













GULF TIMES

0 668039 136499

published in QATAR since 1978

SUNDAY Vol. XXXXVI No. 13491

September 7, 2025
Rabia I 15, 1447 AH

www.gulf-times.com 2 Riyals

PM, British foreign secretary discuss Gaza developments

HE the Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman bin Jassim al-Thani received yesterday a phone call from UK Foreign Secretary Yvette Cooper. During the call, they discussed co-operation relations between the two countries and ways to support and strengthen them. HE Sheikh Mohammed congratulated Cooper on her appointment as Foreign Secretary, wishing her success in carrying out her duties. The call also discussed developments in the Gaza Strip and the occupied Palestinian territories, besides issues of common concern. HE the Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs stressed the need to intensify regional and international efforts to end the brutal war on the Gaza Strip, ensure the sustainable and unhindered flow of humanitarian aid to the Strip, and release prisoners and detainees. **(QNA)**

Honour for Qatar at Baghdad book fair

Qatar will be the guest of honour at the 26th edition of the Baghdad International Book Fair, which will take place from Sept 10 to 21. Qatar's participation in the fair underscores the country's commitment to supporting the Arab cultural movement and highlighting Qatari intellectual production in the fields of literature, poetry, thought, and the arts. It also reflects Qatar's prominent cultural standing and underscores the depth of fraternal ties between Qatar and Iraq. Qatar's cultural programme at the fair includes intellectual seminars, lectures, and poetry evenings, in addition to performances by the Qatari folklore troupe, which will perform Ardha and other folk arts, reflecting the spirit of authentic cultural heritage. **(QNA)** **Page 2**

Awqaf to launch cultural season

The Department of Islamic Research and Studies at the Ministry of Endowments (Awqaf) and Islamic Affairs will launch the first event of the second cultural season of the 'Knowledge Integration' seminar series on Tuesday. The first seminar will discuss the possible implications of the process of knowledge integration, within the framework of examining and reflecting on selected models from the long history of Islamic civilisation and the cultural, intellectual, and scientific achievements that have continued to shape the present and build the future. The seminar will be held at the Imam Muhammad bin Abdul Wahhab Mosque, after Isha prayer. **(QNA)** **Page 2**

GCC states make big progress in CCE Index

The Statistical Centre for the Gulf Co-operation Council (GCC-Stat) affirmed that the GCC member states have made notable progress in the Circular Carbon Economy (CCE) Index. In a statement, the centre noted that the council's overall average score surged to 41.5 in 2024, compared with 37.7 in 2023. The centre's data show that three GCC countries lead the index across the Middle East and North Africa. The CCE Index serves as a comprehensive assessment tool measuring the advancement of 125 countries worldwide toward achieving net-zero emissions through the CCE framework, which balances mitigation technologies with enabling tools. **(QNA)**

UN adopts Saudi-French draft resolution on Palestinian issue

QNA
New York

Saudi Arabia's Permanent Representative to the UN, ambassador Abdulaziz al-Wasil, presented an oral draft resolution during yesterday's session of the UN General Assembly on behalf of Saudi Arabia and France.

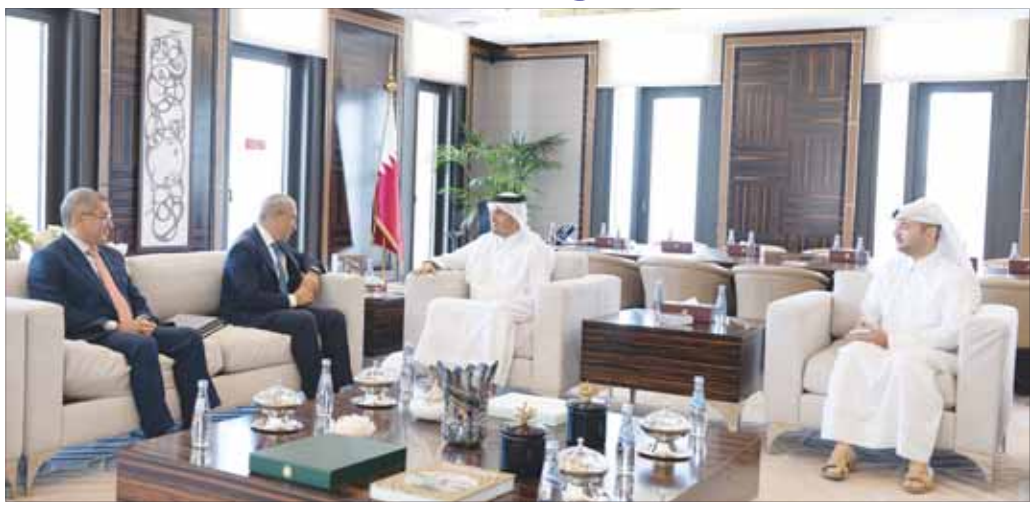
The resolution pertained to the resumption of the High-Level International Conference for the Peaceful Settlement of the Question of Palestine and the Implementation of the Two-State Solution. It was adopted by consensus without a vote.

Ambassador al-Wasil reaffirmed the shared commitment of Saudi Arabia and France to upholding international law and implementing relevant UN resolutions, highlighting that the key objectives of the conference include the protection of international legitimacy and taking practical steps toward achieving lasting peace in the Middle East region.

On July 28, 2025, the aforementioned conference kicked off at the headquarters of the UN General Assembly in New York, co-chaired by Saudi Arabia and France.

It primarily aimed to bring the occupation to an end and to support the establishment of a sovereign and independent Palestinian state.

PM meets Azerbaijan's minister



HE the Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman bin Jassim al-Thani met yesterday with the visiting Minister of Economy of Azerbaijan Mikayil Jabbarov. The meeting discussed co-operation relations between the two countries and ways to support and strengthen them, besides topics of common concern. **(QNA)**

Israel flattens high-rise as it tells Gaza City residents to flee

AFP
Gaza City

An Israeli strike flattened a high-rise in Gaza City yesterday — the second in as many days — after the military warned people to flee ahead of a planned offensive against the urban hub.

Israel has been warning for weeks of a new assault on the territory's largest city, without issuing a timeline.

It has stepped up air strikes and ground operations on the city's outskirts, sparking fears it could worsen already dire conditions.

Yesterday, Israeli aircraft dropped thousands of leaflets on western neighbourhoods calling on residents to evacuate, witnesses and an AFP journalist said.

Nafez Anis, who has been living in a tent with his family in Gaza City, said he had read the leaflet, but was not planning on leaving.

"Where should we go?" he told AFP. "We will wait, and when we see Israeli tanks approaching here, we will leave." Gaza civil defence agency spokesman Mahmud Bassal told AFP that 55 Palestinians had been killed by Israeli fire during the day, including 18 near an aid distribution centre in the north.

Yesterday, the military struck a Gaza City high-rise, saying Hamas was using it "to monitor" Israeli troops and adding that it had taken "measures to mitigate harm to civilians".

Witnesses identified the building as the Sussi residential tower and said it was destroyed.



People search for their belongings at the mound of rubble at the site of the collapsed Sussi Tower, which was destroyed earlier by Israeli bombardment, in Gaza City yesterday.

Hamas condemned the attack and denied using residential or civilian buildings for military purposes.

The Israeli military has said it will target structures being used by Hamas, particularly tall buildings.

It also issued an evacuation order for another high-rise yesterday, warning of an imminent strike and telling people to leave for the south.

A military spokesperson had earlier called on residents to leave for Al-Mawasi, on the Mediterranean coast to the south.

Israel first declared Al-Mawasi a safe zone early in the war, but has carried out repeated strikes on it since then, saying they targeted Hamas.

Gaza City residents said they believed it made little difference whether they stayed or fled.

"Some say we should evacuate, others say we should stay," said Abdel Nasser Mushtaha, 48.

"But everywhere in Gaza there are bombings and deaths" he added, pointing, in particular, to the strikes on Al-Mawasi.

"It no longer makes any difference to us," said his daughter Samia Mushtaha, 20. "Wherever we go, death pursues us, whether by bombing or hunger."

Israel has faced mounting domestic and international pressure to end the nearly two-year war.

Thousands demonstrated in Tel Aviv and Jerusalem yesterday evening to call for a ceasefire and hostage release deal.

In Tel Aviv, protesters unfurled a massive banner saying: "President Trump, save the hostages now!"

Hamas agreed last month to a proposal for a temporary ceasefire and staggered hostage releases, but Israel has demanded the group release all the hostages at once, disarm and relinquish control of Gaza, among other conditions.

The UN estimates nearly 1mn people remain in and around Gaza City, where it declared a famine last month. It has warned of a looming "disaster" if the assault proceeds.

Israel's offensive has killed at least 64,368 Palestinians, most of them civilians, according to figures from the health ministry in Hamas-run Gaza that the UN considers reliable. **Page 4**

Gaza death toll hits 64,368

The death toll of the ongoing Israeli aggression on the Gaza Strip since Oct 7, 2023, has risen to 64,368 martyrs and 162,367 injured. The Palestinian Ministry of Health in Gaza stated yesterday that 68 martyrs and 362 injured arrived at the sector's hospitals in the past 24 hours, noting that the number of martyrs and injuries since the occupation breached the ceasefire agreement on March 18 has reached 11,828 martyrs and 50,326 injured. It also noted that hospitals received in the past 24 hours 23 martyrs among aid victims, along with 143 injured, bringing the total number of martyrs who died seeking sustenance to 2,385 people, and the injured to 17,577. The ministry further reported that hospitals in the sector recorded six new deaths due to famine and malnutrition in the past 24 hours, raising the total number of victims of the systematic Israeli starvation of Gaza's residents to 385 deaths, including 135 children. The Israeli occupation continues its genocidal war against Gaza and its people, disregarding international calls to stop the killing machine and open the crossings to allow humanitarian aid, amid an unprecedented catastrophic humanitarian situation. **(QNA)**

Qatar skies to witness total lunar eclipse today evening

Qatar Calendar House (QCH) has announced that Qatar's skies will witness a total lunar eclipse this evening (Sunday, Sept 7 – 15 Rabi' al-Awwal 1447 AH) coinciding with the full moon of lunar month.

All phases of the eclipse will be visible across the country. The partial eclipse will begin at 7:27pm local time, followed by the start of the total eclipse at 8:31pm. The eclipse will reach its peak at 9:12pm, when Earth's shadow will cover more than the entire lunar disk (136.2%).

To mark the occasion, QCH, in collaboration with Museum of Islamic Art, will host a public viewing event at the museum's park, where visitors can observe the eclipse through advanced telescopes.

QCH highlighted that this is a rare and significant astronomical event, as Qatar will not witness another total lunar eclipse for more than three years — specifically until Dec 31, 2028. Events like these also demonstrate precision of astronomical calculations, especially those related to Hijri calendar.

The total phase of the eclipse will end at 9:53pm, while the partial phase will conclude at 10:56pm. Together, the two phases will last 3 hours and 29 minutes.

The statement explained that a lunar eclipse occurs when the sun, Earth, and moon align in a straight line, with the Earth positioned between the sun and the moon, which must be in its full moon phase.

Unlike solar eclipses, lunar eclipses can be safely observed with plain sight, and photography enthusiasts can also capture striking images using digital cameras.

QCH noted that lunar eclipses are visible from anywhere on Earth where it is nighttime during the event. The phenomenon begins when part of the moon enters Earth's shadow, then the entire lunar disk becomes immersed, before gradually emerging again. There are three types of lunar eclipses: total, partial, and penumbral. **(QNA)**

Awqaf urges worshippers to perform eclipse prayer

The Ministry of Endowments (Awqaf) and Islamic Affairs has called on worshippers to perform the eclipse prayer (Salat al-Khusuf) in mosques after Isha prayer, should the lunar eclipse occur this evening. The ministry explained that the prayer is a confirmed Sunnah, and its time extends from the beginning of the eclipse until it ends.

In a statement yesterday, the ministry noted that Qatar is expected to witness a total lunar eclipse today (15 Rabi' al-Awwal 1447 AH).

The ministry urged worshippers to perform the eclipse prayer, recalling the Prophet's (peace be upon him) practice of praying during solar and lunar eclipses, as he said: "The sun and the moon are two signs among the signs of Allah; they do not eclipse because of the death or life of anyone. So when you see them, invoke Allah and pray until it is over." **(QNA)**

QATAR

Transport minister meets Saudi counterpart



HE the Minister of Transport Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdullah bin Mohammed al-Thani met with Saudi Minister of Transport and Logistic Services, Engineer Saleh bin Nasser al-Jasser, on the sidelines of his visit to the exhibition accompanying the 2nd annual Sustainable Maritime Industry Conference (SMIC) in Jeddah. The two ministers discussed aspects of bilateral co-operation in transportation, and ways to enhance them in areas of expertise exchange, infrastructure development's best practices, and land, maritime, air, and railroad transportation networks integration. The meeting was attended by several senior officials from the Saudi Ministry of Transport and Logistic Services. **(QNA)**

Transport minister tours SMIC exhibition





HE the Minister of Transport Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdullah bin Mohammed al-Thani has toured the exhibition accompanying the 2nd annual Sustainable Maritime Industry Conference (SMIC) in Jeddah. He was escorted by Saudi Arabia's Minister of Transport and Logistic Services engineer Saleh bin Nasser al-Jasser. HE Sheikh Mohammed viewed some of the latest technologies in maritime industry and was briefed by exhibition officials on cutting-edge technological solutions for maritime transportation, and marine environment protection and sustainability. **(QNA)**

Headquarters of Qatar's Consulate General in Shanghai inaugurated



HE the Secretary-General of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Dr Ahmed bin Hassan al-Hammadi on Friday inaugurated the headquarters of the Consulate General of Qatar in Shanghai, China.
The opening ceremony was attended by Deputy Secretary-General of the Shanghai Municipal Government Liu Ping; Deputy Director-General of the Department of Consular Affairs of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of China Wu Demin; and Consul General of Qatar in Shanghai Rashid bin Mubarak al-Khater. The ceremony was also attended by a number of senior Chinese officials, as well as heads and members of consular missions accredited to Shanghai. **(QNA)**

Qatar to be guest of honour at Baghdad Book Fair



Qatar will be the guest of honour at the 26th edition of the Baghdad International Book Fair, which will take place from Sept 10-21. Qatar's participation in the fair underscores the country's commitment to supporting the Arab cultural movement and highlighting Qatari intellectual production in the fields of literature, poetry, thought, and the arts. It also reflects Qatar's prominent cultural standing and underscores the depth of fraternal ties between Qatar and Iraq.

Qatar's cultural programme at the fair includes intellectual seminars, lectures, and poetry evenings, in addition to performances by the Qatari folklore troupe, which will perform Arda and other folk arts, reflecting the spirit of authentic cultural heritage. The Qatari pavilion will feature demonstrations of traditional crafts such as goldsmithing and wooden shipbuilding. Visitors will be able to watch and interact with craftsmen at work. In a statement, Director of the Libraries Department at the Ministry of Culture Jassim Ahmed al-Buainain stated that Qatar's participation in the book fair as the guest of honour reflects the deep fraternal ties between the two countries and their peoples. It also underscores the importance of culture, which is the ideal bridge for communication and the promotion of human dialogue.

This participation, he said, reflects the Ministry of Culture's commitment to supporting the Arab cultural scene, enhancing co-operation with cultural institutions and publishing houses, highlighting the richness of Qatari intellectual production, and presenting a comprehensive image of Qatar that blends contemporary creativity with a rich cultural heritage.

He explained that the Qatari pavilion in the fair features a design inspired by traditional Qatari architecture, embodying national identity and expressing the connection between the past and the present in a style that combines authenticity and the spirit of innovation. He noted that the pavilion offers a comprehensive cultural experience that goes beyond book displays, allowing visitors to explore the diversity of Qatar's cultural landscape, from literature, thought, and the arts to living heritage and traditional crafts.

The Director of the Libraries Department added that the Qatari pavilion will also host a photo exhibition featuring shots of Qatar's modern landmarks, traditional architecture, and scenes of daily life, in addition to the beauty of Qatar's land and marine environment. **(QNA)**



Don't occupy parking spaces reserved for persons with disabilities: MoI



The Ministry of Interior (MoI) has urged the public to avoid the use of parking spaces for people with disabilities. "Occupying parking spaces reserved for persons with disabilities is a traffic offence and a bad habit and violates their rights," MoI said in an X post. The ministry said adhering to designated parking spaces and avoiding the use of parking spaces for people with disabilities is a civilised behaviour that reflects compliance with traffic laws and guidelines and preserves the rights of others.

Awqaf to launch first event of cultural season on Sept 9

QNA
Doha

The Department of Islamic Research and Studies at the Ministry of Endowments (Awqaf) and Islamic Affairs will launch the first event of the second cultural season of the 'Knowledge Integration' seminar series on Tuesday.

The first seminar will discuss the possible implications of the process of knowledge integration, within the framework of examining and reflecting on selected models from the long history of Islamic civilisation and the cultural, intellectual, and scientific achievements that have continued to shape the present and build the future. The seminar will be held at the Imam Muhammad bin Abdul Wahhab Mosque, after Isha prayer. Held in co-operation with the Ibn Khaldon Centre for Humanities and Social Sciences at Qatar University, the seminar will feature the participation of a select group of scholars, researchers, and academics.

Director of the Department of Research and Islamic Studies Sheikh Dr Ahmed bin Mohammed bin Ghanem al-Thani said that the seminar is a semi-annual, scientific, and intellectual cultural event held twice a year. It focuses on the causes, tools, and methods for achieving interaction and integration between various sciences, and it examines cultural issues and social problems from an Islamic perspective, he added. The Director of the Department of Research and Islamic Studies said that the seminar's primary goal is to promote a culture of cognitive integration, which tops the list of objectives the Department of Research aims to achieve through its seminars, lectures, and various publications.

As for the second seminar of this season, Sheikh Dr Ahmed explained that it will take place in February 2026 and explore possible ways to advance 'cultural interaction' as a foundation for cognitive integration.

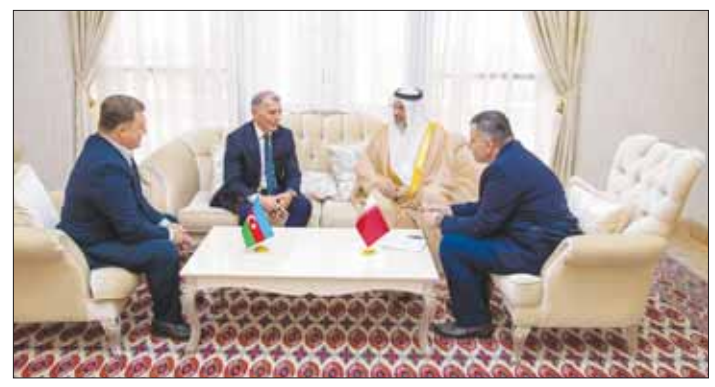
NHRC delegation holds meetings with rights officials in London

A delegation from the National Human Rights Committee (NHRC) met with a number of international human rights officials in London. The delegation met with Quinn McKew, the Executive Director of ARTICLE 19, a freedom of expression organization. They discussed co-operation in promoting freedom of expression and exchanging expertise in developing national legislation and policies, as well as co-operation on digital rights issues and the protection of human rights defenders. The delegation also met with May Romanos and Ella Knight, officials of the migrant labor working group at Amnesty International. They reviewed the NHRC's efforts to protect the rights of migrant workers, particularly awareness campaigns on heat stress, occupational health, and legal assistance. They also discussed prospects for co-operation in protecting journalists and human rights defenders and combating hate speech and discrimination. **(QNA)**

Qatar Red Crescent attends CIS RCRC meetings, signs pact







An official delegation from Qatar Red Crescent Society (QRCS) has participated as observers in the International Meeting of the Chiefs of Red Cross and Red Crescent (RCRC) National Societies in the Member States of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), held in Ashgabat, Turkmenistan, under the theme 'International Year of Peace and Trust – Humanity and Neutrality'.

QRCS's delegation comprised vice-president engineer Ibrahim Hashim al-Sada, assistant secretary-general for Communication and Resource Development Mohamed Ahmed al-Beshri, and International Relations head Dr Aiham Ismail al-Sukhni.

The two-day conference brought together leaders of the Red Crescent and Red Cross National Societies of Azerbaijan, Armenia, Turkmenistan, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Russia, along with representatives of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) and the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC).

The meetings discussed key humanitarian challenges facing the Central Asia and Mena regions, including the impact of climate change, natural disasters, and armed conflicts; migration; and compliance with international humanitarian law.

Participants also addressed how to develop principled humanitarian action, promotion of humanitarian diplomacy, and the role of National Societies as humanitarian auxiliaries to their governments. In a statement, QRCS's delegation said this participation was aimed at building regional and international co-operation and contributing to the joint efforts to deal with global humanitarian challenges, inspired by QRCS's mission of serving humanity and preserving human dignity without partiality or discrimination.

In the presence of Nasser Ali al-Kaabi, charge d'affaires at Qatar's embassy in Turkmenistan, al-Sada signed a bilateral memorandum of understanding (MoU) with Maral Achilova, president of the National Red Crescent Society of Turkmenistan, to enhance co-operation, exchange of expertise, capacity-building, and adoption of best practices when conducting shared projects in the future.

Both parties saw the MoU as a step to step up humanitarian partnership and integration within the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, in alignment with the IFRC's Strategy 2030, thus helping improve humanitarian response and provide quality services for the most vulnerable people in need.

On the sidelines of the conference, QRCS's delegation held co-ordination meetings with many officials from the participating fellow National Societies, including Dr Pavel Savchuk, president of the Russian Red Cross, Zafar Rakhmanov, president of the Red Crescent Society of Uzbekistan, Jeyhun Mirzayev, secretary-general of the Red Crescent Society of Azerbaijan, his deputy Shaban Shayev, and Nurali Odinaev and Dilorom Mirova, deputy secretaries-general of the Red Crescent Society of Tajikistan.

These meetings discussed areas of common co-operation and emphasised the importance of developing partnerships and exchanging expertise to enhance the efficiency of humanitarian response and expand the scope of joint work in the future, a statement added.

Taqat reaffirms support for humanitarian work

On the occasion of the International Day of Charity, observed annually on September 5, Taqat for Trading and Business Solutions reaffirmed its commitment to supporting humanitarian work in its various aspects through partnerships with leading regional and international humanitarian organisations, a statement said yesterday.

Through its three flagship programmes – Edama, Emdad, and Relief Center – Taqat plays an active role in strengthening charitable efforts by participating in specialised exhibitions and events, such as the DIHAD humanitarian exhibition, an international platform for exchanging expertise and enhancing co-operation among humanitarian institutions.

The general manager of Taqat for Trading and Business Solutions said: "At Taqat, we believe that supporting humanitarian work requires collective efforts and integrated roles. Therefore, we are keen to build strategic partnerships with major charitable and humanitarian organisations. Innovation and modern technology lie at the core of our vision to enhance the effectiveness of humanitarian initiatives and achieve tangible and sustainable impact."

He added that Taqat's mission is to make a meaningful contribution to supporting the most vulnerable groups while promoting a culture of giving and solidarity in both local and international communities.

As one of Taqat's flagship programmes, the Relief Centre embodies this mission on the International Day of Charity. The centre offers a comprehensive digital platform that reshapes the humanitarian response to be faster, more accurate, and more integrated — linking data to decisions, the field to analysis, and amplifying the voices of affected communities. It strives toward a smart humanitarian response for a better life, preserving dignity and celebrating the true value of giving, the statement added.

PHCC urges oral care for schoolchildren



A demonstration during an Asnani programme.

Primary Health Care Corporation (PHCC) has stressed that with the new academic year, family preparations should not be limited to books and school uniforms, but must also include attention to children's oral health.

Dr Najat Alyafei, manager of Oral Health Promotion and Prevention, PHCC noted that oral health has a direct impact on a child's comfort and academic performance, pointing out that even minor issues such as tooth decay or gum inflammation can lead to school absences and negatively affect learning outcomes.

She added that the 'Asnani' School Oral Health Programme serves as a national initiative to safeguard the oral health of children in government schools and has been designed to meet the needs of different age groups through two main components. The first is dedicated to kindergarten students, who, according to scheduled plans, are taken to health centres equipped with specialised dental care rooms. During these visits, children engage in interactive activities designed to raise awareness and teach proper oral care habits in an enjoyable and age-appropriate way. They then undergo dental check-ups in designated clinics, where fluoride is applied as a preventive measure against tooth decay.

The second component targets primary school students. Nine dental teams visit government schools according to approved schedules, delivering age-appropriate awareness lectures, conducting dental examinations, and applying fluoride treatments. Dr Alyafei emphasised that the implementation of these activities requires parental consent, obtained through forms distributed to students in their schools. She further explained that the role of the Asnani Programme is not limited to student check-ups. The dental teams also deliver the 'Oral Health Ambassadors' lecture to school teaching and administrative staff during their visits, aiming to spread awareness and promote healthy practices within the school community. Dr Alyafei noted with concern that programme teams encountered a significant number of students who had never used a toothbrush, underscoring the urgent need to strengthen awareness efforts from an early age.

She called on parents to ensure their children participate in the Asnani Programme by signing the consent forms.

Luxury hotels, hospitals offer discounts for QPC members and families

The Qatar Press Center (QPC) has signed contracts with seven 5-star hotels to offer special rates to QPC members and their families on rooms, restaurants, and other hotel services.

The participating hotels are: 21 High Street, The Torch, Mina & Residence, OQ, Bentley, Al Azizia Boutique, and The Muse.

The discounts range from 20-30% for rooms or suites, meals at all of these hotels' restaurants, and fitness club services.

This comes as part of the QPC's commitment to the well-being and comfort of journalists, media professionals, and their families. More offers and discounts on other services will be announced in the coming period.

The QPC has signed similar agreements with the following hotels: Marsa Malaz Kempinski, Dusit Doha, Dusit Suites, and Warwick Doha, which include significant discounts on accommodation services, restaurants, and fitness clubs.

The QPC has also signed a number of agreements to enable members and their families to benefit from special discounts ranging from 20-30% at a number of private hospitals: Al Emadi Hospital, Doha Clinic, and Naseem Medical Center. These discounts vary depending on the specialities and medical services provided, and cover a wide range of fields, including periodic checkups, medical consultations, physiotherapy, specialised surgeries, and dental services.



Culture ministry organises symposium on Arabic calligraphy, human values

The Ministry of Culture organised a symposium on Arabic calligraphy and the promotion of human and aesthetic values, as part of the events accompanying the finals of the International Arabic Calligraphy Competition "Akhlaq Award".

The competition is one of the leading cultural initiatives that celebrate the aesthetic and spiritual dimensions of Arabic calligraphy, while promoting its presence in both local and international cultural spheres. A series of lectures, cultural programmes are held with the participation of distinguished calligraphers, artists, and academics.

The symposium highlighted the importance of the competition and its role in highlighting the art and aesthetics of Arabic calligraphy and its connection to values and ideals.

During the symposium, Qatari calligrapher Ibrahim Abel emphasised that the International Arabic Calligraphy Competition contributes to promoting ethical values and motivates calligraphers from around the world to participate and showcase their creativity. He highlighted need to achieve sustainability in the interest and development of Arabic calligraphy.

Egyptian calligrapher Abdelsalam al-Bassiouni said that this great art has formed a bridge between science, religion, art, and beauty, adding that this symposium confirms that Arabic calligraphy can serve as a tool for spreading awareness and instilling noble values in young people. Dr Ali Afifi, a researcher in history and Arabic calligraphy, said that from a historical perspective, Arabic calligraphy is more than just a form of writing; it serves as a cultural record that reflects the journey of an entire nation. Calligraphy has witnessed stages of social, cultural, and religious change, he added. **(QNA)**

QPC series spotlights sacrifices of journalists in conflict

Qatar Press Center (QPC) continues its "Journalists at the centre of crises" series, which highlights the pivotal role of journalism in covering wars, disasters, and humanitarian crises around the world.

The series documents the exceptional efforts of journalists and media professionals to convey the truth to the world, despite limited resources and information, and to give voice to victims at a time when truth is often the first casualty of conflict.

In this episode, we explore the stories of journalists who sacrificed their lives to bring the truth to the world, disregarding threats and the deliberate targeting of journalists in war and conflict zones. They transformed from witnesses to truth into martyrs and role models for future generations of journalists and media professionals, exemplifying courage, bravery, and unwavering commitment to the principles of journalism and media.

The killing of journalists means more than just the loss of individuals; it represents a loss to human memory and the people's right to knowledge. This makes protecting journalism a priority in an era of relentless wars that spare neither the young nor the old, nor any innocent person.

Ali Hassan al-Jaber was a prominent Qatari journalist and cameraman who served as the director of photography at Al Jazeera. On March 12, 2011, while covering the Libyan revolution in Benghazi, his vehicle was ambushed by unknown gunmen who opened fire on him as he returned from a field assignment. He was killed, and his colleague was wounded. The last images captured by al-Jaber's camera were of the tomb of Libyan martyr Omar al-Mukhtar in the town of Suluq, southwest of Benghazi. His death was the first death of an Al Jazeera correspondent during the Libyan conflict, sparking a wave of international condemnation and repeated calls for the protection of journalists in war zones.

Brent Anthony Reno, the American journalist and documentary filmmaker, was not merely a reporter of events; he was part of them, moving with his camera to the front lines without ever compromising his moral and humanitarian principles. On March 13, 2022, while covering



the refugee crisis caused by the Russian invasion of Ukraine, Reno was shot and killed by a Russian sniper while crossing an area near Irpin, northwest of Kyiv, a location that was supposed to be a safe passage for civilians.

Pierre Zakrzewski, known as "Zak", was a veteran French-Irish photojournalist based in London. He was best known for his work with Fox News, covering armed conflicts in Iraq, Afghanistan, and Syria. On March 14, 2022, while covering the Russian invasion of Ukraine, he and his colleague Benjamin Hall were in a vehicle near Kyiv when it came under Russian artillery fire. Zakrzewski was killed instantly, while Hall was seriously injured and taken to hospital. Following his death, the joint investigation by France, Ireland, and Ukraine led to the case being referred to the International Criminal Court.

ARAB WORLD

Egypt FM criticises voluntary Palestinian displacement narrative

Reuters
Cairo



Children search for salvage at the mound of rubble at the site of the collapsed Sussi Tower, which was destroyed earlier by Israeli bombardment, in Gaza City, yesterday.

Egyptian Foreign Minister Badr Abdelatty, whose country is a key mediator in efforts to end the Gaza war, said yesterday that describing the displacement of Palestinians as voluntary was "nonsense".

Israel earlier called on Gaza City residents to leave for the south, as its forces advance deeper into the enclave's largest urban area.

"If there is a manmade famine (in Gaza), it is to push residents out of their land. It is nonsense to say that this is voluntary displacement," Abdelatty said in a joint press conference with the commissioner-general of the UN agency for Palestinian refugees, Philippe Lazzarini.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has supported the idea that Palestinians in Gaza should be allowed to voluntarily leave and suggested that other countries should accept them.



A man walks by the mound of rubble at the site of the collapsed Sussi Tower, which was destroyed earlier by Israeli bombardment, in Gaza City, yesterday.

Netanyahu's office said on Friday that he had spoken about the basic human right of every individual to choose where they live, particularly during times of war.

The Egyptian minister also said he spoke with US special envoy Steve Witkoff on Friday and discussed intensifying efforts to implement the latest ceasefire proposal. He blamed Israel for what he described as its intransigence over the delay in reaching a ceasefire.

Hamas agreed in August to a proposal for a 60-day ceasefire with Israel that included the return of half the hostages held in Gaza and Israel's release of some Palestinian prisoners.

An Egyptian official source said the proposal accepted by Hamas included a suspension of Israeli military operations for 60 days and outlined a framework for a comprehensive deal to end the nearly two-year-old conflict.

Netanyahu said days later that Israel would immediately resume negotiations for the release of all hostages held in Gaza and an end to the war, but on terms acceptable to Israel.

'Tears and pain' in village after deadly Sudan landslides

AFP
Cairo



This handout image made available by the Sudan Liberation Movement/Army, shows people surrounding mud-covered debris, following a mudslide that devastated the village of Tarasin in Sudan's Jebel Marra area.

In the remote mountain village of Tarasin in Sudan's western Darfur, three successive landslides struck without warning last week.

"The people lost everything," Francesco Lanino, operations director at Save the Children, said via Zoom from Port Sudan after a team from the charity arrived in the devastated village in Sudan's Jebel Marra region.

Torrential rains had saturated the mountains above and when the hillside finally gave way, it collapsed in seconds — burying homes, livestock and entire families under a tide of mud.

"When our team arrived in the village, of course it was hard for them to imagine that under the mud there was an entire village and there were hundreds of bodies", said Lanino.

The latest figures from local authorities and Save the Children put the death toll at 373 confirmed bodies recovered, many of them children.

But the true figure is believed to be far higher, with more than 1,000 people feared dead.

Only 150 survivors, including 40 children, have been found from Tarasin and surrounding villages so far, according to Save the Children.

DIGGING WITH THEIR HANDS

"There's a lot of pain and tears," said Lanino.

"They've lost many of their relatives, many children. And of course they don't know... how to rescue them or try to recover the bodies." With no tools or machinery available, survivors were forced to dig through the mud with their bare hands, desperately searching for lost loved ones, Lanino said.

"The survivors were left with no home, no food, no livestock, nothing," he said.

"They don't know where to go because all the areas are somehow impacted by the heavy rains. They don't really know which is a safe place to go." Over the course of three days, Tarasin and neighbouring communities were struck by three separate landslides.

The first, at 5pm (1500 GMT) on Sunday, swept through Tarasin in seconds, engulfing the entire village at the base of the mountain.

Two more followed on Monday and Tuesday, with one hitting a nearby valley and the other crashing down on residents who were trying to recover bodies from the initial disaster.

"There are a lot of people that are still scared that a new landslide might come.

"They heard some cracks coming from the mountains." As well as experiencing heavy rain, Jebel Marra is one of Sudan's most geologically active regions, sitting atop a major tectonic fault line.

The General Authority for Geological Research has warned that continued landslides could lead to "catastrophic" humanitarian and environmental consequences.

The mudslides also wiped out around 5,000 livestock — including cows, goats and camels — leaving families without food or income.

Save the Children has deployed 11 staff, including doctors, nurses, midwives and social workers to the village.

After travelling for ten gruelling hours on donkeyback from the remote town of Golo across rugged terrain with no roads and under heavy rain, the team arrived on Thursday.

The NGO has set up an emergency health post, along with psychosocial support groups for women and children.

But the challenges remain immense. With flooding contaminating water sources, cholera is now a major threat.

"There was already some cholera cases in the area. So we are also very worried there could be a new and huge outbreak of cholera among the survivors but also in all the areas nearby." Urgent requests from survivors included food, blankets and shelter.

The landslides struck during Sudan's peak flooding season, which runs from July to October, and amid a war that has triggered one of the worst humanitarian crises in recent history, according to the United Nations.

More than two years of fighting between rival generals has killed tens of thousands, displaced millions and left some areas suffering from famine and cholera.

The Jebel Marra region, which has no mobile phone network or road access, is controlled by the Sudan Liberation Movement/Army, led by Abdulwahid al-Nur — a rebel group that has largely remained uninvolved in the fighting.

US sanctions on Palestinian rights bodies slammed

QNA
Gaza

The Palestinian Non-Governmental Organisations network (PNGOs) has condemned the US administration's decision to impose sanctions on three Palestinian human rights organisations, considering it "a blatant attempt to silence free voices exposing the ongoing crimes of the Israeli occupation".

The network explained in a press release yesterday that the unprecedented US decision includes Al Haq (Ramallah), the Palestinian Centre for Human Rights (PCHR), and the Al Mezan Centre for Human Rights (Gaza). It noted that these human rights organisations have carried out their professional work documenting the crimes of genocide against the Palestinian people and have fought for justice and accountability through the International Criminal Court (ICC) and the International Court of Justice (ICJ). It added that these steps reflect a consistent approach by successive US administrations, which seeks to promote impunity and protect the Israeli occupation from international accountability, in flagrant violation of international law and international human rights law.

The network called on the international community, the UN, and all human rights organisations and free people around the world to assume their legal and moral responsibilities regarding what it described as a "vicious attack" on the freedom of human rights and humanitarian work, and to pressure the US administration to rescind these decisions.

It also called for urgent measures to stop war crimes and genocide in the Gaza Strip, stressing that the continued targeting of Palestinian human rights institutions requires support and empowerment for them as essential partners in defending the rights of the Palestinian people.

Sudan gold mine collapse kills six, traps others: officials

Six people have been killed and up to 20 others are feared trapped after a gold mine collapsed in northern Sudan, authorities said yesterday, AFP reported from Khartoum.
The accident occurred on Friday in the Um Aud area, west of the city of Berber in River Nile state, said Hassan Ibrahim Karar, executive director of the Berber locality. "Efforts are ongoing to rescue those trapped beneath the rubble," Karar said, without specifying the cause of the collapse of the artisanal mine. Since fighting erupted in April 2023 between the army and the paramilitary Rapid Support Forces, both sides have largely financed their war efforts through the country's gold industry.
Official and NGO sources say nearly all of Sudan's gold trade is funnelled through a Gulf state, which has been widely accused of supplying arms to the RSF — a charge it denies.

QAFCO
شركة قطر للأسمدة الكيماوية
QATAR FERTILISER COMPANY

QATAR FERTILISER COMPANY

INVITATION TO TENDER

QAFCO ANNOUNCES THE FOLLOWING TENDER

TENDER NO.	DESCRIPTION OF WORKS	TENDER FEE (QAR)	TENDER BOND (QAR)	SUBMISSION DATES INTEREST	TENDER CLOSING DATE
REQUEST FOR INFORMATION	LONG TERM TURNARUND CONTRACT FOR QAFCO	N/A	N/A	07.09.2025 08.09.2025 09.09.2025	N/A

GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS

- The interested Bidders shall respond and submitted a request for relevant documents to **jhafek@qafco.com.qa** on the dates indicated above.
- After the request of above documents to the above email, RFI Document will be provided through an electronic platform separately.
- For any queries related to the RFI you may contact at 'jhafek@qafco.com.qa' or on 44227740
- Technical & Commercial details and Submission Procedures will be specified in the Tender Documents.
- The Company will not consider any request after the submission dated is expired which is 9 September 2025

مؤسسة قطر
Qatar Foundation

INVITATION TO TENDER

Tender Reference	Description	Tender Fee (QAR)	Tender Bond Value (QAR)	Bid Closing Date
QF-RFQ-971	Warehouse Archiving Managed Service Provider on Call-off Basis for five (5) Years	1,000.00	100,000.00	October 5, 2025, 2:00 PM
PUE-RFQ-204	Creative Development and Stage Production Service for a Musical Show	500.00	N/a	October 2, 2025, 2:00 PM
QF-RFQ-978	Supply, Installation & Testing of HUB Devices and TV Panels	500.00	N/a	September 24, 2025, 2:00 PM
CO-RFQ-376	Supply, Installation, Testing and Commissioning of SBR System for Cooling Towers	1,000.00	100,000.00	October 2, 2025, 2:00 PM

Qatar Foundation (QF) Procurement Directorate is inviting companies to participate in the above listed public tenders. To receive the tender documents, please follow the below steps:

1) **Supplier Registration** It is mandatory to be registered as a supplier with QF in order to participate in the above tender(s). Only QF registered suppliers will be allowed to pay the tender fees online. Therefore, please visit QF website at https://www.qf.org.qa/supplier-registration to complete the Supplier Registration process.

   Tender Fee: Interested bidders can Sign in by visiting this link https://suppliers.qf.org.qa/abstract and pay the respective non-refundable and non-transferrable tender fee online.

   All Tender Fees are to be paid using credit cards only.

   Tender Fee Payment Dates: Payment of Tender Fee online will be from **7th to 14th September 2025.**

2) All bidders, who are registered and have paid the required tender fees online to QF, will then be granted access to download the Tender Document.

3) Technical and commercial bids need to be submitted and attached online in QF Supplier Portal as per instructions provided in the "Supplier Portal" work instruction.

   - The commercial bid must be valid for **180 days** from Bid Closing Date.
   - The commercial bid must be accompanied by a bank guarantee (tender bond) issued by a local bank in Qatar and should be valid for **180 days** from the bid closing date (where applicable as per the Tender documents).
   - The successful tenderer will be required to submit a performance bond as prescribed in each of the above tender documents.
   - Qatar Foundation special qualifications, terms and conditions shall apply as stipulated in the tender document.

Note: All work instructions for Supplier registration and Supplier portal can be found in below link:
https://www.qf.org.qa/supplier-registration

Heritage procession in Zimbabwe



Men dressed as Nguni warriors sing and dance outside the city hall during a procession to commemorate King Mzilikazi, the founder of the Ndebele kingdom, in Bulawayo, Zimbabwe, yesterday.

Militants kill 55 in attack on resettled Nigerian IDPs

AFP
Maiduguri

Militants killed at least 55 people in northeast Nigeria while storming a town home to residents who had been returned from a closed camp for internally displaced persons (IDPs), an NGO worker and civilian militia leader said yesterday.

While militant violence has waned since the peak of the Boko Haram insurgency, from 2013-2015, militants including rival Islamic State West African Province (ISWAP) continue to launch attacks across rural areas in the northeast.

The Friday night assault came during an attack on the town of Darul Jamal, which hosts a military base on the Nigeria-Cameroon border.

A security source told AFP that five soldiers were among the dead, while a commander of a government-aligned militia, Babagana Ibrahim, put the number at six.

The latest attack raises questions about Nigeria's push in recent years to close down IDP camps and return displaced people to the countryside.

Residents said the attack began around 8:30pm (1930 GMT), when dozens of fighters arrived on motorbikes, firing assault rifles and torching homes.

"They came shouting, shooting everyone in sight," said Malam Bukar, who fled into the countryside with his wife and three children. "When we returned at dawn, bodies were everywhere." Ibrahim said 55 people were killed, while a worker from an international NGO, who asked not to be named, told AFP that 64 people were killed.

An army spokesman did not return a request for comment.

Many of the victims were families recently relocated from the Government Secondary School displacement camp in Bama, which authorities shut down earlier this year.

"The government told us we would be safe here," said Hajja Fati, a mother of five who lost her brother in the attack. "Now we are burying our people again." The area is known to be under the control of a Boko Haram commander, Ali Ngulde. A security source told AFP he led the attack.

Borno Governor Babagana Zulum was travelling to the scene of the attack.

Boko Haram has been waging a bloody insurgency to establish a caliphate in northeast Nigeria since 2009, leaving around 40,000 people dead and forcing more than two mn people to flee their homes.

Rival ISWAP split from the group in 2016.

According to a tally by Good Governance Africa, a nonprofit, the first six months of 2025 saw a resurgence in militant activity.

There were some 300 militant attacks that killed some 500 civilians, mostly by ISWAP, which has gained ground in recent years over the more fractured remnants of Boko Haram.

ISWAP overran at least 17 Nigerian military bases in that time period, aided by an uptick in its use of drones, nighttime attacks and foreign fighters, according to GGA.

The resurgence in militant violence comes as neighbouring Niger has pulled back from a key multinational task force and the Nigerian military has become stretched by a separate banditry crisis in the northwest.

A biting economic situation under President Bola Tinubu has reinforced the grievances that many armed groups feed off in rural areas, some analysts argue.

Somalia-Jubaland power struggle benefits militants

AFP
Nairobi

Recent clashes in Somalia's semi-autonomous Jubaland region are alarming experts, exposing cracks in the country's federal system and creating an opening for extremist militant group Al Shebaab to gain ground.

Following years of conflict, Somalia is a loose federation of five semi-autonomous member states — Puntland, Jubaland, Galmudug, Hirshabelle and South West — that maintain often fractious relations with the central government in the capital Mogadishu.

But ahead of elections next year, Somalia has sought to assert control over its member states, which security analysts said has created gaps for Al Shebaab infiltration.

Last week, two Somali soldiers were killed in clashes between pro-government forces and Jubaland loyalists, days after both sides called for mobilisation in the area. Five Somali soldiers had already died in July.

The Horn of Africa nation has battled Al Shebaab since the mid-2000s, with its fortunes rising and falling over the years. This year, the Al Qaeda-linked group has won back major towns.

"Once the attention shifted from the fight against Al Shebaab to politics we started seeing losses and setbacks in the battlefield," said Samira Gaid, a security analyst in the Horn of Africa. According to Gaid, the group is using the power struggle as a "recruitment drive".

"It really doesn't favour anyone when these sort of incidents happen," she said.

The deadly clashes have underscored the weakness of Somalia's federal government, analysts said. "There wasn't enough political agreement at the time of the formation of the Somali federal government in 2012 and that's why you have this constant struggle and tension within the federal model," said International Crisis Group's senior analyst Omar Mahmood.

Jubaland severed relations with Mogadishu last year after its leader, Ahmed Madobe, a former warlord in power since 2012, was elected for a third term in polls that the central government labelled "unlawful". An arrest warrant was issued against Madobe, who is based in the de facto state capital of Kismayo.

"The reason why this is spiking up now is because we are heading into the election," Mahmood said. Somali President Hassan Sheikh Mohamud has been pushing for the country to hold its first-ever one-man, one-vote election next year – a move opposed by Madobe. Jubaland's Gedo region, where last week's clashes took place, appears to be critical for the central government.

Both Madobe and Mohamud "want to exert control over Gedo, which they also can then use to exert control over the election process," Mahmood said.

Last month, Mohamud appointed Madobe's former security minister, Abdirashid Hassan Abdinur, known locally as Janan, as the head of security operations in Jubaland.

Janan, seen as an influential power broker in Gedo, has previously been accused by the United Nations of serious human-rights violations.

After last week's clashes, he announced the takeover of a key border town in Gedo, Beled Hawo, saying a new administration will be formed in the region.

Hippo capsizes boat in Ivory Coast, 11 missing

AFP
Abidjan

Eleven people including children were missing after a hippopotamus capsized their boat in southwestern Ivory Coast, a government official said yesterday.

The West African nation's minister for national cohesion and solidarity, Myss Belmonde Dogo, said on her Facebook page that the missing included women, little girls and a baby.

She said the hippopotamus tipped the narrow, canoe-like boat over on Friday, as it was motoring along the Sassandra River near the town of Buyo.

Three people survived the incident and were rescued, and "a search is ongoing in the hope of finding the missing victims", she said. A 2022 study by Ivory Coast university researchers found that hippopotamuses were the species most mentioned in interactions with humans that caused deaths or injury in the country.

There are an estimated 500 hippos in Ivory Coast, distributed among the various rivers in country's south, mainly the Sassandra and the Bandama water courses.

Boat accidents are fairly common in the country, as handcrafted longboats are used to navigate between waterside communities, and are frequently overloaded with passengers and goods. In April, a dozen children and adolescents drowned when the boat they were on capsized in a lagoon near the principal city of Abidjan.

Tunisian brutalist landmark faces wrecking ball, sparking outcry

AFP
Tunis

Tunisia's brutalist landmark the Hotel du Lac — a 1970s postcard icon said to have inspired a desert-roving vehicle in Star Wars — is being demolished, sparking calls from architects, historians and activists to save it.

Built by Italian architect Raffaele Contigiani in central Tunis, the concrete-and-steel inverted pyramid opened in 1973 during a push to boost post-independence Tunisia's tourism industry.

Its daring silhouette has since enraptured brutalism and modernist architecture admirers from across the globe.

But after getting caught up in inheritance disputes and mismanagement, the hotel shut down in 2000, and its 10 floors and 416 rooms have grown decrepit since.

Tunisian historian Adnen El Ghali sees the Hotel du Lac as one of the world's "top 10 brutalism jewels".

Its demolition would mean "a great loss for world heritage", he said.

Lafico, a Libyan state investment fund that has owned the hotel since 2010, has not made any public announcements about its future. But earlier this month, its head, Hadi Alfitory, said the fund had "obtained all the necessary permits for demolition".

When construction fences went up around the building in recent weeks, outrage spread.

A petition on Change.org calling to "save the urban landscape" of Tunis and preserve the "brutalist icon" collected more than 6,000 signatures within days, with a protest set to take place in Tunis in September.

Alfitory said the decision to tear down the structure came after "various expert assessments" determined that "the building is a ruin and must be demolished".

Its replacement, a 20-storey luxury hotel and mall, will keep to its "concept and shape", Alfitory said, with the Libyan fund pledging $150mn in investment and 3,000 jobs.

Critics say the plan ignores both the building's engineering achievements and its cultural resonance.

"Investing and modernising does not mean demolishing and erasing collective memory and architectural heritage," said Amel Meddeb, a member of parliament and architect who first raised alarms about the demolition permit this year.



The Hotel du Lac, designed by Italian architect Raffaele Contigiani, is located in the centre of Tunis.

Like many, she said the proposed plan was "totally vague", and therefore difficult to officially challenge.

Safa Cherif, head of Tunisian conservation group Edifices et Memoires, said there was "no official sign explaining the nature of the work underway, nor any indication about the new project".

The Hotel du Lac has survived other close calls.Between 2010 and 2020, demolition plans were shelved, and in 2022, a wave of media campaigns led by civil society convinced the Culture Ministry to grant it temporary protection.That safeguard expired in April 2023, and the ministry declined to renew it despite an expert rebuttal maintaining that the building was indeed restorable. Parliament member Meddeb said the refusal was "a 180-degree turn", insisting the hotel was a cultural monument worthy of saving. To Gabriele Neri, a professor of architectural history at the Polytechnic University of Turin, its loss would be profound.

"These buildings are 50 years old and will soon be 60 or 100," he said. "They are witnesses of important eras." The Hotel du Lac is "the main symbol in Tunisia" of the independence wave that swept across African nations, when leaders like the country's first president Habib Bourguiba "sought to project a new, modern and international image", he added.It is an "engineering feat" with its narrow base supporting a wider top using Austrian-imported steel, said Neri, who urged authorities to preserve "as much as possible".

Across the world, he pointed out, nations are learning to embrace late 20th-century architecture rather than discard it.

"In Uzbekistan, where I just returned from, the authorities have undertaken efforts to seek Unesco recognition for Soviet monuments of the 1970s and 80s," he said. Brutalism — a style characterised by its use of exposed concrete — had "a very powerful era in many places", Gabriele added. It's now "attracting a growing amount of attention, almost becoming fetishistic", he added, citing books, magazines and movies like 2024's *The Brutalist*.

Amid this wave, Hotel du Lac as it stands could "become an attraction for high-level cultural tourism".

US arrests two suspected Cameroon separatist leaders

AFP
Washington

Two Americans originally from Cameroon have been arrested and charged with organising and bankrolling a violent separatist campaign in their central African homeland's troubled English-speaking regions, the US Justice Department said.

Benedict Nwana Kuah, 51, and Pascal Kikishy Wongbi, 52, were taken into custody on Friday in the northern US state of Minnesota. Both were charged with conspiracy to kill, kidnap, maim, and injure persons abroad; conspiracy to provide material support or resources; and conspiracy to launder monetary instruments. Kuah was additionally charged with conspiracy to take hostages and conspiracy to use weapons of mass destruction outside the United States. The two men, who are naturalised US citizens, face a maximum of life in prison if convicted. They remain in custody pending detention hearings next week.

Federal prosecutors say Kuah and Wongbi hold leadership positions in the so-called Ambazonia Defence Forces (ADF), which is seeking independence for an unrecognised state they call "Ambazonia." A deadly conflict between armed separatists and government forces has blighted Cameroon's mainly anglophone North West and South West regions since 2016.

WORLD

Venezuela's Maduro urges dialogue after Trump threat

AFP
Washington

Venezuelan leader Nicolas Maduro has called for dialogue with Washington, hours after President Donald Trump threatened to shoot down Venezuelan military jets if they pose a danger to US forces.

Tensions between the two countries soared in recent days after the Pentagon accused Venezuela of buzzing its ships in the Caribbean following a deadly US strike on an alleged Venezuelan drug boat.

"None of the differences we have and have had can lead to a military conflict," Maduro said in a message broadcast on all of Venezuela's radio and television networks. "Venezuela has always been willing to talk, to engage in dialogue, but we demand respect."

As tensions mount, Washington is deploying F-35 warplanes to Puerto Rico as part of Trump's war on drug cartels.

The 10 aircraft will join US warships already present in the southern Caribbean as Trump steps up pressure on Maduro, whom the US accuses of leading a drug cartel.

Maduro denied that in his evening speech.

"Those intelligence reports they give him (Trump) are not true," he said. "Venezuela today is a country free from coca leaf production, cocaine, and is a country that fights against drug trafficking."

Asked earlier on Friday what steps he would take if there were further incidents of Venezuelan jets buzzing US ships, Trump said: "If they do put us in a dangerous position, they'll be shot down."

US forces on Tuesday blew up an alleged drug boat in the Caribbean that Trump said belonged to Tren de Aragua, a Venezuelan criminal organisation he tied to Maduro, killing 11 people.

The high-tech F-35 jets are being deployed to an airfield in Puerto Rico, a US Caribbean island territory of more than 3mn people, US sources familiar with the matter told AFP on condition of anonymity.

Maduro – a leftist firebrand whose last election in 2024 was seen by Washington as illegitimate – has denounced the US buildup as "the greatest threat our continent has seen in the last 100 years".

Declaring his country prepared for "armed struggle in defence of the national territory", he has mobilised Venezuela's military, which numbers around 340,000, and reservists, which he claims exceed 8mn.

From his side, White House Deputy Chief of Staff Stephen Miller described Maduro as an "indicted drug trafficker" and said Venezuela is being run by a "drug cartel, a narcotrafficking organisation".

Tuesday's deadly attack on what Washington said was a drug-carrying boat was a major escalation, as well as an unusual use of the US military for what has historically been a law enforcement issue.

There are currently eight US Navy vessels involved in counter-narcotics efforts in Latin America: three amphibious assault ships, two destroyers, a cruiser and a littoral combat ship in the Caribbean, and one destroyer in the eastern Pacific, a US defense official said this week.

The Department of Defence – which Trump has rebranded as the "Department of War" – said two "Maduro regime" aircraft flew near a US vessel on Thursday.

"This highly provocative move was designed to interfere with our counter narcoterror operations," it said on X. It did not give further details.

Venezuela has 15 F-16 fighter jets purchased from the US in the 1980s, plus a number of Russian fighters and helicopters.

During a trip to Latin America this week, Secretary of State Marco Rubio defended the new aggressive approach towards what Washington calls "narcoterrorist" groups.

"What will stop them is when you blow them up, when you get rid of them," Rubio said on Wednesday in Mexico.

Colombia 'committed' to drug fight, minister says

Colombian Defence Minister Pedro Sanchez has insisted that his country is "absolutely committed" to combatting drug trafficking, as the United States mulls whether to blacklist the country for failing to curb cocaine exports.

US President Donald Trump's administration is to decide by September 15 whether to decertify Colombia as an ally in the battle against drugs.

At risk is nearly half a billion dollars in US funding to combat cartels and left-wing guerrillas funded by cocaine trafficking.

The decision looms in the midst of a major US military buildup in the Caribbean, part of Trump's war on cartels, which saw US forces blow up a suspected Venezuelan drug boat with 11 people on board.

Sanchez told AFP that the US certification was "a symbol of cooperation, of alliance, of trust" between Washington and Bogota.

During a tour of a coca eradication programme on Colombia's border with Ecuador on Friday, he said US military assistance was crucial to allow Colombia to "act more forcefully" against traffickers.

Decertification, he said, would mean "illegal players win and nations lose".

Since coming to power in 2022, Colombia's leftist President Gustavo Petro has championed a paradigm shift in the US-led war on drugs, which it considers a failure, to tackling the social problems that fuel drug trafficking.

Since 2022, coca cultivation has increased by about 70%, according to Colombian government and UN estimates.

Sanchez assured that the government had "given absolutely everything" to the anti-drug fight.

"There is absolute commitment here," he assured.

US decertification would be a major blow to Colombia, where the military and police are reeling from a string of deadly attacks by guerrilla groups.

On August 21, 12 police officers were killed when breakaway members of the defunct Farc rebel group shot down a police helicopter during a coca eradication operation in the country's northwest.

On the same day, a truck bomb was detonated on a busy street near a military aviation school in the city of Cali, killing six people.

Sanchez said the uptick in violence was a result of the government's clampdown on drug trafficking, which he likened to a "cancer".

"When you fight cancer and apply chemotherapy (...) there is a response," he argued.

Many Colombian officials however fear the US decision could go against the country, following a blazing row between Trump and Petro in January over migrant deportations.

Petro sent Colombian planes to repatriate migrants after Trump threatened sanctions on the South American country. – ***AFP***

Trump amps up crackdown rhetoric with 'war' threat on Chicago

AFP
Washington

President Donald Trump threatened yesterday to unleash his newly rebranded "Department of War" on Chicago, further heightening tensions over his push to deploy troops into Democratic-led US cities.

The move seeks to replicate an operation in the US capital Washington, where he has deployed National Guard troops and surged federal agents to conduct arrests and deportations, sparking backlash from local residents.

"Chicago about to find out why it's called the Department of WAR," Trump posted yesterday on his Truth Social account.

The post featured an apparent artificial intelligence (AI)-generated image of Trump and the quote: "I love the smell of deportations in the morning" – both references to the 1979 film *Apocalypse Now*.

On Friday, Trump signed an order changing the name of the Department of Defence to the Department of War, saying that it sends "a message of victory" to the world.

The Democratic governor of Illinois, where Chicago is located, voiced outrage at Trump's post.

"The President of the United States is threatening to go to war with an American city. This is not a joke. This is not normal," Governor JB Pritzker wrote in a post on X. "Illinois won't be intimidated by a wannabe dictator."

In addition to Chicago, he has threatened to replicate the surges in Democratic-led Baltimore and New Orleans.

Thousands protest troop deployment in Washington

Reuters
Washington

Several thousand protesters marched in Washington, DC, yesterday to demand that US President Donald Trump end the deployment of National Guard troops patrolling the capital city's streets.

With Trump vowing crackdowns in other Democratic-led cities as well, he appeared to threaten Chicago with migrant deportations in a social media post with an image that parodied the 1979 Vietnam war movie *Apocalypse Now*.

Protesters at the "We Are All DC" march, including undocumented immigrants and supporters of Palestinian statehood, chanted slogans denouncing Trump and carried posters, some of which read, "Trump must go now", "Free DC", and "Resist Tyranny".

"I'm here to protest the occupation of DC," said Alex Laufer. "We're opposing the authoritarian regime, and we need to get the federal police and the National Guard off our streets."

Claiming that crime was blighting the city, Trump deployed the troops last month to "re-establish law, order, and public safety".

Trump also placed the capital district's Metropolitan Police Department under direct federal control and sent federal law enforcement personnel, including members of the Immigration and Customs Enforcement, to police the city's streets, moves critics have decried as federal overreach.

Justice Department data showed violent crime in 2024 hit a 30-year low in Washington, a self-governing federal district under the jurisdiction of the US Congress.



Demonstrators walk toward the White House during the 'We Are All DC' march to protest against the deployment of National Guard troops in Washington, DC. – ***Reuters***

The National Guard serves as a militia that answers to the governors of the 50 states except when called into federal service.

The DC National Guard reports directly to the president.

Trump said on Tuesday that he would also deploy National Guard troops to fight crime in Chicago, an extraordinary effort to militarise the country's third-largest city that was likely to trigger a legal battle with local officials.

Illinois Governor JB Pritzker said after Trump spoke that he had learned from reporters that the administration has "gathered Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) agents and military vehicles, and that there are more ICE agents that are on the way".

"What they're trying to do in DC is what they're trying to do with other dictatorships," said Casey, who declined to give his last name. "They're testing DC, and if people tolerate it enough, they're gonna do it to more and more areas. So we have to stop it while we still can."

More than 2,000 troops, including from six Republican-led states, are patrolling the city.

It is unclear when their mission will end, though the Army this week extended orders for the DC National Guard through November 30.

Washington, DC, Attorney-General Brian Schwalb filed a lawsuit on Thursday seeking to block the troop deployment, arguing that it was unconstitutional and violated multiple federal laws.

However, some residents have welcomed the National Guard and called for the troops to be deployed in the less-affluent parts of the city where crime is rampant.

The National Guard has been mostly visible in downtown and tourist areas.

Washington, DC, Mayor Muriel Bowser has praised Trump's surge of federal law enforcement personnel in the city, but has said that she hopes that the National Guard's mission will end soon.

Bowser said there had been a sharp decline in crime, including carjackings, since the surge.

The mayor signed an order this week requiring the city to co-ordinate with federal law enforcement.

Trump was playing golf at his course outside Washington and was not at the White House when protesters marched past yesterday.

Exam administrator College Board scraps tool used for identifying disadvantaged students

The College Board, the non-profit administrator of the SAT college admissions examination, has said it is discontinuing a tool aimed at helping to identify promising college applicants from disadvantaged backgrounds and neighbourhoods.

President Donald Trump's administration has been pressuring universities and colleges to eliminate diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) policies and has threatened to cut their federal funding if they don't comply.

Civil rights advocates say that DEI helps to address historic and generational inequality.

"As federal and state policy continues to evolve around how institutions use demographic and geographic information in admissions, we are making a change to ensure our work continues to effectively serve students and institutions," the nonprofit company said in a statement.

It has discontinued Landscape, a tool used by college admissions officers to review applicant data related to neighbourhoods and schools, among other parameters.

A Brookings Institute study in 2022 found that Landscape marginally increased admissions offers for students from disadvantaged areas but it did not cause a rise in the actual enrolment of such students. – ***Reuters***

ANNOUNCEMENT

I, JACOB XAVIER STEPHEN AMALAN

holder of

India Passport No. X4098917
QID No. 30935601472

hereby change my name

from

JACOB XAVIER STEPHEN AMALAN

to

JACOB XAVIER STEPHEN

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

ANNOUNCEMENT

I, MOHAMMED IMRAN UDDIN TESHAD

holder of

Bangladesh Passport No. B00783386
QID No. 29505013309

hereby change my name

from

MOHAMMED IMRAN UDDIN TESHAD

to

MD IMRAN UDDIN

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

AI giant Anthropic to pay $1.5bn to settle lawsuit over pirated books

AFP
San Francisco

Anthropic will pay at least $1.5bn to settle a US class action lawsuit over allegedly using pirated books to train its artificial intelligence (AI) models, according to court documents filed on Friday.

"This landmark settlement far surpasses any other known copyright recovery," said plaintiffs' attorney Justin Nelson. "It is the first of its kind in the AI era."

The settlement stems from a class-action lawsuit filed by authors Andrea Bartz, Charles Graeber, and Kirk Wallace Johnson, who accused Anthropic of illegally copying their books to train Claude, the company's AI chatbot that rivals ChatGPT.

In a partial victory for Anthropic, US District Court Judge William Alsup ruled in June that the company's training of its Claude AI models with books – whether bought or pirated – so transformed the works that it constituted "fair use" under the law.

"The technology at issue was among the most transformative many of us will see in our lifetimes," Alsup wrote in his decision, comparing AI training to how humans learn by reading books.

However, Alsup rejected Anthropic's bid for blanket protection, ruling that the company's practice of downloading millions of pirated books to build a permanent digital library was not justified by fair use protections.

"We remain committed to developing safe AI systems that help people and organisations extend their capabilities, advance scientific discovery, and solve complex problems," Anthropic deputy general counsel Aparna Sridhar said in response to an AFP inquiry.

San Francisco-based Anthropic announced this week that it raised $13bn in a funding round valuing the AI startup at $183bn.

Anthropic competes with generative AI offerings from Google, OpenAI, Meta, and Microsoft in a race that is expected to attract hundreds of billions of dollars in investment over the next few years.

According to the legal filing, the settlement covers approximately 500,000 books, translating to roughly $3,000 per work – four times the minimum statutory damages under US copyright law.

Under the agreement, Anthropic will destroy the original pirated files and any copies made, though the company retains rights to books it legally purchased and scanned.

"This settlement sends a strong message to the AI industry that there are serious consequences when they pirate authors' works to train their AI, robbing those least able to afford it," said Mary Rasenberger, chief executive of the Authors Guild, in a statement supporting the deal.

The settlement, which requires judicial approval, comes as AI companies face growing legal pressure over their training practices.

A US judge in June handed Meta a victory over authors who accused the tech giant of violating copyright law by training Llama AI on their creations without permission.

District Court Judge Vince Chhabria in San Francisco ruled that Meta's use of the works to train its AI model was "transformative" enough to constitute "fair use" under copyright law.

Meanwhile, Apple on Friday was targeted with a lawsuit by a pair of US authors accusing the iPhone maker of using pirated books to train generative AI built into its line-up of devices.

The tech titan's suite of capabilities called "Apple Intelligence" is part of a move to show it is not being left behind in the AI race.

"To train the generative-AI models that are part of Apple Intelligence, Apple first amassed an enormous library of data," read the suit. "Part of Apple's data library includes copyrighted works – including books created by plaintiffs – that were copied without author consent, credit, or compensation."

Apple "scraped" works from sources including "shadow libraries" stocked with pirated books, the suit contends.

Apple did not immediately reply to a request for comment.

The suit filed against Apple by Grady Hendrix, author of *My Best Friend's Exorcism*, and Jennifer Roberson of Arizona, whose books include *Sword-Bound*, seeks class action status.

US director-led jury ignores Gaza film for top Venice prize

The Voice of Hind Rajab had reduced audience to tears, resulting in no less than 23 minutes of standing ovation

A gentle study of dysfunctional families by veteran American director Jim Jarmusch clinched top prize at the Venice Film Festival yesterday, while a harrowing docu-drama about the Gaza war took second.
Jarmusch's *Father Mother Sister Brother* starring Cate Blanchett, Adam Driver and Tom Waits, drew mostly positive reviews for its humourous portrayal of awkwardness and guilt.
The *Broken Flowers* director, who wrote the script for three family get-togethers in upstate New York, Dublin and Paris, had called it "a kind of anti-action film".
"Thank you for appreciating our quiet film," he said during his acceptance speech.
In a move that might disappoint campaigners against the Gaza war, the Venice jury under American director Alexander Payne did not reward *The Voice of Hind Rajab* with the Golden Lion.
Instead, the film about a five-year-old Palestinian girl killed by Israeli troops last year, which reduced many festival viewers to tears, was given the grand jury second prize.
Director Kaouther Ben Hania produced a dramatised re-telling of Hind Rajab Hamada's ordeal after she was trapped in a car that came under fire while she and her relatives were fleeing Gaza City.
It was the most talked about movie on the Venice Lido and tipped by many as the likely winner after a 23-minute standing ovation at its premiere on Wednesday.
Hind Rajab's story "is not hers alone", Ben Hania said as she accepted her award.
"It is tragically the story of an entire people enduring genocide, inflicted by a criminal Israeli regime that acts with impunity," she added.
Brad Pitt, Joaquin Phoenix as well as Oscar-winning directors Jonathan Glazer (*The Zone of Interest*) and Mexico's Alfonso Cuaron (*Roma*) joined the film as executive producers after editing had been completed.
Jarmusch signalled his opposition

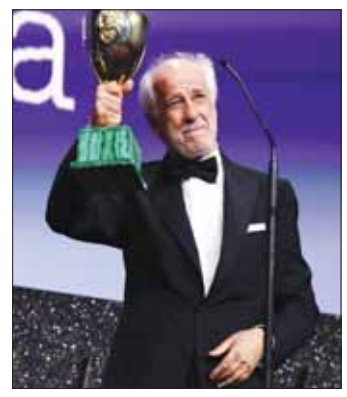


BEST FILM: Jim Jarmusch with the Golden Lion for Best Film for *Father Mother Sister Brother*. (**Reuters**)

to Israel's continued siege and bombardment of Gaza by wearing a badge saying "Enough" on the red carpet for the Venice awards ceremony.

BEST ACTORS

Elsewhere yesterday, China's Xin Zhilei won the best actress award for her role in *The Sun Rises on Us All* directed by Cai Shangjun.
The 39-year-old actress plays a woman trying to make amends with her former lover, who served time in prison for a crime she had



BEST ACTOR: Toni Servillo

committed. Italy's Toni Servillo won the best actor award after wowing audiences in Paolo Sorrentino's *La Grazia*, playing a principled politician facing a moral dilemma.
The veteran film and stage actor portrayed an Italian president at the end of his career wrestling with whether or not to sign a bill to legalise euthanasia.
Big-budget productions such as Netflix's *Frankenstein* by Guillermo del Toro and *Jay Kelly* by Noah Baumbach as well as Yorgos Lanthimos's *Bugonia* with Emma Stone went home empty-handed.



BEST ACTRESS: Xin Zhilei

In the secondary *Orizzonti* (*Horizons*) section of the festival, Mexican truck driver drama *En el Camino* by David Pablos scooped top prize.
Father Mother Sister Brother is the first Jarmusch film to compete at Venice. The American had previously opted to showcase his productions at rival festival Cannes. Film bible *Variety* said his film had his "trademark wry humour but also new notes of mellow, generous wisdom".
Screen called it a "tender family triptych". Critics were broadly positive about the line-up of films in Venice this year. The festival is an important launch platform for big-budget international productions and arthouse films.
Several previous winners of the prestigious Golden Lion have gone on to Oscar glory, such as *Nomadland* and *Joker*.
The Smashing Machine by American director Benny Safdie, a touching film about late 1990s mixed martial-arts (MMA) pioneer Mark Kerr, picked up the third-place directing prize yesterday.
The Hollywood Reporter called the film starring Dwayne "The Rock" Johnson a "compellingly gritty and offbeat biopic", while Johnson was even tipped by some for a best actor award.
Sotto le Nuvole (*Below the Clouds*), a sumptuous documentary about Naples by acclaimed Italian documentary maker Gianfranco Rosi, won a special jury prize.
The Gaza conflict has been a major talking point throughout this year's festival and many prize winners mentioned the war while on stage last night.
An open letter calling on festival organisers to denounce the Israeli government over its offensive in Gaza has been signed by around 2,000 cinema insiders, according to the organisers.

Greek PM in tax breaks amid crisis of living costs

Reuters
Athens

Greek Prime Minister Kyriakos Mitsotakis yesterday announced generous income tax breaks to boost households with children, part of a tax reform worth €1.6bn ($1.87bn).

The tax deductions, announced during his yearly speech on economic policy, come as his government seeks to halt a slide in popularity caused by a protracted cost of living crisis and corruption claims.

Strong economic growth, a higher-than-expected budget surplus and more comprehensive tax collection will help finance the package, which will come into force in 2026, Mitsotakis said.

"We are all well aware that Greeks are struggling to make ends meet. Therefore our non-negotiable priority is to prop up their income," he said. After a 2009-2018 debt crisis marked by years of economic pain, Greece's economy, driven by tourism, has revived and is approaching its pre-crisis size.

But Greece remains Europe's most indebted nation and disposable incomes still trail the EU average due to rising energy, food and housing prices that hurt purchasing power, despite a cumulative 35% minimum wage increase.

The tax reform includes lower taxation by two percentage points for all brackets and a zero tax rate for low-income families with four children amid tumbling birth



Greek Prime Minister Kyriakos Mitsotakis delivers an annual economic policy speech, at the International Fair of Thessaloniki, in Thessaloniki,. (**Reuters**)

rates and rising housing costs.

Mitsotakis also announced increases in pensions, while a real estate tax for remote areas will be scrapped to encourage young people to leave big cities and move to the countryside.

Mitsotakis' centre-right New Democracy party has seen its ratings drop to around 22-25% in opinion polls since June from the 41% of votes it won in 2019 when it came to power on pledges to redistribute the fruits of economic growth more evenly.

Thousands of people joined separate protests organised by trade unions in the city of Thessaloniki, where Mitsotakis was giving his speech, demanding higher salaries and decent living standards.

Pakistan Defence Day



Air Force cadets march at the mausoleum of Pakistan's founding father Quaid-i-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah in Karachi yesterday during celebrations to mark the country's Defence Day. (**AFP**)

Hundreds queue in silence to pay tribute to Armani

Hundreds of people formed a silent queue yesterday in the heart of Milan's fashion district to pay their respects to Giorgio Armani, Italy's most famous designer, who died this week at the age of 91. The passing of Armani has sparked an outpouring of grief with tributes flowing in from Hollywood celebrities and ordinary people alike. Over a career spanning five decades, he built a business empire spanning from haute couture to home furnishing, with his name becoming synonymous with sober elegance.
"Everything he did in his life he did it out of passion," said Pier Carlo Bertoglio, who travelled from nearby Lodi to the Armani headquarters, where the body will be lying in state over the weekend before a private funeral today.
"Everyone here today should testify to the love they have received from him." John Elkann, the scion of Italy's prominent Agnelli family, and his wife Lavinia, were among the first visitors to reach the Armani "theatre" — the vast exhibition space inside the Armani headquarters where catwalk shows are held



A man holding a rose looks on while people queue outside the Armani/Teatro to pay tribute to designer Giorgio Armani in Milan yesterday. (**Reuters**)

and where the wooden coffin topped with an arrangement of white flowers has been laid.
Elkann, who heads the Agnelli family's investment vehicle Exor, had previously discussed a potential combination with Armani to create an Italian luxury goods conglomerate, including Exor-owned sports car maker Ferrari. The talks led nowhere.
Armani, who had no children, has put in place measures to ensure continuity and independence for his business, which he ran with trusted family members and a network of long-time colleagues.
Early visitors also included Milan Mayor Giuseppe Sala. Milan, the city, where Armani relocated with his family after World War Two, will hold a day of public mourning today.
"Milan is full of Armani 'signs', it would be impossible to forget him," Sala said. "His biggest legacy to the city I reckon is his profound belief in work as a means of self-realisation."
People waited patiently under the trees that line the cul-de-sac where the Armani offices, designed by Japanese architect Tadao Ando, sit across from the Armani/Silos, a museum opened in 2015 to mark 40 years of his career and where the Armani Prive haute couture collections of the past 20 years are currently on display.
"When I grew up in China, Armani's name is equal to Italian," said Jonah Liu, who stood in the crowd, sporting an Armani t-shirt and holding a small bunch of white daisies.

US 'yet to approve any help after Afghanistan quake'

Reuters
Washington

Nearly a week after an earthquake killed more than 2,200 people in Afghanistan and left tens of thousands homeless, the United States has not taken the first step to authorise emergency aid, and it was unclear if it plans to help at all, two former senior US officials and a source familiar with the situation told Reuters.

The lack of response by Washington to one of Afghanistan's deadliest quakes in years underscores how President Donald Trump has forfeited decades of US leadership of global disaster relief with his deep foreign aid cuts and closure of the main US foreign assistance agency, said the source and the former officials.

The US Agency for International Development was officially shuttered on Tuesday.

The State Department on Monday extended its "heartfelt condolences" to Afghanistan in an X post.

As of Friday, however, the State Department had not approved a declaration of humanitarian need, the first step in authorising US emergency relief, said the former officials, both of whom worked at USAID, and the third source, speaking on condition of anonymity for fear of reprisal.

Such a declaration is usually issued within 24 hours of a major disaster.

The sources said State Department officials had considered recommendations for US disaster aid for Afghanistan. One former senior official said the White House also has considered the issue, but decided against reversing a policy of ending aid to Afghanistan. When asked if the US would provide any emergency aid to Afghanistan following the magnitude 6 quake on Sunday, which was followed by powerful aftershocks on Thursday and Friday, a State Department spokesperson



A child holds a water bottle as he and his family take refuge, following a deadly earthquake in Bambakot village in Dera Noor district in Nangarhar province, yesterday. (**Reuters**)

said: "We have nothing further to announce at this time."

The United States was, until this year, the largest aid donor to Afghanistan, where it fought a 20-year war that ended with a chaotic US withdrawal and the Taliban's seizure of Kabul in 2021. But in April, the Trump administration ended virtually all aid totaling $562mn — to Afghanistan, citing a US watchdog report that humanitarian groups receiving US funds had paid $10.9mn in taxes, fees, and duties to the Taliban.

Asked whether the US would provide emergency relief for earthquake survivors, a White House official said, "President Trump has been consistent in ensuring aid does not land in the hands of the Taliban regime, which continues to wrongfully detain US citizens."

United Nations aid chief Tom Fletcher said the Afghan earthquake was "the latest crisis to expose the cost of shrinking resources on vital humanitarian work."

"Massive funding cuts have already brought essential health and nutrition services for millions to a halt; grounded aircraft, which are often the only lifeline to remote communities; and forced aid agencies to reduce their footprint," he said in a statement on Thursday.

The Trump administration also has yet to respond to a request by the International Rescue Committee humanitarian organisation to send $105,000 worth of US-funded medical supplies following the first earthquake.

The materials include stethoscopes, first aid supplies, stretchers, and other essentials, said Kelly Razzouk, vice president of policy and advocacy for the IRC.

"The stocks are stuck in storage," said Razzouk, who served on former US President Joe Biden's National Security Council. "In recent memory, I can't remember a time when the US did not respond to a crisis like this."

The IRC needs Washington's permission to send the equipment to Afghanistan because it had been funded by an unrelated US grant that the Trump administration had since canceled.

"Beyond the loss of life, we have also seen basic infrastructure and livelihoods destroyed," Stephen Rodriguez, the representative in Afghanistan for the UN Development Programme, told reporters on Friday.

He said donations of money, goods, and services have come from Britain, South Korea, Australia, India, Pakistan, Iran, Turkiye, and other countries.

"Far more is needed."ww

ASIA

S Korean govt vows support to Koreans arrested in US immigration raid

Reuters
Seoul

South Korean President Lee Jae Myung ordered all-out efforts yesterday to swiftly respond to the arrests of hundreds of the nation's citizens in a US immigration raid on a Hyundai Motor car battery factory.

Foreign Minister Cho Hyun said the government has set up a team to respond to Thursday's arrest of over 300 Koreans at the facility in the southern state of Georgia and that he may go to Washington to meet with officials if needed.

"I am deeply concerned. I feel heavy responsibility for the arrests of our citizens," Cho told an emergency government meeting. The incident could exacerbate tensions between the Trump administration and Seoul, a key Asian ally and investor. They have been at odds over the details of a trade deal that includes $350bn of South Korean investment in the United States.

A video released by US Immigration and Customs Enforcement showed Asian workers shackled at the wrists, waist, and ankles getting on a bus after the raid, which involved a helicopter and armoured vehicles.

The arrest of some 475 workers, including over 300 Koreans, at the plant near Savannah, part of President Donald Trump's escalating crackdown on immigrants, was the largest single-site enforcement operation in the US Department of Homeland Security's history.

In the video, hundreds of workers were standing up in front of a building, with some wearing yellow vests with names such as "Hyundai" and "LG CNS". Two of the workers hid in a pond before being arrested.

"We welcome all companies who want to invest in the US, and if they need to bring workers in for building or other projects, that's fine - but they need to do it the legal way," Special Agent in Charge of Homeland Security Investigations in Georgia and Alabama Steven N Schrank, said in a statement on Saturday. "This operation sends a clear message that those who exploit the system and undermine our workforce will be held accountable."

Hyundai said it would investigate its suppliers and their subcontractors to ensure they meet regulations.

LG Energy Solution, which is working with Hyundai to build the factory, said it had asked employees to return from US business trips while suspending travel to the United States except for customer meetings.

LG Energy Solution said 47 of its employees and about 250 workers for contractors at the joint venture factory were detained.

Thai PM-elect names veterans to cabinet

Reuters
Bangkok

- **Anutin's cabinet aims to stabilise Thailand's economy**
- **Sihasak returns as foreign minister amid Cambodia truce**
- **Anutin promises constitutional referendum and election within four months**

Anutin Charnvirakul , a shrewd dealmaker and mainstay of Thai politics throughout years of turmoil, was elected prime minister on Friday, capping off days of drama and a scramble for power during which he outmanoeuvred the most successful political party in Thailand's history.

He said diplomat Sihasak Phuangketkeow, economist Ekniti Nitithanprapas and energy giant PTT executive Auttapol Rerkpiboon were "top executives in the organisations they will be responsible for".

Ekniti is a finance ministry official who was once seen as a candidate for central bank governor while Auttapol helmed the country's largest company, the state-owned energy firm, PTT Group.

Thailand's foreign service will see former permanent secretary Sihasak return as minister as a fragile truce with neighbouring Cambodia holds after a border clash flared into a five-day conflict that left at least 43 dead in July.

The appointments, which become official after receiving royal approval, come at a crucial time for Southeast Asia's second-largest economy, where growth has been lagging regional peers amid months of political instability. Anutin's rout of rival contender Chaikasem Nitisiri on Friday was a humiliation for the ruling Pheu Thai party, the populist juggernaut of influential billionaire Thaksin Shinawatra, who left Thailand late on Thursday for Dubai, where he spent the bulk of his 15 years of self-imposed exile.

The political crisis was triggered in June by Anutin's withdrawal from Pheu Thai's alliance, followed by last week's dismissal by a Thai court of Prime Minister Paetongtarn Shinawatra, Thaksin's daughter and protege. Anutin, a conservative with a pull across party lines, won power after forging a pact with the progressive opposition People's Party, the largest force in parliament, obtaining its support with promises to hold a referendum on amending the constitution and call an election within four months.

He urged unity late on Friday, saying all sides had to work together to "move our country forward in the speed that could compensate the opportunities that were lost" and that the government would "strictly enforce the law".

"There will be no helping hands to anyone, it will not be used to abuse anyone, and there will be no seeking of revenge on anyone."



Anutin Charnvirakul gestures as he attend a voting session for a new prime minister at the parliament, following the Constitutional Court's removal of Prime Minister Paetongtarn Shinawatra from office for an ethics violation, in Bangkok, Thailand.

Indonesia 'festival bonanza'



Indonesians throw fake money during a festival held on the 15th day of the seventh lunar month and observed in Chinese communities with offerings of food, incense, and paper money in Medan, North Sumatra, yesterday.

China criticises presence of Australia and Canada warships in Taiwan Strait

AFP
Beijing

China said yesterday that its military monitored the passage of Australian and Canadian warships through the Taiwan Strait, criticising their presence in the sensitive waterway as "causing trouble".

Beijing views Taiwan as part of its territory and claims jurisdiction over the body of water that separates the self-ruled island from the Chinese mainland.

"On September 6, the Canadian frigate 'Quebec' and the Australian destroyer 'Brisbane' transited the Taiwan Strait, causing trouble and provoking," said Senior Colonel Shi Yi, spokesperson for the Eastern Theatre Command of the People's Liberation Army (PLA).

Beijing has ramped up deployment of fighter jets and naval vessels around Taiwan in recent years to press its sovereignty claim, which Taipei rejects

The PLA "organised naval and air forces to monitor and supervise their entire transits, effectively responding and handling the situation", Shi said in a statement.

"The actions of Canada and Australia send the wrong signals and increase security risks," he added.

"(Chinese) troops remain on high alert at all times, resolutely safeguarding national sovereignty and security and regional peace and stability."

China has not ruled out the use of force to take control of democratic Taiwan. Beijing has ramped up deployment of fighter jets and naval vessels around Taiwan in recent years to press its sovereignty claim, which Taipei rejects.

The United States frequently sends ships through the Taiwan Strait, and several of its Western allies have increased their presence with regular - though less common - transits.

In June, China criticised the United Kingdom for sending a navy patrol vessel through the waterway, saying it "undermined peace and stability".

Japanese prince comes of age as succession crisis looms

AFP
Tokyo



Japan's Emperor Naruhito and Empress Masako arrive for the private banquet for Prince Hisahito's coming-of-age ceremony in Tokyo yesterday.



Japanese prince Hisahito (centre) attending his coming-of-age ceremony, Kakan-no-Gi, at the Imperial Palace in Tokyo.

Japan heralded yesterday the coming-of-age of Prince Hisahito with an elaborate ceremony at the Imperial Palace, where a succession crisis is brewing. The nephew of Emperor Naruhito and second in line to become emperor after his father, the 19-year-old received a black silk and lacquer crown at the ceremony, which marks the beginning of his royal adult life.

"Thank you very much for bestowing the crown today at the coming-of-age ceremony," said Hisahito, clad in the traditional yellow costume for minors, bowing to Emperor Naruhito and Empress Masako, who smiled at him.

"I will fulfil my duties, being aware of my responsibilities as an adult member of the imperial family," he told his parents at the ceremony in Tokyo, attended by a score of royal family members and relatives. Hisahito was then seen boarding a carriage to attend other ceremonial events, after changing into a dark coloured costume, traditionally worn by adult royals.

Although the emperor has a daughter - Princess Aiko - the 23-year-old has been sidelined by the royal family's male-only succession rules. Even though tradition dictates only a man can carry on the imperial line - which goes back 2,600 years according to legend - opinion polls have shown high public support for a woman taking the throne. "It makes no difference to me whether a woman becomes the emperor or a man does," said Tokyo bartender Yuta Hinago. The 33-year-old felt there could be "room for more flexibility" in the succession rules.

"Gender doesn't matter," part-time shop clerk Minori Ichinose, 28, told AFP, adding that she supports the idea of a female emperor. Japan has debated the royal succession for decades, with a key government panel in 2005 recommending that it pass to the oldest child regardless of their sex.

That appeared to pave the way for the emperor's daughter to rise to the Chrysanthemum Throne, but Hisahito's birth the following year silenced the debate.

Politicians have been slow to act, "kicking the can down the road," and delaying a solution with youthful Hisahito in view, said Kenneth Ruoff, director of the Center for Japanese Studies at Portland State University. Traditionalists have asserted that the "unbroken imperial line" of male succession is the foundation of Japan, and major changes would divide the nation.

Under the post-war constitution, the royal family holds no political power.

With royal daughters forced to leave the family after marriage, one modernising proposal would see them continue their public duties after their nuptials. Conservatives, meanwhile, are pushing for the royal household to bring distant relatives back to the fold. But it is unclear if those men would be willing to give up their careers and freedom to continue the lineage.

Hisahito said this year he has "not yet thought deeply" about his own marriage prospects, which could be challenging. Historically, women who wed royals have faced intense pressure to produce sons and some family members are regular subjects of online and media gossip.

Empress Masako, a former high-flying diplomat, struggled for years with a stress-related illness after joining the household, which some have put down to the pressure to have a boy. Emperess Emerita Michiko, Naruhito's mother, also suffered stress-induced illnesses. Hisahito's sister, Mako, married her university boyfriend Kei Komuro.

She has faced intense tabloid reporting over claims that Kei's family had run into financial difficulties, leading the former princess to develop complex post-traumatic stress disorder. The couple left for the United States, where they recently had a baby. Despite broad public support for changing the succession rules, away from the pageantry, people are focused on other issues, such as rising inflation, royal historian Hideya Kawanishi told AFP.

"If people who are generally supportive (of women emperors) become a bit louder, then politicians can become more serious," said Kawanishi, an associate professor at Nagoya University.

"But when ceremonies end, society, including the media, calms down and moves on."



Japan's Prince Hisahito speaks to media.

Reform UK rally



Reform UK Leader Nigel Farage (right) delivers a speech beside Reform UK Chief Whip Lee Anderson as the second and final day of the Reform UK party conference comes to an end at the NEC Birmingham, central England. British hard-right leader Nigel Farage rallied his insurgent Reform party at the start of its annual conference on Friday, seizing on the Labour government's woes to insist his movement could seize power within two years.

Royal audience



British actor Joanna Lumley (centre), Britain's King Charles III (centre left) and Britain's Queen Camilla attend the annual Braemar Gathering in Braemar, central Scotland. The Braemar Gathering is a traditional Scottish Highland Games which predates the 1745 Uprising, and since 1848 it has been regularly attended by the reigning monarch and members of the royal family.

British police arrest dozens at latest protest for banned Palestine Action

Reuters
London





A protester is carried away by police officers at a "Lift The Ban" demonstration in support of the proscribed group Palestine Action, calling for the recently imposed ban to be lifted, in Parliament Square, central London, yesterday.

British police arrested dozens more people yesterday under anti-terrorism laws for demonstrating in support of Palestine Action, a pro-Palestinian group banned by the government. Britain banned Palestine Action under anti-terrorism legislation in July after some of its members broke into a Royal Air Force base and damaged military planes.

The group accuses Britain's government of complicity in what it says are Israeli war crimes in Gaza.

Police have arrested hundreds of Palestine Action supporters in recent weeks under anti-terrorism legislation, including over 500 in just one day last month, many of them over the age of 60. Yesterday, hundreds of demonstrators gathered near parliament in Central London to protest against the ban, with many holding up signs that said: "I oppose genocide. I support Palestine Action."

London's Metropolitan Police said officers had begun arresting those expressing support for Palestine Action. Police did not say how many arrests were made but a Reuters witness said dozens of people were detained. Palestine Action's ban, or proscription, puts the group alongside Al Qaeda and ISIS and makes it a crime to support or belong to the organisation, punishable by up to 14 years in prison. "I can be unequivocal, if you show support for Palestine Action - an offence under the Terrorism Act - you will be arrested," Met Deputy Assistant Commissioner Ade Adelekan said. "We have the officer numbers, custody capacity and all other resources to process as many people as is required."

Human rights groups have criticised Britain's decision to ban the group as disproportionate and say it limits the freedom of expression of peaceful protesters. The government has accused Palestine Action of causing millions of pounds worth of criminal damage and says the ban does not prevent other pro-Palestinian protests.

Modi says ties with US still 'very positive'

AFP
New Delhi

Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi said yesterday New Delhi and Washington still shared "very positive" ties, after US President Donald Trump reaffirmed their personal friendship and downplayed his earlier remarks about "losing India" to China.

The exchange comes amid strains after Washington imposed tariffs of up to 50% on Indian imports, accusing New Dehli of fuelling Moscow's deadly attacks on Ukraine by purchasing Russian oil.

But Trump and Modi, both right-wing populists, have shared a strong bond since the US president's first term. "Deeply appreciate and fully reciprocate President Trump's sentiments and positive assessment of our ties," Modi wrote on X, adding that India and the United States shared a "very positive and forward-looking comprehensive and global strategic partnership".

Earlier, Trump told reporters that he "will always be friends with Modi". "India and the United States have a special relationship. There is nothing to worry about," Trump said, downplaying his earlier remarks about "losing India" to China. Last week, Modi visited China to attend a gathering of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation, his first visit to the country in seven years signalling a thaw between the two Asian powers. Trump has appeared irritated at New Delhi as he seeks credit for what he said was Nobel Prize-worthy diplomacy for brokering peace between Pakistan and India following the worst conflict in decades between the nuclear-armed neighbours in May.

India, which adamantly rejects any third-party mediation on Kashmir, has since given the cold shoulder to Trump.

Fire breaks out at former BBC HQ in west London, broadcaster reports

Around 100 firefighters were called to a blaze yesterday at the former BBC headquarters Television Centre in London's White City, the British public broadcaster reported.

The London Fire Brigade said firefighters from Hammersmith, North Kensington, Kensington, Chiswick and surrounding fire stations were mobilised after it was called to a fire at a nine-storey building soon after 3am UK time.

The blaze is currently affecting floors towards the top of the structure, with a restaurant, external decking and ducting all currently alight, the fire brigade said. An unknown number of flats have also potentially been affected, it added. The cause of the fire is currently unknown. There are no reports of injuries or deaths. — **Reuters**

'Large shark' kills man off Sydney beach

AFP
Sydney



Surfers exit the water after authorities closed Long Reef Beach in Sydney following a shark attack yesterday.

A suspected "large shark" mauled a surfer to death in a rare fatal attack off a Sydney beach yesterday, Australian police and rescuers said, leading to a string of beach closures. The man was pulled out of the Pacific surf onto shore at northern Sydney's Long Reef Beach but died at the scene, New South Wales police said in a statement.

"A man has died on the Northern Beaches after being bitten by what is believed to have been a large shark," police said.

Two sections of a surfboard were recovered and taken for examination, police said, adding that they were working with experts to identify the species of shark involved. Images of the scene on local media showed police gathered on the shore and ambulances parked nearby. The victim was bitten by the ocean predator while surfing in the morning away from a patrolled area of the beach, according to Surf Life Saving NSW.

Beaches between the northern suburbs of Manly and Narrabeen have been closed for at least 24 hours, it said. "For now, please remain clear of the water at beaches in the vicinity and follow the direction of lifeguards and lifesavers," Surf Life Saving NSW chief executive Steven Pearce said in a statement. "Our deepest condolences go to the family of the man involved in this terrible tragedy."

Surf life saving clubs nearby have cancelled all water activity and training for the weekend.

It was the first fatal shark attack in Sydney since 2022, when 35-year-old British diving instructor Simon Nellist was killed off Little Bay. The previous fatal attack in the city was in 1963. Drones were now scanning the beach for shark activity, according to Australian public broadcaster ABC. Police said emergency services rushed to the scene following alerts that the man, who was not identified, had suffered "critical injuries". An unnamed surfer said the victim had been surfing off the adjoining Long Reef and Dee Why beaches.

"Four or five surfers pulled him out of the water and it looked like a significant part of his lower half had been attacked," the surfer said, according to Sydney's Daily Telegraph. People were ordered out of the water, he told the paper. "There was a surf lifesaving guy waving a red flag," the surfer said. "I didn't know what it was... but thought I should probably go in (to shore)."

Australia's last deadly shark attack was in March, when a surfer was taken off the remote Wharton Beach of Western Australia. There have been more than 1,280 shark incidents around Australia since 1791, of which over 250 resulted in death, according to a database of the predators' encounters with humans.

Rainy day in Bengaluru



Scooterists shield themselves with umbrellas while making their way through a street during rainfall in Bengaluru.

COMMENT

CHAIRMAN
Abdullah bin Khalifa al-Attiyah
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF
Faisal Abdulhameed al-Mudahka
Deputy Managing Editor
K T Chacko

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

GULF TIMES

Climate change no longer a future threat; it is a present reality!

A stark reminder of the accelerating global climate crisis is probably best seen on 2024 being the hottest year on record.

The fact that the 10 hottest years ever recorded all occurred within the last decade also shows us that this is not just a natural fluctuation — it is a clear trend driven by human activity.

The United Nations (UN) urged countries last week to set more ambitious climate plans during this month, seeking to pressure major economies including the EU and China ahead of this year's United Nations climate summit.

The United Nations had asked countries to submit their plans, called Nationally Determined Contributions, or NDCs, within September so that their efforts can be assessed before the COP30 summit in November in Brazil.

Most countries have yet to do so despite agreeing to submit them this year under the 2015 Paris Agreement. The updated NDCs should describe how each country plans to cut emissions by 2035.

In a letter to nearly 200 countries, United Nations climate chief Simon Stiell described the NDCs as "the cornerstone of humanity's fight against the global climate crisis."

"These national climate plans... are among this century's most powerful engines of economic growth and rising living standards," said the letter, which the United Nations published.

China, which is described as the world's biggest polluter, has said only that it will upgrade its target in the autumn.

The European Union (EU) is struggling to agree on its plan, and this month countries including France and Poland called for a delay in approving the bloc's proposed 2040 goal, which would have informed the 2035 target.

Last year was the world's hottest year on record, and the 10 hottest years on record all happened in the last 10 years

The United Nations' assessment will help indicate whether countries are on track to hold global warming to safe levels or if they need to step up their plans.

How governments respond will serve as a test of their climate commitment at a time when the United States - the world's biggest economy and biggest polluter historically - pulls away from the effort. Among the other major polluters is India.

Last year was the world's hottest year on record, and the 10 hottest years on record all happened in the last 10 years. Climate change is worsening extreme weather across continents - from torrential storms, to wildfires and heatwaves.

Environment scientists say rising greenhouse gas emissions, mainly from burning fossil fuels, deforestation, and industrial activity, are trapping heat in the atmosphere.

This has led to record-breaking global surface temperatures, shrinking Arctic sea ice, retreating glaciers, and rising sea levels.

They say the consequences are visible everywhere. More frequent and severe heatwaves, floods, wildfires, and droughts are causing humanitarian crises and billions in economic losses.

Ecosystems are under extreme stress — coral reefs bleaching, biodiversity loss, and disrupted food chains. Human health is increasingly threatened, with heat-related illnesses, spread of vector-borne diseases, and food insecurity. Last year many regions saw extreme weather events that were once considered "once-in-a-century".

Agricultural yields were disrupted, affecting global food supply. This clearly means the urgency for climate adaptation became just as important as mitigation.

Although investments in renewable energy hit record highs, and some countries are moving faster toward net-zero commitments, global emissions remain stubbornly high, and current pledges are not sufficient to limit warming to 1.5C.

"The world is responding, albeit unevenly," the UN says.

Clearly, there is a growing call for climate justice — recognising that the countries most affected are often the least responsible for emissions.

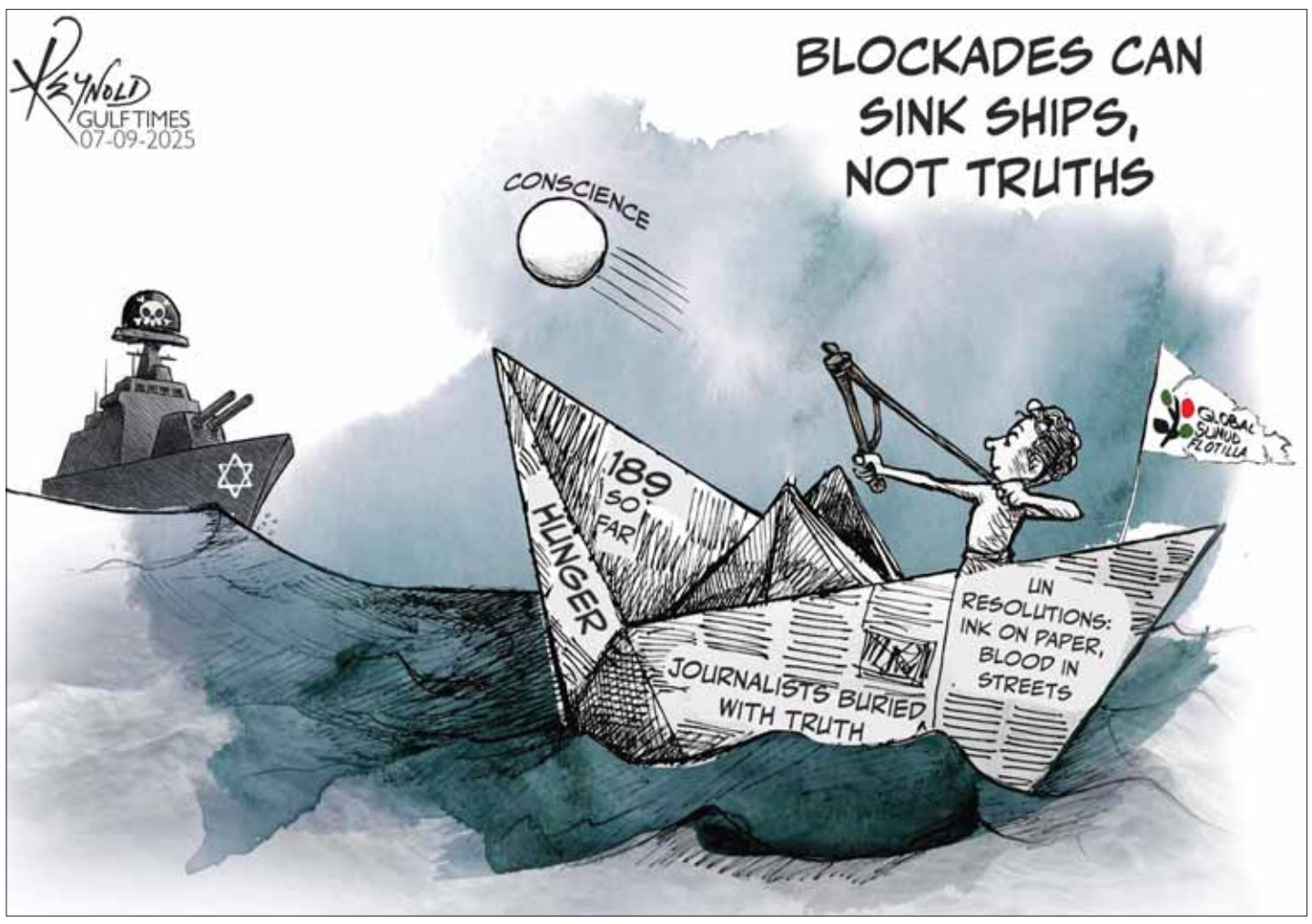
Experts believe rapid scaling of clean energy, sustainable finance, and climate-resilient infrastructure will address global climate crisis to a large extent.

Undoubtedly, 2024 confirmed what scientists have long warned — climate change is no longer a future threat, it is a present reality.

The world now faces a narrow but still open window to act decisively and prevent catastrophic warming.

To Advertise
gtadv@gulf-times.com
Display
44466621
44418811
Classified
44466609 44418811
gtcad@gulf-times.com
Subscription
circulation@gulf-times.com

© 2025 Gulf Times. All rights reserved



Trump and the insatiable quest for a Nobel Prize

By Nina L Khrushcheva
New York

There is nothing new about prominent people – in particular, ambitious men – campaigning for a Nobel prize. Scientists, economists, and even poets do it. But the world has never witnessed as brazen and far-fetched a campaign as the one Donald Trump has mounted for the Nobel Peace Prize.

The Nobel Peace Prize is the world's most prestigious accolade for the restoration or consolidation of peace. Its recipients are selected by a committee of distinguished Norwegians, appointed by the Norwegian Parliament. It is hard to imagine they would indulge Trump's belief that he is worthy of being chosen.

One reason is that Trump belittles and betrays Europe, of which Norway is a part, at every opportunity. Trump has repeatedly threatened to take over Greenland, an autonomous territory of Norway's neighbour, Denmark, and he seems eager to undermine the Nato alliance (of which Norway is also a part). Meanwhile, Trump kowtows to the autocrat responsible for Europe's largest land war since World War II, while patronising the president of the defending country.

Trump seems to stand up for autocrats in general. He recently imposed harsh tariffs on Brazil as punishment for its efforts to hold former Brazilian President Jair Bolsonaro accountable for fomenting a Trump-inspired coup attempt in 2022. And he has stridently supported Israeli Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu, even as Netanyahu has ramped up his brutal assault on Gaza and driven the final nail into the coffin of the Oslo Accords, Norway's foremost diplomatic achievement of the past half-century.

Though the Oslo Accords did not explicitly endorse the future establishment of a Palestinian state alongside Israel, they did lay the groundwork for a two-state solution, by establishing self-governing Palestinian institutions in the West Bank and Gaza. Now, beyond razing Gaza and starving its population, Israel has approved a new settlement project in the West Bank that will effectively block the creation of a Palestinian state there. But Trump not only defends Netanyahu's actions; he punishes Netanyahu's


A Nobel Prize medal replica on display inside the Norwegian Nobel Institute in Oslo, Norway. (**Reuters** file photo)

critics – a group that includes Norway.

Trump's conduct at home shows a similar contempt for dialogue and reconciliation. During his first presidency, he reportedly asked the chair of his Joint Chiefs of Staff, General Mark Milley, whether the troops Trump had called into Washington, DC, could shoot protesters in the legs. Today, he is deploying National Guard troops to cities where they are neither needed nor welcome, while detaining and deporting asylum-seekers, legal immigrants, and even US citizens, including children, without due process.

Of course, in Trump's world – where accountability is labelled a "witch hunt", facts are dismissed as fiction, and lying is a constant – anything could happen. We have already seen one world leader after another kissing up to Trump and capitulating to his bullying. And, in fact, he has already received nominations for his coveted Nobel. One, Pakistan, itself countering terrorism, and another, Cambodia, is led by the sort of authoritarian Trump admires.

But the Nobel Committee has seen through even more grotesque pretences of peacemaking than what Trump has offered. In 1939, a dozen members of Sweden's parliament actually nominated then-British Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain for the Nobel Peace Prize for his role in negotiating the Munich Agreement with Adolf Hitler the previous year. Ultimately, the Nobel Committee decided not to award the prize to anyone that year.

It was a prescient decision: Chamberlain's deal, which gave the Nazi regime the green light to annex Czechoslovakia's Sudetenland region, only emboldened Hitler to launch his blitzkriegs against other European democracies. It is ironic that Trump thinks his best chance of securing a Nobel Peace Prize lies in a Munich-like "peace" agreement that forces Ukraine to cede swaths of its sovereign territory to Russia, which is unlikely to be satisfied until the country is fully subjugated.

Unlike Trump, the Nobel Committee is more likely to side with authoritarianism's opponents than its champions. In 2010, it awarded the Peace Prize to the jailed Chinese dissident Liu Xiaobo for his "long and non-violent struggle for fundamental human rights in China." Chinese officials denounced the decision, which opened a lasting rift between China and Norway, but the Nobel Committee held to its values. Giving Trump a Nobel for encouraging the dismemberment of Ukraine would send the opposite message.

So, why does Trump even want a Nobel Peace Prize, given his apparent disdain for the principles (and hard work) of peacemaking? The most likely answer is that Barack Obama has one. From peddling the falsehood that Obama was born outside the United States to accusing him of treason, Trump's annoyance knows no bounds when it comes to America's first Black president. And yet Obama is a Nobel laureate, and Trump, unbearably, is not.

Admittedly, it is not entirely clear why Obama was given the prize, which came only a few months after he took office in 2009, when his only real achievement was inspiring hope through soaring rhetoric. Perhaps he was being rewarded mostly for having little in common with his predecessor, George W Bush, who invaded Iraq in 2003 on the basis of the fabricated claim that Saddam Hussein possessed weapons of mass destruction.

Whereas Obama's Nobel Peace Prize was premature, Trump's would be parodic. If he somehow managed to browbeat the Nobel Committee into giving him one, the Peace Prize would become a punchline. — Project Syndicate

• *Nina L Khrushcheva, Professor of International Affairs at The New School, is the co-author (with Jeffrey Tayler) of* In Putin's Footsteps: Searching for the Soul of an Empire Across Russia's Eleven Time Zones.


US President Donald Trump gestures during a cabinet meeting at the White House in Washington, DC, last week. (**Reuters**)

COMMENT

China's parade of shining new weaponry sends message of deterrence to many



Strategic strike group displays CJ-20A cruise missiles during the military parade in Beijing. (**Reuters**)



A Chinese military officer on a vehicle salutes during the parade. (**AFP**)



HQ-19 missiles displayed during the military parade. (**Reuters**)

By Greg Torode
Singapore

From an upgraded, nuclear-armed missile with near-global reach, to air defence lasers, hypersonic weapons, and sea drones that could crowd its near seas, China sent a broad message of deterrence with its largest ever military parade last Wednesday.

Military analysts and diplomats saw China's leader Xi Jinping using the event to signal a diverse group, from the United States and its allies, to neighbours and regional powers India and Russia, as well as potential buyers of technology.

"For all the operational questions that surround some of these new elements, China was sending a message of technological advance and military strength on all fronts — there is a indeed a lot for rival defence planners to get their heads around," said Singapore-based security analyst Alexander Neill.

For the first time, China displayed its full nuclear triad of weapons that can be deployed from land, sea and air, including a re-tooled intercontinental ballistic missile, the DF-5C, with a range of 20,000km (12,400 miles), and a new road-mobile long-range missile, the DF-61.

Beyond the strategic level, China's military was also showing it was determined to dominate its near seas as well.

The comprehensive range of new weapons could complicate the plans of the United States and its allies in any conflict in East Asia, said James Char, a China defence scholar at Singapore's S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies.

"The combination of the (sea) ... drones they have and also the missiles, it will create an area that external navies couldn't even enter to intervene," Char said.

More broadly, Char and other analysts said, China was possibly also keen to show smaller nations that it now stood as a "guarantor of peace" amid doubts about the US political, diplomatic and military role worldwide.

Specifically, the new torpedo-shaped drones and array of hypersonic triad weapons would be a serious threat for the United States and its partners.

That is even more so when they are combined with China's growing number of DF-26 medium-range ballistic missiles carrying controllable warheads that could target ships and bases such as Guam.

Analysts have long said China would have to effectively secure control of the South and East China seas in any conflict over Taiwan to ensure success, which is no easy task, given the traditional dominance of the United States across East Asia.



KJ-500A airborne early warning and control (AEW&C) aircraft and Shenyang J-16 jet fighters fly over Tiananmen Square. (**Reuters**)



A member of the People's Liberation Army stands as the strategic strike group displays DF-5C nuclear missiles. (**Reuters**)

Beyond the neat demonstration of precision and discipline on display at the parade, question-marks remained about the full capabilities and ranges of the new weapons.

While China showed off new weapons it said were operational, it is another matter whether that is the case, said military expert Chieh Chung, a researcher at the Taipei-based Association of Strategic Foresight.

"Some weapons may still be in limited deployment to units, undergoing 'field testing during deployment,' and may not yet be fully standardised or ready for mass production," he said.

Char, Neill and other analysts pointed to the high degree of technology on show, particularly in an apparent desire to meld together various systems with air defences, battle management systems and drones.

A new main battle tank, the Type-100, was unveiled, for instance, bristling with new systems, including air defences and reconnaissance drones.

Newly formed aerospace, cyberspace and information support units were also on show, demonstrating a willingness to compete in advanced space and electronic warfare realms.

"Western militaries may still have an operational edge, but there is no doubt China is wanting to show it is rapidly catching up," said Neill, adding that the United States is generally more cautious about detailing weapons being developed.

"I do wonder if there is an element here of China being eager to sell this technology to other militaries," he added. — Reuters

Guatemalan document undercuts US claims on child deportations

By Emily Green, Ted Hesson and **Kristina Cooke**
Mexico City



Guatemalan migrants arrive at La Aurora Air Base on a deportation flight from the United States, in Guatemala City, Guatemala, last week. (**Reuters**)

Many family members of unaccompanied Guatemalan migrant children who are part of a group the Trump administration attempted to deport over last weekend did not want their children returned to Guatemala, according to an internal Guatemalan government report that contradicts assertions made by US officials.

The report, produced by a Guatemalan attorney general's office and reviewed by Reuters, said Guatemalan authorities had contacted the families of 115 minors who had crossed the US-Mexico border without a parent or guardian. Of those, 59 families expressed anger about the possibility of their children being returned to Guatemala, with some even describing it as intimidation, the document said.

Contents of the report have not been previously reported and offer the most comprehensive insight so far into the resistance of many family members to the children being deported. Some of those concerns were backed up by court filings published on Wednesday. President Donald Trump's effort to deport unaccompanied migrant children aged 10-17 over the weekend triggered an immediate legal challenge. In an emergency court hearing on Sunday, a Justice Department attorney said the parents wanted their children to be deported, but a lawyer for the children rejected that assertion.

Guatemala initially agreed with US authorities that it would receive migrants nearing the age of 18 whose parents were generally not in the United States and who would be transferred to adult detention, according to the report.

On July 11, the US provided Guatemala with a list of minors in Health and Human Services custody who were about to turn 18, in accordance with the original plan to facilitate their return to Guatemala before their birthdays. But some time after that, the US sent Guatemala a much broader list of 609 children ages 14-17.

One person with knowledge of Guatemalan authorities' thinking said the government was taken aback by how quickly the Trump administration had broadened the scope of the plan. The person said that it seemed to go overnight from returning 17-year-olds to deporting children as young as 10.

In response to a Reuters request for comment, a Trump administration official said that the Guatemalan government in August assured the administration that any unaccompanied children sent back would be processed in a safe and orderly manner for possible reunification. The Guatemalan government did not respond to a request for comment.

Immigration crackdown

Trump has kicked off a wide-ranging immigration crackdown since taking office, including a campaign to detain and deport unaccompanied children. As part of his deterrent effort, his administration has deported Venezuelan migrants to a maximum-security prison in El Salvador and sent non-African migrants to distant African nations. Stephen Miller, a top White House official overseeing immigration issues, said in a post on X on Sunday that the children were being reunited with their parents. But the internal Guatemalan government report and court filings on Wednesday show many families did not want their children sent back to the country. Parents of one girl told Guatemalan authorities "that if their daughter returned, they would do everything possible for her to leave the country again, as she is under a death threat," the report said.

The Guatemalan report said that Guatemalan authorities had only been able to contact 115 families of the 609 children on the list. It said that more than half of them had rejected any efforts to have their children returned, while others agreed to receive their children but did not welcome the situation.

"The families were surprised when contacted, some even annoyed, since several stated that they knew their children were in a process that seeks to protect them and regularise their immigration status in the United States, and therefore do not expect their children to return to Guatemala," the document said.

About half the families interviewed said their children had migrated for economic reasons, according to the report.

Blindsided by deportations

A Washington-based federal judge on Sunday blocked the deportations until September 14 after lawyers for the children filed an emergency motion. The case has since been transferred to US District Judge Timothy Kelly, a Trump appointee, and plaintiffs are seeking a longer-term halt.

In court filings on Wednesday, some of the minors and their parents said they opposed the attempt to deport them and were seeking to remain in the US. The children also described a frenzied, middle-of-the-night effort that left them terrified and panicked, according to the declarations.

The minors, whose names were redacted from the court filings, were being held at more than a dozen children's shelters, mostly in south Texas.

One 17-year old held at a shelter in Los Fresnos said they were woken up around 2am early on Sunday morning.

"I woke up very scared, and felt like I lost my breath for a second because they had never woken us up in the middle of the night before," said the teenager.

A 16-year-old at a shelter in San Antonio said that on Saturday night around 11pm they and other children were brought to the lobby of the shelter to be taken to the airport. The teen, who said their sister was murdered last year in Guatemala, called their mother to tell her of the impending deportation.

"My mom started crying," the 16-year-old said. "She had no idea the government had a plan to return me." — Reuters

Google's AI rivals get a boost from data-sharing order, but technology giant far from routed

By Kenrick Cai
San Francisco

A rising group of artificial intelligence companies stand to gain from an antitrust ruling last Tuesday that ordered Alphabet's Google to share its invaluable search data with competitors.

Matching Google's heft, though, will take time and huge resources, with no guarantees that any rival product will win as many users, experts said.

While Google was spared the devastating outcome of having to sell its popular Chrome browser and Android operating system, US District Judge Amit Mehta's ruling was a nod to regulators' efforts to level the playing field for companies who have invested billions to boost their AI business.

"The emergence of GenAI changed the course of this case," Mehta wrote in his ruling.

He said that tens of millions of people use generative AI chatbots like ChatGPT, Perplexity, and Claude to gather information that they previously sought through Internet search. While these chatbots are not yet close to replacing traditional search, the industry expects that developers will continue to add features to GenAI products to perform more like Google Search, he said.

The data-sharing requirement does not alter Google's existing means of distribution, allowing the company to continue to pay the likes of Apple to make its search engine the default option. However, it lowers the barrier for competitors to develop and distribute their own alternatives to Google Search, experts said.

These AI products, some say, pose a bigger threat to Google than the antitrust case. But development will take time and resources, giving Alphabet investors a measure of confidence in the near term.

Massive capital needed

The current slate of AI search engines and browsers has not made a material dent in Google's market share. While ChatGPT, OpenAI's popular AI chatbot, has outpaced Google's offering, Gemini, in terms of users, Google has sought to counteract the effect through features like AI Overviews and AI Mode to keep users on its search engine.

"It takes effort for competitors to rely on the syndication and indexes that Google can provide to build a consumer facing experience," said Deepak Mathivanan, an analyst with Cantor Fitzgerald. "And it would take a longer period of time for consumers to also embrace these new experiences."

Indexing is how Google discovers, analyses and stores website pages in its vast database for relevant search results, while propagating the reach of a website through republishing content.

Even with access to Google data, it would be "astronomically expensive" for rivals to build the kind of product that could pry users away from Google, said Ben Bajarin, CEO of tech consulting firm Creative Strategies.

Nevertheless, a number of well-capitalised AI startups have already poured significant amounts of venture capital funding towards doing exactly that.

OpenAI offers a search product within ChatGPT and Reuters reported in July that is close to releasing a web browser to challenge Chrome. Startup Perplexity, backed by Nvidia, has already released its own AI-powered search and browser offerings, and is now negotiating to preload its browser onto some phone makers' devices.

Alphabet CEO Sundar Pichai expressed concerns during the trial in April that the data-sharing measures sought by the US Department of Justice could enable Google's rivals to reverse-engineer its technology. By gaining insights into Google's market-leading IP, tech giants with giant coffers could make a new run at the search market.

Microsoft might make a renewed push to improve the market share of Bing, and Apple, viewed as an AI laggard after failing to deliver on promised AI upgrades to key products like Siri, could try to enter the search market, Mathivanan said.

Judge Mehta said in his order that allowing Google to continue paying other companies to promote its search engine "is more palatable now" because "established technology companies are making, and start-ups are receiving, hundreds of billions of dollars in capital to develop [generative AI] products that pose a threat to the primacy of traditional Internet search." — Reuters

QATAR

Qatar Charity honoured at GCC ministerial meetings in Kuwait



Qatar Charity (QC) was honoured in a ceremony accompanying the ministerial meetings of the ministers and heads of civil service, labour, and social affairs agencies in the Gulf Co-operation Council (GCC) countries, which took place in Kuwait.

The honorary shield was received by QC chief executive Yousuf bin Ahmed al-Kuwari in the presence of several high-level dignitaries, including Kuwait's First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior Sheikh Fahad Yusuf Saud al-Sabah, and GCC Secretary-General Jasem Mohamed Albudaiwi.

Also present at the event were Qatar's Minister of Labour HE Dr Ali bin Smaikh al-Marri, HE the Minister of Social Development and Family Buthaina bint Ali al-Jabr al-Nuaimi, and HE the President of the Civil Service and Government Development Bureau Abdulaziz bin Nasser al-Khalifa.

The QC was recognised as one of Qatar's leading civil society organisations in the social and humanitarian sectors.

The honour highlights its outstanding efforts in the fields of charitable and social work, as well as its tangible positive impact both locally and internationally.

The honour also underscores the QC's deep-rooted commitment to fulfilling its humanitarian responsibilities and achieving the goals of sustainable development.

The QC was also honoured in May with the GCC Housing Award for the 2024-25 cycle, in the category of private sector and charitable organisations, during the 23rd GCC Housing Ministers Meeting in Kuwait.

'Sailing Through Time' exhibition opens at Liwan





Liwan Design Studios and Labs launched yesterday "Sailing Through Time", a special ceramic exhibition led by Indonesian artist Francisca "Kika" Puspitastudibyo.

Bringing together artists from Qatar and Indonesia, "Sailing Through Time" explores themes of human evolution, shared history, and personal transformation through ceramics inspired by the craft legacies of both nations.

It is focused on objects created during the Ceramic Residency last month at Liwan.

The residency embodied the spirit of friendship and artistic dialogue that the Years of Culture programme champions.

By bringing communities together through craft and collaboration, the project reinforced the enduring legacy of the Qatar-Indonesia 2023 Year of Culture and its commitment to building connections that extend far beyond a single year.

As part of the programme, the public is invited to attend an exhibition talk tomorrow at Liwan.

The session will feature Kika alongside collaborators Amira Alnamia, Asya Lazam, Isuri Ashani Peiris, Laila Noor, Norman Baskoro, and Sara Almohannadi, who will share insights into their creative processes and inspirations.

The exhibition is now open to the public and will run through September 10.

It is hosted in collaboration with Years of Culture, underscoring the role of cultural exchange in supporting innovation, dialogue, and community connections between Qatar and Indonesia.

Francisca, widely known as Kika, is an Indonesian ceramicist recognised for blending contemporary forms with a strong sense of community.

She previously led the popular Indonesian Workshop Month in Qatar during the 2023 Year of Culture, where she invited participants to sculpt their own creations and discover new ceramic-making techniques.

Her interactive, inclusive approach demystifies traditional craft and welcomes the public to connect with clay as a medium for storytelling and cultural exchange. – ***QNA***

Pakistan Defence Day



The Al Jaber Lusail Twin Tower is seen lit in the colours of Pakistan flag to mark the Pakistan Defence Day yesterday.

Ashghal prepares for rainy season







The Public Works Authority (Ashghal) is preparing for the upcoming rainy season, taking up measures to ensure timely response and mitigate the impact of rainfall.

"Ashghal has held several successful training to evaluate the fast response team's abilities in mitigating the impacts of heavy rainfall on urban infrastructure, public safety and traffic flow," Ashghal said in an X post.

Ashghal said that prompt mobilisation, effective co-ordination and field knowledge are crucial for minimising risks and averting disruptions during rain incidents.

Ashghal, according to the post, has carried out critical operations successfully to prepare for the rainy season, including setting up rubber ramps, deploying hoses to drain water and operating diesel pumps.

The authority explained that the fast response team remains on high alert, ready to act at a moment's notice.

Their responsibilities include monitoring flood-prone areas and offering immediate assistance to affected communities.

They offer vital support to the impacted main roads and has a contemporary fleet that is fully stocked with all the equipment required.

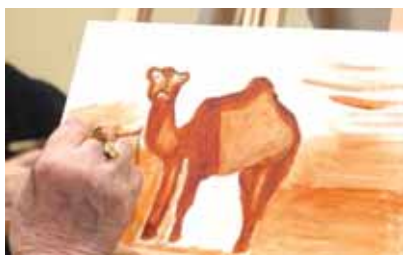
Ahead of the rainy season, Ashghal developed a mechanism to overcome rainwater-related issues and intensified training for its staff members to help them improve the complaint redress time and ensure fast response in dealing with water accumulation.

Ashghal uses the latest technologies to monitor the drainage networks and roads to ensure they are free from waterlogging.

As part of its role to raise awareness and continuously communicate with the public, Ashghal launches awareness campaigns on precautionary measures that are to be taken before and during rain.









Ehsan resumes day clubs' activities

The Centre for Empowerment and Care of the Elderly (Ehsan), affiliated with the Qatar Social Work Foundation, has resumed the activities of its day clubs with the start of the new academic year.

The aim is to continue the mission of providing distinctive programmes and services to empower and care for seniors, enhancing their quality of life, and strengthening their active presence in society.

The clubs include three women's branches in Izghawa, Al Wakra, and Al Shamal, in addition to a men's club.

Ehsan is also preparing to open the Men's Seniors' Majlis in Katara to enrich the community activity system.

These clubs have transformed into vibrant environments that combine recreation, empowerment, and social interaction, providing members with opportunities to engage in diverse activities that foster independence and strengthen their connections with their surroundings.

During the previous season, Ehsan organised 477 activities, including 104 handicraft and skill-based workshops that highlighted the talents of seniors in arts and crafts, 197 awareness lectures covering social, health, family, and psychological issues, and 163 empowerment courses across various fields such as Holy Qur'an memorisation and recitation, e-learning, physical fitness, and others.

These activities effectively contributed to enhancing members' knowledge and refining their experiences.

In addition, 13 trips and external visits were conducted, which offered enriching social and cultural experiences and strengthened community ties among the seniors.

Ehsan's partnerships with governmental and community institutions, including the Ministry of Endowments and Islamic Affairs, the Ministry of Municipality, Qatar Museums, the Primary Health Care Corporation, Mada Centre, and Doha University of Science and Technology, have played a key role in the success, continuity, and diversity of these activities.

Sheikha Ahmed al-Hareeb, acting director of Ehsan's Awareness and Community Department, stressed that restarting the clubs with the new school year marks a fresh milestone to build on past achievements.

She noted that the upcoming phase will feature more innovative initiatives tailored to the needs of seniors, supporting their sustainable integration into society.

"Ehsan clubs have become platforms for empowerment and development," she said. "Through them, we focus on several goals, most notably enabling seniors to carry out their daily activities independently, maintaining their physical and psychological well-being, activating their developmental role and benefiting from their experiences, as well as strengthening their integration with different segments of society and expanding partnerships with governmental and civil institutions to ensure sustainable services."

Ehsan offers membership in its clubs under certain conditions, including being 60 years old or above, whether citizens or expatriates with a valid residency permit.

Applicants must provide a medical report confirming their health stability, in addition to completing the membership form and submitting the required documents via the centre's website or by visiting its headquarters.