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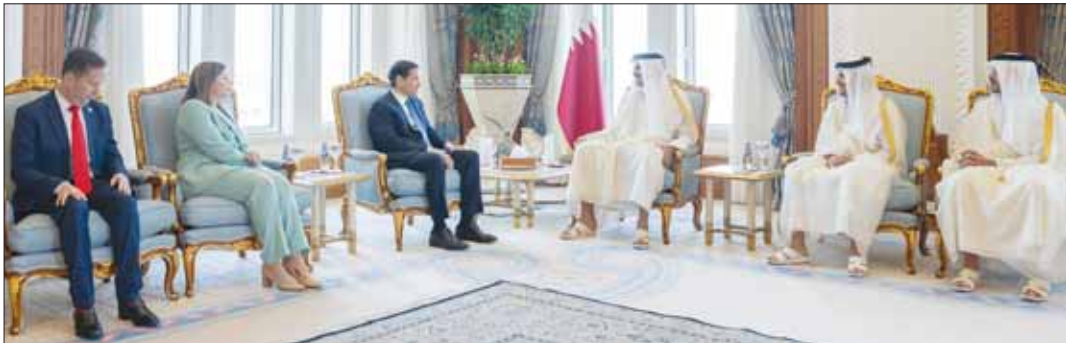
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Amir, Rubio discuss ways to strengthen defence ties



His Highness the Amir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani met yesterday at his Amiri Diwan office with Secretary of State of the United States of America Marco Rubio and the accompanying delegation, on the occasion of his visit to the country. During the meeting, they discussed strategic relations between the two countries and ways to enhance them, particularly in the defence field. They also discussed the most prominent regional and international developments of common concern, most notably the repercussions of the treacherous Israeli attack on Doha, in addition to the future of joint diplomatic efforts to reach a ceasefire in the Gaza Strip, release of hostages and prisoners, and de-escalation in the region.

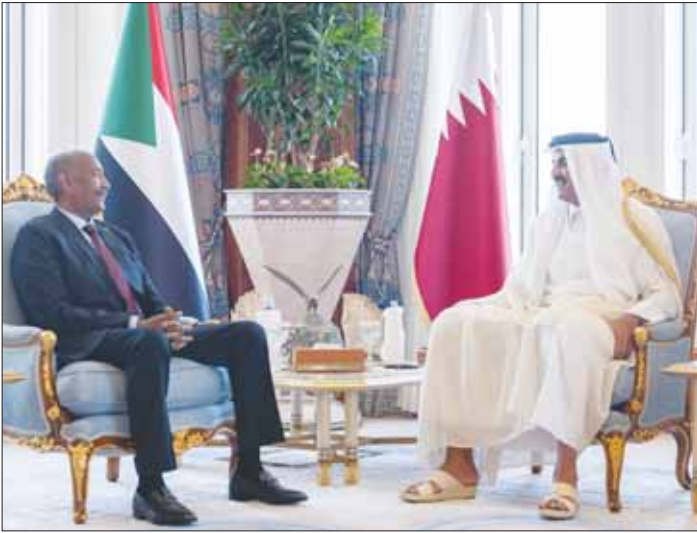
HE the Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman bin Jassim al-Thani attended the meeting. **(QNA)**

Amir, Sudan leader vow to enhance relations

● **Gen al-Burhan backs all measures that Qatar would take to safeguard its sovereignty**

QNA
Doha

His Highness the Amir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani held a meeting at the Amiri Diwan yesterday with Chairman of the Transitional Sovereignty Council of the sisterly Republic of Sudan, Lieutenant General Abdel Fattah al-Burhan, during which they discussed relations between the two countries and strengthening them across a variety of fields of bilateral co-operation, as well as regional developments and the efforts to achieve peace and stability in the region. At the outset of the meeting, His Highness the Amir welcomed the Chairman of the Sudanese Transitional Sovereignty Council and the accompanying delegation, expressing his thanks to him for responding to the invitation to take part in the Arab-Islamic Emergency Summit, and His Highness' pleasure at this visit, which reflects the depth of the brotherly relations between the two countries. For his part, Gen al-Burhan underscored his country's full solidarity with Qatar and its people, affirm-



ing that Sudan backs all measures Qatar takes to safeguard its sovereignty and territorial integrity. He stressed that the cowardly Israeli attack represents a breach of Qatar's sovereignty and flouts all international laws and norms, praising the efforts of His Highness the Amir and Qatar to achieve peace and stability in the region and the world. In this context, His Highness the Amir expressed his utmost appreciation to Gen al-Burhan for his solidarity and fraternal heartfelt sentiments, as well as Sudan's supportive position toward Qatar and its people. During the meeting, His Highness the Amir and Gen al-Burhan

shared viewpoints on regional and global developments of common concern, particularly the current situation in the Middle East and the latest developments in Sudan. HE the Chief of the Amiri Diwan, Abdullah bin Mohammed al-Khulaifi; HE the Minister of State for Foreign Affairs, Sultan bin Saad al-Muraikhi; and a number of high-ranking officials attended the meeting. From the Sudanese side, the meeting was attended by Minister of Foreign Affairs, Muhi Al Din Salem, alongside several high-ranking officials who were members of the delegation accompanying Chairman of the Sudanese Transitional Sovereignty Council.

Qatar's security top priority; Doha to continue peace efforts

By Ayman Adly
Staff Reporter

“At this particular time and stage, the top priority for Qatar is to maintain its sovereignty and security and guarantee that such attacks by Israel never happen again,” stressed HE Adviser to the Prime Minister and Official Spokesperson for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Dr Majed bin Mohamed al-Ansari.

Speaking at the weekly media briefing of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs yesterday, he pointed out that Qatar will remain committed to the peace process and mediation leading to peaceful settlements for all the conflicts around the world and in particular Gaza and the Palestinian issue. “However, it is clear from the reckless action, the recent Israeli attacks on Doha and in particular on Hamas peace negotiators, that Israel does not want peace and is not serious about reaching a peace deal with Hamas. They even seem to be



HE Dr Majed bin Mohamed al-Ansari

no longer caring about the well-being and safe return of the Israeli hostages,” Dr al-Ansari said.

Regarding the visit to Qatar yesterday by US Secretary of State Marco Rubio, Dr al-Ansari stressed that the defence agreement and treaties between Qatar and the US have been a long term relationship and the recent events could only strengthen such agreements and further enhance them. “The relationship and defence relations have always been active and effective as the US President has described Qatar as a key ally

and important partner.”

In the meantime, he noted that so long as Israel is persisting on targeting the peaceful negotiators and the mediator as well, there will be no benefit in continuing the negotiations. This does not mean that Qatar will undermine its peaceful efforts to end the Gaza war or other places of conflict around the world.

Dr al-Ansari further stressed the humanitarian assistance and basic medical aid provided by Qatar as a continuous process, and mentioned the aid delivered to Syria and Afghanistan recently in co-operation and coordination with partners and friends.

Regarding the outcome of the Emergency Arab-Islamic Summit held in Doha on Monday, he confirmed that it sends to the world a strong message of solidarity and support for Qatar to maintain its sovereignty, while condemning the irresponsible Israeli attacks on Doha, and demanding a strong international response against Israeli aggression.

2,000MW solar power plant to be completed in Dukhan by mid-2029

QatarEnergy signed an agreement with Samsung C&T's Engineering & Construction Group (Samsung C&T) for the construction of a world-scale solar power plant in Dukhan.

The Dukhan solar power plant, one of the largest in the world, will be developed in two phases, reaching a total electricity generation capacity of 2,000 megawatts (MW) by mid-2029. Once completed, it will double Qatar's solar power production capacity, contributing significantly to the country's renewable energy goals.

The agreement was signed by HE the Minister of State for En-



(Picture used for illustrative purpose only)

ergy Affairs and President and CEO of QatarEnergy Saad bin Sherida al-Kaabi and President and CEO of Samsung C&T Se-chul Oh during a special ceremony held at QatarEnergy's headquarters in Doha.

HE al-Kaabi said: “When

completed, the Dukhan solar power plant, along with Al Kharsaah, Mesaieed, Ras Laffan solar power plants will help reduce carbon dioxide emissions by about 4.7mn tonnes annually, while contributing up to 30% of Qatar's total peak electricity demand.”

The Dukhan solar power plant will begin the first phase of production by adding 1,000MW of power to the Kahramaa grid towards the end of 2028. The new plant will utilise a solar tracker system and will enhance efficiency by installing inverters capable of operating flawlessly in a high-temperature environment. **(QNA) Business Page 1**

UNHRC urges accountability for Israel's Qatar attack

AFP/QNA
Geneva

The United Nations and a long line of countries yesterday denounced Israel's attack on Qatar last week, decrying a “dangerous escalation” and demanding “accountability”.

Israel's strikes on the Qatari capital on September 9 targeted Hamas leaders gathered to discuss a new US ceasefire proposal for Gaza. Five Hamas members and a Qatari security officer were killed.

That strike “was a shocking breach of international law”, UN rights chief Volker Turk said during an urgent debate at the UN Human Rights Council (UNHRC) about the strike.

Denouncing the attack as “an assault on regional peace and stability”, he urged “accountability for unlawful killings”.

His words were echoed by Qatar and dozens of country representatives who took the floor during the three-hour debate.

Qatar's Minister of State for International Co-operation HE Maryam bint Ali bin Nasser al-Misnad slammed Israel's “treacherous attack” and demanded that the international community “take practical steps to hold the aggressors accountable and prevent their impunity”.

Her Excellency stated that the September 9 attack targeted a densely populated civilian area in the heart of the capital, Doha, near diplomatic missions, schools, kindergartens, and mosques — an area home to about five thousand people, including Qatari families as well as families of residents, children, and women.

She explained that this attack resulted in martyrs and injuries, including the martyr Corporal



HE the Minister of State for International Co-operation Maryam bint Ali bin Nasser al-Misnad addressing the council yesterday.

Badr Saad al-Dosari, 22, and 18 wounded. This is not only a blatant violation of the sovereignty of Qatar and the integrity of its territory, but also a grave breach of fundamental human rights, the right to life, security, and the

protection of children and education, as enshrined in international covenants, primarily the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, and the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Meanwhile, Pakistan's ambassador Bilal Ahmad, whose country was among those that led the call for the urgent debate, warned that “this unjustifiable and unprovoked attack constitutes a dangerous escalation”.

The council announced on Monday that it would convene the 10th urgent debate since its creation in 2006 following two official requests from members of the Organisation of Islamic Co-operation and of the Gulf Co-operation Council.

Neither Israel nor its main ally the United States, which both disengaged from the council earlier this year, was present for the urgent debate.

There was little support for Israel's position during the debate.

European Union ambassador Deike Potzel stressed the bloc's “principled stance against terrorism in all its forms”, while underlining its “support for the sover-

eignty and territorial integrity of Qatar” and calling “on Israel to respect international law”.

“We urge all parties to refrain from any actions that jeopardise mediation channels and regional stability,” she said.

China's ambassador Chen Xu said his country “firmly rejects and categorically condemns” the September 9 attack, which he charged was “a deliberate attempt to derail the negotiation process”.

Some of the harshest criticism came from South Africa, which has brought a case against Israel before the International Court of Justice, accusing it of committing genocide in Gaza.

The attack “strikes against the very heart of mediation processes”, ambassador Mxolisi Nkosi told the council, adding that it “demonstrates that Israel does not want to end its genocidal war against the Palestinian people”.

Kuwait reiterates its condemnation of Israeli aggression against Qatar before rights council

Kuwait reiterated its strong condemnation and denunciation of the brutal and cowardly Israeli aggression that targeted residential headquarters of several Hamas leaders in Doha on Sept 9.

This came in Kuwait's statement yesterday before the UN Human Rights Council (HRC) during the emergency session dedicated to discussing the Israeli aggression against Qatar, which was called for by Kuwait on behalf of the Gulf Co-operation Council countries, alongside Pakistan on behalf of the Organisation of Islamic Co-operation (OIC), as part



of the 60th session of the council held in Geneva.

Kuwait emphasised that this treacherous aggression is a blatant violation of all international laws and norms, a serious threat to the region's security and stability, and a direct undermining of

international peace and security.

Kuwait affirmed its unwavering support for Qatar in the measures it takes to preserve its security, stability, sovereignty, and the safety of its citizens and residents. Kuwait also reiterated its position calling for the UN and the international community to assume their responsibilities in preserving international peace and security, and to take serious and effective steps to stop Israel's systematic aggression against countries in the region and to hold the perpetrators of these crimes against unarmed civilians accountable. **(QNA)**

MoPH rolls out national drive for influenza vaccination

QNA
Doha

The Ministry of Public Health (MoPH) has announced the launch of the National Seasonal Influenza Vaccination and Awareness Campaign from today, in co-operation with Hamad Medical Corp (HMC), Primary Health Care Corp (PHCC), and public, semi-government, and private healthcare facilities.

The campaign aims to enhance community protection and reduce influenza-related health complications. It forms part of the ministry's efforts to raise public awareness of the importance of influenza vaccination, particularly in winter.

This season usually witnesses a rise in infection rates.

The campaign also seeks to cor-

rect misconceptions about influenza and highlight its risks, especially for those most vulnerable to health complications.

The MoPH stressed that the influenza virus undergoes ongoing mutations from one year to another, which makes annual vaccination necessary to ensure adequate protection.

It emphasised that influenza is not merely a simple cold, but may lead to serious complications such as pneumonia, exacerbation of chronic diseases, and in some cases, it may even result in death or permanent disability.

The campaign targets explicitly the groups most at risk, particularly individuals with chronic diseases such as diabetes, asthma, heart and lung conditions, kidney disease, and those with weakened immunity, in addition to senior citizens over the age of sixty, children aged between six months and

five years, pregnant women, and healthcare workers. The MoPH has urged citizens and residents, especially those belonging to the groups mentioned above, to take the seasonal influenza vaccine as early as possible.

The ministry also encourages all community members to get vaccinated, given its key role in safeguarding public health and limiting the spread of infection.

The influenza vaccine is available free of charge at all PHCC Centres, as well as at healthcare facilities affiliated with the Ministries of Interior and Defence, QatarEnergy, all private hospitals, and more than 50 private healthcare facilities across Qatar.

As part of its commitment to ensuring a healthy and safe working environment, the MoPH is also organising an internal vaccination campaign for its employees today and tomorrow.

Saudi delegation in Qatar explores collaboration in education sector

QNA
Doha

Several department directors from the Ministry of Education and Higher Education met with a delegation from the Saudi Export Authority, currently visiting the country, as part of strengthening bilateral co-operation between the two brotherly countries. The delegation reviewed Qatar's pioneering achievements in the education sector at various levels.

They also explored opportunities for partnership and joint co-operation with a number of sectors in the country, and studied business opportunities for leading Saudi companies in the fields of education and modern technology.

Assistant Undersecretary for Educational Affairs at the Ministry of Education and Higher Education Maha Zayed al-Qaqa al-Ruwaili, reviewed the objectives of the visit.

In this regard, the delegation provided a detailed explanation



of the companies' work and objectives in various educational and technical fields. The Saudi delegation, headed by Eng Saud al-Qablan, Executive Vice-President of Services Exports, included Abdulaziz al-Talasi, General Manager of Services Exports; Abdulaziz al-Subaie, Senior Director of Services Exports; and Nouf al-Mayman, Senior Services Exports Specialist.

The delegation also included representatives from several specialised companies, including Strategic Gears, Tatweer Educational Services Company, Jad Sci-

entific Company, which specialises in developing and publishing educational content and curricula; Naseej Digital Transformation Company; and Team of Experts and Partners, a professional consulting company.

During the meeting, the companies presented their most notable previous projects and reviewed opportunities for future co-operation with the Ministry of Education and Higher Education, which would contribute to supporting various fields of education and technological development.

Kahramaa organises 2025 administrative forum

QNA
Doha

The Qatar General Electricity and Water Corp (Kahramaa) organised the 2025 Administrative Forum to underscore the pivotal role of administrative personnel in advancing its mission and realising its strategic objectives.

Held under the motto: Behind every achievement is a shining administrative effort, the event, convened in the presence of President of Kahramaa, Eng Abdullah bin Ali al-Thayab, served as an interactive platform that brought together functionaries from vari-



ous departments, as part of the corporation's unwavering commitment to reinforcing the effective administrative role in achieving corporate excellence.

The forum featured a wide array of panel discussions between functionaries and administrative

leadership, along with interactive workshops aimed at honing skills and fostering innovative thinking in the workplace.

It presented a primer of key administrative initiatives achieved over the past period, which largely contributed to optimising corpo-

Deputy PM meets Afghan defence minister

HE the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of State for Defence Affairs Sheikh Saud bin Abdulrahman bin Hassan al-Thani met with the visiting Defence Minister of Afghanistan Mullah Mohammad Yaqoob Mujahid, and his accompanying delegation. During the meeting, the two sides discussed topics of mutual interest and ways to enhance and develop them. In addition, they discussed regional and international developments. The meeting was attended by a number of senior officers from both sides. **(QNA)**



President of Supreme Judiciary Council meets Syrian minister



HE the President of the Supreme Judiciary Council and President of the Court of Cassation Dr Hassan bin Lahdan al-Hassan al-Mohannadi met with the visiting Syrian Minister of Justice Dr Mazhar Abdul Rahman al-Wais and his accompanying delegation. The Syrian minister's visit to the Supreme Judiciary Council was intended to review the experience of digital transformation for the judiciary system, as well as the commercial judiciary with respect to investment disputes. He met with President of the Investment and Trade Court Judge Khalid bin Ali al-Obaidli, and toured the court's halls, where he reviewed the effective operation mechanisms the court pursues, along with its critical role in creating a judicial environment conducive to investment. At the premises of the Court of Appeal and Cassation, Dr al-Wais was briefed on the experience of the constant digital transformation journey to bolster justice systems, through a presentation that pitched the key steps the Supreme Judiciary Council takes to accelerate the judicial proceedings and ensure swift and effective justice. The presentation was delivered by Judge Khaled al-Mansoori, a vice-president at the Court of Appeal, with President of the Court of Appeal, Judge Sultan Matar al-Dosari, in attendance. Upon wrapping up the visit, both sides underscored the depth of relations between Qatar and Syria, along with the outcome of this visit in terms of a joint commitment to forging both legal and judiciary co-operation and sharing expertise. **(QNA)**

President of National Cybersecurity Agency meets British PM's AI adviser



HE the President of the National Cybersecurity Agency Eng Abdulrahman bin Ali al-Farahid al-Malki met with UK Prime Minister's AI adviser and Chief Technology Officer of the UK AI Security Institute, Jade Leung. The meeting discussed the agency's efforts to enhance cybersecurity at the national and international levels, highlighting its initiatives in the field of artificial intelligence through the issuance of 'Guidelines for Secure Adoption and Usage of Artificial Intelligence'. **(QNA)**

CRA launches updated in-building telecom infrastructure standards

QNA
Doha

The Communications Regulatory Authority (CRA) has announced the launch of the updated In-Building Telecommunications Infrastructure Standards, a set of mandatory guidelines designed to strengthen Qatar's digital foundations and ensure future-ready connectivity across all building types.

The updated standards establish a detailed framework that covers in-building wiring systems and mobile solutions, applicable to both new developments and existing properties.

By simplifying and standardising procedures, the guidelines reduce administrative burdens and enable faster, more reliable deployment of in-building telecommunications infrastructure. This will benefit residential, commercial, and governmental facilities

alike, supporting Qatar's growing demand for seamless connectivity.

These standards include enhancing the quality of telecommunications services to ensure a better consumer experience.

This includes access to higher Internet speeds, improved speed and quality for IPTV services, reliable mobile coverage, HD voice calls, as well as facilitating the adoption of smart building solutions in homes, workplaces, and public facilities.

Service Providers will gain greater efficiency with streamlined processes and reduced challenges in deploying infrastructure. Similarly, real estate developers will benefit from clear, standardised requirements that ensure smoother approval processes.

The scope of the standards extends to a wide variety of developments, including single villas, residential towers, shopping malls, warehouses, labour accommodations, and mega-projects. By set-

ting uniform guidelines across such diverse projects, CRA is ensuring that all types of buildings in Qatar are equipped to deliver advanced telecommunications services.

The standards emphasise early collaboration between Service Providers and real estate developers. This approach is designed to address construction design complexities from the outset, avoid costly implementation delays, and secure the development of robust, high-performance telecommunications infrastructure.

This initiative also aligns with the goals of Qatar National Vision 2030 and CRA's ongoing strategy to promote connectivity, collaboration, and digital transformation within the country's ICT sector.

By setting these updated benchmarks, CRA is helping to create a digital environment that enables innovation, strengthens the economy, and enhances the quality of life for people across Qatar.



the Administrative Excellence Awards, namely in the categories of proactive administrative employee, distinguished administrative co-ordinator, and outstanding customer service employee, for their significant contributions to administrative achievements and the enhancement of the work environment.

Manager of the Human Re-

sources Department at Kahramaa, Najlaa al-Buanain, stated that organising such events reflects Kahramaa's commitment to boosting co-operation and sharing expertise among staff.

She added that these events largely contribute to enhancing performance quality and ensuring its sustainability based on the highest standards.

Transport ministry urges use of ‘Park and Ride’ spaces

The Ministry of Transport (MoT) has reminded the public to make use of the ‘Park and Ride’ spaces to explore key areas.

MoT, in an X post, said they can park their vehicles at the parking spaces and move around by using the public transit system.

The ‘Park and Ride’ spaces are available adjacent to Doha Metro

stations at four locations in Al Wakra, Al Qassar, Lusail and Education City. These places can accommodate over 1,000 vehicles.

These spaces are aimed at encouraging vehicle owners to use public transportation systems to and from their destinations to save time and cost, and further improve the services on public roads and at major intersections by achieving

smoother traffic flow, less congestion and fewer carbon emissions.

It also adds a significant enhancement to Qatar’s public transportation network and Doha Metro services for citizens, residents, visitors and fans during major tournaments.

The MoT set up ‘Park and Ride’ as part of its Public Bus Infrastructure Programme, fully equipped with an

infrastructure that facilitates the operation of eco-friendly e-buses as part of achieving the goals of the Qatar National Vision 2030.

The programme consists of eight bus stations at Al Sudan, Msheireb, Al Gharrafa, Lusail, Al Wakra, Education City, Industrial Area, and West Bay Central and four bus depots in Lusail, the New Industrial Area, Al Wakra, and Al Rayyan.



All these facilities are supported with over 650 charging stations for e-bus operations. The programme also featured the development of more than 2,300 bus stops in and outside of Doha City.

The programme was implemented to provide an integrated, sustainable public transit network that covers all urban areas across the country and forms a coherent transportation unit that includes public buses, Doha Metro, and tram networks.

‘Back-to-School’ offers unveiled on Infiniti premium SUVs

Saleh Al Hamad Al Mana Co, the authorised distributor of Infiniti in Qatar, has introduced a range of exclusive ‘Back-to-School’ offers on its premium SUV lineup.

Until October 15, customers can benefit from attractive monthly instalments on 2025 models starting from QR3,099 for the QX50, QR3,499 for the QX55, QR4,350 for the QX60, and QR5,999 for the QX80, a statement said.

Exclusive benefits on 2025 Infiniti QX50, QX55, and QX60 include, 20% down payment, zero-interest financing for three years, with the option of monthly or quarterly instalments on QX50 and QX55 (2024-2025 models).

Additional offers feature three years of comprehensive insurance, a five-year or 300,000km Infiniti warranty (whichever comes first), free service, Huper Optik tinting, complimentary registration, and more.

For the Infiniti QX80 (2025), the offer includes zero-interest financing for three years, presenting a smart and accessible way to own a full-size luxury SUV. With just a 5% down payment, customers benefit from three years of comprehensive insurance and complimentary registration.

The package also includes Infiniti warranty for five years/300,000km (whichever comes first), and free service for five years/100,000km (whichever comes first).

Nassim Mourani, general manager of the Automotive Group at Saleh Al Hamad Al Mana Co, said: “Our ‘Back-to-School’ campaign transcends mere value; it is an invitation to experience



the distinguished peace of mind that comes with true premium quality. It is about transforming the daily commute into an elevated driving experience, ensuring every journey is conducted with effortless ease and exemplary style.”

The all-new Infiniti QX80 redefines luxury SUVs with a bold exterior featuring aerodynamic lines, dark chrome accents, and a two-tone roof. Its 22-inch wheels and advanced electronic air suspension system balance rugged durability with refined comfort.

Inside, semi-aniline leather, open-pore ash wood with metal inlays, and cutting-edge technology such as Infiniti InTouch with Google built-in and Biometric Cooling ensure ultimate sophistication.

Innovations like the Invisible Hood View, 3D Enhanced AroundView Monitor, and Smart

Rear View Mirror provide unmatched visibility and safety, while the Infiniti Light Path creates a signature illumination experience.

The three-row QX60 offers versatility for families with seating for seven and up to 75.4 cu ft of cargo space.

Powered by the 2.0L VC-Turbo engine (268hp) with 9-speed automatic transmission, it combines power and efficiency. Inside, a 12.3-inch touchscreen, wireless Apple CarPlay, Android Auto, Wi-Fi, and available second-row captain’s chairs enhance convenience. A 17-speaker Bose audio system, panoramic moonroof, and smart key features add comfort and luxury.

Powered by the innovative 2.0L VC-Turbo engine (268hp), the QX50 blends performance and efficiency with Intelligent All-Wheel Drive (AWD). The high-



lights include sliding rear seats, up to 65.1 cu ft of cargo space, dual touchscreens, wireless Apple CarPlay, Android Auto, and a wireless charging pad. Safety features such as ProPilot Assist, Forward Emergency Braking, and Blind Spot Warning are standard.

A Bose audio system and active noise cancellation complete

the refined experience. With its coupe-inspired design and sloping roofline, the QX55 is powered by the 2.0L VC-Turbo engine (268 hp) with Intelligent AWD.

The cabin features heated zero-gravity seats, dual touchscreens with wireless Apple CarPlay/Android Auto, ambient lighting, and open-pore wood trim. The

other salient features include a 16-speaker Bose Performance Series audio system ensures premium sound, and ProPilot Assist and advanced safety systems.

Infiniti’s ‘Back-to-School offers’ are available at Saleh Al Hamad Al Mana Co’s The Pearl and Salwa showrooms.



ABP launches IELTS centre in Education City

The Academic Bridge Programme (ABP), part of Qatar Foundation’s Pre-University Education, has launched its new IELTS registration and testing centre, making it the first official centre in Education City, a statement said.

The signing of an agreement between ABP and the British Council highlights the strategic initiative aimed at enabling ABP students, university students across Education City, and members of the wider community to gain direct and convenient access to IELTS registration and testing services in the heart of Education City.

Dr Saheim Khalaf al-Temimi, director of the ABP, said: “The launch of the new IELTS Testing Centre

is a strategic step that reflects ABP’s commitment to providing a comprehensive educational environment that places students’ needs at the forefront and supports them in achieving the highest levels of academic readiness.” Dr Waseem Kotoub, country director, cluster business development lead, Qatar, British Council, added: “Through this collaboration, ABP will proudly become Qatar’s first Partner Testing Point.” Dr Kotoub further noted that the IELTS test is recognised by more than 12,500 institutions in over 140 countries worldwide, with more than 4mn people taking it annually – making it the most widely used and trusted English language proficiency test globally.

‘Stamp and Currency’ exhibition begins today

The Qatar Philatelic and Numismatic Center announced the organisation of the ‘Stamp and Currency’ exhibition, in co-operation with Qatar Post.

The exhibition will begin today and continue for an entire month at the Qatar Post building. The exhibition features eight glass frames, each containing 16 panels. Seven frames are dedicated to displaying distinctive envelopes featuring the postage stamp and the country’s coin, bearing the country’s name and national flag, offering readers

an introductory overview of its culture, civilisation, and landmarks.

The exhibition paid special attention to displaying stamps from Gulf Co-operation Council (GCC) countries, as well as Arab, Islamic, and North African countries, due to their rich cultural and civilisational heritage. The exhibition will be open to the public daily, welcoming all amateurs and those interested in the world of stamps and coins to visit this unique event at the Qatar Post headquarters. (QNA)

GU-Q scholar debuts at Venice Film Festival

Georgetown University in Qatar (GU-Q) scholar and filmmaker Dr Suzi Mirgani reached a cultural milestone last weekend when her debut feature film *Cotton Queen* was screened during International Critics’ Week of the Venice Film Festival.

The film follows teenage Nafisa, who comes of age in a Sudanese cotton-farming village under the watchful eye of her grandmother, as modern ambitions clash with deep-rooted traditions.

Dr Mirgani, who creates under the moniker Suzannah Mirghani, is one of only a few Sudanese women to write and direct a feature-length drama about Sudan, and the first to do so for cinema. “There are only around ten feature length dramas ever shown in theatres by Sudanese filmmakers – none by women,” she noted.

With the war in Sudan ongoing since April 2023, the film is also a production triumph. “I waited for over a year for the war to finish so I could film in Sudan. I wanted to spend the considerable film budget in my country, but eventually chose to film in Egypt, where my Sudanese actors had taken refuge.”

Born to Sudanese and Russian parents, Dr Mirgani spent her formative years in Sudan before moving with her family to Doha at 16, where she went on to build her career as both a filmmaker and academic.

Due to the intersection of her subject matter and life in the Gulf region, the film secured support



Cotton Queen Venice premiere.

from every major film grant-maker in the Middle East – including the Doha Film Institute (DFI), Red Sea Film Fund, and the Arab Fund for Art and Culture.

“I am indebted to my mentor at DFI, Annemarie Jacir, who encouraged me to bring this story to light and became my creative producer, and the support from GU-Q, which allowed me not to have to choose between my academic and creative work,” said Mirgani.

Her filmmaking emerged from

her academic research as assistant director for publications at GU-Q’s Center for International and Regional Studies. “The idea for the film emerged from a research project on Food Security in the Middle East,” she explains, adding: “I became interested in the connections between Africa and the Gulf region, home to a large Sudanese diaspora, and how remittances and exchange have mutually contributed to development.”

Qatar to contribute \$600,000 to IAEA

QNA
Vienna

Qatar has renewed its condemnation of the treacherous Israeli attack that targeted Doha on Sept 9, and considered it a flagrant violation to its sovereignty and security and a clear breach of the UN Charter and international law.

HE the Minister of Environment and Climate Change Dr Abdullah bin Abdulaziz bin Turki al-Subaie delivered a speech at the 69th General Conference of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), held in Vienna, Austria, during which Qatar affirmed that this aggression was met with widespread rejection from the international community and widespread solidarity with Doha, which stressed that it would take all necessary measures to de-



HE Dr Abdullah bin Abdulaziz bin Turki al-Subaie

fend its sovereignty and territorial integrity and work with its partners to ensure that Israel is held accountable for the crime it has committed.

HE Dr al-Subaie announced that Qatar will make a financial contribution of \$600,000 to support the agency's resources for the period 2026-2027, expressing

the country's appreciation for the agency's efforts to enhance nuclear security and develop the peaceful uses of nuclear technologies.

He also revealed that Qatar has submitted three new national projects within the co-operation cycle 2026-2027, in addition to participating in regional projects, most notably the project to establish the largest secondary calibration laboratory of its kind in the region, with Qatari funding of €2mn in co-operation with the agency.

HE Dr al-Subaie stressed Qatar's firm position in supporting the nuclear non-proliferation regime and rejecting policies of force and threats of using nuclear weapons, calling for intensified efforts to establish a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East, given Israel's continued refusal to join the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty and subject its facilities to a

comprehensive safeguards agreement.

He pointed out the seriousness of recent Israeli statements regarding the possible use of nuclear weapons against the Palestinian people in Gaza, considering this a flagrant violation of international law and a direct threat to regional and international security.

He also noted that Qatar has made significant strides in responding to nuclear and radiological emergencies, commending IAEA's support for the country's efforts to develop nuclear safety and security strategies that ensure the protection of humans and the environment.

HE the Minister of Environment highlighted the Qatari scientific team's participation in the second International Nuclear Science Olympiad in Malaysia, pointing out that the team won three medals.

Amir sends congratulations to leaders of Papua New Guinea, Mexico, Nicaragua, Costa Rica and El Salvador

His Highness the Amir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani and His Highness the Deputy Amir Sheikh Abdullah bin Hamad al-Thani sent yesterday cables of congratulations to Governor-General of the Independent State of Papua New Guinea Sir Bob Dadae on the anniversary of his country's Independence Day. HE the Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman bin Jassim al-Thani sent a similar cable of congratulations to Prime Minister James Marape. ●His Highness the Amir, His Highness the Deputy Amir and HE the Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs sent yesterday cables of congratulations to Mexican President Claudia Sheinbaum on the anniversary of her country's Independence Day. ●His Highness the Amir, His

Highness the Deputy Amir and HE the Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs sent on Monday cables of congratulations to President of Nicaragua Daniel Ortega Saavedra on the anniversary of his country's Independence Day. ●His Highness the Amir, His Highness the Deputy Amir and HE the Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs sent on Monday cables of congratulations to President of Costa Rica Rodrigo Chaves Robles on the anniversary of his country's Independence Day. ●His Highness the Amir, His Highness the Deputy Amir and HE the Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs sent on Monday cables of congratulations to President of El Salvador Nayib Bukele on the anniversary of his country's Independence Day. (QNA)



Seminar on sanitation to Mark World Cleanup Day

The Ministry of Municipality, represented by the Public Services Affairs Sector, yesterday organised a dialogue seminar on sanitation as the responsibility of all, as part of the activities observing World Cleanup Day.

The seminar was intended to shine a spotlight on the criticality of sanitation as a national value and communal culture, in addition to fostering partnership between government agencies, the private sector, and civil society so as to promote this culture through dialogue, sharing expertise, and pitching successful initiatives.

Public sanitation is a national priority and a civilised conduct that demonstrates the tenets of Qatari society, said Assistant Undersecretary for Public Services Affairs at the Ministry of Municipality, Engineer Abdullah Ahmed al-Karani, before stressing the importance of having an all-hands-on-deck approach on the part of community members to preserve the environment and enhance life quality across Qatari areas.

He pointed out that marking this event is an opportunity to renew commitment to sanitation values, respect public places, and appreciate the efforts of those operating in this critical field.

Participants at the seminar emphasised that sanitation is a collective responsibility that requires a whole-of-government approach in collaboration with civil society and the private sector. They called for further practical initiatives to ingrain the notion of sanitation in the community, thereby backing the Sustainable Development Goals

(SDGs) and Qatar National Vision 2030.

The Member of the Shura Council, Khalid bin Abas Kamal al-Emadi, underlined the importance of enacting legislations and regulations that promote positive conduct and impose corporate social responsibility to maintain public sanitation.

Assistant Director of the Command and Control Center at Diar Qatar Company, Eman al-Fadala, noted the role undertaken by the private sector in backing national initiatives in connection with sanitation through investing in smart solutions and sustainable technologies to enhance the urban environment.

It is important to consolidate sanitation values within families and the community alike, as part and parcel of moral and religious education, in addition to inculcating these values in young people, said Dr Ayesh al-Qahtani, Islamic Preacher and Expert in Family Relations.

For his part, Dr Mohamed Saif al-Kuwari, environmental expert and international ambassador for social responsibility, highlighted the current environmental challenges. All efforts of institutions and the community should be energised to reinforce sustainability and protect the environment through daily responsible behaviours, he added.

Director of the Public Cleanliness Department at the Ministry of Municipality Muqbil Madhour al-Shammari, elaborated on the ministry's efforts in advancing awareness campaigns and enhancing field services to ensure a sanitised and secure environment. (QNA)

Minister of Environment meets world officials

HE Minister of Environment and Climate Change Dr Abdullah bin Abdulaziz bin Turki al-Subaie, held separate meetings with several international officials on the sidelines of the 69th General Conference of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), taking place in Vienna, Austria.

During his meeting with Chief Executive Officer of the Nuclear and Radiological Regulatory Commission of Saudi Arabia Dr Khalid al-Issa, the

two sides discussed co-operation in regulatory oversight of nuclear and radiological activities, national emergency plans, and the exchange of expertise in these areas.

In his meeting with Finland's Minister of Climate and Environment Sari Multala, they discussed bilateral co-operation in environmental and climate-change fields and explored ways to strengthen environmental partnerships to support shared sustainability goals.

HE the Minister also met

with Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary in the US Department of Energy's Office of Nuclear Energy Dr Michael Goff, and IAEA Deputy Director General and Head of the Department of Nuclear Safety and Security Karine Hervieu.

Both meetings focused on opportunities for co-operation in the peaceful uses of nuclear energy and its role in supporting efforts to combat climate change and advance the transition to clean energy sources. (QNA)



Public cleanliness: ministry to launch smart containers project

Qatar attaches great importance to public hygiene management as a key element in improving the quality of life and preserving the environment.

This is achieved by launching sustainable initiatives and programmes and adopting innovative solutions that contribute to enhancing environmental awareness, encouraging community participation, and developing infrastructure for waste management and recycling, in line with the objectives of the National Strategy and Qatar National Vision 2030.

In this context, the Ministry of Municipality is working to introduce technology into public



Director of the Public Cleanliness Department Muqbil Madhour al-Shammari.

cleanliness management through qualitative projects, especially smart containers. The experiment was first implemented in Al Wakra Municipality, with plans to gradually expand to cover all areas of the

country in the coming years. This will ensure automated cleanliness operations are managed and smart systems are adopted to track and monitor work with high efficiency and accuracy.

Director of the Public Cleanliness Department at the Ministry of Municipality Muqbil Madhour al-Shammari said that the smart containers experiment will soon be implemented in the municipalities of Doha and Al Rayyan, as well as the northern areas, making all cleanliness management operations fully electronic. This will contribute to raising the quality of services and enhancing the well-being of people in Qatar.

Al-Shammari noted that the

ministry is relying on several initiatives to promote a culture of cleanliness, including the "Zero Waste" campaign to raise awareness in schools, neighbourhoods, and public areas, and the Friends of the Municipality initiative to encourage community participation in environmental protection and waste sorting at the source. He indicated that the ministry has expanded the scope of its initiatives to include other cities, with about 11,000 recycling containers distributed in Doha, collecting about 2,183 tonnes of recyclable waste. Meanwhile, 12,226 containers were distributed in Al Rayyan and the northern regions in co-operation with private sector companies. (QNA)



Gulf Contracting Co. WLL Announces the Sale of Used Vehicles, Equipment, & Machines by Auction on As Is, Where Is Basis

Auction No: GCC/135/2025

Auction Documents Collection Date	Auction Documents Fee	Technical Submission Date	Commercial Submission Date	Auction Bid Bond	Auction Performance Bond
From 15/09/2025 to 22/09/2025	QAR2000 Non-refundable	29/09/2025	02/10/2025	QAR100,000	QAR200,000

1-

Auction documents and the terms & conditions can be collected from Spacemaker Factory located in New Industrial Area, Building#64, Street#3, against a fee of QAR2000 paid in cash at the Company's Cashier. Auction Documents Collection Date is from 15/09/2025 to 22/09/2025, from 8:30am to 3:30pm.

2-

Auction documents can be reviewed (prior to purchasing the same) to allow bidders to confirm suitability of the auction to the bidders' services.

3-

No individuals or middlemen shall be allowed to participate in this Auction, which is restricted to registered companies only.

4-

Companies interested to participate in the auction has to collect the auction documents by submitting an authorization letter for the person who will collect the documents (should be under the bidder's sponsorship), along with copy of his QID, Company CR, Tax Card, Commercial Licence, Establishment Card, company's owner QID, National Address Certificate (all valid) and an official email address for communication. The Auction Documents will not be given to any company unless the said Documents Fee is paid and the required documents stated above are provided in full and valid.

5-

The auction items will be sold on As Is, Where Is Basis, and subject to the Auction's Terms & Conditions.

6-

Viewing of the auction items, which is limited to the companies who obtained the auction documents only, will be on 15/09/2025 to 25/09/2025, from 8:30am to 3:30pm, except for Fridays. The location for viewing the items is specified in the Auction's Terms & Conditions.

7-

Technical submission, auction bid bond submission, and performance bond submission shall be on 29/09/2025 as stated in the Auction's Terms & Conditions.

8-

Commercial submission shall be on 02/10/2025 at 10:00AM. The commercial submission will be at Spacemaker Factory located in New Industrial Area, Building#64, Street#3.

9-

All communications/clarifications/follow-ups/updates related to this Auction is through this email: GCCA135@gulfcontracting.com. The bidders are strictly prohibited from communicating with Gulf Contracting and its staff through any other channels (visits, calls, SMS or WhatsApp messages ...etc). Should a bidder fail to comply, this might lead to disqualification from this Auction.

Note:

No offer will be accepted unless the Auction's Terms & Conditions are accepted by signing and stamping the same, as well as the required documents are provided in full. Likewise, offers will not be accepted after the specified Closing date and time.



QNA
Dubai

Qatar Post has received three prestigious international awards from the Universal Postal Union (UPU) and the EMS Co-operative during the 28th Universal Postal Congress in Dubai.

Qatar Post was awarded the "Gold Level in Performance" in recognition of its excellence in delivering international EMS services, as well as the "Customer

Care Award" for outstanding performance in supporting customers across the global EMS network.

The Gold Level is granted only to operators who meet the highest performance indicators and adhere to the strict technical standards set by the EMS Co-operative.

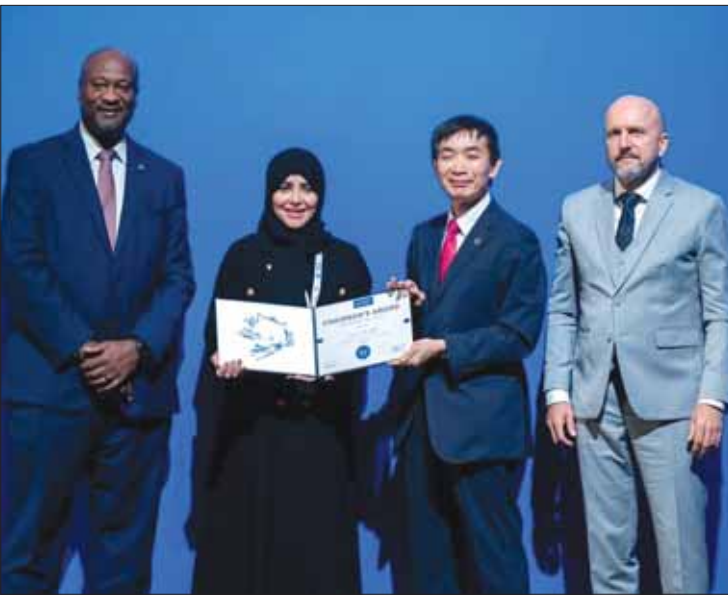
The Customer Care Award was based on the efficient use of the UPU's i-Care system, with high responsiveness and quality handling of EMS inquiries.

Additionally, Qatar Post received the "2025 Postal Security Group's

Chairman's Award", presented by the Universal Postal Union, in recognition of its outstanding efforts and leadership in developing postal security policies and implementing global best practices.

These combined awards reflect Qatar Post's continued commitment to enhancing the quality of postal services, achieving sustainability, and advancing operational security both locally and internationally. They are part of a broader strategic vision aimed at reinforcing Qatar's position on the global postal map.

Qatar Post wins top awards



WISE launches new Edtech Accelerator cohort to transform global learning

The World Innovation Summit for Education (WISE), an initiative of Qatar Foundation, has announced the launch of a new cohort of its WISE Edtech Accelerator, introducing eight pioneering startups from around the world that are redefining the future of learning.

Selected from over 300 applicants, these ventures represent bold solutions to some of education's most pressing challenges. This year, the Accelerator introduces two tracks: a global track, supporting impactful Edtech ventures worldwide, and a local track, dedicated to nurturing startups ready to scale in Qatar's dynamic education ecosystem.

Since its inception, the WISE Edtech Accelerator has been a catalyst for education innovation, providing startups with world-class mentorship, strategic support, and access to Qatar's thriving education ecosystem.

"Edtech is no longer a luxury. It is essential to unlocking opportunity at scale," said Stavros N Yiannouka, CEO of WISE. "This year's cohort reflects a powerful mix of local and global innovators, each tackling systemic challenges in education with creativity, technology, and purpose."

This year's programme welcomes regional innovators such as AlGooru, a fast-growing tutoring platform in Saudi Arabia, alongside iSchool and SkillUp MENA, working to build digital skills and foster a stronger learning culture across the region. Spanning continents and focus areas, the ventures collectively



showcase a global impact: Wonderly equips teachers worldwide to teach coding, Nyansapo AI empowers African schools with AI-based tools, Xertify reimagines digital credentials globally, Musa transforms WhatsApp chats into learning experiences across Latin America and Africa, and InvestEd unlocks education financing for students in the Philippines.

To mark the start of this year's programme, WISE convened a session, organised with the support of the Qatar Fund for Development (QFFD), spotlighting the eight startups of the new Accelerator cohort and featuring a fireside chat between Aurelio Amaral, director of programmes at WISE, and Rwodah al-Naimi, Investment Department Manager at QFFD.

Aurelio noted: "One thing that is quite unique about Qatar – even though it's a smaller country

compared to others in the region – is that we offer an ecosystem that enables startups to engage locally and make the case for the viability of their product. QF and the broader ecosystem here can offer a lot of research, testing and networking opportunities."

"Education is a tool that must be invested in, as it serves as a catalyst to bridge gaps often widened by conflict and natural disasters. At QFFD, we are committed to supporting grassroots solutions that generate real impact, addressing modern-day education challenges in developing countries and empowering vulnerable communities, and we are happy to see the startups of this new WISE Accelerator cohort bring forward targeted solutions to local gaps in education and amplify their impact by harnessing technology, investing in a brighter, more resilient future," al-Naimi said.

Dukhan Bank's limited-time home finance campaign launched

Dukhan Bank has launched a limited-time 'Home Finance campaign', offering an exceptional profit rate of 4.5% per year, one of the most competitive in the market today.

Running until October 14, the campaign is tailored to help customers take the next step towards home ownership with greater ease and flexibility. Eligible applicants can benefit from financing starting from QR1mn, with a minimum tenure of 10 years, along with a 12-month grace period, swift approvals, and comprehensive Takaful (Islamic insurance) coverage.

The initiative reflects Dukhan Bank's continued commitment to placing customers at the heart of its offerings, providing them with practical, Shariah-compliant solutions that align with their evolving financial needs.

As home ownership remains one of the most important milestones for individuals and families, Dukhan Bank said it "is proud to support customers in achieving this goal through accessible financing that combines value, trust, and long-term benefit."

This campaign is also a testament to Dukhan Bank's broader strategic vision; delivering innovative Islamic banking products that support economic empowerment and financial well-being.

By pairing competitive pricing with efficient processing and



transparent terms, the bank continues to reinforce its leadership in the Islamic banking sector and its role in supporting Qatar's aspirations for inclusive growth.

Customers can apply or learn more by visiting www.dukhanbank.com, contacting the Dukhan Bank Contact Center at 800 8555, or using the Dukhan Mobile App.



Sheikh Hamad Award for Translation and International Understanding delegation, including the Award's Executive Director, Labib El-Nahhas, Media Officer, Abdulrahman al-Marri, and media team members, Laila Mohammed and Mohammed al-Damiri, visiting the Chinese embassy in Doha, where they met with the Charge d'Affaires, Wang Ying, to celebrate the selection of Chinese as one of the languages of the 12th edition of the Award for 2026, and as part of preparations for a major cultural tour to China.

Qatar Charity highlights outreach to over 2mn on World Patient Safety Day

On World Patient Safety Day, observed today, Qatar Charity (QC) has recalled its successful implementation of 12 impactful health initiatives over the past five years – from May 2021 to 2025 – benefiting more than 2.1mn beneficiaries across 23 countries, with a total cost of approximately QR129mn.

'Alquloob Alrahimah' (Compassionate Hearts), aimed at reducing mortality and disability caused by congenital heart defects in children. Implemented in nine countries including Ghana, Bangladesh, Pakistan, and Somalia, it benefitted 800 children.

Ibsar (Eyesight) initiative focused on treating cataract-related vision impairment, especially among children and the elderly. Implemented in 14 countries such as Yemen, Jordan, Tanzania, and Burkina Faso, it reached 18,516 patients.

Sinaeat Alibtisamah (Making a Smile) conducted corrective surgeries for children with cleft lip and palate. The initiative benefited 836 children in many countries including Jordan, Pakistan, Somalia, and Ghana.

Man Ahyaha (Whoever Saves a Life) benefitted thousands of children under five suffering from acute malnutrition, particularly in crisis zones, including Yemen, Somalia, and Ghana.

The Non-Communicable Dis-



ease Treatment initiative, to reduce complications from chronic illnesses such as diabetes and hypertension, was implemented in six countries including Senegal, Jordan, and Tanzania, and benefitted 10,200 patients.

Big Hearts offered diagnostic and therapeutic catheterisation services for 183 heart patients, especially the elderly in Yemen, Syria, and Bangladesh. The Kidney Failure Support initiative served 5,050 patients monthly in Yemen, Pakistan, India, Morocco, and Jordan by equipping dialysis centres with modern devices and training medical staff.

The 'I Hear You' project provided hearing aids to 611 children in Syria, Tanzania, and Kyrgyzstan. The Planting Hope

initiative enabled kidney transplants for 60 needy patients in Yemen.

Under the Health Facility Construction initiative, hospitals and health centres were built and equipped in 15 developing countries including Sudan, Tunisia, Somalia, and Mali, serving 2,044,774 people.

The Prosthetic Limbs initiative supplied free prosthetic limbs to 992 individuals who lost limbs due to war or accidents in Pakistan, Yemen, Jordan, and Syria.

The Cancer Patient Treatment initiative provided diagnostic services, chemotherapy, surgical treatment, and psychosocial support for 560 individuals in Yemen, Jordan, and Mauritania.

Sheikh Hamad Award team on visit to China

By Tawfik Lamari
Staff Reporter

A delegation of the Sheikh Hamad Award for Translation and International Understanding is on an official visit to China from Sept 16 to 25, following the adoption of Chinese as one of the languages of the 2026 edition of the award.

The visit aims to strengthen the presence of the award in the Chinese academic and cultural scene and open new horizons for co-operation with universities, research centres, and cultural institutions. It also seeks to highlight the role of translation as a bridge for cultural communication and consolidate the award's position as a leading international platform for translation and understanding between peoples.

The first phase of the visit to Beijing includes a diverse programme combining academic and cultural activities. The delegation will meet with a group of translators and academics working in the field of translation, including previous Chinese winners from the 2018 and 2021 editions, which honoured the Chinese language.

The visit will also include tours of prominent academic and cultural institutions in translation and Arabic studies, such as the



Confucian Studies Association, Peking University, and the University of Languages and Culture. The delegation will also explore ancient cultural landmarks, including the Forbidden City and the Great Wall of China.

However, the highlight will be the academic conference to be held at the Beijing Foreign Studies University on Sept 18, titled "The Reality and Challenges of the Arabic-Chinese Translation Movement." This symposium is of exceptional importance as it is the first event of its kind to be held in China on the Arabic-Chinese translation movement organised by a non-Chinese institution, making it a global cultural pre-

cedent that reflects the award's pioneering role as an international platform for dialogue and cultural communication.

During the second stop, the delegation will travel to Shanghai, where it will meet with a number of translators and institutions working in the field of cultural exchange between Arabic and Chinese, as well as publishing houses interested in publishing translations from and into Arabic. An academic meeting will also be held with professors and students from the Shanghai International Studies University to discuss the challenges facing the Arabic-Chinese translation movement and explore ways to develop and advance it.



The Voice of Hind Rajab (Tunisia, France) by award-winning director Kaouter Ben Hania.

DFF 2025 to open with The Voice of Hind Rajab

Doha Film Institute (DFI) announced that the 2025 Doha Film Festival (DFF), being held from November 20-28, will open with *The Voice of Hind Rajab* (Tunisia, France) by award-winning director Kaouter Ben Hania.

A recipient of DFI's grants programme, the film captures the final moments of an innocent child, Hind Rajab, whose voice shook the conscience of the world. The film won the Silver Lion Grand Jury Prize at the recently concluded 82nd Venice Film Festival.

In a press statement, festival

director and DFI CEO Fatma Hassan Alremiahi said: "To open our festival with *The Voice of Hind Rajab* is to honour truth – fragile, heartbreaking, and urgent. Hind's voice, trembling yet unyielding, speaks to every one of us. It is the story of all children, women, and men of Palestine whose lives have been shattered by violent aggression of the Israeli occupation and whose resilience continues to inspire global conscience".

Hollywood luminaries, including Brad Pitt, Joaquin Phoenix, Rooney

Mara and Alfonso Cuarón have joined on board as executive producers, and the film will represent Tunisia at the 98th Academy Awards.

Ben Hania has established herself as one of the Arab world's most compelling filmmakers. Her remarkable journey includes studies at Tunisia's Ecole des Arts et du Cinema and Paris's prestigious La Fémis.

DFF will be held at locations across Doha, including Katara Cultural Village, Msheireb Downtown Doha, and the Museum of Islamic Art.

Arab Parliament welcomes outcomes of summit in Doha

QNA
Cairo

The Arab Parliament welcomed the outcomes of the Emergency Arab-Islamic Summit, which was held in Doha.

The Arab Parliament affirmed that the summit reflected the unity of the Arab and Islamic ranks in confronting the arrogance of the Israeli entity. In a statement, Presi-

dent of the Arab Parliament Mohamed bin Ahmed al-Yamahi praised the summit's outcomes, saying that they embodied a unified Arab and Islamic stance against the brutal aggression carried out by the occupying entity against Qatar, as well as a rejection of the ongoing genocide committed against the Palestinian people for the past two years.

Al-Yamahi also praised the summit's Final Communique for its full support of Qatar, its rejection of any attempts to

target the country, and its call for unified solidarity with Qatar in responding to any threats to its sovereignty or security and in all measures it takes to respond to this brutal aggression. This comes from a deep belief in the unity of the Arab and Islamic destiny and the necessity of preserving regional stability, he added.

President of the Arab Parliament also lauded the Final Communique's strong and clear positions expressing the collective will of Arab and Islamic states to

support the Palestinian people and their just cause, urging the international community to fulfil its legal and humanitarian responsibilities to stop the war of genocide and ethnic cleansing perpetrated by the occupation, and to hold it accountable before international courts.

He affirmed that this summit represented a unified voice of the Arab and Islamic worlds against the arrogance of the occupying entity and sent a strong message to the international community on

the urgent need to act to stop the occupation's crimes and impose deterrent measures. He stressed that the Arab Parliament will continue to support all collective Arab and Islamic positions and will work in international parliamentary forums to reinforce these outcomes in defence of the just causes of the Arab and Islamic nations, foremost among them the Palestinian cause, and in support of the sovereignty and security of Qatar and all Arab and Islamic states.

Israel troops launch ground offensive on Gaza City

AFP
Gaza City

Israel launched its long-anticipated ground offensive in Gaza City yesterday, targeting Hamas fighters and prompting widespread international alarm, with the UN condemning it as "carnage".

A United Nations probe charged Israel with committing "genocide" in the Palestinian territory and accused Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and other senior officials of incitement.

The Israeli military unleashed a massive bombardment of Gaza City overnight as its troops moved deeper into the territory's largest urban hub.

"Over the past 24 hours, following extensive discussions with the political echelon, the IDF (military) has significantly expanded its operation in Gaza City," said army chief Lieutenant General Eyal Zamir.

"We are operating deep in the area, combining ground troops, precision strikes and high-quality intelligence. Our objective is to enhance the strikes on Hamas until its decisive defeat."

UN chief Antonio Guterres said Israel was "determined to go up to the end".

Israel was "not open to a serious negotiation for a ceasefire, with dramatic consequences from Israel's point of view," he said.

The military estimated there were 2,000-3,000 Hamas fighters in central Gaza City, an army official told journalists.

It said about 40% of Gaza City residents had left and moved to the territory's south, the official added. An AFP journalist saw many people, including children, sleeping in front of a hospital in Gaza City after fleeing from their homes.

"The people do not have money to move to the south or even to move internally," said Youssef



Displaced Palestinians move with their belongings southwards on a road in the Nuseirat refugee camp area in the central Gaza Strip following renewed Israeli evacuation orders for Gaza City, yesterday.



Smoke rises from Gaza after an explosion, as seen from the Israeli side of the border with Gaza, yesterday.

Shanaa, who had taken refuge at a hospital.

People spoke of relentless bombing in Gaza City, much of which is already in ruins after nearly two years of Israeli strikes.

Only huge piles of rubble remained of a residential block in the north of the city hit by overnight bombing.

"Why kill children sleeping safely like that, turning them into body parts?" said Abu Abd

Zaquout. "We pulled the children out in pieces."

The assault was "systematic ethnic cleansing targeting our people in Gaza", Hamas said in a statement.

US President Donald Trump accused Hamas of using hostages as human shields.

"I hear Hamas is trying to use the old human shield deal, and if they do that they're going to be in big trouble," he said.

Israel struck Yemen's Houthis-held Hodeidah port yesterday, saying it targeted a military infrastructure site of the rebel group, which has fired missiles at Israel since the outbreak of war in Gaza.

Later the military said it intercepted a missile launched from Yemen.

Gaza's civil defence, a rescue force operating under Hamas authority, said at least 44 people had been killed by Israeli fire yesterday.

Media restrictions in the territory and difficulties in accessing many areas mean AFP is unable to independently verify the details provided by the civil defence or the Israeli military.

The European Union said the assault on Gaza City would worsen an already "catastrophic" humanitarian situation, while Britain said it would bring only "more bloodshed, kill more innocent civilians and endanger the remaining hostages".

Despite the growing criticism, US Secretary of State Marco Rubio, who visited Israel at the weekend, offered robust backing for the offensive as he met Netanyahu.

UN investigators say Israel committing genocide in Gaza

AFP
Geneva

United Nations investigators yesterday accused Israel of committing genocide in Gaza in a bid to "destroy the Palestinians", accusing Israel's prime minister and other top officials of incitement.

The UN Independent International Commission of Inquiry (COI), which does not speak on behalf of the world body, found that "genocide is occurring in Gaza", commission chief Navi Pillay said.

"The responsibility lies with the State of Israel." The bombshell report, immediately slammed by Israel, marks the first time a UN-mandated investigative body has concluded the country is committing genocide.

Israel has since the start of the war in Gaza faced genocide accusations from NGOs and independent UN experts.

The UN itself has not labelled the situation in Gaza a genocide, but Pillay said she believed the facts presented by the commission should prompt "high-level leaders at the United Nations also to call this what it is, the genocide".

After the report was published, UN rights chief Volker Turk said it was up to the courts to deter-

mine whether genocide was taking place, but warned: "We see the evidence mounting." Israel "categorically" rejected yesterday's report, with the foreign ministry describing it as "distorted and false" and calling "for the immediate abolition of this Commission of Inquiry". The commission published its latest report nearly two years after the war erupted in Gaza following Hamas's October 2023 storming of Israel.

Israel's retaliatory campaign has displaced virtually the entire Gaza population and has killed nearly 65,000 people, according to figures from the health ministry in Hamas-run Gaza that the UN considers reliable.

The report came as Israel yesterday launched a ground assault on Gaza City, where the UN has declared a full-blown famine.

The COI concluded that Israeli authorities and forces had since October 2023 committed "four of the five genocidal acts" listed in the 1948 Genocide Convention.

These are "killing members of the group, causing serious bodily or mental harm to members of the group, deliberately inflicting on the group conditions of life calculated to bring about its physical destruction in whole or in part, and imposing measures intended to prevent births within the group".

Luxembourg says will recognise Palestinian State

Luxembourg has said it will join a raft of countries recognising the State of Palestine at a United Nations summit in New York next week, AFP reported from Brussels.

French President Emmanuel Macron is spearheading the drive on recognising a Palestinian state as international condemnation grows of Israel over its nearly two-year offensive in Gaza. Speaking to journalists late Monday, Luxembourg's Prime Minister Luc Frieden said that "the situation on the ground has deteriorated considerably in recent months".

"A movement is now emerging in Europe and around the world to demonstrate that the two-state solution is still relevant," Frieden said. "That is why the Luxembourg government intends to join those who recognise the State of Palestine at next week's conference on the two-state solution." Countries including Britain, Australia, Canada and Belgium have said they plan to recognise a Palestinian state at the meeting at the UN General Assembly.

16 nations issue statement on safety of 'Global Sumud Flotilla'

Foreign ministers from Qatar, Bangladesh, Brazil, Colombia, Indonesia, Ireland, Libya, Malaysia, the Maldives, Mexico, Pakistan, Oman, Slovenia, South Africa, Spain, and Türkiye have expressed their concern over the safety of the "Global Sumud Flotilla", a civil society initiative involving citizens from various countries.

In a joint statement, the ministers noted that the "Global Sumud Flotilla" aims to deliver humanitarian aid to the Gaza Strip, raise awareness of the urgent humanitarian needs of the Palestinian people, and call for an end to the war in Gaza. The governments of these countries

share these objectives — peace and the provision of humanitarian assistance — while reaffirming their commitment to upholding international law, including international humanitarian law. The ministers further called on all parties to refrain from any illegal or violent actions against the fleet and to respect international and humanitarian laws.

They also reminded that any violation of international law or human rights involving participants in the fleet, including attacks on vessels in international waters or illegal detention, will result in accountability. **(QNA)**

Billions stolen in S Sudan corruption: UN report

AFP
Nairobi

South Sudan government officials have stolen billions of dollars in oil money since the country gained independence in 2011, a United Nations report said yesterday.

The government saw oil inflows worth \$25.2bn in that time and yet "hardly any money reaches essential services" like health and education in one of the world's poorest countries, according to the report by

the Commission on Human Rights in South Sudan, acting for the UN Human Rights Council.

"Our report tells the story of the plundering of a nation," said Yasmin Sooka, chair of the commission, in a statement. "It is driving hunger, collapsing health systems and causing preventable deaths, as well as fuelling deadly armed conflict over resources," she added.

The report details "systemic government corruption and brazen predation", including in the "Oil for Roads" programme that was supposed to be a flagship development scheme.

Malawi votes for president with economic woes looming large

Reuters
Blantyre

Malawi voted yesterday in what is expected to be a close race between President Lazarus Chakwera and his predecessor Peter Mutharika, with a cost-of-living crisis and food shortages key issues for one of the world's poorest countries.

Another 15 candidates, including former President Joyce Banda, are also contesting the presidency of the landlocked southern African state, which lies mostly along the shores of a freshwater lake making up a fifth of its territory.

Analysts said the most likely scenario was a run-off between Chakwera, 70, and Mutharika, 85.

Malawi has faced economic stagnation since former pastor Chakwera was elected in 2020. A devastating cyclone and a regional drought, both linked to climate change, have wiped out crops and worsened hardship. Inflation has been above 20% for more than three years. Nearly three-quarters of Malawians live below the World Bank's poverty line of \$3



A voter (right) marks her ballot in a voting booth at the Civic Centre polling station in Lilongwe, yesterday, during Malawi's presidential and parliamentary elections.

a day. Around half the population does not get the minimum number of calories needed for adequate nutrition, according to the bank's estimates. Voters said high food prices were at the forefront of their minds. "Prices of livestock from farmers have been rising unstopably. Business is down because we have had to raise the price of a kilogram of beef to 15,000 kwacha (\$8.74) from 8,000 last year," said Patrick Tito, a butcher in the commercial capital, Blantyre.

Kenya court seeks UK citizen's arrest over woman's murder

A Nairobi court issued an arrest warrant yesterday for a British citizen in connection with the high-profile death of a young Kenyan mother whose body was found in a septic tank over a decade ago, AFP reported from Nairobi.

Agnes Wanjiru, 21, died in 2012 after she reportedly went partying with British soldiers at a hotel in central Nanyuki town, where Britain has a permanent army garrison. The Office for the Director of Public Prosecutions (ODPP) said it had informed the court "that evidence gathered links the suspect, a United Kingdom citizen, to the murder".

Nairobi High Court judge Alexander Muteti said there was "probable cause to order the arrest of the accused and his surrender before this court for his trial", granting a warrant for "one citizen and resident of the United Kingdom".

ANNOUNCEMENT

I, MOHAMMED MUSTHAEA KAVILKUTH
holder of

India Passport No. V4008054
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Colombia, Venezuela ‘failed to fight drug trafficking’

US President Donald Trump has designated countries such as Afghanistan, Bolivia, Burma (Myanmar), Colombia and Venezuela among those the United States believes to have “failed demonstrably” in upholding counter-narcotics agreements during the past year.

The decision, which could affect funding for the countries, came after Trump said the US military had carried out a strike on an alleged Venezuelan drug vessel, its second such strike in recent weeks.

“I hereby designate Afghanistan, Bolivia, Burma, Colombia, and Venezuela as having failed demonstrably during the previous 12 months to... adhere to their obligations under international counternarcotics agreements,” Trump said.

The statement featured in a presidential determination he submitted to the US Congress, which added that US assistance to the countries was “vital” to its interests.

Coca cultivation and cocaine production in Colombia have “surged to all-time records under President Gustavo Petro, and his failed attempts to seek accommodations with narco-terrorist groups only exacerbated the crisis”, the declaration said.

Petro came to office in 2022 promising agreements with armed groups, but last year pivoted his strategy, pledging to tame coca-growing regions with massive social and military intervention.

The strategy has brought little success.

Trump blamed Colombia’s political leadership for the failure to meet its drug control obligations, but thanked its security personnel for their courage.

“I will consider changing this designation if Colombia’s government takes more aggressive action to eradicate coca and reduce cocaine production and trafficking.”

Trump had previously threatened to “decertify” Petro’s drug containment efforts as ineffective and Republican lawmakers have expressed support for sharp cuts to non-military aid for the country.

Petro lamented the decision, which he said came after dozens of deaths of Colombian police, soldiers and civilians fighting trafficking.

“What we are doing does not really have to do with the Colombian people,” he said during a televised cabinet meeting.

“Rather, it is to stop American society from getting their noses dirty from the desire to work, work, work,” he added, in an apparent reference to the stimulant effects of cocaine.

Colombia’s ambassador to Washington, Daniel Garcia-Pena, told reporters last week that US funding had already been hit by the dismantling of USAID and the US could choose to cut about \$100mn of programmes not focused on drug trafficking if Trump decided to decertify Colombia.

Venezuela’s President Nicolas Maduro “leads one of the largest cocaine trafficking networks in the world”, Trump said in his determination, adding that the United States would continue to try to bring him to justice.

The Trump administration has adamantly accused Maduro of running drug trafficking organisations, allegations always vehemently denied by Caracas, which has accused Trump of seeking regime change through a military build-up in the Caribbean.

The Venezuelan communications ministry did not immediately respond to a request for comment. – **Reuters**

Trump extends delay on TikTok ban

AFP/Reuters
Washington

US President Donald Trump has extended a delay on enforcing a ban against TikTok until December 16, marking the fourth postponement of a law designed to force the app’s sale from its Chinese owner.

The announcement, made through an executive order, came despite Trump telling reporters earlier in the day that the United States and China had reached a deal over a new ownership structure for the US business of the hugely popular video-sharing app.

The extension follows previous delays issued in January, April and June as the administration navigates the complex legal and national security implications surrounding TikTok’s operations in the United States.

The delay will give ByteDance another 90 days to finalise an agreement to transfer TikTok’s American assets to US owners, suggesting much work needs to be

done to close the complex transaction.

The latest delay was set to expire today, which would have enabled a US law signed in 2024 by then-president Joe Biden to force the closure of TikTok in the United States because of its Chinese ownership.

The legislation was designed to address national security concerns over TikTok’s Chinese parent company ByteDance and its potential ties to the Chinese government.

However, Trump, whose 2024 election campaign relied heavily on social media and who has said he is fond of TikTok, put the ban on pause.

The app has faced scrutiny from US officials who worry about data collection and content manipulation.

TikTok has repeatedly denied sharing user data with Chinese authorities and has challenged various restrictions in federal court.

“We have a deal on TikTok; I’ve reached a deal with China. I’m going to speak to President Xi (Jinping) on Friday to confirm everything,” Trump told reporters

yesterday as he left the White House for a state visit to Britain.

“We have a group of very big companies that want to buy it,” Trump said, adding that he would “hate to see value like that thrown out the window”.

China also confirmed what both sides on Monday called the “framework” of a deal that would be finalised in the phone call between the two leaders.

TikTok boasts almost 2bn users globally.

A deal for the popular social media app, which counts 170mn US users, would represent a breakthrough in months-long talks between the two biggest economies as they seek to defuse a wide-ranging trade war that has unnerved global markets.

According to the *Wall Street Journal*, under the new arrangement, TikTok’s US business would be controlled by an investor consortium including cloud giant Oracle and venture capital firm Andreessen Horowitz, with the Chinese owners keeping less than 20% of the US business, in accordance with the law.

Seven former Colombian Farc leaders convicted of thousands of kidnappings

AFP/Reuters
Bogota

A Colombian court has convicted seven ex-leaders of the defunct Colombian guerrilla army Farc over the kidnappings of tens of thousands of people during the group’s half-century of war with the state.

The court, set up under an historic 2016 peace agreement between the state and Farc, ordered the seven to make reparations by engaging in eight years of activities to promote reconciliation and preserve the victims’ memories.

The former rebel leaders were also ordered to help locate missing victims of the conflict and carry out environmental work, among other methods of restorative justice.

Special Jurisdiction for Peace, known by its Spanish acronym JEP, took more than seven years to issue its findings against the leaders of Farc, a Marxist group that terrorised Colombia with a five-decade campaign of bombings, assassinations and kidnappings.

Seven former commanders, including Farc’s last leader Rodrigo Londono Echeverri, alias Timochenko, were found guilty of 21,396 kidnappings.

The seven, who were found guilty of “war crimes, torture and cruel treatment”, accepted responsibility for their acts, Judge Camilo Suarez told reporters in Bogota.

Their sentence is the maximum provided for under the peace deal.

“This sentence does not erase the suffering. But it is an act of recognition, it is the voice that recognises to Colombian society and the world that what happened was unjustifiable and inhumane,” Suarez said.

The judge said that kidnapping “became a systematic practice” under Farc that left “open wounds that persist in families, in (rural) territories and in the daily life of the country”.

The court added that the kidnap victims were mistreated and humiliated and that some were treated like slaves by the guerrillas.

Soldiers, police officers, businesspeople and political lead-

ers were all nabbed by Farc and whisked off to bases deep in the jungle, where some were kept for years.

The court is expected to rule on other cases involving former Farc commanders as well as former members of the security forces accused of murdering civilians during the state’s offensive against the guerrillas.

As part of the peace deal, Farc members agreed to confess to crimes and make reparations to the victims in exchange for being spared prison and being allowed to engage in politics.

Timochenko is currently the president of the Comunes party.

A number of politicians and paramilitaries accused of human rights abuses during the conflict have also confessed to their crimes.

The Farc’s political successor, the Comunes political party, said on X that its commitment to peace and victims’ dignity had been proven.

“The final secretariat” of the Farc “has honoured their word and will continue to do so, with contributions to truth and actions of reparations”, it said.

Trump sues New York Times for \$15bn

President Donald Trump (*pictured*) has filed a \$15bn defamation lawsuit against the *New York Times* (NYT) and book publisher Penguin Random House, his latest legal assault on major media companies he accuses of treating him unfairly.

The lawsuit filed on Monday in Florida federal court centres on a book about Trump by two *New York Times* reporters and three “false, malicious, defamatory, and disparaging” articles that he says were aimed at sabotaging his chances in the 2024 presidential election.

In a statement yesterday, the NYT said Trump’s lawsuit has no legitimate legal claims and is an attempt to stifle and discourage independent reporting.

Penguin Random House called Trump’s lawsuit meritless in a statement yesterday and said it stands by the book and its authors.

US law makes it difficult for public figures like Trump to prevail in defamation cases, requiring them to prove defendants published information they knew or should have known was false.

Trump has nonetheless mounted a flurry of legal attacks against major media outlets during his second term.

In his lawsuit, Trump accused the *New York Times* and Penguin Random House of maliciously publishing articles and a book filled with “repugnant distortions and fabrications about President Trump”.

The lawsuit cites three articles, including an editorial prior to the 2024 election saying that Trump was unfit for office, and a 2024 book titled *Lucky Loser: How Donald Trump Squandered His Father’s Fortune and Created the Illusion of Success*, which was written by two NYT reporters and published by



Penguin Random House.

Those publications harmed Trump’s business and personal reputation, thereby causing massive economic damage to his brand value and significant damage to his future financial prospects, Trump’s lawyers said in a court filing.

The filing comes after Trump threatened last week to sue the *New York Times* for its reporting on an allegedly suggestive note and drawing given to Jeffrey Epstein, the disgraced financier who died by suicide in a New York jail cell in 2019.

A copy of the alleged note was later released by US lawmakers. The Republican president has denied authoring the note.

Trump has intensified his legal attacks on the media during his second term.

In July, Trump sued the *Wall Street Journal* and its owners for \$10bn over the newspaper’s coverage of Trump’s ties to Epstein. – **AFP/Reuters**



This picture taken on November 22, 2016 shows then-president Barack Obama awarding Redford the Presidential Medal of Freedom during a ceremony in the East Room of the White House. – **Reuters**

Robert Redford dead at 89

Cinema legend Robert Redford, a screen great both in front of and behind the camera whose career spanned six decades, died early yesterday morning at his home in Utah, his publicist said. He was 89.

Redford died in his sleep, and a specific cause was not given, according to a statement by Cindi Berger, the chief executive of publicity firm Rogers & Cowan PMK.

“Robert Redford passed away on September 16, 2025, at his home at Sundance in the mountains of Utah – the place he loved, surrounded by those he loved,” she said.

Once dismissed as “just another California blond”, Redford’s charm and craggy good looks made him one of the industry’s most bankable leading men for half a century, and one of the world’s most recognisable and best-loved movie stars.

He made his movie debut in 1962 in a low-budget film called *Warhunt*, but first won attention in *Barefoot in the Park* (1967), opposite Jane Fonda.

The tousled-haired and freckled heartthrob made his breakthrough alongside Paul Newman as the affable outlaw in the Western *Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid* in 1969.

After 20 years as an actor, he moved behind the camera, becoming an Oscar-winning director and co-founding the flagship Sundance festival for aspiring independent filmmakers.

Born Charles Robert Redford Jr. on August 18, 1936, in Santa Monica, California, he was the son of an accountant.

Redford had four children with his first wife, Lola Van Wagenen, one of whom died as an infant.

He married German artist and longtime girlfriend Sibylle

Szaggars in 2009.

A household name in English-language cinema around the world, Redford won a directing Oscar for his 1980 film *Ordinary People*, as well as an honorary award in 2002.

“Robert Redford’s work as an actor, director and producer always represents the man himself: the intellectual, the artist, the cowboy,” Barbra Streisand said in 2002 when presenting him with the Lifetime Achievement honorary Oscar.

Tributes began to pour in yesterday for the screen great.

“One of the lions has passed. Rest in peace my lovely friend,” said Meryl Streep, in a brief e-mailed statement.

Jane Fonda mourned Redford, a fellow activist, as “a beautiful person in every way”.

“It hit me hard this morning when I read that Bob was gone. I can’t stop crying. He meant a lot to me and was a beautiful person in every way. He stood for an America we have to keep fighting for,” she said.

One of Redford’s most beloved roles was in the classic American political thriller *All the President’s Men* (1976), which tells the story of how two journalists exposed the Watergate scandal that brought down US president Richard Nixon.

Redford won his only nomination for the best actor Oscar when playing a 1930s con artist in *The Sting* (1973).

One of the Redford’s greatest achievements was the launch in 1985 of the Sundance Film Festival, which takes place annually in the snowy mountains of Utah.

Created to discover new filmmakers and as an antidote to Hollywood’s commercialism and lack of diversity, it has fostered leading directors such as Jim Jarmusch, Quentin Tarantino and Steven Soderbergh. – **AFP/Reuters**

Key Canada Liberal figure Freeland to leave cabinet

Chrystia Freeland, who was former Canadian prime minister Justin Trudeau’s top ally before she helped force him out, said yesterday that she is leaving the cabinet for a role focused on Ukraine.

Freeland also ran to replace Trudeau as Liberal Party leader and prime minister, but lost decisively in a March vote to Mark Carney, before joining Carney’s cabinet.

Carney said that he had asked Freeland to serve in a new role, Canada’s special representative for the reconstruction of Ukraine.

Freeland, 57, who is of Ukrainian descent and speaks the language, helped drive Canada’s hardline approach on Russia.

Ottawa has imposed a raft of sanctions on Moscow and promised Kyiv billions of dollars in aid.

Freeland said that she is leaving her role as minister for transport and internal trade “with tremendous gratitude and a little sadness”, adding that she would stay



Freeland: A great strength of democracy is that no one holds political office in perpetuity.

on in parliament but did not plan to seek another term.

“A great strength of democracy is that no one holds political office in perpetu-

ity,” she said in a statement.

The move marks an end to Freeland’s 12-year domestic political career.

Carney provided few details about Freeland’s Ukraine job, but said her previous roles as Canada’s minister of finance, foreign affairs and international trade made her “uniquely positioned” to support Kyiv.

While serving as Trudeau’s deputy prime minister and finance minister late last year, Freeland released a scathing resignation letter hours before she had been set to deliver a major economic speech on the government’s behalf.

She accused Trudeau of prioritising vote-buying gimmicks like a Christmas tax holiday instead of shoring up Canada’s finances for a looming trade war with then US president-elect Donald Trump’s incoming administration.

Freeland’s dramatic departure was seen as a key factor in pushing Trudeau to resign after a decade in power. – **AFP/Reuters**

Suspect in Charlie Kirk killing is formally charged with murder

The suspect in the murder of prominent US conservative political activist Charlie Kirk has been formally charged with his murder, prosecutors in Utah announced yesterday.

Kirk, a close ally of President Donald Trump, was shot dead last week during a speaking event on a Utah university campus.

He was the founder of the influential conservative youth political group Turning Point USA.

Authorities said 22-year-old Tyler Robinson used a rifle to shoot Kirk with a single bullet to the neck from a rooftop. He was arrested after a 33-hour manhunt.

“After reviewing the evidence that law enforcement has collected thus far, I am... charging Tyler James Robinson, age 22 with the following crimes,” Utah County attorney Jeff Gray told a press conference.

“Count one, aggravated murder, a capital offense, for intentionally or knowingly causing the death of Charlie Kirk under circumstances that created a great risk of death to others.”

Six other charges include obstruction of justice and witness tampering, allegedly for ordering his room-mate to stay silent.

“I am filing a notice of intent to seek the death penalty,” Gray added. “I do not take this decision lightly, and it is a decision I have made independently as county attorney based solely on the available evidence and circumstances and nature of the crime.”

The killing, captured in graphic video clips that went viral on the Internet, sparked denunciations of political violence across the ideological spectrum but also unleashed a wave of partisan blame-casting and concerns that Kirk’s murder might beget more bloodshed. – **AFP**

Bangladesh faces challenges on multiple fronts ahead of Yunus-led polls

AFP

Dhaka

Bangladesh has been in political turmoil since a student-led uprising forced former prime minister Sheikh Hasina to flee into exile last year, ending her 15-year autocratic rule. An interim government under Nobel-winning Muhammad Yunus has promised elections in February.

But scepticism is high in the Muslim-majority country of 170mn people, with politics fractured and violence rising. Five months before polls expected in early February 2026, alliances forged during and after Hasina's fall are splintering.

Who are the key parties?

With Hasina's former ruling Awami League banned, the main players are the Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) and the Islamist party Jamaat-e-Islami. The other key group is the National Citizen Party (NCP), formed by student leaders who spearheaded the uprising. Rivalries have fuelled fears of street clashes, while Yunus struggles to restore trust in the process.

Where does Yunus stand?

Yunus, the 85-year-old microfinance pioneer who will step down after polls, insists there is "no alternative to election". Michael Kugelman, a US-based analyst who recently visited Bangladesh, suggests some key elements "may have an interest in elections being

delayed". Yunus' personal distance from day-to-day politics, along with speculation about military involvement, has fuelled uncertainty. Recent meetings between the army chief General Waker-Uz-Zaman and top officials have heightened speculation. In a country with a long history of coups, the army retains a powerful role.

Why are groups divided?

The flashpoint is the July National Charter, a sweeping reform document that proposes a two-term limit for prime ministers, and the expansion of presidential powers. Parties have agreed on 84 reform proposals – but are divided over how the charter should be put into effect. The key dispute is over its legal weight. "The main

point of contention now is the procedure for implementing them," said Ali Riaz, vice-chairman of the National Consensus Commission. The BNP argues it cannot override the existing constitution until after elections due in February, when a new parliament could endorse it. Others want it endorsed before the polls.

Senior Jamaat leader Syed Abdullah Mohammad Taher told AFP that "people should be given a chance to share their opinions" on the reforms, meaning that "a referendum is essential".

NCP senior leader Saleh Uddin Sifat said it would be a betrayal to those who died in the uprising if there was no "legal basis" to it before elections. "We are not going to participate in the election without

our demands being fulfilled," Sifat told AFP.

What are parties arguing about?

Hasina's Awami League was banned by executive order. Jamaat wants 13 more groups barred for past ties to Hasina, including the Jatiya Party. The BNP opposes such bans, insisting any case against the Awami League should go through the courts.

"Banning any political party through executive order is not what we support," Salahuddin Ahmed of the BNP said, insisting the decision must have legal backing through the judicial process. Yunus has faced allegations of bias after meeting BNP leader Tarique Rahman in London, angering Jamaat and the NCP.

What challenges are ahead?

The interim government faces eroding law and order. Zahid Husain, former lead economist at the World Bank, described the interim government as "cordial and brave" – but also "helpless and bewildered". Rights groups Ain o Salish Kendra reported 124 mob lynchings this year, while police data show a rise in murders, rapes and robberies.

Analysts say Yunus will need full military backing to deliver credible elections, and guarantees that all parties can contest freely. Mamun Al Mostofa, professor of political science at the University of Dhaka, said for elections to be held in a timely manner, Yunus would need "unconditional and constant support of the military".

China fires water cannon at Philippine ships in S China Sea

China accuses Philippines of 'illegal' intrusion at atoll

Accuses one of Manila's boats of deliberately ramming a ship

Philippine Maritime Council says 'no truth' to accusations

Reuters

Beijing

China's Coast Guard said yesterday it fired water cannon at Philippine ships near the disputed Scarborough Shoal in the South China Sea, and the Philippines accused Beijing of "aggressive" action that injured one person.

The confrontation comes a week after China approved plans to turn the shoal into a national nature reserve, a move that defence analysts have said would test Manila's response over the 150sq km (58 sq mile) triangular chain of reefs and rocks.

The Philippine coast guard in turn accused its Chinese counterpart of harassing vessels it said

Philippines and Britain discuss troop agreement as regional tensions rise

Britain has formally expressed its intention to discuss a Visiting Forces Agreement with the Philippines, Manila's Defence Secretary Gilberto Teodoro Jr said yesterday, as Manila deepens its security ties with Western allies amid rising tensions in the South China Sea. Teodoro said Britain's Minister of State for Defence, Lord Vernon Coaker, presented a letter from British Defence Secretary John Healey during a meeting in Manila, conveying the country's intent to forge an agreement allowing the two nations to deploy troops on each other's soil, making it easier for their militaries to work together. The Department of National Defence said in a separate statement that both sides also exchanged views on the regional security situation, including developments in the South China Sea, where Philippines and China have sparred repeatedly over disputed areas. The proposed troop agreement would mirror similar arrangements the Philippines has agreed with the United States, Australia, New Zealand and Japan, reflecting shared security concerns in the Indo-Pacific region and Manila's shift toward strengthening external defence. Speaking at a congressional budget hearing, Teodoro said the Philippine Navy will receive the largest budget increase among the military services next year, with proposed funding rising by 8.3bn pesos (\$140.48mn) or 16.3%. This year's navy budget stood at 51 billion Philippine pesos. The budget boost will help prepare for the arrival of eight newly ordered frigates and fund the construction of new shipyard and dockyard facilities, Teodoro said. — Reuters

were on a humanitarian mission to support fishermen. Yesterday's encounter involved more than 10 Philippine ships, said Gan Yu, a spokesperson for China's Coast Guard, accusing the vessels of having "illegally invaded China's territorial waters of the Scarborough Shoal from different directions". In particular, he faulted Philippine government vessel 3014, saying in a statement it had "disregarded

solemn warnings from the Chinese side and deliberately rammed a Chinese coast guard vessel". "The China coast guard lawfully implemented control measures against the Philippine ships," he said.

These included measures such as verbal warnings, route restrictions and water cannon spraying, Gan said. A video released by the Chinese Coast Guard showed the bow of Philippine vessel 3014



Damage on board the BRP Datu Gumbay Piang, following an incident with a China Coast Guard vessel near Scarborough Shoal in disputed waters of the South China Sea.

making contact with a Chinese ship, damaging part of the deck railing as the Chinese coast guard ship fired water cannon at the Philippine vessel.

In a statement, the Philippine Coast Guard said it was engaged in a mission to resupply more than 35 Philippine fishing boats at the shoal when they encountered "aggressive actions" by nine Chinese vessels. The PCG later said in a separate statement that two Chinese Coast Guard ships had directed water cannons at the 3014 fisheries vessel. The "aggressive action" caused "significant damage" to the Philippine vessel and one person sustained injuries from shattered glass caused by the water cannon, it said.

Simmering tension over the shoal has led to diplomatic rows in recent years, but no incidents have escalated into armed conflict there. Each side accuses the other of provocations and trespassing in incidents featuring use of water cannon, boat-ramming and manoeuvres by China's Coast Guard that the Philippines regards as dangerously close, as well as jets shadowing Philippine aircraft there.

A spokesperson for the Philippine Maritime Council said there was "no truth" in China's statement that it had taken control measures, which it dismissed as "another case of Chinese disinform-



mation and propaganda". Analysts have said Beijing's plan to categorise the shoal as a nature reserve amounted to trying to take the moral high ground in the dispute over the atoll, known as Huangyan Island in China and Panatag Shoal in the Philippines.

The dispute is part of a contest over sovereignty and fishing access in the South China Sea, a conduit for more than \$3tn of annual shipborne commerce. China claims

almost the entire South China Sea, overlapping the exclusive economic zones of Brunei, Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines and Vietnam. Unresolved disputes have festered for years over ownership of various islands and features.

In 2016, the Permanent Court of Arbitration in the Hague ruled that China's sweeping claims in the region were not supported by international law, a decision that Beijing rejects.

Vietnam asks United States to reconsider seafood export ban

Vietnam has asked the United States to reconsider a decision that could lead to a ban on some Vietnamese seafood exports to the American market starting next year, a potential blow to an economy already hit by US tariffs.

Vietnam's Minister of Industry and Trade Nguyen Hong Dien on Monday sent a letter to US Commerce Secretary Howard Lutnick to ask for the "reconsideration" of an August decision by the US National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, which determined that some of Vietnam's fishing methods posed risks to marine mammals, the ministry said in a statement.

The United States is among Vietnam's largest seafood markets, with January-August exports rising 6.9% from a year earlier to \$1.24bn, accounting for 17.3% of Vietnam's total seafood shipments, according to Vietnam's customs data. NOAA last month notified Vietnam's agriculture ministry that it had declined to grant a "comparability finding" under the Marine Mammal Protection Act for 12 Vietnamese fishing methods, according to the statement.

"Nations whose fisheries were

denied comparability findings are prohibited from exporting fish and fish product from those fisheries into the US beginning January 1, 2026," NOAA had said earlier. The ministry statement said the ban would hurt Vietnam's key seafood exports, including tuna, swordfish, grouper, mackerel, mullet, crab and squid.

Dien said in the letter that reversing the decision would help "avoid serious disruptions in bilateral trade and protect the livelihood of hundreds of thousands of Vietnamese fishermen and labourers," according to the statement. The United States, Vietnam's largest export market, imposed a 20% tariff on Vietnamese exports starting August 7, while transshipments through Vietnam from third countries face a levy of 40%.

August exports from Vietnam to the US fell 2% from July to \$13.94bn, according to Vietnamese customs data. "Vietnam considers the United States an important trade partner ... Vietnam is committed to continuing to work closely with the United States to resolve outstanding issues in a constructive and forward-looking spirit," Dien said in the letter. — Reuters

'Nothing here': Lack of jobs forces young Nepalis abroad

AFP

Pharping, Nepal

After youth protests over corruption and joblessness toppled Nepal's parliament and left dozens dead, villagers like Santosh Sunar see their own struggles reflected in the nation's turmoil. The 31-year-old is jobless and desperately seeking work, yet he dreads the day he finds it – knowing it will likely mean splitting his family further, leaving his daughter with his mother, with his wife already abroad.

"There are no opportunities even after education," said Santosh, who lives in the rural settlement of Pharping, on the outskirts of the capital Kathmandu.

He is far from alone. A "staggering" 82 percent of Nepal's workforce is in informal employment, one in five Nepalis aged 15-24 are jobless, according to the World Bank. With few prospects at home, where GDP per capita is only \$1,447, millions of Nepalis look abroad. Remittances now account for a third of GDP, the world's fourth-highest rate. In Pharping, nearly every second household has a relative overseas. Santosh's wife Amrita, 22, is a waitress in Dubai. "We really miss each other," Santosh told AFP, who has previously worked in India's tech-hub of Bengaluru. "It's tough being away from your wife – and tougher



Members of Armed Police Force (APF) pay tribute to people, who died in last week's anti-corruption protests that toppled the government, in Kathmandu, Nepal.

knowing I'd also have to leave my mother and young daughter when I find work," he said. "But what can we do?"

More than 839,000 Nepalis left the country of 30mn to work abroad last year, according to government data. Tackling endemic corruption and unemployment tops the agenda for Nepal's new leader, 73-year-old former chief justice Sushila Karki, who was sworn in as interim prime minister on Friday. Her predecessor quit on September 9, as protesters set parliament and key government buildings on fire. Protests began a day earlier, sparked by a ban on social media, but fuelled by long-standing economic woes.

At least 72 people were killed in two days of protests, with 191 still

recovering in hospital, according to government figures. Santosh didn't take part, but said he backed what the protesters had done.

His mother, Maiya Sunar, 48, dreams of a time when the young don't have to choose between food and family. "We miss living like a family," she said. "But I also understand that the young have no choice." Her neighbour, Kamala Sunar, 40, also faces the prospect of living without her children nearby. Her younger daughter Diksha, 24, works as a housekeeper in Dubai. Now her older daughter, Rakshya, 27, a single mother to a two-year-old, hopes to follow in her sister's footsteps, leaving her daughter behind. "She has repeatedly warned me against the idea, as the hours are long and the living

conditions tough," Rakshya told AFP. "But what life would I be able to give my daughter here? There is nothing here. If I toil for a few years, and save some money for her education, maybe my daughter would have a bright future."

Sitting outside their one-room house, with unplastered brick walls painted red and white, Kamala said the thought of her daughter leaving fills her with sadness. "Most of our people our age have no option but to leave," Kamala said.

Shyam Bahadur Khatri, 69, an elected village official, said that Nepal is creating ageing villages where subsistence agriculture was the only option. "There will be no young person left even to carry the dead," he said, warning of the future.

UK pulls out all stops for Trump’s landmark second state visit

AFP
London

The UK was rolling out the red carpet yesterday for US President Donald Trump due to arrive on an historic second state visit, with security tight as protestors gear up to make their voices heard.

As wars still rage in Ukraine and the Middle East, and major economies grapple with US tariffs, Britain is hoping to woo the mercurial Trump, treating him to a huge show of pomp and pageantry.

But controversies over sex offender Jeffrey Epstein and free-speech culture wars could make for some awkward moments when Trump sits down with Britain’s embattled Prime Minister Keir Starmer.

Trump was due to arrive Tuesday evening and then head to the historic Windsor Castle on Wednesday, for a full day of lavish events.

The 79-year-old Republican has long been fascinated with the royal family and will be honoured with a carriage procession with King Charles III as well as a grand state banquet at Windsor.

The setting means he will be far away from crowds and protesters, with his schedule due to avoid London where a large anti-Trump demonstration has been called today.

Labour leader Starmer is not a natural bedfellow for right-wing firebrand Trump, but has worked



People cross the road as US and British flags line The Mall ahead of US President Donald Trump and first lady Melania Trump’s state visit to the UK, in London.

to win him over since his return to the White House in January. The visit is “a huge moment for both” men, said Evie Aspinall, director of the British Foreign Policy Group think-tank. “For Trump, the state visit is an opportunity to revel in the pomp and ceremony he loves,” she told AFP.

“For Starmer, the visit is a chance to distract from domestic discontent and shift the limelight onto international issues where he has had greater success.”

Security is being ramped up. Thames Valley Police said it has deployed its marine unit around Windsor as “part of a wide range of security measures in place, many of which will be visible to the public and others which will not.” Downing Street has said Trump’s visit would see the “un-

breakable friendship” between the countries “reach new heights”. The two nations are set to sign a raft of agreements worth £10bn (US \$13.6bn), including one to speed up new nuclear projects as well as what British officials called “a world-leading tech partnership”. Ahead of the trip, Google said it would invest £5bn in the UK in the next two years while US finance firms including PayPal and Citi Group announced they would spend £1.25bn.

Trump, whose mother was Scottish, will become the first US president to get a second state visit, after his previous one in 2019 when he met Queen Elizabeth II.

After Windsor’s pomp, politics will dominate on Thursday when Starmer hosts Trump at his coun-

UK, US to sign \$10bn of economic deals

Britain and the United States will sign more than \$10bn worth of deals in technology and nuclear projects during President Donald Trump’s state visit, UK and US officials said Monday. Trump will be accompanied by a “significant” number of US tech CEOs when he meets with British Prime Minister Keir Starmer at his country residence tomorrow, a senior US official said.

They would include the heads of chip giant Nvidia and ChatGPT-maker Open AI, US media reported. “This visit will highlight a new science and technology partnership that will include billions of dollars in new

investment,” the US official told reporters including AFP. “We’re looking at more than ten billion, perhaps tens of billions, that will take place. We know for sure that there’s definitely more than 10 but there’s a lot.” The two countries will also sign an agreement to speed up development of new nuclear power projects, the UK government said. The partnership promises faster regulatory approval and several new private-sector investment deals for nuclear projects, as the UK strives to meet net-zero carbon emissions and energy security targets.

Under the agreement, Britain and the United States will use each other’s safety assessments on new reactor designs, a move expected to cut the time to obtain a nuclear project license to two years from three or four years. Starmer said the partnership set the UK “on course to a golden age of nuclear”.

The two countries will also unveil “advances in defence technology co-operation” and connections between their top financial hubs, US officials said. King Charles III hosts Trump at Windsor Castle today before Starmer welcomes him to his Chequers residence tomorrow.

try retreat Chequers, seeking to capitalise on Britain being one of the first countries to secure a US trade deal.

Ukraine will also be a key topic. Starmer is one of a host of European leaders who have pushed Trump to keep backing Kyiv despite signs of him leaning toward Russian President Vladimir Putin.

Secretary of State Marco Rubio said Tuesday that Trump will likely meet with Ukrainian counterpart Volodymyr Zelensky next week and still hopes to broker a peace deal between Kyiv and Moscow.

First Lady Melania Trump, who is making a rare public appearance, has a separate itinerary on Thursday. She is due to take part

in an event with Queen Camilla, who is recovering from a bout of acute sinusitis which forced her to pull out attending the Duchess of Kent’s funeral on Tuesday.

Despite the pomp, tensions will be lurking in the background.

The White House said Trump would discuss “how important it is for the prime minister to protect free speech in the UK” – a topic raised by Trump’s former ally Elon Musk in a speech to a far-right rally in Britain over the weekend.

Starmer’s spokesman on Monday called Musk’s language “dangerous and inflammatory”.

Starmer desperately needs the visit to go well following a miserable few days in which some of his own Labour party members have

openly questioned whether he can remain as leader.

He has been dogged by questions over his judgement for appointing the now-sacked Peter Mandelson as ambassador to Washington despite his known friendship with Epstein.

But Rubio, on a visit to Israel, said Mandelson’s sacking “won’t change the nature of the visit”.

“It’s a big honour and they’re an important ally and partner,” Rubio said.

Trump is facing awkward scrutiny himself over his own links to the convicted sex offender.

Activists on Monday unveiled a huge portrait of Trump and Epstein on a large patch of grass outside Windsor Castle.

UK protesters in court charged with supporting Palestine Action

AFP
London

The first people charged with supporting Palestine Action after the UK government banned it as a “terror” group appeared in court in London yesterday. Hundreds of people have been arrested at protests accused of showing support for the pro-Palestinian organisation since it was proscribed by the UK government in July.

The trio who appeared on Tuesday, two of whom are in their 70s, were greeted outside Westminster Magistrates’ Court by several dozen supporters, some chanting slogans and waving Palestinian flags. Inside, more supporters packed the public gallery.

Jeremy Shippam, 72, Judit Murray, 71, and Fiona Maclean, 53, all entered not guilty pleas and were released on bail until a trial set for March 16 next year. They were arrested after a protest in Westminster on July 5, when London’s Metropolitan Police detained 41 people for allegedly supporting the group. They are accused of display-

ing an article in a public place and arousing reasonable suspicion that they are a supporter of a proscribed organisation, according to the charge sheet.

The charges come under section 13 of the Terrorism Act of 2000. They allegedly held placards reading “I oppose genocide, I support Palestine Action” prior to their arrest.

The government proscribed Palestine Action following several acts of vandalism, including against two planes at a Royal Air Force base which caused an estimated £7mn (\$10mn) in damage. At the time, Palestine Action said: “Despite publicly condemning the Israeli Government, Britain continues to send military cargo, fly spy planes over Gaza and refuel US/Israeli fighter jets.”

“Britain isn’t just complicit, it’s an active participant in the Gaza genocide and war crimes across the Middle East,” it said.

Critics of the ban, including the United Nations, have condemned it as legal overreach and a threat to free speech. Kay Wagland, a fellow protester and friend of one of those charged, told AFP the government

had banned a “non-violent direct action group as terrorist”.

“That means no one can take any physical action. The protests are about this being a bad law,” the 66-year-old retired environmental projects manager said.

Since the ban came into force, there have been multiple protests and arrests. Police said earlier this month they had arrested 890 people in one London protest on September 6, the majority under anti-terror laws.

Clive Dolphin of campaign group Defend Our Juries, which organised the protests, said each of the hundreds of cases now going through the system would take up valuable court time.

“They took a piece of cardboard, they took a sharpie and they wrote some words on it, and according to the current UK law, that makes you a terrorist,” he said after the hearing.

Protesters found guilty of section 13 offences face jail terms of up to six months and/or a fine.

Others charged under different sections of the anti-terror legislation could face jail terms of up to 14 years and/or a fine.

JLR’s factory stoppage from cyber attack stretches to three weeks

Reuters
London

Britain’s largest carmaker, Jaguar Land Rover, said a pause in production due to a cyber attack would now stretch to September 24, extending the stoppage at its British plants to more than three weeks. The luxury carmaker, owned by India’s Tata Motors, said it shut down its systems in early September to contain the hack that has severely disrupted its retail and manufacturing operations.

Its three factories in Britain, which usually produce about 1,000 cars per day, will now not restart until September 24, the company said yesterday.

It has told many of its 33,000 staff to stay at home.

“We have taken this decision as our forensic investigation of the cyber incident continues, and as we consider the different stages of the controlled restart of our global operations, which will take time,” JLR said in a statement on its web-

The Unite trade union has warned of job losses and said government support would be needed given the lengthy stoppage

site. There is concern about the financial impact of the stoppage on JLR’s British supply chain, which includes many smaller companies and supports 104,000 jobs across the country. The Unite trade union has warned of job losses and said government support would be needed given the lengthy stoppage.

Chris McDonald, minister in the Department of Business and Trade, told Reuters he had met the company yesterday to “discuss their plans to resolve this issue and get production started again”.

“Our cyber experts are supporting JLR to help them resolve this issue as quickly as possible,” he added.

British newspaper *The Telegraph* reported on Monday that the production shutdown could last until November, although JLR said this was not its position. JLR has said the incident has affected some data, although it remains unclear whether it involved customers, suppliers or internal systems.

The breach was the latest in a string of cyber and ransomware attacks targeting companies around the world. In Britain, household names including Marks & Spencer and the Co-op have fallen victim to increasingly sophisticated breaches.

The disruption comes as JLR faces broader challenges, including weaker demand in China and Europe, and delays to the launch of its electric vehicle models.

In July, JLR reported an 11% drop in quarterly sales, partly due to a temporary pause in US shipments after tariffs were imposed. Although exports resumed in May, the company cut its profit margin target for fiscal 2026 to 5%-7%, down from 10%, citing ongoing trade uncertainty.



Britain’s Prince Andrew stands next to Prince William and his wife Catherine, Princess of Wales, as they leave Westminster Cathedral at the end of the Requiem Mass, on the day of the funeral of Britain’s Katharine, Duchess of Kent, in London, yesterday.

Queen Camilla misses royal funeral due to illness: palace

AFP
London

Queen Camilla pulled out of attending the Duchess of Kent’s funeral due to illness yesterday, as King Charles and other family members bade farewell to the British royal who died earlier this month. Pope Leo XIV paid a personal tribute to the duchess, who converted to Catholicism in 1994, praising her “legacy of Christian goodness” in a message delivered during the funeral.

The requiem mass was the first Catholic funeral to be held for a member of the royal family in modern British history.

Buckingham Palace announced just hours before the ceremony and ahead of the arrival in the UK

of US President Donald Trump on a state visit that the queen would not be attending. “With great regret, Her Majesty The Queen has withdrawn from attendance at this afternoon’s Requiem Mass for The Duchess of Kent as she is recovering from acute sinusitis,” a Buckingham Palace spokesperson said.

The queen, 78, is scheduled to accompany King Charles III for a busy programme of royal events during Trump’s state visit today and tomorrow. The Prince and Princess of Wales, William and his wife Catherine, also joined the mourners gathered at Westminster Cathedral.

And the king’s disgraced brother, Prince Andrew, the Duke of York, and his ex-wife Sarah, the Duchess of York, were also seen in attendance. The Duchess of Kent,

who died on September 5 at the age of 92, was known for her links to the Wimbledon tennis tournament and for anonymously teaching music at a primary school.

A talented pianist, organist and singer, she was born Katharine Worsley into an aristocratic family in Yorkshire, northern England. She was married in 1961 to Prince Edward, Duke of Kent, who is a first cousin of the late Queen Elizabeth II and remains, at 89, a working member of the royal family.

Camilla is reportedly hoping to recover sufficiently from her illness to attend all the elements of Trump’s state visit, according to the PA news agency.

She is due to receive the Trumps alongside the king at Windsor Castle today around noon local time (1100 GMT).

India says trade talks with US were ‘positive’

India said trade talks with the United States yesterday were “positive” and added that both countries had decided to “intensify efforts” to clinch a deal. Ties between New Delhi and Washington have been under tension since US President Donald Trump raised tariffs on most Indian exports to 50 percent last month in retaliation for New Delhi’s continued purchases of Russian oil.

White House officials have accused Indian oil refiners of profiteering and argued that New Delhi’s decision to buy Russian crude has helped finance Moscow’s war in Ukraine. But over the last week, the leaders of both countries have offered more conciliatory public statements and said they remain committed to continuing trade ne-

gotiations. And on Tuesday, Indian and US trade officials held discussions in the capital New Delhi.

The US delegation included Brendan Lynch, assistant trade representative for South and Central Asia. “Acknowledging the enduring importance of bilateral trade between India and the US, the discussions were positive and forward looking covering various aspects of the trade deal,” an Indian commerce ministry statement said yesterday evening. “It was decided to intensify efforts to achieve early conclusion of a mutually beneficial Trade Agreement,” the statement added.

Despite being one of the first few countries to start trade negotiations with Washington, India has so far failed to secure a deal that

would ease its tariff burden. Exporters in the world’s most populous country have already warned of cancelled orders and potentially significant job losses.

Trump’s decision to mix issues of war and peace with trade by bumping up duties on most Indian goods from 25 percent to 50 percent has also further complicated matters. Experts believe that despite both sides pushing forward, a trade deal still will require tough negotiations. “Any progress hinges on Washington rolling back the oil-linked 25 percent duty. Without that, no breakthrough is politically or economically viable,” Ajay Srivastava of the Global Trade Research Initiative, a New Delhi-based think-tank, said in a note yesterday. —AFP

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GULF TIMES

Stronger yuan aids push to globalise China’s currency

The Chinese yuan has appreciated around 2.4% against the dollar this year.

Hedge funds added to bullish options wagers on the currency versus the dollar as weak US jobs data signalled potential trouble for the American economy.

The volume of options bets that the yuan will strengthen, particularly around a three-month time frame, has been significant “as fast-money clients look to re-engage with dollar weakness post the data,” said Ruchir Sharma, London-based global co-head of FX options at Societe Generale.

Meanwhile, the dollar capped its deepest weekly drop in more than a month ahead of the Federal Reserve meeting that’s expected to launch a series of interest-rate cuts.

The Bloomberg Spot Dollar Index fell 0.3% on the week, the most since early August. Lackluster US labour market data have cemented bets for 75 basis points of rate cuts by year-end, even as relatively sticky inflation suggests the greenback won’t face a sudden slump.

The yuan is poised for a huge rally against the dollar as Beijing comes under pressure to let its currency strengthen, according to Eurizon SLJ Capital chief executive Stephen Jen.

The yuan has appreciated around 2.4% against the dollar this year, but it has weakened against other currencies given the even bigger drop in the greenback elsewhere.

That has created the appearance of an “opportunistic devaluation,” something Jen said will lead to pushback from China’s major trading partners.

China’s new-found tolerance for steady yuan appreciation looks set to re-accelerate a rally in emerging-market currencies, as investors brace themselves for lower US interest rates.

China is launching a sweeping campaign to promote the global role of its currency amid growing doubts about US exceptionalism that increasingly weakens the dollar’s appeal

A Bloomberg analysis shows that over the past year, for every 1% yuan move, the Thai baht, Malaysian ringgit, Chilean peso, Mexican peso and Brazilian real have moved closely in tandem.

As the primary currency for many Asian economies’ main trading partner, the yuan acts as an anchor in the region with Beijing’s foreign-exchange policy closely watched by peers.

But its influence spreads beyond Asia to countries impacted by China’s trade and commodity flows.

Market watchers say there is room for EM currencies to resume their advance, as the People’s Bank of China has signalled a departure from its previous policy focus on maintaining yuan stability amid trade tensions.

Allowing the yuan to gradually appreciate could be “part of US-China trade talks and international pressure to let the renminbi strengthen,” said Brad Bechtel, global head of FX at Jefferies. “This will allow Asian currencies to appreciate in lock-step, which allows for easier central bank policy.”

China was the second-largest trading partner of Asia’s developing economies last year, accounting for 9% of the latter’s total trade, according to data from the International Monetary Fund.

There’s also growing evidence that borrowers across the developing world are experimenting with tapping Chinese markets to raise money, in some cases for the first time ever.

In developing countries outside China, excluding Russia, yuan-denominated bond sales have topped 15bn yuan (\$2.1bn) so far in 2025, according to data compiled by Bloomberg. That’s more than any other year, and compares with just 3.5bn yuan in the same period of 2024.

Of course, fundraising in yuan is still miniscule in contrast to the size of the dollar-bond market, where developing countries outside of China raised \$344bn this year. American markets remain the world’s most liquid sources of cash with deep-pocketed investors.

China has for long been extending a calculated diplomatic push to globalise the use of its currency. The country is launching a sweeping campaign to promote the global role of its currency, taking advantage of growing doubts about US exceptionalism that increasingly weakens the dollar’s appeal.

A stronger yuan is seen as aiding such efforts.

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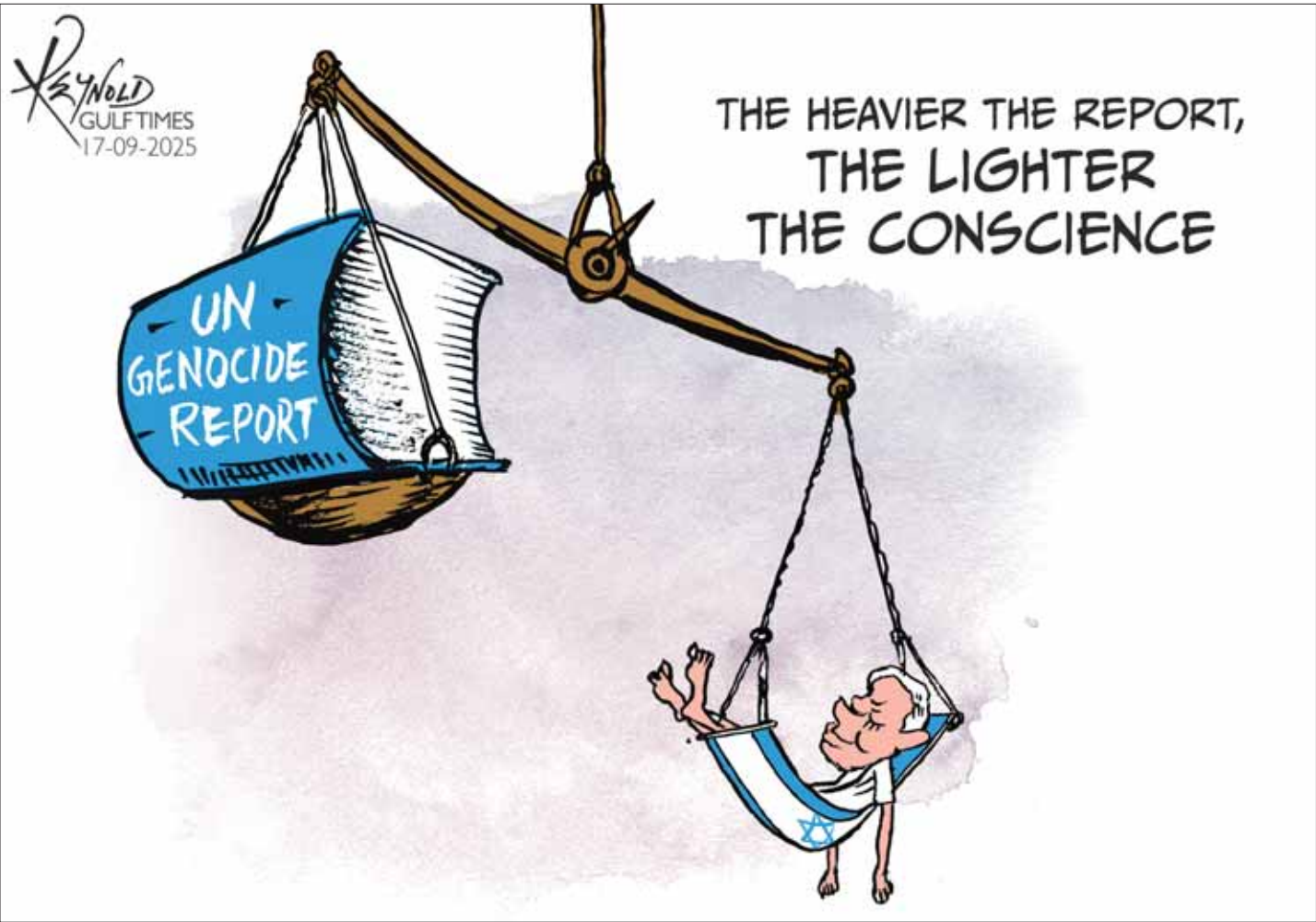
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When co-operation fades, conflict fills the void

By Bertrand Badré
Paris

In November 1985, during their first summit in Geneva, US president Ronald Reagan and Soviet president Mikhail Gorbachev slipped away from the official proceedings to speak privately. Only years later did we learn what they discussed. Gorbachev told the broadcaster Charlie Rose that Reagan had asked him a startling question: “What would you do if the United States were suddenly attacked by someone from outer space? Would you help us?” Gorbachev replied, “No doubt about it” to which Reagan responded: “We, too.” Although the two superpowers were locked in a nuclear arms race and staring each other down across Europe, they could still imagine uniting against a common existential threat.

Four decades later, humanity finds itself locked in another arms race. The Stockholm International Peace Research Institute reports that global defence spending reached a record \$2.7tn in 2024 – an inflation-adjusted increase of 9.4% over the previous year. After nine consecutive years of such spending increases, this surge is unprecedented since the end of the Cold War, with little indication that it will slow. Dozens of countries are expanding their militaries, and more governments are making long-term commitments to boost their defence budgets.

The reasons are many, and some are understandable. In addition to Russia’s war in Ukraine, there are rising tensions in East Asia and the Middle East, as well as vulnerabilities in cyberspace and space. But more fundamentally, this escalation reflects the collapse of globalisation as we knew it – meaning a rules-based order anchored in multilateralism, open trade, and international co-operation.

It is easy to forget how different the mood was just a decade ago. In 2015 – the high-water mark for the most recent wave of globalisation – world leaders delivered three landmark agreements: the Addis Ababa Action Agenda on development financing, the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, and the Paris climate agreement. Chinese President Xi Jinping and US President Barack Obama shook hands in Washington, signalling – at least to many observers – that a new era of sustainable, inclusive, and resilient globalisation was at hand.

But the resulting optimism proved short-lived. Within a few years, trade wars, nationalist and nativist politics, and geopolitical rivalries had undermined the previous consensus. Today, tariffs, subsidies, industrial policies, refugee crises, and the new arms race all attest to a world where cooperation has lost its lustre. As the French historian Arnaud Orain argues, the “end of history” thesis has given way to a world once again conceived as finite – as a pie to be divided, rather than expanded. According to this mindset, what’s mine is mine, and what’s yours is negotiable.

But the existential threats that inspired Reagan’s thought experiment are still here, and they are more pressing than ever. Climate change, ecosystem collapse, and widening social inequalities endanger us all. They have been thoroughly documented, their consequences are already visible, and strategies to confront them have been elaborated in countless policy documents and experts’ reports. Yet they are perpetually treated as secondary to the immediate fear of aggression by one’s neighbours or rivals.

Future historians – if the profession still exists – will wonder why, in the mid-2020s, Homo sapiens poured unprecedented resources into preparing to fight each other, while neglecting collective action against obvious planetary threats. The sums involved are staggering. The nearly \$3tn devoted

annually to defence could cover a significant portion of the investments needed to decarbonise our economies, adapt to climate change, and preserve biodiversity.

Instead of extending the co-operative logic of globalisation to planetary survival, we are re-engineering it with walls, tariffs, and weapons. Call it “barbed-wire globalisation”. Humanity will remain interdependent, but relations will be managed not with common institutions but through spheres of influence. Meanwhile, the planet will recede from political consciousness.

It is mad to obsess over relative geopolitical power while ignoring the absolute reality of planetary boundaries. If there is to be any hope, we must invent something new: not globalisation, but “planetarisation” – the recognition that preserving our fragile world is the precondition for everything else. Upcoming gatherings, such as the United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP30) in Belém, Brazil, offer opportunities to advance such a perspective, even after this year’s disappointing negotiations to address plastics in our oceans. But the window is closing.

Some will argue that the picture is not so bleak, because humanity is living through an extraordinary period of scientific and technological innovation. Given the progress in artificial intelligence, biotechnology, renewable energy, and advanced materials, why not place our trust in human ingenuity to see us through?

The counterargument is sobering. A century ago, revolutionary discoveries in physics, chemistry, and medicine also

promised a golden future, ultimately leading to what the French called the “30 glorious years” after World War II. But before getting there, the world endured a devastating depression, fascism, and a global war waged with those new technologies. The Manhattan Project produced nuclear weapons before the energy contained within the atom had been put to civilian use; the science that gave us modern fertiliser also created chemical weapons.

Today, AI and other breakthroughs may likewise transform society. But if history is any guide, military applications will outpace civilian uses. As ever, we should “follow the money”: defence budgets dwarf climate investments. The danger is not that the technology will fail, but that it will be harnessed first for conflict, not collective survival.

Unlike earlier historical turning points, this one offers no second chances. Resources are finite, the carbon budget is shrinking fast, and planetary boundaries are strained. The choice is stark: Globalisation can be reorganised into a militarised array of political blocs, where resources are consumed by trade wars, culture wars, and real wars, or we can embrace “planetarisation” and start pursuing strategies to survive together with dignity. – Project Syndicate

• Bertrand Badré, a former managing director of the World Bank, is Chair of the Project Syndicate Advisory Board, CEO and Founder of Blue like an Orange Sustainable Capital, and the author of Can Finance Save the World?



Europe stumped by Trump demands over Russia sanctions

AFP
Brussels

US President Donald Trump has demanded that allies stop buying Russian oil before he moves on punishing Moscow, and told them to hit China with tariffs.

But Trump's requests do not seem feasible, and the EU notes that it has already hammered the Kremlin with sanctions.

Meanwhile, diplomats fear it could be a ploy by Trump to again stall on taking a tough stance against Russia himself.

In a Truth Social post over the weekend, Trump said he would impose "major sanctions" on Moscow if all Nato countries

stopped buying Russian oil.

The 27-nation EU has already banned most imports of Russian oil after the Kremlin's 2022 invasion of Ukraine, slashing the share of oil it imports from Russia from 29% in early 2021 to 2% by mid-2023.

Currently Hungary and Slovakia, both countries friendly to both Moscow and Trump, still buy oil from Russia.

The EU is planning to end that entirely and has announced a plan to phase out purchases of all Russian oil and gas by the end of 2027.

EU chief Ursula von der Leyen has said Brussels is "looking at phasing out Russian fossil fuels faster" as it works with partners on toughening sanctions against Moscow.

Other officials have suggested they plan to stick broadly to a timeline EU energy commissioner Dan Jorgensen called "very ambitious" after talks with his US counterpart last week.

But diplomats have welcomed any possible pressure from Trump on Budapest and Bratislava, arguing it could help stiffen European resolve.

"We wouldn't mind some extra push on Hungary, Slovakia from his side as well," an EU diplomat said, speaking on condition of anonymity to discuss sensitive deliberations.

If Trump is serious about getting all Nato countries to turn off the taps, then the bigger issue could be non-EU member Turkiye.

Ankara has refused to join international sanctions on Moscow and has even stepped up its purchases of Russian oil.

If Trump is largely preaching to the choir on trying to get Europe to cut Russian oil imports, then on China tariffs he is swimming against the tide.

In his post he said Nato countries should place "50% to 100% TARIFFS ON CHINA, to be fully withdrawn after the WAR with Russia and Ukraine is ended".

The EU has already blacklisted firms and banks in China accused of supporting Russia's military or helping circumvent EU sanctions.

But the free-trading bloc is no fan of tariffs, and while it has its own grievances over China's commercial practices, Brussels has no

appetite for a broader trade war with the Asian giant.

"Tariffs is not something that is really discussed at the moment," the EU diplomat said.

Brussels is about to put forward its proposals for a 19th package of EU sanctions on Russia since the invasion of Ukraine.

Despite the bloc's top sanctions envoy holding talks in Washington last week, diplomats say that genuine co-ordination with the United States does not seem on the table.

Officials say the next round of measures should see more Chinese businesses targeted, but they do not expect a broader onslaught against Beijing.

Sceptical voices have also pointed out that Trump's demands for action coincide with US

commercial interests.

But a second diplomat said the requests put the bloc "in a tight spot". "Even if his requests are deliberately excessive, it still forces us to come to terms with them in some kind of way in order to avoid him shifting the blame onto the EU," the diplomat said.

By demanding something he knows the EU is not willing to do, officials worry that Trump could be looking to justify not going after Russia himself.

"What is dangerous is that the US administration hints that if we don't follow through with this idea, the EU is not serious enough in the US's eyes in wanting to end the war," a third EU diplomat said.

"This would be a dangerous spin."

Moscow, Minsk rehearse launch of N-weapons deployed in Belarus

Reuters
Minsk

Russia and Belarus are rehearsing the launch of Russian tactical nuclear weapons as part of joint war games, Belarusian leader Alexander Lukashenko said yesterday.

State media quoted the Belarusian chief of staff as saying that the exercises also featured Russia's Oreshnik hypersonic missile, which it test-fired last year in the war with Ukraine.

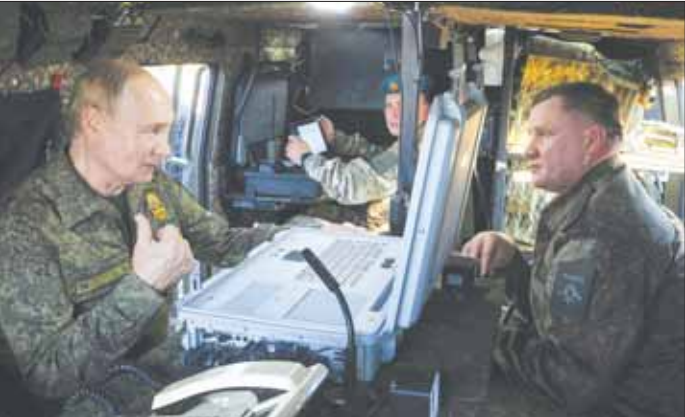
Russia and Belarus are ending five days of war games code-named Zapad (West) in a show of force they say is to test combat readiness but which has unnerved some surrounding countries.

Dressed in military attire, Russian President Vladimir Putin met with top military officials yesterday in Russia's Nizhny Novgorod region, where some of the drills took place.

Some 100,000 military personnel participated in the exercises, which involved roughly 10,000 pieces of military equipment, the Kremlin chief said in comments broadcast on state television.

The drills were to ensure the "unconditional protection of the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Union State," Putin said, referring to the alliance of Russia and Belarus.

The war games, which Western military analysts say are designed to intimidate Europe, come just days after Polish and Nato forces



Russian President Vladimir Putin inspects the Zapad-2025 (West-2025) joint Russian-Belarusian military drills at a training ground in the Nizhny Novgorod Oblast yesterday. (AFP)

es say they shot down Russian drones that entered Polish airspace.

Belarus, a close Russian ally which borders Ukraine and Russia, as well as Nato members Poland, Lithuania and Latvia, hosts Russian tactical nuclear weapons which Moscow retains command and control of.

Lukashenko was cited by the Belarusian state news agency Belta as saying that it was only natural that the Russian tactical nuclear weapons were part of the Zapad drills.

"We are practising everything there. They (the West) know this too, we are not hiding it. From firing conventional small arms to nuclear warheads. Again, we must be able to do all this. Otherwise, why would they be on Belarusian

territory?" he was quoted as saying.

"But we are absolutely not planning to threaten anyone with this," The Belarusian Defence Ministry confirmed in a statement that the use of tactical nuclear weapons had been rehearsed along with the deployment of Russia's intermediate-range Oreshnik ballistic missile that Moscow fired at Ukraine for the first time on November 21 last year.

Putin said late last year that Russia could deploy Oreshniks, which he has claimed are impossible to intercept, on the territory of Belarus in the second half of 2025.

Lukashenko, who holds regular talks with Putin, allowed Moscow to use his territory to enter Ukraine in February 2022, but has not committed his own troops to



Russian President Vladimir Putin tries on a thermal imaging glasses during the tour of the exhibition of military equipment. (AFP)

the fighting. US President Donald Trump has begun cultivating closer ties with Lukashenko, long treated as a pariah by the West, and relaxed some sanctions on Belarus last week in return for the release of 52 prisoners including political opponents.

US military officers observed part of the Zapad exercise in Belarus on Monday.

Russia's Defence Ministry said yesterday that nuclear-capable Russian Tu-160 strategic bombers had rehearsed launching cruise missiles over the Barents Sea north of the Nordic countries.

The bombers had flown over the Barents Sea's neutral waters for about four hours, escorted by MiG-31 fighter jets, it said.

Separately, it said Marines belonging to Russia's Northern Fleet

practised repelling an amphibious landing by an enemy force on a peninsula in Russia's Murmansk region.

Video showed troops — backed by attack helicopters and fighter jets — using armoured personnel carriers, drones, rocket-propelled grenade launchers and automatic weapons — seeing off an imaginary enemy. Ships from Russia's Baltic Fleet — backed by fighter jets — test-fired cruise missiles at notional enemy ships, as did the fleet's land-based mobile missile launchers.

In Russia's Kaliningrad exclave, troops practised using a Torn-MDM radio reconnaissance complex to detect the location of enemy forces so that their co-ordinates could be passed on to drone and artillery units.

Pakistan military kills 31 militants

Pakistan's military said it had killed 31 local Taliban militants in two separate operations near the border with Afghanistan, where the group's presence has increased.

It comes after 12 soldiers were killed in an ambush in a neighbouring district on Saturday, an attack claimed by the Pakistani Taliban (TTP).

The military said in a statement published late Monday that it had killed 31 "Khawarij" over the weekend, a recent term adopted by authorities to describe TTP fighters.

It accused archfoe India, with which Pakistan fought a four-day skirmish in May, of backing the militants.

The nuclear armed neighbours have long accused each other of backing militant forces to destabilise one another.

"Sanitisation operations are being conducted to eliminate any other Indian sponsored" militants in the area, said the statement published late Monday.

Militancy has surged in the border regions with Afghanistan since the return to power of the Afghan Taliban in Kabul in 2021.

Security officials have told AFP that the presence of TTP militants has increased over the past two months.

The TTP, which is waging a campaign against security forces, is a separate group from the Afghan Taliban, but they are closely linked.

Islamabad accuses neighbouring Afghanistan of failing to expel militants using Afghan territory to launch attacks on Pakistan, which authorities in Kabul deny.

More than 460 people, mostly members of the security forces, have been killed this year in attacks carried out by armed groups fighting the state, both in northwestern Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and the southern province of Balochistan, according to an AFP tally.



Pakistan carrier swings to H1 profit as privatisation campaign gathers pace

Pakistan International Airlines (PIA) posted a pre-tax profit in the first half of 2025, which a company source said is its first such for the period in about two decades, ahead of a planned sale of the national carrier later this year.

PIA, part of PIA Holding Company, recorded a pre-tax profit of Rs11.5bn (\$40.64mn) in the six months to June, compared with the same period in 2024 when it remained in a loss before taxes and only managed a rare annual profit through deferred tax adjustments. Net profit for the current half year stood at Rs6.8bn.

The disclosure comes as Islamabad presses ahead with a fresh attempt to privatise the airline, a key condition under Pakistan's \$7bn IMF bailout.

A company source said it was the state-run airline's first such profit since 2004. Financial records before 2014 are no longer publicly available on the airline's and the stock exchange's websites.

The planned sale of Pakistan International Airlines would mark the country's first major privatisation in about two decades, with divestment of loss-making state firms a central plank of last year's bailout.

High fuel and service costs continue to weigh, but a steep drop in finance costs after Islamabad assumed about 80% of PIA's legacy debt last year was a decisive factor in its return to profit. Despite the gain, PIA's equity remains negative, underscoring the fragility of its turnaround.

A previous privatisation attempt collapsed last year after a single lowball offer was received, but the government has since drawn interest from five domestic business groups including Airblue, Lucky Cement, investment firm Arif Habib and military-backed Fauji Fertiliser. Final bids are expected later this year.

Britain lifted in July a five-year ban on Pakistani airlines imposed after a fatal 2020 crash and a pilot licensing scandal, allowing PIA to reapply for lucrative UK routes. The move follows similar steps by the European Union late last year.

PIA had previously estimated an annual revenue loss of around Rs40bn from the British ban, with London, Manchester and Birmingham among its most profitable routes.

Italian court orders extradition of Ukrainian in Nord Stream case

An Italian court yesterday ordered a Ukrainian man arrested over the 2022 sabotage of the Nord Stream gas pipelines linking Russia with Europe to be extradited to Germany to face charges.

Serhii Kuznietsov, arrested in Italy last month on a German warrant, denies involvement and will appeal the ruling, his lawyer Nicola Canestrini told AFP.

Kuznietsov, who says he was a member of the Ukrainian armed forces at the time, is accused of being part of a cell which placed explosives on the underwater pipelines in September 2022. He faces up to 15 years in jail if found guilty in Germany, according to the ruling by the

court in the northern Italian city of Bologna.

The pipelines that for years shipped Russian gas to Europe were damaged by huge blasts just months after Russia's February 2022 invasion of Ukraine.

Western powers who back Kyiv were initially quick to blame Russia, which in turn accused them.

German investigations have identified a Ukrainian cell of five men and one woman as the perpetrators of the blasts.

When he was arrested, German prosecutors said Kuznietsov had used forged identity documents to charter a yacht, which departed from the German city of Rostock

to carry out the attacks.

Kuznietsov says he was in Ukraine at the time of the explosions, and will "appeal... the Bologna court of appeal's decision to order his surrender to Germany", his lawyer said in a statement yesterday.

Italy's Court of Cassation is expected to rule on the case in around a month's time, Canestrini said.

In the meantime, Kuznietsov is being held in a high-security prison in northern Italy.

In court, according to yesterday's ruling, Kuznietsov's team argued that even if he had been involved, he could not face the charges as they stand as he was a soldier following orders at a time of war.

Afghan refugees head home



Afghan refugees with their belongings arrive for deportation as they wait in their trucks at the Pakistan-Afghanistan border in Torkham yesterday. (AFP)

Denmark may buy Boeing aircraft for Arctic surveillance

Denmark's defence minister said yesterday the country's military may buy a fleet of Boeing P-8 submarine-hunting maritime patrol aircraft to help boost the surveillance of the Faroe Islands and Greenland.

Denmark could potentially spend an amount corresponding to billions of dollars on an acquisition, Troels Lund Poulsen said, part of the Nordic nation's plan to sharply boost its military hardware.

"I would prefer that we collaborate with other Nato countries in order to get the most value for our money and to have a greater degree of flexibility," Poulsen said in a statement to Reuters.

"But if that proves impossible, then I am also willing to accept that we will have to acquire this P-8 aircraft capacity ourselves," he said.

Danish broadcaster TV2 first reported the news late on Monday.

The defence ministry declined to comment yesterday on the exact sum it may spend or how many aircraft it could buy. Any acquisition must first be approved by parliament.

Poulsen said the threat level in the Arctic was increasing and that it was necessary to get a better picture of movements around Greenland and the Faroe Islands, both semi-autonomous Danish territories.

EAA, QFFD, Teach for Lebanon partner to empower more than 23,000 students

The Education Above All (EAA) Foundation, in collaboration with the Qatar Fund for Development (QFFD), has partnered with Teach For Lebanon (TFL) to launch a groundbreaking initiative titled “Resilience Through Education: Empowering Vulnerable Students in Lebanon with SEL and Inclusive Learning”.

The project is designed to respond to the urgent educational and psychosocial needs of children affected by Lebanon’s ongoing crises, providing inclusive, trauma-informed, and emotionally supportive education to more than 23,000 vulnerable students across the country.

Lebanon’s education system continues to face mounting challenges amid overlapping economic, social, and humanitarian crises. This initiative seeks to ensure that marginalised children are not left behind and can access quality education that also nurtures their emotional well-being.

Through three core interventions, the programme will provide holistic support to learners in need.

The first component includes



in-school support led by TFL Fellows who have been trained in Social Emotional Learning (SEL) and trauma-informed approaches.

These Fellows will deliver both academic instruction and emotional support directly in classrooms across Lebanon.

Secondly, the initiative will roll out a toll-free Call and Learn Hotline offering over 59,500 academic support calls to students from kindergarten to Grade 9.

This service will enable learners to receive continuous guidance, especially those unable to access

traditional classroom settings.

Finally, thousands of students will benefit from the distribution of essential stationery kits, helping them remain engaged and equipped throughout the academic year.

In addition to direct student support, the initiative also focuses on teacher capacity-building.

A total of 301 educators, including TFL Fellows, hotline teachers, and other local teachers, will be trained using the EAA’s “Let Kids Be Kids” SEL toolkit.

This resource includes over 100

activity-based modules designed to promote emotional resilience, positive routines, and life skills through engaging, interactive methods.

“At Education Above All Foundation, we remain committed to finding innovative ways to reach children where they are, ensuring that no learner is left behind,” said Janhvi Kanoria, the executive director of Innovation Development at the EAA. “This partnership with Teach For Lebanon and the Qatar Fund for Development is helping us reach more than 23,000 vulner-

able students across Lebanon with the academic and socio-emotional support they need to thrive.”

“From in-school support to the Call and Learn hotline and the provision of essential learning materials, these interventions are creating new pathways for children to access inclusive, quality education,” she said.

“Teach For Lebanon exists to empower Fellows with the skills and mindset to transform classrooms and inspire students, even in the most underserved communities,” said TFL executive director

Janine Weber-el Meouchy.

“We are truly grateful for this partnership with the EAA Foundation and the Qatar Fund for Development, which enables us to go beyond academics, addressing students’ social and emotional well-being, especially in times of crisis,” she said. “Together, we are shaping a generation of resilient, forward-thinking leaders who can build a brighter future for Lebanon.”

This initiative builds on the TFL’s extensive experience in Education in Emergencies (EiE), having previously supported children during the coronavirus (Covid-19) pandemic, Lebanon’s economic collapse, the Beirut port explosion, and ongoing conflicts.

The TFL’s Fellows are uniquely trained to operate in fragile contexts, delivering academic learning, psychosocial care, and community leadership.

By working together, the EAA Foundation, QFFD, and TFL are paving the way for a more inclusive, emotionally resilient, and accessible education system that supports every child’s right to learn and thrive. – QNA

QT showcases cruise sector growth at trade fair in Hamburg

Qatar Tourism (QT) took part in the Seatrade Cruise Europe 2025 in Hamburg on September 10-12, showcasing the opportunities for international cruise lines to collaborate with Qatar and support the sector’s continued growth.

The Visit Qatar pavilion at the exhibition served as a collaborative platform, bringing together key government entities such as the Ministry of Interior (Immigration Department and the Permanent Committee for Seaport Affairs), Mwani Qatar, Old Doha Port, and the

General Authority of Customs.

The Qatar delegation, along with leading public and private sector partners, engaged in selected conference sessions, held strategic one-to-one meetings with leading cruise operators, and welcomed visitors to the Visit Qatar pavilion throughout the exhibition.

“Year after year, cruise tourism continues to grow, and last season, Doha Port welcomed nearly 360,000 visitors, a clear reflection of rising demand,” QT Tourism Development Sector chief Omar al-Jaber said in a press statement. “As



Members of the delegation from Qatar in Hamburg for the Seatrade Cruise Europe 2025.

we look forward to the new cruise season beginning this November, we remain committed to positioning Doha as a premier regional hub for marine tourism, forging new partnerships and showcasing the unique experiences that Qatar has to offer.”

The QT also participated in the Cruise Lines International Association Conference on September 9, engaging in targeted discussions with global cruise operators.

On September 10, the QT hosted an exclusive networking event at the Vier

Jahreszeiten Hamburg Hotel, bringing together more than 150 guests.

Attendees included representatives from leading cruise lines such as MSC, Royal Caribbean, TUI, Viking Cruises, and Silversea, regional tourism boards from Abu Dhabi, Dubai, Oman, Bahrain, and Cruise Saudi, as well as shipping agencies, local destination management companies (DMCs), and members of the Cruise Arabia alliance.

The gathering provided a platform to strengthen industry connections, explore partnership opportunities, and highlight

Qatar’s authentic hospitality and cultural experiences.

Further activities included a networking lunch hosted by TUI Cruises on September 13, attended by representatives from the QT and Mwani, as well as a site visit to Hamburg Cruise Centre Altona for Qatari government stakeholders to exchange operational insights.

Qatar is preparing for the start of the 2025-26 cruise season this November, which will feature 73 scheduled cruise calls, including four maiden calls to Doha Port.



Iran’s royal history in spotlight at exhibition

By Joey Aguilar
Staff Reporter

A unique digital exhibition is set to open today at the Arab Centre for Research and Policy Studies (ACRPS), highlighting the rich visual legacy of Iran’s royal history against the backdrop of evolving regional politics.

A portrait of members of the royal court of Nasser al-Din Shah Qajar (left) and the British Bank of Iran and the Middle East (below). – QM’s General Collection



The two-day show, titled “Iran and the Changing Strategic Landscape of the Middle East”, is in collaboration between Qatar Museums (QM) and the ACRPS’s Iranian Studies Unit.

It is presented as a key component of the Iranian Studies Unit Annual Conference.

The exhibition draws upon the extensive holdings of the QM’s General Collection to illuminate how Iran’s political image has been constructed and reinterpreted through the lens of its royal past, particularly during the late 19th and early 20th centuries.

At the heart of the display are historic photographs, with a focus on the Qajar royal family and the journeys undertaken by Nasser al-Din Shah Qajar.

These images underline the key role that royal portraiture and ceremonial photography played as instruments of diplomacy, statecraft, and symbolic exchange with European powers during this transformative period.

Visitors will have the opportunity to compare photographs taken by Nasser al-Din Shah himself between 1890 and 1900, offering a glimpse into the court’s ceremonies, palaces, and the Shah’s meticulous self-fashioning.

From the opulent displays of Qajar diplomacy to the nascent stages of modern statehood, the QM said these carefully curated images offer a rare and insightful lens through which to examine the continuities, ruptures, and transformations shaping Iranian state identity.

According to the QM, this royal perspective is compared with the prevailing realities of the time, including boycotts, debt diplomacy, and contested sovereignty, providing a nuanced understanding of Iran’s position on the global stage.

Among the striking pieces featured is a photograph of the British Bank of Iran and the Middle East.

Originally established in 1889 as the Imperial Bank of Persia, operating under a royal charter from London and a concession from Nasser al-Din Shah Qajar, this institution served a dual role as Iran’s central bank of issue and an instrument of British financial influence.

The exhibition traces the bank’s evolution, noting how rising Iranian nationalism and the establishment of the Iranian-controlled Bank Melli in 1928 led to restrictions on its operations, reflecting a shift in power dynamics and the rise of anti-colonial sentiment.

The bank was renamed the British Bank of Iran and the Middle East in 1949 as it expanded its reach across the Gulf.

Amidst mounting regional tensions, the bank ultimately withdrew from Iran by 1952, later becoming the British Bank of the Middle East and eventually being absorbed into the HSBC group.

Other visual contributions to the exhibition include a portrait of members of the royal court of Nasser al-Din Shah Qajar, dating from approximately 1860-1869, and a general view of the Kasbine Hotel in Kasbine, a town situated along the route from Resht to Tehran, circa 1890-1900.

The QM noted that these pre-1979 revolution photographs capture crucial moments of diplomacy, ceremonial exchange, and statecraft from the late 19th century, a period when Qajar Iran actively engaged with European powers through symbolic and cultural diplomacy.

The exhibition invites attendees to contemplate the intricate relationship between visual culture and Iran’s evolving role within the Middle East.

WCM-Q students discover global healthcare challenges in Tanzania

Students of Weill Cornell Medicine-Qatar (WCM-Q) visited Tanzania to learn about cross-cultural communication and discover the challenges of delivering healthcare in a developing country.

A group of 11 students spent two weeks on a service learning trip in the Kilimanjaro region, during which time they travelled to remote communities to set up field clinics and provide free health checks, visited a local hospital and an orphanage, and carried out home visits with resident healthcare professionals to share health advice and learn about common ailments.

The students also met with representatives of the Maasai and Hadza people and learned about their cultural traditions, as well as having the chance to visit some of Tanzania’s famed national parks.

The students began their service work at the O’Brien Maasai Community, where they first spent a day carrying out house

visits alongside local healthcare professionals.

The following day the students helped set up a field clinic and worked with local doctors and nurses to carry out free health checks in the community for two days.

Under the supervision of healthcare workers the students took vital signs and medical histories, and observed the examination, diagnosis and treatment process being carried out by the local doctors.

They then visited the Karansi community in Siha district, where they carried out home visits and helped provide a two-day community field clinic.

The students visited Kibosho Hospital, a 225-bed facility near the town of Moshi on the slopes of Kilimanjaro, which sees around 150 outpatients daily and handles approximately 100 new births each month.

They then visited the Amani Centre, an orphanage in Moshi.

Other highlights of the trip included



Eleven WCM-Q students visited Tanzania on a service learning trip.

a traditional batik class, trips to local waterfalls and hot springs, shopping at a local Maasai market, and safari trips

to the Ngorongoro Conservation Area, Tarangire National Park, and Arusha National Park.

The trip was organised by the WCM-Q’s Division of Student Affairs, which sponsors a number of WCM-Q students to visit the east African country each year to help them gain a new perspective of global health issues and contribute to health outreach programmes.

The students were accompanied on the trip by biological sciences teaching specialist Sonia Sharma and Dr Avelin Malyango, the assistant dean for medical student affairs and assistant professor of anatomy in radiology.

“Our students learned a great deal about delivering healthcare using the core foundational skills of conducting physical examinations, taking medical histories and developing knowledge of common local ailments and their symptoms,” said Dr Malyango. “They also discovered that having a good understanding of cultural, economic and geographical factors can help a physician achieve better healthcare outcomes for the community they serve.”