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Iran seeks nuclear talks with US

Iran has asked Saudi Arabia to persuade the US to revive stalled nuclear talks, underlining Tehran's anxiety over a possible repeat of Israeli air strikes and its deepening economic woes, two regional sources with knowledge of the matter said. A day before Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman's visit to the White House earlier this week, Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian sent a letter to the de facto Saudi leader. In the letter, Pezeshkian said Iran "does not seek confrontation", wants deeper regional co-operation and remains "open to resolving the nuclear dispute through diplomacy, provided its rights are guaranteed", the sources told Reuters.

Zelensky receives US plan to end war

President Volodymyr Zelensky has received the draft of a new US-backed plan to end Russia's war in Ukraine and expects to have talks with President Donald Trump in the coming days, Zelensky's office said yesterday. Washington had signalled to Zelensky that Kyiv must accept the US-drafted framework to end the nearly-four-year-old war, which includes territorial concessions and curbs on Ukraine's armed forces. **Page 8**

Trump calls Democratic 'lawmakers' traitors

President Donald Trump yesterday assailed Democratic lawmakers who told members of US military they must refuse any illegal orders, calling them traitors who could face execution. Trump reposted an article about a video released Tuesday by six Democratic lawmakers who served in the military or in the intelligence community. "SEDITIOUS BEHAVIOR, punishable by DEATH!" the Republican president wrote in a Truth Social post.

Covid: UK inaction cost 23,000 lives

About 23,000 deaths could have been prevented in England if the first Covid-19 lockdown had been introduced sooner at the start of the pandemic, a UK public inquiry found yesterday, also slamming a "toxic" and misogynistic culture at the top of government. The second report from an inquiry into the UK response to the Covid-19 pandemic criticised the government led by Boris Johnson for a "lack of urgency" in the early days of the pandemic in 2020.

Russia captures key east Ukraine city

The Russian army claimed yesterday to have recaptured the Ukrainian city of Kupiansk, a key Kyiv bastion in the eastern Kharkiv region where Russia's soldiers have been steadily advancing. Kyiv had retaken the eastern railway hub months after it fell to Moscow's troops on the first day of the 2022 offensive, but in recent months Ukraine's soldiers have been on the back foot along the front line.

COMMUNITY
See Page 6

SPORT | Page 1

Carlsen and Gukesh to lead star-studded field in Doha

Amir, Rwanda president vow to cement ties

QNA
Kigali





● Kagame welcomes Amir in Kigali

His Highness the Amir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani and President of the friendly Republic of Rwanda Paul Kagame discussed bilateral relations between the two friendly countries and ways to strengthen and develop them in various fields.

The meeting also dealt with discussing regional and international issues of joint interest. This came during the bilateral meeting held at the headquarters of the president at the Eastern province of Rwanda in Bugesera.

His Highness the Amir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani arrived yesterday in Kigali, on an official visit to the Republic of Rwanda.

His Highness the Amir was welcomed upon arrival to Kigali International Airport by President of the Republic of Rwanda Paul Kagame.

Also present to welcome His Highness the Amir was Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Co-operation Olivier Nduhungirehe, Chief of Defence Staff General Mubarakh Muganga, Mayor of the City of Kigali Samuel Dusengiyumvam, ambassador of Rwanda to Qatar Igor Marara Kayinamura, a number of senior officials, and members of Qatar's Embassy.

His Highness the Amir is accompanied by an official delegation.

● Relations between Qatar and Rwanda have been marked by rapid growth and a strategic partnership spanning various fields. Over the past years, the two nations have succeeded in building a solid foundation of co-operation in the areas of economy, investment, education, tourism, aviation, security, and anti-corruption, making Rwanda a key partner in Qatar's outreach to the African continent.

The mutual visits exchanged between the leadership of both countries reflect their shared commitment to strengthening dialogue, expanding investment opportunities, and achieving sustainable development. This contributes to supporting regional stability and creating new horizons for bilateral co-operation.

The visit of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani to the Rwandan capital, Kigali, to meet with President Paul Kagame comes within the framework of strengthening the close relations between the two nations and reaffirming the mutual commitment to enhancing the foundations of sustainable investment and expanding its prospects in a way that serves their common goals. **Page 2**

Doha Film Festival marks a powerful start to Qatar's spotlight of global cinema



HE Sheikha Al Mayassa bint Hamad bin Khalifa al-Thani, along with dignitaries, led the opening of DFF 2025 at Katara Cultural Village yesterday.

Doha Film Institute (DFI) has opened the Doha Film Festival (DFF) 2025 with the acclaimed film *The Voice of Hind Rajab* by award-winning filmmaker Kaouther Ben Hania, setting a powerful tone for Qatar's bold showcase of global cinema.

During the opening ceremony DFI chairperosn HE Sheikha Al Mayassa bint Hamad bin Khalifa al-Thani presented acclaimed actors Jamal Soliman and Golshifteh Farahani with the DFF 2025 Creative Excellence Award for their outstanding artistic contribution to storytelling.

Other dignitaries attending the opening night ceremony included HE Sheikh Thani bin Hamad bin Khalifa al-Thani, chairman of Qatar Fund for Development; Sheikh Hassan bin Mohammad bin Ali al-Thani, president of the Arab Museum of Modern Art, Qatar Museums; HE Lolwah bint Rashid AlKhater, Minister of Education and Higher Education; HE Dr Hamad bin Abdulaziz al-Kuwari, Minister of State and president of Qatar National Library; HE Hassan al-Thawadi, managing director, Supreme Committee for Delivery & Legacy; HE Saad al-Kharji, chairman of Qatar Tourism and chairperson of Visit Qatar, among other dignitaries. **To Page 12**

MoCI bans export of 'less than 1-year old' vehicles

The Ministry of Commerce and Industry (MoCI), in coordination with the General Authority of Customs, has adopted an executive mechanism for implementing Circular No. (3) of 2025, which bans the export of new vehicles that have not completed one year of registration with competent authorities. Under the new mechanism, commercial showrooms and car dealerships may export vehicles imported from countries other than the country of manufacture — i.e. vehicles not counted under the state's designated quota. This mechanism follows a detailed review of the circular's implementation, taking into account feedback from stakeholders and commercial showrooms, as well as ongoing monitoring of market developments.
By this measure, the Ministry aims to maintain balance between supply and demand, prevent unjustified increases in new vehicle prices, protect consumer rights, and safeguard the rights of commercial establishments in line with the Consumer Protection Law. The Ministry reaffirmed that the provisions of Circular No. (3) of 2025 remain in effect, including the requirement that no vehicle may be exported until it has completed a full year of registration with relevant authorities, except as set out in the executive mechanism.

Israeli attacks threaten Gaza ceasefire: Qatar

QNA
Doha

Qatar strongly condemned the brutal Israeli occupation attacks in the Gaza Strip, which led to deaths and injuries, considering it a dangerous escalation that threatens to undermine the ceasefire agreement in the Strip.

In a statement yesterday, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs stressed the need for concerted regional and international efforts to maintain and adhere to the ceasefire agreement, paving the way for ending the war on Gaza and achieving a just and sustainable peace in the region.

The Ministry reiterated Qatar's firm and unwavering stance in supporting the Palestinian cause.

Qatar condemns Israeli violation of Syrian territories

Qatar strongly condemned the entry of the Israeli prime minister and a number of ministers and officials in the occupation government into the occupied Syrian territories, considering it a blatant violation of the sovereignty of the fraternal Syrian Arab Republic, a flagrant violation of international law, and a serious threat to regional security.

In a statement, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs urged the international community to take urgent action to compel the Israeli occupation to comply with international law resolutions, particularly the 1974 ceasefire agreement, and to stop its repeated attacks on Syrian territory to prevent further escalation and tension in the region.

Qatar slams Israeli air strike on Ain Al Hilweh refugee camp

Qatar strongly condemned the Israeli raid that targeted Ain Al Hilweh Palestinian refugee camp near the city of Sidon in southern Lebanon, which resulted in martyrs and wounded.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs confirmed in a statement yesterday that this raid represents a brutal attack on the defenceless Palestinian people and the sovereignty of the sisterly Lebanese Republic, as well as a flagrant violation of international laws and conventions, stressing, in this context, the need for the international community to act urgently to stop the dangerous Israeli attacks.



Mourners react as they attend the funeral of Palestinians who were killed in overnight Israeli strikes, at Al-Shifa Hospital in Gaza City, yesterday.

Deputy PM meets Italy's minister of defence





HE the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of State for Defence Affairs Sheikh Saud bin Abdulrahman bin Hassan al-Thani met yesterday with Minister of Defence of the Italian Republic Guido Crosetto, and his accompanying delegation, during his official visit to the State of Qatar. The meeting discussed topics of common interest between the two sides and ways to enhance and develop them. **(QNA)**

Official

Amir sends cables of congratulations to Sultan of Oman

His Highness the Amir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani, His Highness the Deputy Amir Sheikh Abdullah bin Hamad al-Thani and HE the Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman bin Jassim al-Thani sent cables of congratulations to Sultan Haitham bin Tariq of the Sultanate of Oman on the anniversary of his country's National Day. **(QNA)**

Web Summit Qatar organising body continues preparations for 3rd WSQ

QNA
Doha



The Permanent Web Summit Qatar Organising Committee has continued its preparations for the third edition of Web Summit Qatar (WSQ), to be held in early February 2026. During its regular meeting, the committee reviewed the latest updates related to the global event, including confirmed speakers, strategic international partnerships and the attraction of global trade delegations.

The meeting also discussed the outcomes of Qatar's participation at Web Summit Lisbon 2025, which concluded last week. The Qatari delegation presented a comprehensive showcase of investment opportunities and national initiatives supporting innovation and entrepreneurship, reaffirming the nation's standing as a leading destination for technology and innovation. In this regard, Director of the Government Communications Office and Chairman of the Permanent Web Summit Qatar Organising Committee HE Sheikh Jassim bin Mansour bin Jabor al-Thani said: "We are committed to strengthening Web Summit Qatar's position by enabling startups and investors, and providing an ideal platform for the exchange of ideas and for shaping the future digital economy regionally and globally."

"We continue to see growing momentum for Web Summit Qatar every year. This was evident during our participation in Web Summit Lisbon, where the Startup Qatar pavilion attracted strong interest from global stakeholders. This confidence inspires us to deliver an exceptional edition that surpasses expectations next year," he added.

The committee confirmed during the meeting that IBM will be the official artificial intelligence partner for Web Summit Qatar 2026. It also announced the launch of the IBM Sports Tech Challenge at Web Summit, a competition designed to spotlight startups developing enterprise-grade sports technology and AI solutions.

The first stage of the competition will take place at Web Summit Qatar 2026, followed by regional rounds at Web Summit's global events, before concluding with the finals at Web Summit Lisbon 2026.

The initiative allows participating startups to receive expert mentorship, gain international visibility and compete for a paid proof of concept valued at up to $100,000, along with evaluation for venture funding to support future growth. The Permanent Web Summit Qatar Organising Committee also announced a new group of high-profile global figures confirmed to participate in the summit. The committee also provided an update on partners, noting that the total number has now reached 119. The committee also confirmed the participation of new trade delegations, including those from Turkiye and Switzerland.

On the media front, the committee highlighted a new group of media professionals who will moderate summit sessions. The Permanent Web Summit Qatar Organising committee continues its efforts to attract additional participants, investors and partners to ensure a high-impact global edition that reinforces Qatar's position in the digital economy sector.



Qatar participates in high-level briefing on GCC WPS in Geneva

QNA
Geneva

The State of Qatar participated yesterday in a high-level briefing on Wage Protection Systems (WPS) in the Gulf Co-operation Council (GCC) states, convened on the margins of the International Labour Organisation (ILO) Governing Body meetings in Geneva. HE the Minister of Labour Dr Ali bin Smaikh al-Marri represented the State of Qatar at the session.

The session, organised by the Executive Bureau of the Council of Ministers of Labour and Social Affairs in the GCC States, and supported by the Permanent Mission of the State of Qatar and the Permanent Mission of the GCC in Geneva, showcased the outcomes of a joint study undertaken with the ILO on the evolution of WPS across the region.

The meeting underscored the collective determination of GCC countries to continue strengthening labour market governance, promote fair working conditions, and advance the objectives of the Global Coalition for Social Justice, in line with broader commitments to the Sustainable Development Goals.

In his address, HE Dr Ali bin Smaikh al-Marri described the joint study as a significant milestone in the long-standing partnership between the GCC and the ILO.

He noted that the findings reflect a shared resolve to uphold social justice, reinforce workers' rights, and entrench the principles of decent work across the region.

HE the Minister highlighted that the GCC's experience in wage protection has matured into a recognised regional and international model.

He emphasised that the transition from traditional regulations to integrated digital platforms has enhanced transparency, strengthened compliance, and ensured timely payment of wages – contributing to greater trust between employers and workers, and supporting long-term labour market stability.

He added that this progress is anchored in a clear political commitment from GCC governments to balance robust worker protection with the growth and continuity of private-sector enterprises, through a framework grounded in transparency, accountability, and constructive engagement with international partners.

HE the Minister of Labour reaffirmed that wage protection remains a central pillar of Qatar's labour market reforms. He noted that the country has implemented a comprehensive suite of mechanisms – including the electronic WPS, streamlined dispute-resolution pathways, and the Workers' Support and Insurance Fund – all contributing to the broader agenda of social justice and to the objectives of the Global Coalition.

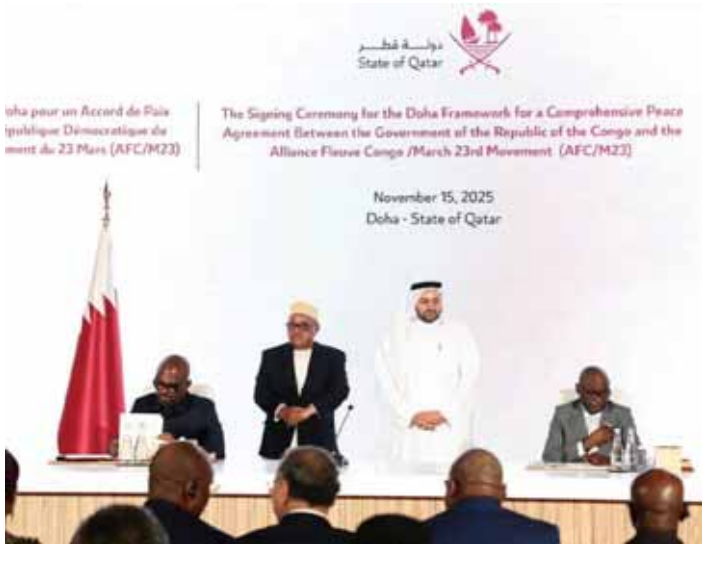
Labour Minister meets senior officials of International Organisation of Employers



HE the Minister of Labour, Dr Ali bin Smaikh al-Marri met yesterday with Secretary-General of the International Organisation of Employers (IOE), Roberto Suarez Santos and Vice-Chair of the Board of Directors for Employers, Mathias Thurnes, on the sidelines of the Board of Directors meetings of the International Labour Organisation in Geneva, Switzerland. During the meeting, they discussed avenues of co-operation between Qatar and IOE, as well as ways to support and develop this co-operation in the upcoming period. **(QNA)**

Doha peace framework between DRC Govt and M23 Movement lauded by UN

QNA
New York



Spokesperson for the United Nations Secretary-General Stephane Dujarric expressed the UN's appreciation for the pivotal and continuous efforts of the State of Qatar that led to the signing of the Doha Framework for Peace Agreement between the government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) and the Congo River Alliance (M23 Movement) on November 15, adding that this agreement sets out guiding principles towards achieving lasting peace.

This came as the UN welcomed the agreement reached with the support of the State of Qatar, the United States of America, the African Union and the Republic of Togo, in addition to regional and international partners in this regard.

The spokesperson stressed that the UN urges all parties to continue negotiations in good faith in order to ensure that these commitments are translated into tangible progress on the ground.

Dujarric added that the UN Mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo (MONUSCO) is committed to working alongside the Congolese people and Congolese authorities to support efforts to achieve lasting peace.

Qatar partakes in 46th Ministerial Conference of La Francophonie

Qatar participated in the 46th session of the Ministerial Conference of the Organisation internationale de la Francophonie, held on Nov 19-20 in the Rwandan capital, Kigali. Qatar's delegation to the meeting was headed by Sheikh Ali bin Jassim al-Thani, ambassador to France and Qatar's representative to the International Organisation of La Francophonie. The conference, held under the theme "30 years after Beijing: the contribution of women in the French-speaking world" focused on highlighting the role of women in development within the Francophone sphere and promoting gender equality. It also discussed prospects for multilateral co-operation, along with administrative and financial issues related to the organisation. In this context, Secretary-General of the International Organisation of La Francophonie Louise Mushikiwabo presented the key efforts undertaken to strengthen political, diplomatic, and economic action within the Francophone space. She expressed appreciation to the State of Qatar for its significant role in resolving the conflict in eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo and for its active contribution to the signing of the Doha Framework Agreement for Peace on Nov 15, between the Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the March 23 Movement, under the supervision and follow-up of Qatar, the US, and the African Union to ensure the agreement's implementation in pursuit of lasting peace and stability. Several delegations from Francophone countries also praised Qatar's mediation efforts to resolve the conflict. The head of Qatar's delegation affirmed the country's continued commitment to playing an active role in mediation and the peaceful resolution of disputes internationally. He also reiterated Qatar's dedication to the values of La Francophonie and its ongoing co-operation with all partners to promote the participation of Francophone women in development and peace. **(QNA)**

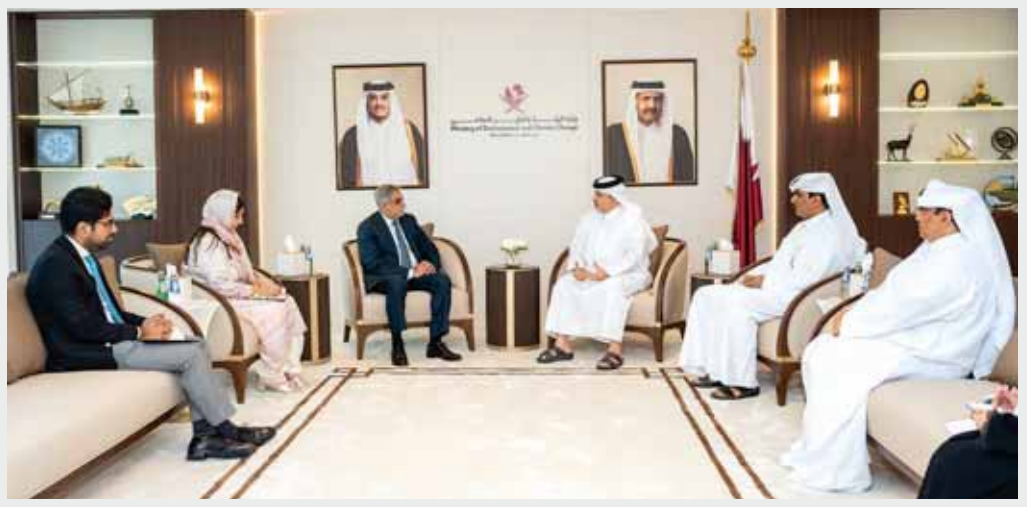
Qatar, Kazakhstan political consultations





The third round of political consultations between the Foreign Ministries of Qatar and Kazakhstan was held yesterday in Astana. HE the Secretary-General of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Dr Ahmed bin Hassan al-Hammadi chaired the Qatar's side, while Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of Kazakhstan Alibek Bakayev chaired Kazakhstan's side. The consultations round discussed relations between the two countries and ways to support and strengthen them. Ambassador of Qatar to Kazakhstan Abdullah bin Hussein al-Jaber, Director of Asian Affairs Department at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Al Johara bint Yousef al-Obaidan Fakhro, and the accompanying delegation attended the consultations round. **(QNA)**

Environment minister meets Pakistani ambassador



HE the Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Dr Abdullah bin Abdulaziz bin Turki al-Subaie, met yesterday with ambassador of Pakistan to Qatar, Muhammad Aamer. During the meeting, ways to support and enhance co-operation between the two sides in environmental fields were discussed, alongside a review of several topics of mutual interest. **(QNA)**

MoFA secretary-general meets Kazakhstan FM



HE the Secretary-General of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MoFA) Dr Ahmed bin Hassan al-Hammadi met yesterday in Astana with Minister of Foreign Affairs of Kazakhstan Yermek Kosherbayev. During the meeting, co-operation relations between the two countries and ways to support and strengthen them were reviewed, in addition to a number of topics of common interest.
The meeting was attended by ambassador of Qatar to Kazakhstan Abdullah bin Hussein al-Jaber, Director of the Asian Affairs Department at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Al Johara bint Yousef al-Obaidan Fakhro, and the accompanying delegation. **(QNA)**

Dr Jery Antony honoured again as Qatar's 'Best Psychiatrist'

Dr Jery Antony, psychiatrist at Kimshealth Al Mashaf, has been honoured with the prestigious Best Psychiatrist Award at Qatar Medicare 2025, following his recognition in 2024.

The award, presented by HeliumDoc, acknowledges his outstanding contributions to mental healthcare in Qatar. Dr Antony is renowned for his expertise in treating conditions such as anxiety, depression, bipolar disorders, Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder, Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder, and sleep disorders, using a patient-centred approach that combines evidence-based treatments, psychotherapy, and lifestyle interventions.

In a press statement, Dr Antony said: "I am deeply honoured to receive this recognition again. Our mission at Kimshealth is to provide compassionate, high-quality care for every individual."



Dr Jery Antony receiving the award.

Visit Qatar set to host country's first UFC event at ABHA Arena

Visit Qatar is gearing up to host the inaugural UFC event tomorrow (November 22), marking an important milestone in the nation's growing portfolio of major international sports events.

Presented in partnership with UFC, the world's leading mixed martial arts organisation, UFC Fight Night: Tsarukyan vs Hooker will take place at the state-of-the-art ABHA Arena, bringing elite Mixed Martial Arts competition to Doha for the very first time. The event highlights Visit Qatar's commitment to growing the country's sporting calendar with globally recognised competitions that appeal to both residents and visitors. The fight card will be headlined by no. 2-ranked lightweight Arman Tsarukyan and no. 7-ranked Dan Hooker, who will face off in a highly anticipated five-round main event.

In the co-main bout, top welterweight contender Belal Muhammad, a regional favourite, will meet Ireland's rising star Ian Machado Garry in what is expected to be a high-intensity clash.

In the lead-up to fight night, fans can enjoy an action-packed week of activities designed to bring them closer to the world of UFC. It features the UFC Fan Zone at Place Vendome Mall, offering interactive experiences including striking challenges, VR fight simulations, fitness activations, and photo opportunities with replica UFC belts, providing an engaging introduction to UFC culture for all ages.



The ceremonial weigh-ins will take place today at ABHA Arena, presenting intense face-offs and building anticipation ahead of tomorrow's main event.

Parents, educators gain new child development insights at QNL's second 'Our Children Matter' forum

Building on the success of its inaugural edition, Qatar National Library (QNL) hosted the second 'Our Children Matter' forum, offering parents, educators, and caregivers valuable insights to support healthy childhood development.

Themed "Healthy Childhood, Evolving Skills", the forum featured insightful presentations on early childhood education, developmental milestones, and strategies to enhance children's cognitive, social, and emotional growth.

Maram al-Mahmoud, manager of Children's and Young Adults' Programmes and Services at QNL, said the forum emphasised key strategies to nurture child development during the formative years. "At QNL, we recognise that early childhood is the cornerstone of lifelong learning, and we are determined to continue the forum with the same goal, ensuring it remains a platform for meaningful dialogue and practical outcomes.

"Through this forum, we aim to bring together parents, educators, and experts to exchange ideas and strengthen the foundations of early childhood development. By fostering understanding and shared commitment, we seek to build a community that nurtures every child's potential from the very beginning," al-Mahmoud added.

Faten Azzam, senior librarian, Children's and Young Adults' Programmes, at QNL, said early childhood is the foundation for shaping a person's character.

"We aim for this forum to serve as a space filled with valuable educational guidance and information, reflecting our commitment to empowering those responsible for the care and upbringing of children", Azzam added. The event featured experts in childhood development, including PhD researcher Ahmed Sbeata, founder and CEO of Kydzzo, a platform specialising in child and adolescent behaviour; Dr Maryam Ibrahim al-Shraim, an early childhood education expert with two decades of experience establishing public kindergartens in Qatar; and Heng Huey Bin, manager of the Children's & Teens' Library at the National Library Board of Singapore, who leads national children-focused initiatives.



Question and answer session at the forum.

MCIT, MoEHE host series of awareness workshops on AI

The Ministry of Communications and Information Technology (MCIT), in collaboration with the Ministry of Education and Higher Education (MoEHE), organised a series of awareness workshops under the 'Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) Go Digital Programme'.

The workshops targeted SMEs operating in the education sector and aimed to promote the adoption of digital solutions and the use of artificial intelligence (AI) to enhance services provided within Qatar's education ecosystem.

MCIT noted that the workshops highlighted the role of digital transformation and AI in driving innovation across SMEs operating in the education sector, and included specialised sessions delivered by experts in digital transformation in education. Participants gained valuable insights about the key role of digital technologies in empowering these enterprises, along with practical examples of AI applications that contribute to improving students' learning experiences, increasing operational efficiency, and creating new opportunities for business growth.



Faraj Jassim Abdullah, director of the Digital Economy Department at MCIT, said: "Enhancing the adoption of digital solutions among SMEs through AI is a national priority, as it plays a vital role in achieving the objectives of the Digital Agenda 2030. "SMEs are a key driver of the nation's digital advancement, and our collaboration with MoEHE reflects this vision by equipping SMEs operating in the education sector with modern tools and technologies that improve the quality of education and enrich both student and teacher experiences."

Eman Ali al-Nuaimi, director of the Educational Services Centres Department at MOEHE, said: "MoEHE is committed to preparing Qatar's next generation of leaders by equipping them with all the tools and technologies needed to succeed in a digital world shaped by AI.

"Awareness workshops were delivered to the educational service centres licensed by the ministry to support their digital transformation journey and to demonstrate how modern technologies and AI can be utilised to enhance the quality of educational services, such as analysing learner performance, automating administrative processes, and developing interactive educational content."

The programme offers a wide range of benefits for SMEs, including tailored digital assessments, customised digital transformation plans, opportunities to connect with service providers, exclusive technology offers, and potential financial support from Qatar Development Bank.

QF's 'Heart to Heart' series to host musician Negar Bouban

Qatar Foundation's (QF) 'Heart to Heart' series is a celebration of the timeless musical technique maqam in its purest form, and its next edition will host a rare solo appearance by Iranian musician and composer Negar Bouban.
She will perform 'Negar Bouban: Oud and Vocals' in the Black Box Theater at Multaqa (Education City Student Centre) on November 29, with tickets now available for an evening that will blend ancient Persian musical traditions with philosophical narrative.
Featuring oud, vocals, and improvisation, and entirely free of amplified sound, screens, and mobile phones, as 'Heart to Heart' presents maqam to audiences in a truly authentic setting. Bouban's performance will reflect the connection between her music and her roots in Persian and Kurdish culture, as well as how she perceives the world and its people.
Launched under QF's Al Ghorrah for Literature and Arts, 'Heart to Heart' is devoted to maqam classical music in both its ancient and contemporary forms, and is curated by musician, composer, researcher, and oud player Mustafa Said, founder of the Asil Ensemble. Its performances take place without any amplification or technology, instead relying on the natural acoustics of their setting to create an intimate musical experience that removes barriers between the musician and their audience.
Bouban's performance will be preceded by a '3D Geometry' workshop under QF's Herfah programme, which is dedicated to reviving and promoting traditional crafts that are deeply rooted in Qatari and Islamic culture.
Tickets for the performance are priced at QR50, with the Herfah workshop being complimentary.
The performance takes place from 7pm-8pm.

QATAR

Amir's visit 'confirms depth of Rwanda-Qatar bilateral relations'



QNA
Kigali

Rwanda government spokesperson Yolande Makolo said the visit of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani to Rwanda is a milestone that reflects the depth of the strong relations between the two countries.

Speaking to Qatar News Agency (QNA), Makolo said the visit confirms the growing friendly relations between Qatar and Rwanda, and reflects the two sides' keenness to strengthen the existing partnership further and expand the horizons of co-operation in various fields.

Rwanda looks forward to this visit due to its political and economic significance, Makolo said, noting the visit also presents an opportunity to build upon the solid foundations laid by Rwanda President Paul Kagame and His Highness the Amir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani.

Makolo emphasised that the future of co-operation between the two countries is very promising in light of the strong relations and mutual understanding between the two leaderships.

On the prospects for future co-operation, Makolo said the strategic investments made by Qatar in Rwanda is considered a model of fruitful co-operation, adding Rwanda looks forward to achieving more in various fields of mutual interest.

She also expressed her country's belief that the visit of His Highness the Amir enhances the prospects for relations between the two countries in a positive and beneficial way for both sides.

As for sectors of priority for both countries, Makolo said technology, innovation, energy, and agriculture are important platforms for strategic cooperation, noting that these sectors form a solid foundation for their partnership.

She highlighted the importance of diversifying Rwanda's economic activities, indicating that her country can greatly benefit from Qatar's expertise in the energy sector. Developing the agricultural sector is also a priority for Rwanda, she continued, noting that her country sees it as a crucial area for strengthening its partnership with Qatar.

She pointed out Rwanda's interest in opening up wider areas of co-operation in these sectors because of their long-term impact on the future of both countries, stressing Rwanda's aspiration for joint investment to achieve economic development that benefits both peoples.

Describing the current level of relations between Doha and Kigali as "excellent," Makolo said both countries are continuously working to strengthen and develop those relations.

"On the political field, Qatar is a trusted partner. In peace and security, we value the role Qatar is playing in mediating on important global issues, including the ongoing situation in the Great Lakes region," she said, praising Qatar's unique approach in dealing with these issues sustainably, which is highly appreciated by Rwanda.

Makolo also stressed that the relationship between the two countries is based on solid foundation that have paved the way for development of extensive co-operation in multiple fields, highlighting the strength of their partnership in the education sector.

"We very much appreciate the Zero-Out-Of-School project that is funded by Qatar," she said, noting that building human capacity is a key priority for Rwanda.

"We have Rwandan students studying in Qatar, and we would like even more student to go there. That is also a part of our strategy for growing our economy," she continued.

Makolo concluded by affirming that relations between the two countries will witness further development in the next stage – both at the political and economic levels, thanks to the shared vision and mutual will to enhance bilateral co-operation.

Amir's visit strengthens Doha-Kigali partnership: Qatar diplomat

Charge d'Affaires of the Embassy of Qatar to Rwanda, Ali bin Hamad al-Aida said the visit of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani to Kigali comes at a very important time in light of the rapid transformations taking place in the world at the regional and international levels, noting that it reflects the vision of Qatar in enhancing its openness to the African continent and expanding its partnerships with countries in support of security, stability and sustainable development.

Al-Aida said the visit also embodies Rwanda's status as a reliable partner for Qatar, and the keenness of the leadership of the two countries to elevate bilateral relations to broader horizons within the framework of a partnership based on mutual trust, respect and common interests.

He noted that relations between Doha and Kigali have witnessed remarkable development in recent years thanks to continuous communication and the converging vision of the two leaderships, indicating that the current visit comes to push this momentum forward and enhance co-operation to more comprehensive levels, especially in the areas of development, innovation and investment.

He highlighted that co-operation between the two countries has achieved tangible results in several sectors, including security, education, transportation, and aviation services, noting that the visit will witness the signing of new agreements that will expand the scope of co-operation and meet the aspirations of the two countries in the next stage.

Al-Aida said the visit will have a significant positive impact on the



Ali bin Hamad al-Aida
Charge d'Affaires of the Embassy of Qatar to Rwanda

course of relations between the two countries and will contribute to strengthening co-ordination and co-operation in all fields, thus consolidating joint work based on trust and mutual respect.

Regarding future partnerships, he noted that His Highness the Amir's visit marks a new beginning for more comprehensive co-operation between the two countries. He pointed out that the new Bugesera International Airport project, currently under construction, is one of the most prominent avenues for bilateral co-operation, as its completion will contribute to doubling development aspirations and enhancing Rwanda's position as a regional hub for transportation and logistics.

Al-Aida, concluded by stressing that the existing partnerships between Qatar and Rwanda represent a practical embodiment of the two countries' orientation towards promoting sustainable development and achieving regional integration, reflecting the wise vision of the two leaderships in opening new horizons for co-operation towards a prosperous future and lasting stability. (**QNA**)

Amir's visit embodies strength of Qatari-Rwandan strategic partnership, stresses ambassador

Rwanda's ambassador to Qatar, Igor Marara Kayinamura, said the visit of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani to Rwanda is a clear evidence of the strength of the solid and growing strategic partnership between the two countries.

In a statement to Qatar News Agency (QNA), Kayinamura noted that this visit, which is His Highness the Amir's third visit to Rwanda, reflects a continuous and high-level commitment, and embodies the strength of the bilateral relations based on friendship and mutual trust between the two countries' leadership.

The envoy said the high-level dialogues between the two sides contributed to translating the mutual vision into tangible co-operation in various fields. His expressed confidence that this visit would constitute an additional incentive to strengthen the existing alliance, enhance economic and development partnerships, and open new horizons for co-operation in a way that achieves common prosperity for the Qatari and Rwandan peoples. The visit will put focus on the remarkable development witnessed in the aviation sector, infrastructure, logistics, agriculture, food security, technology, knowledge exchange, and capacity-building programmes that have provided quality opportunities for Rwandan youth, he said.

The talks will also address expanding economic co-operation to include renewable energy and digital innovation, building on the strong foundation that has been built in recent years, he added, expressing optimism that a number of new agreements and memoranda of understanding could be signed during the visit, which supports the growing momentum in relations between the two countries.

He described the development of relations as exceptional, noting that it reflects the political will and shared vision.

The envoy highlighted some of the memoranda of understanding and agreements signed between Qatar and Rwanda, the most important of which is the Bugesera International Airport project – one of the most prominent joint strategic projects and which will contribute to strengthening Rwanda's economic interdependence and making it a pivotal gateway to the East African region.

Direct flights between the two countries have had a significant impact on stimulating passenger traffic and boosting the absorption capacity of high-value Rwandan exports such as coffee and horticultural products, he added.

Co-operation also includes mechanisms for exchanging expertise in governance and combating corruption, along with knowledge-sharing programmes, he said, stressing that what distinguishes bilateral relations is the alignment of values between the two countries, as both sides place paramount importance on good governance, human development, and stability,



Igor Marara Kayinamura
Rwanda's Ambassador to Qatar

placing them at the forefront of their priorities.

The envoy said that Qatar's expertise in investment, finance and world-class infrastructure development is perfectly integrated with Rwanda's innovation- and reform-based economy, noting that there is a great potential to expand co-operation in areas such as Kigali Innovation City (KIC), which aims to establish Rwanda as a leading technology hub in Africa. He added co-operation with Qatari investors in this field will support the development of digital infrastructure, data centres and technological services.

With regards to the tourism sector, the envoy indicated that Rwanda has become a distinguished global destination for ecotourism, commending Qatar's expertise in developing hospitality and tourism facilities, in addition to the significant role played by Qatar Airways in supporting Rwanda's tourism vision. As for the energy sector, he stressed that Rwanda is seeking to enhance its clean energy capabilities, particularly in solar power, expressing his belief that Qatari investments can accelerate these projects, considering Qatar's emphasis on long-term and sustainable partnerships. He called for strengthening ties between the two peoples through increased trade, academic activities, cultural co-operation, and intensified tourism between Doha and Kigali.

Kayinamura emphasised that the high-level visits between the two countries reflect the priority both sides place on their growing partnership, noting that these visits are not merely symbolic, but also provide a platform to discuss strategic directions and explore new areas of co-operation, as well as convey a clear message to the people of both countries that there is a firm political will driving joint development.

The ambassador concluded by pointing out that the personal relationship between the two countries' leaders creates an environment of mutual trust, which contributes to facilitating co-operation at various levels, whether between government institutions or through private sector partnerships.

He also expressed his optimism about the future of bilateral relations, especially with the availability of a strong foundation that allows for expanding cooperation in sectors such as the digital economy, innovation, financial services, education, and healthcare, stressing that the two countries have great potential in these areas, and that deepening the partnership will bring mutual benefit. (**QNA**)

Qatar and Rwanda: Strategic integration toward sustainable future

Relations between Qatar and Rwanda have been marked by rapid growth and a strategic partnership spanning various development fields. Over the past years, the two nations have succeeded in building a solid foundation of co-operation in the areas of economy, investment, education, tourism, aviation, security, and anti-corruption, making Rwanda a key partner in Qatar's outreach to the African continent.

The mutual visits by the leadership of both countries reflect their shared commitment to strengthening dialogue, expanding investment opportunities, and achieving sustainable development. This contributes to supporting regional stability and creating new horizons for bilateral co-operation.

The visit of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani to the Rwandan capital, Kigali, to meet Rwanda President Paul Kagame comes within the framework of strengthening the close relations between the two nations and reaffirming the mutual commitment to enhancing the foundation of sustainable investment and expanding its prospects in a way that serves their common goals.

Qatar's successful mediation in resolving the dispute between Rwanda and the Democratic Republic of the Congo, announced in Doha on March 18, followed by the final signing of the peace agreement, which included armed groups, on November 15, 2025, crowned nearly a decade of distinguished relations between Qatar and Rwanda. This reflects the fruitful co-operation and a shared desire by the leadership of both countries to strengthen bilateral ties and elevate it to an advanced level of political and economic partnership.

In March, His Highness the Amir hosted both Rwanda President Paul Kagame and the President of the Democratic Republic of the Congo Felix Tshisekedi to reaffirm the commitment of all parties to an immediate and unconditional ceasefire, as agreed upon. Both sides expressed their gratitude for Qatar's efforts and for the role of His Highness the Amir, which contributed to building trust between the two countries.

Since the establishment of diplomatic relations between the Qatar and Rwanda in 2017, both sides have strived to elevate these relations to a level of productive partnership and robust investments.

Regular reciprocal visits between His Highness the Amir and the Rwandan president, along with high-level governmental delegations, have helped drive forward joint co-operation across vital sectors, broaden the scope of bilateral agreements, and enhance co-ordination on related issues in various international forums.

Undoubtedly, Qatar constitutes a significant economic force within the Gulf Co-operation Council (GCC), owing to its distinguished capabilities in global energy markets, infrastructure, international trade, and diplomatic negotiation efforts.

Rwanda, meanwhile, is one of Africa's fastest-growing economies, offering a dynamic and stable investment environment in sectors such as textiles, apparel, leather, agriculture, livestock, manufacturing, tourism, ICT, and pharmaceuticals.

At the institutional level, on February 7, 2025, Qatar Fund for Development (QFFD) and GiveDirectly signed a grant agreement worth approximately $5mn during the 2025 Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) Partnership Forum, aimed at supporting families living in extreme poverty in Rwanda for a one-year period, underscoring the commitment of QFFD and its partners to assisting the most vulnerable.

Funded by QFFD, GiveDirectly, in collaboration with the Rwandan government, will provide lump sum cash grants of $1,100 to 3,979 households experiencing extreme poverty. This initiative falls under the Habwa Wigire ('Receive and build your own future') Programme, implemented in coordination with the ministry of local government (MINALOC) in Rwanda.

The programme aims to accelerate the reduction of the national poverty gap and provide a successful model for poverty reduction that can be replicated nationally, and eventually globally.

This trilateral agreement seeks to accelerate the implementation of Rwanda's National Strategy for Transformation toward Vision 2050 by eradicating poverty. The partnership also supports Rwanda's agricultural economy, upon which more than two-thirds of the rural population depends for their livelihoods, and which provides income for nearly 60% of the country's population.

In terms of investments, Qatar has undertaken its largest investment in Africa, constructing a new international airport on the outskirts of Kigali, the capital, at a cost of $1.6bn.

The majority of the project was completed in 2023. Qatar Airways also signed two agreements with Rwandan tourism air transport company and an agreement with the Rwanda Civil Aviation Authority.

Qatar and Rwanda are linked by an array of agreements and memoranda of understanding (MoU) covering political, diplomatic, economic, trade, agricultural, cultural, and sports sectors, in addition to investment and co-operation sectors in aviation and double taxation avoidance.

The two countries also signed an agreement for Qatar to acquire 60% of the share of the Rwandan Bugesera International Airport. Furthermore, a MoU for defence co-operation exists between the two friendly nations, addressing military and defence relations and ways to strengthen and develop them.

Hassad Food, a Qatari company that invests in achieving food security for Qatar, signed a MoU for food cooperation with Rwanda in 2018. This aligns with Hassad's new strategy, which aims to become a successful strategic investor in global food and agricultural production by exploring available investment opportunities in the food and agricultural sectors.

In a related development, a MoU was signed between the Qatar Financial Centre (QFC) and Rwanda Finance Limited (RFL), with the aim of facilitating joint initiatives that contribute to enhancing the growth of both QFC and the KIFC, as well as encouraging the regulatory bodies responsible for overseeing the performance and operations of both financial centres to enter mutual recognition agreements, thus opening new avenues and creating more business opportunities in both markets, and fostering durable partnerships with global markets that supports Qatar's economic diversification strategy and enhancing its economic capabilities and potential.

The agreements signed between the two countries include one that enables passengers on RwandAir and Qatar Airways to access over 160 destinations on their combined networks from Kigali and Doha.

In December 2023, on the sidelines of the International Conference on Air Services Negotiations (ICAN) in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, bilateral talks were held between the civil aviation authorities of Qatar and Rwanda, resulting in positive outcomes, including the signing of a MoU that allows the relevant airlines in both countries to enter into joint commercial co-operation agreements.

It is worth noting that Rwanda has recorded an impressive economic growth rate, with an average GDP growth rate exceeding 7%. Over the past decade, thanks to strategic investments in technology, agriculture, tourism, and industry, Rwanda has made significant strides. The country has also achieved comprehensive health coverage, improved the quality of education, and promoted gender equality across various sectors.

Located in the heart of Africa, south of the equator within the Great Lakes region, Rwanda is a landlocked country. It connects to the outside world through its neighbours, particularly via the ports of Dar es Salaam in Tanzania and Mombasa in Kenya. Its area exceeds 26,000 square kilometres, and its population is estimated at 15mn in 2025.

Visitors to Rwanda will readily perceive the country's remarkable economic boom. Rwanda, whose name means "Land of a Thousand Hills," attracts tourists from around the world with its unique and breathtaking natural beauty. (**QNA**)

Old Doha Port unveils its exciting calendar of events for the 2025-2026 season

QNA
Doha

Old Doha Port unveiled its exciting calendar of events for the 2025-2026 season, promising a vibrant lineup of festivals, a variety of maritime experiences, and sporting spectacles that celebrate the traditions and customs of the Qatari community while embracing an exceptional sporting atmosphere brought to life by local fans and major championships taking place in the coming period.

Announced through a press conference, the six-month programme positions the port as a year-round hub for entertainment, leisure, and family-friendly activities. Eng Mohammed Abdulla al-Mulla, CEO of Old Doha Port, said: "The 2025-2026 calendar highlights our ambition to sustain year-round activity that enriches Qatar's community and maritime heritage landscape by crafting exceptional experiences for our visitors. Through every initiative, Old Doha Port continues to grow as a destination that inspires visitors, empowers communities, and contributes to the nation's tourism vision as well as reinforces our position as one of the most premier tourist destinations on the local tourism scene."

Old Doha Port is set to welcome regional and international guests as Qatar hosts the FIFA Arab Cup 2025, offering a lively programme of activities and entertainment throughout the tournament. The port has recently announced a special berthing package for yacht and boat owners sailing to Qatar, which includes exclusive tickets to the FIFA Arab Cup 2025 matches. Supported by its advanced infrastructure and the newly introduced Minakom digital service that allows for streamlined entry and departure, Old Doha Port will serve as a premier destination for luxury yachts, providing an exceptional experience during the tournament. In addition, visitors can enjoy a vibrant Fan Zone experience alongside roaming performances throughout the Mina District.

Old Doha Port will also host Al Majlis, a studio programme from Alkass Sports Channel, alongside another Fan Zone in Mina Park, opposite Containers Yard. Mina Park will be fully transformed into an immersive, one-of-a-kind destination, combining entertainment, shows, and family activities. Visitors can also enjoy live match screenings on large screens and experience the games in a dynamic environment. Furthermore, from 17 to 19 December, the district will come alive with the Al Rasta Festival, introducing a dynamic cultural celebration that adds a festive spirit to the Port.



During the winter months, the Port becomes a showcase of excellence through flagship events such as the World Arabian Horse Championship Qatar 2025, the Digital Creator Awards, and Polo Al Marsa, enriching the season with world-class entertainment and premium experiences.

National celebrations take centre stage within the port's seasonal calendar, with Qatar National Day festivities transforming the waterfront into a vibrant gathering place for residents and visitors alike. In recognition of National Sport Day, the port will also host a diverse range of activities that promote healthy living, encourage physical activity across the community, and raise awareness about the importance of exercise and sports.

Throughout Ramadan, Old Doha Port will continue its beloved traditions through Musaher Al Mina, the Iftar Cannon, Garangao Night, and Wada'a Ramadan. Visitors will also enjoy the Throwback Food Festival, evoking Qatar's culinary heritage, before the celebrations continue with Eid al-Fitr and Eid al-Adha. Toward the end of the season, anticipation builds for the return of Old Doha Port's most celebrated signature events. Following the successful turnout of its first edition, the annual Fishing Exhibition and Competition will once again highlight Qatar's maritime culture, craftsmanship, and community spirit in late March. This commitment is reflected in the Port's continued support for local competitions that preserve Qatar's maritime identity and strengthen national expertise.

The season will then continue with the Mina Pre-Owned Boat Show in May, inviting families and marine enthusiasts to explore Qatar's seafaring heritage and coastal lifestyle through a lively, community-driven showcase. During the event, the Mina Corniche will transform into a dedicated destination for displaying marine equipment at competitive prices and will serve as a platform for reselling marine gear ahead of the summer season.

Through these events, Old Doha Port continues to strengthen its role as one of Qatar's most dynamic destinations, where culture, sport, and leisure come together along Doha's iconic waterfront.

Qatar TV addresses Arab, humanitarian issues with a global dimension: al-Sada

QNA
Doha

The world is celebrating World Television Day today, (Nov 21st) in recognition of the growing influence of television on decision-making and as a way of conveying information to the public.

Since its first broadcast on August 15, 1970, Qatar Television has been able to keep pace with all the transformations that television has witnessed at the global level, and has subsequently achieved tremendous development, whether at the technical level or at the level of programmes and the diverse content it offers, including news, cultural, economic, social, artistic and other materials.

Qatar TV is distinguished in its giving and leadership among Gulf and Arab screens, with many of its productions and programmes winning awards in the field of Arab media competitions.

Regarding how Qatar TV translates the principles of World Television Day into its programmes and media policies, Director of Qatar TV Ali bin Saleh al-Sada confirmed in special statements to Qatar News Agency (QNA) that Qatar TV embodies the principles of World Television Day through professional media that promotes credibility and cultural dialogue, and presents awareness and development programmes that reflect the values of Qatari society and open up knowledge horizons for the public.

Al-Sada said that through a balanced discourse, Qatar TV combines identity and openness, and continues its role as a platform for spreading knowledge and promoting cultural communication. Regarding Qatar TV's ability to be a platform for cultural enlightenment and civilisational dialogue, he affirmed that the television has been able to establish its position through content that balances authenticity and openness, and celebrates national identity within a global vision. He added that through Qatar TV's dialogue and cultural programs, and by hosting intellectual figures from various countries, it has contributed to enhancing community awareness and building bridges of communication between cultures, becoming a media platform that reflects Qatar's image as an environment for dialogue and cultural exchange.

Regarding Qatar TV's role in balancing its national mission with its ambition to reach an Arab and global audience, the director of Qatar TV affirmed that this long-established channel balances its national mission with its ambition to reach an Arab and global audience by presenting content that reflects the Qatari identity in a modern style. He pointed out that Qatar TV addresses Arab and humanitarian issues with a global dimension, adopting a professional discourse and advanced digital platforms, which enabled it to be close to the Qatari viewer and attractive to audiences abroad because it combines authenticity and openness.

On Qatar TV's contributions to supporting the local cultural scene through coverage, programs, and festivals, al-Sada explained that it contributes to supporting the local cultural scene through its continuous coverage of artistic events and festivals, and the presentation of cultural programmes that highlight Qatari creativity, in addition to supporting young talents and producing documentaries that introduce heritage and identity. Thus, the television continues its role as a platform that enhances the presence of Qatari culture and opens it up to the local and Arab public.

Al-Sada said that regarding Qatar TV's future vision in the field of interactive and digital media, its future vision in digital and interactive media seeks to provide innovative content through advanced digital platforms that allow the public to interact and participate, support national talents in digital production, and enhance Qatar's media presence at the regional and international level, all with the aim of integrating technology with distinguished content for a modern and attractive media experience.

Regarding the most prominent initiatives that Qatar TV is expected to launch to promote awareness of the importance of television as a means of cultural and human communication, Al-Sada stated that Qatar TV plans to launch cultural and humanitarian initiatives that promote the importance of television as a means of communication, through awareness and cultural programmes, to provide interactive content in which the public participates, in addition to supporting national talents, and producing documentaries that reflect heritage and human values, all with the aim of promoting awareness and spreading culture and civilisational dialogue.

In the context of the symbolism that World Television Day carries in light of the rapid digital transformations, the Director of Qatar TV stressed that this occasion carries a double symbolism in light of the rapid digital transformations, World Television Day commemorates the role of traditional television as a window for cultural and media communication between societies, while at the same time highlighting the challenges and opportunities created by digital technology in the media industry.

Concluding his remarks to QNA, al-Sada said television still retains its ability to shape public opinion and collective consciousness, through credibility, in-depth analysis, and the presentation of content in image and sound, with its integration with digital platforms to expand its influence on various segments of the public.

World Television Day, which falls on Nov 21st annually through a UN resolution issued in 1996, aims to recognise the growing influence of television on decision-making by drawing public attention to conflicts and threats to peace and security, and its role in increasing focus on other key issues, including economic and social issues.



QT concludes participation in International Cruise Summit in Madrid

QNA
Madrid

Qatar Tourism (QT) concluded its participation in the International Cruise Summit (ICS) 2025, held in Madrid, Spain. In a statement, Qatar Tourism affirmed that the 14th edition of the summit is one of the most prominent annual events in the cruise industry. It brings together leading figures and experts from cruise lines, ports, destinations, suppliers, and the media to exchange experiences and discuss prospects for developing this vital sector.

On the sidelines of the summit, the Qatari delegation held a series of bilateral meetings with key decision-makers and cruise planners from leading international companies. These meetings focused on exploring future collaboration opportunities and showcasing Qatar's growing capabilities in the cruise tourism sector.

Head of Tourism Development at Qatar Tourism, Omar Abdulrahman al-Jaber participated in a panel discussion titled 'Cruise Destinations: The Real Economic Implications of the Blue Economy', alongside global cruise experts.

The discussion covered the most important updates and developments related to cruise tourism worldwide.

During the session, al-Jaber talked about Qatar's most prominent achievements in developing the cruise sector, stating: "Qatar is committed to strengthening its position as a leading cruise destination in the Gulf region by expanding co-operation with new international cruise lines and offering integrated tourism experiences that combine culture, entertainment, and world-class events.

Developing the cruise sector is a key pillar of Qatar's tourism strategy, contributing to the national economy and enhancing Qatar's reputation as a leading global destination." QT has recently announced the launch of the new 2025-2026 cruise season with the arrival of the luxury cruise ship "MSCIURIA" at the cruise terminal in Old Doha Port.

The season will continue until next May, and Qatar is expected to receive 72 cruise calls, including 40 short-term stops, 15 round trips, and 3 maiden voyages.





COMMUNITY

PPS wins award at Charity Week 2025



Podar Pearl School celebrated Charity Week 2025 with the theme 'Servant Leadership', marking a week of compassion, community engagement, and student-led initiatives that reflected the true essence of giving.

Under the banner of 'Together for a Cause,' students, parents, and staff joined hands to organise diverse initiatives culminating with the school being honoured with the 'Leadership through Action Award' at the valedictory function.

Last year PPS had won the top-tier 'United We Can Award.' This year, PPS stood out for not only organising an interactive session at an inter-university event but also emerging as the second-largest contributor nationwide and the highest contributor among schools during Charity Week.

PPS president C Muhamed Nizar, said: "This recognition reflects our students' empathy and initiative. At Podar Pearl, we believe that leadership begins with service. The Charity Week success showcases how our young learners are growing into compassionate global citizens."

Principal Dr Maneesh Mangal, said: "Charity Week 2025 has been an inspiring journey of teamwork and social responsibility. Our students have demonstrated that true education extends beyond the classroom — it lies in contributing to the greater good of society."



India@100 Quiz 2025 – Season 4 held



The Onattukara Pravasi Association (Opaq) conducted the 'India @100 Quiz 2025 – Season 4' for secondary school students across Indian schools in Qatar.

There were a total of 52 participants and six schools qualified for the final round: Loyola International School, Doha Modern Indian School, Noble International School, MES Indian School Abu Hamour Branch (Mesis), MES Indian School, and DPS-Modern Indian School.

The first prize and overall championship trophy were bagged by Mesis for the second consecutive year. Mesis was represented by Mohammed Bassam and Albin Antony.

The second prize went to DPS-Modern Indian School with Makka Mohamed Syed Ali and Aaryan Sujith and the third prize to Loyola International School team with Avighna Bora and Ananya Chaurasia.

Manzoor Moideen was the quiz master and Druvi Vishnu the host.

Indian embassy first secretary Harish Pandey was the chief guest. The function was presided over by Opaq president Jayasree Suresh, with general secretary Shejina Naushad, delivering the welcome address. The proceedings concluded with a vote of thanks by programme convenor Sreejith P Pillai.

During the programme, a special memento was presented to Yash Arjun for his recognition in Kalam's World Records and the India Book of Records in the 'Extraordinary Grasping Power – Genius Kids' category.

Established in 2009, Opaq is a socio-cultural organisation associated with the Indian Cultural Center under the aegis of the embassy of India in Qatar. The association has over 500 members from the four southern districts of Kerala.

DPS-MIS marks silver jubilee



DPS Modern Indian School commemorated 25 years at an event themed 'Al Rihla – A Timeless Journey Celebrating Silver Years, Envisioning Golden Dreams.'

Renowned Indian space scientist Padmashri Dr Mylswamy Annadurai was the chief guest. The vice-president of the Tamil Nadu State Council for Science and Technology, and former director of the Indian Space Research Organisation's Satellite Centre, underscored the importance of collaboration and interdisciplinary approaches in education and highlighted the necessity of continuous learning in a rapidly changing world. He also emphasised the vital role of science in everyday life, advocating for scientific thinking to be accessible to all.

In her welcome address, principal Asna Nafees reflected on the school's 25-year journey of values and heritage. Indian ambassador Vipul, the guest of honour, lauded DPS-MIS for its pioneering initiatives, including the space lab and community service, and commended the school's dedication to academic excellence, holistic development, and meaningful community engagement.

He underscored the strong educational and cultural bonds between India and Qatar and highlighted India's strides in higher education and the growing global presence of its universities.

The school's patron Aisha bint Mohammed bin Hammam recalled the achievements. President Yasir Nainar expressed gratitude for the legacy of past leaders and underscored the school's commitment to inclusive education, with a special focus on children with special needs.

DPS-MIS alumnus (batch 2018-2019) Imtiaz Abdul Gafur, associate drainage engineer at Parsons Corporation, Doha, stressed on discovering new strengths, taking up new roles, pursuing hobbies, and treading untrodden paths with curiosity, purpose, and heart as guiding principles.





Health talk for women professionals



The Women's Wing of the Institution of Engineers (India), Qatar Chapter (IEI QC), in collaboration with Kims Hospital, organised a Health Talk aimed at enhancing awareness on preventive healthcare and holistic well-being among women professionals and community members.

IEI QC honorary chairman Abdul Sathar inaugurated the seminar and highlighted that such initiatives not only empower women to prioritise their health but also foster stronger, healthier families and workplaces.

In her address, IEI QC Women's Wing president Dilba Midlaj highlighted the importance of consistent health awareness initiatives within the community. She emphasised the Wing's commitment to empowering women through knowledge-sharing sessions, health-focused programmes, and professional development activities.

The session was led by Dr Shobha Justus Victoria, who imparted insights on key aspects of women's health and well-being. Her talk covered essential topics such as lifestyle management, nutritional balance, reproductive health, and the importance of routine medical screening.

Dr Shobha also elaborated on early detection methods for breast cancer, explaining the significance of regular self-examinations, clinical breast evaluations, and timely mammography. She emphasised that early diagnosis remains one of the most effective ways to reduce risks and improve treatment outcomes.

Chief guest Nishad Azeem, executive director of Kimshealth Medical Centre, emphasised the growing role of engineers in advancing modern healthcare. He highlighted how engineering innovations are enhancing diagnostic accuracy through machine learning, enabling better interpretation of clinical data, and supporting doctors in identifying illnesses at earlier stages. Guest of honour Khalid Fakhroo, senior petroleum engineer, QatarEnergy, commended IEI and their contribution to Qatar professional community in various engineering disciplines and 50 years bilateral relation between India and Qatar as well.

The event concluded with an interactive session, reinforcing the importance of collective efforts between engineering and medical communities for better health outcomes.

IEI QC executive committee members Salihudeen, Sajeet George, and A K Sharma, along with IEI Women's Wing vice president Busna and treasurer Samu, Sufiya, Dr Afreen, Shejina, Bindu Mathew supported the event.

A special moment of the evening was the send-off felicitation for Bindu Mathew. Kims business development executive Suhail coordinated the event and Jennifer compered.



Free medical camp for women, girls and children

Indian Cultural Centre (ICC), in association with the ICC Women's Forum and Medfort SHE Clinics, organised a free medical camp for women, girls, and children below six.
The focus was on preventive health, wellness, and early medical care.
Indian embassy counsellor Dr Vaibhav A Tandale was the chief guest. ICC president A P Manikantan delivered the presidential address, followed by remarks from Indian Sports Centre president E P Abdurahman, who appreciated the initiative.
The camp was co-ordinated by the ICC Women's Forum management committee.
ICC Women's Forum chairperson Anjana Menon welcomed the gathering and ICC's cultural activities head Nandini Abbagouni proposed a vote of thanks. Jahanavi was the programme host.

Chaliyar Doha to hold 10th anniversary celebration today



Chaliyar Festival 2025, marking the 10th anniversary of Chaliyar Doha, will take place today, from 4pm at Al Wukair Noble International School auditorium, officials told a press conference.

Chaliyar Doha is an environmental collective representing 24 panchayats (village council) along the Chaliyar River in north Kerala.

The event is set to deliver a lineup of performances that reflect Kerala's rich cultural heritage. A music show featuring the title winner of "Pathinalamravu" along with popular playback singers Badusha and Salman will be the highlight.

Attendees can also enjoy cinematic dance, oppana, skit, kolkali, thiruvathira, margamkali, and miming, performed by various member panchayats of Chaliyar Doha. Entry is free, the organisers said, inviting families and residents to participate.

Chaliyar Festival programme committee chairman V C Mashhood Thiruthiyad, Chaliyar Doha president C T Siddeeque Cheruvadi, general secretary Sabikhussalam Edavanna, treasurer Abdul Azeez Cheruvannur, Zedex Cargo marketing consultant Shara Hashmi, Chaliyar Doha chief patron Shaukathali T A J, chief adviser Zameel Abdul Vahid, media wing chairman Ahmed Niyas Moorkanad and Women's Wing president Muhsina Zameel were present at the press conference.

US approves $93mn arms sale to India

Reuters
New Delhi

The US state department has approved the sale of Javelin anti-tank missile system and Excalibur guided artillery munitions worth $93mn to India, the US Defence Security Co-operation Agency (DSCA) said. The purchase of US defence equipment is India's first under Washington's foreign military sales programme since ties soured in August after President Donald Trump doubled tariffs on Indian goods to 50% as punishment for New Delhi's purchases of Russian oil.

It follows a re-order this month of fighter jet engines made by General Electric to power more of India's home-produced Tejas combat aircraft.

"This proposed sale will support the foreign policy and national security objectives of the US by helping to strengthen the US-Indian strategic relationship and to improve the security of a major defence partner which continues to be an important force for political stability, peace, and economic progress in the Indo-Pacific and South Asia regions," the DSCA said in a statement.

The Indian government had requested to buy up to 216 Excalibur tactical projectiles and 100 units of the Javelin system, the DSCA said.

India already uses the Excalibur artillery ammunition in its M-777 Howitzer guns.

The principal contractors for the sales will be RTX Corporation for the Excalibur projectiles and its joint venture with Lockheed Martin for the Javelin systems, the DSCA said.

The deal is being seen as a first in a series of defence deals to be signed with Washington, DC, in the coming months and comes weeks after both countries signed a 10-year framework to deepen bilateral defence relations.

The signing took place in Kuala Lumpur at a meeting between Defence Minister Rajnath Singh and his US counterpart Pete Hegseth.

Resilient domestic economy gives India space to negotiate US trade deal: experts

Reuters
New Delhi/Mumbai

India's strong domestic economy and a smaller-than-expected hit to exports are giving New Delhi more room to negotiate a trade deal with Washington, which has imposed tariffs as high as 50% on imports from the country, Indian sources and analysts said.

Indian exports to the US dropped 8.6% year-on-year to $6.3bn in October, the second month that the 50% tariff on imports from the country was in place. The decline was lesser than the 12% drop in September.

Negotiations between New Delhi and Washington have dragged on even as other Asian countries like Japan and South Korea have struck deals to bring down tariffs. Indian officials have publicly maintained that India will not rush to sign a deal.

"For now, we've avoided the worst impact of the 50% US tariffs," said a senior government official aware of the talks, declining to be identified as the person was not authorised to speak to the media.

While some sectors such as textiles have reported a fall in US orders, the official said, the broader economic impact of the tariffs has been limited, allowing negotiators space to reach a deal.

"If needed, we are ready to wait," the official said.

The official, and others aware of the trade talks, said they expect Washington to roll back the 25% tariff linked to Russian oil purchases, and eventually move toward a 15% overall rate, with New Delhi prepared to cut its own import tariffs on over 80% of goods while protecting sensitive sectors like agriculture.

The commerce ministry did not immediately respond to an emailed request for comment. US officials did not immediately comment although President Donald Trump said last week Washington was close to reaching a deal with India that would expand economic and security ties. The government is helping exporters diversify into new markets through recent new trade deals with the UK, UAE and Australia, tax cuts on raw materials and a $5.1bn support package to boost exports, officials said.

Many exporters have cushioned the fall in exports to the US since September by diversifying into African and European markets and retaining US clients with discounts and longer delivery timelines, five exporters and industry associations said.

Apparel and footwear firms are absorbing costs up to 20% to retain US buyers, said Ajay Sahai, director general of the Federation of Indian Export Organisations.

The government and the central bank have announced targeted relief, including short-term loan moratoriums, but avoided large fiscal easing.

Domestic tax cuts on hundreds of consumer items since September are boosting local demand and helping exporters stay competitive, trade associations and officials say.

Also, tax cuts on inputs like man-made fibres have aided textile exporters, said N Thirukkumaran, general secretary of the Tirupur Exporters' Association.

Exporters are offering 10–20% discounts on garments depending on style and shipment size, he said.

India's economy grew an annual 7% in the July-September quarter and is expected to expand 6.8% in the financial year, according to the central bank.

However, exporters said that pressure from over-capacity in China is proving to be tough to manage, with cheaper Chinese goods flooding a number of the markets they compete in.

"Chinese businesses are well-entrenched and their domestic situation has made them highly competitive," said Rahul Tikoo, CEO of Optime, a Mumbai-based speciality chemical maker.

India's goods exports to non-US markets fell 12.5% year-on-year in October, a sharper drop than to the US, led by weaker engineering, petroleum and jewellery shipments.

"This may reflect heightened competition in non-US markets as countries diversify exports post tariff announcements," HSBC chief India economist Pranjul Bhandari said.

Prince William visits hospital



Britain's Prince William, Prince of Wales sits with May and Macy Burrow, daughters of the late rugby league player Rob Burrow, during a visit to the Rob Burrow Centre for Motor Neurone Disease at Seacroft Hospital in Leeds, northern England, yesterday

Kabul urges India to scale up trade, expand use of Chabahar Port

Reuters
Kabul

Afghanistan's Taliban government urged India yesterday to scale up trade and open cargo hubs in its territory, as it strengthens ties with New Delhi and seeks alternatives to Pakistan after repeated border clashes and closures.

During talks, Al-Haj Nooruddin Azizi, the Taliban's commerce minister, also asked India to help set up scheduled shipping services to move Afghan goods through the Indian-operated Chabahar Port in Iran, his ministry said.

Landlocked Afghanistan has redirected more goods to Iran and Central Asia in recent months after armed clashes shut key crossings with Pakistan.

Azizi met India's Minister of State for Commerce, Jitin Prasada, in New Delhi and discussed investment, joint ventures and expanding opportunities for Afghan exporters, the Afghan commerce ministry said.

Azizi also suggested India develop dry ports in Afghanistan's southwestern Nimroz province bordering Iran, and ease cargo processing at Nhava Sheva, India's largest container port near Mumbai, the ministry added.

Afghan officials said last week that shipments have been growing faster through Iran and Central Asia than through the Pakistan corridor as repeated border closures disrupt its main transit route.

Azizi sought to speed up the process for Afghan traders getting visas and proposed co-operation in pharmaceuticals, cold storage, fruit processing, industrial parks and SME centres, his ministry said.

India's Prasada said on X that the talks reflected a shared commitment to strengthening bilateral trade.

Indian Foreign Minister Subrahmanyam Jaishankar said he discussed expanding trade and connectivity and reiterated India's support for Afghanistan's development.

Four more arrested in India over deadly Delhi blast

India's anti-terrorism agency yesterday said it had arrested four more people, including three doctors, in connection with last week's deadly car blast in Delhi, the first such attack in the capital in more than a decade. The car bomb killed 10 people and wounded 32 outside the historic Red Fort on November 10. The four "prime accused" have been identified as Dr Muzammil Shakeel Ganai, Dr Adeel Ahmed Rather, and Mufti Irfan Ahmad Wagay who come from Kashmir, and Dr Shaheen Saeed from the northern city of Lucknow, the National Investigation Agency said. "They had all played a key role in the terror attack," the agency said in a statement on X. Ganai, Rather, and Wagay were previously in the custody of Jammu and Kashmir police, who arrested them last week saying they were part of a terrorist unit linked to militant groups Jaish-e-Mohammad and Ansar Ghazwat-ul-Hind.

Residents flee volcano eruption



Local residents carrying valuable goods from their houses walk through mud mixed with volcanic materials at an area affected by overnight Mount Semeru volcano eruption in Supiturang village, Lumajang, East Java province, Indonesia, yesterday.

Ex-Philippine mayor Guo gets life sentence

AFP
Manila

A Chinese woman who faked Philippine nationality to become a town mayor was yesterday sentenced to life in prison on human trafficking charges, a Manila regional court said.

Alice Guo, who served as mayor of a town north of the capital, was found guilty of overseeing a Chinese-operated online gambling centre where hundreds of people were forced to run scams or risk torture.

The sprawling complex, which included office buildings, luxury villas and a large swimming pool, was raided in March 2024 after a Vietnamese worker escaped and called the police.

More than 700 Filipinos, Chinese, Vietnamese, Malaysians, Taiwanese, Indonesians and Rwandans were found on site, along with documents allegedly showing that Guo was president of a company that owned the compound.

Although elected mayor of Bamban town, the site of the scam centre, a Manila court ruled in June that Guo, 35, was "undisputedly a Chinese citizen" and never eligible for the position.

Guo and seven other defendants, all of whom appeared via videolink, were sentenced to life in prison yesterday, state prosecutor Olivia Torrevillas said outside a regional courthouse in Manila. "After over just one year, the court... gave us a favourable decision. Alice (Guo) was convicted along with seven other co-accused. Life imprisonment," Torrevillas said without revealing the names of Guo's co-defendants.

Japan trade co-operation 'damaged' by Taiwan remarks: China

Reuters
Beijing/Tokyo

Trade co-operation between China and Japan has been "severely damaged", the Chinese commerce ministry said yesterday, urging the Japanese prime minister to retract her comments on Taiwan or face the consequences.

A diplomatic spat between China and Japan has intensified since Sanae Takaichi told parliament on November 7 that a hypothetical Chinese attack on Taiwan could trigger a military response from Tokyo.

"Prime Minister Takaichi's openly erroneous remarks concerning Taiwan have fundamentally undermined the political foundation of China-Japan relations and severely damaged bilateral economic and trade exchanges," He Yongqian, a ministry spokesperson told a regular news conference. "Should the Japanese side persist on its course of action and continue down the wrong path, China will resolutely take the measures required and all consequences shall be borne by Japan."

A spokesperson for Takaichi said her comments on Taiwan did not change existing Japanese policy.

China is Japan's second-largest export market after the US, buying about $125bn of Japanese goods in 2024, mainly industrial equipment, semiconductors and automobiles, according to UN COMTRADE data.

Tokyo could struggle to find alternative markets if China closes its doors to Japanese goods. South Korea, its third-largest export destination, absorbed only $46bn worth last year, the data shows.

He said she had "no information to provide at present" when asked to confirm reports that China had indicated it would ban all imports of Japanese seafood.

The world's second-largest economy has a record of taking coercive trade actions against its neighbour.

In 2023, Beijing imposed a blanket ban on imports of all Japanese seafood after Tokyo decided to release radioactive water from the Fukushima nuclear plant into the Pacific. The International Atomic Energy Agency, a UN body, had concluded the discharge was safe.

In 2010, China halted rare earth exports to Japan for about seven weeks after Japanese authorities detained a Chinese fishing captain whose vessel had collided with coast guard ships near the Senkaku Islands, which Beijing claims as the Diaoyu Islands.

"Coercion is a hard habit to break for Beijing. But just as the US stood by Japan during China's last unwarranted ban on Japanese seafood, we will be there for our ally again this time," US ambassador to Japan George Glass said in an X post yesterday. Before the 2020 ban, China was Japan's top scallop buyer and a major importer of sea cucumbers.

Relations had looked to be improving, with Chinese leader Xi Jinping and Takaichi agreeing in a meeting on the sidelines of last month's Apec summit in South Korea to "build a constructive and stable China-Japan relationship fit for the new era". Now, Japanese seafood companies fear a return to past restrictions. "What's frustrating is that things that were moving forward suddenly went backwards. And given the nature of the issue, this might well happen again," said Kazuya Yamazaki, the president of Sanwa Fisheries, a company on Japan's northern Hokkaido island that used to export around 200 metric tonnes of scallops to China annually before imports ended. His firm is among almost 700 that applied for export permits after China agreed to restart shipments of Japanese marine products. There is no easy fix, Japanese officials and analysts say.

"There is no immediate off-ramp, unless Takaichi retracts her comments which she will not do as it will be political suicide. China has elevated the situation to a level where they can not easily back down," said Joseph Kraft, a financial and political analyst at Rorschach Advisory in Tokyo.

WORLD

Zelensky receives US plan, will speak with Trump

Reuters
Brussels/Kyiv

President Volodymyr Zelensky has received the draft of a new US-backed plan to end Russia's war in Ukraine and expects to have talks with President Donald Trump in the coming days, Zelensky's office said yesterday.

Two sources told Reuters on Wednesday that Washington had signalled to Zelensky that Kyiv must accept the US-drafted framework to end the nearly-four-year-old war, which includes territorial concessions and curbs on Ukraine's armed forces.

European countries pushed back yesterday against the plan, which sources said would require Kyiv to give up more land and partially disarm, conditions long seen by Ukraine's allies as tantamount to capitulation.

"We are ready now, as before, to work constructively with the American side, as well as with our partners in Europe and around the world, so that the outcome is peace," Zelensky's office said in a statement on Telegram.

Zelensky's talks with Trump would include discussion of the "key points required to achieve peace", it said.

Trump and Zelensky clashed in front of television cameras in a disastrous meeting for the Ukrainian leader at the White House in March, but talks went more smoothly when he visited the White House this summer.

The acceleration in US diplomacy comes at an awkward time for Kyiv, with its troops on the back foot on the battlefield and Zelensky's government undermined by a corruption scandal. Parliament fired two cabinet ministers on Wednesday.

Moscow played down any new US initiative.

"Consultations are not currently under way. There are contacts, of course, but there is no process that could be called consultations," Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov said.

He said Russia had nothing to add beyond the position President Vladimir Putin laid out at a summit with US President Donald Trump in August, adding that any peace deal must address the "root causes of the conflict", a phrase Moscow has long used to refer to its demands.

With another winter approaching in the nearly four-year-old war, Russian troops occupy almost one-fifth of Ukraine and are poised to capture their first substantial city in nearly two years — the ruined eastern railway hub of Pokrovsk.



UNDER PRESSURE: Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky. (**AFP**)

Video footage released by Russia's defence ministry yesterday showed its troops moving freely through the southern part of Pokrovsk, patrolling deserted streets lined with charred apartment blocks.

European Union foreign ministers meeting in Brussels did not comment in detail about the US plan, which has not been made public, but indicated they would not accept demands for Kyiv to make punishing concessions.

"Ukrainians want peace — a just peace that respects everyone's sovereignty, a durable peace that can't be called into question by future aggression," said French Foreign Minister Jean-Noel Barrot. "But peace cannot be a capitulation."

German Foreign Minister Johann Wadephul said US special envoy Steve Witkoff had, during a phone call yesterday, underlined "the importance of close coordination with Germany and our European partners" in talks to end the war.

The White House has not commented on the reported proposals. US Secretary of State Marco Rubio said on X that Washington would "continue to develop a list of potential ideas for ending this war based on input from both sides of this conflict".

"...Achieving a durable peace will require both sides to agree to difficult but necessary concessions," Rubio said.

A US Army delegation, led by Army Secretary Dan Driscoll and the Army's Chief of Staff Randy George, was in Kyiv and expected to meet Zelensky late yesterday.

They met Ukraine's top military commander Oleksandr Syrskyi late on Wednesday. Syrskyi said the best way to secure a just peace was to defend Ukraine's airspace, extend its ability to strike deep into Russia and stabilise the front line.

Pakistan Army kills 30 militants in border region

AFP
Islamabad

Pakistani security forces killed 30 militants in several operations near the Afghan frontier in recent days, the army said yesterday, after a suicide bombing last week killed 12 people in Islamabad.

The militants belonged to the Pakistani Taliban or its affiliated groups, the military said in a statement, accusing archfoe India of backing them.

Twenty-three militants were killed in raids in the Kurram district of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province on Wednesday, the military said.

In a subsequent statement, the military said a further seven militants were killed in three separate operations in Mohmand, Lakki Marwat and Tank districts in the same province on November 18-19.

"Pakistan will continue at full pace to wipe out (the) menace of foreign sponsored and supported terrorism from the country," the military said. Islamabad has routinely accused Kabul of harbouring militant groups, particularly the Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP), that stage deadly attacks in Pakistan.

Pakistan has also stepped up its rhetoric against India in recent months, which it claims backs militant groups.

Both neighbours deny any involvement. The raids come after a suicide bombing outside a court in Islamabad killed 12 people and wounded dozens last week, which Pakistan said was planned from Afghanistan.

A faction of the Pakistani Taliban claimed responsibility for the attack. Relations between Pakistan and Afghanistan have sharply deteriorated, with cross-border clashes last month prompting the worst fighting in years.

Top Spain prosecutor guilty of media leak

AFP
Madrid

Spain's Supreme Court yesterday said it had convicted the top prosecutor of leaking confidential legal information against the conservative opposition in a fresh blow to Socialist Prime Minister Pedro Sanchez.

The conviction of Alvaro Garcia Ortiz, appointed by Sanchez's government in 2022, increases the pressure stemming from several legal affairs that have embarrassed the minority left-wing coalition.

Garcia Ortiz will be banned from his post for two years, fined around €7,300 ($8,400) and pay €10,000 in damages to complainant Alberto Gonzalez Amador, the partner of right-wing figurehead Isabel Diaz Ayuso, the court said.

In 2024, media reported that Gonzalez Amador had proposed a plea deal with the public prosecutor's office in which he would admit to alleged tax offences in exchange for avoiding a trial and jail.

Ayuso, the leader of the Madrid region who has been tipped for a national leadership role, and her conservative Popular Party (PP), accused Garcia Ortiz of leaking case files about Gonzalez Amador to damage her.

Gonzalez Amador had demanded four years in jail for Garcia Ortiz and €300,000 for "the moral damage caused".

Garcia Ortiz, the first serving attorney general to go on trial in Spanish history, denied the accusations during the proceedings in the Supreme Court this month.

His legal team presented him as the victim of a campaign by the Madrid region's government to distract attention from Gonzalez Amador's legal woes and protect Ayuso.

Public prosecutors had also called for an acquittal, saying nothing proved that Garcia Ortiz ordered the leak of the correspondence about Gonzalez Amador.

Separate corruption investigations targeting the prime minister's wife, brother and two former Socialist heavyweights have threatened to topple Sanchez, who came to power in 2018 promising to clean up Spanish politics.

The PP has repeatedly called for Sanchez's resignation and a snap general election, accusing his minority government of widespread corruption.

Sanchez has said the graft allegations against his wife and brother are part of a "smear campaign" set in motion by the right.

Trump signs bill to release Epstein files

President Donald Trump has signed legislation ordering the Justice Department to release documents from its long-running investigation into sex offender Jeffrey Epstein — files eagerly sought by both his political opponents and members of his own base who have pressed for greater transparency in the case.

The material could shed more light on the activities of Epstein, who socialised with Trump and other notable figures before his 2008 conviction.

The scandal has been a thorn in Trump's side for months, partly because he amplified conspiracy theories about Epstein to his own supporters. Many Trump voters believe his administration has covered up Epstein's ties to powerful figures and obscured details surrounding his death, which was ruled a suicide, in a Manhattan jail in 2019 as he faced federal sex trafficking charges.

Until recently, Trump had urged Republican lawmakers to oppose the measure, warning that releasing internal investigative records could set a precedent he viewed as harmful to the presidency, according to two congressional aides. But he reversed course this week as it became clear the bill had enough bipartisan support to pass with or without his backing.

Trump, a Republican, celebrated the signing in a social media post, saying the measure would help expose "the truth about certain Democrats and their associations with Jeffrey Epstein".

Trump accused Democrats of weaponising the Epstein scandal to undermine his accomplishments and divert attention from what he called Republican policy victories. He portrayed Epstein as a Democratic ally and said the upcoming document release would expose "their associations" with him.

"Perhaps the truth about these Democrats, and their associations with Jeffrey Epstein, will soon be revealed," he wrote in a Truth Social post on Wednesday.



A man handles plastic roses by a portrait of Francisco Franco on the 50th anniversary of the late Spanish dictator's death, at an informal shrine, at the entrance to Franco's mausoleum in Madrid's Mingorrubio-El Pardo cemetery, yesterday. (**Reuters**)

Spanish PM urges defence of democracy, 50 years after dictator Franco's death

Prime Minister Pedro Sanchez yesterday called on Spaniards to defend the "miracle" of their democracy as the divided country marked the 50th anniversary of ex-dictator Francisco Franco's death.

The general's demise on November 20, 1975 ended 36 years of authoritarian right-wing rule that followed a devastating 1936-1939 civil war which brought him to power. Spain then embarked on a transition to democracy that has seen it become a stable EU and Nato member and one of the world's wealthiest countries.

"That November 20 did not only mark the end of Western Europe's last dictatorship, but also the beginning of a journey that would lead us to regain freedom and prosperity and to win back lost democracy," Sanchez wrote on news website elDiario.es.

"Let us remember that we live in a unique country, that we live in a present that represented a tiny possibility 50 years ago," added Sanchez in the article published late on Wednesday.

"Spain, Spaniards, both men and women, will never let that miracle disappear." "Democracy is our power. Let's defend it," the Socialist leader added in an X post yesterday.

Franco's legacy continues to split society, with experts warning that inaccurate social media content has spurred a positive opinion among young people with scant knowledge of the period. According to a poll published yesterday by *El Pais* daily, almost one-quarter of Spaniards aged 18 to 28 believed an authoritarian regime may "sometimes" be preferable to a democracy.

Around 40% of respondents had a "very good", "good" or neutral opinion of the regime, while 55% viewed it as "bad" or "very bad".

"It is precisely now, when some idealise authoritarian regimes and cling to nostalgia for a past that never was, when we must step forward in defence of a freedom that was snatched from us for so many years," Sanchez wrote in elDiario.es.

No official commemorative events were planned yesterday under the "50 years of Spain at Liberty" programme, with the government saying it aimed to celebrate the recovery of democracy throughout the year. The conservative opposition says Sanchez plays "the Franco card" to distract attention from a series of corruption investigations that threaten to topple his minority leftist coalition.

Washington elite at Cheney funeral but Trump off guest list

AFP
Washington

Dick Cheney, celebrated as a master Republican strategist but defined by the darkest chapters of America's "War on Terror," was honoured yesterday in a funeral attended by Washington's elite that pointedly left out President Donald Trump.

Cheney's career over half a decade reads like a catalogue of American statecraft, even as his long shadow over foreign policy — as defence secretary during the Gulf War and as the 46th vice-president under George W Bush — still divides the country.

Bush and fellow former president Joe Biden were among more than 1,000 guests at the Washington National Cathedral.

But Trump, who hasn't commented on Cheney's death, and his vice-president JD Vance were not invited.

Every living former vice-president — Kamala Harris, Mike Pence, Al Gore and Dan Quayle — were in attendance, along with generals, foreign dignitaries and Supreme Court justices.

"Vice-President Dick Cheney was an American patriot who served this country like very few in our history, and I was always inspired by his by his quiet and steady leadership," Pence told cable news network MS NOW outside the cathedral.

Bush was due to deliver a tribute, along with Cheney's daughter Liz — famously ousted from the congressional Republican Party over her opposition to Trump.

Praised for his intellect and described by historians as the "most powerful vice-president in modern US history," Cheney was admired as a strategist of unusual clarity, and a steady hand who helped steer the nation through its darkest hours.

His career spanned the Cold War, the Gulf conflict and the turbulent aftermath of the September 11 attacks.

As vice-president under Bush, he redefined a traditionally ceremonial role into one of unparalleled influence, helping drive national security policy and expanding presidential authority.

He was said to embody the paradoxes of power as a meticulous behind-the-scenes operator who often found himself in the spotlight, a staunch conservative and a statesman regarded both as indispensable and dangerous.



(**L-R**) Former US president George W Bush his wife Laura Bush, former US president Joe Biden, his wife Jill Biden and former US vice-president Kamala Harris look on as they attend the funeral service for late US vice-president Dick Cheney at the Washington National Cathedral in Washington, DC, yesterday. (**AFP**)

Flags across states were lowered to half-staff after his death on November 3.

But looming over every tribute will be the darker side of his legacy: the expansion of executive power, the "War on Terror," the invasion of Iraq and the now-infamous debate over America's use of torture.

For critics, he was the architect of some of the nation's most calamitous decisions, a politician whose belief in executive power and aggressive foreign policy left deep scars at home and abroad.

Cheney was a key advocate for the 2003 invasion of Iraq — famously stating that "there is no doubt that Saddam Hussein now has weapons of mass destruction" — a conviction that haunted his legacy after the intelligence unravelled.

He championed sweeping surveillance powers under the Patriot Act and defended controversial "enhanced interrogation" tactics.

But Cheney underwent a late-career reinvention as a critic of his own party's populist drift.

A vocal detractor of Trump, whom he called a "threat to our republic," he even endorsed Harris, the president's Democratic election rival in 2024.

Trump's absence from the funeral reflected the ideological rifts that divided Washington and the wider United States during Cheney's final years, and the demise of the bipartisanship valued by the oldest generation of Washington power-brokers.

The president has been silent on Cheney's death, although his press secretary Karoline Leavitt told reporters Trump was "aware" of his passing.

Responding to criticism from Cheney, Trump once described the former vice-president as an "irrelevant RINO" — meaning "Republican In Name Only" — and a "king of endless, nonsensical wars, wasting lives and trillions of dollars."

Freeing the heart from spite

Islam encourages making reconciliation between people in order to maintain good relations amongst the Muslims, to spread love and to keep the hearts of Muslims free from spite. Allah Says (what means): "So fear Allah and amend that which is between you" [Qur'an 8: 1]. Additionally, Islam ordains all that which spreads mutual love and frees the hearts from spite, as in the narration of Abu Hurairah, may Allah be pleased, with him who reported that the Prophet, *sallallaahu 'alaihi wa sallam* (may Allah exalt his mention), said: "You will not enter Paradise until you believe, and you will not believe until you love one another. Shall I guide to that which would make you love one another? Spread greetings (*Salaam*) abundantly amongst yourselves" [Muslim]

The Prophet, *sallallaahu 'alaihi wa sallam*, was asked: "Who are the best type of people?" He replied: "A person who is truthful in his speech and *Makhmoom* in his heart." People asked: "We know what is truthful speech, but what is a *Makhmoom* heart?" The Prophet, *sallallaahu 'alaihi wa sallam*, responded saying: "It is a pure pious heart that does not have envy, evil or spite." [Ibn Maajah]

Spite has greatly increased amongst people today, resulting in the severing of relations and in people holding grudges against each other. This is in spite of the fact that Allah has made legislations, which would prevent this from happening. For example, a Muslim is allowed to request a fellow Muslim who wants to visit him to return at a later time. In normal situations, people would not appreciate someone not allowing them entry when they visit them, but since Allah The All-Knowing, knows that people might have certain circumstances that would not allow them to receive visitors, He legislated this to protect people's hearts from holding grudges due to this.w

Allah Says (what means): "And if it is said to you, 'Go back (or a similar expression showing that the occupants are not prepared to receive visitors)' then go back; it is purer for you" [Qur'an 24: 28]. This is a way to console the person who was not granted permission to enter, lest he feels insulted or saddened, and a means to protect the hearts from spite. This is why some of the *Salaf*, may Allah have mercy upon them, used to be happy when they went visiting someone and were not permitted in, because they sought the consequence of returning mentioned in the above verse – which is the promise of becoming purer (i.e. in their hearts).



Having pure hearts that are free from spite is a bounty and a blessing from Allah which He grants to the dwellers of Paradise upon their entry into it. Allah Says (what means): "And We will remove whatever is in their chests of resentment (i.e. ill will or ill feelings towards one another), [so they will be] brothers, on thrones facing each other." [Qur'an 15: 47]

In addition to a pure heart being a blessing and a bounty from Allah, it is also a source of comfort. This is why Islam puts great emphasis on purification of the heart from spite, so that people can live together in peace and harmony.

The great importance attached to this issue is because it is a difficult state to achieve all the time. A person may have a strong will which enables him to wake up in the middle of the night to offer optional night prayers, but he may not be strong enough to overcome some of his bad feelings towards his fellow Muslims.

Undoubtedly, this quality is a praiseworthy one indeed; Allah praised the Ansaar (i.e. the residents of Madinah) for possessing such a quality saying (which means): "They [i.e. the Ansaar] find not any [ill] feelings in their chests [i.e. hearts] of what they were given [i.e. the *Muhaajireen* – emigrants from Makkah] but give [them] preference over themselves, even though they are in privation." [Qur'an 59: 9] When Allah favoured the *Muhaajireen* with certain things, the Ansaar did not feel any objection to this, nor did they harbour any ill feelings or envy towards their brothers in faith for being distinguished with these favours. Instead, they favoured them over their own selves with whatever they had, even if they themselves were in need of what they offered.

The following great story reflects the rank of possessing a pure heart that is free from spite, and that it is a blessing from Allah. Anas Ibn Maalik, may Allah be pleased with him, narrated: "We were sitting with the Prophet, *sallallaahu 'alaihi wa sallam*, once when he said: 'A man from the dwellers of Paradise will walk in now' so a man from the Ansaar (i.e. residents of Madinah) walked in whose beard was dripping from the effect of ablution and who held his slippers with his left hand. The next day the Prophet, *sallallaahu 'alaihi wa sallam*, said the same thing, and the same man walked in. On the third day, the Prophet said the same thing, and the same man once again walked in. When the Prophet left the gathering, 'Abdullaah Ibn 'Amr followed that man and said to him: 'I had a misunderstanding with my father and swore not to stay in his house three nights, so if you permit me I would like to spend these three nights with you.' The man said: 'Yes, I permit you.'"

Anas, may Allah be pleased with him, added: " 'Abdullaah Ibn 'Amr told us that he spent three nights and did not notice that the man prayed the optional night prayers during any of these nights, but if he woke up during the night, he would simply mention Allah. Nonetheless, I never heard him utter except good things, so when the three nights finished, I almost belittled his deeds (as they were insignificant) and I said to him: 'O slave of Allah! There was not dispute between me and my father or anger, but I heard the Prophet, *sallallaahu 'alaihi wa sallam*, saying thrice: "A man from the dwellers of Paradise will walk in now" and you walked in all three times, so I wanted to sleep in your place to see what you do in order to imitate you, but I did not see that you exert extra effort in performing any extra deeds. How did you reach such status to deserve what the Prophet, *sallallaahu 'alaihi wa sallam*, said about you?' He replied: 'My deeds are nothing more than what you saw.' Then when I left, he called me back in and said: 'My deeds are nothing more than what you saw, but the only thing I do is that I do not hold any grudge against any Muslim or envy anyone for what bounties Allah has granted them'; thereupon 'Abdullaah Ibn 'Amr said to him: "This difficult quality to obtain is what granted you this rank". [Ahmad]

It is not an easy task for someone to maintain a heart free from spite and hold no grudges against anyone. On the other hand, it is not an impossible mission either, and can be achieved with training, practice and constant striving.

The Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, were very keen to remove any bad feelings from the hearts of their brothers towards them. 'Aa'ith Ibn 'Amr al-Muzani, may Allah be pleased with him, reported: "Abu Sufyaan passed by Salmaan, Suhayb and Bilaal and some other Companions (after the conquest of Makkah, when he was still a disbeliever). They said to him: "The swords of Allah did not exact their due from the foes of Allah?'' Abu Bakr, may Allah be pleased with him, said to them: "Do you speak like this to the chief of the Quraysh and their master?'' Then he went to the Prophet, *sallallaahu 'alaihi wa sallam*, and related this to him. He, *sallallaahu 'alaihi wa sallam*, said: "O Abu Bakr! Perhaps you have angered them. If so, you have angered your Lord". Abu Bakr, may Allah be pleased with him, rushed back to them and said: "O my brothers! Did I offend you?'' They replied: "No. May Allah forgive you, brother". [Muslim]

This proves that a person must rush to make amends and apologise for his actions, if he fears that a fellow Muslim was offended or his feelings were hurt, to make sure his brother's heart remains pure towards him. The one who is being apologised to must accept without delay and comfort his brother, and assure him that he is not holding any grudge against him and supplicate for him as the Companions did with Abu Bakr.

Article source: http://www.islamweb.net/emainpage/

islamweb.net English

Hope – the most sublime rank for the believers

The believers' relationship with their Lord is characterised both by fear and hope, such that the former deters them from sins and disobedience, whereas the latter drives them towards good deeds.

Ibn Al-Qayyim, may Allah have mercy upon him, said:

"Hoping for the reward of Allah is one of the most supreme and honourable ranks of one who pursues the right path. Allah The Almighty praises those [who do that], when He Says (what means): {There has certainly been for you in the Messenger of Allah an excellent pattern for anyone whose hope is in Allah and the Last Day and [who] remembers Allah often.} [Qur'an 33:21] It was also narrated in a *Hadith Qudsi*, that Allah The Almighty Says: 'O son of Adam, If you supplicate to Me, expecting My forgiveness, I will forgive you however great or many your sins may be.' When a person has hope, it means that he or she is bound and attached to these names of his or her Lord: 'The Benevolent, The Beneficent'. The more one knows Allah The Almighty, His names, attributes and the dominance of His mercy over His wrath, the more his or her hope increases [in Him]. Had it not been for hope, the servitude of the heart and organs [to Allah] would have ceased, and monasteries, churches, synagogues and mosques, where the name of Allah is frequently mentioned, would have been demolished. If not for the spirit of hope, [our] limbs would not have performed acts of obedience, and neither would the ships of good deeds have sailed in the seas of will without its pleasant breeze."

Similarly, the Prophet, *sallallaahu 'alaihi wa sallam*, said: "If a believer [truly] knew of the punishment of Allah, no one would expect His Paradise. Equally, were a disbeliever to know of the [actual] mercy of Allah, none would despair of His Paradise." 'Abdullah ibn Mas'ood, may Allah be pleased with him, remarked, "The most encouraging verse in the Qur'an is in the Chapter *Az-Zumar* (The Groups); Allah The Almighty Says (what means), {Say, "O My servants who have transgressed against themselves [by sinning], do not despair of the mercy of Allah. Indeed, Allah forgives all sins. Indeed, it is He who is the Forgiving, the Merciful."} [Qur'an 39:53]"

One of those who visited Maalik ibn Anas, may Allah have mercy upon him, during the night in which he died, asked him, "O Abu 'Abdullah, how do you find yourself?" He, may Allah have mercy upon him, answered, "I do not know what to say to you except that you will soon see [aspects] of the clemency of Allah that you have never expected."

Glory be to Allah The Almighty! If those who turn away from Him only know how He waits for their return and how Merciful He is to them, they will long for Him enormously. Indeed, if this is His will towards such people, how will He be to those who draw near to Him? 'Abdullah ibn al-Mubaarak approached Sufyaan Ath-Thawri, may Allah have mercy upon them both, on the night of [standing in] 'Arafah, and found him kneeling [in prayer], as his eyes overflowed with tears; he asked, "Who is the worst person in this gathering [in the plains of 'Arafah]?' Sufyaan Ath-Thawri, may Allah have mercy upon him, replied: "Whoever thinks that Allah will not forgive their sins [i.e., of the people who are present]."

On a similar night, Al-Fudhayl ibn 'Iyaadh, may Allah have mercy upon him, observed people's glorification [of Allah The Almighty] and their crying, so he asked those around him: "If those people went to a man and requested one-sixth of a *dirham* from him, would he let them return empty-handed?" When they replied in the negative, he commented: "By Allah, pardoning is easier for Allah than [that]." Therefore, I implore Allah The Almighty, seeking His forgiveness, knowing fully that He absolves and forgives; even if people's sins are great, they are minor in comparison to His mercy.

Hence, a slave should have much hope in Him, especially when he or she is on the verge of death. Allah The Almighty Says, as narrated in a *Hadith*: "I am [to him or her] as My slave thinks of Me." That is why, perhaps, when Waathilah ibn Al-Asqa', may Allah be pleased with him, went to see Yazeed ibn al-Aswad, may Allah have mercy upon him, as he lay dying, he asked him, "What is your expectation about Allah?" The latter replied: "My sins have brought me to the brink of ruin, but I hope for the mercy of Allah." So, Waathilah, may Allah be pleased with him, [happily] exclaimed "Allah is The Greatest", and then said, "I heard the Messenger of Allah, *sallallaahu 'alaihi wa sallam*, say: 'Allah The Almighty Says: 'I am as My slave thinks of Me, so let him think of Me what he wants'." For the same reason, when Sulaymaan At-Taymi, may Allah have mercy upon him, was dying, he instructed his son: "O Mu'tamir, talk to me about exemptions [in Islam], so that I may meet Allah while having good expectations of Him."

Hope prompts one to do good deeds

It is witnessed as a reality in life that many neglect good deeds and dare to commit evil and sins, claiming that they trust in the mercy and forgiveness of Allah The Almighty. Undoubtedly, this is a misunderstanding of the true meaning of hope. The words of Al-Hasan al-Basri, may Allah have mercy upon him, are applicable to such people mentioned above; he says: "There are people whose confidence in forgiveness diverts them from doing what is moral, so much so that they die with no virtues. They proclaim: 'we have good expectation of Allah'. Surely, they are liars, for if they had hope [in Him], they would have done good [to support their claim]."

Allah The Almighty is indeed the most Forgiving, Ever Merciful; however, I would like to draw your attention, dear reader, to the subtle meaning embedded in the verse (which means): {Indeed, those who have believed and those who have emigrated and fought in the cause of Allah - those expect the mercy of Allah. And Allah is Forgiving and Merciful.} [Qur'an 2:218]. Contemplate how this verse alludes to these people hoping for the mercy of Allah The Almighty alongside doing those great noble deeds.

Dear Muslim, let us, then, do good and repent from our sins and evil which we have committed. Let us repeat the words of Mahmood al-Warraaq, may Allah have mercy upon him: "O Allah, I have much hope in Your forgiveness and You [alone] manage my affairs. I have concealed my secrets from my relatives and others; You are the only One to Whom I disclose them as I am confident that You will veil them. O Allah! Do not fail me on the Day of Resurrection when all hidden matters will be exposed. O Allah, do not reveal my secrets before people; Your protection will provide me with an argument [for my forgiveness], even though I have no basis for contention or a real excuse."

Article source: http://www.islamweb.net/emainpage/

Fascination with this world

The life of this world is fleeting and is often focused on materialism – it is so easy to get caught up in the whirlwind of it all – but how does that affect our faith?

We all love this life to some extent or another – our homes, our cars, and most of all our family – but what we do not know is just how much of a corruption it can be to our souls when we place so much importance on material things in this life and loving the life of this world. Read on, what you will find may change your entire outlook on how you live your life and what is really important…

Imam Ibn al-Qayyim, may Allah have mercy on him, said:

Loving this life is the father of sins which corrupts the Muslim's faith in different ways:

1. Loving this life entails glorifying it, whereas Allah Almighty has despised it. One of the greatest sins is glorifying what Allah Almighty has despised.

2. Allah Almighty has cursed it, detested it, and poured scorn on it, with the exception of the good things in it such as remembering Allah, seeking knowledge, and spreading it. Whoever loves what Allah Almighty has cursed and hated will expose himself/herself to Allah's wrath and detestation.

3. When someone loves this life, it becomes his/her ultimate goal. Accordingly, the good deeds he/she performs will eventually be for the sake of this life; and not the Hereafter. That type of love reverses the natural process, invalidates the conventional wisdom, and moves the lover in the wrong direction. In an authentic hadith, the Prophet, *sallallaahu 'alaihi wa sallam* (may Allah exalt his mention), mentioned that the *Mujahid* (fighter), the alms giver, and the scholar of Islam whose ultimate goal is this life, seeking an elevated social status and looking for people's praise, will be the first to be burned in the Hellfire. Those people prefer this life to the Hereafter.

4. Loving this life prevents the servant from doing what will be of great benefit to him/her in the Hereafter because of obsession with mundane matters such as money, social status, wife, or children. That type of worldly love might keep a person away from maintaining *eeman* (faith), or doing the necessary things in life. The minimal adverse effect of loving this life is making the servant's heart oblivious to loving Allah Almighty.

5. Loving this life makes the servant obsessed with it. Anas, may Allah be pleased with him, narrated that the Messenger of Allah, *sallallaahu 'alaihi wa sallam*, said: "He whose ultimate goal is the Hereafter will be endowed with richness in their hearts by Allah, will be granted a close-knit, protected familial environment, and will gain as much as they want from this life despite its unwillingness. On the contrary, Allah will make those who are obsessed with this life see poverty in front of their eyes and break up their family ties, and they will not gain from it except what they have been destined for." [At-Tirmithi]

6. When someone loves something, he/she is tortured by that type of love. Additionally, those who love this life are tortured as they try to gain as much as they can from it, as they hanker after its pleasures, and as they fight other people for its sake. Then, they will be tortured in their graves, missing it and suffering the agony of not being able to go back to it. There will be no such better thing that will compensate for the life they have seemingly enjoyed. They will be tortured by this life since they have been its servants and captives which is depicted by the Prophet, *sallallaahu 'alaihi wa sallam*, "Losers are the servants of the *Dinar*; losers are the servants of the *Dirham*," referring to money. Some scholars of Islam from the past generations said: "They (lovers of this life) suffer the agony of collecting money and their love towards money continues till the moment of breathing their last. They are not even paying the amount of money that Allah has prescribed."

7. Whoever loves this life and prefers it to the hereafter is considered one of the most ignorant and unwise people. He/she has preferred the unreal to the real, slumber to wakefulness, and a perishable house to an ever-lasting one. Yunus Ibn Abdul Aa'la, may Allah have mercy upon him, said: "This life can be compared to a man who sleeps and dreams of what he likes and hates. Then, he wakes up." 'Ali, may Allah be pleased with him, described this life saying: "In this life, the healthy grow old, the sick become penitent, the poor feel sad, and the nouveaux riche are happy. The appraisal is in its permissible practices, and the punishment is in its forbidden practices."

Article source: http://www.islamweb.net/emainpage/

COMMENT

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GULF TIMES

Illiberal world order is here

It was once common to speak of a "liberal international order." Even if the accompanying institutional arrangements were not always entirely liberal, international, or orderly, the label had its uses. After all, the purpose of an ideal is not to describe reality, but to guide behaviour, and for many decades, most countries aspired to be part of the liberal order and to contribute to its development (even if some preferred to free ride or game the system).

Those days are clearly gone. We have entered a new era of global disorder. Obviously, the steady rise of China and other emerging economies was always going to pose a challenge to arrangements that were created by the Western powers after World War II. But the decisive factor in the demise of the liberal international order is that its chief architect, the United States, has abandoned it. No longer do American leaders echo John F Kennedy's commitment to "pay any price, bear any burden, meet any hardship, support any friend, oppose any foe to assure the survival and the success of liberty."

True, the US wasn't always consistent in upholding international law or supporting the United Nations and its multilateral networks of co-operation. But there is little doubt that without American support, this entire edifice would have crumbled, as seems to be happening now. Under the current administration, the US has become explicit in denouncing the old liberal order, with Secretary of State Marco Rubio arguing that it is "not just obsolete; it is now a weapon being used against us."

By definition, an international order entails some common rules. But the Trump administration is openly hostile to any such constraints. It is explicitly pursuing a policy of putting its own self-defined interests above everything else.

We have entered a period of global disorder, with illiberal regimes gaining ground and old structures of international order breaking down

The punitive tariffs are only part of the story. The entire rulebook has been thrown out including by imposing import tariffs for reasons that have nothing to do with trade. While it is still early days, there is no doubt that the global economy will pay a heavy price – with the US economy perhaps suffering the most in the long term.

The very concept of international law has been all but expunged from US foreign and economic policymaking. The long-held view of geopolitics as a contest between democratic and authoritarian regimes now looks utterly irrelevant. The current administration speaks of human rights only selectively, such as when issuing false claims about a genocide being committed against white farmers in South Africa (meanwhile, the Palestinians in Gaza and the West Bank merit barely any mention).

There has been an understandable backlash in the US against the "forever wars" in Afghanistan and Iraq, as well as a belated recognition that foreign countries cannot simply be reordered by US diktat. The "unipolar" moment of unrivalled US power – between the fall of the Berlin Wall and China's emergence as a technological superpower – undoubtedly lent itself to American hubris.

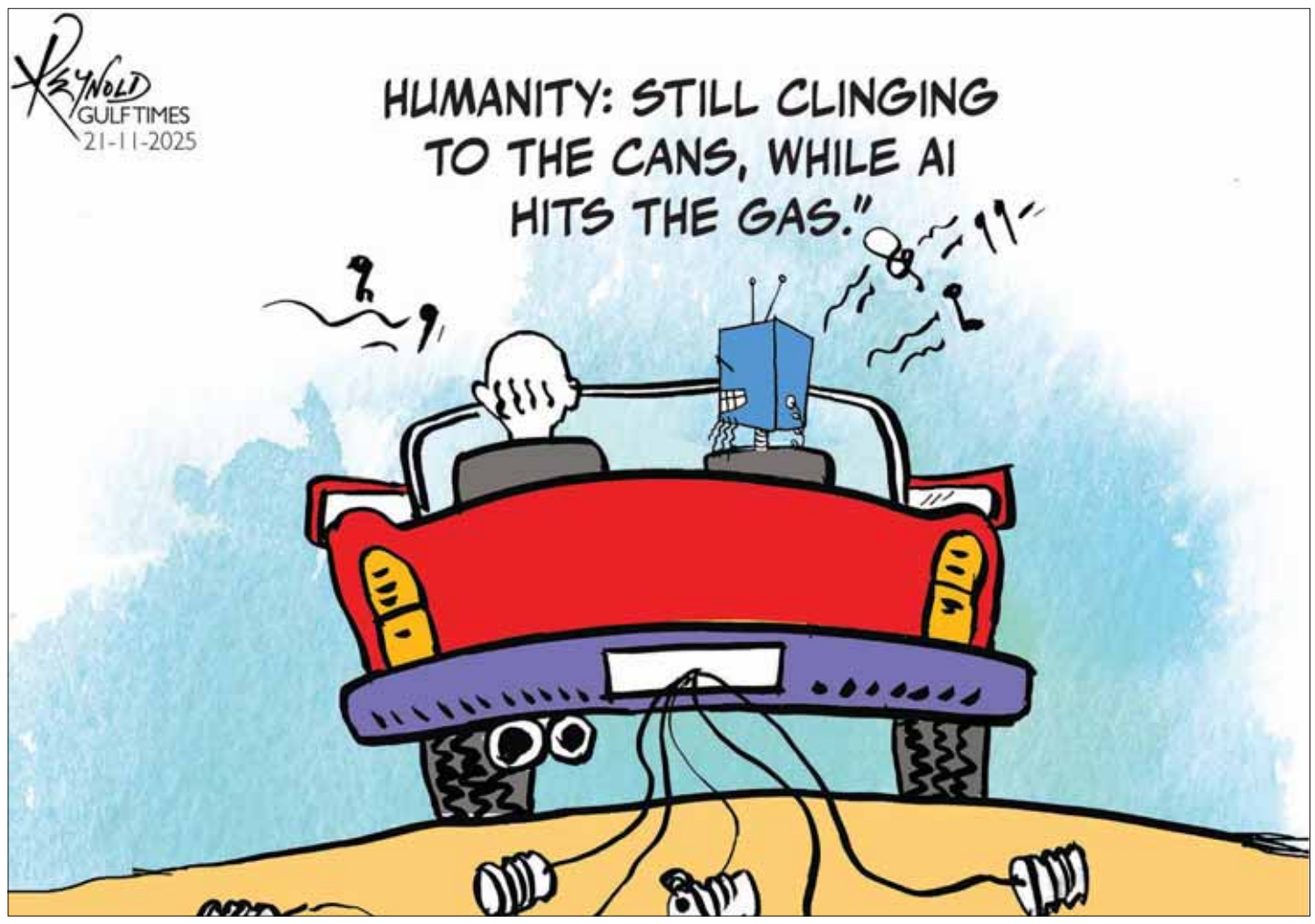
But now the pendulum has swung all the way in the other direction. From Greenland to the Panama Canal, the US has become an engine of international disorder, joining the likes of Russia, with its delusional war of aggression against Ukraine and mushrooming shadow war on the European Union. Meanwhile, vast regions, from the Horn of Africa to Sudan and through the Sahel, are descending into conflict and chaos, and no-one seems to care. In fact, the US is busy with its own new little "war of choice" against Nicolás Maduro's regime in Venezuela.

Despite its industrial might and expanding naval resources, China is unlikely to fill the void left by the US. So far, the Chinese have been treading cautiously, strongly resisting what they see as US bullying, but refraining from intervening in various conflicts around the world. China explicitly wants a new global order, not a continuation of the US-led liberal order that prevailed for eight decades after WWII.

But there is no new order on the horizon. We have entered a period of global disorder, with illiberal regimes gaining ground and the old structures of international order breaking down. These trends would be dangerous enough in isolation; they are even more so in the face of climate change, pandemic risks, and potentially disruptive technologies like AI. — Project Syndicate

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Climate and development finance must be integrated

By Mahmoud Mohieldin
Cairo

For decades, the international community has operated under the illusion that climate action and development are different pursuits, each with its own goals, institutions, and funding mechanisms. This approach has hindered progress on both agendas.

The world leaders gathered in Belém, Brazil, for the United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP30) were supposed to recognise this and begin transforming the fragmented, underperforming climate-finance system into an integrated framework that delivers on both climate and development objectives. As they embark on this process, it is worth considering the main takeaways from Policy-Driven Climate and Development Finance: Strategies for Equitable Solutions, the forthcoming volume of essays that I edited.

While making the global financial architecture more equitable and efficient is a long-term project, delegates at COP30 can take important steps forward. First, they must deliver a replicable and scalable model for climate finance that translates pledges into predictable flows, provides measurable results, and allows for country ownership. This is necessary to narrow the climate-finance gap, especially because developing countries will require between $5.1-6.8tn through 2030 to meet their nationally determined contributions, while their adaptation finance needs are 10-18 times greater than international public-finance flows.

A good example of this kind of model is the Tropical Forests Forever Facility, an ambitious blended-finance mechanism designed to unlock large amounts of both public and private capital for the conservation and sustainable management of tropical forests. If this facility successfully channels annual payments to tropical forest countries, it will show how climate finance that is anchored in outcomes can preserve biodiversity, support local livelihoods, and, crucially, advance development.



(Second left to right) Brazil's Secretary for Climate, Energy and Environment at the Foreign Ministry Mauricio Lyrio; COP30 President Andre Correa do Lago; Brazil's Vice-President and Minister of Industry and Trade Geraldo Alckmin; Brazil's Environment Minister Marina Silva; and COP30 CEO Ana Toni during a press conference during the COP30 UN Climate Change Conference in Belem, Para state, Brazil, on Monday. (**AFP**)

COP30 must also focus on efficiency. The climate-finance system is not only underfunded but also fragmented. Developing countries are forced to navigate an ever-growing number of funds, each with its own procedures and reporting requirements. This bureaucratic thicket, coupled with co-financing conditions and weak co-ordination among institutions, can delay projects for years, while too much money is wasted on transaction costs.

At the heart of this inefficiency lies the cost of capital. Green investments often come with high interest rates for developing economies. According to the International Energy Agency, the cost of financing green energy in developing countries can be 2-3 times higher than in advanced economies, significantly constraining the pace of the low-carbon transition. This disparity is less about project risk and more about structural biases, such as sovereign credit ratings that underestimate resilience, volatile currencies, and persistent debt overhangs.

The G20 has recognised the problem and recently hosted a high-level dialogue with the African Union on debt sustainability, the cost of capital, and financing reforms. The group must now deliver viable solutions: more dynamic and liquid local capital markets, financial instruments that reduce currency risk, and de-risking mechanisms that attract private investors on fair terms. Multilateral development banks, for their part, should reform their mandates and risk frameworks to provide more capital, more cheaply and more quickly.

But increasing efficiency also requires injecting a new sense of urgency into the process. For communities at risk of being displaced by floods and droughts, a year-long approval cycle for climate financing can turn a disaster into a catastrophe. COP30 must push for accelerated disbursement standards, simplified access procedures, and other measures to streamline operations.

Lastly, there is the question of fairness. The majority of climate-finance flows are concentrated within the G20 and focused on mitigation. At the same time, developing countries are grappling with unsustainable debt burdens, which have narrowed their fiscal space and crowded out climate and development spending.

The 11 recommendations by the UN Secretary-General's Expert Group on Debt offer a roadmap for addressing this silent debt crisis. The proposed reforms cover three broad areas: restructuring and modernising the multilateral financial system; providing borrowing countries with technical and capacity-building assistance; and encouraging borrowers to adopt more effective strategies for debt management. Implementing these recommendations would help low- and middle-income countries redirect resources from debt service toward investment in sustainable growth.

Instruments such as debt-for-climate and debt-for-nature swaps can complement these efforts by ensuring that financial relief is linked to climate and environmental protection and creating fiscal space for spending on development goals. A just climate transition requires concessional finance, which should be seen not as charity, but rather as a shared investment in global resilience.

Integrated finance is the only viable path forward, because a government that invests in climate action such as resilient agriculture or green transport is also advancing development goals. The global financial architecture must reflect that reality.

COP30 can bring about a move in this direction. Governments can commit to incorporating climate and development finance into their budgets. International institutions can begin to streamline rules, align metrics, and ensure transparency. And both public and private actors can expand the use of innovative tools – from voluntary carbon markets to regional project platforms – that support local transformation.

No country should have to choose between fighting poverty and fighting climate change. The shortcomings of the climate-finance architecture must be addressed. Public financial flows remain indispensable not only for equity, but also for leverage – every dollar spent effectively can mobilise many more in private capital. Whether COP30 is considered a success largely depends on its ability to maximise the impact of these flows on climate and development outcomes. — Project Syndicate



An aerial view shows a fire burning in the Amazon rainforest to clear land for agriculture, during a Greenpeace flyover amid the UN Climate Change Conference (COP30), near Centro Novo in the state of Maranhao, Brazil. (**Reuters**)

• *Mahmoud Mohieldin, UN Special Envoy on Financing Sustainable Development and Co-Chair of the Expert Group on Debt, is a former minister of investment of Egypt (2004-10), former senior vice-president of the World Bank Group, and former executive director of the International Monetary Fund.*

COMMENT

Billions flow to US nuclear sector with payoff still years away

Washington's $80bn investment in nuclear reactors won't yield carbon-free power anytime soon

By Will Wade
Bloomberg

After a generation of stagnation, interest in US nuclear energy is sky high, thanks to artificial intelligence's voracious energy needs. Nuclear companies are stock market darlings, and the Trump administration recently unveiled an $80bn-plus commitment to help fund new reactors.

There's just one problem: Hardly anything will be ready to plug in for a decade.

In theory, $80bn can buy enough reactors to power all of Virginia's Data Center Alley. In reality, traditional reactors take 10 years or more to build, while a highly anticipated wave of small, modular reactors has yet to produce commercial power. That means the only plants that will go into service anytime soon are a handful of shuttered facilities that can be restarted.

"There's a lot going on, and nothing is going on," said BloombergNEF's head nuclear analyst Chris Gadomski.

That dissonance underscores how radically, and rapidly, the US energy system has transformed in recent years. Not long ago, utilities were shutting down costly nuclear plants and replacing them with cheaper natural gas-fired and renewable plants. The AI boom has since supercharged electricity consumption, straining power supplies and driving up prices. But while nuclear is suddenly in demand again, logistics and technology constraints threaten to thwart development even with President Donald Trump's moves to streamline permitting and commit billions of dollars in funding.

It's possible the nuclear industry can meet Trump's goal of starting construction on 10 big nuclear reactors by 2030. But there won't be a lot of wiggle room, said Wyatt Hartley, head of North American asset management for Brookfield Asset Management Ltd. The company is emerging as a key player in the industry, in part because it's the majority owner of Westinghouse Electric Co, which is expected to be a key beneficiary of the $80bn reactor deal announced last month.

"Nothing in nuclear happens overnight," said Jeffrey Merrifield, a former commissioner with the Nuclear Regulatory Commission.

Besides permitting, developers must line up buyers for the power and hire thousands of skilled workers. And some of the most critical components of a plant, such as reactor vessels and steam generators, can take as long as four years to manufacture and deliver.



A power substation near a data centre in Ashburn, Virginia.



The control room at the Three Mile Island nuclear power plant in Middletown, Pennsylvania.

Hartley expects some of those orders to be placed "in the very near term" but, realistically, it will take 10 years to get just two plants up and running.

Until then, some reactor developers are relying on natural gas. Fermi Inc, an energy real estate investment trust co-founded by former Energy Secretary Rick Perry that is developing a massive data centre in Texas, placed orders for reactor components last month, but doesn't expect them to go into service until the early 2030s. Start-ups Blue Energy Global Inc and First American Nuclear Co also expect their reactors to be completed next decade. All three companies are installing gas systems to supply data centre customers as soon as possible.

And there's another wrinkle that could slow deployment of big reactors: The Trump administration hasn't yet laid out how the $80 billion will be allocated. It's also not clear who would be responsible for covering the costs for a project that goes significantly over budget. Cost overruns resulted in the 2017 abandonment of the two-reactor VC Summer project in South Carolina.

"What matters at the end of the day is who takes on the cost overrun risk," said Jigar Shah, who headed the US Energy Department's loan programmes office under President Joe Biden.

The buzz around nuclear is so cacophonous that simply announcing plans to develop reactors is enough to drive up company valuations. Fermi, which has yet to build any electricity generation and only listed on the New York Stock Exchange in September, is now valued at about $13bn, more than Campbell's Co or Moderna Inc. Meanwhile, firms developing small, modular reactors have seen share prices skyrocketing in the past year.

Despite the hype around small reactors, which are designed to be produced in factories and assembled on site, actual progress is painstakingly slow. Shah and others think small reactors could come online sooner than big ones because they're potentially cheaper and faster to produce, but only three companies have started construction: Oklo Inc, TerraPower LLC and Kairos Power LLC. None of them have regulatory approval to build a commercial system, nor have they proven they can produce power at a commercial scale.

Kairos may be the closest to delivering on its plans for commercial plant. It's building a demonstration reactor to validate the technology but won't generate electricity, and has permission to build a slightly larger version that will produce 50 megawatts. Once the company gets all regulatory approvals, it has a deal to sell that energy to the Tennessee Valley Authority for Google data centres, potentially as soon as 2030.

That means the fastest-moving part of the industry is restart projects.

More than a dozen reactors were shut down from 2012 to 2022, mostly for economic reasons, and three of them are now being revived. Holtec International expects the Palisades plant in Michigan to resume service early next year, and Constellation Energy Corp is on track to switch on a reactor in 2027 at Three Mile Island, in Pennsylvania. NextEra Energy Inc announced last month that it would bring the Duane Arnold plant in Iowa back online by 2029. Brookfield, meanwhile, is in talks to take over the abandoned VC Summer project, which could go into service in the early 2030s, Hartley said, though the deal is not yet finalised.

But the list of potential restart candidates is very short, and the three planned revivals would produce just 2.2 gigawatts of electricity at most, a fraction of the power Trump wants to generate from reactors.

"It's a lot of talk," said Scott Levine, an analyst with Bloomberg Intelligence. "Will we see anything soon? No."

ECB board revamp exposes diversity failings that could impact policy

- **Four of six ECB board members to be replaced in next two years**
- **Small countries fight it out for vice-president job**
- **ECB's policy-making bodies have poor diversity record**
- **Central banking still largely dominated by men**
- **2020 study suggests women more hawkish in fighting inflation**

By Balazs Koranyi and Francesco Canepa
Frankfurt

Eurozone officials have embarked on a two-year process to replace most of the European Central Bank's executive board, including President Christine Lagarde, raising questions along the way about how well the institution represents the people it serves.

In contrast to the US Federal Reserve, which gets a new leader next year and faces criticism from the Trump administration over interest rates, the ECB can be sure its independence will not be challenged in the reshuffle and policy will not be questioned.

Yet, the same EU institutional complexities that shield the ECB from politics in deciding policy, have also left it trailing the already-weak diversity record of global central banking — a field dominated by white men from big Western economies.

The first chance to address some of the disparities comes early next year when the term of ECB Vice-President Luis de Guindos of Spain expires.

The lack of geographic, gender and ethnic diversity, critics argue, leaves the bank with blind spots on the economy of a 20 nation bloc of 350mn people. Policymakers may lack the full picture on how households really experience hardships, inflation and interest rates.



A view of ECB headquarters in Frankfurt, Germany. (**Reuters**)

The bank's lack of diversity is glaring. On its 26 member rate-setting Governing Council, there are 24 men. All the 20 national central bank governors that sit on this council, selected in national capitals, are men. Meanwhile the six-person board, picked through the EU, has been dominated by men from the big four eurozone members — France, Germany, Italy and Spain. Former communist countries in the east, making up a third of the bloc, have never held a seat. The six board members, who sit on the council, run the ECB's day-to-day operations. Lagarde, a former French economy minister, is the first woman to have led the board. Since its inception in 1998, women have held 19% of ECB board seats.

"When it comes to female representation, the ECB's track record is appalling," Maria Demertzis, economy, strategy and finance centre leader for Europe at The Conference Board think-tank said.

"Diversity matters," Demertzis added. "You cannot have good decisions if people making them represent just a very specific, narrow segment of society, when your objective is to serve society."

Croatia, Finland, Greece, Latvia and Portugal have all thrown their hat into the race to replace de Guindos, suggesting that a smaller nation, possibly from the east, will get a chance. But the role may be seen as the least important among the four upcoming seats. The chief economist, the head of market operations and the president will be replaced in 2027 as their non-renewable terms also expire.

"If they pick an Eastern European, it will be a symbolic giveaway because the VP role itself is not that influential," ING economist Carsten Brzeski said. "If I was sitting in Berlin or Paris, I'd say, it's fine, let them have it, so we can concentrate on the more important positions."

In contrast to the ECB, the Bank of England's nine-member Monetary Policy Committee now has a female majority after years of political and public pressure to correct a gender imbalance. At the Swedish central bank, the board is split 50-50 while in Norway, the board has a slight male majority but a female governor.

The Fed's rate-setting FOMC has also become more diverse, although President Donald Trump is reversing some of this as he is trying to fire Lisa Cook, the first Black woman on the body, and already picked a man to replace a vacancy left by a woman.



European Central Bank (ECB) President Christine Lagarde, ECB Vice-President Luis de Guindos, Director General Communications Wolfgang Proissl and Governor of the Bank of Italy Fabio Panetta arrive for a press conference following the Governing Council's monthly monetary policy meeting in Florence, Italy, on October 30, 2025. (**Reuters**)

The greater problem may be that finance is dominated by men and there are not enough women rising up through the ranks. A working paper published by the Dallas Fed last year argued that there was barely any improvement on the staff level as the share of women among economists in the Fed system rose to just 22% from 20% in 20 years.

The ECB, which has no official role in board selection, declined to comment on the process.

Lagarde, who has warned that inflation hurts the poor, the vulnerable and women the most, has repeatedly made the case for greater inclusion and set ambitious targets for hiring more women staff. But she has little influence over who becomes a policymaker.

Finance ministers of the 20 eurozone nations nominate board members while EU leaders make the formal selection after they are heard by the European Parliament, which oversees the ECB.

The European Parliament can filibuster appointments, as it has already done several times over gender objections, but it cannot stop them.

"The fact that there are four roles to be replaced is actually an advantage as it allows for an overall package to be made," Markus Ferber, a member of the European Parliament's Committee on Economic and Monetary Affairs, said, adding that diversity was a relevant consideration.

"It is always easier to tick all the boxes if you have a package of candidates," he said. "I will advocate in the European Parliament that we do not look at each candidate separately, but look at the bigger picture."

A 2020 study by Bocconi University and Trinity College researchers argued that women at central banks are more hawkish in fighting inflation and a higher presence of women on central bank boards may thus be desirable for the credibility of central banks.

"With Lagarde at the top, the ECB has the right conditions to make a change, but they are stuck," Demertzis said. "They just don't have the pipeline of women coming in to make their way to the top." — Reuters

QATAR

The Voice of Hind Rajab kicks off 2025 DFF

The Doha Film Institute opened the 2025 Doha Film Festival yesterday at Katara Cultural Village with the screening of *The Voice of Hind Rajab* – dubbed as a deeply moving and urgent testament to human resilience directed by award-winning filmmaker Kaouther Ben Hania. The event brought together key government officials, filmmakers, and artistes, among other dignitaries.
Over the course of the festival, audiences can expect a vibrant mix of world premieres, regional firsts, panel discussions, industry events, youth-focused activities, live music, Geekdom, and a range of community programmes taking place across Doha. The festival will turn Doha's iconic venues, from Katara Cultural Village and Msheireb Downtown Doha to the Museum of Islamic Art, into lively centres of cultural exchange, uniting filmmakers, storytellers, and audiences from around the world and highlighting the enduring power of art. **PICTURES**: Shaji Kayamkulam and supplied













Doha Film Festival marks a powerful start to Qatar's spotlight of global cinema

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Joining them on the red carpet were members of the opening film's creative team and special guests, including director Ben Hania; producers Nadim Cheikhrouha and Odessa Rae; actors Saja Kilani, Amer Hlehel, Motaz Malhees and Clara Khoury; Hind Rajab's mother Wissem Hamada and representatives of the Palestine Red Crescent Society led by its president Dr Younis al-Khatib and director general Khaled Abu Ghoush. Also included were Nisreen Jiries Eid Qawas, Rana H I Faqih, Omar Ahmed Mohammed Alqam, Mahdi M N Jamal, Nibal Farsakh and Mohammad Ayyad, who were portrayed in the film.

Addressing the opening ceremony, festival director and DFI CEO Fatma Hassan Alremaihi said: "This is a milestone year for DFI – 15 years of commitment to a vision that has now become a reality. DFI is more than an institution shaping the global film industry, it is a promise that every voice matters and that art will always have a home in Qatar.

"DFI has established the golden age of Arab cinema as an essential chapter in the world's collective story, where long-term commitment meets long-term impact. As we turn a new page with Doha Film Festival, we are poised and ready to write the next chapters of our journey to build a global community coming together in dialogue to shape a shared future rooted in purpose and possibility."

Other special guests included creative luminaries and global change makers including Jim Sheridan, Mohammed Al Ibrahim Kamal Aljafari, Elia Suleiman, Yasmine Hamdan, Brigitte Lacombe, Rithy Panh, Dhafer L'abidine, Dana Alfardan, Mehdi Hasan, Elyanna, Dana al-Meer, Akira Yamaoka, Dorra Zarouk, Engin Altan Duzyatan, Rahma Zein, Ayca Aysin Turan, Jassim al-Nabhan among others.

With prizes totalling over $300,000, DFF features four main competition sections, special screenings, music performances, Geekdom and other community initiatives. The festival's original theme song is composed by Qatar's celebrated contemporary composer and songwriter Dana Alfardan, in collaboration with Katara Studios and Qatar Philharmonic Orchestra, capturing the rhythm, emotion, and heartbeat of Doha.

Key Partners of Doha Film Festival include Katara, Film Committee at Media City Qatar and Visit Qatar. The festival will transform iconic locations across Doha, including Katara Cultural Village, Msheireb Downtown Doha, and the Museum of Islamic Art, into vibrant hubs of cultural exchange, bringing together filmmakers, storytellers, and audiences from every corner of the globe, to reaffirm art's power.

Building character, not just classrooms: QF's human approach to learning



WISE, set from November 24-25 at QNCC, will explore the purpose of education and its continuing role in serving humanity even as it incorporates new technologies and innovations.



At Qatar Foundation (QF), values such as respect, empathy, and integrity are not taught as standalone lessons. Instead, they are woven into every learning experience – from community projects and sports to extracurricular activities, theatre, and music. "We do not define human values as slogans written on walls or theoretical concepts to be memorised, but as daily behaviour that builds the person before filling notebooks," says Sara H al-Hajri, director of Student Affairs and Community Engagement at QF Pre-University Education. "They are principles that make the student a moral actor, open to others, and responsible toward their community.

"This is because our goal is to build a balanced personality – not just a student who memorises information. We do not talk to students about values; we place them in situations that produce values."

This model of values-based education plays a vital role in advancing both national development and global sustainability goals. The approach of embedding ethics and empathy into every aspect of learning, al-Hajri says, is "the most sustainable investment in Qatar's future." On a local level, QF integrates these values through initiatives such as the Islamic Civilisation Curriculum, which links identity to action, teaching students that civilisation is not something to be told, but to be built. Globally, QF promotes a model that can be applied in any educational context, because, as al-Hajri explains, "values are human, not geographical."

Programmes such as Thimun Qatar see students from countries all over the world come together to practice diplomacy, dialogue, and respect for differences, in a student-led environment. "This is not learning about values," says al-Hajri. "It is living them on a global scale.

"We want students to be rooted in their identity and global in their thinking, because true values create citizens capable of making an impact both locally and globally."

The upcoming WISE 12 Summit – the latest edition of the biennial international gathering of educational expertise organised by QF's global education initiative WISE – will spotlight QF's belief in cultivating the values that make us human.

Taking place from November 24-25, at the Qatar National Convention Centre, the two-day event, under the theme 'Humanity.io: Human Values at the Heart of Education,' will explore the purpose of education and its continuing role in serving humanity even as it incorporates new technologies and innovations.

According to Bassim Hijazi, Community Development Lead at WISE, these values have become even more vital in today's world, one shaped by technology and marked by conflict and climate challenges.

Doha Design District, VCUarts Qatar showcase local creative talent



The project challenged students to reinterpret Liberty London's distinctive brand identity within the architectural and cultural context of MDD.

Doha Design District and Virginia Commonwealth University School of the Arts in Qatar (VCUarts Qatar) have partnered to conceptualise creative window display designs inspired by Liberty London's iconic aesthetic.
The winning concept, selected by Liberty's team, was brought to life and featured at the brand's recently opened store in Msheireb Downtown Doha (MDD).
Developed as part of a retail design course at VCUarts Qatar, the project challenged students to reinterpret Liberty London's distinctive brand identity within the architectural and cultural context of MDD. The winning concept, created by Moza al-Marri, Ayat al-Hayki, Reema al-Mohannadi, and Fatima al-Haddad, blended Liberty's heritage with Msheireb's modern design ethos, reflecting creativity, sustainability, and cultural harmony.
Dana Kazic, director of Doha Design District, said: "This initiative embodies the spirit of Qatar National Vision 2030, where creativity, education, and innovation come together to empower our community. We look forward to building on this collaboration and continuing to create opportunities that celebrate local talent and strengthen Qatar's position as a regional hub for design and creativity."
Dean Amir Berbić, Dean of VCUarts Qatar, said: "Our students had the coveted opportunity to work with a world-renowned brand, one of our most valued partners, Liberty London. They translated their ideas into a professional context that celebrates design heritage and cultural identity. The winning design draws on a poetic connection between Liberty's historic London flagship – an architectural icon crafted from the timber of two Royal Navy vessels – and the traditional Dhow boats of Doha.
The Liberty store was built to resemble a ship that had journeyed across the world, collecting beautiful objects, art and textiles before anchoring in the heart of London.
Embodying the spirit of adventure and discovery, the students reimagined this concept through a Qatari lens of exploration and exchange, echoing the enduring legacy of the Dhow boat, an icon of Qatar's rich history of pearl trading and global connection.
Renowned set designer Miranda Sinclair brought the students' concept to life, translating their vision into a fully realised spatial installation. Drawing inspiration from the original narrative, Sinclair reinterpreted the story with theatrical flair, featuring ships draped in Liberty fabrics and cargo boxes overflowing with wares. Her design captures both the emotional depth and visual dynamism of the concept.

EAA Foundation and Al Sadd SC hold 'Peace Tournament' for Gaza families living in Qatar



EAA and Al Sadd SC organises "Peace Tournament" for Gazan families in Qatar.

Education Above All (EAA) Foundation held the "Peace Tournament" yesterday, bringing together Gazan families residing in Qatar in a community football event held at the Al Sadd Sports Club.

The event, in collaboration with Al Sadd Sports Club and with the support of the Ministry of Social Development and Family, is dedicated to children, youth, and Gaza families hosted by Qatar and residing in Al Thumama Complex.

The initiative formed part of the community partnership between EAA and Al Sadd SC, and aligned with EAA's efforts to enhance the psycho-social well-being of children and youth. It also aims to support crisis-affected communities through sports activities that strengthened social cohesion, built bonds of solidarity, and reinforced positive community values.

Sheikh Khalifa bin Khalid al-Thani, CEO of Al Sadd Football Club Company, said: "We believe that sport, and football in particular, has a unique ability to bring people together, restore hope, and create moments of joy, especially for children and youth who have endured difficult experiences.

"At Al Sadd Club, we were keen to provide all the necessary resources to ensure the success of this tournament, which we are proud to present as a message of solidarity from Qatar to our brothers and sisters from Gaza who are guests of the country. We will continue to support initiatives that harness the power of sport to serve humanity and promote the values of unity and generosity".

AlAnood al-Attiyah, director of the Al Fakhoora Programme at EAA Foundation, said: "At EAA, we believe in the transformative power of sport to build confidence, strengthen resilience, and restore hope, especially for communities facing profound humanitarian challenges.

"This tournament was not merely a sporting activity; it was a safe space that offered children and youth an outlet for expression and an opportunity to build positive relationships that enhanced community cohesion."

EAA Foundation continued its efforts in Qatar and around the world to create safe, inclusive, and supportive educational and social environments for children and youth.