



Qatar Insurance

Financial Results (Q3 2025)

Gross Written Premiums (GWP)	Net Profit	Net Profit	Earnings Per Share
9%	23%	12%	14%
QAR 7.9B	QAR 645M	QAR 588M	QAR 0.135

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Amir congratulates Algerian president

His Highness the Amir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani and His Highness the Deputy Amir Sheikh Abdullah bin Hamad al-Thani sent cables of congratulations to Algerian President Abdelmadjid Tebboune on the occasion of his country's National Day. HE the Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman bin Jassim al-Thani also sent a cable of congratulations to Algerian Prime Minister Sifi Ghrieb on the occasion of his country's National Day. **(QNA)**

Sheikha Maryam bint Abdullah al-Attiyah passes away

The Amiri Diwan issued a statement mourning the passing of Sheikha Maryam bint Abdullah al-Attiyah, wife of the late His Highness Sheikh Ali bin Abdullah al-Thani, former ruler of the State of Qatar. The funeral prayer was held yesterday after Maghrib prayer at the Nasser bin Abdullah Al Attiyah Mosque in the Al Kharaitiyat area, followed by burial at the Al Kharaitiyat Cemetery. **(QNA)**

700 children join 'Little Employee' initiative

More than 700 students took part in Qatar Career Development Center's (QCDC) 'Little Employee' initiative during this week's school mid-term break, joining their parents and relatives at workplaces across the country. Organised by QCDC, founded by Qatar Foundation (QF), 'Little Employee' enables children aged 7-15 to spend a full working day in real-world environments alongside parental role models. **(QNA) Page 12**

Syrian leader Sharaa to visit Washington

The United States envoy for Syria said yesterday that Damascus's interim President Ahmed al-Sharaa is to travel to Washington to sign an agreement to join an international US-led alliance against the Islamic State. Asked by reporters on the sidelines of the Manama Dialogue in Bahrain whether Sharaa would head to Washington this month, Tom Barrack said "yes", adding that Sharaa would "hopefully" sign up to the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS. It would be the Syrian leader's first visit to Washington.

Qatar joins Global WHO Alliance for Food Safety '25-'27

QNA
Doha

Qatar has officially joined the Global Alliance for Food Safety for the period 2025 to 2027.

The alliance brings together leading countries in the field of food safety and the World Health Organisation's (WHO) collaborating centres, with the aim of enhancing co-ordination, knowledge exchange and integration of efforts in implementing the Global Strategy for Food Safety 2022-2030.

The network focuses on monitoring food-borne diseases and detecting food contamination.

The announcement of Qatar's accession was made during the participation of the Ministry of Public Health in the Alliance's annual meeting, which was recently held in Muscat, Sultanate of Oman.

The meeting brought together representatives from more than 40 countries and around 90 participants from regional and international organisations col-



laborating with the World Health Organisation, as well as national institutions, research centres and academic bodies.

The meeting served as a vital international platform to review achievements, share experiences, and define future priorities and steps, including opportunities for co-operation and resource mobilisation to support national and regional programmes.

During the meeting, it was also announced that a group of specialists from the Food Safety Department at the Ministry of Public Health would join four working groups covering various areas to support the alliance's programmes and enhance the exchange of expertise among member states.

Director of the Food Safety Department at the Ministry of Public Health Wasan Abdulla al-

Baker stated, "Our participation in the Alliance's annual meeting represents an opportunity to strengthen international co-operation and exchange expertise and best practices in the field of food safety".

"It also enables us to contribute effectively to accelerating the implementation of the Global Strategy for Food Safety 2022-2030, enhance Qatar's global role in the field of food safety, broaden its vision within the international community and increase its impact in promoting global food safety standards," she added.

Qatar's accession to the alliance reflects the country's commitment to actively contributing to international efforts to enhance food safety through the development of partnerships and capacity building among member states.

This will help to strengthen national capabilities, achieve the goals of the Global Strategy for Food Safety 2022-2030 and reduce the health risks posed by food-borne diseases at both national and international levels.

Excitement builds with 30 days to go until FIFA Arab Cup Qatar 2025



Only 30 days remain for the FIFA Arab Cup Qatar 2025, as excitement builds for the Arab world's biggest tournament taking place from December 1-18 in Qatar.

The prestigious tournament returns to Qatar for a second time, following the successful delivery of the Arab Cup in 2021, which was the first time that the tournament was held under the auspices of FIFA. This year's edition has set a new benchmark with the total prize money exceeding \$36.5mn (approximately QR132.9mn),

with the Arab Cup now joining the ranks of the world's major international football tournaments.

A total of 16 teams will have a chance to lift the coveted Arab Cup Qatar 2025 trophy. Nine of the highest FIFA ranked teams have qualified automatically, while 14 teams will vie for the remaining 7 spots in a series of qualifiers. Current champions Algeria will look to defend their title, whereas hosts Qatar will look to lift their first Arab Cup trophy. **Sport Page 1**

'Int'l Gaza force needs UN mandate'

AFP
Manama

Jordan and Germany said yesterday that an international force expected to support a future Palestinian police in Gaza under US President Donald Trump's post-war governance plan should have a UN mandate.

Under the US-brokered ceasefire between Hamas and Israel, a coalition of mainly Arab and Muslim nations is expected to deploy forces in the Palestinian territory, which has been devastated by the war that broke out on October 7, 2023.

The so-called international stabilisation force is supposed to train and support vetted Palestinian police in the Strip, with backing from Egypt and Jordan, as well as secure border areas and prevent weapons smuggling.

"We all agree that in order for that stabilisation force to be able to be effective in



Palestinian woman Manal al-Saidi examines a damaged banknote as she repairs money on a street, amid a cash crisis, in Nuseirat, central Gaza Strip.

getting the job done, it has to have a Security Council mandate," Jordanian Foreign Minister Ayman Safadi said.

Jordan, however, will not be sending its own forces to the Strip.

"We're too close to the issue and we cannot deploy troops in Gaza," Safadi said, adding his country was nonetheless ready to co-operate with the international force.

Children killed as survivors flee Sudan's 'apocalyptic' El-Fasher

AFP
Port Sudan

Survivors fleeing the Sudanese city of El-Fasher said yesterday that paramilitary fighters separated families and killed children in front of their parents, with tens of thousands still trapped following the city's fall. Germany's top diplomat Johann Wadephul described the situation in Sudan as "apocalyptic" while fresh satellite images suggested mass killings were likely ongoing, five days after the paramilitary Rapid Support Forces seized El-Fasher.

At war with the regular army since April 2023, the RSF pushed the military out of its last stronghold in the vast Darfur region after a grinding 18-month siege.

Since the takeover, reports have emerged of summary executions, sexual violence, attacks on aid workers, looting and abductions, while communications remain largely cut off.



Displaced Sudanese gather and sit in makeshift tents after fleeing Al-Fashir city in Darfur, in Tawila, Sudan.

"I don't know if my son Mohamed is dead or alive. They took all the boys," Zahra, a mother of six who fled El-Fasher to the nearby town of Tawila, told AFP in a satellite phone interview.

Another survivor, Adam, said two of his sons, aged 17 and 21, were killed in front of him. The survivors' full names have been withheld for their safety. **Page 6**

Katara hosts live screening of Grand Egyptian Museum opening

The Cultural Village Katara organised a special event yesterday, featuring a live broadcast of the grand opening ceremony of the Grand Egyptian Museum, in co-operation with the Embassy of Egypt in Qatar.

The event was attended by Prof Dr Khalid bin Ibrahim al-Sulaiti, General Manager of Katara, and Walid Elfiky, ambassador of Egypt to Qatar, alongside a large diplomatic and public audience, particularly members of the Egyptian community living in Qatar, who enthusiastically engaged with this historic occasion. **To Page 6**



Prof Dr Khalid bin Ibrahim al-Sulaiti, General Manager of Katara and Walid Elfiky, ambassador of Egypt attend the screening yesterday.

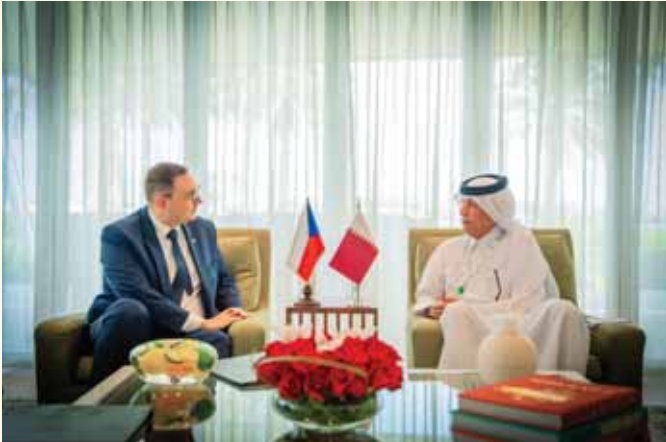


Lightning effects depicting the sarcophagus Egyptian King Tutankhamun light up the sky during the opening ceremony of the GEM in Giza, yesterday.

Sisi opens GEM, calls it 'new chapter in history'

Egyptian President Abdel Fattah al-Sisi yesterday opened the Grand Egyptian Museum (GEM), a long-awaited, billion-dollar showcase for pharaonic treasures, saying that its inauguration opened "a new chapter in history". "Today, as we celebrate together the opening of the Grand Egyptian Museum, we are writing a new chapter in the history of the present and the future, in the cause of this ancient homeland," Sisi told a gathering of princes, queens, heads of state and other dignitaries.

Al-Muraikhi in Manama meetings



HE the Minister of State for Foreign Affairs, Sultan bin Saad al-Muraikhi, met yesterday with the Foreign Minister of Czech Republic, Jan Lipavsky, on the sidelines of the Manama Dialogue 2025, currently underway in the Bahraini capital. The meeting discussed Qatari-Czech co-operation relations and way to boost them, in addition to topics of mutual interest.



HE the Minister of State for Foreign Affairs, Sultan bin Saad al-Muraikhi, met yesterday with Adviser on Foreign Affairs of Bangladesh, Tohid Hossain, on the sidelines of the Manama Dialogue 2025, currently underway in Bahraini capital. Discussion during the meeting, focused on bilateral relations and ways to support and strengthen them in addition to topics of mutual interest.



HE the Minister of State for Foreign Affairs, Sultan bin Saad al-Muraikhi, met yesterday with Secretary General of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Estonia Jonatan Vseiovi, on the sidelines of the Manama Dialogue Conference held in the Bahraini capital. During the meeting, the two sides discussed bilateral co-operation and ways to support and enhance it, in addition to issues of mutual interest. (QNA)

Official

Amir congratulates governor-general of Antigua and Barbuda

His Highness the Amir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani and His Highness the Deputy Amir Sheikh Abdullah bin Hamad al-Thani sent cables of congratulations to Governor-General of Antigua and Barbuda Rodney Williams 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 also sent a similar cable to Prime Minister, Minister of Finance, Corporate Governance and Public Private Partnerships of Antigua and Barbuda Gaston Browne on the occasion. (QNA)

Mol conducts training course on identity theft detection skills



The Ministry of Interior (MoI), represented by the General Directorate of Passports, wrapped up a training course on document forgery and identity theft detection skills. The course was attended by a number of personnel from various MoI departments, as well as representatives from Gulf Co-operation Council (GCC) member states. The training aimed to enhance participants' efficiency and develop their skills in forgery detection and identity verification, in addition to strengthening co-operation and the exchange of security expertise among relevant agencies in GCC countries. At the conclusion of the course, Director of the Administrative Affairs Department at the General Directorate of Passports Brig Khalid Jassim al-Zaini handed out certificates of participation to the trainees. (QNA)

Qatar attends 21st Manama Dialogue



HE the Minister of State for Foreign Affairs, Sultan bin Saad al-Muraikhi, took part in the 21st Manama Dialogue 2025, being held Bahrain. The conference discussed the most pressing challenges in foreign policy, defence, and security in the Middle East. (QNA)



Unesco endorses celebration of 50th anniversary of QU

Qatar University (QU) announced that the UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (Unesco), during its 43rd session held in Samarkand, Uzbekistan, has officially approved the inclusion of the 50th anniversary of the founding of QU in the organisation's list of commemorative events for 2026-2027.

The university said, in a statement, the decision follows a proposal submitted by Qatar, represented by QU and the Qatar National Commission for Education, Culture and Science, and supported by several national commissions of member states.

The approval recognises QU's pioneering role since its establishment in 1977 in advancing higher education and research, its sustained contributions to community service and national development, and its commitment to strengthening Qatar's academic and scientific presence regionally and internationally, in alignment with Unesco's objectives in education, science, and culture.

This decision also represents international recognition of QU's standing as the nation's first and leading university, an academic and research hub that



ing QU's achievements, and collaborations with local and international partners to document the university's journey through exhibitions, symposia, and publications that highlight its contributions to Qatar's educational renaissance.

The planned activities and events will be announced at a later stage.

The celebration aims to underscore QU's academic and scientific leadership, reaffirm its role as a national institution and a key driver of human development in Qatar, and envision its future beyond the Golden Jubilee as a beacon of education, research, and innovation in the region.

It is noteworthy that since 1956, Unesco has supported the commemoration of fiftieth and centennial anniversaries of significant historical events, institutions, and influential figures celebrated by its member states, recognising their global importance.

Such commemorations aim to highlight distinguished personalities, achievements, and milestones that foster international understanding, cultural exchange, and closer relations among peoples in the service of peace. (QNA)

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Kahramaa wraps up cybersecurity awareness campaign

The Qatar General Electricity and Water Corporation - Kahramaa has successfully concluded the 2025 Cybersecurity Awareness Campaign, marking the end of month-long initiative filled with educational and interactive activities. The campaign saw record participation from Kahramaa employees and played a vital role in fostering a culture of digital protection and embedding cybersecurity principles into the foundation of a sustainable digital work environment.

Throughout the campaign, Kahramaa organised a series of educational workshops attended by over 1,005 employees. These workshops addressed critical topics including the safe use of AI technologies, data classification, database security, and secur-

ing digital presence. In addition, 773 employees participated in knowledge-based quizzes, while 398 engaged in interactive games, each contributing to a deeper understanding of modern cybersecurity concepts.

A key highlight of the campaign was the phishing awareness initiative, which drew participation from 2,812 employees and resulted in 2,793 accurate reports. These figures reflect a high level of awareness and precision in identifying cyber threats. Overall, the campaign engaged 4,988 employees, underscoring Kahramaa's growing commitment to cybersecurity excellence.

Kahramaa hosted a closing ceremony at the KM2 headquarters. Abdulla bin Ali al-Theyab, president of the Corporation, attended

the ceremony, which featured the distribution of appreciation certificates, awards for outstanding participants, and a showcase of the campaign's key achievements - honouring the dedication and contributions of Kahramaa's workforce.

Turkih Trad al-Hothal, head of Information Security & Risk Management at Kahramaa remarked, "The campaign witnessed a noticeable improvement in security awareness and the spread of cybersecurity culture among Kahramaa employees." She further emphasised that cybersecurity is a shared responsibility that demands continuous collaboration and vigilance, and that employee engagement was instrumental in achieving the campaign's objectives.

AI smartphone Honor X9d 5G unveiled at Safari Mall



Honor, in partnership with Tradetec Group launched its latest Model - Honor X9d at Safari Mall Abu Hamour recently. The launch ceremony was attended by senior officials from Safari Group, Honor, and Tradetec Group. Attendees from Honor Qatar included Gao Done, country head, Honor Qatar, Hanish Hamza, sales director, Honor Qatar, Nisar, brand manager (Tradetec), Tamel Elsaid Farag AGM Safari, BM Kassim, regional director Safari, Mubeeb Rahiman business development manager Safari, Tittu George, head of Sales Safari and Hariprashanth MG, actor and special guest. Guests got an exclusive first look at the Honor X9d, showing Honor's commitment to bringing advanced technology, stylish design, and strong performance to Qatar. Built for durability and powered by a long-lasting battery, the Honor X9d delivers a reliable and smooth experience for everyday use - setting a new standard for dependable smartphones. Speaking at the event, a Safari mall spokesperson shared the brand's dedication to offering customers the latest technology innovations and Safari remains committed to bringing global tech experiences closer to everyone in Qatar. The Honor X9d is now available across all Safari outlets in Qatar, offering customers a durable and powerful mid-range smartphone that delivers great value for money.

'Qatar Rail Creative Hub' event gathers strong public, private sector presence

Qatar Railways Company (Qatar Rail) recently organised the 'Qatar Rail Creative Hub' as part of its ongoing strategy to build bridges of communication and collaboration between public sector entities and the local creative community.

The initiative reflects the company's belief that partnerships rooted in creativity and knowledge are fundamental to success, sustainability, and continued progress, serving as a key driver of development.

Ajlan Eid al-Enazi, chief of Strategy and Business Development at Qatar Rail, stated: "We are delighted with the successful organisation of the Qatar Rail Creative Hub, which brought together communication and public relations representatives from several government and semi-government entities, as well as talented individuals and local companies specialising in artistic and creative production. We were pleased to see the active participation which contributed to the success of this initiative."

He added: "Through this hub, we sought to create a platform for local talents and national companies to showcase their expertise in production, photography, advertising, design, and branding, while promoting collaboration, knowledge exchange, and the creation of new success stories and partnerships. "We hope this initiative serves as a significant step toward strengthening partnerships, fostering innovation in Qatar, and enhancing communication and co-operation between the public and private sectors in the fields of production and creative industries."

The event provided participating companies and talents with the opportunity to present their services and capabilities through dedicated showcases and promotional materials. The networking offered a platform for engagement and knowledge exchange between organisations and local creatives.

Participants expressed their appreciation for this initiative, which helped highlight national capabilities and their contribution to supporting communication and creative production projects across various entities in the country. Talal Abdulla al-Malki, director of Public Relations and Communication Department at the Civil Aviation Authority, said: "We were delighted to attend and take part in the Qatar Rail Creative Hub."

"The event was marked by a strong spirit of collaboration and creativity, offering us a valuable opportunity to connect with exceptional national talents capable of providing integrated creative and production solutions that meet our institutional needs. Such initiatives undoubtedly strengthen



Ajlan Eid al-Enazi, chief of Strategy and Business Development at Qatar Rail.



Nasser Ali Alhijji, director of the Public Relations and Communication Department at the General Tax Authority.



Talal Abdulla al-Malki, director of Public Relations and Communication Department at the Civil Aviation Authority.

collaboration between the public and private sectors and open new horizons for constructive future partnerships." Nasser Ali Alhijji, director of the Public Relations and Communication Department at the General Tax Authority, stated: "The Qatar Rail Creative Hub pro-

vided us with an ideal opportunity to engage directly with local companies specialising in diverse fields of creative and production. "We were impressed by the showcasing throughout the event and look forward to building on these connections to develop our

upcoming projects in alignment with our institutional strategy and Qatar National Vision 2030. We were pleased to attend this event that empowers local companies to showcase their capabilities and enhance their presence in the market."

Impactful ideas of QF students in spotlight at innovation and entrepreneurship summit

The second edition of Qatar Foundation's (QF) Higher Education Innovation and Entrepreneurship Summit - held at Mullaqa and sponsored by Snoonu, Al Sraiya Holding Group, and Qatar Research, Development and Innovation (QRDI) Council united QF students and alumni, alongside investors, under the theme 'Tech for Sustainable Growth'.

Organised by QF's Higher Education division, the summit reinforced how QF cultivates an entrepreneurial mindset among those who learn and grow within its unique ecosystem and education. It featured a startup pitching session where six teams of students presented their innovative ideas to a jury of investors and innovation experts.

The pitches ranged from digital well-being tools leveraging Artificial Intelligence, to advanced sustainability solutions in food waste management, clean energy, and healthcare technology - reflecting the breadth of creativity and purpose-driven innovation emerging from QF's higher education ecosystem. The winning project was Aiko, an Artificial Intelligence mentor for children's digital safety, by QF partner university Texas A&M University at Qatar students Manar Oqbi, Ay-

sha Jiffry, Fatima al-Emadi, and Soha Mousa.

Second place went to health innovation Portable Hyperbaric Oxygen Hood, developed by students from QF partner university Weill Cornell Medicine-Qatar, with third place going to HerBasira, a personalised, AI-powered solution for women's health, led by students from QF partner university Carnegie Mellon University in Qatar.

Each of the top three teams received financial support from Snoonu, Al Sraiya Holding Group, and QRDI Council to further develop their innovation.

Through the summit, QF offers its university students a platform to develop and showcase their ideas, engage with mentors and peers, and gain insights into entrepreneurship and innovation. The event reflects QF's commitment to blending academic study with practical experience, and nurturing the next generation of problem-solvers and changemakers.

"Now in its second year, the Higher Education Innovation and Entrepreneurship Summit stands as a key multiversity initiative of Qatar Foundation - serving as a dynamic platform where students transform ideas into real-world impact," said Dr Abdulnassir S

al-Tamimi, executive director of Student Services within QF's Higher Education division.

Hamad Mubarak al-Hajri, founder and CEO of Snoonu and an alumnus of QF partner university HEC Paris, Doha, said: "At the Higher Education Innovation and Entrepreneurship Summit, Snoonu proudly reaffirms our commitment to advancing Qatar's future by empowering its talented youth."

"Through our strategic partnership with Qatar Foundation, we are dedicated to fostering innovation and entrepreneurship by providing dynamic internship opportunities that nurture home-grown talent.

"Together, we aim to inspire and support the next generation of leaders, driving impactful contributions to Qatar National Vision 2030."

Aysha Abdulhameed al-Mudhahka, RDI programme director at QRDI Council, said: "QRDI Council has been a consistent key driver of innovation and entrepreneurship. The Higher Education Innovation and Entrepreneurship Summit 2025 reflects the council's commitment to driving collaboration that supports technological progress, develops local talent, and strengthens Qatar's knowledge-based economy."



Students from Qatar University's College of Arts and Sciences, Department of Mass Communication, participated in a series of interactive workshops over the first two days.

Media City, QU host Euronews Academy Bootcamp focused on digital journalism

Media City Qatar and Qatar University (QU) recently hosted the second edition of the Euronews Academy Bootcamp, focused on digital and mobile journalism. The programme offered training sessions designed to provide participants with practical skills and insights relevant to modern journalism.

Students from Qatar University's College of Arts and Sciences, Department of Mass Communication, participated in a series of interactive workshops over the first two days. Sessions covered digital storytelling techniques, mobile reporting and editing, and strategies for using social media platforms to engage audiences. The final day brought together instructors and representatives from Qatar University, Media City Qatar, and Euronews for a dedicated session, allowing participants to consolidate their learning in a collaborative environment.

Tevfik Ergun, director of Strategy & Excellence at Media City Qatar, said: "Media City Qatar is committed to fostering innovation and collaboration within the media sector.

Through our partnership with Qatar University and Euronews, the bootcamp provides opportunities for emerging talent to explore new ideas, gain exposure to industry standards, and contribute to shaping the next generation of media professionals. Initiatives like this support Qatar National Vision 2030 by nurturing a skilled, creative workforce that strengthens the country's media ecosystem."

Dr Fatima al-Kubaisi, dean of the College of Arts and Sciences at Qatar University, said: "This programme with Media City Qatar and Euronews provides our academic community with vital global media expertise. It encourages the critical thinking, creativity, and problem-solving essential for building a diversified, knowledge-based economy, aligning with our mission to cultivate individuals who can make a positive impact within society."

Jane Witherspoon, managing editor, Middle East, Central Asia and South Caucasus, Euronews, said: "Partnering with Media City Qatar and Qatar University enables Euronews to contribute to strengthening journalistic excellence across

the region. This bootcamp equips participants with the practical experience, ethical grounding, and global perspectives needed to produce impactful, high-quality journalism that speaks to both local and international audiences."

Leading the sessions was Amber Bryce, a senior social media journalist at Euronews with extensive experience in digital and mobile journalism. Before joining Euronews, she worked with *The Times* and *Twitter*, where she developed strategies for integrating social media into newsroom operations and storytelling.

Media City Qatar and Qatar University, which signed an MoU in 2024, have a strong history of collaboration on initiatives that enhance media education and professional skills for students and recent graduates.

This year's bootcamp builds on their previous Euronews Business Media Training, reinforcing their shared commitment to preparing participants for careers in a fast-changing media environment and advancing Qatar's position as a regional media hub.



Qatar supports Arab environmental efforts

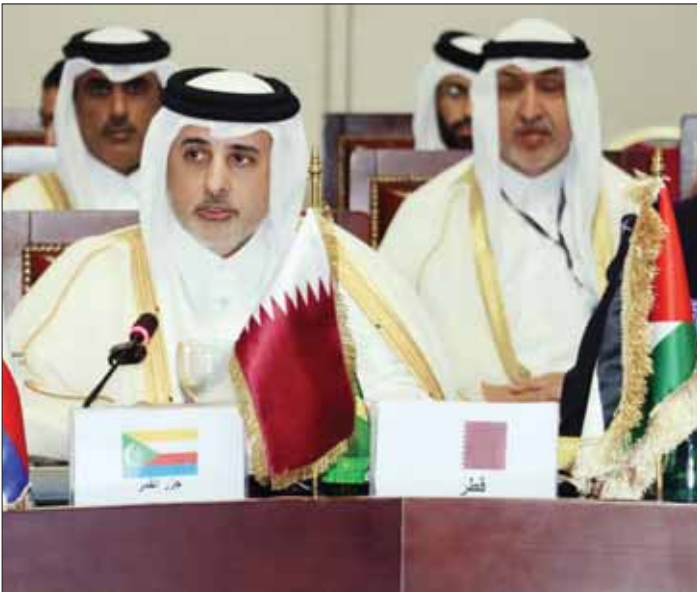
QNA
Nouakchott

Qatar, represented by the Ministry of Environment and Climate Change, participated in the meetings of the 36th session of the Council of Arab Ministers Responsible for Environ-

mental Affairs, hosted by the Mauritanian capital, Nouakchott. The Qatari delegation to the meetings was headed by HE the Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Dr Abdullah bin Abdulaziz bin Turki al-Subaie, who affirmed in his address Qatar's unwavering commitment to supporting joint Arab environmental

efforts and strengthening regional and international co-operation to achieve the sustainable development goals (SDGs) and protect natural resources for the benefit of future generations. On the sidelines of the session, HE the minister held meetings with a number of ministers and heads of participating bodies. He

discussed with them aspects of environmental co-operation, co-ordinating Arab positions in international forums, and prospects for partnership in regional and international initiatives aimed at combating desertification and addressing the challenges associated with drought, particularly in developing countries.



Qatar showcases its climate change adaptation

QNA
Seoul

The Ministry of Environment and Climate Change showcased Qatar's experience in planning and implementing climate change adaptation strategies at a dialogue session titled "Re-

sponses to Climate Change Adaptation and New Support Structures", held as part of Global Green Growth Week 2025 in Seoul, South Korea. The ministry was represented at the session by Head of the Climate Change Mitigation Section at the Climate Change Department, Mohammed Omar al-Badr.

He presented to the participants the most prominent successful national experiences and practices implemented by Qatar in the field of national climate change adaptation planning, as well as its ongoing efforts to build capacity and enhance the resilience of vital sectors most affected by climate events.

Al-Badr also addressed the lessons learned from Qatar's experience in developing and implementing adaptation strategies, emphasising the importance of co-operation between the public and private sectors to achieve national goals in the areas of sustainability and mitigating the effects of climate change.

He affirmed that Qatar continues to adopt innovative policies and initiatives to support the green economy and promote sustainable investments, in line with Qatar National Vision 2030. The Global Green Growth Week is one of the most prominent international platforms for discuss-

ing environmental challenges and reviewing solutions and policies aimed at achieving sustainable development. It witnesses broad participation from representatives of governments, international organisations, research institutions, and experts in the fields of environment, energy, and green finance.

Call for enhancing global climate policies

QNA
Seoul

Qatar participated in the high-level opening session of Global Green Growth Week 2025, organised by the Global Green Growth Institute (GGGI) in Seoul, South Korea. The session saw wide participation from government leaders, international organisations, and representatives of the private sector. The Qatari delegation was headed by HE the Undersecretary

of the Ministry of Environment and Climate Change engineer Abdulaziz bin Ahmed bin Abdullah al-Mahmoud. In his address, the undersecretary affirmed Qatar's commitment to supporting international efforts to address climate challenges. He emphasised the importance of strengthening international partnerships in knowledge exchange and technology transfer, which contributes to enhancing the effectiveness of climate policies and achieving the Sustainable Development Goals.

He highlighted the strategic co-operation between Qatar and several international organisations, including the Global Green Growth Institute, noting that this co-operation has contributed to strengthening national institutional capacities in the areas of climate planning and the development and implementation of environmental policies. He also noted that the bilateral agreements concluded by Qatar with a number of private entities and institutions have contributed to accessing the latest technolo-



gies in the fields of environment, sustainability, and the circular economy. He highlighted the existing partnership between the Ministry and the Global Green Growth Institute (GGGI) in preparing the National Adaptation Plan, which is being implemented according to a comprehensive approach that ensures the achievement of sustainable climate development. HE the undersecretary also participated in a ministerial session entitled "Water and Renewable Energy for Climate Change Adap-

tation". During his intervention, he reviewed Qatar's integrated approach, which links water security and energy efficiency, within the framework of the country's vision to expand the scope of renewable energy and achieve environmental sustainability. He also held a series of bilateral meetings, including a meeting with Chairman of the GGGI Board of Directors, Ban Ki-moon, and Director-General of the Institute, Dr Sang-Hyup Kim, where they discussed mechanisms for imple-

menting the National Adaptation Plan and reviewed opportunities for future co-operation. The Institute's officials expressed their appreciation for the support provided by Qatar to the Institute's programs and initiatives. He also met with President of the Mitsubishi Research Institute (MRI), Takashi Morisaki, where they discussed the existing co-operation between the two sides and the prospects for future joint work in the fields of environmental innovation and clean technology.



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No.	Document No.	Description	Tender Bond	Bid Closing Date
1.	QC/TC/FM/108/25	Staff and Other Transportation Services for Five Years at Q-Chem, Q-Chem II, RLOC and RLP and Lease of Shuttle Buses for Five Years at Q-Chem and RLP	QR 2,138,500/-	12:00 hrs. on 10 th December 2025
Brief SOW: The Company requires a qualified and experienced Contractor to provide the following: 1.Staff and Other Transportation Services for Five Years at Q-Chem, Q-Chem II, RLOC and RLP. The scope of work includes transportation services for general shift and shift employees on a long-term with a provision for additional transportation services on call-off basis. 2.Lease of Shuttle Buses for Five Years at Q-Chem and RLP. The scope of work includes supply of (2) shuttle buses for each Company's site on a long-term, including maintenance and drivers with a provision for short-term shuttle buses lease requirements on call-off basis.				
2.	QC/TC/FM/112/25	Plant Leased Vehicles for Q-Chem, Q-Chem II, RLOC and RLP for Five Years	QR 864,500/-	12:00 hrs. on 9 th December 2025
Company requires Contractor to provide vehicles on lease for Q-Chem, Q-Chem II, RLOC and RLP. The scope covers supply of vehicles on the long-term as well as the short-term (call off) lease basis, including maintenance and without drivers and without fuel.				

Tender Documents for the above description can be obtained as follows:
A. Pay to Bank and send the original receipt with authorization letter via email
For each tender pay a **non-refundable document fee of QR 1,000/-** Payable to Q-Chem, Bank Account (Contract Services - Tender) - Account Number 001-242007-003 with HSBC Bank) and submit the original receipt with an Authorization letter on Tenderer Company Letterhead with ID copy of the Tenderer representative via email to **tadvertising@qchem.com.qa** In the authorization letter Tenderer shall nominate a single focal point with contact mobile number, **official email address**, office number, fax number for the communications related to this tender for the transfer and receipt of the tender documents. **The Bank receipt must indicate the tender number and the tenderer name (company name).**
B. Date and Time of Tender documents Issuance via email
Tender documents issuance from **2nd November 2025 to 6th November 2025, 8am-12noon**
C. Proposal details
Proposals should be valid for **240 days** from the tender closing date.
D. Submission of Proposals
Guidelines for Electronic Bids Submission is attached in the Tender documents.

MoECC event aims to build green future for Qatar

The Ministry of Environment and Climate Change (MoECC) has announced the launch of Qatar Sustainability Week, as part of its ongoing efforts to promote environmental awareness and strengthen the principles of sustainable development. This event is considered an important step in highlighting the initiatives and projects aimed at protecting the environment, rationalising the use of resources, and achieving ecological balance. The week also seeks to engage everyone in building a more sustainable future for Qatar. There are various related activities that are being held at Gowan Island during Nov 1-3 from 4pm until 10pm, which focuses on creativity, active engagement of the public and giving the participants excellent experiences for better green future. Meanwhile, the activities of Qatar Sustainability Week are set to go on until Nov 8, seeking to raise public awareness on the importance of adopting positive sustainable practices to help maintain the wellbeing of the local environment and reduce unnecessary consumption. (QNA)



Tender - Waseef

Waseef Asset Management (Waseef) would like to invite competent Service Providers for the below Open Tenders:

Tender Number	Subject	Bid Bond (QAR)	Non-refundable Tender Fee (QAR)	Bid Submission Closing Date
GTC/WSF/MAD/FAFF/53/2025	TENDER FOR FIRE ALARM AND FIRE FIGHTING WORKS, EXECUTION, INTEGRATION AND TESTING AND COMMISSIONING AS PER QCDD STANDARDS FOR MADINATNA PROJECT (QCDD GRADE A APPROVED COMPANIES)	57,000	1,000	November 23, 2025
GTC/WSF/ARG/FAFF/54/2025	TENDER FOR FIRE ALARM AND FIRE FIGHTING WORKS, EXECUTION, INTEGRATION AND TESTING AND COMMISSIONING AS PER QCDD STANDARDS FOR ARGENTINE NEIGHBORHOOD PROJECT (QCDD GRADE A APPROVED COMPANIES)	95,000	1,000	November 23, 2025


The Tender Document will be available from November 2, 2025 onwards upon submission of the below documentation to **tender@waseef.qa**

To collect please provide the following:


1. Authorization Letter on Company letterhead, copy of Commercial Registration and valid Identification of the representative.
2. Bank deposit slip carrying tender number and subject details. Tender fee shall be deposited to Account Name - Waseef Asset Management Co., Account Number 0002-105222-200 with Masraf Al Rayan Bank.

To collect please provide the following:

1. Bidders should submit a bid bond issued by a bank operating in the State of Qatar and valid for 120 days from the closing date (March 23, 2026)
2. Technical and Commercial offers must be submitted in separate sealed envelopes and delivered to the below-mentioned address:
GTC Secretary, 10th floor, Waseef Head Office, Al Owaina Tower, Old Salata, Museum Park Street, Doha, Qatar.



LET US MANAGE YOUR WORLD





Macedonia rally backs Palestine



Protesters hold a banner reading “Free Palestine” during a demonstration in support of Palestinians in Skopje, Macedonia, yesterday.

Thousands feared ‘in grave danger’ in El-Fasher after fall to RSF

AFP
Port Sudan

Thousands of civilians are feared trapped and in imminent danger in the Sudanese city of El-Fasher after its fall to paramilitaries, Doctors Without Borders said yesterday, as Germany’s top diplomat described the situation there as “apocalyptic”. At war with the regular army since April 2023, the Rapid Support Forces seized El-Fasher last Sunday, pushing the military out of its last stronghold in Darfur after a grinding 18-month siege marked by starvation and bombardment. Since the city’s fall, reports have emerged of summary executions, physical violations, attacks on aid workers, looting and abductions, while communications remain largely cut off. Survivors from El-Fasher who reached the nearby town of Tawila have told AFP of mass killings, children shot before their parents, and civilians beaten and robbed as they fled. The UN says more than 65,000 people have fled El-Fasher since Sunday but tens of thousands remain trapped. Around 260,000 people were in the city before the RSF’s final assault. “Large numbers of people remain in grave danger and are being prevented by the Rapid Support Forces and its allies from reaching safer areas,” Doctors Without Borders (MSF) said. The NGO added that only 5,000 people had managed to make their way to Tawila, about 70 kilometres to the west. The numbers of people arriving in Tawila “don’t add up, while

accounts of large-scale atrocities are mounting”, said MSF head of emergencies Michel Olivier Lacharite. “Where are all the missing people who have already survived months of famine and violence in El-Fasher?” he added. “The most likely, albeit frightening, answer is that they are being killed, blocked, and hunted down when trying to flee.” Several eyewitnesses told MSF that a group of 500 civilians, along with soldiers from the military and the army-allied Joint Forces, had attempted to flee yesterday, but most were killed or captured by the RSF and their allies. Survivors reported that people were separated based on their gender, age or presumed ethnicity, and that many were still being held for ransom. Hayat, a mother of five who fled the city, previously told AFP that “young men travelling with us were stopped” along the way by paramilitaries and “we don’t know what happened to them”. The UN said Friday the death toll from the RSF’s assault on the city may be in the hundreds, while army allies accused the paramilitary group of killing over 2,000 civilians. Yale University’s Humanitarian Research Lab suggested on Friday that mass killings were likely continuing in and around El-Fasher. The lab, which uses satellite imagery and open-source information to document human rights abuses during wars, said fresh images from Friday showed “no large-scale movement” of civilians fleeing the city, giving them reason to believe much of the population may be “dead, captured, or in hiding”.

The lab identified at least 31 clusters of objects consistent with human bodies between last Sunday and Friday, across neighbourhoods, university grounds and military sites. “Indicators that mass killing is continuing are clearly visible,” the lab said. At a conference in Bahrain yesterday, German Foreign Minister Johann Wadephul said Sudan was “absolutely an apocalyptic situation, the greatest humanitarian crisis of the world”. He added that the RSF had “pledged to protect civilians and they will be held accountable for these actions”. Speaking at the same event, British Foreign Minister Yvette Cooper also described the reported abuses as “truly horrifying”. “Atrocities, mass executions, starvation and the devastating use of physical violation as a weapon of war, with women and children bearing the brunt of the largest humanitarian crisis in the 21st century,” she said. The RSF said Thursday that it had arrested several fighters accused of abuses during the capture of El-Fasher, but UN humanitarian chief Tom Fletcher questioned the group’s commitment to investigating atrocities. Both the RSF — descended from the Janjaweed militias accused of genocide in Darfur two decades ago — and the army have faced war crimes accusations over the course of the conflict. The US has previously determined the RSF committed genocide in Darfur. The army-backed government relocated to Port Sudan early in the war. Meanwhile, the army has drawn on support from Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Iran and Turkey.

Displaced Gazans find shelter in Yasser Arafat’s dilapidated villa

AFP
Gaza City

The Gaza residence of the late Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat stands in ruins, like most other buildings in the devastated territory, but the remains of the once-lavish villa now also host several displaced families. AFPTV footage shows the house, converted into a museum after the Palestinian leader’s death in 2004 and bearing murals in his honour, surrounded by rubble. Located in the Rimal neighbourhood in Gaza City, the house

was heavily damaged by Israeli strikes during the two years of war that followed Hamas’s unprecedented storming of Israel in October 2023. Ashraf Nafeth Abu Salem, a university professor who found shelter in the residence with his own and other families, said he had decided to clean up the rubble inside the house’s courtyard, which was “largely destroyed and burned”. A metal door that opens from the villa onto the street is adorned with a poster of Arafat, wearing his trademark keffiyeh and sunglasses. Behind him in the image is a smaller picture of the current president of the Pal-

estinian Authority, Mahmoud Abbas. Abu Salem leafed through an old, yellowed book bearing Arafat’s portrait. “We belong to the generation of the first intifada (in 1987). We grew up throwing stones,” he said. “For us, President Abu Ammar was a model and a symbol of the Palestinian national struggle,” the professor said, referring to Arafat by the affectionate name used by supporters. Three-quarters of the buildings in the Gaza Strip have been destroyed in the two-year war, producing over 61mn tonnes of debris, according to UN data analysed by AFP.

Katara hosts live screening of Grand Egyptian Museum opening

From Page 1

Katara’s organisation of this live broadcast reflects its cultural mission to open new windows of interaction with human achievements across diverse fields, and to highlight the shared values that unite peoples through culture, art, and knowledge. It also demonstrates Katara’s commitment to keeping pace with major global cultural events and shining a light on them. In his speech on this occasion, Ambassador Elfiky expressed his delight at Katara’s participation in this world-class event, which he described as a moment of pride for Egypt and for all humanity. He noted that the Grand Egyptian Museum (GEM) represents a civilisational bridge linking Egypt’s glorious past with its present and future, embodying Egypt’s vision of its historic role as a beacon of culture and knowledge throughout the ages. He added that this monumen-

tal cultural project reflects the Egyptian leadership’s deep commitment to heritage and identity, affirming that culture and art are among the noblest bridges that bring nations closer and deepen human understanding. He also praised the strong co-operation between the Egyptian embassy and Katara, expressing his gratitude to Katara’s General Manager and staff, saying: “Katara continues to enrich the cultural scene in Qatar and the Arab region through its outstanding initiatives and contributions, fostering intercultural exchange among nations.” The Grand Egyptian Museum is located near the Pyramids of Giza, covering an area of approximately 500,000sq m, making it the largest archaeological museum in the world dedicated to a single civilisation. The building itself spans about 167,000sq m, housing permanent and temporary exhibition halls, restoration centers, and educational, cul-

tural, and recreational facilities. The museum contains over 100,000 artifacts from various periods of ancient Egyptian history — from pre-dynastic times, through the Old, Middle, and New Kingdoms, and up to the Greek and Roman eras. Among its most remarkable treasures is the complete collection of King Tutankhamun, comprising more than 5,000 artifacts displayed together for the first time since their discovery. The architectural design of the museum is itself a masterpiece, inspired by the grandeur of its location overlooking the Giza Pyramids. Its majestic façade is composed of large triangular stone forms that symbolise the temporal continuum of Egyptian civilisation—from past to future. The exhibition halls are equipped with advanced technical systems, offering visitors an interactive and immersive experience that connects them deeply with Egypt’s rich and enduring history.



Lights illuminate the sky during the opening ceremony of the Grand Egyptian Museum (GEM) in Giza, on the southwestern outskirts of the capital Cairo, yesterday.

21 dead, 30-plus missing in Kenya landslide: minister

At least 21 people died and more than 30 were still missing in a landslide yesterday caused by heavy rains in western Kenya, the interior minister said, AFP reported from Nairobi. The landslide occurred overnight in Marakwet East in the west of the country, which is currently in rainy season. “We have confirmed the loss of 21 people to this tragedy, while over 30 people are still unaccounted for as reported by their families,” Kipchumba Murkomen wrote on X.

Search and rescue operations were paused for the night, he added. The Kenyan Red Cross shared aerial images from the region that showed massive mudslides and flash flooding stretching over vast distances. It said it was co-ordinating rescue efforts with the government, including air evacuations for the injured. “Access to some of the affected areas remains extremely difficult due to flooding and blocked routes,” it said in a statement on X.

ANNOUNCEMENT

I, TAMSYN ROMI LEWYN BRISCOE

holder of

SOUTH AFRICA Passport No. A06319597
QID No. 28971000460

hereby change my name

from

TAMSYN ROMI LEWYN BRISCOE

to

TAMSYN ROMI PARTINGTON

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

Tanzania president wins 98% in election as opposition says hundreds killed

AFP
Dar es Salaam

Tanzanian President Samia Suluhu Hassan condemned protests around the election in which she was declared winner yesterday with almost 98% of the vote, while the opposition said hundreds have been killed by security forces. The electoral commission said Hassan won 97.66% of the vote, with turnout at 87%, despite reports from AFP journalists and other observers that polling stations were largely empty. Hassan, 65, had sought to cement her position and silence critics in her party with an emphatic victory, helped by the main opposition candidates being either jailed or disqualified. But a heavy crackdown and the



File photo of incumbent Tanzanian President Samia Suluhu Hassan.

lack of options sparked mass protests around the country. “The government strongly condemns and denounces those incidents,” said Hassan as she accepted a winner’s certificate on state television. “When it comes to the national security... there is no alternative but to employ all defence measures.” The

main opposition party, Chadema, said “no less than 800 people” have been killed by security forces since Wednesday. A security source and a diplomat in Dar es Salaam both told AFP that deaths were “in the hundreds”, but verifying information remained difficult as an Internet blackout was still in place yesterday. The election result is a “mockery of the democratic process”, Chadema spokesman John Kitoka said, calling for a “fresh election”. “We are going to announce our reaction that could also include calling for national protests,” he added. Father Charles Kitima, secretary of the Catholic Bishops Conference in Dar es Salaam said Tanzania has become a “totalitarian regime”. “It’s a very sad event. For the first time in our country, we are experienc-

ing the mass killing of people protesting,” he said by phone. The African Union chair Mahmoud Ali Youssouf congratulated Hassan in a statement, but said he “deeply regrets the loss of human life”. Tourists have been stranded by cancelled flights, and the main port at Dar es Salaam — a major economic lifeline for the country — was shuttered, according to data from tracker Vessel Finder and Dutch shipping firm C. Steinweg. There were reports yesterday of spiking food prices as shops ran low on supplies, petrol stations were closed and public transport halted. “I have been staying in the mosque since Wednesday when the violence erupted,” said Mohamed Rajab, a 52-year-old in Dar es Salaam. “There is no transport. I’m not sure when I’m going back home.”

Mamdani campaigns in New York City mayoral bid



Democratic candidate for New York City mayor, Zohran Mamdani, delivers remarks while campaigning with New York Attorney General, Letitia James, at the Hanson Place Seventh-Day Adventist Church in the Brooklyn borough of New York City, yesterday.

US will not send any top officials to COP30

AFP
Washington

The US will not send any top officials to the COP30 climate talks in Brazil later this month, a White House official said yesterday, as President Donald Trump instead works to boost fossil fuels.

Trump, who withdrew from the Paris climate agreement for a second time upon his return to the White House in January, had not been expected to attend a leaders' summit ahead of the annual UN climate conference in Belem.

But it now appears he will not dispatch any top negotiators to the talks, to be held from November 10 to 21, either.

"The US is not sending any high level representatives to COP30," a White House official

said on condition of anonymity.

"The president is directly engaging with leaders around the world on energy issues, which you can see from the historic trade deals and peace deals that all have a significant focus on energy partnerships," Brazil said Friday that fewer than 60 world leaders have confirmed they will attend the climate summit on November 6-7 – held separately this year to ease accommodation pressures. The leaders of France, Germany, the United Kingdom, the Netherlands, Norway, Colombia, Chile, Cape Verde and Liberia will attend, their governments have confirmed to AFP.

China has said Vice-Premier Ding Xuexiang will represent President Xi Jinping.

While Trump also exited the Paris deal in his first term, his administration has gone further this time, exerting its clout

to boost fossil fuels globally.

This includes, for example, threatening countries with retaliatory measures if they agreed to a carbon pricing system by the UN's International Maritime Organisation, effectively curtailing its implementation.

Climate advocates fear the administration could seek to withdraw from the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change – the treaty that underpins the Paris Agreement.

Doing so could prevent future administrations from re-entering the deal, but it is not clear if the executive branch has the legal authority to undo a Senate-ratified treaty.

While Trump's administration appears to be ignoring the summit, more than 100 state and local US leaders – including governors and mayors – are still expected to join the talks.

Canada's Carney apologises to Trump over Reagan ad

Canadian Prime Minister Mark Carney said yesterday he had apologised to US President Donald Trump over an anti-tariff political advertisement and had told Ontario Premier Doug Ford not to run it, Reuters reported from Gyeongju. Carney, speaking to reporters after attending an Asia-Pacific summit in South Korea, said he had made the apology privately to Trump when they both attended a dinner hosted by South Korea's president on Wednesday. "I did apologise to the president," Carney said, confirming comments by Trump made on Friday. Carney also confirmed that he had reviewed the ad with Ford before it aired, but said he had opposed

using it. "I told Ford I did not want to go forward with the ad," he said. The ad, commissioned by Ford, an outspoken Conservative politician who is sometimes compared to Trump, uses a snippet of Republican icon and former President Ronald Reagan saying that tariffs cause trade wars and economic disaster. In response, Trump announced that he was increasing tariffs on goods from Canada, and Washington has also halted trade talks with Canada. When departing South Korea earlier this week, Trump remarked he had a "very nice" conversation with Carney at that dinner, but did not elaborate. On Friday Trump still said the United States and Canada will not restart trade talks.

Hegseth says US ready to share tools to help allies counter China

Reuters
Kuala Lumpur

Pentagon chief Pete Hegseth yesterday took aim at Beijing over an increase in "destabilising actions" in the South China Sea and committed to support Southeast Asian countries with technology to help them respond jointly to Chinese threats.

On a second day in Kuala Lumpur packed with meetings that included multilateral talks with allies Australia, Japan and the Philippines, Hegseth proposed to Asean defence ministers the building of shared maritime domain awareness and said China had shown a lack of respect and threatened their territorial sovereignty.

"You live it on the threats we all face from China's aggression and course of actions in the South China Sea and elsewhere," he said.

"We need to develop our joint capabilities to respond, and this includes being able to monitor maritime conduct and develop the tools that allow us to respond quickly...ensuring that whoever is on the receiving end of aggression and provocation is then, therefore, by definition, not alone." "No one can innovate and scale like the United States of America, and we're eager to share those capabilities with allies and partners," Hegseth added.

Hegseth's remarks came a day after the armed forces of Australia, New Zealand, the Philippines and the US held a drill in the South China Sea, a patrol that a Chinese military spokesperson said "seriously undermined peace and stability".

Beijing claims sovereignty over almost the entire South China Sea via a line on its maps that overlaps with parts of the exclusive eco-



US Defence Secretary Pete Hegseth attends the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (Asean) - United States Defence Ministers Hi-Tea as part of the Asean Defence Ministers' Meeting in Kuala Lumpur, yesterday.

nomic zones of Brunei, Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines and Vietnam.

China has deployed an armada of coast guard vessels hundreds of kilometres off its mainland that has repeatedly clashed with vessels of the Philippines and been accused of disrupting energy activities of Malaysia and Vietnam.

Beijing denies acting aggressively and says its coast guard has operated professionally in defending Chinese territory from incursions.

On Friday, its Defence Minister Dong Jun said it was necessary for China and Asean to work together to "pool Eastern strength" and safeguard peace and stability in the South China Sea.

Hegseth's visit to Southeast Asia came soon after US President Donald Trump announced on social media that he had asked the US military to "start testing our Nuclear Weapons", after a halt for 33 years, a move that appeared to be a message to rival nuclear powers China and Russia.

It was not immediately clear

whether Trump meant nuclear-explosive testing, which would be carried out by the National Nuclear Security Administration, or flight testing of nuclear-capable missiles.

Asked by reporters what kind of testing Trump was referring to, Hegseth said his department would comment later, adding: "We have very capable nuclear capabilities, and testing them is only prudent." In addressing the defence ministers' forum, Hegseth touted Washington's peace credentials and said the US was dedicated to building a military "unmatched in global power", while stressing its commitment to allies and partners in the Indo-Pacific.

He said US dialogue with China was important and the opportunity to talk to his Chinese counterpart on Friday was of value, but warned Beijing's actions must be watched closely.

"We seek peace. We do not seek conflict, but we must ensure that China is not seeking to dominate you or anybody else," Hegseth told Asean counterparts.

More than \$2mn in weapons seized in deadly Rio anti-drug raid: govt

AFP
Rio de Janeiro

Authorities confiscated more than \$2mn worth of weapons, explosives, drugs and military equipment in the raid, which targeted Comando Vermelho, one of the oldest and most powerful gangs in the country, which controls large swathes of Rio de Janeiro.

On Tuesday, the massive police operation in two favela complexes left at least 117 suspected criminals and four police officers dead, according to the latest official tally. The Rio de Janeiro state government announced "one of

the largest seizures" of military weapons in a single day from the raid – 120 weapons in all, including 93 rifles, valued at 12.8mn reais (about \$2.4mn).

They also found ammunition, explosives, drugs and military equipment in the raid, which targeted Comando Vermelho, one of the oldest and most powerful gangs in the country, which controls large swathes of Rio de Janeiro.

According to authorities, some of the weapons come from other countries such as Argentina, Belgium, Germany, Peru, Russia and

Venezuela, and included models used in conflict zones such as the AK-47 and the FAL.

Some rifles belong to foreign militaries. "We are looking at an arsenal typical of a war scenario," Rio de Janeiro Civil Police Secretary Felipe Curi said in a statement.

Curi said authorities would investigate the routes used by criminal groups to bring the weapons to Rio de Janeiro. The police raid has drawn condemnation from human rights organisations, and the United Nations has called for an investigation.

In US first, New Mexico launches free child care for all

Reuters
Taos

New Mexico became yesterday the first US state to offer free child care to all residents in a bid to boost its economy and lift education and child welfare levels ranked the worst in the country.

Under the programme, families, regardless of income, can receive state vouchers to cover public and private child care fees. It culminates efforts New Mexico has made to expand access to free child care since the governor and state legislature created the Early Childhood Education and Care Department in 2019.

The launch comes as other Democratic-run states, cities and counties eye a step popular among working families. Connecticut recently passed a bill making child care free for those families earning under \$100,000 per year and no more than 7% of income for those earning more.

New York mayoral candidate Zohran Mamdani has proposed no-cost universal child care.

Taos special education teacher Allyson O'Brien expects to save around \$12,000 a year in child care bills for her son Otis, who is nearly 2-1/2. She and her husband Shawn O'Kelly, a truck driver, earn a fraction above New



Allyson O'Brien, a special education teacher who stands to save about \$12,000 a year in child care costs, when New Mexico becomes the first US state to offer free universal child care, poses for a photograph in her classroom at Taos Charter School in Taos, New Mexico. **Right:** Children play at the University of New Mexico-Taos Kids' Campus, in Ranchos de Taos, New Mexico, US.

Mexico's previous income cap for free child care, which was about \$129,000 per year for their family of four.

"We'll be able to go on vacation, we won't have to decide what bills we're going to pay, like, are we going to do propane or the mortgage?" O'Brien said.

To achieve a fully universal system, New Mexico must create nearly 14,000 more child care slots and recruit 5,000 educators, according to its Democratic-run government. The state is estab-

lishing a \$12.7mn low-interest loan fund to construct and expand child care facilities. It is also increasing reimbursement rates to providers that pay entry-level staff a minimum of \$18 per hour, above the state's \$12 hourly minimum wage, and offer full-time care. Alison McPartlon, director of the University of New Mexico-Taos Kids' Campus child care centre, said her waiting list is so long some children do not get in before they start kindergarten. She said higher reimbursement rates will

help her retain and recruit educators.

"There will be more centres coming up," said McPartlon, describing the shift to universal child care as "incredible."

New Mexico Governor Michelle Lujan Grisham told reporters child care was "the backbone of creating a system of support for families that allows them to work, to go to college, to do all the things they need to do to continue to lift New Mexico out of poverty." Nearly 18% of New Mexicans live

below the poverty line, according to the US Census, making it one of the poorest states. Slightly larger in area than the United Kingdom, with only 2.1mn people, New Mexico is paying for universal child care primarily through funds generated by its oil and gas sector, the second-biggest of any state.

Research shows quality child care lifts education outcomes, especially among low-income families, according to Philip Fisher, a professor of early childhood learning at Stanford University.



Reading levels of New Mexican students fall far below the national average when children are first tested around age 8 or 9, according to studies by Neal Halfon, professor of paediatrics at the University of California, Los Angeles.

The Annie E Casey Foundation has, for years, ranked New Mexico last among states in both education and child well-being.

New Mexico joins countries such as Norway and Belgium that offer free universal child care for children under 3, and Bulgaria, where early childhood education is free for all children until elementary school. New Mexico is going further by offering no-cost child care for children up to age 13.

Critics such as New Mexico State Representative Rebecca Dow, a Republican, say it makes no sense to give wealthier families free child care when they could receive federal tax breaks for child care included this year in President Donald Trump's One Big Beautiful Bill.

Dow, the founder of a daycare centre, said research showed the best place for a young child was at home and the state should give families tax credits for "mom to stay home" with the kids.

"There is no capacity, people are going to be disappointed," she said of the state's push for universal free day care.



Tens of thousands protest in Serbia on anniversary of deadly roof collapse

Reuters
Novi Sad

Tens of thousands of protesters poured into Serbia's second city yesterday a year after a railway station roof collapse that killed 16 people, unleashing discontent over alleged corruption and a lack of accountability many blame for the disaster.

Months of protests across Serbia, stoked by anger over the failure so far to prosecute those responsible for the roof collapse have rattled President Aleksandar Vucic's long grip on power and raised calls for early elections.

Protesters streamed into the northern city of Novi Sad, where the disaster occurred, in cars, buses or on foot, some having walked long distances, witnesses said. One of Novi Sad's main boulevards was packed with people.

The protesters — many of them young people — observed 16 minutes of silence — one for every victim — from 11:52am, when the roof caved in following renovation work on November 1, 2024.

Protesters held up large red hearts bearing the names of the collapse victims, clutched white flowers and laid wreaths in front of the railway station. The tearful father of one of the victims, dressed in black, stood for hours staring at his daughter's name affixed among others to the station's perimeter fence.

There were no reports of violence, which had marred some protests during the summer when riot police used stun grenades and tear gas to break up rallies.

"This is a major tragedy for the Serbian people. We cannot bring those people back but we can feel the pain with their families and say that this is enough," said Sladjana Burmaz, a 51-year-old economist

from the central town of Valjevo.

"These people were not killed by accident, their deaths were the result of a poor system, poor politics... Justice would be served if those responsible were held accountable," she said.

Vucic, in an Instagram post, published a photo of himself in a church holding a candle at a commemoration ceremony in the capital Belgrade for the victims of the disaster.

"Let the names of those killed be a reminder that human life is above any divisions (in society)," Vucic wrote. The government, he added, had designated yesterday as a day of national mourning.

The protest movement, led by students, academics and opposition leaders, accuse Vucic and his populist nationalist party of presiding over corruption, shoddy public services, nepotism and curbs on media freedoms. They deny the accusations.



Mourners stand in front of flowers and heart-shaped signs bearing the names of victims laid outside the station during gathering marking the first anniversary of the Novi Sad railway station tragedy, yesterday. (AFP)

Pakistan and Afghanistan extend truce, to hold another round of talks

AFP
Islamabad

Pakistan and Afghanistan have agreed to extend a temporary ceasefire and will hold another round of peace talks in Istanbul next week, aiming to defuse tensions after a deadly flare-up this month.

The talks, set for November 6, follow the worst clashes between the South Asian neighbours since the Taliban returned to power in 2021.

Until Turkiye and Qatar mediated a ceasefire, more than 70 people were killed and hundreds wounded in violence that erupted after explosions in Kabul on October 9.

"All parties have agreed on continuation of ceasefire," Turkiye's foreign ministry said in a statement, adding that a monitoring mechanism would be established to ensure peace and penalise the violating party.

The two sides had been holding talks in Istanbul under Turkish and Qatari mediation until Islamabad said Wednesday that the negotiations had collapsed.

The following evening, Turkiye announced that the warring parties had agreed to extend the truce.

Afghan Taliban spokesman Zabihullah Mujahid said the talks concluded with "agreement that both sides will meet again and discuss the remaining issues".

"The Islamic Emirate seeks good relations with other neighbouring countries, it also desires positive ties with Pakistan and remains committed to relations based on mutual respect, non-interference in internal affairs, and not posing a threat to any side," he said on X.

Pakistan's foreign ministry

confirmed "the ceasefire holds".

"We have taken note of assurances from the Afghan side on this issue," foreign ministry spokesperson Tahir Andrabi told journalists.

Islamabad "hopes for a positive outcome" in the talks, and is "entitled to be this optimistic for the subsequent round" of negotiations, Andrabi said.

Relations between the one-time allies, who share a 2,600km (1,600-mile) frontier, have deteriorated in recent years.

Islamabad accuses Kabul of harbouring militant groups that stage cross-border attacks, particularly the Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP), which it says uses Afghan territory as a base.

The Taliban government has consistently denied the allegations. "Our inflexible demand is attacks (should stop) from Afghan soil, and that the Afghan Taliban in Kabul should stop providing shelter to the TTP," Pakistani Defence Minister Khawaja Asif said in remarks broadcast on state-run PTV.

"We are Muslims, brothers, neighbours, but some (in Pakistan), consciously or unconsciously, are playing with fire and war," Afghanistan's Interior Minister Sirajuddin Haqqani said.

The border between the two countries has been closed for more than two weeks, biting into the earnings of conflict-weary traders.

In Kandahar on the Afghan side, Nazir Ahmed, a cloth trader, told AFP both countries "will bear losses".

"Our nation is tired and their nation is also tired," the 35-year-old said. Abdul Jabbar, a vehicle spare parts trader in the Pakistani border town of Chaman, said "trade suffers greatly".

Fresh and ready to hit the road



Farmers pack cauliflowers in bags after harvesting them in a field in Attock district, Punjab province of Pakistan. (AFP)

Ukraine claims its troops holding out in Pokrovsk; Moscow says pincer closing

Reuters
Kyiv/Moscow

Ukraine's top military commander said yesterday his troops were still holding out in the embattled eastern city of Pokrovsk, which Moscow said its forces were at last enclosing in a pincer movement after more than a year of fighting.

Russia has been trying to capture Pokrovsk, dubbed "the gateway to Donetsk", since mid-2024 in its campaign to control the entirety of Donetsk, a Ukrainian province it claims to have annexed. The city, home to 70,000 people before the war, has been all but completely destroyed and depopulated.

Capturing Pokrovsk would be the most important Russian territorial gain inside Ukraine since Moscow took the ruined city of Avdiivka in early 2024 after one of the bloodiest battles of the war.

Since then, Russia has made steady but slow gains in intense fighting along the 1,000km front line, believed to have killed tens of thousands of soldiers on both sides. Kyiv says the costly fight-

ing is largely stalemated and its territorial losses are marginal; Moscow says it is still making important gains.

"We are holding Pokrovsk," Ukraine's army chief Oleksandr Syrskyi said on Facebook. "A comprehensive operation to destroy and dislodge enemy forces from Pokrovsk is ongoing."

Russian officials say control of Pokrovsk and Kostiantynivka to its northeast would allow Moscow to drive north towards the two biggest remaining Ukrainian-controlled cities in Donetsk — Kramatorsk and Sloviansk.

They have described increasing advances in the Pokrovsk area in recent days. Reuters has not been able to verify the battlefield accounts because access is restricted on both sides.

Deepstate, a Ukrainian map of the front line made by compiling data from open-source images, shows Russian troops in full control of a small southern part of the city, with most of the rest of it still depicted as a grey zone, fully controlled by neither force.

The Russian Defence Ministry's Zvezda news outlet said yesterday that Ukrainian troops were beginning to lay down arms

inside Pokrovsk, and released a video of two men it said were Ukrainian soldiers who had surrendered. Reuters could not verify the video or determine where or when it was filmed.

Kyiv said this week it had landed a helicopter with a team of special forces

in Pokrovsk in a mission to halt the Russian advance. Russia's Defence Ministry said on Saturday its troops had killed all 11 members of that Ukrainian special forces team.

A Ukrainian military official, who spoke on condition of anonymity, denied that the special forces had been killed and said the operation was continuing.

Russia also said its troops had pushed back an attempt by a Ukrainian unit to break out of Hryshyne, northwest of Pokrovsk. Battles in that area are significant, as they could indicate Russian forces are close to cutting off Ukrainian supply lines to Pokrovsk.

Ukraine's military said the situation in Pokrovsk "remains difficult and dynamic" but the army had "managed to improve its tactical position in several quarters of the city".

Indian Sikhs get visas for festival in Pakistan

AFP
New Delhi

Indian Sikh pilgrims have been issued visas for neighbouring Pakistan, the first major allowance after travel between the arch-rival nations was frozen during conflict in May.

There was no immediate response from New Delhi, but Indian newspapers reported yesterday that the government would allow "selected" groups to travel for a 10-day festival to celebrate the founder of the Sikh faith.

Tensions remain high between New Delhi and Islamabad, after deadly clashes between the nuclear-armed rivals in May — the worst fighting since 1999.

More than 70 people were killed in missile, drone and artillery exchanges — and the land crossing was shut to general traffic.

The Pakistan High Commission in New Delhi said it had issued "over 2,100 visas to Sikh pilgrims from India".

Tens of thousands of Sikh pilgrims are expected to flock to Pakistan's city of Nankana Sahib, the birthplace of Guru Nanak.

Nankana Sahib lies 85km west of the border with India. Celebrations are expected to begin on Tuesday.

The frontier was a colonial creation at the violent end of British rule in 1947 which sliced the sub-continent into Hindu-majority India and Muslim-majority Pakistan.

The Attari-Wagah land border between the countries — straddling the state of Punjab on either side — was shuttered to general traffic in May.

The border is the site of a daily flag ceremony, where visitors come to watch a sunset parade of strutting soldiers on each side.

Conflict broke out in May after New Delhi accused Islamabad of backing an attack targeting tourists on April 22 in Indian-administered Kashmir, claims Islamabad rejected.

Woman charged over Louvre heist tears up in court

AFP
Paris

A woman arrested this week along with four other suspects over the unprecedented jewel heist at the Louvre was charged and remanded in custody yesterday.

The 38-year-old was in tears as she appeared at a Paris court, saying she feared for "her children" and for herself, according to AFP.

She has been charged with complicity in organised theft and criminal conspiracy with a view to committing a crime.

The magistrate justified the detention of the woman who lives in the French capital's northern suburb of La Courneuve on the grounds of a "risk of collusion" and "disturbance of public order".

In total, two of the five people arrested this week were charged yesterday, while the other three have been released without charge, police sources and sources close to the case told AFP.

Last month, thieves wielding power tools raided the Louvre, the world's most



French police officers stand next to a furniture elevator used by robbers to enter the Louvre Museum, on Quai Francois Mitterrand, in Paris on October 19, 2025. (AFP)

visited art museum, in broad daylight, taking just seven minutes to steal jewellery worth an estimated \$102mn.

French authorities initially announced the arrest of two male suspects over the

Louvre robbery, and this week prosecutors said that police had arrested five more people.

Adrien Sorrentino, a lawyer for the woman who was remanded in custody,

said his client "vehemently" denied the charges against her.

"She is devastated," he told reporters.

"This is a spectacular heist, and the decision that has just been made is a spectacular one: a young woman has just been placed in detention despite being presumed innocent."

One other person under investigation has also been placed in pre-trial detention, pending a hearing postponed until Tuesday, said one of the sources.

Three of the five people arrested this week were released without charge.

Sofia Bougrine, a lawyer for one of them, pointed to what she said was the indiscriminate nature of some of the arrests. "In these serious crime cases, we find that waves of arrests look more like drift nets," Bougrine told AFP.

The first two men arrested previously were charged with theft and criminal conspiracy after "partially admitting to the charges", Paris prosecutor Laure Beccuau said this week.

They are suspected of being the two who broke into the gallery while two accomplices waited outside.

Both lived in the northeastern Paris suburb of Aubervilliers.

One is a 34-year-old Algerian national living in France, who was identified by DNA traces found on one of the scooters used to flee the heist. The second man is a 39-year-old unlicensed taxi driver.

Both were known to the police for having committed thefts. The first was arrested as he was about to board a plane for Algeria at Paris Charles de Gaulle airport. The second was apprehended shortly after near his home, and there was no evidence to suggest that he was planning to go abroad, prosecutors said.

The stolen loot remains missing.

The thieves dropped a diamond- and emerald-studded crown that once belonged to Empress Eugenie, the wife of Napoleon III, as they escaped.

The burglars made off with eight other items of jewellery.

Among them are an emerald-and-diamond necklace that Napoleon I gave his second wife, Empress Marie-Louise, and a diadem that once belonged to the Empress Eugenie, which is dotted with nearly 2,000 diamonds.



People traverse The Long Walk leading to Windsor Castle, in Windsor, Britain. King Charles has stripped his younger brother Andrew of his title of prince and forced him out of his Windsor home, Buckingham Palace said, seeking to distance the royals from him over his links to the Jeffrey Epstein scandal.



Prince William leaves Andrew scandal behind for trip to Brazil

Reuters
London

Prince William heads to Brazil next week for the awards ceremony for his multi-million-dollar environmental prize, hoping to refocus attention away from the scandal of his uncle Andrew and back on the royals' causes. William will visit some of Rio de Janeiro's most famous landmarks

on what will be the British heir's first Latin American trip. The aim is to turn the spotlight onto a line-up of environmental projects before the annual awards ceremony for the prince's Earthshot Prize. The visit comes days after King Charles stripped his younger brother of his title of prince and evicted him from his mansion, banishing his sibling from public life to try to prevent any further damage to the royal brand from Andrew's links to the

Jeffrey Epstein scandal.

During his three-day trip, William will seek to focus on his main philanthropic environmental cause, which aims to find innovations to combat climate change, and awards five winners £1mn (\$1.3mn) each to drive their projects.

William will visit Sugarloaf mountain, the Maracana soccer stadium, the Christ the Redeemer statue and the Copacabana beach

where he will play volleyball, a Kensington Palace spokesperson said.

His wife Kate, who is in remission after cancer treatment, will not be joining him. South America is an uncommon destination for the British royals who tend to focus overseas trips on Europe or the foreign realms where the king is head of state, such as Canada.

William has never been to Brazil or Latin America before, while

Charles last went there in 2009. This year, the Earthshot events will take place a week before the United Nations COP30 climate summit which is also being held in Brazil and which the prince will attend in place of his father.

"With its energy, its people and its iconic landscapes it is the perfect place to celebrate amazing environmental innovation and host our biggest and best Earthshot ever," Jason Knauf, chief executive

of the Earthshot Prize, said. The winners will be announced at a ceremony on Nov 5 which will feature a host of celebrities and performances from Australian popstar Kylie Minogue and Brazilian musician Gilberto Gil.

Organisers say the summit surrounding the event will attract more than 1,000 global leaders, some of the world's biggest philanthropists along with global mayors and world-leading scientists.

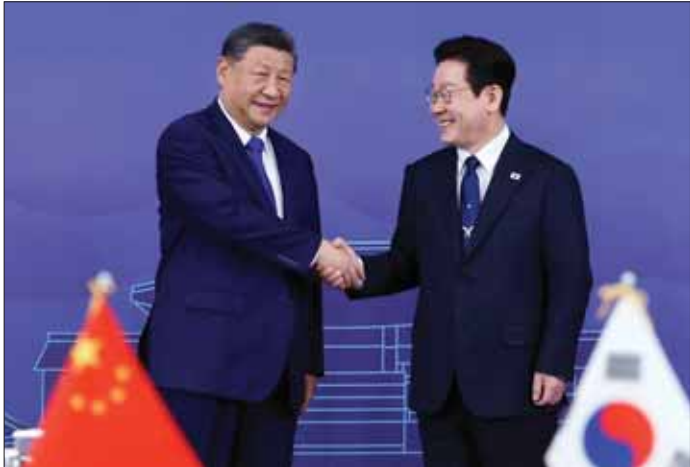
S Korea hosts Xi as Chinese leader rekindles fraught ties

AFP
Gyeongju

South Korean President Lee Jae Myung hosted Xi Jinping for their first meeting yesterday as the Chinese head of state took centre stage and re-forged old ties at an Asian summit from which US leader Donald Trump was largely absent. The talks on the sidelines of the Apec gathering came on the final day of Xi's first trip to South Korea in more than a decade and a day after his meeting with Canada's premier reset damaged ties.

Trump flew to South Korea for the summit but promptly jetted home on Thursday after sealing a trade war pause with Xi, the pair agreeing to dial down a dispute that has roiled markets and disrupted global supply chains. His departure left the Chinese leader to take centre stage at the Asia-Pacific Economic Co-operation summit, where he framed Beijing as a responsible power against the chaos unleashed by the United States on the international order.

Lee welcomed Xi at a grand opening ceremony complete with soldiers wearing traditional garb. The visit was the Chinese leader's first since 2014 and comes after years of strained ties over everything from trade to cultural disputes. Lee told Xi he had "long



China's President Xi Jinping shakes hands with South Korea's President Lee Jae Myung during their meeting in Gyeongju, South Korea.

looked forward to meeting you in person" and framed his trip as a reset in relations.

"As our two countries move from a vertical structure of economic co-operation to a more horizontal and mutually beneficial one, we must work together to build a relationship that delivers shared prosperity," Lee told Xi, whose vast economy represents South Korea's largest trading partner.

Xi, in turn, described China and South Korea as "important neighbours that cannot be moved and also partners that cannot be separated".

He told Lee that the two countries should "respect each other's societal differences and development paths... (and) resolve contradictions and disagreements through friendly consultation", according to Chinese state broadcaster CCTV.

Lee also pitched China as a partner in Seoul's efforts to rekindle frayed ties with North Korea, with which it remains technically at war. Stressing the need for "stability" in the region, Lee noted "recent high-level exchanges between China and North Korea" - an apparent reference to leader Kim Jong-un's recent attendance

at a major military parade in Beijing. Those meetings, Lee said, "are helping to create conditions for renewed engagement with Pyongyang".

"I hope that South Korea and China will strengthen strategic communication... and work together to resume dialogue with the North," Lee told Xi.

Ahead of their meeting, Pyongyang had dismissed Seoul's hopes for denuclearisation as a "pipedream" which "can never be realised even if it talks about it a thousand times". South Korea's national security advisor Wi Sung-lac said Xi reaffirmed to Lee that China "would continue efforts to help resolve issues and promote peace and stability on the Korean peninsula".

During Xi's visit Seoul said South Korea and China had renewed their 70tn won (\$49bn) currency swap agreement for another five years, and hoped the deal would "help stabilise the financial and foreign exchange markets of both countries". The two countries also signed several MoUs, including on a joint response to voice phishing and online scams, Seoul said.

Lee earlier passed the Apec baton to Xi, who will host next year's summit in the southern Chinese city of Shenzhen. With the US president absent, Xi has used Apec to reach out to coun-

tries with which Beijing has had frosty relations. He met Canadian Prime Minister Mark Carney on the sidelines of the event on Friday, the first formal talks between the two countries' leaders since 2017.

Xi told the Liberal leader he was determined to work together to get relations back on the "right track" and invited Carney to visit China. Carney described the meeting as a "turning point" in ties between Ottawa and Beijing. Canada's relations with China are among the worst of any Western nation.

However, they could find common ground because they are both at the sharp end of Trump's tariff onslaught, even after Xi and the US leader's deal on Thursday to dial back tensions.

Carney said yesterday he had apologised to Trump over an anti-tariff ad featuring former US leader Ronald Reagan that sent the president into a rage, leading him to cancel trade talks and slap additional 10% tariffs on Canada.

Trade talks would restart when the United States was "ready", Carney said. And, he said, he had accepted Xi's invitation to visit "in the new year". Xi also sat down on Friday with Japan's new premier Sanae Takaichi, long seen as a China hawk. She told Xi she wanted a "strategic and mutually beneficial relationship".

Dover port delays new EU border checks for tourist traffic

Reuters
London

Britain's Port of Dover has paused the planned roll-out of the European Union's new biometric border checks to car passengers as it has not yet been given the go-ahead by French authorities, it said yesterday. Last month, the EU started to phase in its much-delayed Entry/Exit System (EES) for all non-EU citizens, including British visitors - an automated system that requires travellers to register at the border by scanning their passport and having their fingerprints and photograph taken.

For British travellers using the Port of Dover, the Eurotunnel terminal at Folkestone or Eurostar terminal at St Pancras International, the process will take place at the border before they leave the UK. At the Port of Dover, freight and coach traffic was subject to EES checks from October 12.

Checks for tourist traffic had been scheduled to start on Saturday but have been put on hold.

"Whilst Port of Dover's facilities will be ready for 1st November, we are being guided by French authorities as to when we will activate," Doug Bannister, CEO of the port, said in a statement.

Last month, Bannister said he was confident the checks would not result in traffic congestion in the peak summer season but warned it would take six times longer to process each car.

Irish government condemns arson attack against asylum housing

Multiple people were evacuated after an arson attack at a building housing asylum seekers in a town north of Dublin, Irish officials said, condemning the "deeply disturbing incident". Justice minister Jim O'Callaghan said fireworks were thrown into the building housing international protection applicants in Drogheda, a town 40km north of Dublin, on Friday night. "This was a terrifying ordeal for the women and children living there, a number of whom were taken to hospital," O'Callaghan said in a statement on X, adding that a police investigation was underway. Four children and one adult had to be rescued from the top floor of the building, according to local media reports. The incident comes amid rising anti-immigration sentiment in Ireland and neighbouring Britain, with hotels and buildings housing asylum seekers a common flashpoint for protests and riots. -AFP

Bangladesh dockers strike over foreign takeover of key port

AFP
Dhaka

Bangladesh's dock workers escalated a strike yesterday at the country's biggest port, Chattogram, protesting plans by the interim government to lease operating licences to a foreign company. The walkout, which began in small numbers in October, has now grown to around 200 workers at the port - Bangladesh's main trade gateway and a vital hub in the global garment supply chain.

"Foreign expert operators would increase the foreign investment and enhance the efficiency," Chattogram Port Authority chairman S M Moniruzzaman told AFP. Bangladesh, the world's second-largest garment exporter, relies heavily on Chattogram port - formerly known as Chittagong and strategically located on the Bay of Bengal - for most of its imports and exports.

According to state-run news agency BSS, UAE-based DP

World has expressed interest in operating the port's New Mooring Container Terminal, and Danish shipping giant AP Moller-Maersk in the Laldia Container Terminal on the city's outskirts.

In October, Mohammed Yusuf, senior secretary at the Ministry of Shipping, said that "agreements are expected to be signed by December" with Bangladesh's interim administration. The interim administration, which took over after the government of Sheikh Hasina was toppled in a mass uprising in August 2024, will be replaced after elections in February.

The port move has sparked anger among some. "We don't know if the new authority will hire us or restructure the entire system," striking docker Nur Uddin, 55, told AFP on Saturday. "Do they even have the mandate? They are an interim government," said Iliyas Bhuiyan, 56, another dockworker.

But supporters say foreign expertise could modernise operations.

The dye is cast



Workers use traditional processes to dye silk yarn at a workshop in Srinagar. Indian-administered Kashmir is known for its handwoven silk, pashmina, and carpets, many of which rely on natural dyes and skilled craftsmanship passed down through generations.



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GULF TIMES

Fed rate cuts prompt GCC monetary easing, likely lifting domestic demand

The US Federal Reserve (Fed) lowered its policy rate by 25bps (0.25%) on October 29, prompting the majority of GCC central banks to follow with similar cuts. As widely expected, the Fed cut its policy rate by 25bps to a target range of 3.75%-4%, despite some concerns over the lack of visibility of macro conditions, caused by the current US government shut down delaying the publication of some key data. Due to this, Fed Chair Jerome Powell sounded tentative over the prospects of another cut at the next Federal Open Market Committee meeting in December, although the path for policy is likely to be for more easing over 2026.

Oxford Economics' forecast has three more quarter-point cuts by the end of next year. Consequent on the Fed decision, Qatar Central Bank (QCB) had reduced the interest rates for deposits, lending and repo by 0.25% or 25 basis points (bps).

The new rates took effect on October 30, according to QCB. Qatar Central Bank's deposit rate (QCBDR) is now 4.10%, lending rate (QCBLR) 4.60% and repo rate (QCBRR) 4.35%. The surprise exception, according to reports, was the Central Bank of Kuwait, which decided to keep its policy unchanged, stating that its monetary policy was consistent with local economic conditions. Monetary easing for the remaining GCC will help lift investment and consumer spending, providing a boost to domestic demand, according to Oxford Economics.

The scale of the impact will depend on each country's fiscal stance, private sector dynamism, and existing liquidity conditions

GCC central banks, particularly those with currencies pegged to the US dollar including Qatar, typically mirror the US Federal Reserve's monetary policy to maintain exchange rate stability. Therefore, if the Fed starts cutting rates, GCC countries are expected to follow suit. Analysts say rate cuts affect domestic demand through three main channels: lower borrowing costs, wealth and confidence effects and fiscal-monetary interaction. For GCC countries reduced policy and lending rates will translate into cheaper financing for businesses and consumers. This could encourage corporate investment (especially in non-oil sectors like real estate, manufacturing, and services) and household spending (on housing, durable goods, etc.). However, the degree of impact depends on the depth of the credit market and consumer sentiment, which varies across the GCC. Easier monetary conditions often boost asset prices (equities and real estate), improving household and business balance sheets. Analysts believe that this, in turn, supports confidence and spending—particularly in countries with vibrant financial markets such as Qatar, the UAE and Saudi Arabia. Given the GCC's strong fiscal buffers, government spending remains the dominant driver of demand. Lower rates can complement expansionary fiscal policies, especially if governments are investing in diversification projects under Vision 2030 or similar national plans across the GCC. However, some economists argue that despite these positives, a few structural factors may dilute the impact. Since the GCC must follow the Fed to protect currency pegs, rate cuts are not always driven by local conditions, they argue highlighting limited monetary independence. Many GCC banks already have abundant liquidity, so cheaper policy rates may not dramatically alter lending volumes, they point out. Also, it is argued that if inflation remains sticky (e.g., from imported food or housing), policymakers may move cautiously to avoid overheating. If the Fed begins an easing cycle this year itself—as markets expect—the GCC's parallel rate cuts should provide modest but noticeable support to domestic demand, especially in private credit growth, retail spending, and construction. It will also reinforce non-oil sector expansion, helping governments meet diversification targets. The move will also keep the real estate and equity markets buoyant, improving the overall business sentiment in the region. GCC rate cuts in line with the Fed's would undoubtedly boost domestic demand moderately, particularly through cheaper credit and stronger confidence. That said, the scale of the impact will depend on each country's fiscal stance, private sector dynamism, and existing liquidity conditions.

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US aid cuts compromise Cameroon malaria fight

By Amindeh Blaise Atabong, Robbie Corey-Boulet and Jennifer Rigby
Bogo (Cameroon)

Nine-month-old baby Mohamat burned with fever for three days before his family took him to the closest health centre in northern Cameroon, but it was too late. He died of malaria that day. Mohamat's death was part of a spike this year in malaria fatalities that local health officials attribute to foreign aid cuts by the United States. Before the cuts, Mohamat might have been diagnosed earlier by one of more than 2,000 US-funded community health workers who would travel over rough dirt roads to reach the region's remotest villages. And at the health centre, he might have been treated with injectable artesunate, a life-saving drug for severe malaria paid for by US funds that is now in short supply. But the centre had none to give out. Reuters travelled to northern Cameroon — where the US had played a leading role in the malaria response for nearly a decade — to document how the sudden cuts are contributing to delayed malaria diagnoses, inadequate treatment and a growing number of deaths. This story is based on interviews with more than 20 doctors, nurses, community health workers, residents and former US officials involved in malaria programming. Mohamat's father, sorghum and banana farmer Alhadji Madou Goni, is mourning a son he had hoped would one day escape poverty. "I feel so sad about my loss. I hope no one suffers from this (malaria) again," Goni, 30, told Reuters as he sat outside his home, his wife next to him holding prayer beads. "Since there is hardship here, and people don't have the means, we hope aid comes."

Upon taking office in January, US President Donald Trump paused all foreign aid, including the President's Malaria Initiative (PMI), launched in 2005 by George W Bush. The PMI is credited with helping to save 11.7mn lives and prevent 2.1bn malaria cases. A limited waiver issued in February allowed life-saving work on malaria to continue, but PMI's 30 partner countries — most of them in Africa — have reported major disruptions linked to the dissolution of the US Agency for International Development, the main implementer of PMI-funded programmes. In Cameroon's Far North region, where Goni lives, the cuts stripped support for PMI-funded community health workers who distributed prevention tools like bed nets and identified serious cases. PMI funded half — 1,492 out of 2,824 — of all community health workers in the region, said Dr Jean-Pierre Kidwang, coordinator of the regional technical group for malaria control. The support included a monthly stipend of 15,000 CFA francs (\$26), a transport allowance, bicycles and clothing. Nearly all of the US-funded community health workers are now out of service. Prosper Laurent Messe Fouda, head of planning, monitoring and evaluation at the National Malaria Control Programme, confirmed that 2,105 out of the 2,354 US-funded workers in Cameroon's Far North and North regions were no longer working. PMI made Cameroon a focus country in 2017, and recorded malaria deaths in Far North dropped from 1,519 in 2020 to 653 in 2024 — but now appear to be rising, Kidwang said. "With PMI funding, we moved from a mortality rate of 17% to bring the situation down to 8%," Kidwang said. "Now, with the September-October peak underway, available trends indicate that fatalities are rising sharply, even though official data has yet to be released," he said, citing a figure of 15% for the first half of 2025. "We may get to a point where all the gains against malaria are reversed." The Trump administration says it is reforming foreign aid that did not align with its "America First" agenda and Secretary of State Marco Rubio has said repeatedly that no-one has died as a result of the cuts. Trump has said the US pays disproportionately for foreign aid and wants others to pay more. Between 2010 and 2023, the US contributed an average of 37% of funding for malaria programmes, the World Health Organisation says. This year, the US has cancelled more than 80% of aid contracts, but said life-saving work, including for malaria, would continue. Yet organisations on the ground and the WHO in April said "critical gaps" remained in the malaria response after the cancellations. Going forward, Trump's initial budget request for fiscal year 2026 included a 47% cut to PMI's budget from the just below \$800mn it had hit in recent years, though Congress will have the final say later this year. The "America First Global Health Strategy" Rubio announced in September stated some commitments to reducing malaria mortality and incidence, but made no mention of PMI or budgets. A State Department spokesperson confirmed to Reuters that the programme would continue. Anne Linn, former senior community health advisor for PMI, told Reuters that before the January cuts the programme supported 115,000 community health workers across 30 countries. That all disappeared, she said, although it is unclear how much funding has since resumed and where governments and non-profits have stepped in to fill urgent gaps.

The State Department spokesperson said in the future it would provide support to fight malaria through bilateral agreements with partner countries, and committed to maintaining 100% of current US funding for commodities such as nets and drugs and frontline health workers in fiscal year 2026, before asking governments to co-invest. They gave no details of their current annual budget. The effects of the cuts have been felt in a number of African countries, including Liberia, where some community health workers are volunteering without pay. In Cameroon's Far North, a region prone to droughts and flooding as well as violence linked to the Boko Haram insurgency in neighbouring Nigeria, the cuts came as officials were training community health workers to deploy during the rainy season, which runs from May to October, Kidwang said. Oumarou Gassi, one of the health workers, said he was devastated to lose the job. "I am struggling to survive. The little I used to get from the PMI project was helpful in supporting my family," he said. With health workers no longer in the field, more malaria cases are becoming severe, and the US cuts have also hit the supply of injectable artesunate, Kidwang said. Far North was out of stock for much of this year, he said. Some 200,000 vials arrived in Maroua, the regional capital, recently, but that is not enough to meet the region's needs for even three months, he said. Authorities are trying to fill the gap but face resource constraints, said Olivia Ngou, executive director of Impact Sante Afrique, a nonprofit. Just how bad the situation gets may be difficult to gauge given that PMI also played a major role in data collection. That data is no longer online. PMI's website says it is "currently undergoing maintenance as we expeditiously and thoroughly review all of the content" to comply with Trump's executive orders. As a result, "we won't know the extent to which this bounce back is going to occur," said Louisa Messenger, a public health expert at the University of Nevada-Las Vegas who has worked with PMI and other malaria programmes in Africa. The big-picture data matters little to Djidja and Daouda Amadou, who lost their five-month-old girl to malaria in July. Like Goni, they waited in hopes the child's fever would subside before taking her to a health clinic, where staffers referred them to Maroua. By the time they arrived, it was too late, and now their baby is buried under a mound of earth in their yard. "I am devastated," Amadou said quietly. "The child's memory keeps coming back to me." — Reuters



Djidja Hamidou, mother of a five-month-old child who died of malaria, reacts while talking about her child in Kalliao. (Reuters)

Courts are shaping the future of climate action

By **Francesca Mascha Klein and Laura Schäfer**
Berlin/Bonn

Amid rising geopolitical tensions, pressure to comply with climate obligations increasingly comes from courts. Earlier this year, both the International Court of Justice (ICJ) and the Inter-American Court of Human Rights (IACtHR) issued landmark advisory opinions affirming that countries must address climate change, and that failure to do so may carry serious legal consequences.

This renewed legal clarity comes at a critical moment. Last year was the hottest on record, with global average temperatures exceeding 1.5° Celsius above pre-industrial levels, yet the gulf between the urgency of the climate threat and the policy response continues to widen.

In the absence of political will, the legal system has become a key driver of climate progress. As the United Nations Climate Change Conference in Brazil (COP30) approaches, the groundwork has been laid for stronger, fairer, and more accountable climate action. The task now is for governments to adapt their policies in accordance with both international law and environmental needs.

The most immediate implication of the ICJ and IACtHR opinions is that national climate plans – known as Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) – must reflect the “highest possible ambition” and be consistent with the 2015 Paris climate agreement’s goal of limiting global warming to 1.5°C.

Alarmingly, as of 2024, global temperatures are on track to rise by up to 3.1°C by the end of the century. Following the September deadline for new NDCs, only half of greenhouse-gas (GHG) emissions are covered by updated climate pledges, most of which fall well short of science-based targets.

The ICJ and IACtHR decisions, however, offer some cause for hope. At COP30, negotiators and civil-society



representatives can push for ambitious measures, as noncompliance with the Paris agreement’s temperature goals can be challenged not only in diplomatic forums but also in courts.

A rapid phaseout of coal, oil, and gas remains essential to effective climate action. But despite the so-called “UAE consensus” to move away from fossil fuels, many countries continue to obstruct progress. Here, too, the ICJ provides negotiators with new tools, explicitly recognising that governments may be held liable for failure to reduce GHG emissions, including through fossil-fuel production, consumption, exploration, and subsidies.

The international climate regime must evolve to reflect these changing legal realities. That requires creating stronger compliance mechanisms that ensure

countries meet their targets and deliver on climate-finance commitments.

The legal shift is particularly evident in climate finance. For decades, developed countries have treated funding for climate adaptation and loss and damage as discretionary. Consequently, despite the establishment of the Fund for Responding to Loss and Damage at COP28, contributions remain far below what is needed.

The path forward is clear. The ICJ’s opinion affirms that wealthy countries have a legally binding duty to support mitigation, adaptation, and loss and damage efforts across the developing world. To meet these obligations, at least \$1.3tn must be mobilised annually by 2035, with dedicated provisions for loss and damage.

Crucially, the private sector is not being

let off the hook. The ICJ, IACtHR, and the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea have all recognised that governments must regulate corporations where necessary to protect the environment, safeguard the climate system, and uphold human rights.

At the same time, corporate accountability is taking shape in domestic courts. In a landmark decision, Germany’s Higher Regional Court of Hamm ruled that large emitters can, in principle, be held liable for climate-related impacts. The case, brought by Peruvian farmer Saúl Luciano Lliuya, shows that individuals on the front lines of the climate crisis can force polluters to pay their fair share.

But litigation alone cannot deliver justice at scale. Governments must establish clear legal frameworks to hold major emitters fully accountable for

their role in driving the climate crisis before the damage becomes irreversible. Mechanisms such as mandatory reserves, disclosure rules, insurance schemes, and compensation funds can help internalise liability risks and embed accountability into the system, rather than leaving it to goodwill or the courts.

The momentum for such measures is building. In countries like the Philippines and Pakistan, as well as US states such as Vermont and New York, lawmakers are advancing “polluter pays” legislation. Remarkably, climate lawsuits, by plaintiffs ranging from indigenous groups in Canada to farmers in Korea, are already invoking the ICJ’s reasoning and a Brazilian court explicitly cited it when ordering a fossil project to cease operations.

Instead of waiting for the next court ruling, governments should now take steps to uphold the rule of law and assume responsibility for confronting the climate crisis. That means charting a credible path toward drastic emission cuts, accelerating the phaseout of fossil fuels, and ensuring that climate finance is effective, equitable, and fit for purpose. At COP30, international policymakers should harness the current legal momentum by proposing a global levy on fossil-fuel profits and high-emitting sectors, including shipping and aviation, to ensure sustainable financing of the Adaptation Fund and the Loss and Damage Fund.

A decade after the Paris agreement, the world can no longer afford half-measures. Vanuatu has already announced plans to pursue a new UN resolution aimed at translating the ICJ’s opinion into concrete political action. By supporting this initiative and acting decisively now, policymakers can build a global climate regime capable of delivering real solutions at the speed and scale this crisis demands. — Project Syndicate

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How social protection can accelerate climate action

By **Tracy Kajumba**
Edinburgh

Ahead of this year’s United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP30) in Belém, Brazil, countries are being urged to embrace an approach to climate action and finance with social protection at its heart. Making this connection could not be more important for protecting human dignity, building community resilience, and maximising the impact of limited funds.

At COP29 last year, developed economies agreed to mobilise at least \$300bn per year in climate finance for developing countries by 2035, as part of the New Collective Quantified Goal on climate finance. But least-developed countries (LDCs) and small island developing states have rightly criticised the target as vague, unenforceable, and inadequate. In fact, this figure falls far short of need, especially because climate-finance delivery is often highly inefficient. For example, just 0.8% of tracked funds reach small-scale agricultural systems.

This is where social protection comes in. A 2019 study by the LDC Initiative for Effective Adaptation and Resilience (LIFE-AR) showed that social-protection initiatives can play a powerful role in building climate-resilient communities. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change’s Sixth Assessment Report, released in 2023, echoed this finding. Now, a joint review of 23 Green Climate Fund-funded projects, carried out by the GCF and the Food and Agriculture Organisation of the UN (FAO), has shown that the integration of climate objectives into social-protection systems can go a long way toward delivering limited finance where it is needed most.

There are plenty of proven social-protection models that advance inclusive climate action. For example, Ethiopia’s Productive Safety Net Program supports over eight million people – including the country’s most climate-vulnerable communities – through cash and food transfers, while responding to short-term shocks like droughts and restoring degraded landscapes.

Similarly, India’s Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme, which reaches more than 60mn rural households, funds climate-smart solutions like rainwater harvesting and afforestation (tree-planting), which protect communities against droughts and floods. Brazil’s Bolsa Verde links income support to environmental stewardship, incentivising sustainable land use and forest conservation among low-income families in protected areas.

The 23 GCF projects sampled in the recent FAO-GCF review show similar promise. Paraguay’s Poverty, Reforestation, Energy, and Climate Change Project, which receives technical support from the FAO, ties conditional cash transfers to social-welfare goals, such as the establishment of climate-sensitive agricultural and forestry systems, and emphasises indigenous participation. Botswana’s Ecosystem-Based Adaptation and Mitigation in Communal Rangelands project aims to advance similar goals, with women comprising 60% of its participants.

But, despite some successes, inclusion remains a formidable challenge. As it stands, almost half of the world’s population – including many of those most exposed to the effects of climate change – lacks access to any kind of social-safety net. This helps to explain why only three of the projects reviewed in the FAO-GCF report were in low-income countries. Moreover, only six of those projects included people with disabilities, a mere four incorporated young people, and none involved migrants. Of the seven project areas where indigenous peoples were present, only four included them.

Outcomes, too, fell short. For example, the FAO finds that heat stress widens the income gap between female-



headed and male-headed households by \$37bn a year, and floods by \$16bn. But while several of the 23 GCF projects were gender-responsive, none was transformative. In addition, fewer than half of the GCF projects included efforts to strengthen existing social-protection systems, undermining their long-term sustainability and scalability. Social-insurance mechanisms were absent.

Improving outcomes will require a fundamental shift in the prevailing approach to designing, financing, and implementing social protection. Rather than continue to depend on short-term project-based grants – the scale of which is necessarily limited – we must emphasise longer-term, co-ordinated initiatives, focused on building national systems and capabilities, while supporting locally led adaptation. A whole-of-government approach, involving ministries responsible for climate, social protection, and emergency management, is essential. And inclusion must be built into every stage of the process.

The GCF can play an important role in advancing this shift. It is well-positioned to catalyse additional, longer-term financing for social protection, taking advantage of innovative mechanisms, such as debt-for-climate swaps and green bonds. Furthermore, it recently introduced reforms to its accreditation model, focused on improving transparency, responsiveness, and efficiency, though more flexibility is still needed for low-income countries.

But the GCF cannot do it alone. Other multilateral climate funds must also step up, including by establishing dedicated financing tracks and streamlining access for low-income countries. Governments, for their part, must establish social protection as a pillar of their climate strategies, including Nationally Determined Contributions, National Adaptation Plans, and the operational frameworks of the Fund for Responding to Loss and Damage. Development partners and UN agencies must strengthen technical support for inclusive, long-term strategies, not just short-term projects.

COP30 has been designated the “implementation COP,” focused on turning plans and pledges into actions and outcomes. It thus represents the ideal opportunity to apply the lessons from the FAO-GCF report, which lays out clear pathways for scaling social protection to enhance inclusive climate action. — Project Syndicate

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In Russia, enemies are everywhere

By **Nina L Khrushcheva**
Moscow

In the 18th century, Russian emperor Peter the Great regularly had his detractors tortured, exiled to Siberia, and executed, sometimes for as little as directing “unseemly speech” at the sovereign. In the mid-1930s, Joseph Stalin used fabricated charges of treason and coerced confessions to purge potential rivals, including many prominent Old Bolsheviks who were subjected to public show trials. Russian President Vladimir Putin’s current fight against his perceived enemies – both inside and outside Russia – carries disturbing echoes of these bleak episodes.

Consider Kremlin critic Ilya Yashin’s October 2022 indictment – and 8.5-year prison sentence – for disseminating “fake” information about the Russian military. The charges against Yashin were accompanied by the accusation that he had “a dislike for the [Russian] political system.” At the time, the Stalinesque overtones were shocking. Three years later, they are par for the course.

The number of terrorism-related cases opened in Russia has soared since the country’s full-scale invasion of Ukraine, with convictions also rising, from roughly 350 the previous year to nearly 500 in 2022 and over 1,000 in 2024. This year, Russian courts have been issuing at least five such verdicts per day, with over 600 convictions in just the first six months. By year’s end, the total could well exceed 1,500.

In fact, Russia’s rubber-stamp parliament just made it even easier to bring criminal charges against Putin’s critics by requiring nonprofits receiving “any assistance” from abroad to register as “foreign agents” and face increased government oversight. The “foreign agent” label was always a tool for punishing the Kremlin’s opponents, but it is now almost the equivalent of the Soviet-era designation “enemy of the people”: a precursor to a purge.

That became clear earlier last month, when almost two dozen supposed foreign agents – that is, exiled opposition figures who are members of the Russian Antiwar Committee, which was formed after the 2022 invasion – were charged with terrorism-related crimes. The accused include former Yukos head Mikhail Khodorkovsky, who moved to London after his funding of Putin’s opponents earned him a decade-long stint in prison on trumped-up fraud and embezzlement charges.

But, like in the Stalin era, the current regime is prosecuting not only outspoken critics, but anyone the Kremlin believes might challenge its authority. Once-trusted regional executives, influential politicians, and military leaders are regularly arrested and indicted on criminal charges, often involving corruption. Many more Kremlin loyalists have lately been dubbed foreign agents, and one can only speculate why.

Might the pro-Putin propagandist Sergei Markov have gotten too cozy with Azerbaijan at a time when the country’s relations with Russia are deteriorating? Did the military blogger and Kremlin cheerleader Roman Alekhin go too far in lamenting Russia’s slow progress in

Ukraine? Was Alexey Shevtsov, the former mayor of Plyos, too ambitious in his entrepreneurial ventures?

Like Khodorkovsky’s Yukos, Shevtsov’s assets – including his thriving “izbizing” business (glamping in traditional huts) – have now been seized by the government. From the Bolsheviks to Putin, the objectives behind such confiscations are the same. First, they enrich the state: since 2022, Russia has acquired some 3.9tn rubles (\$49bn) worth of assets from private business owners accused of crimes ranging from embezzlement to treason. Second, they limit potential rivals’ ability to mount effective opposition.

As Putin’s regime doles out harsh punishments, using laws as it sees fit, Russia’s elites are becoming increasingly anxious. But one need not be Russian to end up in Putin’s crosshairs. Just as Stalin viewed virtually everyone outside the Soviet Union as a potential impediment to his cultivation of “socialism in one country,” Putin is convinced that Russia is a “distinct civilisation” that is under assault by a West bent on destroying it.

The Kremlin’s anti-Western rhetoric has become increasingly unhinged during the Ukraine war. But it reached new heights this month, when the Russian Foreign Intelligence Service (SVR) accused the United Kingdom of preparing a “vile provocation”: a false-flag operation involving a group of Ukraine-aligned Russians, equipped with “Chinese-made gear,” who were to attack a Ukrainian Navy ship or a foreign civilian vessel in a European port.

Such fabrications reflect cultural resentment as much as they do geopolitical insecurity. If the Russians are the villains in British spy films, the British are the villains in Russian intelligence propaganda.

The reasons for the Kremlin’s growing fixation on Russia’s supposed enemies are not difficult to discern. Disillusionment with the Ukraine war is growing, even among those who once bought into Putin’s nationalistic propaganda.

With inflation running at over 8%, many Russians are struggling to afford basic needs like food, fuel, utilities, and medicine. Economic growth is slowing, and the budget deficit swelled to 4.88tn rubles in the first half of this year – well beyond the 3.8tn-ruble deficit planned for all of 2025. And for what? In almost four years, Russia has managed to occupy less than 12% of Ukraine’s territory.

Russians were promised a quick victory in Ukraine; instead, they have gotten a protracted and costly conflict reminiscent of the Afghan quagmire that contributed to the collapse of the Soviet Union. None of this is lost on Putin, who is now seeking to forestall any threat to his position through punishment and fear. Meanwhile, the war drags on, and the body count grows. — Project Syndicate

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WCM-Q conference addresses health challenges posed by climate change

Healthcare professionals, researchers, policymakers, and experts from around the world gathered in Doha to explore evidence-based strategies for mitigating the health impacts of climate-related issues. The conference was co-ordinated by the Division of Continuing Professional Development at Weill Cornell Medicine - Qatar (WCM-Q). Titled "Exploring the Nexus of Climate, Health, and Environment" (CHE2025), the two-day conference addressed the intersection of climate change, environmental pollution, and human health, with a strong emphasis on the unique challenges faced by the Mena region. Other areas of focus included sustainable urban planning and healthcare delivery, the food-energy-water-health nexus and strategies for achieving net-zero emissions in healthcare systems. Featuring plenary sessions, expert panels, and interactive workshops, CHE2025 offered participants actionable insights to enhance resilience and promote the integration of climate and health in research, policy, and practice. Dr Javaid Sheikh, dean of WCM-Q,



said: "At WCM-Q, we recognise that the health of our communities is deeply connected to the health of our planet. CHE2025 demonstrates our commitment as an institution to bring together regional and global experts to discuss and address the urgent health threats posed by climate change, particularly in the Mena region." The conference was directed by Dr Sadeer al-Kindi, a WCM-Q alumnus and associate

professor at Houston Methodist and Weill Cornell Medicine, and medical director at the Centre for Health & Nature in Houston, US, and Dr Nasrin Mesaeli, associate professor of biochemistry at WCM-Q, who also served as speakers. Dr Sanjay Rajagopalan, chief of cardiovascular medicine and chief academic and scientific officer at University Hospitals Harrington Heart & Vascular Institute, who also serves as the Herman

K Hellerstein MD, professor of cardiovascular medicine and director of the Case Cardiovascular Research Institute at Case Western Reserve University, described the global health impacts of climate change and pollution and how environmental stressors contribute to disease patterns. He also evaluated strategies to address environmental challenges in clinical care. Dr Thurayya Arayssi, vice-dean for

academic and curricular affairs at WCM-Q, said: "Discussions about climate change are critical. Through this conference, we seek to foster collaboration, knowledge exchange, and actionable solutions to drive climate-resilient healthcare and communities in the Mena region. We are extremely pleased by the high level of interest expressed by all participants in addressing this global health challenge."

HEC Paris, Doha welcomes new cohort of emerging leaders EMBA

HEC Paris, one of the world's top-ranked business schools, proudly welcomes the 2025 cohort of its Emerging Leaders Track (ELT) - a pioneering Executive MBA programme to develop the next generation of business leaders who will shape the diversified, knowledge-driven economies of Qatar and the wider region. As HEC Paris celebrates 15 years in Qatar, the launch of this new cohort reflects the business school's commitment to cultivating purposeful leaders, fostering innovation, and advancing Qatar National Vision 2030 through education, human capital development, and transformative societal impact. Building on the success of the inaugural 2024 cohort, the Emerging Leaders Track Executive MBA continues to offer a flexible, part-time format that enables participants to balance professional responsibilities with academic advancement, equipping them to apply their learning



immediately within their organisations. The 2025 intake welcomes 47 participants from six countries, including professionals from Qatar and the region. Notably, 70% are women, reflecting HEC Paris, Doha's strong commit-

ment to diversity, inclusion, and the development of local talent. Participants come from a variety of industries, creating a dynamic learning environment rooted in global perspectives and regional relevance. Dr Pablo Martin de Holan,

dean of HEC Paris, Doha, reflected: "The Emerging Leaders Track empowers professionals to grow personally and professionally developing the technical and human skills and the ethical perspective needed drive impact within organisations and

communities. The programme reflects our commitment to nurturing talent, advancing innovation and entrepreneurship, supporting Qatar's vision for a modern, robust and sustainable economy." Designed for ambitious profes-

sionals with high growth potential, the ELT curriculum integrates academic rigour with practical learning. Participants gain expertise in core business disciplines, including strategy, finance, operations, and innovation, while developing leadership skills through case studies, field visits, and a hands-on Capstone Project that enables them to generate tangible impact within their organisations or entrepreneurial ventures. Prof Wolfgang Amann, academic experience manager of the Emerging Leaders Track Executive MBA at HEC Paris, Doha, said: "The Emerging Leaders Track goes beyond business education - it's a transformational experience that develops both mindset and capability. By integrating global insights with local relevance, participants learn to turn strategic vision into action and to lead with clarity, agility, and purpose. The programme challenges them to think differently, act decisively, and create lasting impact within their organisations and across the region."

Over 700 children join 'Little Employee' initiative across national institutions

More than 700 students took part in Qatar Career Development Center (QCDC)'s 'Little Employee' initiative during this week's school mid-term break, joining their parents and relatives at workplaces across the country, Qatar Career Development Centre (QCDC) has announced in a statement. Organised by QCDC, founded by Qatar Foundation (QF), 'Little Employee' enables children aged 7-15 to spend a full working day in real-world environments alongside parental role models. This initiative builds early career awareness and strengthening family engagement in career conversations. It is designed with flexible scheduling, allowing families and institutions to make the most of both school breaks and regular workdays.

This week's surge signals national momentum to use school breaks for structured career exploration, building curiosity, transferable skills, and early informed choices in support of Qatar's human-capital agenda. After engaging 500 children in 2024, participation has more than doubled in 2025, reflecting stronger public and institutional recognition of the initiative's value. "This week's turnout shows what is possible when families, institutions, and the wider community invest in our children," said Saad Abdulla al-Kharji, Executive Director of QCDC. "By opening their doors during the mid-term break, partners across government, media, finance, education, and civil society provided meaningful, age-appropriate exposure to the world of work. They are

helping turn education into competence and build a future-ready workforce aligned with Qatar National Vision 2030. We thank all participating entities for championing early career development and community partnership," he added. Now in its fifth edition, 'Little Employee' offers streamlined pathways for families and employers. QCDC provides interactive workshops and step-by-step guides to structure the day and embed the initiative into CSR and youth-engagement plans. QCDC calls on companies, government and semi-government entities, and NGOs to host additional days this period and in upcoming breaks. Organisations and parents/guardians can enrol children by visiting QCDC's official website. (QNA)



Qatar Shell's NXplorers Pro programme inspires innovation with HBKU students



As part of Qatar Shell's Tafawoq programme, a group of energetic students from Hamad Bin Khalifa University (HBKU) and Education City campuses came together to experience the transformative journey of the Shell NXplorers Pro programme. NXplorers Pro is Shell's advanced educational programme to equip future leaders with practical tools for solving complex global challenges. It blends systems thinking, scenario planning and theory of change, collectively known as NXthinking, to help participants explore problems, envision sustainable futures and develop actionable solutions. Hosted at HBKU, the NXplorers Pro programme challenged students to tackle global issues, imagine bold futures and develop actionable solutions for sustainable impact. Their energy and

creativity highlighted the power of experiential learning to shape future changemakers. Dr Ala al-Fuqaha, associate provost, Teaching and Learning from HBKU, said: "At HBKU, we are proud to continue our well-established collaboration with Qatar Shell and its Tafawoq programme, of which we are a founding partner. NXplorers Pro aligns with our commitment to empowering the next generation of problem-solvers as they prepare to address critical challenges of our times. The enthusiasm and creativity demonstrated by our students reaffirm the importance of such experiential learning opportunities." Bader al-Jaidah, director of Tafawoq, said: "By engaging with universities, we are building a bridge that helps students gain a clearer understanding of how industry operates before they begin

their professional journeys. Our enduring partnership with HBKU in Qatar highlights the transformative power of collaboration in shaping a resilient and sustainable future." Pia Ceasar, a graduate student at HBKU, who participated in the programme shared: "What I found most impressive about the programme was how seamlessly it combined deep insight with practical application. The experience sharpened my critical thinking and equipped me with powerful frameworks and tools to structure ideas and navigate complex challenges in both professional and personal contexts." Tafawoq is a centre of excellence in project management, dedicated to developing professionals in Qatar and the wider region for major investment projects that support the Qatar National Vision 2030.