standard main cameras. For photography enthusiasts, this means taking surprisingly good pictures of faraway subjects.

The Switchable Dual Telephoto camera on the Pura 80 Ultra consists of two telephoto lenses; a 3.7x medium telephoto and a 9.4x super telephoto. Instead of using two separate sensors, these two lenses share a single sensor. This design makes it possible to fit a large sensor in place of two smaller ones, leading to a monumental leap in telephoto image quality, especially in low light.

While the telephoto lenses improved to be on par with typical flagship cameras, the latest Pura Series significantly improved its own main camera with a large 1-inch sensor in the Pura 80 Ultra and Pura 80 Pro. What's more, the Pura 80 Ultra achieves the industry's highest dynamic range of 16EV, more than some professional cinema cameras. Users can now shoot cinematic-looking videos thanks to the ultra-high dynamic video capabilities.

Fashion is part of the Pura Series DNA. It's no wonder, then, that we have some captivating aesthetic choices going on with the Pura 80 Series. The Pura 80 Ultra, the Pura 80 Pro, and the Pura 80 each have a signature style. With golden trims around the camera rings and a Forward Symbol camera module dazzling in a sunburst pattern and golden XMAGE branding, the flagship Pura 80 Ultra is as classy as it is flashy. The Pro versions feature pure monochrome glazes with a curved, silk-textured frame. By contrast, the regular Pura 80 brings effortless style with a frosted glass back



HUAWEI Pura80 Series

and flat-edged screen.

The HUAWEI Pura 80 and HUAWEI Pura 80 Pro feature Kunlun Glass 2nd Generation on the front, improving drop resistance by 20x to easily withstand accidental daily drops. The Pura 80 Ultra further upgrades reliability with 2nd-Gen Crystal Armor Kunlun Glass, offering 16x better scratch resistance and 25x better drop resistance for more comprehensive protection and all-around upgraded device reliability.

With an ingenious telephoto camera system, a superior main camera, and dazzlingly brilliant design, the HUAWEI Pura 80 Series is a flagship photography powerhouse.

Marine vessels and jet skis prohibited at Doha Corniche

By Shafeeq Alingal
Staff Reporter

The entry of marine vessels, personal water scooters (jet skis) and swimming are prohibited in the Doha Corniche area, in order to prevent accidents, an official has said.

"Approaching, fishing, or engaging in recreational or marine activities in the restricted areas is prohibited and the specified distance for each restricted area must be adhered to," explained Lt Col Ahmed Ali Saad from the General Directorate of Coasts and Borders Security.

He was addressing a recent awareness webinar titled 'General Guidelines for Seagoers, Boat Owners, and Fishermen', organised by the Public Relations Department of the Ministry of Interior in association with the General Directorate of Coasts and Borders Security.

"Seagoers should observe a minimum distance of 300m



Lt Col Ahmed Ali Saad from the General Directorate of Coasts and Borders Security addressing the webinar.

from private coastal properties and residences, 2.5km from the seafront near the coastal industrial facilities, 300m from the seafront at Ras Bu Abhoud Plant, coral reefs when using fishing nets, from diplomatic areas and military bases and 500m from petroleum facilities on the seafront.

"Fishing or engaging in any activity that obstructs maritime navigation or blocks channels and passages is prohibited at Doha Port, Mesaieed Port and Ras Laffan Port to ensure safe and smooth marine traf-

fic at maritime entrances and navigation channels," he said. Lt Col Saad urged all seagoers, including fishermen, boat, and ship owners, to strictly refrain from entering or approaching restricted maritime areas under any circumstances. "Restricted areas in the waters of Qatar are designated for reasons of national security, public safety or the protection of vital and environmental facilities. Entering these areas constitutes a clear violation of applicable maritime laws and regulations and exposes offenders to legal accountability," he said.

The official asked seagoers to respect areas designated for swimming and tourists, and to avoid entering restricted zones. Keep the marine environment clean and free from pollution. "If you notice any floating object on the water while at sea, it may be a mine; therefore, it must be reported immediately to the General Directorate of Coasts and Borders Security," he added.

Publishers Forum boosts Back-to-School Festival with interactive activities

The Qatari Publishers and Distributors Forum, affiliated with the Ministry of Culture, participated in the third edition of the Back-to-School Festival, which kicked off at Msheireb Galleria and will continue until August 30. This comes as part of its efforts to prepare students for the start of the new academic year through engaging cultural and interactive programmes.

During its participation, the forum presented a workshop titled "The Importance of Reading," targeting children and youth to introduce them to the benefits of books and the knowledge and values they convey, while encouraging them to make reading a part of their daily lives. The forum's corner also featured a miniature library rich in diverse publications, including a collection of distinguished local books issued by Qatari publishing houses, allowing visitors to browse the national publishing industry and learn about its



contributions to the local cultural scene. Jassim Ahmed al-Buainain, director of the Qatari Publishers and Distributors Forum, emphasised that this participation falls within the Ministry of Culture's vision to build a

generation that loves reading. He noted that the forum continues its efforts to support the publishing and distribution sector with the full support of the ministry, in line with the state's directives and vision to preserve national identity and values.

He explained that the interactive activities presented by the forum during the festival contributed to instilling a love of reading and learning in children and provided a space for direct interaction with books, strengthening their connection to knowledge and preparing them for a productive academic year.

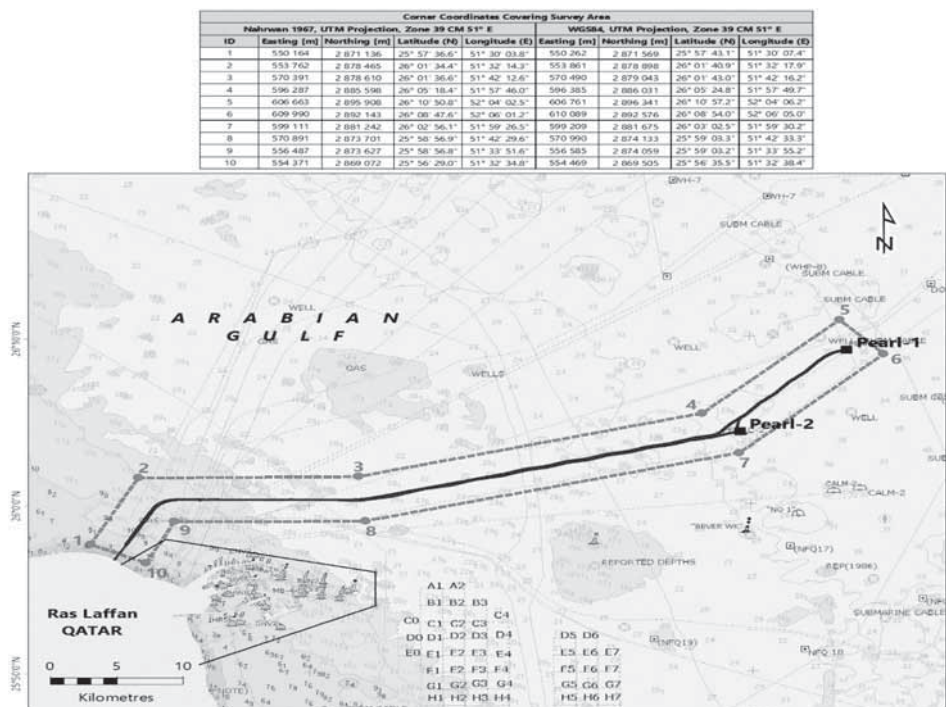
Qatar Shell GTL Ltd Public Announcement To all Ships, Fisherman and Mariners



Subsea Survey Works Offshore in North Field (Pearl 1& Pearl 2) & Raslaffan Qatar By the Vessels "Fugro Pegasus" & "Lady Beatrice"

Subsea Survey Works Offshore Qatar from 24/08/2025 to 31/08/2025

In pursuant and under directives from the Seafarers and Registration Department, Ministry of Transport, State of Qatar, this announcement is to inform all Vessels, Mariners and Fisherman that Qatar Shell GTL Ltd intends to undertake subsea survey works by the vessels "Fugro Pegasus" & "Lady Beatrice" in North Field (Pearl 1& Pearl 2) & Raslaffan, Qatar, bound by the coordinates and location map shown below.



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

Qatar Shell GTL Ltd 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
Tel: 70489890

Al-Markhiya Gallery launches ‘Women in the Marshes’ expo

Al-Markhiya Gallery has opened the new virtual exhibition by Iraqi artist Faleh al-Saidi, held through the international art platform “Artsy” and continuing until September 3.

The exhibition, titled “Women in the Marshes,” offers a remarkable artistic experience, through which al-Saidi highlights the

women of southern Iraq and the strength and resilience they represent in a fragile and marginalised environment.

This artistic series embodies women’s relationship with land, water, and memory, moving away from the direct depiction of the marsh landscape, but rather through an expressive treatment brimming with symbols and

connotations. The artist relied on acrylic and pastel techniques in his works, employing earthy colours and free lines that border on visual poetry.

This allowed him to craft paintings that simultaneously carry personal and political dimensions, reflecting his experience of exile and alienation, offering a tribute to women and the

culture of the marshes throughout the ages.

The virtual exhibition, which can be viewed on the Artsy website, provides an opportunity for audiences from around the world to interact with al-Saidi’s artistic experience and discover his unique signature, which combines nostalgia for the homeland and the evocation of the collective



One of the paintings of Faleh al-Saidi.

memory of southern Iraq.

This exhibition is a continuation of Al-Markhiya Gallery’s efforts to support contemporary Arab arts and to highlight the experiences of creative artists on international platforms, reflecting the diversity and richness of the art scene.

UNRWA says massive aid vital to end Gaza suffering

QNA
Gaza

The United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees (UNRWA) confirmed that stopping the famine in Gaza City is possible, provided that Israel allows the immediate and large-scale entry of humanitarian aid.

In a brief post on its page on the social media platform X yesterday, the agency stated that ending the ongoing catastrophe requires the entry of massive quantities of aid through the United Nations, including UNRWA.

It added that its warehouses in both Jordan and Egypt are filled with the necessary supplies of food, medicine, and hygiene materials, sufficient to load 6,000 trucks.

This statement comes after the United Nations and international experts officially declared on Friday the widespread outbreak of famine in Gaza, marking the first such announcement regarding famine in the Middle East.

In a joint statement issued from Geneva, the World Health Organisation (WHO), the United Nations Children’s Fund



Palestinian women and girls elbow their way to receive cooked rice from charity kitchen in Gaza City, yesterday.

(Unicef), the World Food Programme (WFP), and the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) warned that more than half a million people in the Strip are trapped in a state of famine.

These organisations called on Israel to ensure the unobstructed delivery of food and medi-

cal supplies to the population to reduce deaths caused by hunger and malnutrition.

Starvation in Gaza has worsened, and the death toll from malnutrition has risen since October 2023 to 272, including 113 children. The Israeli occupation has intensified its blockade on

the Gaza Strip, closing the crossings to aid trucks piled up at the borders, amid continued heavy bombardment of all areas of the Strip. Since October 7, 2023, this has resulted in the martyrdom of 62,263 people and the injury of 157,365 others, in an unprecedented humanitarian catastrophe.

Erdogan’s wife urges Melania to also speak up for Gaza children



CONCERN: Emine Erdogan (right) and Melania Trump.

Turkiye’s First Lady wrote to her US counterpart Melania Trump yesterday, asking her to show the same concern for Gaza’s children as she has shown for those of Ukraine.

Emine Erdogan asked Donald Trump’s spouse to write to Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu to show mercy to Gaza’s children.

In a letter presented to Russian President Vladimir Putin at the Alaska Summit earlier this month, she appealed to him to make peace in Ukraine for the sake of the children.

Turkiye’s First Lady wrote: “I have faith that the important sensitivity you have shown for the 648 Ukrainian children who have lost their lives in the war will be extended to Gaza as well, where, in the span of two years, 62,000 innocent

civilians, including 18,000 children, have been brutally killed.

“As a mother, as a woman, and as a human being, I deeply share the sentiments expressed in your letter, and I hope that you will give the same hope to the children of Gaza, who also yearn for peace and tranquillity,” Emine wrote to Melania.

Turkiye’s President Recep Tayyip Erdogan has tried to act as a mediator between Russia and Ukraine during the war, which is in its fourth year.

On Tuesday, he accused Israel of using hunger as a weapon in Gaza, saying the images coming from the Palestinian enclave were worse than “Nazi camps”. The United Nations on Friday officially declared a famine in Gaza. - **AFP**

Nairobi slum pageant gives platform to voiceless

AFP
Nairobi

A stone’s throw from Kibera, Kenya’s largest informal settlement, a young woman glides down a spotlight catwalk, her delicate white dress at odds with the fake blood splattered across it and the tape covering her lips reading: “Stop, silence, gender-based violence.”

The annual “Mr and Ms Kibera” pageant in Nairobi, gleefully attended by hundreds, is about more than just the contestants’ looks – it provides a much-needed platform for expression and protest.

For many of those taking part, the cool August evening was a chance to voice support for youth-led demonstrations and freedom of speech or to condemn violence against women.

Gender-based violence in the east African country has been labelled a “femicide” by activists, who have urged the government to act. Waves of anti-government demonstrations have also taken



Rozelda Kim (centre left), 21, and Boniface Mukuha (centre right), 27, walk the main stage as attendees cheer after being crowned Mr & Ms Kibera 2025 in the Kibera informal settlement of Nairobi.

place – the latest in June and July killing 65 people – with rights groups alleging police brutality, a long-running issue in Kenya.

At the pageant, one contestant’s tank top simply read: “Stop killing us.” Their speeches and protest acts are as key to their success in the contest as their appearance.

Now in its 20th year, the pageant has offered scores of young people from the neighbourhood – where many still lack clean wa-

ter and regular electricity – the chance to step out of a cycle of poverty, violence and crime.

“Many people don’t see anything positive coming from a slum,” said founder Ben Ooko.

“Yet, there are hidden gems in our community just waiting to be discovered.” The pageant teaches participants how to express themselves in public and build self-confidence, he said. “We are looking at young people who are able

to stand up and speak for the challenges of other young people,” he added. Twenty years ago, Kepha Ngito became the first Mr Kibera. Thanks in part to a scholarship from the pageant, Ngito was able to move off the streets and is now a development consultant.

Despite no longer living in Kibera, he still comes back to help young people stuck in what he calls an “environment of indignity”. The pageant offers people a chance to demonstrate their potential, he said. Another former participant Pauline Akiniyi, 30, who took part in 2016, has gone on to open a women’s shelter in Kibera. Towards the end of the evening, the winners are announced, with the crown going to 21-year-old Rozelda Kim.

“It’s not just a beauty pageant... It’s a microphone to speak louder,” she said. The nursing student will use her victory to help her community, changing perceptions about an often-maligned part of the capital.

“Your social background doesn’t define you,” Kim said.

Sudan’s South Darfur records 158 cholera deaths since May

AFP
Khartoum

At least 158 cholera deaths have been recorded in Sudan’s South Darfur since the end of May, the health ministry of its paramilitary-controlled state government said yesterday.

More than two years of fighting between the regular army and the paramilitary Rapid Support Forces has left much of Darfur in the hands of the RSF and without access to live-saving aid.

The last pocket of territory in army hands, around the North Darfur state capital El-Fasher, has been under siege by the RSF since May last year and UN agencies have spoken of appalling conditions for the remaining civilians trapped inside.

Since South Darfur recorded its first cholera case at the end of May, cases have been reported in all five of the region’s states but South Darfur still accounts for

more than half of them, the World Health Organisation said on Friday. The state health ministry said it had recorded a total of 2,880 cases so far, 158 of them fatal, with 42 cases, two of them fatal, on Friday alone.

Medical charity Doctors Without Borders (MSF) has said the Darfur outbreak is Sudan’s worst in years and threatens to spread to neighbouring South Sudan and Chad.

Cholera is an acute intestinal infection that spreads through food and water contaminated with bacteria, often from faeces.

It can kill within hours when not attended to, though it can be treated with simple oral rehydration, and antibiotics for more severe cases.

MSF said mass displacements of civilians sparked by the war had aggravated the Darfur outbreak by denying people access to clean water for essential hygiene measures, such as washing dishes and preparing food.

ANNOUNCEMENT

I, **FLORDELYN ABENOJA MARIANO**
holder of
PHILIPPINES Passport No. P0076387D
QID No. 28560830292
hereby change my name
from
FLORDELYN ABENOJA MARIANO
to
FLORDELYN MARIANO KEMP

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

ANNOUNCEMENT

I, **PRINCES ALBANA LASALA**
holder of
PHILIPPINES Passport No. P5024788B
QID No. 28760811010
hereby change my name
from
PRINCES ALBANA LASALA
to
PRINCES LASALA GATUS

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

ANNOUNCEMENT

I, **MOHAMMED MUNNA KHAN**
holder of
INDIA Passport No. N4837576
QID No. 27135626854
hereby change my name
from
MOHAMMED MUNNA KHAN
to
MOHAMMAD MUNNA KHAN

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

LEGAL

Gambian ‘death squad’ member sentenced to 67 years in prison

A Gambian man convicted of torturing opponents of the African country’s former president was sentenced to more than 67 years in a US prison on Friday, AFP reported from Los Angeles. Michael Sang Correa, 46, served in an armed unit known as the “Junglers,” which answered to The Gambia’s then-president, Yahya Jammeh. Correa was convicted by a jury in Denver, Colorado, in April of torturing people because of suspicions they had plotted against Jammeh. The Justice Department said the torture included burning victims with molten plastic and subjecting them to vicious beatings.

CURBS

Gates Foundation’s anti-malaria campaign halted in Burkina

Burkina Faso on Friday halted a project backed by US billionaire Bill Gates that had seen genetically modified mosquitoes released in a bid to eradicate malaria and other insect-borne diseases. AFP reported from Abidjan. Target Malaria, funded by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, is the latest NGO to come under pressure from the country’s military rulers. It was ordered to stop “all activities”, the government said in a communique.



US govt ‘wants migrant targeted in crackdown deported to Uganda’

AFP
Washington

The US government intends to deport a Salvadoran man at ground zero of President Donald Trump's war on illegal immigration to Uganda next week, his lawyers said yesterday.

In a filing, the lawyers asked courts to dismiss the case against Kilmar Abrego Garcia on grounds that it is a vindictive attempt to punish him for challenging his initial deportation to El Salvador.

The attempt to deport Garcia to far-flung Uganda in East Africa adds a dramatic new twist to a saga that become a test case for

Trump's harsh crackdown on illegal immigration - and, critics say, his trampling of the law.

His lawyers' filing was an addition to an earlier one asking judges to dismiss the case. Word of the new press to deport him came a day after he was freed and allowed to go home to Maryland pending trial on human smuggling charges.

This followed a tortuous saga in which he was mistakenly deported to a notoriously rough prison in El Salvador, then returned to US soil only to be detained again.

A judge ordered his release Friday but the latest news means he might again be expelled, this



Kilmar Abrego Garcia walks, after he has been released from the Putnam County Jail in Cookville, Tennessee, US.

time to Uganda under a new, harsh Trump administration scheme of sending undocumented

migrants to distant, even war-torn countries where they know no one.

Abrego Garcia denies any wrongdoing, while the administration says he is a violent MS-13 gang member who smuggled other immigrants.

On Thursday when it became clear Abrego Garcia would be released the following day, government officials made him a plea offer: remain in custody, plead guilty to human smuggling charges and be deported to Costa Rica, his lawyers said in the filing. He declined the offer.

"The government immediately responded to Mr Abrego's release with outrage," the filing states.

"Despite... assurances from the government of Costa Rica that Mr Abrego would be accepted there, within minutes of his release from pretrial custody, an (Immigration and Customs Enforcement) representative informed Mr. Abrego's counsel that the government intended to deport Mr Abrego to Uganda and ordered him to report to ICE's Baltimore Field Office Monday morning," it added.

The case has been a messy tug of war. The government admitted it had mistakenly sent him to El Salvador's notorious maximum security prison in March.

The US Supreme Court later ordered the Trump administra-

tion to "facilitate" the return of Abrego Garcia. He was returned in June, and then quickly arrested and charged with trafficking undocumented migrants. On Friday, he was released from prison in Tennessee on a judge's order.

At that point he had not seen his family in more than 160 days. The case has become emblematic of Trump's rough crackdown on illegal migration.

Right-wing supporters praise the Republican president's toughness, but legal scholars and human rights advocates have blasted what they say is a haphazard rush to deport people without even a court hearing, in violation of basic US law.

US Defence Intel Agency chief among latest ousted officers

AFP
Washington

The head of the US Defence Intelligence Agency (DIA) and two other senior officers are being removed, officials said - the latest in a series of military firings this year.

The removal of Lieutenant General Jeffrey Kruse, who led the DIA since early 2024, comes after the agency produced a preliminary assessment that said US strikes on Iran set back Tehran's nuclear programme by just a few months.

The assessment - which was widely reported on by US media - contradicted claims from President Donald Trump that the strikes totally destroyed the nuclear sites, drawing the ire of both him and officials within his administration.

Kruse "will no longer serve as DIA director", a senior defence official said on condition of anonymity, without providing an explanation for the general's departure.

Prior to becoming director of the DIA, Kruse served as the advisor for military affairs for the director of national intelligence, and also held positions including director of intelligence for



File photo shows: US Air Force Lt General and Director of the Defence Intelligence Agency Jeffrey Kruse.

the coalition against the Islamic State militant group.

A US official separately said on condition of anonymity that two other senior officers - Vice Admiral Nancy Lacore, chief of Navy Reserve, and Rear Admiral Milton Sands, commander of the Naval Special Warfare Command - were also leaving their positions.

In June, the US launched a massive operation against three Iranian nuclear sites, an effort that involved more than 125 US aircraft as well as a guided mis-

sile submarine. Trump called the strikes a "spectacular military success" and repeatedly said they "obliterated" the nuclear sites, but the DIA's preliminary assessment raised doubts about the president's claims.

The Trump administration responded with an offensive against the media, insisting the operation was a total success and berating journalists for reporting on the assessment.

Defence Secretary Pete Hegseth insisted the assessment was "leaked because someone had

an agenda to try to muddy the waters and make it look like this historic strike wasn't successful", and slammed "fawning coverage of a preliminary assessment". Since beginning his second term in January, Trump has overseen a purge of top military officers, including chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff general Charles "CQ" Brown, whom he fired without explanation in February.

Other senior officers dismissed this year include the heads of the Navy and Coast Guard, the general who headed the National Security Agency, the vice chief of staff of the Air Force, a Navy admiral assigned to Nato, and three top military lawyers.

The chief of staff of the Air Force also recently announced his retirement without explanation just two years into a four-year term. Hegseth has insisted the president is simply choosing the leaders he wants, but Democratic lawmakers have raised concerns about the potential politicisation of the traditionally neutral US military. Earlier this year, the Pentagon chief additionally ordered at least a 20% reduction in the number of active-duty four-star generals and admirals in the US military, as well as a 10% cut in the overall number of general and flag officers.

Maxwell told DOJ official she is unaware of any Epstein ‘client list’

Reuters
New York

Ghislaine Maxwell, who is serving a 20-year prison sentence for helping Jeffrey Epstein physically violate underage girls, told a top Department of Justice (DoJ) official in July that she was not aware of any "client list" belonging to the late financier and never saw President Donald Trump behave inappropriately, according to a transcript of an interview released on Friday.

"I never witnessed the President in any inappropriate setting in any way," Maxwell said, according to the transcript of her two-day interview last month with Deputy Attorney General Todd Blanche. "The President was never inappropriate with anybody."

During the interview, the imprisoned 63-year-old former British socialite also said she did not witness any physical abuse by Epstein, her longtime boyfriend, and did not implicate any other prominent individuals in wrongdoing.

"He kept a lot to himself and he didn't like to share," Maxwell said, of Epstein. "He was not a sharer. Well, at least not with me."

The Justice Department's release of the transcripts and audio recordings of Maxwell's interview comes amid intense public curiosity about Epstein, a multimillionaire who socialised with the cultural and political elite, and as Trump, a Republican, tries to tamp down a political crisis stemming from the Justice Department's decision not to release files from its investigation of Epstein despite its earlier pledges to do so.

Maxwell spoke with Blanche on the condition that she not be prosecuted for any self-incriminating statements she were to make, but she could be prosecuted if she lied in the interview.

Maxwell was previously charged with perjury for lying in a 2016 deposition about her knowledge of Epstein's alleged behaviour, though prosecutors dropped those charges after a jury found her guilty of sex trafficking in 2021.

During Maxwell's month-long

trial in Manhattan, jurors heard emotional and explicit testimony from four women who said Maxwell recruited and groomed them for abuse by Epstein.

Epstein died by suicide in a Manhattan jail cell in 2019 while awaiting trial on sex trafficking charges. He had pleaded not guilty.

Epstein's death, coupled with his friendships with powerful people like Trump and former Democratic President Bill Clinton, has fuelled conspiracy theories that other people were involved in his crimes, and that he was murdered to cover that up. No one other than he and Maxwell have been charged with crimes.

Blanche asked Maxwell if Epstein maintained any "client list." "There is no list that I am aware of," Maxwell said.

Maxwell, who pleaded not guilty to the criminal charges brought against her in 2020, has asked the US Supreme Court to overturn her conviction. David Markus, Maxwell's attorney, said in a statement on Friday that the interview supports Maxwell's argument that she is innocent.

"She supported her answers with documents and other objective evidence. Her demeanour and credibility are clear for anyone to hear," Markus said.

Markus has previously said Maxwell has not held discussions with Trump about a possible pardon, but that she would welcome "relief".

Blanche's interview of Maxwell on July 24 and July 25 came as Trump sought to quell criticism from his conservative base of supporters and congressional Democrats over the Justice Department's decision not to release the files.

A week after the interview, Maxwell was moved from a low-security prison facility in Florida to a less-restrictive prison camp in Texas.

Trump knew Epstein socially in the 1990s and early 2000s. During Maxwell's trial the financier's longtime pilot, Lawrence Visoski, testified that Trump flew on Epstein's private plane multiple times. Trump has denied flying on the plane.

Bolsonaro defence says Brazil police aim to ‘discredit’ him

AFP
Brasilia

Former Brazilian president Jair Bolsonaro's lawyers denied on Friday that he violated restrictions imposed for his detention during his trial over an attempted coup, and accused police of "discrediting" him, according to a document submitted to the Supreme Court.

The far-right former president is accused of plotting to cling onto power after losing the 2022 elections to his leftist successor Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva.

Bolsonaro, 70, has been under house arrest since early August - imposed by the judge overseeing the case after he allegedly flouted

the ban on his use of social media.

He is banned from social media for the duration of the proceedings, and third parties are barred from sharing his public remarks.

But federal police revealed this week that Bolsonaro repeatedly violated restrictions, citing an analysis of a seized mobile phone showing he allegedly communicated with other trial defendants and shared up to 300 videos of support demonstrations in Sao Paulo and Rio de Janeiro on WhatsApp.

Police also said they found a 33-page document containing a draft "request for political asylum" to Argentine President Javier Milei, dated days after the coup investigation began in February 2024.

The police report "appears to be a political piece, aimed at discrediting a former presi-

dent of the Republic who, whether police authorities like it or not, is still a political leader," Bolsonaro's defence team said.

"In other words, it is ongoing 'lawfare'" they added, using a term that essentially means legal warfare. The defence argued that Bolsonaro complied with all court orders, remaining at his residence even when ordered to wear an electronic ankle bracelet before house arrest was imposed.

"A draft asylum request to the Argentine president, dating from February 2024, cannot be considered evidence of escape," the lawyers argued.

The Supreme Court is expected to issue a ruling in September.

Bolsonaro could face up to 40 years in prison if convicted.

Lyle Menendez denied parole decades after murder of parents

AFP
Los Angeles

US judicial commission denied parole to Joseph Lyle Menendez, a day after his brother Erik was also ordered to stay in prison for the murder of their parents in a Beverly Hills mansion more than three decades ago.

A California panel ordered the 57-year-old, who goes by his middle name, to remain behind bars along with his younger sibling, defying a campaign for their freedom waged by family, friends and celebrities including Kim Kardashian.

"Joseph (Lyle) Menendez was denied parole for three years at his initial suitability hearing to-

day," read a brief statement from the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (CDCR).

The outcome of Lyle Menendez's hearing is the latest blow to a movement that has swelled in recent years, amplified by Netflix's smash hit dramatic series "Monsters: The Lyle and Erik Menendez Story."

The show and myriad documentaries have fixated on the gory details of the 1989 shotgun murders, and the televised jury trial that captivated audiences with accounts of their abusive upbringings and posh lifestyles.

Parole commissioner Julie Garland said the panel found that there were still signs that Lyle Menendez posed a risk to the public.

Five killed in New York state tourist bus crash

AFP
New York

Five passengers aboard a tourist bus were killed when their driver got distracted and crashed on a New York state highway, police said.

The wreck happened 25 miles (40 kilometres) east of Buffalo as the tourists headed back to New York City after visiting Niagara Falls.

The passengers were of Indian, Chinese and Filipino origin, authorities said.

"It's believed the operator became distracted, lost control, over corrected and ended up... over there," said New York state police commander major Andre Ray at the scene Friday evening, giving the toll for the first time.

No one else was in a life-threatening condition, Ray said. Several passengers received medical treatment and were released.



This handout photo courtesy of Mike Flaig shows victims and emergency personnel at the site of a bus crash on Interstate 90 eastbound near Pembroke, New York.

Fifty-four people were on the bus when it crashed and no children were killed, US media reported, contradicting an earlier police briefing.

Six Chinese citizens were aboard the bus, China's state broadcaster CCTV said quoting the Chinese consulate in New York. Five were treated for minor injuries and discharged, while the sixth was undergoing surgery.

The bus had travelled to Nia-

gara Falls, on the border with Canada, for the day and was heading home when the accident took place on a highway near Pembroke.

"Mechanical error was ruled out as well as impairment or intoxication," said Ray, who added that no charges had been brought.

Translators were sent to the scene to help communicate with the victims. Eight helicopters

were involved in the rescue effort, Margaret Ferrentino, president of Mercy Flight, a nonprofit provider of air ambulance services, told AFP.

"The driver is alive and well - we're working with him. We believe we have a good idea of what happened, why the bus lost control. We just want to make sure that all the details are thoroughly vetted," a police spokesman said earlier.

State Governor Kathy Hochul said her team was co-ordinating with state police and local officials "who are working to rescue and provide assistance to everyone involved." Blood and organ donor network Connect Life issued a call for blood donors to come forward in the wake of the crash. "I'm heartbroken for all those we've lost and all those injured and praying for their families. Thank you to our brave first responders on the scene," said the senior US senator from New York, Chuck Schumer.

Two Dutch teenagers found dead in Istanbul hotel

AFP
Istanbul

Two Dutch teenagers were found dead in their Istanbul hotel room and their father hospitalised, Turkish media reported yesterday, with initial suspicion falling on a restaurant meal they had eaten.

The boys, aged 15 and 17, were deceased when police and paramedics arrived at the hotel where they were staying, in the Fatih district, near Istanbul's Blue Mosque and Grand Bazaar, according to the NTV television channel.

"When they arrived, ambulance paramedics noted the two children were deceased. The father was taken to hospital by ambulance" in a state of shock, the channel reported.

The three had been vacationing in Turkiye and were believed to have gone to the touristy Taksim district for dinner, media said.

The 57-year-old father told police that he had gone with his sons to Taksim "but did not eat", the Haber Turk news outlet reported.

Later that evening, after returning to the hotel, the father called out to the boys, who did not respond.

A hotel employee, Mehmet Kirdag, heard the father crying for help, NTV reported.

"When I knocked at the door and entered, the two sons were dead, one of them in bed, the other on the floor... when paramedics arrived, the two young men were deceased. The father was in a state of shock," Kirdag said.

Istanbul police have launched an investigation, NTV reported.

Lake formed by mountain mudslide in Pakistan threatens 'catastrophic' floods

Reuters
Peshawar

A 7km (4-mile) lake in northern Pakistan, created by a mountain mudslide, is threatening to burst and unleash potentially "catastrophic" floods downstream, officials warned yesterday.

The mud flow descended into the main Ghizer River channel and blocked it completely on Friday, creating the lake in Gilgit Baltistan province, the National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) said.

The blockage created a "dam-like structure" that poses a significant threat of bursting, it said in a situation report by its provincial office.

The new lake "can cause a catastrophic flood", said Zakir Hussain, director general of the

Provincial Disaster Management Authority.

Four downstream districts – Ghizer, Gilgit, Astore and Diamer – face a serious threat, he told Reuters.

Ghizer is north of the mountain districts in northwest Pakistan where floods triggered by the worst of this year's monsoon rains and cloudbursts have killed nearly 400 people since August 15.

A video shared by the national authority on a WhatsApp group where it issues statements shows black mud sliding down the mountain before landing in the river.

Reuters could not independently verify the video, which an official at the authority said was shot by residents.

Similar mud flows landed in the river from different mountainsides, said provincial gov-

ernment spokesperson Faizullah Faraq.

A shepherd on higher ground, the first to spot the mud flow crashing down, alerted villagers and local authorities, he said.

As a result of the warning, he said, nearly 200 people in dozens of scattered houses tucked in the mountainsides and the river's surroundings were rescued.

The lake has started discharging water, meaning the threat of a burst is receding, but flash floods in downstream districts cannot be ruled out until the lake is completely cleared, Faraq said.

The communities downstream have been directed to stay on high alert and vacate areas along the river, he said.

Floods across Pakistan have killed 785 since the monsoon started in late June, the national authority said, warning of two more rain spells by September 10.

Russia captures two more Ukraine villages

Russia said yesterday that its forces in east Ukraine had taken two villages in the Donetsk region, upping military pressure on the ground as world leaders struggle to broker an end to the conflict.

Russian forces are slowly advancing in the embattled eastern region, grinding closer to Kyiv's key defensive line in costly metre-for-metre battles.

Moscow's defence ministry said on Telegram that Russian forces captured the villages of Sredneye and Kleban-Byk. – **AFP**



Bangladesh's Foreign Secretary Asad Alam Siam (right) receiving Pakistan's Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar at the Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport in Dhaka. – **AFP**

Bangladesh welcomes Pakistan FM

AFP
Dhaka

Pakistan's foreign minister flew to Bangladesh yesterday as the nations, once bitter enemies after they split in 1971, seek to rebuild ties with regional power balances shifting.

Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar is the most senior Pakistani official to visit Dhaka since 2012, with Islamabad calling it a "significant milestone in Pakistan-Bangladesh relations".

The two Muslim-majority nations are expected to sign several agreements including on trade today.

Pakistan's foreign ministry said Dar would meet with Bangladesh's interim leader, Muhammad Yunus.

Analysts say neighbouring India, which fought a four-day conflict with Pakistan in May, will be watching closely.

Relations between Dhaka and New Delhi turned icy in August 2024 after a mass uprising in Bangladesh ended the autocratic rule of prime minister Sheikh Hasina, prompting her to flee to India.

"Bangladesh had been one of India's closest partners in its neighbourhood, and now it is flirting with India's chief adversary," said Michael Kugelman, a US-based analyst, ahead of the visit.

Pakistan and Bangladesh began sea trade last year, expanding government-to-government commerce in February.

Islamabad's Commerce Minister Jam Kamal Khan held talks on Thursday in Dhaka, where he agreed to set up joint commissions to boost trade and investment.

On Friday, top military commanders from both nations met in Pakistan.

Pakistan's military was accused of widespread atrocities during the 1971 war, when East Pakistan broke away to form Bangladesh.

Hundreds of thousands were killed – Bangladesh estimates say millions – and many in Dhaka still demand Islamabad apologise for the killings.

After 1971, Bangladesh leaned heavily on India, which almost encircles the country of 170mn people.

However, Bangladesh's interim government, led by Nobel Peace Prize winner Yunus, is furious that India took Hasina in – where she remains and continues to refuse to attend her trial on charges amounting to crimes against humanity.

"The toppling of Hasina was a strategic setback for India, and the improved relations between Bangladesh and Pakistan are a consequence of her ouster," said Thomas Kean of the International Crisis Group.

Dhaka accused India this month of backing Hasina's now-outlawed Awami League party, charges that New Delhi rejected, saying that it "does not allow political activities against other countries to be carried out" from its soil.

Berlin street gets renamed after years of controversy

AFP
Berlin

Berlin street was officially renamed yesterday for an 18th-century African philosopher after years of debate over its previous name that many considered outdated and offensive.

The local council in the central Mitte district announced in 2020 that it wanted to change the name of the street from Mohrenstrasse (Moors' Street) to Anton Wilhelm Amo Street, after the first black philosopher known to have taught at a German university.

The Mohrenstrasse metro station also took the new name yesterday, a date chosen to coincide with the International Day for the Remembrance of the Slave Trade.

In comparison with the English word "Moor", the German term carries a more direct connotation of skin colour and has long been considered pejorative and offensive.

Sharon Dodua Otoo, a British writer and activist who lives in Germany, unveiled one of the street signs alongside district mayor Stefanie Remlinger.

"Anton Wilhelm Amo Street stands for solidarity, for appreciation. For a truly appreciative remembrance of African people in 17th century Germany," Otoo said.

"It's a great success for civil society, which has been pushing for a name change for more than 30 years," said Tahir Della, from the group Decolonise Berlin, which organised celebrations to mark the name change.

"It makes clear why the former name is so problematic for many black people in Germany," he said.

The origins of the name Moors' Street are unclear.

It dates back to the early 18th century, the height of the Atlantic slave trade, and some suggested it may refer to former slaves who settled there.

Another theory is that it refers to a visiting African diplomatic delegation.

Whatever its precise origins, Della said the name is a "racist description for black people".

However, some local residents mounted legal challenges against the council to try to stop the renaming.

A last-minute court decision on Friday briefly threatened to derail the process, even after workers had already begun switching the street signs.

However, a higher court overturned the decision hours later, allowing the renaming to go ahead.

Anton Wilhelm Amo, born around 1700 in what is today Ghana, is believed to have been sold into slavery and then brought to Europe.

Amo was "just a child when he was brought from west Africa" to Germany, Otoo said.

Amo later had the opportunity to receive an education that took him to the prestigious universities of Wittenberg, Halle and Jena, becoming an important figure in Germany's Enlightenment period.

Decolonise Berlin says the new name honours a symbol of "resistance, self-affirmation and knowledge in the African diaspora".

Della said he hopes the renaming will serve as an "impetus for further discussions on public spaces", pointing to debates on other street names in Berlin honouring figures from Germany's colonial past.



Guests are seen during the unveiling ceremony for the renaming of the Mohrenstrasse (Moors' Street) to Anton Wilhelm Amo Street, named after the first known philosopher of African origin in Germany, after years of debate over its current name, in central Berlin. – **AFP**

Portugal sees new fire death as Spain beats back blazes

AFP
Madrid

A fourth Portuguese firefighter died of injuries sustained battling a wildfire yesterday as Spain slowly got the upper hand over fires that have scorched vast swathes of territory.

Eight people have now died in the two countries that have been gripped by a summer of fires fuelled by heatwaves, tinderbox conditions and strong winds.

Portugal's presidency said that a firefighter had died of injuries suffered this week in Sabugal in the northeast.

Media said the 45-year-old had been working for a private company battling the fires. Spain has also counted four deaths.

However, with weather conditions improving, Spanish authorities said that the tide appeared to have turned in the fight against the fires, mainly raging in the country's west and northwest.

The head of Spain's civil protection and emergencies service, Virginia Barcones, said there were still 18 "treacherous" fires burning.

However, she added that Spanish emergency services, backed by European reinforcements, had almost contained the blazes.

The Spanish regions of Castile and Leon, Extremadura and Galicia have been hardest hit by the fires that flared during the latest heatwave that saw temperatures soaring to 40° Celsius and above.

In Portugal, the office of President Marcelo Rebelo de Sousa sent condolences to the family of the fireman "who tragically lost his life

after directly combating the forest fires in Sabugal municipality".

The amount of land burnt across the Iberian peninsula has hit a total area about the size of the US state of Delaware, based on EU statistics.

The European Forest Fire Information System (EFFIS) said Spain had lost a record 403,000 hectares (996,000 acres), while Portugal lost 278,000 hectares this year.

The total is about 6,810sq km (2,630sq miles).

The fire emergency has thrown a spotlight on climate change and trends that have left Spain's countryside vulnerable.

Castile and Leon has suffered from decades of rural exodus, an ageing population and a decline of farming and livestock grazing that once helped keep forests clear of tinder.

Armenians protest Russian army base

About 100 people staged a protest yesterday outside a Russian army base in the Armenian city of Gyumri, calling for an end to Moscow's military presence in the country.

Armenia, a landlocked ex-Soviet country in the Caucasus, has long relied on Russia to bolster its security in its standoff with neighbouring Azerbaijan.

However, ties between the allies have been strained since Azerbaijan's 2023 offensive on Nagorno-Karabakh, in which Moscow did not intervene to back Armenia.

Police presence outside the base prevented clashes between the anti-Russia rally and a rival protest of a few dozen in support of the base. – **AFP**

Bosnia Serb statelet calls referendum on verdict against leader

AFP
Sarajevo

Bosnia's Serbian entity faced international criticism yesterday for ordering a referendum on whether it accepts a federal court verdict banning its president Milorad Dodik from public office.

Lawmakers in Republika Srpska (RS)'s regional assembly voted late on Friday to hold a referendum on October 25 that would be a new challenge to the state's weak central government.

The European Union delegation in Bosnia said yesterday that the court ruling against Dodik "must be respected".

"Subjecting a court decision to a public vote runs counter to the rule of law and the independence of judicial authorities," it added in a post on X. "We expect the Republika Srpska authorities to de-escalate the situation and respect the sovereignty, territorial integrity, and constitutional and

legal order of Bosnia and Herzegovina."

Britain's ambassador to Bosnia, Julian Reilly, made a similar call, saying that any referendum on the court decision would be "illegal".

Dodik, 66, was convicted in February by a Bosnian federal court of flouting decisions by Christian Schmidt, the international envoy enforcing a peace deal that ended Bosnia's 1992-1995 war.

He avoided a one-year prison sentence by paying a €19,000 (\$22,000) fine, but an appeals court upheld a ruling that he be removed from the RS presidency and banned from political office for six years.

Dodik has vowed to block elections in Republika Srpska and to hold a series of referendums – the first of which would be the vote on the court ruling.

Bosnian Serb lawmakers voted to put the question: "Do you accept the decisions of the unelected foreigner (envoy Schmidt) and the unconstitutional verdict of the Bosnia-Herzegovina Court against the

president of the RS, as well as the decision of the Bosnian Electoral Commission to revoke the mandate of the president of the RS, Milorad Dodik?"

Fifty of the 65 lawmakers present voted in favour.

Opposition lawmakers refused to vote.

"I won't get in your way... but you're walking on a minefield," warned one opposition lawmaker, Nebojsa Vukanovic, a fierce critic of Dodik.

Dodik has said he expects the Serbian majority population of Republika Srpska to massively vote "no" to the referendum question.

The nationalist Bosnian Serb has been in power since 2006. He blames Schmidt, a former German minister who has been international envoy for Bosnia since 2021, for his ouster.

The RS parliament also passed votes rejecting Schmidt's authority, demanding that Dodik continue as the RS president, and rejecting elections to choose a new president.

Bosnia's electoral commission is expected however to call early elections for the RS presidency.

Dodik's prime minister Radovan Viskovic resigned on Monday.

He did not give a reason but his departure deepened the political crisis in Bosnia.

Last Saturday Dodik named Savo Minic, agriculture minister in Viskovic's government, as the new prime minister.

Viskovic and Dodik had been accused of undermining Bosnia's constitutional order after the RS parliament voted to bar federal police and the judiciary from operating in the Serb entity.

Both have also been sanctioned by the United States for threatening the 1995 Dayton Peace Agreement and undermining Bosnia's fragile sovereignty.

Bosnia has been split between Serbian and Bosnian-Croat entities since the 1990s war, in which tens of thousands died.

The country is held together by weak central institutions.

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GULF TIMES

Fed signals possible Sept rate cut amid dual risks of rising unemployment and persistent inflation

Federal Reserve (Fed) Chair Jerome Powell has signalled that a September interest rate cut is possible, despite a recent uptick in inflation, warning that “downside risks to employment are rising”. Speaking at the Fed’s annual Jackson Hole conference in Wyoming recently, Powell stressed that the US central bank would move cautiously, noting the need to weigh the effects of tariffs and broader policy shifts on the economy.

While acknowledging that inflation remains “somewhat elevated”, Powell said the “balance of risks appears to be shifting”.

He also announced a reversal of a five-year-old policy framework that could keep interest rates higher over the longer term.

“The labour market appears to be in balance, but it is a curious balance created by a sharp slowing in both the supply of and demand for workers,” Powell observed.

“This unusual situation suggests that downside risks to employment are emerging — and when they materialise, they can do so quickly, through sharply higher layoffs and rising unemployment.”

His comments drew close attention from both Wall Street and the White House, where President Donald Trump has repeatedly pressed for rate cuts.

Inflation has picked up in recent months, with consumer prices rising 2.7% in July from a year earlier, above the Fed’s 2% target

shifting balance of risks may warrant adjusting our policy stance.”

Analysts interpret this as Powell’s clearest signal yet that a rate cut is on the table. Economists at Goldman Sachs, for example, said his remarks are consistent with expectations of a quarter-point reduction at the Fed’s September 16–17 meeting. The benchmark rate currently stands at 4.3%.

The Fed has three meetings remaining this year — in September, late October, and December — although it remains uncertain whether officials will ease policy at each.

Inflation has picked up in recent months, with consumer prices rising 2.7% in July from a year earlier, above the Fed’s 2% target. Core prices, which exclude food and energy, climbed 3.1%.

While tariffs have not fuelled inflation as much as feared, they are beginning to raise prices on imported goods such as furniture, toys, and shoes.

The Fed’s decisions carry global significance. Because the US dollar is the world’s primary reserve currency and American markets are deeply integrated into global finance, Fed policy often shapes monetary decisions elsewhere.

Emerging market central banks, in particular, frequently adjust their own policies to avoid destabilising capital outflows or currency volatility.

Historically, Fed rate hikes have seen strengthening the dollar and tightening global financial conditions, pushing capital into US assets and raising borrowing costs worldwide.

Conversely, rate cuts tend to weaken the dollar, improve global liquidity, and lift equities, commodities, and other risk assets.

Analysts say emerging markets with large dollar-denominated debt are highly sensitive. A stronger dollar raises repayment burdens, risks capital outflows, and can trigger financial instability.

Conversely, a weaker dollar after rate cuts can reduce debt pressures and improve emerging market currencies.

Higher rates in the US slow domestic demand, reducing imports and dampening global trade flows. This can especially affect countries that are heavily reliant on US consumption.

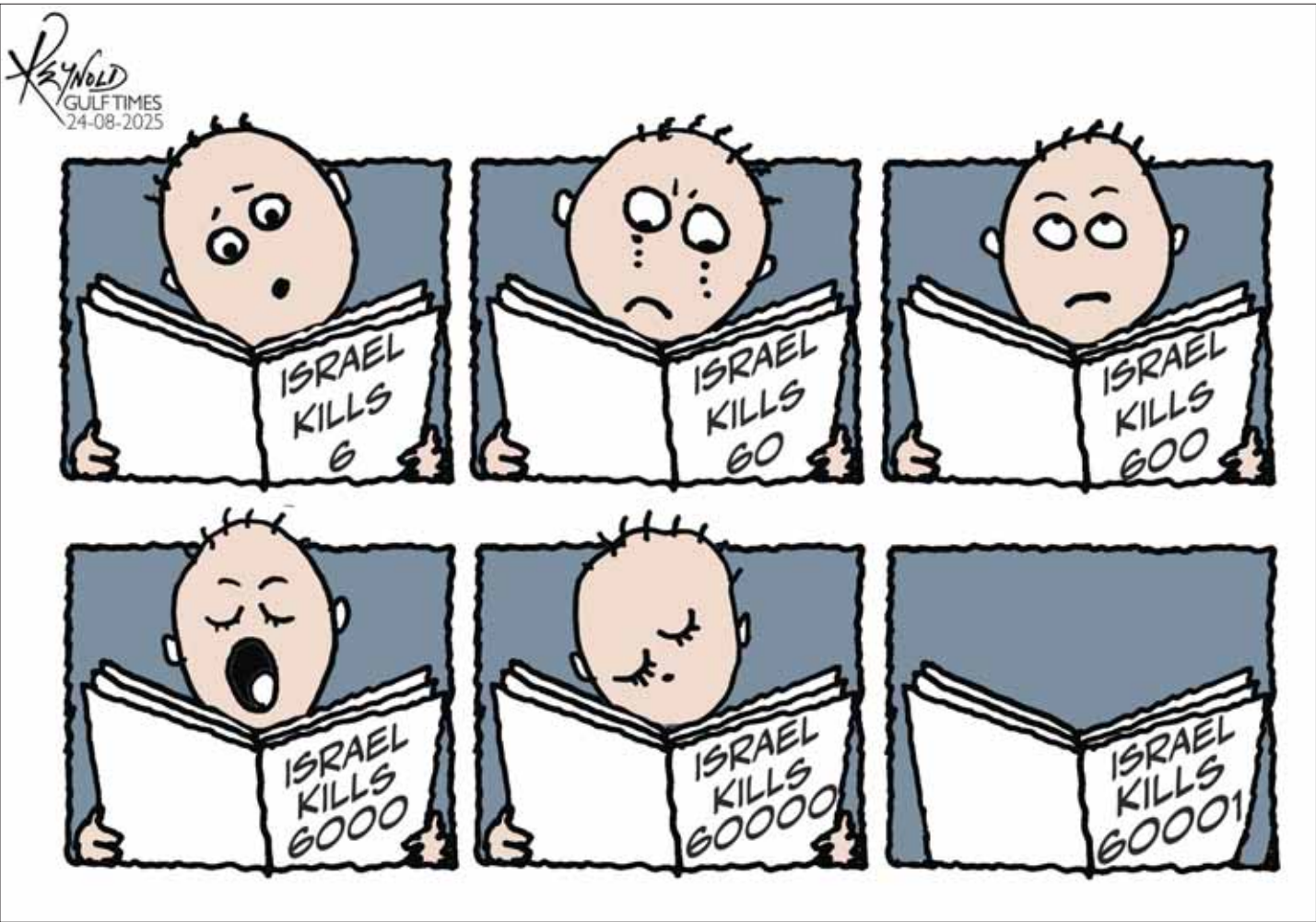
On the other hand, rate cuts stimulate US demand and can provide a lift to global growth, though with a lag.

In respect of commodities, a stronger dollar (often tied to higher Fed rates) puts downward pressure on commodities priced in dollars (like oil, gold, and copper), making them more expensive for non-US buyers.

Lower rates and a weaker dollar usually support commodity prices, which benefits exporters around the world.

Trump argues that lower borrowing costs would ease the government’s interest burden on its \$37tn debt and provide relief to the housing market.

Powell, however, highlighted the dual risks of rising unemployment and persistent inflation. With hiring slowing, he suggested the labour market could weaken further, stating: “The



US Navy drone fleet meant to take on China not going well



Software issues led to crashes, mishaps in drone boat tests



Pentagon paused autonomy software contract with L3Harris



Key Navy acquisition programme rocked after top admiral fired

By David Jeans
New York

During a US naval test off the California coast last month, which was designed to showcase the Pentagon’s top autonomous drone boats, one vessel stalled unexpectedly.

As officials scrambled to fix a software glitch, another drone vessel smashed into the idling boat’s starboard side, vaulted over the deck, and crashed back into the water — an incident captured in videos obtained by Reuters.

The previously unreported episode, which involved two vessels built by US defence tech rivals Saronic and BlackSea Technologies, is one of a series of recent setbacks in the Pentagon’s push to build a fleet of autonomous vessels, according to a dozen people familiar with the programme. Weeks earlier, during a separate Navy test, the captain of a support boat was thrown into the water after another autonomous BlackSea vessel it was towing suddenly accelerated, capsizing the support boat, according to four people familiar with the matter. The captain was rescued and declined medical attention. The incident was first reported by Defence Scoop.

Both incidents stemmed from a combination of software failures and human error, including breakdowns in communication between onboard systems and external autonomous software, according to a person with direct knowledge of the matter, who requested anonymity to share sensitive information.

The Navy, Saronic and BlackSea declined to comment on the incidents.

The videos showing the drone crash were verified by two Reuters sources, the landscape matching terrain imagery, the GARC-096 name ID and structure of the boat matching file imagery of Global Autonomous Reconnaissance

Craft (GARC). US military leaders, seeing the outsized impact of maritime drones in the Ukraine war, have repeatedly said they need autonomous swarms of aerial and maritime drones to hinder a potential advance by China across the Taiwan Strait. Taiwan itself has begun acquiring its own maritime drones.

The drones being developed in Ukraine, which often look like speedboats without seats, and are capable of carrying weapons, explosives and surveillance equipment, are primarily remote-controlled and cost close to \$250,000 — making them optimal for kamikaze missions that have effectively neutralised Russia’s Black Sea Fleet.

The US, meanwhile, is aiming to build an autonomous naval fleet that can move in swarms and without human command — a more ambitious task at a higher price point; as much as a few million dollars per speedboat. The recent test failures highlight the challenges facing the Navy’s effort to deploy the nascent technologies, said Bryan Clark, an autonomous warfare expert at the Hudson Institute. It will need to adapt its “tactics as it better understands what the systems can do and what they can’t do.”

But the Navy’s problems go beyond getting the boats to work: its autonomous maritime drone acquisition unit has also been rocked by the firing of its top admiral, and a top Pentagon official voiced concerns about the programme in a candid meeting with Navy brass last month, Reuters found.

Since the most recent incident, the Pentagon’s Defense Innovation Unit (DIU), which had acquired technology for the tests, has indefinitely paused a contract — valued close to \$20mn — with L3Harris, one of the companies providing autonomous software used to control some of the vessels, according to two people familiar with the matter.

The Pentagon did not respond to questions about the cause of the accidents or the L3Harris contract being paused, which has not been previously reported.

A Pentagon spokesperson said it conducted drone tests as part of a “competitive and iterative approach, between operators and industry.”

L3Harris declined to comment on the contract and directed questions to the DIU. The DIU declined to comment.

“L3Harris stands behind the safety, integrity and capability of our autonomy command- and-control product,” said Toby Magsig, who oversees L3Harris’ autonomous software products.

To accelerate its drone effort, the Pentagon in 2023 launched the \$1bn Replicator programme, through which branches like the US Navy and the DIU planned to acquire thousands of aerial and maritime drones, along with the software to control them. The first systems from this program are due to be announced this month.

The Navy has committed at least \$160mn to BlackSea, which is producing dozens of its Global Autonomous Reconnaissance Craft boats a month, according to procurement records.

Saronic, which was recently valued at \$4bn in a funding round backed by Andreessen Horowitz and 8VC, makes the competitive sea drone Corsair, but is yet to announce a major contract. Federal procurement records show the company has generated at least \$20mn from prototype agreements.

“These systems will play a critical role in the future of naval warfare by extending fleet reach, improving situational awareness, and increasing combat effectiveness,” acting chief of naval operations Jim Kilby said during a visit to BlackSea’s facility in June.

Since returning to office, President Donald Trump has made fielding swarms of drones a top military priority. Trump’s “Big Beautiful Bill” passed last month

included almost \$5bn for maritime autonomous systems.

But, so far, the Navy’s approach has faced scepticism under the new administration.

In April, the Navy’s key drone boat procurement unit — known as Program Executive Office Unmanned and Small Combatants (PEO USC) — touted a successful demonstration of the software used to control BlackSea’s vessels in a post on LinkedIn, hailing it as “a major step forward in advancing #maritime autonomy.”

In response, Colin Carroll, then-chief of staff to Deputy Secretary of Defence Steven Feinberg, suggested the program was duplicating other efforts within the Pentagon. “I have a feeling that there are changes in this program’s future,” he replied to the LinkedIn post. Carroll, who is no longer with the Pentagon, declined to comment further.

The PEO USC was recently placed under review, according to four people familiar with the matter, due to a series of setbacks, and could be restructured or shut down. This comes two months after the Navy said it had sacked the unit’s leader, Rear Admiral Kevin Smith, due to a loss of confidence in his leadership after the Naval Inspector General substantiated a complaint against him. Reuters was unable to contact Smith.

During a meeting last month, Feinberg grilled Navy officials about their autonomous vessel capabilities, including those being fielded by the PEO USC, according to three people briefed on the meeting. Feinberg was unimpressed by some of the capabilities being acquired by the Navy and questioned whether they were cost-effective, the people said.

A Pentagon spokesperson said, “we’re not going to comment on private internal meetings” and directed questions about PEO USC to the Navy.

The Navy declined to comment on the meeting or the acquisition unit being put under review. Spokesperson Timothy Hawkins said the PEO USC stands by its mission, including its role as acquisition authority for the maintenance and modernisation of unmanned maritime systems.

The turmoil comes as shipbuilders and software providers are angling to secure even larger autonomous maritime projects, such as unmanned submarines and cargo-carrying ships.

Last week, the PEO USC started accepting proposals for the Modular Attack Surface Craft, to acquire medium and large vessels capable of carrying containers, surveillance equipment, and conducting strikes.

TX Hammes, an autonomous weapons expert and Atlantic Council fellow, said the Navy is in uncharted waters, trying to overhaul decades of tradition at high speed.

“You’ve got a system that’s used to building big things, taking years to make a decision, and now suddenly you’re asking them to move fast,” he said. — Reuters



Acting Chief of Naval Operations Admiral Jim Kilby visits BlackSea Technology facilities to view the US Navy’s Global Autonomous Reconnaissance Craft programme, in Baltimore, Maryland, in June this year. (Reuters)

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Center for Islamic Civilization ‘will open its doors as a symbol of New Uzbekistan’

General Director Firdavs Abdukhalikov dilates on the awe-inspiring Tashkent landmark that aims to reclaim Islam’s legacy in science, art and philosophy

By Kamran Rehmat
Doha

Rising from the historic heart of Uzbekistan’s capital, where the domes of the Hastimam complex cast their shadows across centuries, the new Center for Islamic Civilization seeks to bridge the past and present.

Conceived on the initiative of President Shavkat Mirziyoyev, the vast cultural and research institution is designed not merely as a museum or archive, but as a statement: that Islam’s legacy in science, art and philosophy must be reclaimed and retold at a time of rising global polarisation.

Graceful domes, Timur-era motifs and cutting-edge design converge in the Center’s striking architecture, but its mission reaches far beyond brick and mosaic. With a thousand rare manuscripts and artefacts being repatriated, a Qur’an Hall built around Caliph Uthman’s revered manuscript, and galleries devoted to education and enlightenment, the project aims to reframe perceptions of Islam and to position Uzbekistan at the crossroads of cultural dialogue once more.

For Firdavs Abdukhalikov, the Center’s general director, this endeavour is nothing less than “restoring historical justice” — returning lost treasures, rekindling intellectual traditions and offering young Uzbeks a bulwark against extremism through knowledge, critical inquiry and cultural pride.

In an exclusive interview with *Gulf Times*, Abdukhalikov spoke on a host of related aspects for an insight into the marvel that will be the Center. Excerpts:

For what was the Center for Islamic Civilization created and why is this the right moment to launch it?

The Center for Islamic Civilization was created to honour and revive the outstanding contribution of scientists of Transoxiana, a historical region covering the territory of modern Uzbekistan, to the development of medicine, mathematics, astronomy, philosophy, architecture and art. It has been inspired by the initiative of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan, Shavkat Mirziyoyev, who in 2017 at the UN General Assembly emphasised the humanistic essence of Islam and the huge contribution Central Asia has had in the development of worldwide civilisation.

Very soon the Center for Islamic Civilization will open its doors as a symbol of the New Uzbekistan, a country that attaches special importance to education, inter-civilisational dialogue and enlightenment.

What is the vision and mission of the Center?

The vision of the Center is to become one of the largest international scientific and cultural centers of Islamic civilization and intercultural dialogue, focused on preserving historical heritage, promoting knowledge and educating future generations.

Its mission is to preserve, study and popularise the rich intellectual and spiritual heritage of the region, asserting the humanistic values of Islam: peace, the pursuit of knowledge, tolerance and progress. Particular attention in the Center is paid to the return of spiritual and cultural values lost in different eras.

Thanks to the personal initiative and determination of President Mirziyoyev, a large-scale programme was launched to return ancient manuscripts, artefacts and objects of Islamic heritage that are directly related to the history

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- Uzbekistan repatriates 1,000 rare manuscripts and artefacts for the Center’s collection, including works purchased at Christie’s and Sotheby’s
- The Qur’an of Caliph Uthman, one of the oldest manuscripts of the Islamic world, will anchor a dedicated Qur’an Hall surrounded by 114 holy texts
- Education and youth engagement — from children’s museums to manuscript restoration labs — lie at the heart of the Center’s mission to counter extremism with enlightenment

and culture of Uzbekistan. As part of this programme, representatives of the country took part in prestigious art sales at the international auction houses Christie’s and Sotheby’s, while separately holding complex and delicate negotiations with private collectors and antique dealers.

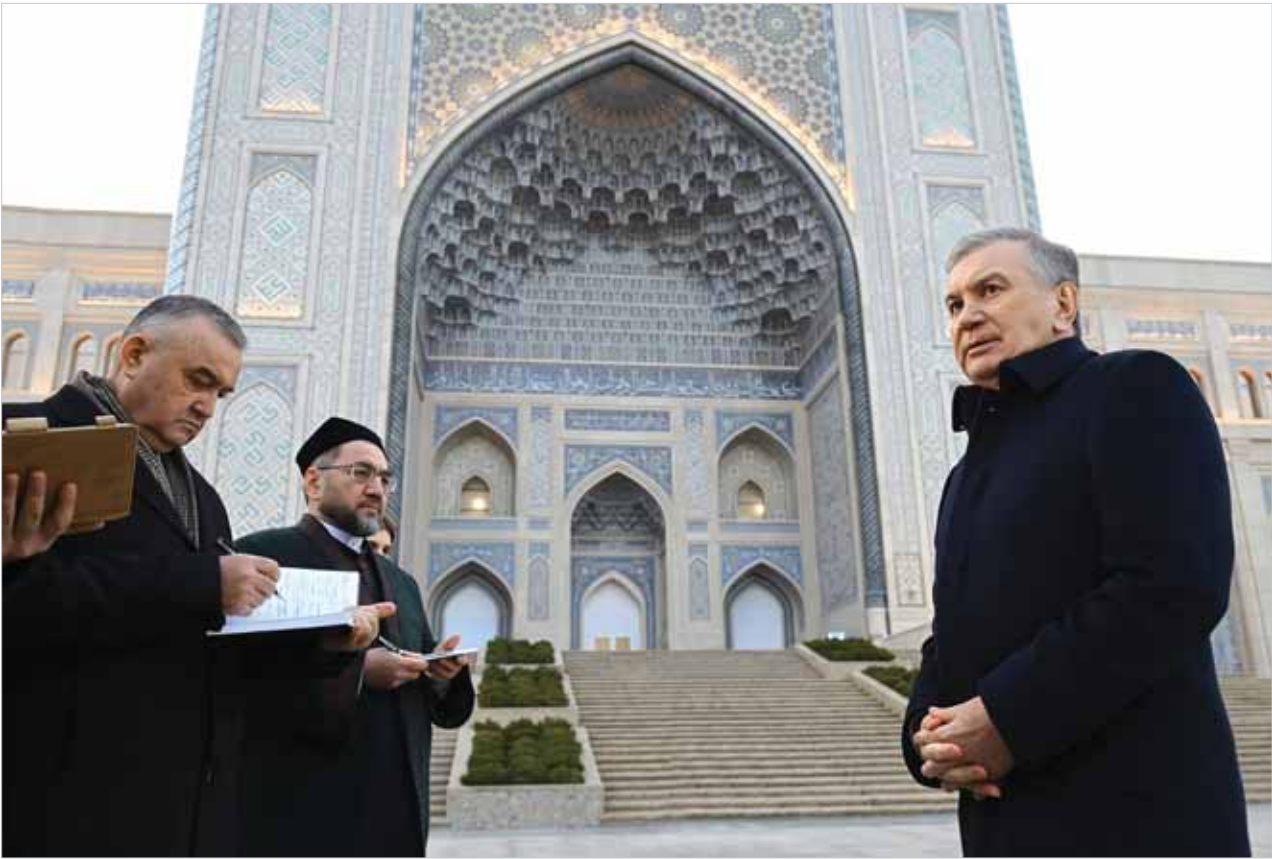
As a result of this initiative, inspired by the desire to preserve national memory, a unique collection is returning to its homeland — about a thousand of the rarest exhibits, including ancient manuscripts, works of art, household items and ritual objects.

All of them will take their rightful place in the exhibitions, symbolising the restoration of historical justice and the cultural sovereignty of the country.

How did the traditional Uzbek aesthetics of the madrasa and modern design elements influence the architecture of the Center, and what does this combination symbolise?

The Center for Islamic Civilization was built not just as an architectural structure, but as a symbol of the deep connection between times, culture and spirituality. The traditions of the great era of the Timurids come to life — the time when Uzbekistan became the heart of world science, enlightenment and art. Graceful domes, majestic arches and the finest mosaics of the Center refer to the spiritual and intellectual peaks for which architects and scientists of that era were famous. The entrance portal of the Center is stylised in the architecture of Ulugbek Madrasa, the first higher education complex in the East, symbolising the continuity of the Uzbek scientific and spiritual tradition.

The location of the Center is of particular importance. It is deeply thought out and symbolic. It rises at a unique point in Tashkent, where two worlds converge: on the one hand, the Hastimam ensemble, the sacred heart of ancient Tashkent, which preserves the spiritual heritage of Islamic civilisation, including the mausoleum of Abu Bakr Kaffal Shosha and unique Qur’anic manuscripts; and on the other hand, the silhouette of New



Uzbekistan President Shavkat Mirziyoyev (right) explains his vision for the Center to visiting scholars.

Uzbekistan, rapidly developing, modern, and open to the world.

Thus, the very appearance and location of the Center embody the dialogue of eras: from sacred historic sources to the future, from tradition to innovation, from spiritual memory to new horizons of knowledge. The idea to create such a Center belongs to the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan — it was born as an expression of the deep will to preserve, comprehend and pass on to the world the unique heritage of the Uzbek people, which has become part of the civilisation of the entire planet.

How will the Center rethink the global perception of Islam as a religion of peace and enlightenment, and why is this necessary today?

By emphasising the historical role of Islam in the development of science, philosophy and the arts, the Center will challenge the stereotypes that associate Islam with conflict. We will promote the narrative of Islam as a driver of enlightenment and innovation, which is crucial in times of growing polarisation and misinformation about religion. What we are aiming for will not necessarily happen overnight, but it is our bold and ambitious goal.

What role will the Samarkand Kufic Qur’an play in the mission of the Center?

In the Qur’an Hall, a special place will be given to the Qur’an of Caliph Uthman — one of the oldest and most revered manuscripts of the Islamic world. This shrine has a special significance not only for Muslims, but for all mankind as a monument of spirituality and written culture. It will be surrounded by a unique exposition consisting of 114 Holy Qur’ans, symbolising the 114 surahs (chapters) of the Great Qur’an.

These manuscripts are directly related to the cultural and spiritual heritage of Uzbekistan. They cover different historical epochs — from the Abbasids, Samanids, Qarakhanids, Timurids, Baburids to the times of the late Khanates.

Each of the Qur’ans presented is not just a book, but a real artistic and spiritual masterpiece, reflecting the high development of calligraphy, book art and spiritual culture of its time. This exhibition vividly demonstrates the important role Uzbekistan has played over the centuries in the preservation and transmission of Islamic knowledge and spirituality.

How will the Center’s museum, with its five thematic galleries and monumental fresco, create a unique experience for visitors?

The museum was designed to take visitors on a journey through time: from pre-Islamic Central Asia to the Third Renaissance, i.e. to the present day. Each gallery immerses visitors in a corresponding atmosphere with the help of multimedia, artefacts and interactive displays. The central hall with the Qur’an of Uthman is surrounded by galleries on science, education, art and architecture, culminating in a contemporary vision of our New Uzbekistan.

What strategies will the Center use to engage youth and local communities in Tashkent to become a vibrant cultural centre?

Education is the central pillar of the Center — to educate, inform and inspire current and future generations. Initiatives include, for example, the creation of a Children’s Museum. Its ideas will be communicated to our entire community through school partnerships, creative workshops, interactive digital content and youth-focused manuscript restoration labs. They will be complemented by public lectures, social events and cultural programmes that are designed to make the Center a daily part of life in

our capital and beyond.

How will the Center fight extremism and what effect do you hope to achieve through your educational and cultural programmes?

By promoting critical thinking, historical literacy and the humanistic roots of Islam, the Center will directly confront contemporary ideologies that are based on ignorance and separatism. This is not the way of Islam. The emphasis on enlightenment over dogma, and on the truth of history over distortion, are aimed at instilling in young minds a guaranteed protection against destructive radicalism.

How will the Center be financed in the long term — through state support, private sponsorship or other means — and what challenges do you foresee?

Initial funding for the establishment of the Center has been provided by the state, with continued support from the government, philanthropic foundations, international partnerships and expected museum revenues. Challenges include maintaining international collaboration and increasing private sector support without compromising the academic independence of the Center.

What are your plans for exhibitions after the opening and what major event do you see as the next milestone?

Modern cultural projects are increasingly using interactive and mobile formats, and we plan to actively use this potential not only within the framework of exhibitions, but also in educational and awareness-raising activities. Particular attention will be paid to digital solutions — virtual expositions, multimedia platforms, online courses and applications that allow us to involve a wide audience, primarily targeting young people. After all, Uzbekistan is a country of young people, which means that it is our main country. The audience is precisely the younger generation, which will not only preserve, but also develop the rich cultural heritage of our country.



A recent gathering of more than 300 participants from 35 countries, seen here in front of the Center for Islamic Civilization, praised Uzbekistan for its investment in the Center project.



HBKU hosts orientation for 974 students in 2025-26 academic year



Hamad Bin Khalifa University (HBKU) held its Student Orientation Programme for a record number of incoming students. Held at the Education City for new undergraduates and postgraduates, the event was also an opportunity to welcome returning students back to campus. Orientation marked the beginning of the 2025-26 academic year, introducing 974 students – 308 undergraduate and 666 postgraduate students – across HBKU’s 48 programmes.

These align with the five focus areas that inform Qatar’s economic, social, and technological development: Precision Health; Artificial Intelligence; Progressive Education; Sustainability; and Social Progress.

The new academic year also sees the university launching its School of Economics and Management (SEM), offering the Master of Science in Economics pro-

gramme to address a critical field in the development of Qatar’s economy, as well as the future needs of the labour market in both the public and private sectors.

“We are proud to welcome our latest cohort of undergraduate and graduate students,” said provost Dr Prabhat Hajela. “This promises to be a remarkable academic year for our university as enrolment numbers grow and academic programmes expand across several disciplines.”

“HBKU will empower them to pursue the future they envision,” he said. “Research and innovation are our strengths, and students understand the practical and positive impact these factors have on their education.”

University leadership and staff were on hand to acquaint the students with campus life and academic expectations.

The deans of HBKU’s six colleges and undergraduate department heads offered



advice to new students, highlighting the university’s research and education ecosystem.

The incoming batch includes 303 Qataris, bolstering the university’s track record of contributing to the country’s national human development efforts by offering future generations the opportunity to excel in their chosen fields.

“Hamad Bin Khalifa University is dedicated to enriching students’ academic and extracurricular experience,” said Dr

Maryam al-Mannai, the vice-president for Student Affairs. “As we break new ground by expanding our programmes and welcoming more students, we remain committed to fostering an immersive environment that encourages academic excellence, professional development and personal growth.”

“Today marks the beginning of their educational journey, an opportunity to interact with peers and explore the HBKU landscape,” she said. – **QNA**



VCUarts Qatar welcomes Class of 2029

Virginia Commonwealth University School of the Arts in Qatar (VCUarts Qatar) officially welcomed its Class of 2029 during a student convocation held on campus.

The programme opened with a welcome address from the director of Student Affairs, Sarah Faheem, who set the tone for the occasion by emphasising a message of belonging, creativity, and new beginnings.

“To all our new students: welcome home,” she said. “You are now part of a diverse and inspired community where ideas are encouraged, differences are celebrated, and creativity leads the way.”

Dr Matthew Nelson, assistant dean for Student Affairs, welcomed the Class of 2029, encouraging them to embrace this new chapter with courage and curiosity.

“This is your community now,” he said. “Say yes. Get involved. Meet people who are different from you. Try something



unexpected. These are the moments that shape your experience – and often, they’re the ones you remember most.”

In his welcoming remarks, Dean Amir Berbi reminded students of the importance of academic excellence, leadership, and extracurricular engagement as vital components of their development.

“Your creative passions will drive you,” he said. “By achieving excellence in your studies and expanding your horizons through extracurricular and leadership opportunities, you lay the groundwork for a successful and impactful career.”

The ceremony also featured an address from Anusheh Zaman, an alumna from the

Class of 2019 (Art History), who reflected on her own student journey and encouraged the new class to make the most of the opportunities ahead.

The day’s highlight came as students exited the Atrium to take part in the Rams Spirit Walk, a newly introduced tradition symbolising their formal induction into

the VCUarts Qatar community.

Guided by Dr Nelson and cheered on by faculty, staff, and peers, the students processed through Saffron Hall.

Each student received a new student convocation stole, a symbol of welcome, tradition, and pride, as they walked through a ceremonial archway.



Cleaning campaign carried out at central region meadows

The Ministry of Environment and Climate Change (MoECC)’s Department of Land Protection has carried out a comprehensive clean-up campaign in the central region, covering Rawdat Muither Al Darb, Al Riffa, and north of Abu Nakhla, as part of the field campaign project targeting rawdat (meadows) and land areas across the country.

The aim is to raise public environmental awareness and encourage visitors to adopt proper practices to preserve the natural environment, particularly protecting the green cover and ensuring the sustainability of the meadows as natural destinations frequented by

visitors for leisure and recreation.

The MoECC affirmed that these field campaigns are part of its ongoing efforts to preserve the natural environment and reduce negative practices resulting from leaving waste in undesignated areas, noting that its field teams regularly monitor and follow up on terrestrial areas.

The ministry has called on all visitors to the desert meadows and land sites to refrain from leaving waste behind and to dispose of it in designated areas only to help maintain the beauty of nature and protect the local ecosystem.