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**QATAR | Page 12**

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# Qatar, Saudi vow to reinforce fraternal ties



## Amir, Saudi Crown Prince co-chair 8th meeting of Qatari-Saudi Co-ordination Council

**Amir and the Crown Prince witness signing of the high-speed electric rail link agreement between the two countries**

**QNA**  
Riyadh

His Highness the Amir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani and Crown Prince and Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia Prince Mohammed bin Salman bin Abdulaziz al-Saud co-chaired the eighth meeting of the Qatari-Saudi Co-ordination Council at Al-Yamamah Palace in Riyadh yesterday.

At the outset of the meeting, the Crown Prince of Saudi Arabia welcomed His Highness the Amir and the accompanying delegation in Riyadh. He highlighted that the brotherly relations between Qatar and Saudi Arabia are strong and historic.

Prince Mohammed bin Salman praised the Qatari-Saudi Co-ordination Council's role in supporting and strengthening bilateral relations, affirming that Saudi Arabia is committed to advancing them for the interests of the two brotherly peoples.

On his part, His Highness the Amir thanked the Crown Prince and Prime Minister of Saudi Arabia for the warm welcome and magnanimous hospitality, affirming that he was glad to visit the

Kingdom of Saudi Arabia in the framework of the eighth meeting of the Qatari-Saudi Co-ordination Council.

His Highness further pointed out that the agreements signed by the two countries during this visit reflect the level of partnership and the tremendous co-operation between them, emphasising that Qatar is committed to reinforcing its fraternal co-operation with Saudi Arabia for the ambitions of the two brotherly peoples in sup-

port of security, peace, and prosperity in the region.

During the meeting, both sides discussed the brotherly relations between the two countries and aspects of cementing them in a variety of partnership areas, particularly in the priority fields, including political, security, military, energy, industry, economy, investment, trade, technology, infrastructure, culture, tourism, and education, in addition to reviewing the latest developments

on issues of mutual interest to the two countries on the regional and global stages.

His Highness the Amir and the Crown Prince witnessed the exchange of the high-speed electric rail link agreement between the governments of the two countries.

They also witnessed the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between Invest Qatar and the Ministry of Investment of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, aimed at heralding them toward

Amir hails meeting as chance to enhance strategic co-operation

His Highness the Amir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani has said the latest meeting of the Qatari-Saudi Co-ordination Council offers an important chance to broaden strategic co-operation between the two nations.

Writing on his official X account yesterday, His Highness said he was pleased to meet Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman and take part in the council's discussions.


His Highness the Amir said the joint co-ordination council represents a key opportunity to review the prospects of bilateral strategic partnership and continue investing combined capabilities of both countries across all fields in a way that serves their mutual interests.

His Highness added that the talks reflect the strong ties of brotherhood and longstanding goodwill that unite Doha and Riyadh.

The council was established to deepen co-operation in political, economic and security matters and has become a central platform for aligning policies and advancing shared development goals between the two Gulf neighbours. **(QNA)**

Train project: a game-changer

- Distance covered: 785km
- Project span: 6 years
- Economic impact: SR115bn
- Annual passengers: 10mn
- Job creation: 30,000



The high-speed electric passenger train project between Qatar and Saudi Arabia is a strategic step within the two countries' efforts to enhance co-operation and developmental integration, and to consolidate sustainable development and the shared commitment toward broader horizons of development and prosperity in the region.

The high-speed railway line spans 785km, strategically connecting Riyadh and Doha, and will pass through key stations including Hofuf and Dammam, while also linking King Salman International Airport and Hamad International Airport.

The train will form a new artery for rapid and sustainable transportation, improving the regional travel experience with speeds exceeding 300kmph, reducing travel time between the two capitals to

approximately two hours, significantly enhancing mobility, boosting trade and tourism, and improving quality of life.

The project is slated for completion in six years, utilising the latest railway technologies and smart engineering to ensure safe and seamless operation and to adhere to the highest international standards of quality and safety. **To Page 3**

offering innovative solutions in the field of direct investment promotion, and the exchange of an MoU in the field of food security between the Ministry of Municipality in Qatar and the General Authority for Food Security in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

The meeting was attended by HE the Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman bin Jassim al-Thani, HE the Minister of Interior and Commander of the Internal Security Force (Lekhwiya) Sheikh Khalifa bin Hamad bin Khalifa al-Thani, HE the Chief of the Amiri Diwan Abdullah bin Mohammed bin Mubarak al-Khulaf, HE the Minister of Finance Ali bin Ahmed al-Kuwari, HE the Minister of Culture Sheikh Abdulrahman bin Ha-

mad al-Thani, HE the Minister of Sports and Youth Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa bin Ahmed al-Thani, HE the Minister of Commerce and Industry Sheikh Faisal bin Thani bin Faisal al-Thani, HE the Minister of Transport Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdullah bin Mohammed al-Thani, HE the Secretary-General of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Dr Ahmed bin Hassan al-Hammadi, HE the Minister of State at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Dr Mohammed bin Abdulaziz bin Saleh al-Khulaifi, alongside a lineup of ministers and members of the official delegation accompanying His Highness the Amir. **To Page 3**

**Joint statement at conclusion of Amir's visit to Saudi Arabia**  
**Page → 10**

# MoECC unveils climate adaptation plan

**It aims to enhance the country's ability to face climate risks**

**QNA**  
Doha

The Ministry of Environment and Climate Change (MoECC) launched yesterday Qatar's National Adaptation Plan (NAP), which forms the comprehensive national framework to enhance the country's ability to cope with the effects of climate change, protect its vital resources and its economic and service sectors from current and future climate risks, in addition to supporting the path of sustainable development in the long term.

The ministry affirmed that the plan was prepared based on scientific assessments, technical studies, and extensive consultations involving government agencies, the private sector, academic institutions, and interna-



Ban Ki-moon



tional organisations. It includes six key sectors that are most affected by climate change: water, agriculture and livestock, biodiversity, public health, energy, infrastructure and coastal areas, the ministry added.

The plan also includes an executive programme containing a package of measures, procedures and projects aimed at reducing climate risks and enhancing national preparedness, with priorities set in water management, sustainable agricultural



HE the Minister of Environment and Climate Change Dr Abdullah bin Abdulaziz bin Turki al-Subaie

practices, protecting ecosystems, developing infrastructure capable of withstanding extreme climate phenomena, and raising the readiness of the health sector towards climate-related risks.

In his speech during the launching ceremony, HE the Minister of Environment and Climate Change Dr Abdullah bin Abdulaziz bin Turki al-Subaie, affirmed that the National Adaptation Plan represents a pivotal step in enhancing the country's preparedness to deal with the repercussions of climate

## Qatar launches national AI firm to advance digital transformation

Qatar has announced the launch of Qai, a national company specialising in artificial intelligence (AI), aimed at developing advanced digital ecosystems to support innovation and contribute to sustainable development.

The new company is part of Qatar's broader strategy to strengthen a knowledge-based economy and build a digital infrastructure that keeps pace with global technological advancements, in line with the Qatar National Vision 2030. Qai operates under the Qatar Investment Authority and leverages the authority's global investments, long-term strategy, and close collaboration with scientific, research, and policy institutions, as well as the national innovation ecosystem.

The company will develop, manage, and invest in advanced AI infrastructures both within Qatar and internationally, providing secure and reliable smart technologies to support key sectors. It will enable organisations to access high-performance computing capabilities and connected tools for training and

deploying scalable AI systems, fostering innovation and empowering decision-making across local and global markets.

Qai will focus on creating AI solutions that serve people and communities, while attracting top international talent and collaborating with leading research institutions, global technology firms, and strategic investors to transfer knowledge and strengthen an advanced innovation ecosystem.

The company's chairman Abdullah bin Hamad al-Misnad said that the world is undergoing a profound transformation led by AI technologies, affecting every sector. He highlighted that Qai's mission is to ensure this transformation happens responsibly, with trust and human-centred principles at its core. The company will empower governments, businesses, and innovators to develop and adopt AI solutions with confidence, while establishing a reliable link within the global AI ecosystem to boost Qatar's regional leadership and international competitiveness. **(QNA)**



## Deputy Amir chairs second meeting of QU Board of Regents



His Highness the Deputy Amir Sheikh Abdullah bin Hamad al-Thani, the Chairman of the Board of Regents of Qatar University (QU), chaired the second meeting of QU Board of Regents for the academic year 2025-2026, held at the Amiri Diwan yesterday. At the beginning of the meeting, the Board of Regents reviewed the accomplished decisions and recommendations taken in the first meeting of the 2025-2026 academic year. The Board then discussed the topics listed on the meeting's agenda and took the appropriate decisions. (QNA)

# Shura Council praises Doha Forum's success

The Shura Council convened at its headquarters yesterday, chaired by HE the Speaker of the Shura Council Hassan bin Abdullah al-Ghanem.

At the outset of the session, the Council hailed the success of the 23rd Doha Forum 2025, held under the patronage of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani, under the theme “Justice in Action: Beyond Promises to Progress”.

In this regard, the Council lauded the standing that was deepened by this forum as a leading global platform that gathers leaders of nations, policymakers, and experts, along with the framework it had established for serious dialogue and joint work on global challenges amid accelerating geopolitical, humanitarian, and technological transformations.

The Council noted the content of the forum's agenda in terms of strategic panel discussions that addressed issues on peace and global responsibilities towards Gaza, avenues for the Gulf-European relationship, the challenges associated with funding global health, the responsible use of artificial



intelligence in the military field, as well as other relevant subjects.

The Council affirmed that this thoughtful momentum and the wide-ranging presence of over 6,000 participants representing more than 150 countries reflect the growing role of the Doha Forum as a platform where diplomacy meets action, thereby advancing responsibility and global collaboration.

Thereafter, HE the Secretary-General of the Shura Council, Nayef

bin Mohammed al-Mahmoud, read out the agenda of the session, with the Council duly ratifying the minutes of its previous sitting.

As part of the agenda, the Council considered draft legislation amending certain provisions of Law No. 24 of 2010 regarding the promulgation of the Law (Regulation) on pesticides in the Gulf Co-operation Council (GCC) states, submitted to the Council by the revered government.



The Council then resolved to remit that legislation to the Health, General Services, and Environment Committee for further perusal and submission of its report to the Council.

Throughout the session, the Council approved draft legislation amending certain provisions of Law No. 3 of 2016 regulating the registration of births and deaths, following the perusal of the report of the Committee on Legal

and Legislative Affairs and discussion of its details by the esteemed Members of the Council.

The session's deliberations proceeded, during which it reviewed the report of the Education, Culture, Sport, and Information Committee, which set out its opinion on the statement of the revered Government pertaining to the proposal put forth by the Council concerning the Cultural Heritage Project for hosting the

FIFA World Cup Qatar 2022, and took the appropriate decision.

The Council also took note of several reports regarding parliamentary participations and reviewed the report on the participation of HE the Deputy Speaker of the Shura Council Dr Hamda bint Hassan al-Sulaiti as a member of the Inter-Parliamentary Union's Executive Committee and vice-chair of the Committee for the Arab Group in the 39th session of the Executive Committee of the Arab Inter-Parliamentary Union, held in Cairo last September.

The Council also reviewed the report on the participation of Dr Sultan bin Hassan al-Dhabit al-Dosari, Member of the Shura Council and a member of the Union's Executive Committee in the same session.

It likewise reviewed the report on the participation of Abdullah bin Nasser bin Turki al-Subaie, vice-president of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Mediterranean (PAM) and Member of the Bureau of the Parliament, at the fifty-fifth meeting of the Bureau, which was convened virtually last July. (QNA)

# SADAD and the New Era of Payments in Qatar: How local innovation is Reshaping Merchant Growth

As Qatar accelerates its transition toward a fully digital economy, few sectors have evolved as quickly—or as visibly—as financial technology. Payment solutions, once considered a back-office operational concern, now sit at the heart of commercial competitiveness, cash-flow efficiency, and customer experience. In this shifting landscape, local fintech platforms are playing a critical role in redefining how businesses collect, manage, and accelerate their revenue cycles.

Among these platforms, SADAD Payment Solutions has emerged as one of the most influential players, particularly for Qatar's merchant community and SMEs. While international gateways have long dominated the conversation, a new question is gaining prominence among business owners and financial decision-makers: What does a truly local, QCB-regulated fintech provider offer that global platforms cannot?

This question sits at the center of Qatar's broader transformation—and the answer reveals much about the future of payments in the Gulf.

### A Shift Toward Merchant-Centric Innovation

In recent years, Qatar's merchant ecosystem has expanded rapidly, driven by entrepreneurship, retail diversification, tourism, and a growing SME sector. Alongside this growth, payment behavior has fundamentally changed. Customers demand fast,



seamless, digital-first experiences, while businesses seek solutions that reduce friction, close cash-flow gaps, and integrate smoothly with their existing operations.

This is where the distinction between payment tools and payment ecosystems becomes essential.

Payment tools process transactions. Payment ecosystems—like SADAD—connect transactions to accounting systems, settlement cycles, analytics, APIs, and operational workflows.

This evolution from tool to ecosystem reflects a global trend, but in Qatar, it carries additional importance due to the country's regulatory frameworks and its push toward secure digital transformation.

### Why Merchants Are Choosing SADAD

When speaking with merchants across Qatar—from home businesses to large commercial groups—a consistent theme emerges: they increasingly prefer solutions that are locally regulated, responsive, technically integrated, and tailored to market realities. Several unique advantages stand out:

#### 1. Faster Settlement Cycles:

##### Speed as a Competitive Edge

In a market where cash flow determines operational stability, the speed of settlement is often the biggest differentiator. Many merchants cite SADAD's

accelerated settlement processes as a key reason for switching, describing it as “a practical advantage, not a technical feature.”

Faster access to funds enables businesses to reinvest quickly, purchase inventory, meet payroll deadlines, and reduce reliance on credit facilities. For SMEs especially, shortening the cash-to-bank cycle can be the difference between stagnation and expansion.

### 2. Deep ERP and API Integrations: A Quiet Revolution for Operations

While payment links and POS devices are visible to customers, the real transformation often happens behind the scenes through ERP and API integration.

SADAD's integration frameworks have allowed merchants to:

- Automate invoicing
- Sync transactions with accounting systems
- Reduce manual errors
- Generate real-time financial visibility
- Improve operational decision-making

For enterprise merchants managing thousands of monthly transactions, this automation is not just beneficial, it is foundational.

### 3. Cost Efficiency in a Competitive Market

As businesses in Qatar become more cost-conscious, many seek fee structures that align with their transaction volumes without compromising

service quality. SADAD's pricing flexibility and absence of complex hidden fees have helped it appeal to both growing SMEs and established brands looking to optimize their cost base.

### 4. Local Reliability and QCB Recognition

In regulated sectors—healthcare, finance, retail chains, logistics—merchants increasingly prioritize payment partners operating under QCB oversight. The assurance of compliance and data security matters now more than ever, particularly in a global environment where fintech regulations evolve rapidly.

SADAD's local operations, dedicated support teams, and regulatory alignment offer merchants peace of mind that foreign providers often cannot match.

### The Human Story: Supporting SMEs in a Digital-First Era

Behind every payment transaction lies a human story—an entrepreneur, a home business, a startup, or a family-run shop navigating Qatar's competitive landscape.

Interviews with SME owners reveal a recurring challenge: even with strong sales, delays between transactions and actual cash availability can create operational pressure. This gap affects everything from inventory purchasing to fulfilling customer orders.

For many of these businesses, SADAD's value has gone beyond technology. It has been a partner in their growth.

A home business owner described the platform as “the bridge that allowed us to scale without losing control.”

A retail startup noted that payment insights helped them forecast demand more accurately than manual methods.

Others highlighted that integrating payments with their ERPs allowed them to expand branches without complicating financial reconciliation.

These stories form the backbone of Qatar's SME economy—where digital payments are not just a convenience, but an essential enabler of resilience and expansion.

### A Turning Point for the Merchant Economy

The evolution of digital payments in Qatar reflects more than technological progress—it signals a shift in how businesses operate, compete, and grow. As merchants seek greater control over their financial lifecycles, platforms capable of combining speed, integration, regulatory trust, and human-centered support will define the next era. SADAD's rise within this landscape illustrates a broader truth:

**Local innovation, when aligned with market needs and national digital ambitions, becomes a strategic asset for the entire economy.**

For businesses navigating the future of commerce in Qatar, the question is no longer whether to adopt digital payments—it is which ecosystem will empower their growth, resilience, and competitiveness in a rapidly changing world.









# Shura Council Speaker meets Paraguayan parliamentarians



HE the Speaker of the Shura Council, Hassan bin Abdullah al-Ghanem, met yesterday with Eduardo Nakayama, member of the Senate of Paraguay and member of the Foreign Affairs and International Relations Committee, and Enrique Salyn Buzarquis, member of the Senate, who are visiting Qatar. Discussions during the meeting covered on a range of subjects pertaining to advancing parliamentary co-operation between the Shura Council and the Senate of Paraguay. They likewise

deliberated on areas of exchanging legislative expertise and bolstering bilateral communication channels, thereby contributing to the strengthening of relations between the countries. Chairman of the Internal and External Affairs Committee, Yousef bin Ali al-Khater, Chairman of the Qatari-Paraguayan Parliamentary Friendship Group at the Council, Abdullah bin Jaber al-Libda, and Paraguay ambassador to Qatar, Jose Rafael Agüero Avila, attended the meeting. **(QNA)**

# Justice minister meets Gambian counterpart



HE the Minister of Justice and Minister of State for Cabinet Affairs Ibrahim bin Ali al-Mohannadi met yesterday morning with Attorney-General and Minister of Justice of Gambia, Dawda Jallow, on the occasion of his official visit to the country. During the meeting, they discussed judicial co-operation between Qatar and Gambia, and ways to enhance and develop them. They also exchanged views on several legal matters of mutual interest. **(QNA)**

# Commercial Bank, VCUarts Qatar host art-based educational initiative



Commercial Bank partnered with Virginia Commonwealth University School of the Arts in Qatar (VCUarts Qatar) through its 'Continuing Education Programme' to host an educational initiative aimed at enhancing leadership and team-building skills through creative methodologies.

Commercial Bank partnered with Virginia Commonwealth University School of the Arts in Qatar (VCUarts Qatar) through its 'Continuing Education Programme' to host an educational initiative aimed at enhancing leadership and team-building skills through creative methodologies that go beyond traditional training formats.

This initiative also supports the national development of talent, aligned with Qatar National Vision 2030. The initiative took place over two sessions: the first focused on team building, and the second on exploring leadership through art. Both were held at Commercial Bank Plaza, with some 20 participants in each session. Drawing on VCUarts Qatar's expertise in creative learning, the sessions introduced participants to new ways of thinking, problem-solving, and collaborating, and fostered cultural exchange, innovation, and professional growth.

As a leader in integrating creativity into professional development, Commercial Bank demonstrated its commitment to cultivating a dynamic

and engaging work culture. Commercial Bank EGM and Chief Human Capital Officer Khalifa al-Rayes said: "At Commercial Bank, we don't only invest in skills, but in mindsets as well. By integrating creative approaches, we are equipping our teams to think outside the box, lead with confidence, and build a stronger, well-connected community. "Innovation starts within, and our collaboration with VCUarts is just one of the many ways we are reimagining the future of talent development at Commercial Bank."

Lejla Niksic, director of Strategic Engagement at VCUarts Qatar, added: "Our partnership with Commercial Bank reflected the power of creativity as a catalyst for professional growth and lifelong learning.

"By integrating art and design-based methods into continuing education, we opened new pathways for strategic insight, forward-thinking leadership, and innovative thinking. This initiative demonstrated how creative education can meaningfully support both organisational culture and the broader goals of Qatar National Vision 2030."

# LuLu Qatar donates QR125,000 to Qatar Cancer Society



LuLu Hypermarket Qatar, the region's leading retailer, has donated QR125,000 from its sixth annual 'Shop & Donate' campaign to Qatar Cancer Society (QCS), as part of breast cancer awareness efforts.

This year's campaign encouraged customers to become active partners in social responsibility by contributing through the purchase of selected products across LuLu stores and a portion of the proceeds directed towards supporting QCS's mission.

A non-profit charitable organisation, QCS relies on donations and community partnerships to raise awareness about cancer, methods of prevention, and the importance of early detection. QCS also offers financial, psychological, and social support to patients, survivors, and their families, and contributes to professional development and scientific research in the field of cancer.

The donation cheque was handed over by Shanavas Padi-

yath, regional director of LuLu Hypermarket Qatar, to Ammar al-Mashhadani, public relations manager at QCS, during a ceremony held at LuLu Regional Office Doha.

Al-Mashhadani highlighted the significance of such partnerships, noting that LuLu Hypermarket has been a consistent supporter of QCS and its various awareness and fundraising campaigns. He emphasised that QCS plays a vital role in the community by leading nationwide programmes focused on cancer prevention, early detection, patient support, and education. Through its continuous efforts, QCS provides essential services such as medical assistance for patients in need, public awareness activities, and initiatives that promote healthy lifestyles across Qatar.

Reaffirming LuLu's dedication, Shanavas, stated: "This campaign underscores LuLu's long-standing commitment to social responsibility and health awareness. Supporting Qatar Cancer Society aligns with our

mission to promote healthier lifestyles, encourage preventive care, and contribute to a more informed society. We will continue to enhance our initiatives to benefit the community and create lasting positive impact."

Beyond this annual donation, LuLu Hypermarket Qatar remains actively involved in several CSR-driven programmes. These include health education drives, collaborations with governmental bodies, and innovative initiatives such as interactive healthy cooking shows designed to empower customers with knowledge about nutrition and disease prevention.

The 'Shop & Donate' campaign continues to stand as a model of how private-sector organisations can support national health objectives through impactful partnerships and customer engagement. With its sustained commitment to CSR excellence, LuLu Hypermarket Qatar reinforces its role as a responsible corporate leader contributing to the welfare of society, a statement added.

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# Al-Misnad meets Sri Lanka's minister of labour, planning



HE the Minister of State for International Co-operation Maryam bint Ali bin Nasser al-Misnad met yesterday with Member of Parliament and Minister of Labour and Planning of Sri Lanka, Dr Anil Jayantha Fernando. Their discussions during the meeting focused on advancing co-operation between the countries, addressing the aftermath of Cyclone Ditwah that recently struck Sri Lanka, and exploring possible areas of support

from Qatar, including humanitarian aid, early recovery assistance, rehabilitation of critical infrastructure, and livelihood protection programmes. HE al-Misnad underscored Qatar's commitment to continuing its humanitarian role and supporting its partners in Sri Lanka. Dr Fernando expressed his country's gratitude to Qatar for its solidarity and enduring readiness to support the people of Sri Lanka. **(QNA)**





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# Virginia Commonwealth University School of the Arts celebrates emerging talent at 2025 high school fine art award

The Painting & Printmaking Program at Virginia Commonwealth University School of the Arts in collaboration with the Visual, Literary and Drama Section, Department of Educational Guidance at the Ministry of Education and Higher Education, Qatar, is pleased to announce the successful conclusion of the second edition of the High School Fine Art Award, themed Nature & the Self.

The award ceremony and exhibition were honored by the presence of Hemyan Al Kabbi, Director of Visual Arts and Theatre Division, and Dr. Amro Abu Al Huda, Advisor on Fine Arts at the Ministry of Higher Education. Their attendance highlighted the growing national commitment to supporting young artists and expanding opportunities for creative expression in Qatar.



This year's theme invited Grade 11 and 12 students to explore how the natural world reflects inner landscapes of memory, resilience, and transformation. Through painting, printmaking, photography and digital art, participants presented compelling

interpretations of how nature becomes a mirror for the self. Reflecting on this year's submissions, Amir Berbić, Dean of VCUarts Qatar, noted, "The quality of work presented this year was exceptional. These students demonstrated a level of creativity, technical skill, and depth of thought



that speaks to a remarkable future for the arts in Qatar. We look forward to staying in touch with these talented young artists as they continue their studies and chart their own creative paths."

The top awards were presented to ten outstanding students whose work demonstrated exceptional artistic promise. The 2025 top award recipients are Wadha Saeed, Jowana Alserhi, Aisha Almuhammad, Saleh Al Nuaimi, Joud Alamri, Ali Almuhammad, Ferja Al-Marri, Duaa Muatasim, Rashid Muhammed, and Abdulrahman Al-Qahtani.

VCUarts Qatar congratulates this year's honorees and extends its heartfelt appreciation to all students, families, teachers, and distinguished guests who contributed to making the 2025 edition of the High School Fine Art Award a success.





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# RACA launches ‘Masar’ Programme to enhance charity sector governance

The Regulatory Authority for Charitable Activities (RACA) yesterday launched the “Masar” Programme, designed to monitor the implementation of its 2025-2030 strategy.

The launch marks a significant step in the Authority's commitment to advancing effective governance tools, performance measurement mechanisms, and ensuring the efficient and transparent achievement of its strategic objectives.

The launch ceremony was attended by HE the Minister of Social Development and Family, and Chairperson of the Board of RACA Buthaina bint Ali al-Jabr al-Nuaimi.

On this occasion, she affirmed that the “Masar” Programme serves as a natural extension of the Authority's strategy, reflecting its commitment to shifting from planning to execution within a clearly defined institutional framework that strengthens performance governance and enhances the efficiency of the charitable sector. She explained that the programme introduces a practical vision aimed at promoting sustainability, embedding the values of transparency and effectiveness, and ensuring the precise implementation of the Authority's strategic initiatives. This, she noted, is intended to generate tangible outcomes aligned with



Qatar National Vision 2030, while reinforcing a culture of giving, development and supporting charitable work as a fundamental pillar of Qatari society. Director-General of RACA, Ibrahim Abdullah al-Dehaimi emphasised that the launch of “Masar” marks a new phase in the Authority's institutional development. He noted that the programme represents a qualitative shift in monitoring and performance-assessment mechanisms, and reflects the Authority's determination to implement its strategic projects with the highest levels of quality and efficiency.

He added that the programme also advances the Authority's digital transformation and enables work teams to track progress continuously, thereby ensuring the expected impact on the advancement of the charitable and humanitarian sector.

Director of the Planning and Quality Department, Ashwaq Abdullah al-Aji delivered an introductory presentation on the programme, outlining its operating mechanisms, key progress indicators, and the periodic reports it generates to support decision-making. (QNA)

# QGOSM completes gravitational acceleration measurement



The Qatar General Organisation for Standards and Metrology (QGOSM) announced the completion of the first measurement of absolute gravitational acceleration in Qatar.

This measurement was taken as part of a scientific co-operation project between national metrology centres in member states of the Gulf Metrology Organisation (GULFMET), aiming to establish a network for accurate measurements of absolute gravitational acceleration in the Gulf Co-operation Council (GCC) countries.

The measurements were conducted at QGOSM's Central Laboratories and Calibration Department on Nov 26 and 27, 2025, using state-of-the-art global equipment and technologies, with an accuracy of ff5 microgals. Experts from the Saudi National Center for Measurement and Calibration (NMCC) carried out the measurements, while specialists from the

Center for Geographic Information Systems (GIS) of the Ministry of Municipality in Qatar participated in determining the measurement site's co-ordinates and altitude, given their impact on the value of absolute gravitational acceleration.

An international report containing the precise values of the absolute gravitational acceleration measurements at the measurement site will be issued and made publicly available, given the importance of these measurements and their significant impact on numerous fields and applications, such as geodesy, energy, aviation, and scientific research at research centres and universities within the country.

This achievement aligns with the goals of Qatar National Vision 2030, which focuses on building a knowledge-based economy and enhancing scientific and technological capabilities through the development of the country's quality infrastructure. (QNA)

# Ministry recalls Lincoln, Lexus models

The Ministry of Commerce and Industry (MoCI), in co-operation with Almana Motors Company, has announced the recall of Lincoln Nautilus vehicle 2025-2026 models, due to a malfunction in the audio processing system causing the car not to emit warning sounds.

The ministry, in co-operation with Al Abdulghani Motors, also announced the recall of Lexus LX600, ES 2022-2023 models, Lexus RX350 2020-2023 models, Lexus RX500h 2023 model, and Lexus LS500 2021-2022 models. The recall is due to a possible defect in the Adaptive High Beam System (AHS) LED units, which may lead the warning message to be displayed on the multi-information display, and the AHS function and High Beam may become inoperable. The ministry urged all consumers to report any violations or breaches through the following communication channels: Call Centre: 16001, e-mail: info@moci.gov.qa, ministry's accounts on social media: @mociqatar, ministry's Mobile App: MOCIQATAR (available on iOS and Android devices)

# GAC processes 456,604 declarations in November

The General Authority of Customs (GAC) announced that it had processed 456,604 customs declarations through the custom ports of Qatar during Nov 2025. GAC said in a post on X platform that the customs declarations processed through seaports were 16,791, while those processed through air cargo port totalled 417,310, and the land cargo port recorded 22,503 declarations. The number of customs declarations processed at customs ports during October reached 552,526, distributed as follows: 16,737 declarations through seaports, 515,127 through air cargo port, and 20,662 through land cargo crossing. (QNA)

## Nepal news agency delegation visits QNA HQ

A delegation from the National News Agency Nepal, headed by Executive Chairman Dharmendra Jha, visited the headquarters of Qatar News Agency (QNA) to enhance co-operation and exchange expertise. The delegation was briefed on the nature of QNA's work and the developments it has witnessed recently across its various departments. The delegation toured several QNA departments to learn about the modern work systems utilised by Qatar News Agency (QNA), which positively enhance daily operations. The delegation also visited the QNA Training Hall, where they learned about the specialised and high-quality training programmes offered, as well as its role in training journalism graduates and media personnel in the State who wish to join QNA or other state institutions. (QNA)







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Airbus counts cost of relying on single model

This week, Airbus got a brutal reminder that even the world's most-delivered jet — the A320 — isn't immune to shocks as disparate as solar flares and flawed metal. Days after recalling 6,000 A320-series planes over a software glitch linked to cosmic radiation, the European giant was forced to slash delivery targets when defects surfaced in some of their fuselage panels.

The twin setbacks — one rooted in astrophysics, the other in basic metallurgy — underscore how fragile success can be for a planemaker that dominates the busiest corner of aviation and is on track to outpace Boeing for a seventh straight year.

"As we put one thing behind us, we have another," CEO Guillaume Faury told Reuters as he weighed how many aircraft could be affected by problems with the thickness of panels.

Last Friday, Airbus issued surprise instructions to airlines to revert to a previous version of software in a computer that directs the nose angle on some jets, several weeks after a JetBlue A320 tilted downwards, injuring about a dozen on board. It blamed the issue on a vulnerability to solar flares that could, in theory, have caused the plane to lurch downwards — a brush with the sun reminiscent of Greek mythology as airlines scrambled to deal with a flaw nicknamed the "Icarus bug".

The rollback happened faster than expected but within days Airbus was grappling with a more humdrum issue threatening to cut short the year-end rush in plane deliveries: the discovery of flawed fuselage panels.

Airbus has been at odds with some of its suppliers over plans to raise production to meet strong demand for air travel

The glitch, first reported by Reuters last Monday, caused a sharp sell-off in the company's shares as investors pondered how it would hit already shaky delivery targets for the year. Within 48 hours Airbus had cut its target by 4% and on Friday it confirmed deliveries had already slowed in November. The two unrelated setbacks came weeks after the A320 series, including the best-selling A321, surpassed the recently troubled Boeing 737 MAX as the most-delivered passenger jet in history.

"Airbus is at present an A321 machine," said Agency Partners analyst Sash Tusa. "That extreme concentration on a single model has both strengths and vulnerabilities."

The broader A320 medium-haul family accounts for most of profit, he said, adding there were inconsistencies between Airbus lowering delivery targets and maintaining financial forecasts.

Airbus shares were down around 3% over the week having dropped as much as 11% last Monday. As the week ends, Airbus is under pressure from official investigators to supply more data on the software grounding as well as pushback from some airlines reluctant to take delivery without new guarantees on affected fuselage parts, sources said. It also faces lingering questions about supply chains.

Airbus has been at odds with some of its suppliers over plans to raise production to meet strong demand for air travel. Unions and suppliers say quality snags such as the panel problem at a Spanish supplier highlights how some are struggling. Airbus said that the industrial flaw was not a safety issue. It has said previously that supply chains are improving overall after being thrown into disarray by the Covid pandemic.

In particular, the fuselage snag highlights concerns over one of the weakest parts of the industry: the aerostructures firms which make parts that are never replaced, cutting them off from spare parts sales that have been highly profitable for others. Insiders said Airbus's week-long crisis began last Thursday in the charged atmosphere immediately following an appeals trial of Airbus and Air France for corporate manslaughter over the crash of an A330 in 2009 — charges both strongly deny. Engineers probing the JetBlue incident had just concluded that a software update designed to make it harder for A320s to stall even when their normal defences are accidentally disabled — echoing the loss of control on AF447 — may have removed a backup layer of protection used to correct solar interference.

But with the cosmic particles leaving no trace, Airbus's findings on JetBlue were hypothetical and there was no proof, sources said, prompting the precautionary recall decision.

"We are used to this in space, it's not uncommon," Faury said. "We discovered that we had a vulnerability on the software on that computer, so we had to deal with it."

Experts said the incident was a reminder of aviation's exposure to Earth's bombardment by rays from deep space or the sun, an issue raised by a landmark Boeing/IBM study in 1995 but increasingly relevant as modern jets use more electronic chips.

"It's an alarm... the international community needs to work in unison to make sure that we further understand this phenomenon," cosmic radiation expert George Danos, president of the Cyprus Space Exploration Organisation, said. — Reuters

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Qatar, Saudi advance Vision 2030 goals with strategic accords



QNA  
Riyadh

Building on the deep-rooted historical ties and fraternal relations uniting the leaderships of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and Qatar and their brotherly peoples, and in furtherance of the steadily advancing bilateral relationship between them, His Highness the Amir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani, paid a visit to Saudi Arabia yesterday at the gracious invitation of Crown Prince and Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Prince Mohammed bin Salman bin Abdulaziz al-Saud.

The Crown Prince welcomed His Highness the Amir at Al-Yamamah Palace in Riyadh. The two leaders held an official session of talks during which they reviewed the close relations between the two countries, explored prospects for joint co-operation, and discussed avenues for further strengthening the relationship across various domains.

Both sides commended the positive outcomes of the reciprocal fraternal visits exchanged between the Crown Prince and Prime Minister, and his brother, His Highness the Amir of Qatar, which have significantly contributed to enhancing the level of co-operation between the two states.

Amid an atmosphere of cordiality, fraternity, and mutual trust, the Eighth Meeting of the Qatari-Saudi Co-ordination Council was convened during the visit, co-chaired by His Highness the Amir and the Crown Prince and Prime Minister of Saudi Arabia, and attended by Their Highnesses, Excellencies, and distinguished members of the council. The co-chairs reviewed the distinguished bilateral relations, praised the achievements realised within the council's framework, and affirmed the importance of sustaining and further developing joint co-ordination in priority areas, including political, security, and military; energy; industry; economy; investment; trade; technology; infrastructure; culture; tourism; and education.

Both sides lauded the strength of bilateral economic ties and the scale of inter-trade, noting that trade exchange reached \$930.3mn in 2024 (excluding the value of re-exported goods), marking a remarkable 634% increase compared to 2021. They underscored the importance of enhancing joint efforts to diversify and expand trade exchange, facilitate commercial flows, overcome any challenges that may arise, and capitalise on available opportunities in priority sectors within Saudi Vision 2030 and Qatar National Vision 2030 — transforming these

opportunities into tangible partnerships that reinforce economic and commercial integration for the benefit of both countries and their brotherly peoples.

The two sides welcomed sustainable bilateral investment co-operation through partnerships between sovereign wealth funds and investment companies. They affirmed the importance of intensifying reciprocal visits by officials from both the public and private sectors and holding investment meetings and business forums.

They also highlighted the importance of enhancing the reliability and stability of global energy markets and ensuring the security of supply across all energy sources in service of the interests of producers and consumers alike, thereby supporting global economic growth.

Both sides expressed their desire to explore ways of strengthening co-operation in energy fields, including electricity, renewable energy, energy efficiency, and the development of related projects in a manner that yields mutual benefits for both economies.

The two parties stressed the importance of bolstering co-operation in developing and sustaining energy-sector supply chains and enabling collaboration between companies to maximise the use of local resources, thus contributing to more resilient and efficient energy supplies.

They agreed on the need to strengthen co-operation on climate policies within international agreements and regional and international bodies, and affirmed that such policies should focus on emissions rather than sources.

Both sides further agreed on the importance of enhanced co-operation in the following areas:

- The digital economy and innovation
  - Industry and mining and intensifying joint work towards industrial integration
  - Youth, sports, and cultural programmes and activities
  - Education, including the development of high-quality joint academic programmes
  - Media, including elevating the reliability of media content, promoting joint media production, and enhancing media coverage of events and occasions hosted by both countries
  - Cybersecurity
  - Health
- In the defence and security fields, the two sides affirmed their determination to strengthen and develop their defence partnership in a manner that serves their shared interests and supports efforts to enhance regional and international security and stability.

They emphasised co-ordinated positions in confronting regional challenges to help ensure the security of the region and bolster its readiness. Both parties commended the existing level of security co-operation and co-ordination across all domains, including the exchange of expertise and security visits at all levels; information sharing related to traveller security; the organisation of training courses; participation in cybersecurity conferences held in both countries; border security; counter-narcotics efforts; and combating extremism, terrorism, and their financing, as well as fighting crime in all its forms. They expressed their aspiration to further strengthen this co-operation in a manner that enhances security and stability in both brotherly states.

The two sides welcomed the signing of the High-Speed Electric Rail Link Agreement between the two countries, which will connect Riyadh and Doha via Dammam and Al-Hofuf. They noted that this project constitutes a major strategic initiative aligned with Saudi Vision 2030 and Qatar National Vision 2030, contributing to the facilitation of tourism and trade flows and deepening linkages between the two brotherly peoples.

They also welcomed the signing of several agreements and memoranda of understanding during the visit, covering railway transport, investment promotion, food security, media co-operation, and collaboration in the non-profit sector.

On international affairs, both sides reaffirmed their resolve to continue coordinating and intensifying efforts aimed at safeguarding international peace and security. They exchanged views on issues of mutual concern at both regional and international levels. The Saudi side expressed its appreciation for Qatar's ratification of the Charter of the World Water Organisation, which aims to unify and strengthen global efforts to address water challenges and develop comprehensive solutions.

At the conclusion of the visit, His Highness the Amir of Qatar expressed his gratitude and appreciation to the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques, King Salman bin Abdulaziz al-Saud, and to Crown Prince and Prime Minister, Prince Mohammed bin Salman bin Abdulaziz al-Saud, for the warm reception and generous hospitality extended to him and his accompanying delegation. The Crown Prince voiced his best wishes for continued health and well-being to His Highness the Amir of Qatar, and for ever greater progress and prosperity to the brotherly Qatari people.

IndiGo crisis exposes risks in Indian aviation

By Abhijith Ganapavaram  
New Delhi

A wave of flight cancellations by IndiGo, India's largest airline, sparked a week of chaos and grounded tens of thousands of passengers, laying bare the risks of having a duopoly-like situation in the world's fastest-growing aviation market.

For years, IndiGo with a 65% domestic market share has helped Indians realise their dreams of flying — an aspiration shared by Prime Minister Narendra Modi who once said those "in slippers should also be seen in aircraft".

The airline became the poster child of the nation's aviation boom in recent years, with its promise of low fares and on-time performance.

But last week changed it all: IndiGo cancelled at least 2,000 flights because of a shortage of pilots after it failed to plan adequately for new rules limiting how many hours they work. That upended vacation plans, weddings and flooded social media with photos and videos of luggage piling up at terminals — scenes never witnessed in India's aviation history.

IndiGo's woes came at a critical time for the airline and the industry. Rival Air India, which commands a 27% market share and was owned by the government until 2022, has for years faced complaints of an ageing fleet and poor service, and is battling tighter scrutiny since a June crash killed 260 people.

IndiGo has said it hopes to return to normalcy in the coming days, but its troubles have drawn warnings from both politicians and aviation experts. The crisis has raised concerns about the risks of over reliance on a single carrier and whether the airline is really too big to fail.

The government stepped in swiftly, relaxing

rules on pilot fatigue management to ease the disruptions. IndiGo has repeatedly apologised but has not disclosed financial losses from the crisis.

"IndiGo's size has grown to the point where operational setbacks pose systemic risk," said Harsh Vardhan, chairman of Starair Consulting.

If IndiGo or Air India get into "trouble, there will be mayhem in Indian aviation... the government needs to reduce jet fuel taxes and encourage more competition," he added.

Airline duopolies exist in a few countries, such as Australia and Canada. Even China, the world's second most-populous nation, has three state-owned carriers, and several private ones.

India's aviation market is not a duopoly in the strictest sense but analysts say that 92% market share of IndiGo and Air India — including its low-cost Air India Express — means it is a duopoly-like situation and creates vulnerabilities.

On many routes connecting smaller towns, IndiGo holds a monopoly.

"A country cannot grow robustly with duopolies, or effective monopolies, in any sector," G R Gopinath, founder of now-defunct low-cost airline Air Deccan, wrote in a weekend editorial in the *Economic Times* newspaper.

Despite government efforts to expand airports and simplify operations rules, few carriers have succeeded. High taxes, fierce competition and supply-chain snags have driven airlines like Kingfisher, Jet Airways and Go First into bankruptcy in recent years.

IndiGo did not respond to a Reuters request for comment. On Sunday, it said it was on track to operate more than 1,650 flights and expressed confidence that operations would stabilise by tomorrow.

Modi spoke of his ambitions for India's aviation sector at the global airlines conference in New Delhi this year, but that vision mostly

depends on IndiGo and Air India's success.

About 174 million passengers travelled from and within India by air in 2024, 10% more than a year ago, International Air Transport Association data shows.

Founded in 2006 by Indian businessmen Rakesh Gangwal and Rahul Bhatia, IndiGo has grown rapidly. It now has a fleet of more than 400 aircraft, mostly Airbus A320s, and serves close to 380,000 customers a day through its more than 2,000 daily flights.

The airline is led by CEO Pieter Elbers, former chief of KLM Royal Dutch Airlines.

"This seems to be the lowest point in the company's history. Disruptions are hurting the brand image," said an IndiGo executive, who declined to be identified due to the sensitivity of the matter.

With \$9bn in revenues and \$807mn in profits last fiscal year, IndiGo dominates India's aviation sector. It will likely face a hit to its annual revenue due to disruptions — with customer refunds as of Sunday already touching \$68mn, and set to rise.

But the bigger hit will be to its reputation, built over years by making punctuality a key selling point.

An IndiGo commercial on YouTube from 2011 had pilots and other staff singing in unison: "Every time we fly, we will ensure you will land on time."

The carrier had an average on-time performance of 91.4% as recently as July — the best among Indian airlines at six major airports. However, on Friday, that figure plunged to just 3.7%.

The crisis is reminiscent of Southwest Airlines' holiday season meltdown in 2022, which led to cancellation of 16,900 flights and stranded over 2mn passengers. Those disruptions cost the US carrier at least \$400mn in revenue. — Reuters



# Move towards innovative financing seen for development, sustainability

By Joseph Varghese  
Staff Reporter

Funding agencies including the Qatar Fund for Development (QFFD) are transitioning from traditional mode of donors to innovative and inclusive financing bodies, QFFD director-general Fahad bin Hamad al-Sulaiti noted yesterday.

"I think that not only the QFFD is moving this way, transforming our mandate but most funds are transitioning," he said. "We are moving from a traditional way to a new way of innovative financing. I think the issue really is scaling, and what we need is how we can have very innovative solutions that have the scaling to move forward."

Al-Sulaiti was speaking during a panel discussion on "Innovative Financing for Development: Scaling Impact and Driving Inclusive, Sustainable Growth" at the Doha Forum 2025.

He noted that as per the data, the global inequality gap is increasing and not decreasing.

"Education and health, economic em-



The panel discussion at the Doha Forum 2025. **PICTURE:** Thajudheen

powerment among others, the gap in Africa is increasing," al-Sulaiti said. "A large number of people in Africa still do not have electricity. This will never bring peace back, will never bring security back, and will never bring a good impact."

"The GDP always will be very low because they are not utilising their natural resources well," he added.

To overcome such challenges, the official suggested the involvement of private sector.

"I have been meeting with a number of ministers and presidents during the Doha Forum and everyone is really taking this approach now," al-Sulaiti said.

"We have seen most of countries are now

moving from government schooling," he continued. "Now we can see a lot of private sectors have big investment on schooling and hospitals and other areas. So what we need is, the new way of supporting the least developed countries."

Al-Sulaiti was joined by AFD (French Development Agency) chief executive Remy Rioux, United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) administrator Alexander De Croo, and Interpeace president Itonde Kakoma at the session moderated by International Finance Corporation division director Khawaja Aftab Ahmed.

De Croo said in a video message that developing countries face an annual \$4.3tn gap

to achieve the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

"In almost 60 developing countries, more than 10% of government revenues go to debt interest payments, leaving less money for schools, hospitals and sustainable growth," he said. "This is not a story of scarcity. It is a story of misalignment between capital and need."

Rioux noted that the institutions have become an enabler for the mobilisation of private finance while Kakoma highlighted the need for peace for economic prosperity and how leadership on innovative finance links to or is inextricably linked to peace diplomacy.

"Peace is a de-risking mechanism by reducing the barriers that impede private sector investment and market formation," Kakoma said. "So, investors are looking for predictability, enforceable contracts, functioning institutions and social cohesions, the very things that I see investing."

"However, conflict erodes all of these basic things, making capital more expensive, short-term and extractive, rather than productive and sustained," he added. "We look at peace as risk mitigating rather than a parallel sector, enabling economic transformation."

## Qatar 'believes sustainable peace is the basis for safeguarding the right to education'

HE the Minister of State at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Dr Mohammed bin Abdulaziz bin Saleh al-Khulaifi affirmed Qatar's conviction that just and sustainable peace is the basis under which all rights can be safeguarded, foremost among them the right to education.

In his speech during a session titled "Education as Justice in Times of Crisis", held as part of the Doha Forum 2025, HE Dr al-Khulaifi noted that the world is witnessing the most severe decline in peace indicators since the end of World War II.

He pointed out that, according to the Global Peace Index, geopolitical tensions are escalating, conflicts are becoming more complex and prolonged, civilians are increasingly exposed to danger, and paths to resolution and recovery are narrowing.

HE Dr al-Khulaifi said that in Gaza, Syria, Sudan, and many other regions, education systems have not only suffered from poverty, but have also been directly targeted by violence, displacement, and the complete destruction of schools and learning institutions, in an attempt to weaken communities at their roots.

Qatar's efforts in mediation, dialogue, and conflict resolution, the minister continued, contribute to saving lives, stabilising communities, and preserving education itself.

HE Dr al-Khulaifi added that Qatar's efforts affirm one clear truth: education is a right with which justice is upheld, an embodiment of shared humanity, and a collective responsibility borne by all nations, which require co-ordinated and serious action.

The minister called for looking at education as an essential pillar of peace and international co-operation, instead of it just being a standalone service. - **QNA**



The briefing was designed to support and guide media representatives in preparation for the upcoming Web Summit, slated for February 1-4, 2026. **PICTURE:** Ram Chand

## GCO, Web Summit Media Team organise briefing for upcoming edition

The Government Communications Office (GCO) and the Web Summit Media Team co-hosted a media briefing yesterday for Doha-based journalists ahead of the event's 2026 edition.

Described as "the first session of its kind", the briefing was designed to support and guide media representatives in preparation for the upcoming summit, slated for February 1-4, 2026, at the Doha Exhibition and Convention Centre (DECC).

The Web Summit Media Team discussed a comprehensive onboarding and an operational overview, along with insights on how to help participating media make the most of their news coverage and maximise output.

Yesterday's session covered registration and logistics procedures from obtaining media accreditation and requesting interviews with speakers to reserving interview booths, accessing the press release portal, and understanding coverage guidelines, among others.

The Web Summit Media Team also shared what global audiences are currently interested in, helping local media tailor their content effectively.

## Adviser to prime minister meets officials



HE the Adviser to the Prime Minister and Official Spokesperson for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Dr Majid bin Mohammed al-Ansari held meetings with the Special Envoy of the Austrian Chancellor Peter Launsky-Tieffenthal and Poland's Deputy Foreign Minister Wojciech Zajączkowski on the sidelines of the 23rd Doha Forum 2025. Dr al-Ansari also held a meeting with a delegation from the British parliament on the sidelines of the Doha Forum. The meetings reviewed co-operation, relations and ways to support and develop them, in addition to a number of regional and international issues of common interest. - **QNA**



## ABA Holidays opens kiosk in Katara, expands customer experience

Ali Bin Ali Holidays (ABA Holidays) has announced the launch of its first-ever Holidays Kiosk at 21 High Street, Katara, marking a milestone in the company's journey to bring personalised travel experiences closer to its customers.

Under the theme *We Build The Trip, You Live The Story*, the kiosk is designed as a travel hub, where visitors can explore curated vacation packages, seasonal offers, and destination inspirations with travel consultants.

The initiative reflects Ali Bin Ali Holidays' vision to make travel planning more accessi-



ble, interactive, and inspiring for everyone, a statement said.

The launch event featured an evening programme graced by ambassadors of countries including Colombia, Cuba, Dominican Republic, Kazakhstan, Uganda, and Uzbekistan.

"Travel is about living a story worth telling," said Ali Bin Ali International Travel & Tourism general manager Nadeem Ulde.

"With the launch of our Holidays Kiosk, we are giving our customers a space where imagination meets expertise, where they can dream, plan, and embark on journeys that

truly enrich their lives," he said.

"When we build your trip, you get a refined perspective to world exploration in an easier, personalised, and more memorable manner; thereby living the story," Ulde added.

In the coming months, ABA Holidays and the tourism authorities of various countries will be launching weekly installations to promote destinations and packages during the winter season, including getaways to South Korea, Morocco, Colombia, Cuba, and Sri Lanka. More information is available from [www.alibinalitravel.com](http://www.alibinalitravel.com) or +974 31490333.

## Mada launches 2026-28 strategy

Under the patronage and in the presence of HE the Minister of Social Development and Family Buthaina bint Ali al-Jabr al-Nuaimi, Mada Assistive Technology Centre-Qatar organised the Mada Centre Strategy Exhibition 2026-28, under the theme *Universal Access*.

The event also featured the official announcement of Mada's new strategy for the period 2026-28, which outlines the next phase in Qatar's journey towards universal accessibility.

HE al-Nuaimi emphasised the importance of strengthening the ecosystem of inclusion and accessibility in Qatar: "Promoting inclusion and accessibility is the cornerstone of our national efforts to

build a cohesive society where equal opportunities are available to all without exception. In Qatar, we continue to invest in innovation, inclusive solutions, and assistive technologies through the pioneering Mada Centre to ensure the active participation of persons with disabilities and older persons in all aspects of life."

"Our upcoming strategy reflects our commitment to building an inclusive future driven by innovation and partnerships to achieve universal access for all," said Mada Centre chief executive Maha al-Mansouri. "We welcome all community members, partners, and innovators to participate in the exhibition and help shape the future landscape of empowerment and universal accessibility in Qatar." - **QNA**



## India Mahdavi heads 2026 Design Doha Prize jury

Design Doha, Qatar Museums' biennial showcase for excellence and innovation in design from Qatar and across the Middle East, North Africa, and South Asia (Menasa), has announced the appointment of internationally renowned architect and designer India Mahdavi (pictured left) as head of jury for the Design Doha Prize 2026.

"India Mahdavi represents the very essence of what Design Doha stands for: a celebration of cultural dialogue, craftsmanship, and optimism through design,"

said Design Doha acting director Fahad al-Obaidly.

A globally acclaimed architect and designer, Paris-based Mahdavi is renowned for her distinctive approach to colour, form, and cultural storytelling.

Awarded on April 14, 2026, the Design Doha Prize honours innovation and craftsmanship in four categories: Craft, Product Design, Furniture Design, and Emerging Talent.

More information is available at <https://designdoha.org.qa/en/calendar/design-doha-prize/>

## Doha Design District, HBKU conclude Sustainable Islamic Urbanism course

Doha Design District (DDD), in collaboration with Msheireb Properties and Hamad Bin Khalifa University (HBKU), has concluded a five-week course exploring "Sustainable Islamic Urbanism", which positions Msheireb Downtown Doha as a leading "Living Labs" for modern Islamic urban design.

Delivered as part of HBKU's Sustainable Islamic Urbanism programme, the module combined lectures, research tasks, and immersive fieldwork.

"By integrating academic insight with our real-world development model, we are strengthening the foundations for future cities that are smarter, more sustain-

able, and deeply connected to their cultural context," said Msheireb Properties chief executive engineer Ali al-Kuwari.

"This collaboration reflects our belief that education must be lived, not just learned," said DDD education and sustainability senior manager Fatima Mohamed Fawzy.

Emine Filiz Kolmek, assistant professor of Sustainable Urbanism at the HBKU, said: "Through this collaboration, our students experienced how core values, urbanism concepts, and cultural sustainability rooted in the Islamic tradition can be actualised and meaningfully reinterpreted in contemporary urban design."

## Ooredoo honoured at Kahramaa 'Success Partners Forum 2025'

Ooredoo has been honoured at the 'Success Partners Forum for the Electricity and Water Sectors', hosted by the Qatar General Electricity & Water Corporation (Kahramaa), highlighting Ooredoo Business's contribution to supporting and enabling the corporation's strategic projects and national development objectives. Ooredoo Qatar senior Business Accounts director Hassan Ismail al-Emadi received the award on behalf of Ooredoo Business from Kahramaa president engineer Abdulla bin Ali al-Thayab.



## PUE, AUB form partnership to advance education excellence

Qatar Foundation (QF)'s Pre-University Education (PUE) and the American University of Beirut (AUB) signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) to work together on developing teachers, strengthening school leadership, and promoting innovation in K-12 education.

"The signing of this co-operation agreement between the AUB and PUE represents an important step that reflects our shared vision that the development of education begins with building strong institutional partnerships across the Arab world," said QF PUE president Abeer al-Khalifa.

"Our partnership with Qatar Foundation stems from a shared belief that every child in the Arab world deserves a high-quality education, and that collaboration between our institutions is the path to a true Arab renaissance," AUB president Dr Fadlo Khuri said.







Her Highness Sheikha Moza bint Nasser at the PUE's 'Civilisation Day' event. **PICTURES:** Aisha al-Musallam



# Sheikha Moza attends PUE's 'Civilisation Day'

Her Highness Sheikha Moza bint Nasser, Chairperson of Qatar Foundation (QF), attended the "Civilisation Day" event, organised by the QF's Pre-University Education (PUE), which was held as an interactive learning experience that reflected the educational vision of the Islamic Civilisation curriculum and aimed to move learning from theory into real-life practice.

The event served as a platform that enabled students to explore the roots of Islamic civilisation, learn about its key historical stages, and connect them to their national identity and contemporary culture through research-based, analytical, and creative learning practices.

Students showcased their learning through interactive stations they led themselves, featuring performances, research projects, and visual and digital content that reflected the scientific, artistic, and human values and achievements of each era.

"Civilisation Day reflects the outcome of an educational journey through which our students deepened their understanding of Islamic civilisation and its origins, while also gaining solid knowledge of Qatar's history and rich heritage," said PUE president Abeer al-Khalifa.

She said that revisiting the study of

## Sheikha Moza meets UNDP official



Her Highness Sheikha Moza bint Nasser, Chairperson of Qatar Foundation for Education, Science and Community Development (QF), met United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) administrator Alexander De Croo yesterday. They discussed strengthening the UNDP's partnership with the QF in the field of innovation and youth empowerment, and explored ways to advance their joint initiative with the Education Above All Foundation (EAA) to support providing education for the most vulnerable communities. **PICTURE:** Aisha al-Musallam

Islamic civilisation helps reinforce the lessons drawn from historical experience, which in turn "shape our present, strengthen our sense of identity, and provide a clearer vision for the future"

"Our students' journey through Islamic

civilisation shows that identity is a living awareness that grows through learning and is strengthened through practice," al-Khalifa added.

"When students rediscover Islamic civilisation, they do not only revisit the



past, but also confidently shape the future and use its values as a guide for the road ahead," she said.

Civilisation Day, she continued, gave students a space to demonstrate their deep understanding of the concepts of Islamic civilisation and the history of Qatar.

"What they presented today was not just a display of historical knowledge, but clear proof of the power of education to connect knowledge with real life and to turn civilisation into daily practice and lasting values that inspire future generations," the official added.

"Civilisation Day marked the first practical activation of the Islamic Civilisation curriculum in QF schools, as learning moved beyond theoretical knowledge into a live experience based on research, analysis, and critical thinking," said PUE execu-

tive director of Student Affairs and Community Engagement Sara al-Hajri. "This helped build true understanding as awareness and identity, not just memorisation."

She said that Civilisation Day was built on an integrated educational approach that brought together values and thought, historical and social context, and tangible civilisational expressions.

This approach, al-Hajri added, provided students with a balanced understanding of civilisation.

"During the Day, students took on multiple roles as historians, researchers, performers, and guides," she continued. "It was a fully integrated learning experience that demonstrated their ability to turn knowledge into real practice and highlighted their skills in critical thinking, expression, and teamwork!" - QNA

# 'World Wide Walls' brings street art into Doha's neighbourhoods

By Joey Aguilar  
Doha

Qatar Museums (QM) has taken the third edition of "World Wide Walls: Doha" deeper into the city's neighbourhoods, bringing unique cultural experiences closer to communities.

Organised under the QM's Public Art programme, this street-art festival is unfolding at Al Aziziyah area, where two Qataris and 12 international artists are transforming building facades into public art pieces.



Kitt Bennett showing his work.

Speaking to *Gulf Times* on the sidelines of a press preview yesterday, QM senior public art planning specialist Dimitrije Bugarski said the team worked directly with private building owners instead of one stakeholder, a process that required careful co-ordination and community engagement.

"Usually, if you notice, most cultural content happens around the coastal line," he said. "We wanted to go more into the city, into the fabric, and bring something to the people and neighbourhoods who lack this kind of content."

"We want to enrich their space visually and aesthetically so they can enjoy it within their own grounds, instead of having to go far from home to see something of this sort," Bugarski said.

He added that the selection of artists this year reflects the QM's ongoing effort to broaden representation and deepen international collaboration.

"We always aim to have artists from each continent, to bring as much diversity as we can. We managed to do that this time as well," Bugarski said.

He noted that the lineup includes participants from Chile and Argentina, both part of Qatar's Years of Culture engagements, alongside artists from festivals that the QM has partnered with, such as Hawaii Walls, Japan Walls and HK Walls in Hong Kong.

According to Bugarski, such initiatives and partnerships also create what he describes as a global artist exchange that enriches both local talent and Doha's cultural scene.

Among the participating artists is American muralist Roxy Ortiz, who works under the name

Wooden Wave alongside her husband, Matt.

Their mural at Al Aziziyah takes the form of a falcon-shaped dwelling, which she said is a visual narrative that links together Qatari heritage, nature, and sustainability.

"We incorporated the Bedouin tent structure with the souq market," Ortiz said, noting that the composition layers symbolic elements: young falcons perched on stands, geometric motifs drawn from local architecture, and a mangrove tree forming the structure of the falcon's head, a tribute to Qatar's coastal ecosystems.

The artist said one of the most striking features is the falcon's 'eyelid,' depicted as solar panels.

"It has something to do with technology and sustainability, using the resources here," she added. "There's a lot of beautiful sunshine, so you can use that for energy."

Australian mural artist Kitt Bennett said his piece explores humanity's evolving relationship with technology, from smartphones to artificial intelligence (AI), visualising how deeply intertwined daily life has become with digital tools.

"One of the main themes is how we as humans and our technology... are becoming more and more merged," he said. "The rise of AI is super interesting right now, and usually as an artist, if you think about something (of its) a lot, it comes out in your art."

Bennett pointed out that street art's power lies in its visibility and vulnerability.

"It's a very powerful place to be, a super vulnerable place, to put your stuff in the public, but I love doing it, even though it's exhausting," he said.



Roxy and Matt Ortiz working on their piece. **PICTURES:** Joey Aguilar

# Alfardan Automobiles, Teen Art Awards collaborate for Qatar debut



The competition brought together young creatives aged 13-17 from across Qatar, showcasing works submitted in a wide variety of artistic mediums.

Alfardan Automobiles, the official importer of BMW Group vehicles in Qatar, has partnered with Teen Art Awards (TAA) 2025 as the international event made its debut in Qatar.

Now in its third season, the TAA is a pioneering global youth arts initiative that empowers teenage creators from across the world, bridging heritage and innovation to shape a sustainable future through art.

The festival took place under the theme *A Culture Dialogue for a Shared Future*.

As the Strategic Mobility Partner, Alfardan Automobiles contributed to the event's mission of celebrating creativity and advancing the region's cultural and artistic landscape, providing seven BMW 5 Series vehicles with professional drivers to transport VIP guests throughout the event.

The competition brought together young creatives aged 13-17 from across Qatar, showcasing works submitted in a wide variety of artistic mediums such as painting, drawing, photography, digital art and illustration, mixed media, collage, sculpture, and animation.

Selected artists had their work presented at the festival, with winners receiving prizes, mentorship opportunities, grants, international exposure, and access to major global art events.

The TAA was held at Qatar Museums' Teen Hub, a forward-looking initiative created to empower youth aged 13-17 through meaningful opportunities in the cultural and creative fields.

Representing BMW Group's long-term commitment to art and culture, Alfardan Automobiles showcased THE 8 X JEFF KOONS Edition, an exclusive BMW

M850i xDrive Gran Coupé designed by world-renowned pop artist Jeff Koons.

With only 99 cars produced globally, the design of this special edition incorporates elements from Pop Art, as well as geometric patterns that blend perfectly with the lines and contours of the BMW 8 Series Gran Coupé.

Alfardan Automotive chief marketing officer Omar Hussain Alfardan was directly involved in the TAA youth art competition as a member of the jury, where entries focused on this year's theme, connecting heritage and innovation, identity and technology.

In addition to his business interests, Alfardan's participation in the TAA was a further display of his commitment to empowering the community as a member of the Committee of Trustees of the State Appreciation and Encouragement Awards in Sciences, Arts and Literature.

"Alfardan Automobiles is honoured to be part of the first TAA to be held in Qatar," said Alfardan Automobiles general manager Ayman Berjawi.

"Community engagement through supporting regional youth empowerment and creativity is an important pillar for us," he added. "Our participation in the TAA embodies our commitment to inspiring progress and celebrating the creative spirit that drives both the next generation of talent and Qatar's cultural excellence."



Selected artists had their work presented at the festival, with winners receiving prizes, mentorship opportunities, grants, international exposure, and access to global art events.