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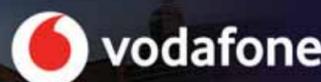
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Sheikha Jowaher honours top female graduates



Her Highness Consort of His Highness the Amir Sheikha Jowaher bint Hamad bin Suhaim al-Thani honoured the nation's top-performing female high school graduates for the 2024-2025 academic year during a ceremony held yesterday evening at the Msheireb Administrative Building of the Amiri Diwan. Her Highness Sheikha Jowaher congratulated the graduates on their academic excellence and praised their achievements across various educational paths. She encouraged them to continue pursuing success in their academic and professional endeavours. The students and their mothers expressed heartfelt thanks to Her Highness for the recognition and motivation, reaffirming their commitment to excellence in their future university and career paths. The event was attended by HE the Minister of Education and Higher Education Lolwah bint Rashid AlKhatier. (QNA) Page 2

Amir, Canadian PM discuss ties, trade



His Highness the Amir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani discussed with Canadian Prime Minister Mark Carney, bilateral relations and means to further develop them, particularly in the trade and investment fields. This came during a phone call His Highness the Amir received yesterday from Carney. The call also dealt with key regional and international developments of mutual interest. During the call, His Highness the Amir welcomed Canada's announcement of its intention to recognise the State of Palestine, emphasising that this positive step is consistent with international legitimacy resolutions and supports the legitimate rights of the brotherly Palestinian people. In this regard, the two sides stressed the need to maintain security and stability in the region, which would contribute to supporting peace and development efforts. (QNA)

82 killed in Gaza as Israel swells ranks

AFP
Jerusalem

Israeli reservists began responding to call-up orders yesterday, swelling the military's ranks ahead of a planned offensive to capture Gaza City after nearly two years of devastating war.

Despite mounting pressure at home and abroad to end its campaign, Israel has recently been stepping up operations as it lays the groundwork for seizing the Palestinian territory's largest urban centre.

Gaza's civil defence agency said Israeli forces killed at least 82 people yesterday across the Strip, which has been in the grips of a major humanitarian

crisis for months.

Gaza's civil defence agency said 10 people were killed in an Israeli air strike on a residential building in the southwest of Gaza City.

AFP footage from the aftermath of the strike in the Tel Al-Hawa neighbourhood showed Palestinians carrying a dead girl from the rubble of the top floor.

"We were sleeping safely in our homes and suddenly we woke up to the sound of bombing and destruction and found most of our neighbours murdered and injured," said Sanaa al-Dreimli.

In Tel Aviv yesterday, a group of reservists refusing to serve in the war who called themselves "Soldiers for the

Hostages" held a public event urging their fellow reservists and active-duty soldiers not to report for service.

Israeli media has reported that around 40,000 reservists were being mobilised in the first wave.

The UN estimates that nearly a million people live in and around Gaza City, where a famine has been declared.

Army chief Eyal Zamir told reservists reporting for duty yesterday they were being deployed to "enhance the strikes of our operation".

The military has intensified its bombardment of Gaza City, and has been operating on its outskirts in recent days.

"We are already entering places we have never entered before," Zamir said.

Weary Palestinians in Gaza City told AFP they felt helpless and desperate ahead of the looming offensive.

"There is no place for us to go, and no means to get there. We are exhausted physically and mentally from displacement and from the war," 60-year-old Amal Abdel-Aal, who lives in a tent in the city's west, told AFP by telephone.

In a post on X yesterday, a military spokesman warned Gazans of the upcoming "expansion of combat operations towards Gaza City".

Belgium set to recognise State of Palestine

Belgium will recognise a Palestinian state at the UN General Assembly, Foreign Minister Maxime Prevot said yesterday, adding to international pressure on Israel after similar moves by Australia, Britain, Canada and France. Under mounting global criticism for its war in Gaza, Israel has been angered by the pledges to formally recognise a Palestinian state at a summit during this month's UN event.

Belgium will join the signatories of the New York Declaration, paving the way for a two-state solution, or a Palestinian state co-existing in peace alongside Israel, Prevot said in a post on X.

Qatar welcomes move Page 2

The decision comes "in light of the humanitarian tragedy unfolding in Palestine, particularly in Gaza, and in response to the violence perpetrated by Israel in violation of international law," Prevot added. Belgium intends to recognise a Palestinian state as part of a joint diplomatic initiative led by France and Saudi Arabia, Prevot said. The move is described as a political signal also aimed at condemning Israel's settlement expansion and military presence in the territories.

US President Donald Trump has criticised Canada's decision to back Palestinian statehood and Rubio has said the decision by France is reckless. The White House did not respond to a Reuters request for comment after Belgium's statement.

Belgium would also levy 12 "firm" sanctions on Israel, such as a ban on importing products from its settlements, a review of public procurement policies with Israeli companies and declaring Hamas leaders persona non grata in Belgium, Prevot said.

Qatar underpins two-state solution as opportunity beckons at UNGA

Dr Majed bin Mohammed al-Ansari, Adviser to the Prime Minister and Official Spokesperson for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, said the upcoming 80th session of the United Nations General Assembly offers a timely opportunity to reaffirm global support for the Palestinian cause and the two-state solution, especially amid efforts spearheaded by Saudi Arabia and France.

During the Ministry of Foreign Affairs' weekly press briefing yesterday, Dr al-Ansari said Qatar has consistently committed to supporting multilateral action and strengthening the role of the United Nations in various international issues, stressing the importance of ensuring Palestinian presence in all international forums.

He pointed out that there has been no response from the Israeli side to the ceasefire proposal in the Gaza Strip. He added what the Strip has witnessed in recent days has seen further escalation, particularly the dangerous step of occupying the densely populated Gaza City amid a rapidly deteriorating humanitarian situation, resulting in hundreds of civilian casualties, including hostages whom



Adviser to Prime Minister and Official Spokesperson for Ministry of Foreign Affairs Dr Majed bin Mohammed al-Ansari during the briefing yesterday.

the Israeli government claims to be seeking to release.

He noted that any alternative proposal remains contingent on a genuine will to reach an agreement, indicating that there has been intensive contact with the US and regional and international parties, but that these have not yet yielded anything new.

The spokesperson emphasised that the priority is to end the humanitarian crisis, warning against linking the humanitarian situation in Gaza to the issue of prisoner and hostage exchanges, describing this as unacceptable blackmail and a violation of international law. To Page 2

Saudi Arabia to be guest of honour at Qatar Real Estate Forum

By Shafeeq Alingal
Staff Reporter

The third edition of the annual Qatar Real Estate Forum will see the participation of Saudi Arabia with several government entities involved in the real estate sector, in a step aimed at promoting integration and the exchange of expertise between the two countries.

While addressing a press conference yesterday, engineer Khalid bin Ahmed al-Obaidli, president of the Real Estate Regulatory Authority (Aqarat) said Saudi

Arabia will be the guest of honour at the event to realise a strategic partnership with Qatar.

Under the patronage of HE the Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman bin Jassim al-Thani, the forum will be held on October 14-16 at the Doha Exhibition and Convention Centre (DECC) in conjunction with the Cityscape Qatar.

Organised by Aqarat, the event will address pivotal issues to foster the sector's growth. The first topic focuses on the government's role in the sector highlighting legislation and policies that ensure a safe



Aqarat president engineer Khalid bin Ahmed al-Obaidli addressing the event yesterday. PICTURE: Thajudheen

and stimulating investment environment.

The second topic will be dedicated to Real Estate Technology (PropTech) showcasing the latest digital solutions aimed at enhancing transparency and efficiency. The third topic will address the Investor's Journey offering key guidance to enable investors to maximise available opportunities and streamline procedures. In its fourth topic, the forum will showcase Major and Promising Projects that open new horizons for development and progress in Qatar.

Aqarat president noted that

this edition builds on the success of previous ones and embodies the ongoing efforts to solidify Qatar's position as a leading real estate and investment destination.

The forum serves as an annual platform for investors, experts and real estate developers to explore promising opportunities in the Qatar real estate market, enhance confidence in the sector and foster collaboration among various stakeholders thereby supporting the development path aligned with the goals of Qatar National Vision 2030.

Al-Obaidli explained that

Aqarat has developed a comprehensive and integrated media plan for this edition in addition to launching the forum's official website.

The press conference also featured the signing of official sponsorship agreements. Qatar Investment Authority is the official sponsor. Qatari Diar, Barwa Real Estate Company, United Development Company and Qetaifan Projects are platinum sponsors. Gold sponsors are Al Waab City and GMG Holding. Lesha Bank is media sponsor. Qatar Living and Ain Riyadh are media partners.



Qatar welcomes Belgium move to recognise State of Palestine

Qatar welcomed the announcement by Belgium of its intention to recognise the State of Palestine during the United Nations General Assembly meetings this month. In a statement yesterday, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs affirmed that the step represents significant support for the legitimate rights of the brotherly Palestinian people and embodies the international community's

consensus on the need to end the Israeli occupation and enable the Palestinian people to exercise self-determination and establish their independent state on the 1967 borders with East Jerusalem as its capital. The ministry also considered this announcement a positive development consistent with international legitimacy and relevant Security Council

resolutions, and contributing to enhancing the chances of achieving a just and comprehensive peace in the region. It reiterated Qatar's call for all countries that have not yet recognised the State of Palestine to take similar steps that reflect a commitment to international law and support the historical and inalienable rights of the brotherly Palestinian people on their land. **(QNA)**

Minister holds phone call with Afghan caretaker government's acting foreign minister

HE the Minister of State for International Co-operation Maryam bint Ali bin Nasser al-Misnad held a phone call with Acting Minister of Foreign Affairs in the Caretaker Government of Afghanistan Mawlawi Amir Khan Muttaqi. During the call, HE the Minister of State for International Co-operation conveyed her sincere condolences over the victims of the earthquake that struck Afghanistan, and wished a speedy recovery for the injured. She affirmed Qatar's full support for the Afghan people in addressing the aftermath of the earthquake, with particular focus on women, children, and displaced persons affected, reflecting Qatar's established values of human solidarity and assistance to those impacted by natural disasters. For his part, the Acting Minister of Foreign Affairs confirmed that the earthquake caused extensive damage in four provinces, noting that search and rescue teams are still working to reach those stranded. He praised Qatar's humanitarian stances and its continuous efforts in support of the Afghan people during crises. **(QNA)**

Minister holds phone call with Sudan's TSC adviser

HE the Minister of State for International Co-operation Dr Maryam bint Ali bin Nasser al-Misnad held a phone conversation with Adviser to the Transitional Sovereignty Council (TSC) for Organisational and Humanitarian Affairs and Chairman of the Supreme National Committee for Humanitarian Emergencies in Sudan Al Sadig Ismail Mahmoud. The discussion focused on enhancing bilateral co-operation, with particular emphasis on humanitarian efforts. HE al-Misnad conveyed her heartfelt condolences to the families affected by the recent landslide in the Jebel Marra area of Darfur, western Sudan, praying for mercy on the victims and a swift recovery for the injured. HE al-Misnad also confirmed Qatar's readiness to provide full support to the brotherly Sudanese people to cope with the effects of this disaster, embodying Qatar's deep-rooted values of humanitarian solidarity and assistance to those affected by natural disasters. Meanwhile, Mahmoud expressed his country's gratitude to the State of Qatar for its ongoing support to the Sudanese people in various fields. **(QNA)**

Japan, Qatar pledge closer co-operation

Japan's Minister for Foreign Affairs Iwaya Takeshi met with Qatar's Minister of State for Foreign Affairs HE Sultan bin Saad al-Muraikhi on Monday in Kuwait, reaffirming a commitment to deepen their strategic partnership and collaborate on critical regional and international issues.

In a press statement, the Embassy of Japan in Doha said minister al-Muraikhi expressed his desire to further promote bilateral co-operation under the strategic partnership. In response, minister Iwaya expressed his respect for Qatar's diplomatic efforts towards the stabilisation of the Middle East, emphasising the importance of the strategic partnership with Qatar and his desire to further

strengthen it. The two ministers had a candid exchange of views on recent regional situations, including Iran, Gaza, and Syria. Minister Iwaya noted the importance of the fact that Gulf countries called on the parties involved to exercise restraint and to engage in dialogue during the exchange of attacks between Israel and Iran in June this year.

He also mentioned the necessity of addressing the serious humanitarian situation in Gaza and acknowledged the diplomatic efforts of relevant countries towards the stabilisation of Syria, expressing his desire to continue close communication with Qatar. In addition, he emphasised Japan's consistent support for the 'Two-State

Solution' and its desire to co-ordinate with Qatar.

In response, minister al-Muraikhi explained Qatar's position on the importance of dialogue towards regional stabilisation and thanked Japan's efforts, including the Conference on Co-operation Among East Asian Countries for Palestinian Development and Japan's long-standing support for Palestine.

The two ministers also exchanged views on various international challenges, including their policies toward North Korea, as well as the nuclear, missile, and abductions issues. They confirmed to continue close communication to further strengthen bilateral relations.

Amir sends cables of congratulations to president of Vietnam

His Highness the Amir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani and His Highness the Deputy Amir Sheikh Abdullah bin Hamad al-Thani sent cables of congratulations to President of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam Luong Cuong on the occasion of his country's Independence Day. HE the Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman bin Jassim al-Thani also sent a similar cable to Prime Minister of Vietnam Pham Minh Chinh on the occasion. **(QNA)**

Sheikha Jowaher fetes high school achievers



Her Highness the Consort of His Highness the Amir Sheikha Jowaher bint Hamad bin Suhaim al-Thani honoured the nation's top-performing female high school graduates for the 2024-2025 academic year during a ceremony held last evening at the Msheireb Administrative Building of the Amiri Diwan. Her Highness Sheikha Jowaher congratulated the graduates on their academic excellence and praised their achievements across various educational paths. She encouraged them to continue pursuing success in their academic and professional endeavours. **(QNA)**

Al-Misnad meets Chatham House top official



HE the Minister of State for International Co-operation Maryam bint Ali bin Nasser al-Misnad met yesterday with Director of the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) Program at the Royal Institute of International Affairs (Chatham House) Dr Sanam Vakil, who is visiting the country. The meeting discussed aspects of co-operation between Qatar and Chatham House, in addition to a number of topics of common interest. **(QNA)**

NHRC chairperson holds series of meetings with British officials and parliamentarians

QNA
London

HE the Chairperson of the National Human Rights Committee (NHRC) Maryam bint Abdullah al-Attiyah held a series of meetings in London, with a number of British officials and parliamentarians to discuss ways to enhance co-operation and exchange expertise in the field of human rights protection.

HE al-Attiyah met with Chief Executive of the Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) John Kirkpatrick; Chair of the Office for Legal Complaints (OLC) Elisabeth Davies; and the UK's Special Envoy for Women and Girls' Affairs Baroness Harriet Harman. During her meeting with the EHRC Chief Executive, HE the NHRC Chairperson emphasised the importance of exchanging expertise and building partnerships to enhance the capacities of human rights defenders, particularly regarding mechanisms for receiving and reviewing complaints, addressing issues of discrimination, and protecting the rights of children, persons with disabilities, and migrants, in addi-

tion to sharing experiences related to field visits. She also stressed the importance of co-operation with the British Commission in developing international human rights standards through organising international seminars and conferences, conducting joint research, and exchanging data to contribute to the protection and promotion of human rights.

In this context, HE al-Attiyah called for structuring the co-operation between the National Human Rights Committee and the British Ombudsman and developing a joint vision for interaction at the regional and international levels, while exploring the possibility of holding activities on issues of mutual concern.

She further emphasised the need for co-operation in advocating global issues affecting human rights, foremost among them the human rights situation in the occupied Palestinian territories, considering it an urgent humanitarian issue that requires a global stance to put an end to the Israeli occupation's practices and its violations of international humanitarian law and international human rights law.

In this regard, she praised the European approach support-



ing the recognition of the State of Palestine, including the stance announced by the British Foreign Secretary David Lammy, affirming that this step would establish balance and achieve stability in the Middle East. During her meeting with Elizabeth Davies, the Chairperson of the National Human Rights Committee discussed mechanisms for receiving and examining complaints to ensure transparency and justice for affected individuals, while express-



ing the committee's interest in benefiting from the Ombudsman's expertise in dispute resolution and mediation to develop training programmes for its staff, in addition to conducting joint research on the legal and practical challenges faced by individuals.

The meeting also touched upon exchanging experiences on prison education programmes and exploring the possibility of developing joint projects to support prisoners' education and reintegration

into society. In this context, HE al-Attiyah proposed signing a memorandum of understanding between both parties during the upcoming international conference of the National Human Rights Committee in 2025 and organising joint workshops in Qatar on mediation and dispute resolution. As for her meeting with Baroness Harriet Harman, the United Kingdom's Special Envoy for Women and Girls' Affairs, HE Maryam al-Attiyah affirmed the NHRC's pioneer-

ing role in protecting and promoting the rights of women and girls in Qatar, highlighting the national efforts and legislations that have strengthened the status of Qatari women, as well as the international partnerships that have contributed to their empowerment.

She pointed to the significant achievements made by Qatari women in leadership and executive positions, reflecting Qatar's deep commitment to empowering women and integrating them as a key element in sustainable development.

The meeting also addressed opportunities for co-operation in launching joint programmes and projects to empower women and girls, particularly in the fields of education and political participation, as well as humanitarian initiatives to support women in conflict or crisis-affected areas.

The discussions further explored strengthening international networks for women leaders, the role of women in addressing global challenges related to climate change, peace, and international security, and ways to ensure access for girls to quality education in fragile or conflict-affected environments.

Qatar underpins two-state solution on eve of UNGA session

From Page 1

Dr al-Ansari also indicated that Qatar, as a mediator, possesses no leverage other than pushing for an agreement and relying on international pressure and position. He noted that Israel's move to occupy Gaza City and its threats to annex the West Bank have been met with increasing international condemnation, given that a Palestinian state is a reality established by UN resolutions, and that the international community, except Israel, unanimously recognises its legitimacy.

He highlighted that the international stance has become clearer

in its support for the rights of the Palestinian people and the two-state solution, considering that recent Israeli measures have weakened its position internationally, a point recently acknowledged by the US president.

Dr al-Ansari also revealed the existence of contacts to develop new proposals that could contribute to reaching an agreement, stressing Qatar's openness to all realistic solutions, noting that the only official offer on the table is the plan previously announced and approved by Hamas.

In another context, the spokesperson discussed Qatar's ongoing mediation efforts on a number of

international issues, including the humanitarian role related to reuniting children affected by the war in Ukraine and Russia with their families.

He affirmed Qatar's support for all efforts aimed at ending the war, including the upcoming summit between Russia and Ukraine.

Regarding the Arab Foreign Ministers' meeting scheduled for Cairo tomorrow, Dr al-Ansari said regional issues, especially the situation in Gaza, will feature prominently, emphasising the importance of these meetings in co-ordinating Arab positions.

At the outset of the briefing, Dr al-Ansari addressed the Ministry

of Foreign Affairs' key activities during the week, including the work of the sixth session of the Joint Higher Committee between Qatar and Egypt, where HE Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman bin Jassim al-Thani met with Egyptian Prime Minister Dr Mostafa Madbouly. He also held a joint press conference with Minister of Foreign Affairs, Emigration and Egyptian Expatriates Dr Badr Abdelatty. He also met with Head of the Office of the President of Ukraine Andriy Yermak and Secretary of the National Security and Defence Council of Ukraine Rustem Umerov.

In a related context, HE the Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Sultan bin Saad al-Muraikhi led Qatar's delegation to the 165th session of the Ministerial Council of the Gulf Co-operation Council (GCC) and the second Joint Ministerial Meeting of the Strategic Dialogue between the GCC countries and Japan.

He met with Minister of Foreign Affairs of Japan Iwaya Takeshi, and also with Deputy Minister and Government Representative for Korean Nationals Overseas Protection and Consular Affairs at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Korea Jung Ki-hong.

He noted that HE the Minister of State for International Co-operation Maryam bint Ali bin Nasser al-Misnad met with Executive Director of the Global Fund to Fight Aids, Tuberculosis and Malaria Peter Sands. She also held phone calls with Acting Minister of Foreign Affairs in the Caretaker Government of Afghanistan Mawlawi Amir Khan Muttaqi and with Minister of Rural Rehabilitation and Development in the Caretaker Government of Afghanistan and Chairman of the Co-ordination Committee for Assistance to Earthquake Victims Mohammad Younus Akhundzada. **(QNA)**

Montenegro's president meets Qatar minister



Montenegro President Jakov Milatovic met yesterday with HE the Minister of State at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Dr Mohammed bin Abdulaziz bin Saleh al-Khulaifi on the sidelines of the Bled Strategic Forum in Slovenia. During the meeting, they discussed co-operation between the two countries and ways to support and develop it. In addition, they discussed a number of topics of common interest. (QNA)

Slovenian president holds talks with Qatar minister



Slovenia President Nataša Pirc Musar met yesterday with HE the Minister of State at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Dr Mohammed bin Abdulaziz bin Saleh al-Khulaifi, on the sidelines of the Bled Strategic Forum in Slovenia. During the meeting, they discussed co-operation between the two countries and ways to support and develop it. They also discussed the latest developments in the Gaza Strip, the occupied Palestinian territories, and Syria, as well as ways to intensify diplomatic and mediation efforts to maintain international peace and security. (QNA)

Qatar will remain committed to its role as trusted mediator: al-Khulaifi

Qatar minister participates as speaker at Bled Strategic Forum in Slovenia

QNA
Bled

HE the Minister of State at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Dr Mohammed bin Abdulaziz bin Saleh al-Khulaifi participated yesterday as a speaker in the high-level session titled 'Sustaining Peace In A Shifting Global Order', as part of the Bled Strategic Forum held in the Republic of Slovenia.

In his speech before the session, HE Dr al-Khulaifi affirmed that Qatar will remain committed to its role as a trusted mediator and will continue investing in promoting a culture of dialogue, mediation, and preventive diplomacy, in a way that enhances opportunities for sustainable peace and fulfils the aspirations of peoples for security and development.

He stated that successful mediation requires a set of fundamental principles, including neutrality and building trust, communication and engagement with all parties, humanitarian motivation, patience, and perseverance. He added in this context that no mediation process can achieve its objectives if the conflicting parties do not view it as impartial and free from political agendas.



HE Dr Mohammed bin Abdulaziz bin Saleh al-Khulaifi

tion and engagement with all parties, humanitarian motivation, patience, and perseverance. He added in this context that no mediation process can achieve its objectives if the conflicting parties do not view it as impartial and free from political agendas.

HE Dr al-Khulaifi explained that Qatar has earned its reputation in this field through openness and engagement with various actors, including parties that major powers may avoid communicating with, while maintaining distinguished relations with its partners, the United Nations, and regional and international organisations.

He emphasised that starting with humanitarian steps, such as the release of prisoners, the exchange of detainees, medical evacuation, or even opening humanitarian corridors, helps build trust between the conflicting parties and creates a more favourable environment for moving to major political issues related to the conflict. He also pointed out that successful mediation is not achieved

overnight; rather, it is a long process that requires cumulative steps to build trust and keep dialogue channels open. In this regard, HE Dr al-Khulaifi outlined a set of essential elements to make agreements more sustainable and effective, including strengthening the provisions of agreements to ensure practical implementation and prevent loopholes that parties may exploit later, establishing precise and enforceable follow-up mechanisms to ensure all parties fulfil their obligations, and incorporating clear provisions for resolving potential future disputes during implementation.

Those essential elements also included involving regional actors for their direct interests and ability to positively influence the parties, and linking agreements to humanitarian and development projects that enhance the benefits of peace and deliver tangible outcomes for the lives of people.

HE the Minister of State at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs expressed his gratitude and appreciation to the organisers of the Bled Strategic Forum, noting that the convening of this forum amidst the increasing challenges facing the international system reflects the urgent need to strengthen multi-lateral dialogue and develop new approaches to resolve conflicts and consolidate security and stability.



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HBKU conference explores ADR and IP role in advancing sustainable development in Qatar

Hamad Bin Khalifa University (HBKU)'s College of Law, in collaboration with the Ministry of Commerce and Industry (MoCI), World Intellectual Property Organisation (WIPO) and the Unesco Chair on Environmental Law and Sustainable Development, hosted the second edition of the The Role of ADR, IP Protection, and Innovation in Advancing FDI for Sustainable Development. The conference was held at Mina-retein, Education City.

The two-day event convened an impressive assembly of top legal scholars, industry experts and policymakers to underscore the pivotal role of alternative dispute resolution (ADR) in intellectual property (IP) issues. In doing so, the gathering highlighted the effectiveness of ADR mechanisms in enhancing collaboration, particularly in sectors critical to sustainable development.

Speakers also examined the intersection between sustainability policies and promotion of foreign direct investment (FDI), as well as strategies that foster entrepreneurship and SMEs across critical economic sectors. Panellists also elaborated on how robust IP protection can catalyse innovation in specific sectors, achieving the Third National Development Strategy (NDS3) and contributing to Qatar National Vision 2030.

In addition, attendees gained insights into the latest advancements in IP rights protection both regionally and globally, underscoring the need to adapt legal frameworks to support innovation in an increasingly interconnected world. A dedicated session examined dispute resolution and IP protection in sports, where participants discussed the successful hosting of the 2022 FIFA World Cup in Qatar as a case study for regional and global leadership on this issue.

Dr Susan L Karamanian, Dean, College of Law, HBKU, added: "This conference addresses the critical issue of IP protection and ADR in a fast-changing world. Mediation provides a confidential, efficient, and flexible means of resolving IP disputes, while ensuring business continuity. Qatar has

been proactive in promoting mediation, aligning its IP laws with international standards reflecting its commitment to strengthening its dispute resolution framework and promoting a thriving business environment."

For his part, Ignacio de Castro, Director of the WIPO Arbitration and Mediation Center, said: "Mediation and arbitration have proven to be effective in resolving complex disputes related to technology and intellectual property. This is evident from the experience of the WIPO Arbitration and Mediation Center. By working with our partners in Qatar, we shared our experience and WIPO's tools that complement court procedures and help foster innovation in this field."

Leveraging multidisciplinary and international partnerships, HBKU continues to foster impactful innovations by inspiring dialogues about contemporary challenges, promoting research mechanisms, and aligning its efforts with Qatar's strategic development goals. (QNA)

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Qatar participates in GCC Ministries of Labour meeting

Qatar participated in the 11th meeting of the Undersecretaries of the Ministries of Labour of the Gulf Co-operation Council (GCC) countries, held yesterday in the sisterly State of Kuwait. Qatar was represented at the meeting by HE Undersecretary of the Ministry of Labour Sheikhha Najwa bint Abdulrahman al-Thani. The participants in the meeting reviewed topics related to labour in the GCC countries, in addition to discussing the topics on the agenda of the 11th meeting of the Committee of Ministers of Labour of the GCC countries, and enhancing international co-operation between the GCC countries and international organisations specialised in the labour sector. (QNA)



Marine environment monitoring programme carried out

The Ministry of Environment and Climate Change's Environmental Monitoring and Inspection Department, in co-operation with the Marine Protection Department, have carried out 56 field visits since the beginning of this year, as part of the monthly marine environment monitoring programme. During this period, 2,240 variables were documented. The programme covers seven marine sites to monitor physical, chemical, and biological variables, which are regularly observed throughout the year. The aim is to track environmental changes in marine waters and provide accurate and periodic scientific data that help assess the status, in addition to monitoring biological indicators that reflect the health and sustainability of marine ecosystems.

The ministry affirmed that the programme serves as a fundamental tool to support the country's efforts in protecting marine resources and preserving biodiversity, in addition to enhancing research studies that assist in developing policies and strategic plans to address environmental challenges.



Nissan, Ford models recalled

The Ministry of Commerce and Industry, in co-operation with Saleh Al Hamad Al Mana Co, has announced the recall of Nissan Magnite, 2025 model, as the clearance between the brake pipe and the heat shield might be insufficient, causing the brake pipe to rub against the heat shield leading to damage and causing brake fluid leak. This may result in brake warning message on the cluster or less effective brake pedal. The ministry, in co-operation with Almana Motors Company, also announced the

recall of Ford Transit, 2025 model, over a malfunction of multimedia system when connecting a phone, which leads to loss of media connectivity when transferred to the screen. The ministry said the recall campaign comes within the framework of its ongoing efforts to protect consumers and ensure that car dealers follow up on vehicle defects and repairs. The ministry said it will coordinate with the dealer to follow up on the maintenance and repair works and will communicate with customers to ensure that the

necessary repairs are carried out. The ministry urges all consumers to report any violations or breaches by contacting the Consumer Protection and Combatting Commercial Fraud Department, which receives complaints, suggestions, and inquiries through the following communication channels: Call Centre: 16001, e-mail: info@moci.gov.qa, ministry's accounts on social media: @mociqatar, ministry's Mobile App: MOCIQATAR (available on iOS and Android devices).



A talk, titled 'The Economic Engine: How Events Fuel Local Economies' marked the start of the three-day event.



Mangusteen CEO Malik Shishtawi, along with industry experts and partners, leads the ribbon-cutting ceremony to mark the start of the Qatar Events Show 2025 yesterday at the DECC.
PICTURES: Shaji Kayamkulam



QES 2025 showcases a number of unique booths.

Qatar Events Show 2025 opens with panel on 'events as economic engines'

By **Joey Aguilar**
Staff Reporter

The Qatar Events Show (QES) 2025 kicked off yesterday at the Doha Exhibition and Convention Centre (DECC) with a panel discussion, exploring the impact of the events sector on national economic growth and international perception.

Titled 'The Economic Engine: How Events Fuel Local Economies', the session highlighted the key role of large-scale conferences, exhibitions, and cultural festivals in fostering economic diversification, particularly for nations seeking to expand beyond traditional industries. Speakers agreed that events are not merely spectacles but significant contributors to a country's economic vitality and global image.

Oak View Group SVP Dr Debbie Kristiansen cited job creation as a primary economic benefit derived from the events industry, saying there are a number of things that contribute to economic impact in a destination, including job creation. About economic diversification beyond tourism, DECC CEO Jose Vicente shines a spotlight on how major events create vibrant hubs, attracting new industries and fostering local businesses.

He pointed to Qatar's hosting of sig-



Gulf Times is a media partner of QES 2025.

nificant events like the Web Summit as examples that provide growth opportunities for emerging and local companies. He also emphasised the legacy of large events in creating sustainable job opportunities through recurring exhibitions. Abu Dhabi Convention and Exhibition Bureau director Mubarak al-Shamisi echoed this view,

explaining that various industry sectors within events play a crucial role in creating new opportunities and nurturing creative development to reach new heights.

He also cited the Abu Dhabi Financial Week as an example of how key partnerships can benefit companies, particularly within the events industry. About the



within the events sector. He noted that the GCC region, as a whole, is a hotspot for events, with complementary infrastructures and collaborations enhancing accessibility. This collaborative approach, Shishtawi suggested, facilitates the rotation of events, creating unique, interconnected hubs across destinations like Dubai and Abu Dhabi, with potential for similar developments in other GCC countries.

Dubai World Trade Centre EVP Mahir Julfar agreed, citing venues, transportation, and infrastructure as vital elements, and lauded the GCC for its flexibility in accommodating diverse international attendees. He also shared Dubai's success story, illustrating how collaborative efforts create a larger ecosystem that amplifies the impact of events.

Dr Kristiansen stressed the relevance of maximising event utilisation and the critical role of security, lauding the Middle East for its safety. She also pointed to the strategic use of hybrid events to broaden audience reach, generating interest for in-person attendance at future events.

She said people development was another critical aspect, highlighting the value of nurturing individuals with the right attitude and supporting their growth within the hospitality industry, identifying the development of future leaders as paramount.

'Qatar Events Show 2025 a key platform for tech integration, regional event growth'

By **Joey Aguilar**
Staff Reporter

The inaugural Qatar Events Show (QES) 2025 is poised to be a pivotal platform for advancing event technology and bolstering the region's growing Meetings, Incentives, Conferences, and Exhibitions (MICE) industry, according to an industry expert.

Speaking to *Gulf Times*, Eques Holding president and executive chairman Ibrahim al-Fares underlined QES' significance as a platform offering direct access to organisers and suppliers, essential for both the event's success and his company's core business. Eques Holding, a diversified company managing three subsidiaries, including Lanyard, a leading provider of custom event identifica-

tion solutions, is a sponsor of the show.

Al-Fares added that participation in the debut show will offer invaluable exposure to a wide spectrum of professionals within the events industry, enabling them to experience Eques Holding's services firsthand.

In an era dominated by artificial intelligence (AI), al-Fares addressed the potential evolution of traditional event identification methods. While acknowledging AI's transformative power, he pointed out that physical lanyards and badges will remain indispensable. "As much as AI advances, we still need to identify the person in front of us. AI will not replace this because even with full digitalisation, you still need to understand who the person is by name, company, and position. That visual identification is still important



Ibrahim al-Fares speaks to the organisers, ambassadors, and guests at QES 2025 opening yesterday. **PICTURE:** Shaji Kayamkulam

for people," al-Fares said. He noted that such view has driven Eques Holding's strategic investments, including the establishment of the first Middle East

factory dedicated to lanyards and UV badges. This facility aims to serve not only Qatar but also the broader GCC region.

Apart from physical identifica-

tion, al-Fares noted that they are also actively integrating AI into its technological offerings, particularly within its registration systems.

"We have a company that focuses on technology, so we have the registration system, and now we are integrating AI into it. For example, instead of scanning people at the entrance, we will have RFIDs that can do automated checks. This will help event organisers manage their shows by knowing the exact footprint at any given time," he said.

However, al-Fares also stressed the importance of the human element in the events sector, saying: "While AI might reduce the need for human interaction in some areas, you will always need someone to greet you nicely with a smile. You need that human touch; it will never go out of fashion."

Looking at Qatar's and the region's role as an events hub, al-Fares expressed optimism, noting that: "Qatar has proven that it can deliver mega-events. Now, the focus is on attracting more events to the country, not just one-off mega-events, but a year-round calendar."

"I believe the GCC, in general, is booming and is set to become a leading region for events globally, as it has already become a hub for events and mega-events."

He highlighted the current robust activity, noting that "for the latter end of this year, we have almost 150-200 events happening within the next four months alone". Al-Fares attributes Qatar's advantage as an MICE destination to its well-established infrastructure and efficient logistics, a legacy built from its successful bid in 2010 for the World Cup.

Qatar hosts regional consultations for reviewing draft strategic plan for ensuring food security in OIC states

QNA
Doha

Qatar, represented by the Ministry of Municipality, has hosted the In-Person Regional Consultations for Reviewing the Draft Strategic Plan for Ensuring Food Security in OIC Member States 2026-2035, in the presence of representatives of the OIC member states, alongside relevant regional and international organisations.

The consultations are intended to weigh in on the aforementioned plan to boost co-operation and co-ordination among the member states to ensure sustainable food security, enhance strategic agricultural commodities, develop a joint food reserve system, and establish a strategic agricultural commodities programme.

In his opening remarks, Assistant Undersecretary for Agriculture and Food Security Affairs, Minis-

try of Municipality, Engineer Fahd Mohammed al-Qahtani, affirmed that these consultations underscore the shared commitment to the food security issue among the member states, along with Qatar's pivotal role in bolstering food security based on an integrated approach, in its capacity as Chair of the 9th OIC Ministerial Conference on Food Security and Agricultural Development, hosted by Qatar in 2023.

Reviewing the strategic plan for food security for 2026-2035 represents an ambitious vision to build flexible and enduring food systems capable of meeting the needs of as many as one billion people in the OIC states, al-Qahtani said. He added that the plan is not merely a theoretical document but rather an implementation roadmap crafted with effective contributions through the regional consultations that convened last February.

Al-Qahtani reiterated Qatar's commitment, through its National

Vision 2030, to standing side by side with the member states on the path toward achieving enduring food security, in its belief in the collective capability to build a more secure and prosperous future for the OIC peoples. Assistant Secretary-General for Economic Affairs of OIC, Dr Ahmad Kawesa Sengendo, highlighted the importance of joint efforts to enhance food security, given the current global challenges. He indicated that the items on the agenda earn special significance due to the spike in food security-related challenges on the global stage, because of disruptions in supply chains for food commodities and agricultural inputs caused by international conflicts, particularly as the effects of soaring prices and shortages of foodstuffs have become evident in a number of OIC member states. The economies of the vast majority of the member states lean on the agri sector, as in some countries, the contribu-

tion of this sector reaches as high as 60 percent of GDP, while nearly one-third of the population relies on agriculture as a principal source of livelihood, a proportion that exceeds 70 percent in certain states, thereby underscoring the imperative of bolstering co-ordination and co-operation among member states to safeguard food security and attain sustainable agricultural development, he outlined.

Assistant Director General, Islamic Organisation for Food Security (IOFS), ambassador Khusrav Noziri, stated that this plan represents an ambitious collective vision to build an integrated, flexible, and sustainable food system, in addition to strengthening the inclusion of the member states in the international supply chains, with the imperative of observing shared values and identity.

This plan is based on five main pillars, including strengthening model support centres, developing agricultural and food industries,

building capacities, mobilising resources, and enhancing intra-trade, and its success requires the concerted efforts of all member states and partner institutions, ensuring the provision of practical and innovative solutions to navigate challenges and enhance food security for the Islamic nation in the long run, Noziri highlighted.

The three-day high-level consultations' deliberations are set to contribute to shaping a unified vision for the strategic plan across member states and to produce actionable recommendations that reinforce integration and co-ordinated efforts within OIC, ultimately paving the way for more efficient and sustainable food systems. The first day of the joint meeting of the sectoral steering committees, tasked with establishing the OIC's food security reserve system, focused on monitoring the implementation of programs for the development of strategic agricultural commodi-

ties. The subsequent two days were devoted to deliberations on the approval of the strategic plan for food security in OIC member states for 2026-2035, marking a pivotal step toward strengthening food security and advancing sustainable development across the organisation.

The event convened representatives from 18 OIC member states, alongside four affiliated institutions, bringing the total number of international experts to 46. Participants underscored the critical importance of regional consultations in shaping the plan, ensuring alignment with each country's national priorities, and reinforcing co-operation among member states to achieve sustainable food security. This convention is part of the OIC's efforts to strengthen joint action, in addition to co-ordinating initiatives that aim to confront food security challenges and ensure the sustainability of agri resources in the member states.



Nissan's best-ever SUV deals at Saleh Al Hamad Al Mana Co

Saleh Al Hamad Al Mana Co, the exclusive agent of Nissan in Qatar, has announced a range of exceptional back-to-school offers, designed to provide customers with outstanding value and peace of mind.

The offer, valid until September 30, will make it easier than ever to drive away in a brand-new Nissan SUV while enjoying a suite of exclusive benefits tailored for convenience, affordability, and long-term satisfaction, a statement said.

Until September 30, customers can enjoy monthly instalments starting from QR899 for the Magnite, QR1,199 for the all-new Kicks, QR1,299 for the X-Trail, QR1,399 for the X-Terra, QR2,099 for the Pathfinder and QR4,099 for the all-new Nissan Patrol V6T.

The package includes a host of benefits, such as 0% interest for three years, a five year warranty, three years of comprehensive insurance, a two-month grace period, and free registration.

"At Saleh Al Hamad Al Mana Co, we understand that the back-to-school season is a significant time for families across Qatar, and we are proud to support them with offers that make a real difference," said Nassim Mourani, general manager of the Automotive Group at Saleh Al Hamad Al Mana Co.

The all-new Nissan Magnite makes a powerful first impres-

sion with its bold, dual-tone grille featuring a pronounced honeycomb design. LED Bi-Projector Auto Headlamps and LED lightsaber-style turn indicators enhance the vehicle's assertive appearance, complemented by a dual-tone floating skid plate that adds to its robust stance.

The honeycomb motif continues prominently at the rear through LED tail lamps with 3D honeycomb gradient effect, creating visual depth and an instantly recognisable design. Complementing this theme, the Magnite's profile features distinctive 16-inch diamond-cut alloy wheels with a dual-tone finish.

The Magnite's cabin carries through the honeycomb design, particularly noticeable in the front air-conditioning vents, front and rear seat upholstery, and door trims. Premium Modure leather quilted seats with Heat Guard technology maintain comfort by effectively reflecting heat, making journeys pleasant even in warmer climates.

The Magnite is equipped with an efficient 1.0-litre Turbo engine, incorporating Nissan's advanced 'mirror bore cylinder coating' technology, ensuring optimal heat management, improved combustion efficiency, smooth acceleration, and delivers 99hp and 152Nm torque, paired with exceptional fuel efficiency at 17.3km/l.

The cabin offers advanced

connectivity with an 8-inch infotainment touchscreen supporting wireless Android Auto and Apple CarPlay. Comprehensive safety features, include six airbags and a 360° Around View Monitor.

The Magnite features a spacious boot, increasing from 336L to 690L when the rear seats are folded flat. There is an additional load-carrying capacity of up to 50kg. The all-new 2025 Nissan Kicks features progressive and dynamic styling. The front face features sleek, low-profile LED projector headlamps and LED daytime running lights that double as amber turn signal indicators. Available signature accent lights further enhance its distinctive appearance.

Longer, taller, and broader than its predecessor, the all-new Kicks makes a bold statement with 19-inch alloy wheels and intricate rocker panel designs inspired by athletic sneaker soles for added texture and visual interest. There are 15 exterior hues including six two-tone colour options.

The 2025 Nissan Kicks was developed to optimise interior room for passenger comfort and cargo space, while maintaining a compact exterior size that makes driving and parking in the city a breeze. A Panoramic Sunroof, Nissan's Zero Gravity seating design, dual 12.3-inch monolith display, Wireless Apple CarPlay, Android Auto, two



USB Type-C ports, Bose Personal Plus 10-speaker audio system, and ProPILOT and a collection of active and passive safety features are among highlights.

All Kicks grades employ a 2.0-litre inline-four-cylinder engine rated for 142hp and 190Nm of torque, coupled to the latest generation of Nissan's Xtronic CVT transmission. Together, the new Kicks delivers confident acceleration for highway passing, thanks to the responsive transmission and the

engine's strong low- and mid-range torque.

In addition to its dynamic performance, the all-new Kicks boasts a best-in-class fuel economy, achieved through innovative engineering that enhances both aerodynamics and engine efficiency.

The all-new Kicks is the second model introduced as part of The Arc, Nissan's Global Business Plan, following the all-new Patrol, in the Middle East. With a total of five new models slated

for launch in the region by Fiscal Year 2026, this strategic expansion underscores Nissan's commitment to redefining the automotive landscape with forward-thinking vehicles designed to meet the needs of modern drivers.

More information and test drive booking are available at Saleh Al Hamad Al Mana Co showrooms on Salwa Road, The Pearl, Bin Omran, Barwa, and Al Khor. The phone number is 8000505.

Daam signs funding pact with Katara for 'S'hail 2025' exhibition

The Social & Sport Contribution Fund (Daam) has signed a funding agreement with the Katara Cultural Village Foundation to sponsor the ninth edition of the Katara International Hunting and Falconry Exhibition "S'hail 2025."

This marks the eighth consecutive year of the partnership, underscoring the vital role of the fund and companies listed on the Qatar Stock Exchange in supporting cultural and community activities. This aligns with the broader goals of the Qatar National Vision 2030.

The exhibition is scheduled to take place from September 10 to 14, with the participation of 260 companies from 21 countries.

Exhibitors will showcase a diverse range of products, including the latest innovations in hunting vehicle outfitting, hunting weapons, safari gear, and specialised falconry equipment.

Daam's consistent support for the exhibition since its second edition has been a cornerstone of its success. The event has grown beyond its local scope to become one of the most prominent cultural and

heritage events in the region, serving as a leading platform for preserving the heritage of falconry on the global stage.

Since its establishment in 2010, the Daam Fund has launched numerous vital projects and initiatives across cultural, social, sports, and charitable sectors. Contributions from public shareholding companies listed on the Qatar Stock Exchange are a primary source of the fund's financial resources, making them essential partners in achieving community development. (QNA)

Waldorf Astoria Doha Lusail welcomes celebrity chef Green

Waldorf Astoria Doha Lusail has welcomed the internationally renowned celebrity chef Daniel Green until September 10.

Specialising in healthy cuisine, chef Green is an award-winning author of 13 cookbooks on nutritious eating, selling millions worldwide, a statement said.

He has designed menus for global airlines, luxury hotels, and acclaimed restaurants, and is a familiar face on leading networks including BBC, Food Network, and NBC.

During his residency, chef Green will unveil the brand-new healthy menu at Wyld Erth on September 4, bringing his signature approach of guilt-free yet flavourful dining. Guests can also enjoy his specially curated dishes at Bywater and PRAIA throughout the week.

From September 5-9, chef Green will host interactive cooking classes, sharing his expertise and passion for healthy living with participants in an engaging, hands-on experience.

This collaboration marks a new chapter in Waldorf Astoria Doha Lusail's commitment to culinary innovation, wellbeing, and exceptional guest experiences, the statement added.



Chef Daniel Green.



Closure at Bani Hajer Interchange

The Public Works Authority (Ashghal) has announced a full closure of the right turn at Bani Hajer Interchange for road users coming from Al Shahama Street towards Dukhan from 2am to 10am on September 5. The closure is in coordination with the General Directorate of Traffic is to carry out maintenance works. During the closure, road users coming from Al Shahama Street towards Dukhan are advised to continue through Bani Hajer Interchange Tunnel, then use Al Shafi Interchange on Al Rayyan Al Jadeed Street to make a U-turn and resume their journey towards Dukhan. Ashghal will install road signs advising motorists of the temporary closure and has requested all to abide by the speed limit to ensure safety.



Qatar participates in meeting of Arab Association for Prosecutors in Oman



Qatar has participated in the fifth meeting of the Arab Association for Prosecutors for 2025, which was held in the city of Salalah, Oman. HE the Attorney General Dr Issa Saad al-Jafali al-Nuaimi chaired Qatar's delegation to the meeting. The meeting discussed several topics on the agenda, most notably criminal investigation into crimes related to digital currencies, securing evidence, encouraging the use of modern technology in legal and judicial work, and enhancing international co-operation in evidence gathering and prosecuting the accused. On the sidelines of the meeting, HE the Attorney General met separately with the Public Prosecutor of Oman, Nasr bin Khamis al-Sawa'i, and the Public



Prosecutor of Lebanon, Judge Jamal al-Hajjar. During the two meetings, they exchanged views on a number of issues of mutual interest and discussed ways to enhance co-operation and exchange expertise in the field of modern technology in legal work. (QNA)

QCDC, Ehsan sign MoU to support elderly people

Qatar Career Development Center (QCDC), affiliated with Qatar Foundation (QF), and the Center for Empowerment and Care of the Elderly (Ehsan), signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) aimed at enhancing co-operation between the two parties in supporting senior citizens and promoting their active participation in society. The MoU was co-signed by the Executive Director of Ehsan, Manal Ahmed al-Mannai, and Executive Director of QCDC, Saad Abdullah al-Kharji.

The MoU establishes a framework for co-operation to implement joint initiatives that highlight the vital contributions of senior citizens, support their participation in the national development process, and enhance the transfer of expertise and knowledge between generations.

Under the memorandum, the two parties will collaborate on a series of initiatives, including the involvement of elderly citizens in QCDC's pioneering programmes, such as the Little Employee Initiative and Al Dileela programme.



In these roles, they will serve as mentors and guides to younger generations, providing them with inspiring role models. They will also contribute to various other career guidance and development initiatives, and will feature in the Career Guide magazine, highlighting their skills and experiences. Al-Kharji emphasised QCDC's role in enhancing communication between vari-

ous segments of society through the Career Development Portal. He noted that QCDC views career development as a lifelong process, and its partnership with Ehsan embodies this approach. Al-Kharji pointed out that the Center believes that involving senior citizens in programmes enriches the experiences of the youth while also reflecting the appreciation for the valuable knowledge and contributions of older generations in Qatar. Manal al-Mannai explained that the memorandum reflects Ehsan Center's commitment to strengthening strategic partnerships with national institutions and promoting integration in efforts to empower the elderly, benefit from their expertise, and utilise it in service of the community. She emphasised that this step represents a significant addition to the Center's initiatives aimed at fostering intergenerational communication and reinforcing the role of the elderly as active partners in sustainable development, in alignment with Qatar National Vision 2030. (QNA)

Awqaf announces winners of Sheikh Ali bin Abdullah Al-Thani Endowment Prize

The Department of Islamic Research and Studies at the Ministry of Endowments (Awqaf) and Islamic Affairs yesterday announced the winners of the Sheikh Ali bin Abdullah Al-Thani Endowment Prize. Moroccan researcher Ismail bin Abdullah al-Hajj won the 15th edition of the global prize, which focused on social solidarity and its role in achieving community security. The first local edition of the prize on family cohesion and its role in childcare was shared by Dr Omar Othman al-Khatib, Dr Khalifa Ahmed Bu Hashim, and Layla Fadl Hamad Sada. During a press conference, Awqaf said the decision to share this local edition was based on the findings of the prize's panel which affirmed that each researcher complements the other and constitutes a critical addition. Director of the Department of Islamic Research and Studies, Sheikh Dr Ahmed bin Mohammed bin Ghanem al-Thani, highlighted that the prize drew a strong contest from 57 researchers hailing from Qatar, Oman, Yemen, Jordan, Iraq, Syria, Palestine, Egypt, Sudan, Algeria, Morocco, Afghanistan, Bangladesh, India, and Indonesia. He added the prize's panel lauded the submitted research which were of a high degree of scientific excellence in terms of approach and objectivity, prompting the panel to significantly recommend verification from some research and further submission to the Book of the Nation Series to weigh the possibility of publishing them.



and Studies Center at the Police Academy in Qatar, Capt Dr Khalifa Ahmed Bo Hashim al-Sayed, who said his participation in the local prize came after he delved into the topic of family cohesion and its role in childcare: The Qatari society as a model. Al-Sayed pointed out that his participation, which was ranked first, revealed how tight-knit families can take care of children in the Qatari community through identifying the reality of family cohesion and care for children in terms of Sharia perspectives. Al-Sayed noted that his study also discussed the impact of the tight-knit family in caring for children in many respects that include psychology, emotion, morality, education, and science. A field study was conducted using a descriptive-analytical approach, along with the preparation and distribution of a questionnaire to a random sample of 747 individuals from various segments of Qatari society, he said. He further elucidated that the findings were literally consequential, pointing out that the impact of diverse issues on family cohesion and caring for children in Qatar is almost high, based on social dispensation, as well as education and culture, emphasising that this cohesion has an apparent and profound impact and comes based on the scientific, moral, and educational levels, as well as psychology and emotion. With respect to the recommendations of this study, Capt al-Sayed said they advocate for reconsidering the policies and measures in connection with job patterns in the Qatari community to preemptively avert the detrimental consequences arising from the long hours of work that could potentially affect familial relationships. The recommendations laser-focus on social collaboration with the nation's competent authorities, namely the Supreme Council for Family Affairs and Doha International Family Institute (DIFI), in urging families to dedicate a limited time to their sons and daughters to use social media, al-Sayed outlined, noting that the recommendations stressed the importance of crafting a strategy that strengthens family cohesion and contributes to caring for children. In essence, the prize is the first and largest endowment-based prize in culture, advocacy, and Islamic thought in Qatar, supported by Awqaf to encourage research and develop a new generation of scholars, with a value of QR200,000 for both the international and local categories. (QNA)

Qatar pavilion at Expo 2025 Osaka welcomes 1mn visitors

QNA
Osaka, Japan

Qatar's pavilion at the Expo 2025 Osaka has reached a significant milestone, welcoming over 1mn visitors since its opening on April 13, 2025. This achievement underscores the pavilion's role as a leading platform for cultural dialogue and international engagement, under the theme "From the Coastline... We Progress."

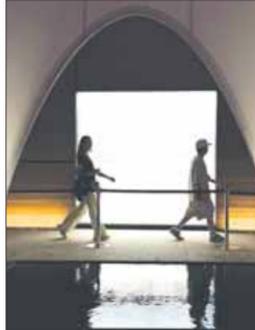
The pavilion offers an immersive and interactive experience blending heritage with modernity, featuring a diverse programme of workshops, and cultural and artistic performances that highlighted Qatar's national identity. Leading Qatari institutions have contributed to the pavilion's events, including Qatar University, Qatar Museums, the Ministry of Culture, and the World Innovation Summit for Health (WISH), a Qatar Foundation initiative, alongside several government ministries and national entities. The pavilion has attracted visitors from diverse nationalities, particularly during recent celebrations such as the Qatar National Day, Children's Day, and Mother's Day, which featured interactive activities and panels hosted by the Doha International Family Institute, reflecting Qatar's authentic social values in a family-friendly atmosphere enriched with cultural diversity and



inclusivity.

On the creative front, Qatari cinema has been showcased through a selection of short films presented by the Doha Film Institute, highlighting cultural diversity, artistic innovation, and the talents of a new generation of filmmakers in Qatar and the Arab world. The pavilion has also hosted a session by the Ministry of Transportation in Qatar, alongside extensive panel discussions on the Qatar Media City project and the role of the National Archive in preserving heritage and documenting the national memory. In addition, visitors have been given the opportunity to engage with Qatar's rich artisanal traditions through live demonstrations of Arabic calligraphy and henna design, offered by local craftsmen in an interactive environment that embodies authenticity and re-

fects the depth of Qatar's cultural identity. As the Expo draws closer to its conclusion, Qatar's Pavilion is preparing to launch a dynamic programme of events, including a cultural session by Qatar Museums' Years of Culture initiative on youth identity and cultural exchange, panel discussions hosted by the National Human Rights Committee, and participation from Doha University for Science and Technology highlighting its role in academic innovation, applied research, and the development of specialised national talent in science, technology, and engineering. The upcoming programme will also feature diverse activities that reinforce Qatar's cultural and intellectual presence, underscoring its commitment to international dialogue and knowledge exchange. Commenting on the milestone,



Director of Qatar's Pavilion at Expo 2025 Osaka Faisal Abdulrahman al-Ibrahim stated: "Surpassing the 1mn visitor mark is global recognition of the uniqueness and appeal of the Qatari experience. From the very first day, our vision was to create a vibrant pavilion that inspires and connects cultures, sharing Qatar's story and showcasing its contributions to enabling life in line with the themes of Expo. As we approach the closing ceremony, we remain dedicated to presenting innovative and distinguished events that reflect Qatar's international standing and leave a lasting impression on Expo 2025 Osaka visitors." Amid the ongoing activities of Expo 2025 Osaka, Qatar's Pavilion reaffirms its role as a global destination for cultural exchange, embodying the country's vision for a more inclusive, sustainable, and co-operative future.

ANNOUNCEMENT

I, ROSITA GOMESEFERNANDES
holder of
India Passport No. X8961424
QID No. 27335607770
hereby change my name
from
ROSITA GOMESEFERNANDES
to
ROSITA GOMES

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

ANNOUNCEMENT

I, AZEEZ VENMANNIL KAVAT
holder of
India Passport No. M8515160
QID No. 27835651321
hereby change my name
from
AZEEZ VENMANNIL KAVAT
to
ABDUL AZEEZ VENMANNIL KAVAT

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

ANNOUNCEMENT

I, SHOHIDUL ISLAM MIR AHAMMED
holder of
BANGLADESH Passport No. EG0644415
QID No. 28405005661
hereby change my name
from
SHOHIDUL ISLAM MIR AHAMMED
to
SHAHIDUL ISLAM

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

Event planned to observe lunar eclipse on Sunday

Qatar Museums, in collaboration with the Qatar Calendar House, is organising a special event to watch a rare astronomical phenomenon that will be witnessed by the residents of Qatar next Sunday evening: the total lunar eclipse. The event will be held in the Museum of Islamic Art (MIA) Park, where a large tent will be set up with advanced astronomical observation equipment and tools. MIA Director, Shaika al-Nassr, stressed the museum's established approach to serving the community through its public programmes. Executive Director of the Qatar Calendar House, Eng Faisal al-Ansari, affirmed the House's commitment to its national plan to spread astronomical culture and sponsor related activities in Qatar. Dr Bashir Marzouk, an astronomy expert at the Qatar Calendar House, said that residents of Qatar will be able to observe all phases of the total lunar eclipse. The partial phase will begin at 7.27pm on Sunday, followed by the total eclipse at 8.31pm, reaching its peak at 9.12pm Doha time and ending at 9.53pm. The partial eclipse will end at 10.56pm. The combined duration of the partial and total eclipse phases will be approximately three hours and 29 minutes. (QNA)

Gaza mother hopes Venice film about slain child helps end war

AFP
Gaza City

The mother of Hind Rajab, a five-year-old Palestinian girl killed by Israeli forces in Gaza, hopes that a film about her final moments, to be screened today at the Venice Film Festival, would help end the war.

Rajab's body was recovered from a car riddled with bullets in Gaza City days after she was

last heard from, in a desperate, hours-long phone call to the Palestinian Red Crescent on January 29, 2024.

She had made the emergency call after her family's car came under fire during an attempt to flee Gaza City amid an Israeli advance in the Palestinian territory's north.

Her death sparked international outrage and calls for an independent investigation, and the original audio recordings of

her emergency call has been incorporated into *The Voice of Hind Rajab*, one of 21 features competing at the Venice festival.

"I hope this film will help stop this destructive war and save the other children of Gaza," her mother Wissam Hamada said by phone from Gaza City in a call ahead of the premiere in the Italian city.

"My daughter Hind's voice has become heard all over the world and she will never be forgotten,"

the 29-year-old mother said.

To Hamada, who lost her husband a year ago, their slain daughter "is just one case among thousands". Her death has grabbed international attention, but "why didn't the world act to save other parents and children?" said the mother, who now lives with her five-year-old son.

"The whole world has left us to die, to go hungry, to live in fear and to be forcibly displaced without doing anything. It's a

huge betrayal." *The Voice of Hind Rajab*, by Tunisian director Kaouthar Ben Hania, recounts the last hours of the girl's life using the original recordings, with the family's permission according to Hamada. Rajab's body was eventually recovered along with six relatives and two Red Crescent rescue workers sent to find her.

Contacted by AFP, the Israeli military said the circumstances of Hind Rajab's death were "still being reviewed", without giving

further details. It has never announced a formal investigation into the case.

Ben Hania said in a statement to the Venice Film Festival that after hearing excerpts from Rajab's calls for help, she immediately contacted the Palestine Red Crescent Society.

"I spoke at length with Hind's mother, with the real people who were on the other end of that call, those who tried to help her. I listened, I cried, I wrote," she said.

Plea for help after landslide wipes out Sudan village, killing 1,000

Reuters
Khartoum

An armed group that controls part of western Sudan appealed yesterday for foreign help in recovering bodies and rescuing residents from torrential rain, after it said at least 1,000 people were killed when a landslide buried a mountain village.

Only one person survived the destruction of the village of Tarseen in the mountainous Jebel Marra area of the Darfur region, said the Sudan Liberation Movement/Army.

SLM/A, which has long controlled and governed an autonomous portion of Jebel Marra, appealed to the United Nations and international aid agencies to help collect the bodies of victims, including men, women and children.

"Tarseen, famed for its citrus production, has now been completely levelled to the ground," the group said in a statement. Continuing rains have made travel in the region difficult and could impede any rescue or aid efforts.

"Nearby villagers are overwhelmed with fear that a similar fate might befall them if the ... torrential rainfall persists, which underscores the urgent need for a comprehensive evacuation plan and provision of emergency shelter," the group's leader, Abdelwahid Mohamed Nur, said in a separate appeal.

A statement by the UN's resident co-ordinator put the death toll at between 300 and 1,000, citing local reports.

Arjimand Hussain, regional re-



This handout image made available by the Sudan Liberation Movement/Army (SLM), yesterday, shows people inspecting the debris after a landslide devastated the village of Tarseen in Sudan's Jebel Marra area.

sponse manager for the development group Plan International, said the last 45km of the route to Tarseen were impassable to motor vehicles and could only be negotiated on foot or by donkey.

Nine bodies were recovered by volunteers, said Abdelhafiz Ali from the Jebel Marra Emergency Room, who noted that the village had hosted hundreds of people displaced by fighting.

The SLM/A has remained neutral in the battle between the main enemies in Sudan's civil war, the Sudanese army and the paramilitary Rapid Support Forces. The two foes are fighting over control of Al-Fashir, capital of North Darfur state, which is under siege from the RSF and has suffered famine.

Residents of Al-Fashir and nearby areas have sought shelter in Jebel Marra, though food, shelter, and medical supplies

are insufficient and hundreds of thousands have been exposed to the rains. Tawila, where most have arrived, is in the throes of a cholera outbreak, as are other parts of Darfur.

The two-year civil war has left more than half of Sudan's population facing crisis levels of hunger and driven millions from their homes, leaving them especially exposed to the country's damaging annual floods.

Sudan's army-controlled government expressed its condolences and willingness to assist.

The prime minister of a newly-installed RSF-controlled rival government, Mohamed Hassan al-Taishi, said he would be co-ordinating with the SLM/A on the delivery of aid supplies to the area.

Pope Leo sent his condolences and said he was praying for those affected, according to a Vatican statement.

In oil-rich Oman, efforts to preserve frankincense 'white gold'

AFP
Dawkah

The arid Dawkah valley is home to one of Oman's most prized resources: not oil or gas but frankincense trees, their fragrant sap harvested for millennia by residents who call it "white gold".

Located in Oman's southern Dhofar region, bordering Yemen, the valley is the world's largest such reserve, home to around 5,000 frankincense trees that dot the barren earth, their trunks bearing kernels that exude a distinctive woody scent.

"For us, frankincense is more precious than gold. It's a treasure," said Abdullah Jaddad, a frankincense harvester resting in the shade of a tree.

The oil extracted from the sap of the frankincense tree is used in perfume and skincare but it is also sold as solid beads of fragrance in local markets.

The high-end Omani perfume-maker Amouage, which manages the reserve, sells its luxury scents internationally for hundreds of dollars a bottle - with one limited edition perfume containing frankincense sold for nearly \$2,000.

The Dawkah valley is one of the rare places in the world where the Boswellia tree, from which frankincense resin is extracted, grows. Since 2000, it has been a Unesco World Heritage Site as part of the Land of Frankincense listing, along with Khor Rori, Al Baleed and Shisr.

With its unique earthy scent, frankincense has long been used as incense, but also in traditional medicine, and even religious rituals.

Before modern technology, the frankincense trade, which began in the third millennium BC, extended from Dhofar via sea and caravan routes to Mesopotamia, the Indus Valley and Ancient Egypt, all the way to Greece, Rome and even China.

"Frankincense had roughly the same value as oil today," according to Ahmed al-Murshidi, who heads the Khor Rori site.

The ancient port of Samahram, which forms part of the Khor Rori site, served as the gateway for frankincense to the world.

As Jaddad collected dried beads of sap from the trees, he told AFP that the type of frank-



Harvesters rest in front of a Boswellia tree, after extracting frankincense resin from it, in the Dawkah valley in Oman's southern Dhofar region.



A harvester collects frankincense resin from a Boswellia tree, in the Dawkah valley in Oman's southern Dhofar region.

incense found in the valley was the Najdi - one of four main varieties.

The Najdi and Hojari varieties are used for their medicinal properties, according to Faisal Hussein bin Askar, whose father founded the Bin Askar frankincense shop, in business since the 1950s.

"The cleaner and purer the frankincense, the more suitable it is for drinking as a treatment, while the rest is used as incense," he said, adding that several factories in Dhofar are specialised in frankincense skincare and oils.

The highest-grade and rarest frankincense has a light green colour.

The resin is harvested by hand using traditional methods that involve cutting the bark to release the sap and leaving it for a few days to harden.

Harvesting the tree requires care and skilled craftsmanship. As one guide put it to a group of tourists at the Land of Frankincense Museum in Salalah: "the frankincense tree is quick to anger".

"We strike the tree in specific,

small spots, about five times, to preserve" the plant, said Musallam bin Saeed Jaddad, who works in the reserve. "No one should cut open a frankincense tree... it could kill it," he said.

In 2022, Amouage partnered with Omani authorities to develop the Dawkah reserve and provide jobs for the local community, only harvesting a fifth of the trees to preserve them.

Each tree has a unique code and is monitored by a team of specialists, with donations open to anyone wanting to help the reserve in exchange for small gifts of frankincense products every year.

A distillery is set to be built in the reserve to extract the frankincense oil, a process for now completed in France, said Mohammed Faraj Istanbuli, the reserve supervisor.

"The government is carrying out vital projects, like building roads for example, which threatens other areas where frankincense trees grow," he said.

"We bring those trees... to the reserve. We have saved about 600 trees so far."

DR Congo ex-justice minister sentenced to three years hard labour for graft

AFP
Kinshasa

Firebrand former Democratic Republic of Congo justice minister Constant Mutamba was sentenced yesterday to three years of forced labour for embezzling public funds, including reparations for war victims, an AFP journalist saw.

Mutamba, who while in government proposed putting politicians who syphon off money from the public purse to death, was also barred from holding high office for five years.

The 37-year-old was found guilty of violating the rules in the awarding of a contract worth around \$40mn to build a prison near the northeastern city of Kisangani.

The politician, who resigned on June 18 in the wake of the allegations, has claimed to be victim of a "political plot" as a result of his crusade to root out the resource-rich central African nation's widespread corruption.

As the ex-minister made his way to the hearing yesterday, the army and police were out in force around the Court of Cassation in the capital Kinshasa to prevent unrest among his supporters, AFP reporters saw.

Guinea lifts some media curbs ahead of referendum

Selected Guinea media outlets can give voice to banned parties ahead of a September referendum, the president of the country's media regulator said, reversing an earlier decision to prohibit such coverage, AFP reported from Conakry. But the regulator suspended Guinea360.com, one of the country's most important private news sites, for three months, citing unspecified "professional

incompetence and manipulation of information." The junta-ruled west African country holds a referendum on September 21 that is in theory due to open the way for a return to civilian rule after the military seized power in 2021. Last week, the head of the country's communications authority (HAC) Boubacar Yacine Diallo banned all media from giving a voice to suspended or dissolved political parties.

Madagascar gets skull of king beheaded by France

AFP
Antananarivo

Madagascar marked at a ceremony yesterday the return from France of the skulls of three men killed by French troops 128 years ago, including one believed to be that of a decapitated king.

France handed over the skulls in Paris on August 27, in the first such restitution since it passed a law in 2023 facilitating the return of human remains seized during its colonial conquests. They are believed to belong to King Toera of the Sakalava people, who was beheaded by French troops in 1897, and two of his warriors.

The remains arrived in Madagascar late Monday and were re-



Prince of Menabe Harea Georges Kamamy leads the welcoming ritual of the three colonial-era skulls, at Ivato International Airport, near Antananarivo, yesterday.

ceived at the airport by members of the Sakalava group dressed in traditional robes.

Held in three boxes draped with the flag of the Indian Ocean nation, they were driven through the capi-

tal Antananarivo to the city's mausoleum yesterday, where they were welcomed by President Andry Rajoelina and a gathering of government and Sakalava dignitaries.

"If we want to move forward, we

must know our past, our history," Rajoelina told the gathering. "We are proud to have had a king and his soldiers who protected the nation," he said, praising a people who rose against French colonial troops "with courage and daring".

King Toera's great-grandson, the newly enthroned Sakalava king Georges Harea Kamamy, sprinkled water from the sacred Tsiribihina River to welcome home his ancestor's remains.

"We Sakalava are relieved. Today is a day of joy," Kamamy said.

He however regretted that the skulls were handed to Madagascar's government instead of the royal family. The skulls will take a four-day, 800-kilometre journey by road to the west coast area of Menabe, where they are expected to be buried later this week.

UN raises fears over poll clampdown in Cameroon

AFP
Geneva

The United Nations yesterday said growing restrictions in Cameroon surrounding the upcoming presidential elections "raise fears" about whether voters can freely choose their candidate.

President Paul Biya, the world's oldest head of state at 92, is seeking a new seven-year term to extend his nearly 43 years in power in elections on October 12.

"A safe and enabling human rights environment is essential for peaceful, inclusive and credible elections. It regrettably appears that this is not the case in Cameroon," said UN rights chief Volker Turk.

His Office of the High Com-

missioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) said rising restrictions were being imposed on opposition activities, with several gatherings banned.

There have also been concerns regarding the exclusion of some political figures from the race, as well as irregularities in voter registration, OHCHR said in a statement.

It also cited reports that opposition candidates and their supporters had been intimidated and threatened.

OHCHR cited an incident on August 7 when Dieudonne Yebga, a former senior member of the opposition African Movement for New Independence and Democracy, was escorted off air by security forces eight minutes into a live television interview.



CRIME

Jaguar Land Rover 'severely disrupted' by cyber-attack

Jaguar Land Rover yesterday said its retail and production activities have been hit by a cyber-attack, in the latest blow to the tariffs-hit automaker. British-based JLR, owned by India's Tata Motors, said it took immediate action to shut down its systems to curb the impact of the incident. "At this stage there is no evidence any customer data has been stolen but our retail and production activities have been severely disrupted," it said in a statement. The company added that it is "working at pace" to restart its global operations. Cyber gangs have increasingly targeted luxury brands and retailers.

APPOINTMENT

UK Greens elects self-styled 'eco-populist' as new leader

Britain's Green Party elected a self-styled "eco-populist" as its new leader yesterday, as the group seeks to gain traction by exploiting dissatisfaction with the Labour government among left-wing voters. Zack Polanski, a former actor, wants to make the Greens as noisy on the left as Nigel Farage's anti-immigrant Reform UK party is on the right as British politics fractures into a multi-party system. "My message to Labour is very clear. We are not here to be disappointed by you, we are not here to be concerned by you, we're here to replace you," he told supporters in central London after being elected.

INDUSTRIAL ACTION

UK parliamentary security staff to strike over pay

Hundreds of security staff at Britain's parliament are set to strike over conditions and pay for two days this month, their trade union said yesterday. The Public and Commercial Services union will bring the strike action to the Palace of Westminster on September 3 and 10, when its members walk out over issues including pay and annual leave. A spokesperson for parliament said it was working with London's Metropolitan Police to implement contingency plans to avoid disruption. "The decision to proceed with strike action is a disappointing outcome, following months of continued engagement to try to resolve outstanding concerns," the spokesperson said.

OFFBEAT

Fake astronaut scams Japanese octogenarian

A Japanese octogenarian was swindled out of thousands of dollars after falling in love online with a self-described astronaut. The woman in Japan's northern Hokkaido island met the fraudster on social media who claimed to be a male astronaut, a local police officer said, describing the case as a "romance scam". After some exchanges, the scammer one day told her he was "in space on a spaceship right now" but was "under attack and in need of oxygen", the official said. The scammer then urged her to pay him online to help him buy oxygen, and successfully hoodwinked around \$6,700 out of her.

China's Xi hosts 'old friend' Putin, N Korea's Kim in challenge to West

Reuters

Beijing

China's President Xi Jinping convened his Russian and North Korean counterparts in Beijing for the first time yesterday, a show of solidarity with countries shunned by the West over their role in Europe's worst war in 80 years.

Xi hosted Vladimir Putin for talks at the Great Hall of the People and then at his personal residence, calling him his "old friend".

A few hours later, Kim Jong-un's armoured train was spotted by a Reuters witness arriving in the Chinese capital. North Korean state media confirmed Kim's arrival, showing his daughter Kim Ju Ae accompanying him.

Ju Ae, whom South Korean intelligence consider her father's most likely successor, is making her international debut after years of being seen next to Kim at major domestic events. Xi, Putin and Kim are set to take centre stage at a massive military parade today, where the Chinese president will flaunt his vision for a new global order as US President Donald Trump's "America First" policies strain Western alliances. Beyond the pomp, analysts are watching whether the trio may signal closer defence relations fol-

lowing a pact signed by Russia and North Korea in June 2024, and a similar alliance between Beijing and Pyongyang, an outcome that may alter the military calculus in the Asia-Pacific region. It would also be a blow for Trump, who has talked up his close relations with all three leaders and touted his peacemaking credentials as Russia's three-and-a-half-year war with Ukraine has raged on. In a thinly veiled swipe at this rival across the Pacific Ocean on Monday, Xi told a summit of more than 20 leaders of non-Western countries: "We must continue to take a clear stand against hegemonism and power politics."

Xi also held talks on Monday with Prime Minister Narendra Modi of India, whose country has been targeted by Trump over its purchases of Russian oil seen as helping finance Putin's war effort. Trump's Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent called the summit "performative" and accused China and India, the biggest buyers of Russian crude, of being "bad actors" by fuelling Russia's war. As Putin and Xi met, Russia's Gazprom and China National Petroleum Corporation signed a deal to increase gas supplies and penned an agreement on a new pipeline that could supply China for 30 years.

At a time when Trump has set his sights on a Nobel Peace Prize, any

new concentration of military power in the East that includes Russia will ring alarm bells for the West.

"Trilateral military exercises between Russia, China and North Korea seem nearly inevitable," wrote Youngjun Kim, an analyst at the US-based National Bureau of Asian Research, in March, citing how the conflict in Ukraine had pushed Moscow and Pyongyang closer.

"Until a few years ago, China and Russia were important partners in imposing international sanctions on North Korea for its nuclear and missile tests... (they) are now potential military partners of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea during a crisis on the Korean peninsula," he added, using the diplomatically isolated country's official name.

The North Korean leader has supplied more than 15,000 troops to support Putin's war in Ukraine.

In 2024, he also hosted the Russian leader in Pyongyang - the first summit of its kind in 24 years - in a move widely interpreted as a snub to Xi and an attempt to ease his pariah status by reducing North Korea's dependence on China.

About 600 North Korean soldiers have been killed fighting for Russia in the Kursk region, according to South Korea's intelligence agency, which believes Pyongyang is planning another deployment.

Apple retail store opens in Bengaluru



Employees use an iPad of US tech giant Apple Inc at the Phoenix Mall on the opening day of the first Apple retail store in Bengaluru, India, yesterday.

India eyes Netherlands, Russia, Brazil for pharma export growth

Reuters

New Delhi

India plans to increase pharmaceutical exports to Russia, the Netherlands and Brazil, according to two industry sources aware of the matter, aiming to expand its presence beyond the US, its largest market, amid tariff-related concerns.

India's pharmaceutical industry is currently exempt from US President Donald Trump's tariffs of up to 50% but the sector has been on edge due to the uncertainty surrounding the situation.

The US accounts for slightly more than a third of India's pharmaceutical exports, primarily consisting of cheaper generic ver-

sions of popular drugs. Sales in the country rose 20% to approximately \$10.5bn in fiscal 2025.

"India wants to increase exports to other markets, and we believe there is scope for growth in Russia, Brazil, the Netherlands, and parts of Europe," one of the sources said.

"The idea is to diversify our export chain and increase market share in other countries."

The sources requested anonymity as they were not authorised to speak to the media.

The United Kingdom is India's second-largest export market, with \$914mn in sales, followed by Brazil with \$778mn.

Exports to the Netherlands and Russia stood at \$616mn and \$577mn, respectively, in fiscal 2025, according to government

data. With the existing manufacturing capacity of Indian drug-makers, there is potential to increase exports to newer markets by 20%, the sources noted.

However, newer markets cannot substitute revenue from the US, which will always be crucial for India, the sources said, adding that the aim was to "identify additional markets for growth".

India hopes to discuss regulatory challenges in these markets at the upcoming International Pharmaceutical Exhibition in New Delhi, which will also be attended by global regulatory stakeholders, they added. "We cannot increase exports overnight... so there will be discussions on regulatory challenges in these countries," the first source said.

India in talks with US for trade deal: minister

India is in talks with the US for a bilateral trade agreement, India's Trade Minister Piyush Goyal said yesterday, days after Washington doubled tariffs on goods from India as a punitive measure for New Delhi's continued import of Russian oil. Goyal added that the Free Trade Agreement negotiations between India and the European Union have reached an advanced stage and that both the parties are making significant progress. "We have reached a very advanced stage in our FTA with the EU. The commerce secretary is in a meeting in Brussels with his counterpart, the DG of the EU. Their team is coming down later this week and will be in active negotiation with us. Minister trade commissioner Maros Sefcovic (European Commissioner for Trade and Economic Security) is coming down on the 12th of this month and we are making very active and significant progress", Goyal said.

Vietnam marks 80 years of independence



Vietnam held its largest-ever public celebrations yesterday to mark 80 years since the declaration of independence, with legions of lock-stepped patriots marching under fluttering flags. Around 40,000 troops and civilians paraded in the capital Hanoi after dawn, feting the date when communist revolutionary Ho Chi Minh declared a "Democratic Republic of Vietnam" free from French rule in 1945.

India to start commercial chip production by 2025

AFP

New Delhi

India will begin commercial semiconductor production by the end of 2025, Prime Minister Narendra Modi said yesterday, touting his nation as a future "global hub" for chip innovation.

Modi, speaking in New Delhi at the launch of the annual Semicon India conference, said test chips from Micron and Tata were already being produced. "Commercial chip production will begin this year," he said. "This reflects how rapidly India is advancing in the semiconductor sector." India's semiconductor market has surged from \$38bn in 2023, to \$45-50bn in 2024-2025, with government targets of \$100-110bn by 2030.

The country is currently developing 10 semiconductor projects

worth \$18bn in investments, including two new 3-nanometre design facilities - among the most advanced - in Noida and Bengaluru. "Our journey began late, but nothing can stop us now," Modi said. India says it has an edge in three areas - producing components for semiconductor equipment, supplying critical materials such as chemicals and minerals, and services ranging from research and development, to artificial intelligence, big data and cloud computing. The world's most populous nation also claims a "human capital" advantage, Modi said, noting that "20% of the global talent in semiconductor design talent comes from India". The announcement comes after Japan pledged to boost investment in India to 10tn yen (\$68bn), including semiconductor and AI cooperation, during Modi's visit to Tokyo last week.

Indonesian police fire rubber bullets at student protesters

Reuters

Bandung, Indonesia

Indonesian police fired tear gas and rubber bullets at protesters near two universities in the city of Bandung, student groups and authorities said yesterday, stoking concerns over unrest in which 10 people have been killed since last week.

The protests began in the capital Jakarta, targeting government spending such as enhanced perks for lawmakers, and have since spread nationwide. They escalated into rioting and looting, causing millions of dollars of damage in the capital,

after a police vehicle hit and killed a motorcycle taxi driver.

University students have long been seen as vanguards of Indonesia's democracy, having taken a leading role in protests that toppled authoritarian president Suharto in 1998.

The incident in Bandung was the first instance of police firing at demonstrators on or near university campuses during the current protests, with previous clashes in and around government buildings and officials' residences.

President Prabowo Subianto warned on Monday that the police and military would stand firm against violent escalations.

Police official Hendra Rochman said officers did not enter the campuses of the Islamic University of Bandung, or UNISBA, and nearby Pasundan University, more than 140km from Jakarta, on Monday night, but tried to break up crowds of "non-student protesters" around the premises.

The UNISBA student body accused security forces of seeking to silence dissent, saying they "brutally attacked" the campus. Student groups at Pasundan shared a similar account on social media.

"We feel campuses are no longer safe for students... When military or security officers came into our campuses, then there is no longer a safe

zone for us," Ravi Tuanku Alsaid, head of Islamic Students Union at the university, said.

Pasundan student Yoga Tadiyala Ruchiyat said students were angry and had found at least 40 tear gas shells on their campus. "We were here as paramedics to help if protesters got injured but the police fired tear gas (at us)," he said.

One UNISBA student was critically injured when hit by rubber bullets on his campus and was undergoing surgery, Ravi said.

President Prabowo Subianto had talks with labour unions, some of whom joined demonstrations last week calling for a hike in the minimum wage, and said he told

lawmakers to discuss labour laws, according to a statement from his office.

The head of the Indonesia Trade Union Confederation, Said Iqbal, told reporters he had conveyed workers' demands to Prabowo, such as income tax cuts, and an end to cheap labour and outsourcing of jobs.

Analysts said the protests were testing Prabowo's young presidency, which nears its first anniversary in October.

Growing inequality had contributed to the unrest, said Achmad Sukarsono, associate director at consultancy Control Risks, citing a recent allowance for lawmakers that

stoked public resentment.

"The growing gap between the rich and poor in Indonesia provides an easily combustible dry-hay situation. Policies that fail to consider social sensitivities like the perks for parliamentarians then turn into matchsticks," he said.

Indonesia's official human rights body voiced concern over security forces' handling of the protests and is conducting an investigation, its commissioner Anis Hidayah told journalists. The security response has also been criticised by international organisations. The United Nations rights office called for accusations of rights violations by security forces to be investigated.

'Mockery of science': US experts blast Trump climate report

AFP/Reuters
Washington

A report commissioned by the Trump administration that disputes the scientific consensus on human-caused climate change mimics tactics once used by the tobacco industry to manufacture doubt, leading US experts said yesterday.

The group of 85 scientists, led by professors Andrew Dessler from Texas A&M University and Robert Kopp from Rutgers University, submitted a 440-page review of the assessment written by five scientists handpicked by Energy Secretary Chris Wright who have a contrarian view of mainstream climate science in time for the September 2 deadline for public comment.

The Trump administration's 150-page

report was published on the Department of Energy (DOE)'s website in late July to support the administration's proposal to overturn the 2009 "Endangerment Finding" - a bedrock determination that underpins much of the federal government's authority to curb greenhouse gas emissions.

The scientists said the DOE relied too heavily on debunked research, misinterpreted other research and failed to undertake a peer-review process to ensure the assessment was credible.

In contrast, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) and US National Climate Assessment reports have had thousands of authors and contributors and time-consuming independent review.

"The report privileges the outdated views of individual dissenters rather than the consensus of scientists," said

Andra Garner, a climate scientist who participated in the review. "The report is intended to support a specific policy decision and is not an unbiased synthesis of climate science."

"This report makes a mockery of science," Dessler wrote in a statement.

"It relies on ideas that were rejected long ago, supported by misrepresentations of the body of scientific knowledge, omissions of important facts, arm waving, anecdotes, and confirmation bias," he wrote. "This report makes it clear DOE has no interest in engaging with the scientific community."

Entitled *A Critical Review of Impacts of Greenhouse Gas Emissions on the US Climate*, the DOE document made sweeping claims: that extreme weather events linked to human-caused emissions were not increasing, US temperatures were not rising, and that higher carbon dioxide (CO2) levels would benefit agricultural productivity.

The rebuttal marshals experts from multiple disciplines to challenge each assertion.

"Contrary to the authors' claims, the human-induced global warming signal is clearly discernible in all-time high and low temperature records over the continental United States and throughout the world," scientists wrote in one example.

On agriculture, the rebuttal notes that while elevated CO2 can sometimes spur greater yields in isolation, rising heat and shifting rainfall patterns are expected to cause overall declines.

The DOE report also downplays the threat of ocean acidification, stating that "life in the oceans evolved when the oceans were mildly acidic" billions of years ago.

However, according to the rebuttal,

this is "irrelevant for evaluating whether current or near-future conditions are suitable for modern ecosystems to continue" since complex multi-cellular life had not evolved at the time.

Since returning to office in January, President Donald Trump has gone far beyond the pro-fossil fuel agenda of his first term.

Republicans recently passed legislation titled the "Big Beautiful Bill" which gutted clean energy tax credits established under former president Joe Biden, while opening ecologically sensitive areas to expanded fossil fuel development.

Trump has also withdrawn the United States from the Paris Agreement on climate and is pressing America's fossil fuel agenda abroad - requiring the EU in its trade deal to buy more US liquefied natural gas and pressuring the World Bank to stop prioritising climate change.

US appeals court says EPA can terminate over \$16bn in climate grants

Reuters
Washington

President Donald Trump's administration can proceed with terminating more than \$16bn in grants awarded to non-profit groups to fight climate change, a US federal appeals court ruled yesterday.

Trump's predecessor Joe Biden's signature 2022 Inflation Reduction Act had awarded the grants aimed at reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) under Trump had sought to terminate the grants.

By a 2-1 vote, a panel of the US Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit ruled that a lower-court judge lacked jurisdiction to hear the case brought by five of eight of the non-profits who had collectively been awarded \$20bn under the law's Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund programme.

The EPA and a lawyer for the plaintiffs did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

The EPA under administrator

Lee Zeldin maintained the programme did not align with the agency's priorities, and it cited concerns with potential fraud, waste and abuse.

The Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) and Justice Department under Trump also investigated the programme.

The grant funds were being held by Citibank and had been awarded to Climate United Fund, Coalition for Green Capital, Power Forward Communities, Inclusive and Justice Climate Fund.

They sued after access to their collective funding worth over \$16bn was frozen.

US District Judge Tanya Chutkan in Washington issued a preliminary injunction in April, holding that the Trump administration's actions were unlawful and requiring Citibank to disburse the funds.

That ruling was put on hold by the appeals court while it considered the case, and yesterday, a majority of the three-judge panel concluded that Chutkan abused her discretion by issuing that order.

Both judges in the majority were appointed by Trump.

Trump moves headquarters of Space Command to Alabama

Reuters/AFP
Washington

US President Donald Trump announced yesterday the relocation of US Space Command headquarters from Colorado Springs, Colorado, to Huntsville, Alabama, in a move that will draw criticism from Democrats and could cost hundreds of millions.

The move, first reported yesterday morning by Reuters, benefits a state that overwhelmingly supported Trump's three Republican presidential bids, at the expense of one that opposed them.

Colorado, in the western US, leans Democrat while the southern state of Alabama leans Republican.

"We love Alabama. I only won it by about 47 points. I don't think that influenced my decision, though," Trump told reporters and lawmakers gathered in the Oval Office.

The decision reverses a move made under former president Joe Biden's administration, which had selected Colorado Springs as the permanent home for the military's newest combatant command.

Defence officials have previously estimated that relocating the headquarters, which became fully operational in December 2023, could cost hundreds of millions of dollars and take three to four years to complete.

About 1,700 personnel work at Space Command, according to congressional records.

Trump has often linked federal funding decisions and politics.



This picture taken in 2012 shows the Air Force Space Command early warning system at Buckley Air Force Base, Colorado.

- Reuters

The president previously blocked a move to put the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI)'s headquarters in Maryland, calling it a "liberal state", and suggested linking disaster aid in California to the state's policy decisions.

Huntsville, home to the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (Nasa)'s Marshall Space Flight Centre and a major hub for defence contractors, such as L3Harris and Lockheed Martin, has long lobbied for the Space Command headquarters.

The Space Command, established in 2019 under the first Trump administration, is responsible for military operations beyond Earth's atmosphere and defending US satellites from potential threats.

White House Press Secretary



Trump making the announcement at the Oval Office. - AFP

Karoline Leavitt said in a statement sent earlier to AFP that Trump "will be making an exciting announcement related to the Department of Defence" but gave no more details.

The Department of Defence's

image distribution website initially listed Trump's announcement as being about "US Space Command Headquarters".

It later changed it to say only that "President Trump makes an announcement".

Fires force evacuations in Canada's far north

More than 1,000 residents of Canada's vast and remote far north are under evacuation orders as forest fires rage in the drought-struck region.

Canada is undergoing its second worst fire season in recent memory, with 8.3mn hectares (20.5mn acres) of forest - an area the size of Austria - scorched thus far.

Fires are now threatening the towns of Fort Providence and Whati in the Northwest Territories, prompting the first evacuations this year in the enormous area, where some land and large islands straddle the Arctic Circle.

Fire seasons have been longer than usual since 2022, said Mike Westwick, manager of wildfire prevention and mitigation for the territory.

"It's stressful, mentally on people, it's stressful, physically on workers and people who may need to move locations and be away from home," he told AFP.

Thousands of forest fires have raged across Canada since the spring. More than 650 blazes are currently active, and over 100 of those are uncontrolled, according to official data released yesterday.

Canada has increasingly been hit with extreme weather events, with scientists observing that northern regions are warming at a faster pace than other parts of the globe.

2023 remains the worst fire year on record for Canada, when nearly 18mn hectares (44.5mn acres) went up in smoke. - AFP

US peacekeeping cuts 'limit UN ability to protect civilians'

United Nations peacekeeping missions are under severe financial pressure and US cuts could limit their ability to protect civilians in places like South Sudan and the Democratic Republic of the Congo, a UN peacekeeping spokesperson said yesterday.

US President Donald Trump last week unilaterally cancelled \$4.9bn in foreign aid authorised by Congress.

This includes some \$800mn in peacekeeping funding appropriated for 2024-25, according to a Trump administration message to Congress.

The White House budget office has already proposed eliminating funding for UN peacekeeping missions in 2026, citing failures by operations in Mali, Lebanon and the Demo-

cratic Republic of the Congo.

Washington is the largest contributor, accounting for 27% of the \$5.6bn UN peacekeeping budget. These payments are mandatory.

"Without sufficient resources, we will be doing less with less, with potentially serious implications for peace and security in contexts such as South Sudan and the Democratic Republic of the Congo, where financial constraints could significantly limit our ability to protect civilians," said a UN peacekeeping spokesperson in New York. "We urge all member states to pay their contributions to peacekeeping in full and on time to sustain the vital work and impact of peacekeeping."

There are currently 11 UN peacekeeping operations around the world.

Federal judge blocks Trump administration's use of troops in California

Reuters/AFP
Washington

A federal judge has blocked US President Donald Trump's administration from using the military to fight crime in California, as the Republican president threatens to send troops to more US cities including Chicago.

San Francisco-based US District Judge Charles Breyer found that the Trump administration violated a law known as the Posse Comitatus Act with its June deployment of 4,000 National Guard and 700 active duty US Marines to Los Angeles.

The law sharply limits the use of federal troops for domestic enforcement.

The decision dealt a setback to Trump's push to expand the role of the military on US soil, which critics say is a dangerous expansion of executive authority that could spark tensions between troops and ordinary citizens.

Breyer put the ruling on hold until September 12.

The Trump administration is likely to appeal.

White House spokeswoman Anna Kelly called Breyer a "rogue



This picture taken in June shows members of the California National Guard outside a complex of federal buildings in Santa Ana. - Reuters

judge" and said that the military deployment had saved Los Angeles from "mass chaos".

"The president is committed to protecting law-abiding citizens, and this will not be the final say on the issue," Kelly said in an e-mailed statement.

The injunction applies only to the military in California, not nationally.

However, the judge said that Trump's stated desire to send troops to Chicago and other cities provided support for his ruling, noting that the president said at an August 27 cabinet meeting that he had the right to "do anything I want to do... if I think our country is in danger".

Trump has said the troops were

needed in Los Angeles to protect federal agents carrying out immigration enforcement, after large-scale immigration raids triggered protests.

"There is no question that federal personnel should be able to perform their jobs without fearing for their safety," wrote Breyer, who was nominated to the bench by Democratic president Bill Clinton and is the brother of former Supreme Court Justice Stephen Breyer.

"But to use this as a hook to send military troops alongside federal agents wherever they go proves too much and would frustrate the very purpose of the Posse Comitatus Act," he added.

The Los Angeles deployment

drew wide condemnation from Democrats, who said Trump was using the military to stifle opposition to his hardline immigration policies.

"The people of California won much needed accountability against Trump's ILLEGAL militarisation of an American city!" California Governor Gavin Newsom, a prominent Democrat who brought the lawsuit, wrote on X yesterday.

Trump has since deployed the National Guard to Washington, DC, a federal district where Trump wields exceptional power, and said he may send troops to Chicago, the nation's third-largest city.

The Republican president has cited crime rates to justify the need for federal troops.

Washington and Chicago, like many places across the US, experienced crime spikes in the wake of the pandemic, but crime is on a declining trend in both cities.

At a three-day trial last month, lawyers from the California attorney-general's office tried to show that the troops had performed police functions - including setting up security perimeters and detaining two people - and were not needed in the first place.

They warned that a ruling for

the Trump administration would "usher in a vast and unprecedented shift in the role of the military in our society".

The Trump administration countered that the US Constitution permits presidents to use troops to protect federal personnel and property as an exception to the Posse Comitatus Act.

The administration's lawyers tried to show that the troops only acted to protect federal agents from perceived threats and stayed within their legal limits.

The administration still had several hundred soldiers in Los Angeles when the trial took place.

The troops were used for security during raids on certain farms outside the city and as a show of force to deter protests at a popular park during an operation by immigration agents, according to evidence shown at trial.

About 300 National Guard troops remain deployed to Los Angeles, and the Trump administration has said they would stay there at least until November.

Trump meanwhile vowed yesterday to quickly and dramatically reduce crime in Chicago, hinting at sending federal troops into what he

branded the "most dangerous city in the world".

"I will solve the crime problem fast, just like I did in DC," Trump posted on his Truth Social platform, referring to his deployment of National Guard reservists to the US capital beginning last month.

"Chicago is the worst and most dangerous city in the world, by far," he said, adding that JB Pritzker, the Democratic governor of the state of Illinois where Chicago is located, "needs help badly, he just doesn't know it yet".

"Chicago will be safe again, and soon," he said.

Trump followed up with a provocative, all-caps post: "CHICAGO IS THE MURDER CAPITAL OF THE WORLD!"

As Chicago residents braced for a possible intervention by Trump - reportedly as early as this week - its Democratic mayor delivered a spirited defence of the Windy City.

"No federal troops in the city of Chicago! No militarised force in the city of Chicago!" Mayor Brandon Johnson said on Monday at a rousing Labour Day rally. "We're going to take this fight across America, but we've got to defend the home front first."



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EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

Faisal Abdulhameed al-Mudahka

Deputy Managing Editor

K T Chacko

- ✉ P.O.Box 2888, Doha, Qatar
- ✉ editor@gulf-times.com
- ☎ 44350478 (News),
- ☎ 44466404 (Sport),
- ☎ 44466636 (Home delivery)
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Trump's 50% tariff hit to slow India's growth momentum down

India's growth momentum faces significant headwinds as the surprise pickup in economic growth last quarter comes amid rising concern over US President Donald Trump's 50% tariffs imposed on the Asian nation.

Gross domestic product growth accelerated 7.8% in the three months to June, the fastest pace in more than a year and well above economists' forecasts in a Bloomberg survey.

But the surprisingly strong economic growth was likely exaggerated by statistical factors. While growth was stronger than expected, a lower deflator – used to strip out inflation from economic output – may have boosted the headline figure, according to economists from Goldman Sachs, HSBC Holdings, and Nomura Holdings.

The reading assumes significance as the market is closely watching for signs of the economy's ability to absorb the pressure from the 50% US tariffs that kicked in last week. The US is India's biggest export market, and Trump's tariffs could severely hurt labour-intensive industries such as textiles and footwear.

Overall exports from India to the US, its biggest market, may more than halve. India exported more than \$20bn of textile products, jewellery and diamonds to the US in 2023.

Job losses in those sectors could hurt sentiment and weigh on growth. Citigroup economists estimate the tariffs could reduce India's annual growth by 0.6–0.8 percentage points.

Trump's move to penalise India for buying oil from Russia will increase economic risks for the South Asian nation and test its longstanding ties with Moscow.

Indian exports to the US were already hit with a 25% duty as part of Trump's broader "reciprocal tariffs." On August 27, he followed through on a threat to impose so-called secondary tariffs to punish India's purchases of Russian crude, applying an additional 25% levy on Indian goods.

The US is India's biggest export market and Citigroup economists estimate the tariffs could reduce India's annual growth by 0.6–0.8 percentage points

by acquiring more arms from the US and European nations.

Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi has maintained his country's longstanding ties to Moscow, while pursuing deeper links with the US, which it sees as a partner in standing up to a more assertive China. Trade between India and Russia reached a record-high \$68.7bn in the year to March 31. India's exports to Russia totalled \$4.9bn, while its imports from Russia amounted to \$63.8bn, according to a Bloomberg report.

Tariff worries pushed India's rupee to a record low on Friday of 88.21 against the dollar.

To cushion the tariff hit, Modi's government is rolling out measures to boost private consumption, which makes up about 60% of the economy. He announced a reduction in consumption taxes earlier this month, which will likely take effect from October, giving a boost to spending and helping to drive down prices.

If India continues to trade with Russia, a 50% duty on its goods shipped to the US – the combined hit of the reciprocal and secondary tariffs – could reduce its exports to America by 60% and lower its gross domestic product by 0.9%, according to Bloomberg Economics.

The economic impact may be cushioned by the fact that India's economy is largely driven by domestic demand, rather than exports. Modi must now walk a geopolitical tightrope.

If he allows India's refiners to keep buying Russian oil, he risks a direct blow to the economy and damage to the ties with his country's top trade partner.

On the other hand, yielding to US pressure could undermine India's long-standing relationship with Moscow.



NEW WORLD ORDER: OVERTURE IN D(ETER) MINOR.



From draft to adoption: Addressing future pandemics through multilateralism



By Dr Esmat Zaidan and Dr Diana AlSayed Hassan

The world is on the cusp of a historic global health accord. On April 16, 2025, World Health Organisation (WHO) member states forged a draft Pandemic Agreement after more than three years of negotiations. Adopted at the World Health Assembly in May, the agreement aims to make the world safer from future pandemics by strengthening global health infrastructure and collaboration. It also outlines clear targets and timelines to bolster health systems and prevent catastrophic health disasters like Covid-19. As WHO Director-General Dr Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus noted, this "generational accord demonstrates that even in a divided world, countries can unite for a shared response to shared threats".

Lessons learned from Covid

The devastation wrought by Covid-19 was the undoubted catalyst for this agreement. In December 2021, amid the pandemic's peak, WHO member states created an Intergovernmental Negotiating Body (INB) to develop a convention, agreement or other international instrument for pandemic prevention, preparedness and response. Over 13 formal rounds, countries gradually built consensus on a legally binding framework. These negotiations took place against a backdrop of high stakes and tensions as countries grappled with mistrust in the aftermath of Covid-19, geopolitical frictions, rampant misinformation, and even the withdrawal of the United States from the process.

Despite the challenges, this marks only the second time in WHO's 75-year history that member states have created a binding international health accord. After adoption by the WHA, the agreement will require signatures and ratifications from 60 countries to enter into force.

Reaching this point was far from straightforward. One major sticking point was how to ensure fair access to vaccines, medicines, and other tools during pandemics, so that wealthy countries do not hoard supplies at the expense of poorer ones. Article 11 of the draft (on tech transfer) proved especially contentious, with hours spent debating how to help developing countries produce vaccines, diagnostics, and treatments. The final text encouraged countries to promote tech transfer on mutually agreed terms – an outcome some poor nations worried may be too weak. Ambitions on intellectual property waivers were tempered by opposition from some wealthy nations and industry, illustrating the delicate balance struck in the draft.

Another obstacle was the question of Pathogen Access and Benefit Sharing (PABS). This refers to rules for rapidly sharing outbreak samples and data in addition to ensuring countries providing those pathogens receive benefits (like vaccines). Countries agreed in principle to a framework ensuring that 20% of pandemic supplies will be set aside for equitable distribution. However, the detailed PABS annex is yet to be finalised, meaning further negotiations will continue even after the main agreement's adoption. This unresolved issue underscores how complex

questions of equity and trust still need to be ironed out.

What the draft Pandemic Agreement proposes

The draft WHO Pandemic Agreement is ambitious in scope. It establishes priorities and targets for pandemic prevention, preparedness and response, and commits signatories to a range of supporting actions. For the first time ever, a global health treaty explicitly embraces a "One Health" approach that recognises the interconnected health of humans, animals, and environment. This means countries will co-ordinate across sectors to better detect and curb diseases that jump from animals to humans – the source of most new pandemics.

From there, the draft agreement underscores that strong national health systems are the foundation of pandemic preparedness, and countries should therefore fully invest in public health infrastructure, workforce training, and service delivery so they can respond swiftly to emergencies. It also envisions mobilising a skilled global health emergency workforce and financial mechanisms to fund preparedness efforts. In essence, nations recognise that preparedness requires sustained political and financial investment – something the agreement seeks to galvanise.

At its heart, the treaty is about ensuring a more equitable and effective global response when the next pandemic hits. The draft obligates governments to attach conditions to publicly funded Research and Development (R&D) requiring vaccines or drugs developed with taxpayer money be made accessible and affordable globally. Additionally, the agreement would establish a global supply chain and logistics network to co-ordinate allocation of critical supplies and prevent crippling bottlenecks or hoarding of items like masks and personal protective equipment.

Notably, the agreement takes care to affirm national sovereignty and dispel concerns about overreach. It explicitly states that nothing in the treaty gives WHO authority to dictate countries' domestic health measures or laws. It cannot impose lockdowns, travel bans, or vaccine mandates. Such clauses were included to reassure governments and sceptics that the accord will respect each nation's right to implement health policies as it sees fit.

Challenges and opportunities

While the agreement's drafting is a diplomatic triumph, significant challenges lie ahead. Despite being formally adopted in May 2025, states will have 18 months to decide whether to formally join (ratify) the treaty. This process could take several years – more than enough time for another pandemic to strike. As former New Zealand Prime Minister Helen Clark urged, leaders "should be investing now in pandemic preparedness... We can't afford another pandemic, but we can afford to prevent one". Achieving the treaty's vision will therefore require continuous political commitment and funding starting immediately.

Implementation also faces significant geopolitical and financial headwinds. The United States' absence casts an alarming shadow. Many worry that without the world's biggest economy – not to mention the WHO's largest donor – on board, funding and compliance could suffer. Others nevertheless see the wider consensus as a show that with or without the US, countries are committed to working together. Washington's stance could evolve with political changes. In the meantime, however, the rest of the world's commitment underscores a broader point: the WHO's reliance on a few major donors has been a vulnerability, and diversifying support is crucial.

A policy breakthrough, but not a panacea

On reflection, the agreement represents a

major policy breakthrough in global health governance. For the first time, the world will have a comprehensive framework dedicated to pandemics, treating them as existential global security threats requiring a unified response. The agreement's adoption reaffirms the WHO's coordinating role and provides a platform for holding countries accountable to improve their capacities. It embodies hard-won consensus on principles like solidarity, fairness, and the notion that no country should be left behind when a health emergency strikes.

Yet no treaty alone can guarantee global health security. Implementation will be the real test. Countries must follow through on investing in their healthcare systems, training health workers, building vaccine manufacturing hubs, and sharing data transparently. The treaty provides mechanisms for financing and other tools, but these need political will to function.

Another critical factor is sustained funding and donor confidence in WHO and global health initiatives. The pandemic agreement arrives at a time when multilateral agencies have been battered by funding uncertainties – not least due to the US funding cutbacks and withdrawal. The hope is that this new agreement, by demonstrating global unity and a clear plan, will improve relations between donors and inspire increased investment in pandemic preparedness. A successful pandemic accord could convince both wealthy countries and philanthropies that their money will be used effectively to build a safer world – potentially unlocking more generous contributions. The example of Qatar's flexible funding and growing roster of mid-sized donors show a trend of broader support that needs to continue.

Realising the entire draft's aspirations ultimately requires continued political resolve, resources, and inclusive collaboration. The involvement of all nations – big and small – will be necessary to operationalise the agreement's provisions and keep momentum. Multilateral success stories like this treaty are rare, and thus precious. As Dr Tedros said, the agreement is a victory for public health, science and multilateral action. Now the world must translate words on paper into action.

- Dr Esmat Zaidan is Associate Professor and Associate Dean for Academic Affairs
- Dr Diana AlSayed Hassan is Assistant Professor, both at Hamad Bin Khalifa University's College of Public Policy.

(This piece has been submitted by HBKU's Communications Directorate on behalf of its authors. The thoughts and views expressed are the authors' own and do not necessarily reflect an official University stance.)

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Court ousts leadership of opposition's Istanbul branch

A Turkish court has ousted the Istanbul provincial head of the main opposition Republican People's Party (CHP), dealing a fresh judicial blow to opponents of President Recep Tayyip Erdogan and triggering sharp falls in share and bond markets.

The Istanbul court ruled that the votes of delegates in a 2023 CHP provincial congress had been influenced by cash payments, and thus the board members elected at the congress should be removed.

The CHP denied all the accusations and said the court had no authority to overrule congress decisions.

The court named former CHP deputy chair Gursel Tekin as interim provincial head, replacing Ozgur Celik who was removed.

Speaking to broadcaster Halk-TV, CHP leader Ozgur Ozel said that they deem the court decision "null and void" and will file objection to the upper courts.

Ozel also said that Tekin, who was appointed as CHP interim provincial Istanbul head, has been expelled from the party after the court decision.

The Istanbul ruling could have implications for another court case, in Ankara, that could oust CHP leader Ozel.

In that lawsuit, for which the next hearing is set for September 15, results of the party's 38th Ordinary Congress in 2023 could be overturned over procedural irregularities.

It was at that congress that Ozel replaced Kemal Kilicdaroglu, who lost to Erdogan in a presidential election earlier that year. - Reuters

Brazil Supreme Court deliberates Bolsonaro coup-plot verdict

AFP
Brasilia

Brazil's Supreme Court began verdict deliberations yesterday in the trial of former president Jair Bolsonaro, the Donald Trump ally accused of plotting a coup to retain power after he lost the 2022 election.

In opening comments for the multi-day session, presiding Justice Alexandre de Moraes said Bolsonaro aimed to install a "real dictatorship" when he allegedly launched the uprising.

Referring to extraordinary pressure put on Brazil by the US president, as well as domestic tensions, de Moraes said the top court would operate "independent from internal or external threats and coercion".

Bolsonaro, 70, faces a prison sentence of more than four decades if convicted of conspiring to cling onto power after losing to leftist rival and current President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva.

Verdicts in his case and those of seven co-defendants, including several former ministers and generals, are expected by September 12.

The former army officer, who is under house arrest, was not expected to appear in the Brasilia courtroom.

It is the first trial of a former Brazilian president on coup charges and has sparked tensions across Latin America's biggest country - stoked by Trump's highly unusual campaign in support of the leader once dubbed "Trump of the Tropics".

Five justices are deliberating and a simple majority of three is needed for a guilty verdict.

A guilty verdict could scupper Bolsonaro's hopes of making a spectacular Trump-style comeback from a criminal conviction to the country's top job.

The case has deeply divided the country between those in favour, who view it as a test of the vitality of Brazil's democracy 40 years after the end of a military dictatorship, and those who see it as a political show trial.

Trump has denounced a "witch hunt" and imposed a 50% tariff on a variety of exports from Brazil, plunging relations between the two allies into crisis.

The US Treasury has also sanctioned de Moraes.

Bolsonaro's supporters welcome Trump's attacks.

"Thanks to these measures, they (the accused) see that they are not alone, that there is someone above them who can make a difference," Carlos Sergio Alcantara, a businessman who took part in a Bolsonaro solidarity rally on Sunday, told AFP.

On January 8, 2023, mobs of Bolsonaro supporters stormed the Supreme Court, presidential palace and parliament, calling for the military to depose Lula, who had just been inaugurated.

Bolsonaro was in the United States at the time but has been accused of instigating the unrest.

The violence bore uncanny similarities to the January 6, 2021 attack by Trump supporters on Congress in Washington in a failed attempt to prevent certification of Joe Biden's presidential election win.

Trump eventually came back to retake the White House in the 2024 election.

Prosecutors accuse Bolsonaro of leading a "criminal organisation" that conspired to prevent Lula taking office, saying that his attacks on Brazil's electronic voting system months before the vote

aimed to discredit the election.

They charge that, after his defeat, Bolsonaro planned to declare a state of emergency and call new elections but failed to win the support of the military top brass.

Prosecutors also allege that he knew of a plan to assassinate Lula, his vice-president Geraldo Alckmin and Moraes, which was later abandoned.

Bolsonaro denies all the charges and claims he is the victim of political persecution.

Moraes was opening proceedings by summarising the evidence, after which the prosecution and defence were to present closing arguments.

The judges will vote next week to convict or acquit Bolsonaro and his co-accused before considering possible sentences.

If Bolsonaro is convicted on five charges and given the maximum sentence for each crime, he could be imprisoned for 43 years. However, he can appeal the verdict to a full chamber of the Supreme Court.

His allies believe his conviction to be a foregone conclusion and are counting on Congress to pass an amnesty law to save him from prison.

Five hurt in Marseille knife attack, suspect shot dead

French police killed a man suspected of stabbing five people in the southern port city of Marseille, one of whom is in critical condition, a public prosecutor said yesterday.

The assailant, a Tunisian national with legal status in France, stabbed several people at a hotel that had just evicted him for non-payment, then attacked several others on a busy shopping street, prosecutor Nicolas Bessone told reporters.

"It would appear that he blindly and gratuitously attempted to strike people," he said.

The man first stabbed his roommate, leaving the victim in critical condition, the prosecutor said.

He then attacked the hotel's manager, who fled into the street along with his son, who was stabbed "in the back".

While both father and son were seriously

hurt, but "their lives are not believed to be in danger", Bessone said.

The man then continued what prosecutors called a "criminal rampage" on a crowded street, injuring at least two people in the face with a baton he carried along with two knives.

Witnesses said he shouted "religious and incoherent things", a judicial source said, adding that there were no grounds for France's anti-terror unit PNAT to get involved in the case.

A police patrol armed with tasers and automatic weapons in the area intervened and ordered him to drop his weapons, but when he refused they "neutralised" him, the prosecutor said.

A video published on TikTok by an anonymous user appears to show the man facing four plainclothes police for around 20 seconds before rushing towards them.

They then opened fire. Seven shots can be heard on the video.

A resident told AFP that police arrived "very quickly" at the scene, and that the man had tried to attack them with a knife.

One policeman shouted "stop, stop", the witness said.

Another eyewitness told AFP the man was holding "two large butcher knives".

The man died despite efforts to resuscitate him.

Prosecutors have opened an investigation into attempted murder and attempted murder of police officer.

Police cordoned off the area, close to Marseille's port, and put up a forensic tent in front of a fast-food restaurant.

The area is the site of several drug dealing spots, notorious for street consumption of cocaine as well as drug-related crime. - AFP

Two held as Argentina hunts for Nazi-looted painting

Argentine police are investigating a deceased Nazi's daughter and son-in-law after a 17th century painting stolen from a Dutch Jewish art collector was recently spotted in a property ad before promptly disappearing.

The painting, believed to be *Portrait of a Lady* by Italian baroque artist Giuseppe Ghislandi (1655-1743), was recognised by the Dutch newspaper *AD* in a photo of a house for sale in the Argentine seaside resort of Mar del Plata.

The authenticity of the artwork cannot be confirmed until it is recovered, but it is believed to have been stolen from Amsterdam art dealer Jacques Goudstikker during World War II.

Goudstikker died while fleeing the Netherlands in 1940 when it was invaded by Nazi Germany, and his abandoned art collection was looted.

The for-sale notice revealed what is believed to be the Ghislandi painting in the house of Friedrich Kadgien, a financial adviser to Adolf Hitler and placed in charge of moving Nazi plunder to South America.

Kadgien died in 1978 in Argentina, where he had fled along with other Nazi war criminals.

The painting disappeared shortly after the *AD* article was published.

Interpol and the Argentine federal police are involved in the search for the artwork.

A daughter of Kadgien was placed under house arrest along with her husband for three days, the prosecutor in the case said yesterday.

They will then appear in court to be charged in the painting's disappearance.

According to Argentina's *La Nacion* newspaper, the couple insisted that they are the rightful owners of the artwork, which they had inherited.

Goudstikker's heirs are determined to recover the painting, which is listed on an international registry of missing artworks.

The lawyer for Kadgien's daughter, Carlos Murias, told *La Capital*, a local newspaper in Mar del Plata, that the pair would co-operate with the authorities, through prosecutors said yesterday that the artwork has not been handed over.

Four property searches conducted on Monday also failed to yield the painting.

The prosecutor's office said investigators carrying out the search had seized two other artworks from the home of another Kadgien daughter that appeared to be from the 1800s.

"The works will be analysed to determine if they are linked to paintings stolen during World War II," it added.

Goudstikker, a leading dealer of Italian and Dutch 16th- and 17th-century masters, left behind an extensive art collection of over 1,000 paintings when he fled.

Top German officials, led by Gestapo founder Hermann Goering, divvied up his collection.

After the war, the Dutch state retrieved some 300 works, most of which were returned to Goudstikker's heirs.

In 2011, the Getty Museum in Los Angeles returned a 17th century Dutch painting from Goudstikker's collection.

Many other works remain scattered around the globe. - AFP

Aftershocks rumble Afghanistan as quake death toll rises above 1,400

AFP/Reuters

Kabul/Mazar Dara, Afghanistan

Strong aftershocks to a powerful earthquake that killed more than 1,400 people at the weekend rattled eastern Afghanistan yesterday as survivors in remote hard-hit villages prepared for another night without shelter.

Temporary shelters had not yet reached the Mazar Dara area of Kunar province, an AFP journalist said, with roads still blocked to the remote, mountainous region bordering Pakistan where the worst of the earthquake was felt.

"There is no food... there is nothing, everything has been buried in the rubble," Nurgal district official Ijaz Ulhaq Yaad told AFP.

Residents, including elderly people and children were "in the open air" with little to protect them from wet weather, he said, adding that "we still feel strong aftershocks".

A 5.2-magnitude earthquake jolted the region near the epicentre of the magnitude 6.0 earthquake that hit late on Sunday night - one of at least six aftershocks recorded by the US Geological Survey (USGS).

"These aftershocks are constant, but they have not caused any casualties yet," Ehsanullah Ehsan, the disaster management spokesman in Kunar, told AFP.

The number of victims from Sunday's earthquake has mounted steadily, with 1,411 people dead and 3,124 injured in Kunar alone, chief Taliban government spokesman Zabihullah Mujahid said yesterday, making it one of the deadliest to hit the country in decades.

Another dozen people were killed and hundreds injured in neighbouring Nangarhar province.

Afghanistan is one of the poorest countries in the world, with dwindling aid since the Taliban seized power in 2021, undermining its ability to respond to disasters.

The devastation could affect



Children are seen with their belongings in the devastated village of Mazar Dara, in Afghanistan's Kunar province. - Reuters

"hundreds of thousands", said United Nations humanitarian coordinator for Afghanistan Indrika Ratwatte.

Rescuers searched through the night and all day for survivors in the rubble of homes flattened in Kunar, where more than 5,400 houses were destroyed, government spokesman Hamdullah Fitrat said.

The European Union said it was sending 130 tonnes of emergency supplies and providing €1mn (\$1.2mn) to help victims of the deadly quake.

The bloc has become one of the key aid donors to Afghanistan after the United States - previously the country's largest aid provider - cut all but a slice of its assistance after President Donald Trump took office in January.

The aid cuts risk impeding the response to the earthquake, sector experts told AFP, in a country already facing one of the world's worst humanitarian crises after decades of conflict.

"The scale of need far exceeds current resources," the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) said, noting that funding cuts had hit humanitarian air services, "limiting access to remote communities".

The IFRC said it had launched an emergency appeal for 25mn Swiss francs (\$31mn) to help with the earthquake response and recovery, as various countries pledged to send support.

As Taliban military helicopters flew in food and continued to transport victims, residents buried their dead, including children, wrapping them in white shrouds and praying over their bodies before laying them to rest.

Sunday's earthquake epicentre was about 27km (17 miles) from Jalalabad, according to the USGS, and just 8km below the Earth's surface.

Such relatively shallow quakes can cause more damage, especially as the majority of Afghans live in mud-brick homes vulnerable to collapse.

Many of those living in the quake-hit villages were among the more than 4mn Afghans forced back to the country from Iran and Pakistan in recent years, many coming through the Torkham border crossing in Nangarhar province.

Rahmatullah Khaksar, who heads the emergency ward at a hospital in Jalalabad, Nangarhar's provincial capital, said they had received 600 injured since Sunday night.



A military helicopter airlifts injured Afghans after earthquakes at Mazar Dara village in eastern Afghanistan. - AFP

"Most of the patients were trauma patients. They were hit on the head, back, abdomen and legs," he told AFP, adding they had cleared a ward for unidentified patients "so they will stay there until they find their families".

Nasrullah Khan's voice breaks as he describes how with his own hands he buried three children in one grave and two young men in another.

Nasrullah, an office worker from Kunar City, travelled six hours into Dewagul Valley in Kunar after the quake to help rescue efforts.

"The first man I met had lost 18 members of his family," he said. "The injured and the dead were lying on the ground with no aid. In some villages, only two or three people survived in each household. It was the first time in my life I saw so many dead bodies."

"Entire households were gone." In valleys lined with mud-brick homes, survivors carried bodies on woven stretchers. Nasrullah said he saw the bodies of children wrapped in patterned blankets and men digging graves with pickaxes.

Gul Bibi, an 80-year-old, was weeping, holding a toddler in her arms, next to a destroyed house in the mountain village of Mazar

Bomb blast leaves 14 dead at Quetta political rally

A bomb killed at least 14 people in the Pakistani city of Quetta yesterday when it went off in the parking area of a rally held to commemorate the anniversary of the death of a nationalist leader, government official Hamza Shafaat said.

Police were investigating the blast, which appeared to be a suicide bombing, police official Athar Rasheed said.

At least 18 people were wounded in the explosion, which took place in the parking lot of a stadium in Quetta where hundreds of members of the Balochistan National Party (BNP) had gathered, the officials said, speaking on condition of anonymity. - Reuters/AFP

12 die during attack on Pakistan base

Six security personnel and six militants were killed yesterday during an assault on the base of a paramilitary force in northwest Pakistan that began with a suicide bomber ramming the compound and led to a 12-hour gun battle, police said.

The suicide bomber rammed his explosive-laden car into the boundary wall of the base in the town of Bannu early yesterday, causing an explosion that allowed other attackers to enter the compound, said

Sajjad Khan, the regional police chief.

The attack also left 16 security personnel and three civilians wounded, he said, adding: "Our forces fought bravely for about 12 hours."

Bannu is located close to the lawless border region with neighbouring Afghanistan, which has long been home to Islamist militants.

No group has so far claimed responsibility. A police statement blamed the attack on Islamist militants, without naming any group. - Reuters



Qatari dignitaries and other guests at the event.

Visit Qatar partnership with Nita Mukesh Ambani Cultural Centre launched

Visit Qatar officially launched its partnership with the Nita Mukesh Ambani Cultural Centre (NMACC) in Mumbai at a gala event attended by a number of Qatari and Indian dignitaries who came together to mark the occasion in India's financial capital.

The event was attended by the Qatar Tourism chairman and chair of the Visit Qatar Board of directors, HE Saad bin Ali al-Kharji,

and Visit Qatar chief executive Abdulaziz Ali al-Mawlawi.

The evening featured the unveiling of Visit Qatar's year-long installation at the centre, an immersive LED experience showcasing four of the country's most iconic destinations.

Visitors can step into vivid scenes of the Inland Sea, Souq Waqif, Museum of Islamic Art, or Richard Serra's East-West/West-East in Zekreet.

Engaging all the senses with striking visuals, ambient fragrance, and surround sound audio, the installation evokes the feeling of being transported to Qatar, with bespoke postcards offered as lasting mementoes.

The partnership announcement and installation unveiling were conducted in the presence of a number of other distinguished guests, including Qatar's ambassador to India Mohammed bin Hassan al-Jaber,

and Qatar's consul in Mumbai, Ahmed bin Saad al-Sulaiti.

They were joined by Bollywood stars and acclaimed Qatari composer Dana Alfaridan.

The event, held under the theme *Confluence of Cultures*, celebrated the synergies between Qatar and India through curated artisan showcases, including traditional *sadu* weaving, Arabic calligraphy, and Indian crafts like brass *nakshi* and *pichwai* painting.



HE al-Kharji with Indian actor Anil Kapoor at the event.

Guests were treated to performances by the Qatar Philharmonic Orchestra, marking its debut performance in India, alongside renowned Indian classical maestro Rahul Sharma.

The event concluded with a fusion dining experience, further strengthening the cultural exchange and fostering closer tourism ties between the two nations.

The partnership between Visit Qatar and the Nita Mukesh Am-

bani Cultural Centre will serve as a long-term platform to deepen cultural exchange and position Qatar as a leading luxury destination for Indian travellers.

By bringing Qatari heritage, art, and hospitality to India's foremost cultural venue, the collaboration seeks to inspire travel, strengthen people-to-people connections, and create immersive experiences that highlight the shared values of both nations.

WCM-Q's new cohort of medical students receive white coats

The new intake of medical students at Weill Cornell Medicine - Qatar (WCM-Q) marked the beginning of their training by donning the white coat of the physician for the first time at a special ceremony.

This year there are 57 students enrolled on the first year of the medical curriculum.

Each of the new medical students received their white coat and their first stethoscope at the opening exercises ceremony, a symbolic event that marks the point when students begin the four-year medical curriculum that will eventually lead to them graduating as doctors.

Sara al-Mannai, who took part in the ceremony, having completed both WCM-Q's Foundation Programme and pre-medical curriculum, said: "Receiving our white coats is both surreal and deeply rewarding after years of hard work to reach this milestone."

"I feel well-prepared, thanks to the excellent teaching in both the Foundation Programme and the pre-med curriculum," she said. "My long-term goal is to pursue cardiothoracic surgery and I feel optimistic knowing that I'm learning in such a supportive community, with faculty and classmates who truly inspire me."

Of the 57 first-year students, 26 are



New pre-medical students with WCM-Q dean Dr Javaid Sheikh and other faculty at the ceremony.

male and 31 are female. Nineteen are Qatari nationals.

If successful in their studies, each student will be awarded the Cornell University MD degree.

"Pulling on the white coat of the phy-

sician for the first time is an important milestone in the career of any doctor, marking the point at which they take their first steps into a profession that demands technical excellence, compassion, and dedication," said WCM-Q dean

Dr Javaid Sheikh. "All of us at the WCM-Q have great confidence the members of this cohort will excel and go on to become the next generation of leaders in medical science and innovation, driving our profession forwards into a bright fu-

ture of enhanced patient care."

The ceremony is the culmination of the WCM-Q's orientation period when students are welcomed to their new programmes.

The event welcomed 57 students who are commencing the first year of WCM-Q's Six-Year Medical Programme, which integrates two years of pre-medical education and the four-year medical curriculum.

Students beginning the Six-Year Medical Programme were presented with the Ibn Sina pin, named in honour of one of the most important philosophers and physicians of the Islamic Golden Age.

The WCM-Q also welcomed 25 students who are commencing the Foundation Programme, a one-year course of study that provides a pathway to entry to the Six-Year Medical Programme.

The keynote address at the event was given by WCM-Q alumna Dr Noor al-Khori, now senior attending physician at Sidra Medicine.

"As you feel the fabric slip onto your shoulders today, feel its magic," she said. "Feel the weight of the trust that is placed in you. Feel the weight of history."

"But also, feel the excitement of the adventures to come," Dr al-Khori stressed. "Your white coat is a flag - a flag of humanity, of compassion, and of unwavering principle."



New medical students with WCM-Q dean Dr Javaid Sheikh and other faculty at the ceremony.

195 youths join Doha Debates' global ambassador programme



Qatar Foundation (QF)'s Doha Debates has welcomed a new cohort of 195 young leaders from across the globe into its ambassador programme.

Furthering Doha Debates' goal of empowering young people to bridge differences and build consensus through constructive debate, participants in the Doha Debates Ambassador Programme learn to engage in intercultural dialogue and generate solutions to the world's most timely and complex issues.

At the start of the 12-week programme, ambassadors join an online community of practice guided by facilitation and intercultural communication expert Dr Brandon Ferderer, systems-thinking specialist Jennifer Geist, and several international guest speakers.

Participants will build critical communication, systems-thinking, and con-

sensus-building skills to prepare them for the second half of the programme, where they work in small teams to produce a majlis-style debate that examines a global issue of concern to their generation.

While acquiring valuable intercultural communication tools and techniques, ambassadors form lifelong connections with their peers and often engage with Doha Debates long after the programme concludes.

Programme graduates have participated in live debates and town halls, podcasts and other special events.

A group of 20 alumni will mentor the incoming cohort.

Alumni have also created their own community projects showcasing the skills they acquired in the programme and reflecting its majlis-style approach.

Former ambassador Ahmed Berram-

dane hosted majlis-style workshops at the American Cultural Centre Algiers, while Murshidul Alam Bhuiyan launched the Human Heroes Project, a space for authentic story-sharing to bridge divides.

Meanwhile, Ayomide Emmanuel Akinwale, Rami Mroueh, Fils Jean Pierre Mutsinzi, Hafsa Rasheed, and Azra Shahab co-created a global affairs podcast promoting peaceful dialogue among youth.

This cohort represents 68 countries across six continents, including Iraq, Somalia, India, Nigeria, Kenya, Afghanistan, Qatar, the US, and the UK.

Many are current students or alumni of QF partner universities.

"We warmly welcome our seventh cohort into the Doha Debates Ambassador Programme," said Doha Debates managing director Amjad Atallah.