



# GULF TIMES

YOU DESERVE  
to watch without interruptionNEW  
UNLIMITED  
PLANSEnjoy YouTube Premium  
with Vodafone WorldBarcode  
0 668039 136499

THURSDAY Vol. XXXXVI No. 13628

January 22, 2026  
Sha'ban 3, 1447 AH

www.gulf-times.com 2 Riyals

published in  
QATAR  
since 1978

## BUSINESS | Page 1

State Street, QNB Group sign strategic agreement to launch new custody servicing model



## Amir honours Police Academy graduates

### • 8th cadet batch takes oath to serve with dedication

By Ayman Adly

Staff Reporter

His Highness the Amir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani patronised the graduation ceremony of the eighth batch of cadets from the Police College of the Police Academy in Al Saliya yesterday, marking the commissioning of 168 newly qualified officers from Qatar and six Arab countries.

The graduation ceremony was attended by Sheikhs, ministers, heads of diplomatic missions accredited to the state, senior officers from the Ministry of Defence,

Ministry of Interior, the Amiri Guard, State Security Service, and Internal Security Force (Lekhwiya), as well as senior security and military leaders from several fraternal and friendly countries, and guests of the ceremony.

The national anthem was played at the beginning of the ceremony. The commander of the graduates' queue then stepped forward to ask His Highness the Amir to inspect the queue of the 168 graduates from Qatar, Kuwait, Jordan, Palestine, Libya, Yemen, and Somalia.

A total of 117 graduates were from Qatar, while 51 hailed from other Arab countries. [To Page 12](#)



## PM meets French FM



HE the Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman bin Jassim al-Thani met yesterday with French Minister for Europe and Foreign Affairs Jean-Noel Barot, on the margin of the World Economic Forum 2026. The meeting discussed bilateral co-operation and ways to support and strengthen it as well as developments in the region, particularly in the Gaza Strip and the occupied Palestinian territories, in Iran, Syria, and Lebanon, along with a number of issues of mutual interest. (QNA)

## Real estate reform approved

By A Staff Reporter

Doha

The draft law was referred to the Shura Council for further consideration.

The Cabinet also endorsed two draft decisions of HE the Minister of Justice: the first defining the conditions and rules for registering and deregistering arbitrators and determining associated fees, and the second setting out conditions and rules for licensing the establishment of arbitration centres and branches of foreign arbitration centres.

In addition, the Cabinet approved a draft Free Trade Agreement between the governments of the Gulf Co-operation Council (GCC) countries and the government of New Zealand, underscoring Qatar's keenness to strengthen global economic partnerships and boost trade collaboration in diverse sectors. [To Page 6](#)

## 8 Arab, Islamic countries welcome Board of Peace

The foreign ministers of Qatar, Turkiye, Egypt, Jordan, Indonesia, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia and the UAE have welcomed the invitation extended to their leaders by US President Donald Trump to join the Board of Peace.

The ministers announced their countries' shared decision to join the Board of Peace. Each country will sign the joining documents according to their respective relevant legal and other necessary procedures, including Egypt, Pakistan, and the UAE, who have already announced to join.

The ministers reiterated their countries' support for the peace efforts led by President Trump, and reaffirm their countries' commitment to support the implementation of the mission of the Board of Peace as a transi-



tional administration, as set out in the Comprehensive Plan to End the Gaza Conflict and endorsed by United Nations Security Council Resolution 2803.

The resolution is aimed at consolidating a permanent ceasefire, supporting the reconstruction of

Gaza, and advancing a just and lasting peace grounded in the Palestinian right to self-determination and statehood in accordance with international law, thereby paving the way for security and stability for all countries and peoples of the region. (QNA)

## 'Qatar is poised to reshape regional finance landscape'

By Peter Alagos

Business Editor

Qatar is building an entrepreneurial powerhouse that could redefine regional finance – and global investors are taking notice. Daniel Sansano, CEO of Doha-based Daniel Sansano Capitals Inc, believes the country stands at a pivotal moment. "Qatar is uniquely positioned to lead the region, not by replicating what others have done, but by crafting its own playbook," he told *Gulf Times*.

The ecosystem, he says, has three critical advantages: nimbleness, strong capitalisation, and an increasingly global outlook. "The combination is



powerful," Sansano noted, adding that ideas can now scale rapidly in Qatar when paired with disciplined execution and deep market understanding.

Sansano observed that global investors are paying close attention to Qatar's entrepreneurial community. "Qatar is at a pivotal moment where ideas can scale rapidly, with disciplined execution and deep market understanding increasingly shaping the country's entrepreneurial trajectory," he noted.

The CEO also pointed to the pace of change in Qatar's finance industry. "Local firms are balancing global best practices with regional insights. This duality will be one of the key differentiators for Qatar in becoming a hub for strategic capital allocation," Sansano pointed out. [To Page 6](#)

### Amir to patronise graduation event

His Highness the Amir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani will patronise the joint graduation ceremony of military colleges' cadets from Ahmed bin Mohammed Military College, Al Zaeem Mohammed Bin Abdullah Al Attiyah Air Academy, Mohammed Bin Ghanem Al Ghanem Naval Academy, and the Cyber Space Academy. The ceremony will be held at Ahmed bin Mohammed Military College today. (QNA)

### Country braces for cold nights

By Joey Aguilar

Staff Reporter

A sharp winter chill has swept across Qatar, sending nighttime temperatures in Doha down to 11C and making it feel as cold as between 5C and 8C due to strong winds, prompting many residents to bundle up and take extra precautions even as daytime conditions remain inviting.

According to the Department of Meteorology (MET), the cooler spell is expected to continue over the coming days, with generally stable weather and no significant rain forecast.

Temperatures today are set to reach 19C during the day before dropping to 12C at night. Winds may gust to 30mph, while the chance of rainfall remains low at 5%. Despite the mild temperatures, MET has flagged high ultraviolet (UV) levels, advising the public to seek shade during midday hours, wear protective clothing, and apply sunscreen.

Similar conditions will prevail through the weekend and into early next week. Friday's forecast mirrors Thursday at 19C during the day and 13C at night. [To Page 6](#)

# Minister of state for international co-operation meets Greek diplomat



HE the Minister of State for International Co-operation Dr Maryam bint Ali bin Nasser al-Misnad met with Greek ambassador Christos Kapodistrias. The meeting discussed co-operation relations between the two countries, as well as ways to support and strengthen them, especially in the field of culture, and in particular the cultural exchange next year within the Cultural Days initiative, which aims to build long-term partnerships between the State of Qatar and other countries, and to consolidate respect between cultures. The meeting further discussed prospects for co-operation between the two countries in the fields of investment, economy, trade and health, in addition to a number of topics of common interest. **(QNA)**

# **Bahrain king receives credentials of Qatar's ambassador in Manama**

King Hamad bin Isa al-Khalifah of the Kingdom of Bahrain has received the credentials of Nasser bin Abdullah al-Nassr as ambassador extraordinary and plenipotentiary of the State of Qatar to the Kingdom of Bahrain. The ambassador conveyed His Highness the Amir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani's greetings and wishes of good health and happiness to the king, and the government and people of Bahrain enduring progress and prosperity. For his part, the Bahrain King entrusted the ambassador with his greetings to the Amir, wishing him good health and happiness and the State of Qatar continuous progress and growth. **(QNA)**



Venue: Tawar Mall | On 12.30 pm, Thursday, 22nd January 2026

هذه العروض متوفرة فقط في كارفور هايبر ماركتس قطر (سيتي سنتر، فيلاجيو، لاند مارك، قطر مول و إزدان الوكرة)

Offers are only available in Carrefour Hypermarkets (City Center, Villaggio, Landmark, Mall of Qatar & Ezdan Al Wakrah)



24/7  
Hours  
DELIVERY

## توصيل مجاني غير محدود

لجميع الطلبات فوق 99 ريال

## UNLIMITED FREE DELIVERY

On All Orders Above QAR 99

### Super Deals أفضل العروض

21 to 24th of January 2026

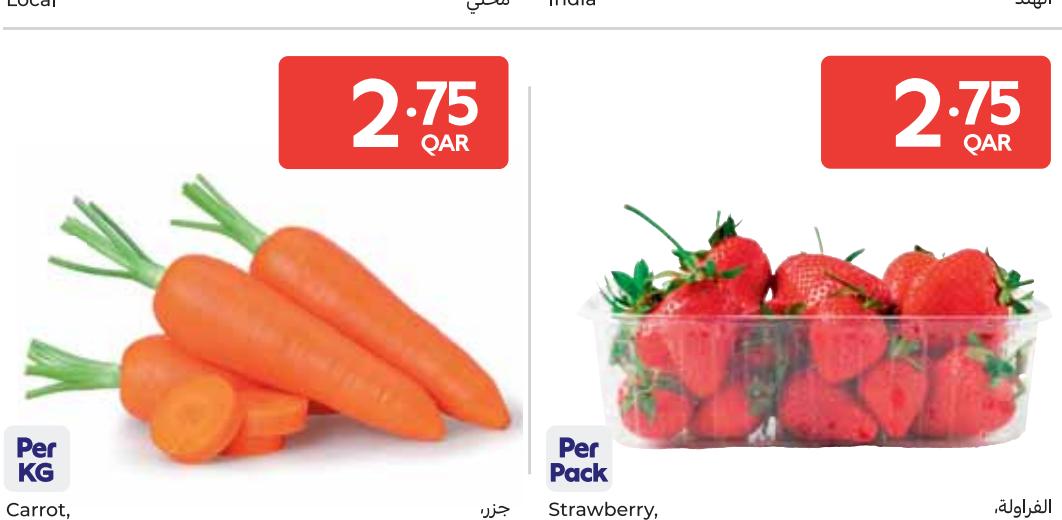


21st to 27th of January 2026



22nd to 24th of January 2026

٢٢ يناير إلى ٢٤ يناير ٢٠٢٦



21st to 27th of January 2026

٢١ يناير إلى ٢٧ يناير ٢٠٢٦



لا تفوت الفرصة!  
احصل على أفضل العروض على هاتفك

Don't miss out!  
Get the best deals on your phone

Scan to  
subscribe





# HIA marks year of operational strength, global connectivity

Hamad International Airport (HIA) has announced a record year, serving 54.3mn passengers in 2025, underlining its growing role as Qatar's main global gateway.

In a statement released yesterday, the airport said the milestone reflected high operational efficiency and continued investment in passenger comfort, sustainability and global connectivity.

Passenger traffic rose by 3% compared with the previous year, with the third quarter emerging as the busiest since the airport opened, handling 14.3mn travellers. August set a new monthly record, welcoming more than 5mn passengers, the highest figure in the airport's history.

Aircraft movements reached 282,975 during the year, up 1% year-on-year. The airport also handled 2.59mn tonnes of air cargo, a slight decline attributed to fluctuations in global markets. On-time performance remained strong at 85%.

HIA said it continued to expand its global network in 2025, working with 57 airline partners. New carriers, including Virgin Australia, Georgian Airways and Smartwings, joined its growing list of operators.

Qatar Airways also added new destinations, including Aleppo in Syria and the Red Sea Airport in Saudi Arabia, further

strengthening air links between Qatar and international markets.

Travel to and from Doha reached 13.5mn passengers during the year, a rise of 5.4%, driven by growth in tourism, trade and the hosting of major international events.

The airport played a key role in supporting Qatar's hosting of global sporting and cultural events, including FIFA-backed football tournaments such as the Arab Cup 2025 and the Intercontinental Club Cup 2025, as well as major business conferences and cultural festivals.

Infrastructure upgrades during the year focused on boosting capacity and operational flexibility. The integration of Concourses D and E added 17 new boarding gates, increasing the use of passenger boarding bridges and reducing reliance on remote stands and bus transfers, particularly during peak travel periods.

Passenger experience remained a priority, with satisfaction levels holding steady at 98%, even during busy seasons. Improvements also focused on accessibility, including enhanced services for passengers with disabilities.

The airport unveiled interactive art installations by artists Gillie and Marc in its Orchard garden early in the year, and closed 2025 with live performances by the Qatar Philharmonic

Orchestra, offering travellers a glimpse of the country's cultural heritage.

Hamad International Airport also strengthened its accessibility credentials by achieving Level Two certification under the Airports Council International Accessibility Enhancement Accreditation, and recently launched the Sunflower programme to support passengers with non-visible disabilities.

On sustainability, the airport said it achieved its goal of becoming zero waste in 2025, with waste from passenger terminals, airside operations and shared facilities diverted to recycling, composting and energy recovery.

The move aligns with Qatar National Vision 2030 and embeds sustainability as a core operational standard.

Looking ahead to 2026, the airport said its focus will shift towards further enhancing operational performance, including a major phased rehabilitation of the eastern runway to meet International Civil Aviation Organisation safety standards, while ensuring continuity of operations.

Officials said the investments reflect HIA's long-term strategy to prioritise safety, reliability and collaboration, supporting Qatar's ambitions to expand global connectivity and maintain operational excellence. (QNA)

# Daam centre unveils new visual identity

The Behavioural Health-care Center (Daam), one of the centres affiliated with the Qatar Foundation for Social Work, announced yesterday the launch of its new visual identity in a step that reflects a new stage in the centre's journey towards institutional development and excellence and confirms its continued commitment to promoting behavioural and psychological health, and consolidating its role in supporting individuals, families and society.

The launch event for the new visual identity was attended by CEO of the Qatar Foundation for Social Work Rashid al-Nuaimi, Executive Director of Daam Jawaher Abu Alfain, and a number of executive directors of centres affiliated with the foundation.

Marking the occasion, Executive Director of Daam Jawaher Abu Alfain said that the launch of the new visual identity represents a pivotal milestone in the journey of Daam, and embodies the maturity of the institutional experience after more than



eleven years of specialised work in the field of mental and behavioural health.

For her part, supervisor of the visual identity project Andalus Ibrahim indicated that the design of the new logo comes to combine modernity and authenticity, and to highlight the human connection between Daam and the target groups.

She noted that the choice of the hand symbol reflects, from the first glance, the concepts of

care, support, assistance, rebalancing and recovery, which are the essence of the centre's specialisation and its work mission.

Within the framework of the 2026 annual plan, Daam has developed many projects, programmes and activities targeting all segments of society with the aim of raising behavioural awareness and consolidating national identity and community values. (QNA)

# Qatar observes Int'l Day of Education

Qatar's Ministry of Education and Higher Education has marked the International Day of Education by launching a series of educational and awareness activities highlighting the role of young people in shaping the future of learning.

In a statement yesterday, the ministry said the celebrations were held under this year's global theme, "The Power of Youth in Co-creating Education", reflecting the United Nations' emphasis on youth as key drivers of educational transformation and sustainable development.

The International Day of Education was proclaimed by the UN General Assembly in 2018 and is observed annually on January 24 to underline the importance of education as a fundamental human right and a cornerstone of development.

As part of the celebrations, the ministry is hosting a two-day educational technology exhibition on January 21 and 22 at its headquarters, in partnership with Dakakeen Group. The initiative highlights co-operation between the public and private sectors to support innovation and enhance learning environments. The ex-



hibition was officially opened yesterday and features interactive displays showcasing smart educational tools and digital learning solutions designed to support blended learning and meet the demands of the digital

age. Assistant Undersecretary for Educational Affairs Maha Zayed al-Ruwaili said the occasion reflected strong confidence in students' ability to lead meaningful change in education.

She stressed the ministry's

## Sheikha Moza holds talks with Lebanese education minister



Her Highness Sheikha Moza bint Nasser, Chairperson of Qatar Foundation for Education, Science and Community Development (QF), met yesterday with Minister of Education and Higher Education of Lebanon Dr Rima Karami. They discussed ways to enhance co-operation between QF and educational institutions in Lebanon in the fields of education, technology, and curriculum development. (QNA)

PICTURE: AR Al-Baker

# Forum stresses human rights in drug control

By Tawfik Lamari  
Staff Reporter

The opening session of the second day of the Fourth National Human Rights Forum focused on international, regional, and national standards and strategies for addressing drug-related challenges.

The session was chaired by Colonel Dr Jassim Mohammed al-Obaidli, director of the Security Research and Studies Centre at the Police Academy, with Abdurrahman bin Sultan al-Hashemi, assistant director of the International Co-operation Department at the National Human Rights Committee (NHRC), serving as rapporteur.

Al-Obaidli highlighted that these standards are rooted in the international conventions adopted by the United Nations, which establish the core principles governing drug control. He explained that these principles include criminalising illicit drug trafficking, strengthening international co-operation through extradition, information exchange, and mutual legal assistance, and promoting co-ordinated global responses to the problem.

He added that the conventions also encourage states to adopt preventive, treatment, and rehabilitation policies, as well as social reintegration programmes for drug users. These measures, he said, reflect a modern approach that views individuals with substance-use disorders as patients in need of care and support, rather than solely as offenders subject to punishment.

Dr Wadih Maalouf, director of the International Drug Prevention Programme at the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) headquarters in Vienna, addressed the session via video conference. He spoke on international standards and mechanisms for combating drugs, outlining key challenges, future prospects, and best practices. Dr Maalouf stressed that the drug problem



The panel of speakers.

is a shared global challenge affecting all countries, although its manifestations differ depending on local contexts, types of substances, and patterns of use. He noted that drug-related phenomena are inherently international, with changing geographical and temporal dynamics.

Nasser Marzouq Sultan al-Marri, director of the Legal Affairs Department at the NHRC, emphasised that addressing drug issues from a human rights perspective requires first examining the rights-based approaches adopted by national institutions before assessing their practical implementation.

He explained that this framework is built on integrated approaches that address the root causes of the problem, including family disintegration, gaps in social policies, widespread unemployment, and feelings of marginalisation and loss among large segments of youth. These factors, he warned, contribute to serious imbalances in human rights systems and create environments conducive to drug use and addiction.

The forum's second session focused on national strategies, policies, and measures for combating drugs and psychotropic substances. Moderated by Dr Noura al-Sahlawi, professor of Public Law at Qatar University, the session opened with a presentation.

He explained that these substances include fully synthetic drugs produced through chemical processes, such as synthetic opioids and stimulants, including ecstasy and methamphetamine.

Captain Abdullah Qasim Askar, head of the Education and Awareness Section at the General Directorate of Drug Enforcement. He discussed emerging patterns of drug-related crimes and comprehensive counter-narcotics strategies.

Captain Askar noted that Qatar continues to take leading steps in drug control through an integrated system that combines strict legislation, community awareness programmes, healthcare services for drug users, and enhanced international co-operation, in line with human rights principles and the Sustainable Development Goals.

He added that transnational organised crime networks have shown significant adaptability, exploiting global conflicts, technological advances, and expanding communication networks to traffic narcotics and refine their methods.

Concluding the session, Fahad al-Hajri, first assistant in the Narcotics Prosecution, identified synthetic drugs as a major current challenge, noting that manufacturers frequently alter chemical compositions to evade detection and prosecution.

He explained that these substances include fully synthetic drugs produced through chemical processes, such as synthetic opioids and stimulants, including ecstasy and methamphetamine.



## Ashghal resumes Semaisma Package 4 roads and infrastructure works project

As part of its ongoing efforts to enhance services and improve the quality of life for residents across the country, the Public Works Authority 'Ashghal' announced the resumption of work on Package 4 of the Remaining Roads and Infrastructure Works in Semaisma area. Project engineer in Ashghal's Drainage Networks Projects Department Eng. Waled al-Ghoul indicated that Package 4 of the Semaisma project is located in Zone 70. It aims to serve around 554 land plots for citizens in the area, through the construction of a 26km road

network, the provision of 444 parking spaces, the installation of around 95 streetlights, and the planting of more than 40 trees. He added that the project also includes the development of infrastructure service networks, with the construction of 27km of sewage networks, 22km of stormwater drainage networks, and approximately 5km of treated water networks. A wastewater pumping station will also be constructed. Ashghal is also carrying out works to construct a pump station for the rainwater drainage network as part of the second package of the same project. (QNA)

## Safari Shop & Drive hands over cars to first draw winners



Safari Hypermarket, one of Doha's leading hypermarket chains, has officially handed over the Bestune cars to the winners of the first draw of its Mega promotional campaign, Shop & Drive - Win 30 Bestune Cars.

The car handover ceremony was held yesterday (January 21) at Safari Mall, Abu Hamour, where Safari management representatives presented the first four cars to the winners of the first draw: Kammunoori Pullaiah (Coupon No:

No: SDB100071844), Johnny Lee Eli Narvaez (Coupon No: SDB100225679), Shabid Hussain Ashiqur Hussain (Coupon No: SDB100965015), and Ansar Meethalevallari (Coupon No: SDB100715570).

As part of this promotion, customers receive an e-raffle coupon for every QR50 purchase made at any Safari outlet, giving them a chance to win one of 30 Bestune cars. In each draw, four Bestune cars will be awarded, while the final draw will fea-

ture five Bestune cars. This Shop & Drive promotion is available across all Safari outlets.

The first draw of the promotion was conducted on January 5 at Safari Hypermarket, Salwa Road, in the presence of representatives from the Qatar Ministry of Commerce and Safari management. The second draw of the Shop & Drive - Win 30 Bestune Cars promotion will take place on February 15 at Safari Hypermarket, Al Khor.

## MoPH, MoEHE workshop promotes food safety awareness in schools

The Ministry of Public Health (MoPH), in co-operation with the Ministry of Education and Higher Education (MoEHE), organised a workshop on research and innovation projects in food safety, with the participation of approximately 70 co-ordinators and supervisors from scientific research teams in secondary schools across Qatar.

The workshop aimed to raise awareness of the concept of food safety and its health and community significance in schools, introduce participants to the fundamentals of scientific research in this field, and empower teachers and supervisors to generate innovative research ideas and proposals.

The workshop addressed several key topics, particularly the concept of food safety and its associated risks, foodborne diseases, preventive measures and

risk analysis, in addition to presenting sample research topics in food safety. The programme also included practical training on the fundamentals of scientific research and methods for applying them in food-related studies.

The workshop further included interactive sessions for presenting and discussing ideas for student research projects focusing on elements of excellence and innovation.

These ideas were evaluated by a joint and specialised judging committee comprising representatives from the Ministry of Public Health and the Ministry of Education and Higher Education.

The committee will provide technical guidance to proposal owners throughout the research stages, monitor outcomes, and disseminate successful practices to interested schools.

Food Safety Consultant at

the MoPH Dr Shaikha al-Zeyara said the ministry is committed to nurturing students' capabilities. She noted that strengthening scientific research skills at an early stage directly reflects on the quality of life of the community and contributes to enhancing collective awareness.

She emphasised that the workshop represents a practical platform that links academic knowledge with field application in a vital area such as food safety.

In turn, Acting Head of the Research, Talent and Innovation Section at the Curriculum Department and Learning Resources at the MoEHE Ghanem Saad al-Humaidi highlighted the importance of institutional partnership with national entities concerned with scientific research in supporting applied education and strengthening the culture of research and innovation in schools. (QNA)



## Police Academy 'affirms ability to supply national security talent'

HE Legal Adviser to the Minister of Interior and General Supervisor of the Police Academy Dr Abdullah Yusuf al-Mal emphasised that, under the supervision of the Ministry of Interior (MoI), the Police Academy continues to perform its national mission of preparing qualified officers with a comprehensive scientific and professional preparation that combines legal grounding and professionalism, within a modern training system.

He said that it keeps pace with scientific and technological developments, reflecting the latest concepts of security work.

Marking the graduation of the 8th batch of cadets at the Police College of the Police Academy, His Excellency said that in line with the vision of the MoI and the directives of its senior leadership, the academy has been keen to develop its academic and training programmes to enhance the efficiency of graduates and to enable them to face renewed security challenges and deal with evolving crime patterns efficiently and competently, in accordance with the highest standards of discipline and professional responsibility.

He added that with the successive batches of graduates from educational and training programmes, the Police Academy affirms its firm

ability to supply the security agencies with distinguished national competencies, qualified to protect the security of the homeland and the safety of society, armed with the values of discipline, loyalty and sincerity, and capable of contributing effectively to consolidating security and stability, preserving the gains of the state and enhancing its position regionally and internationally.

President of the Police Academy Major General Abdulrahman Majid al-Sulaiti said the celebration at the Police Academy of the graduation of the 8th batch of cadets at the Police College is a celebration of the graduation of competent officers who are scientifically and practically trained in legal and police fields with advanced training and applied programmes, which strengthens the security and military sector with qualified Qatari cadres that meet the needs of the nation and achieves the strategic goals of the MoI.

He added that the Police Academy, represented by the Police College, has made significant strides since its establishment, and in addition to the approved curricula and training, it continues to strive towards developing educational programmes to keep pace with the latest developments in the security field. In the same context, Maj Gen al-Sulaiti pointed out that the

academy co-operates in the fields of training and exchange of scientific expertise with all prestigious security institutions locally and internationally to enrich its educational journey in general.

In turn, Vice-President of the Police Academy and Director of the Police College Colonel Dr Fahad Saeed al-Subaie voiced his happiness at the graduation of the 8th batch.

He said that the 8th batch of college students who graduated are confident that they will be faithful to the message they carry, and capable of performing to the fullest extent, after they received advanced military training as well as in legal and police sciences.

They have the knowledge and skills to qualify them for their practical lives in the military and police fields.

He added that the college is certain that they will form a qualitative addition and a role model for their colleagues in the coming batches.

He pointed out that the college has taken steady and confident steps in its journey of development and prosperity, striving to achieve its distinguished educational and training mission, and to consolidate its position among its counterparts from police colleges. (QNA)

### QNA director-general meets French envoy

HE Director-General of Qatar News Agency (QNA) Ahmed bin Saeed al-Rumaihi met yesterday with French ambassador to Qatar Arnaud Pescieux. During the meeting, aspects of joint co-operation between the countries in the field of media were discussed. (QNA)



## Over 100 young Gulf leaders set to gather at Mutual Dialogue Summit

Summit will be organised by QatarDebate Center at Msheireb Museums on Jan 25-26

QatarDebate Center, founded by Qatar Foundation, will host the latest edition of the Mutual Dialogue Summit on January 25-26 at Msheireb Museums, Doha.

The summit will bring together a distinguished group of more than 100 talented youth and experts from the Gulf Co-operation Council countries to explore critical strategic issues under the theme "Future Heritage". The summit, supported by the Ministry of Sports and Youth as a strategic partner and Msheireb Museums as a culture sponsor, aims to position itself as a premier platform that brings together the region's most creative young minds, nurturing a culture of constructive dialogue and strengthening the critical thinking skills of future leaders.

It also seeks to empower youth to address shared regional challenges through an engaging, interactive programme that



provides direct access to decision-makers and experts, fostering the exchange of ideas and best practices.

Aljohara AlKhulaifi, senior academic and research programmes Specialist at QatarDebate Center and General Co-ordinator of the Mutual Dialogue Summit, said: "We envision the summit as a pivotal moment in empowering Gulf youth. Under the theme 'Future Heritage', we seek to connect our rich cultural legacy with our ambitions for technological and economic leadership."

She added: "Our aim is to create an interactive platform that goes beyond identifying challenges and fosters innovative solutions by equipping a generation with the skills of dialogue and critical thinking, while building a sustainable future that embodies both our identity and aspirations."

A series of in-depth discussions will address key contemporary themes, including the relationship between Gulf architecture, heritage, and innovation; the transformation of learning in the digital era; the impact

of individualism on social cohesion in Gulf societies; efforts to advance artificial intelligence in ways that reflect Arabic language and Gulf culture; and the role of emerging startups in driving regional innovation and economic growth.

The summit will also feature a special dialogue in partnership with the Ministry of Sports and Youth, titled "From Hosting to Legacy: How Gulf Sports Build a Youth-Led Future", which will focus on leveraging major events as platforms for sustainable human capital development.

## Ministry recalls Ford and Lincoln models

The Ministry of Commerce and Industry (MoCI), in co-operation with Almana Motors Company, Qatar's Ford and Lincoln dealership, has announced the recall of Ford Edge 2015-2018, Expedition 2015-2017, Mustang 2015-2019, Super duty 2015-2019, Transit 2015-2018, and Lincoln Navigator 2015-2017, MKC 2015-2019 models.

The recall is due to the possibility that some vehicles may have a blank or distorted image on the centre display screen when the vehicle is in reverse. The ministry said the recall campaign comes within the framework of its ongoing efforts to protect consumers and ensure that car dealers follow up on vehicle defects and repairs.

The ministry said that it will co-ordinate with the dealer to follow up on the maintenance and repair works and will communicate with customers to ensure that the necessary repairs are carried out.

The ministry has urged all customers to report any violations to its Consumer Protection and Anti-Commercial Fraud Department, which processes complaints, inquiries and suggestions through the following 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).



# Qatar Press Center upskills journalists with visual content creation course

The Qatar Press Center (QPC) wrapped up its training course "Before Being Known", focused on visual content creation skills, led by Abdulaziz al-Kubaisi, deputy director of the Qatar Photography Centre, photographer, and content creator. The programme is part of the centre's ongoing efforts to equip journalists and content creators with professional tools for modern digital platforms.

Al-Kubaisi, with over 18 years of experience, emphasised that successful content creation starts with understanding one's identity and message, rather than merely appearing on camera. He highlighted that building a sustainable presence requires coherent content that reflects the creator's personality, delivers real value, and maintains authenticity over mere popularity.

The course combined theory with hands-on practice.

Participants learned photography and videography techniques, including camera angles, composition, lighting management, product shooting, and common mistakes affecting shot quality. Differences between smartphone and professional camera use were also explored, along with practical guidance on choosing the right tool for each platform.

Practical exercises were central to the program, covering video recording, shot framing, lighting, editing, and publishing for targeted platforms. Participants completed four integrated projects, taking ideas from concept and scriptwriting to shooting, editing, and digital publication, providing full exposure to the production workflow.

Director-General Sadiq Mohammed al-Omari highlighted the centre's commitment to developing media skills through programs that blend theoretical knowledge with professional practice. He noted that such initiatives foster professionalism, quality content, and



preparedness for the fast-evolving digital media landscape.

Participants praised the course's practical approach. Sajida Abdulla noted it helped translate theory into actionable skills, from camera handling to video editing. Ahad al-Tamimi gained confidence in appearing on camera and plans to create bilingual educational and travel content.

Mohammed Salem and Abdullah al-Shammari emphasised improvements in video production, visual effects, and mobile photography, while Maryam al-Mohammadi highlighted enhanced storytelling and visual coherence in her work.



The course underscored that visual content creation is a comprehensive process, from idea to impact, requiring clear messaging, consistent production, and gradual mastery of tools.

## Real estate reform approved

From Page 1

At the outset of the meeting, the Cabinet commended the successful outcomes of the discussions held between His Highness the Amir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani and Canadian Prime Minister Mark Carney on January 18, during the latter's state visit to Qatar. The Cabinet highlighted that the joint statement released at the conclusion of the visit reflected the depth of the friendship and partnership between the two countries.

The Cabinet reviewed the other items on its agenda and concluded its meeting by examining five comprehensive reports, taking appropriate measures accordingly. The reports included two submissions by the Qatar Financial Markets Authority's Grievance Committee regarding grievances reviewed during the periods from January 7 to December 31, 2024, and from January 1 to June 30, 2025.

## Country braces for cold nights

From Page 1

Saturday will see a slight warming trend, with temperatures rising to 21C during the day and 17C in the evening. Sunday is expected to be the warmest day of the period, with a high of 22C and a low of 15C.

Temperatures are forecast to dip again on Monday, reaching 20C during the day and 13C at night, with stronger winds gusting to 31mph. On Tuesday, daytime temperatures will climb back to 22C, with a low of 14C. Humidity levels are also expected to rise, peaking at around 86% during the day, which may add to the chill in the air despite the sunshine.

While the colder nights have caught some off guard, the overall weather remains pleasant by local standards. Many residents are expected to make the most of the winter climate by heading to popular outdoor destinations such as Al Bidda Park, Aspire Zone, the Doha Corniche, and traditional souqs, among other popular outdoor places such as Katara Cultural Village. These areas are likely to see increased activity, particularly in the afternoons and over the weekend, as families and fitness enthusiasts gather for picnics, recreation, and outdoor sports under clear winter skies.



Many residents are expected to make the most of the winter climate by heading to popular outdoor destinations. PICTURES: Thajudheen



## 'Qatar is poised to reshape regional finance landscape'

From Page 1

On education and talent development, Sansano stated: "Qatar's National Vision 2030 thrives when talent is encouraged to experiment, learn from setbacks, and apply both theoretical and real-world skills."

These views echo the sentiments Sansano shared in the recent episode of the 'I Wanna Grow Podcast' hosted by Steve Mackie, where he offered a candid discussion on asset management, entrepreneurship, and financial literacy.

In the podcast, Sansano clarified public misconceptions about Assets Under Management (AUM), emphasising that AUM represents entrusted assets, such as cash, real estate, and commodities, rather than a firm's valuation or an individual's net worth.

Sansano also distinguished asset management and investment banking, explaining that while investment banks operate in public-facing environments with lending and underwriting activities, asset managers focus on entrusted assets and long-term growth strategies.

The podcast delved deeper into the realities of entrepreneurship, going beyond popular startup narratives to highlight the importance of discipline, risk management, and long-term planning in emerging markets. Sansano also reflected on education and career development, advocating for a balance between academic qualifications and practical experience.

## ANNOUNCEMENT

I, ABDUL MUKIT MD ASHFAK UDDIN  
holder of  
**Bangladesh Passport No. A20960664  
QID No. 29405007955**  
hereby change my name  
from  
ABDUL MUKIT MD ASHFAK UDDIN  
to  
**ABDUL MUKIT ASFAK UDDIN**  
Any objection, please contact  
**THE PERMANENT COMMITTEE FOR  
NATIONALITY AFFAIRS**  
within 15 days from the publication of this notice.

## ANNOUNCEMENT

I, ABDUL SAMED ABDUL KHADER  
holder of  
**Indian Passport No. M4589589  
QID No. 26235605367**  
hereby change my name  
from  
ABDUL SAMED ABDUL KHADER  
to  
**ABDUL SAMAD ABDUL KHADER**  
Any objection, please contact  
**THE PERMANENT COMMITTEE FOR  
NATIONALITY AFFAIRS**  
within 15 days from the publication of this notice.

## ANNOUNCEMENT

Brouq has emerged as one of this winter season's most popular outdoor attractions, welcoming strong public interest from residents and visitors since its launch. In response to continued demand, Visit Qatar announced the extension of Brouq until February 10, allowing more audiences to experience this distinctive desert experience. For those who have yet to enjoy Brouq, the Desert Escape Zone offers a range of adventure-led activities, including the 25-m Adventure Tower and Qatar's longest zipline, complemented by open-air dining areas and live entertainment throughout the day. Visitors can also explore the Film City zone, which brings together cultural experiences such as falcon photo opportunities, henna art, traditional and musical performances, and storytelling sessions. Children can enjoy a dedicated programme featuring puppet shows, face painting, and caricature classes, making Brouq a well-rounded destination for families.

**Brouq desert activation extended until Feb 10**

## ANNOUNCEMENT

I, ALI SHAHID RATHOR SHAHID RATHOR  
holder of  
**Pakistan Passport No. AB9445503  
QID No. 29158611856**  
hereby change my name  
from  
ALI SHAHID RATHOR SHAHID RATHOR  
to  
**ALI SHAHID RATHOR SHAHID JAVED**  
Any objection, please contact  
**THE PERMANENT COMMITTEE FOR  
NATIONALITY AFFAIRS**  
within 15 days from the publication of this notice.

## ANNOUNCEMENT

I, DERRICK KAVIN ALMEIDA  
holder of  
**INDIAN Passport No. Z3835291  
QID No. 29235600368**  
hereby change my name  
from  
DERRICK KAVIN ALMEIDA  
to  
**DERRICK KEVIN DALMEIDA**  
Any objection, please contact  
**THE PERMANENT COMMITTEE FOR  
NATIONALITY AFFAIRS**  
within 15 days from the publication of this notice.

## ANNOUNCEMENT

I, CHAKKALA THOPPU SALAHUDDIN KOYA  
holder of  
**INDIA Passport No. S1205199  
QID No. 26735612429**  
hereby change my name  
from  
CHAKKALA THOPPU SALAHUDDIN KOYA  
to  
**SALAHUDDIN CHERIYA CHAKKALA THOPPU**  
Any objection, please contact  
**THE PERMANENT COMMITTEE FOR  
NATIONALITY AFFAIRS**  
within 15 days from the publication of this notice.

## ANNOUNCEMENT

I, SHUAIB MAHMODULHASAN ABDULHAKIM  
holder of  
**Bangladesh Passport No. A18753845  
QID No. 30705000143**  
hereby change my name  
from  
SHUAIB MAHMODULHASAN ABDULHAKIM  
to  
**SHUAIB MAHMUDUL HASAN**  
Any objection, please contact  
**THE PERMANENT COMMITTEE FOR  
NATIONALITY AFFAIRS**  
within 15 days from the publication of this notice.

## Deputy PM holds bilateral meetings



HE the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of State for Defence Affairs Sheikh Saud bin Abdulrahman bin Hassan bin Ali al-Thani has held several bilateral meetings with high-ranking international officials on the margins of the third day of the 9th Doha International Maritime Defence Exhibition and Conference (Dimdex 2026). His Excellency met with Minister of Defence of Mongolia, Damba Batlut; Secretary of State at the Ministry of National Defence of Cambodia, Admiral Tea Vinh; Deputy Minister of Defence and Veterans Affairs of Mali, Gen Sadio Camara; and Vice-Minister of National Defence of Ecuador, Roberto Quintero. The meetings discussed a range of matters of shared interest and avenues for advancing them. A number of high-ranking officers and officials attended the meetings. (QNA)



## Chief of Staff of Qatar Armed Forces holds talks with international officials



HE Chief of Staff of Qatar Armed Forces Lt Gen (Pilot) Jassim bin Mohammed al-Mannai held a number of bilateral meetings with several senior international officials during the third day of 9th Doha International Maritime Defence Exhibition and Conference (Dimdex 2026). His Excellency met with Commander of the Armed Forces of Malta, Brig Gen Clinton John O'Neill; Deputy Chief of the General Staff of Saudi Arabia, Lt Gen Fahd bin Abdullah al-Ghufaili; Deputy General Delegate for Armaments of the French Republic, Lt Gen (Engineer) Gael Diaz de Tuesta; Adviser to the Chief of Staff of the Italian Armed Forces, Lt Gen Gianfranco Annunziata;

and Deputy Chief of Staff of Mongolia, Brig Gen Baldjid Baatar. His Excellency also met with a number of officials and representatives of companies participating in the exhibition, including Chief Executive Officer of CIVIC, Xinnan Li; Deputy General Manager of Leonardo, Carlo Gualdoni; and General Manager of Elettronica Group Office in Qatar, Guerino Giancola. During the meetings, a number of topics of mutual interest were discussed, and ways to enhance and develop military co-operation in a manner that serves common interests. The meetings were attended by a number of senior officers and officials. (QNA)



## Barzan Holdings, KNDS sign letter of intent at Dimdex

Barzan Holdings and KNDS, the leading pan-European land defence company, have signed a letter of intent (LoI) to co-operate in the development of local industrial capabilities in the field of ammunition and in support of Qatar's national defence objectives and strengthening the regional supply chain. The LoI, signed by Barzan Holdings Group CEO Mohammed bin Bader al-Sadah and KNDS France CEO Nicolas Groult at the Doha International Maritime Defence Exhibition and Conference (Dimdex 2026), marks a significant step towards the localisation of medium and large-calibre ammunition capabilities in Qatar. The co-operation is built on shared commitments to technology transfer, industrial excellence, and long-term partnership. Under

the terms of the agreement, both entities will explore localisation opportunities across key areas of ammunition manufacturing to meet the operational requirements while complying with the highest standards of quality, safety, and performance. "This agreement is an important first step in establishing a sovereign ammunition supply capability in Qatar. KNDS is fully committed to advancing quickly with this initiative," said Sébastien Simon, commercial director of KNDS Ammunition. The initiative is fully aligned with Barzan Holdings' mandate to enhance sovereign defence capabilities as well as with KNDS France's strategy to support trusted partners through sustainable, locally anchored industrial solutions.

## Es'hailSat signs pact with QAF for satellite communications



The Qatar Satellite Company, Es'hailSat, and the Qatar Armed Forces (QAF) have signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU), to provide QAF with satellite communication services, ground infrastructure, and secure, flexible network solutions to support sovereign and operational requirements for government and military entities.

In a press release yesterday, Es'hailSat said that this MoU comes in recognition of QAF's role in protecting national security, supporting defence capabilities, and ensuring operational readiness under all circumstances, adding that it stems from the belief in the importance of satellite communications as a key element in supporting command and control, field connectivity, and operational continuity, especially in challenging environments.

The company noted that both parties are looking to strengthen frameworks for joint co-operation and exchange of technical and technological expertise to serve the national and strategic

interests of both QAF and Es'hailSat and build upon their shared interest in co-operation in this field.

Es'hailSat provides satellite, broadcast, teleport and managed services from Doha, Qatar and brings to this relationship more than 15 years of being in the business of catering to broadcasters, telecommunication companies, enterprises, mobility applications and governments across the Middle East and North Africa. Es'hailSat's two satellites at 25.5/26 East together with the 50,000sq m Tier-4 certified teleport facility provides reliable and robust connectivity services.

QAF continues to play a vital role in protecting national security, supporting defence capabilities, and ensuring a high level of operational readiness under all circumstances.

Through the Qatar Amiri Signal Corps, the Armed Forces oversee and maintain secure, sovereign, and resilient communications systems that underpin command, control, and mission continuity across the defence sector. Their work includes advancing field operations support, delivering technical and operational expertise, and enabling sustainable communications in both routine and emergency environments. The Qatar Armed Forces also prioritise crisis management communications, ensuring continuity of operations during exceptional or urgent situations.

Commenting on this, Es'hailSat President and CEO Ali Ahmed al-Kuwaiti said: "Es'hailSat is delighted to enter into this enhanced partnership with Qatar Armed Forces that brings the experience and industry knowledge of Es'hailSat to complement the unique sovereign role of Qatar Armed Forces in protecting national security, supporting defence capabilities and ensuring operational readiness under all circumstances."

Al-Kuwaiti added: "Es'hailSat acknowledges the needs of Qatar Armed Forces for sovereign ground station infrastructure, field operations support, and ensuring readiness during emergencies to maintain continuity, which will also lead to future development and capacity building." (QNA)

## Aqarat, developers discuss challenges facing Qatar's real estate investment

The Real Estate Regulatory Authority (Aqarat) held a dialogue with real estate developers yesterday to discuss the key challenges related to real estate investment in Qatar, as part of its efforts to develop the real estate ecosystem and strengthen direct engagement with sector partners.

During the session, Aqarat emphasised the importance of providing accurate and reliable real estate data and improving the quality of offered projects and real estate units, contributing to enhanced transparency, increased market efficiency, and a better balance between supply and demand.

Aqarat reviewed its integrated plan to regulate the sector and license real estate developers, noting that the first phase of implementing the law focused on preparation and organisation.

This phase resulted in licensing several developers and registering them in the approved registry, with their data made available through Aqarat's official platforms. The current phase focuses on enforcing legislation and strengthening oversight to ensure compliance with the legal frameworks governing the sector.

Aqarat stressed that no project



Aqarat president Khaled Ahmed al-Obaidli.

PICTURE: Thajudheen

may be offered for off-plan sale unless all licensing procedures are completed and the required approvals are obtained, underscoring the importance of adhering to applicable laws and regulations to safeguard the rights of all relevant parties. It also noted the completion of the legal framework for the real estate sector through the activation of several specialised committees, in addition to implementing the escrow account system in co-ordination with relevant entities.

The dialogue also addressed real estate market performance indicators, which showed no

table growth in recent periods, and discussed challenges related to the lack of integrated data on available real estate supply. Aqarat highlighted the importance of developers' co-operation in providing data on their future projects to support market analysis and informed decision-making.

Participants of the dialogue discussed several regulatory topics, including the importance of the preliminary property registration as an initial stage of ownership, linking real estate residency to meeting regulatory requirements, and reviewing the "Real Estate Developer Journey" initiative currently under implementation. The initiative aims to simplify procedures and clarify the regulatory pathway for developers. The discussion also covered initiatives to promote Qatar and attract investors, operational challenges, and ways to enhance coordination with relevant service entities.

Aqarat reaffirmed its commitment to continuing to organise periodic dialogue with developers and investors, contributing to the establishment of a well-regulated, transparent, and sustainable real estate investment environment in Qatar.

Hamad Bin Khalifa University (HBKU) has unveiled the Human-Inspired Knowledge by Machine Agents (HIKMA) Project, an initiative that uses artificial intelligence (AI) to generate, review, revise and to present scientific papers under ethical human supervision.

The project aims to redefine how knowledge is created and shared, positioning Qatar as a pioneer in AI-assisted scholarship.

HIKMA integrates every stage of academic research, from topic generation and automated writing to AI-based review and revision in a single continuous pipeline.

At the centre of the project is HikmaXiv, an open-access digital repository that will serve as the world's largest archive for AI-generated and human-reviewed research papers. The system is designed to store manuscripts and their underlying datasets, AI-generated revisions, peer-review notes and presentation materials. It creates a transparent record of how machines and humans collaborate in science.

"This is not about replacing scholars, it's about amplifying them," said Dr Mowafa Housh, the project's supervisor at HBKU's College of Science and Engineer-

ing. "HIKMA represents the first global experiment where human inspiration and AI work together from the birth of an idea to its public presentation."

HIKMA's emergence comes as universities and research labs around the world experiment with AI-driven scientific discovery. Stanford University's "Agents for Science" conference has shown how autonomous agents can suggest experiments, review and accept AI-co-authored papers. Sakana AI's "AI Scientist" focuses on modular paper generation, and the recently published "Robin" system demonstrated how an AI could identify new drug targets in biomedical studies.

Unlike other systems that primarily focus on modular paper generation or specific tasks within the research process, HIKMA integrates a comprehensive set of tools designed to facilitate an end-to-end research experience. "Others automate a single step, we connect them all," explained HIKMA's lead AI engineer Dr Zain Tariq. "Our system produces a full academic workflow, from first draft to conference presentation, with human reviewers guiding quality and ethics at every stage."

The project also plans to support multilingual research, including Arabic-language science, ensuring that global AI innovation does not overlook regional and cultural contexts. Each AI-generated paper within the HIKMA pipeline undergoes a Human-in-the-Loop process, a hybrid review model where human experts audit and refine the AI's work. The resulting paper is then published on the HikmaXiv repository.

## HBKU's HIKMA project launches AI-powered research ecosystem



tegrates a comprehensive set of tools designed to facilitate an end-to-end research experience.

"Others automate a single step, we connect them all," explained HIKMA's lead AI engineer Dr Zain Tariq. "Our system produces a full academic workflow, from first draft to conference presentation, with human reviewers guiding quality and ethics at every stage."

The project also plans to support multilingual research, including Arabic-language science, ensuring that global AI innovation does not overlook regional and cultural contexts. Each AI-generated paper within the HIKMA pipeline undergoes a Human-in-the-Loop process, a hybrid review model where human experts audit and refine the AI's work. The resulting paper is then published on the HikmaXiv repository.



## APPEAL

**OIC renews call to international community to protect UNRWA**

The Organisation of Islamic Co-operation (OIC) reiterated its call to the international community, particularly the UN Security Council, to take all necessary decisions and measures to protect the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees (UNRWA), its facilities, and its staff, and to compel Israel to cease its violations and respect its obligations under international law. In a statement, the OIC condemned the Israeli occupation forces' storming and demolition of facilities belonging to the UNRWA headquarters in occupied Jerusalem, considering it a dangerous escalation and a flagrant violation of the UN Charter. - QNA

## DECISION

**US moving 7,000 alleged IS detainees from Syria to Iraq**

The US yesterday launched an operation that could ultimately transfer up to 7,000 detainees allegedly affiliated with the Islamic State (IS) group from Syria to neighbouring Iraq, the US military said. The aim of the operation - which began with the movement of 150 alleged fighters - is to ensure the people "remain in secure detention facilities," US Central Command (CENTCOM) said in a post on X. "We are closely coordinating with regional partners, including the Iraqi government," the post quoted CENTCOM commander Admiral Brad Cooper as saying. Thousands of detainees are held in seven prisons in northeast Syria. - Reuters

## OFFICIAL

**US envoy Witkoff says he will meet with Putin today**

US President Donald Trump's special envoy Steve Witkoff said he and Trump's son-in-law Jared Kushner planned to meet with Russian President Vladimir Putin today, and that he would meet with the Ukrainians later. "We plan to discuss peace, and Ukraine and Russia," Witkoff told reporters one day after meeting with his Russian counterpart in Davos. "I'm hopeful... we need a peace." Asked if he would meet with Ukrainian officials later, he said "we are" but gave no other details. The TASS state news agency said, citing the Kremlin, that Witkoff and Putin would meet in Moscow. - AFP

## PEOPLE

**'I am not a criminal': Uganda opposition leader in hiding**

Uganda's opposition leader Bobi Wine said yesterday he was "not a criminal" after going into hiding following last week's election in which President Yoweri Museveni won a seventh term. Wine, 43, a former singer-turned-politician who was arrested ahead of Uganda's last election in 2021, said on Saturday that he had escaped a police raid on his home. His whereabouts have been unknown since then. He had denounced last Thursday's presidential election as "blatant theft". In a phone interview, Wine said he was constantly on the move but was being "housed and protected by the common people". - AFP

# US top court appears reluctant to let Trump fire Fed's Lisa Cook

Reuters

Washington

Conservative and liberal US Supreme Court justices signalled scepticism yesterday toward President Donald Trump's bid to fire Federal Reserve governor Lisa Cook in a case with the central bank's independence at stake.

During about two hours of arguments in the case, the justices indicated they were unlikely to grant the Trump administration's request to lift a judge's decision barring the Republican president from immediately firing Cook while her legal challenge continues to play out.

Some of the justices pressed D John Sauer, the US solicitor general arguing for Trump's administration, about why Cook was not given a chance to formally respond to the unproven mortgage fraud allegations - which she has denied - that the president cited as justification to oust Cook.

They also raised concerns about the effect on the economy of such a first-ever presidential firing from the central bank and the implications for the Fed's cherished independence from political influence.

The case represents the latest dispute to come to the top US judicial body involving Trump's expansive view of presidential powers since returning to office 12 months ago.

When the court, which has a 6-3 conservative majority, agreed in October to hear the case, they left Cook in her job for the time being.

"This case is about whether the Federal Reserve will set key interest rates guided by evidence and independent judgment or will succumb to political pressure," Cook, who attended the arguments, said in a statement afterward.

"For as long as I serve at the Federal Reserve, I will uphold the principle of political independence in service to the American people," Cook added. Sauer told the justices that the allegations against Cook impugn her "conduct, fitness, ability or competence to serve as a governor of the Federal Reserve."

"The American people should not have their interest rates determined by someone who was, at best, grossly negligent in obtaining favourable interest rates for herself," Sauer said.

"Deceit or gross negligence by a financial regulator in financial transactions is cause for removal," Sauer added, arguing that the allegations require immediate removal.

Cook has called the allegations against her a pretext to fire her over monetary policy differences as Trump heaps pressure on the central bank to cut interest rates and lashes out at Fed Chair Jerome Powell for not doing so more quickly.

Conservative chief justice John Roberts asked Sauer to explain whether his argument that Cook should be immediately removed applies if the basis of the mortgage allegations - that she cited two different properties as a principal residence - is an "inadvertent mistake contradicted by other documents in the record."

**Canadian beef heads to China after Carney visit**

Canadian beef will be exported to China following the relaxation of an import ban that had been in place since 2021, the agriculture minister said, though analysts cautioned it will likely be in small amounts.

The reopening of what could be a vital market for Canadian beef follows the visit of Canadian Prime Minister Mark Carney, who reached an agreement with China's leadership to lower tariffs and do more business on a number of agricultural commodities, including canola. "We know that there's a large company that's shipping its first load of beef to China next week," said Canadian Agriculture Minister Heath MacDonald. Earlier on social media he said "China has lifted market access for Canadian beef." China's customs agency did not comment. The move is not expected to have an immediate major impact on Canadian beef exports or prices because North America has a shortage of domestic beef and prices are historically high. - Reuters

Reuters

Davos, Switzerland

President Donald Trump will begin weekly trips around the US to speak to voters ahead of November's midterm elections, beginning on Tuesday with a stop in Iowa, White House chief of staff Susie Wiles said.

The speech in Iowa will focus on the economy and energy, Wiles told reporters on the way to Davos, Switzerland. Cabinet officials will also increase their domestic travel

**Crackdown on illegals**

Members of the US Border Patrol are confronted by community members after stopping at a gas station in Minneapolis, Minnesota, yesterday. The Trump administration has sent a reported 3,000 plus federal agents into the area, with more on the way, as they make a push to arrest undocumented immigrants in the region.

in the coming months, she said.

The domestic travel comes as frustration has grown among senior White House aides and Republican lawmakers over Trump's emphasis on foreign policy, rather than the economic and healthcare concerns dominating the election year.

Opinion polls are broadly unhappy with Trump's handling of the economy, and Trump conceded in an interview last week that his Republican Party could struggle to retain its tenuous grip of Congress because

the party of the president historically suffers losses during mid-term elections.

Trump's attention on foreign policy has included a military operation that led to the capture of Venezuelan President Nicolás Maduro, escalating rhetoric about seizing Greenland, negotiating an end to Russia's war in Ukraine, and pushing an ambitious international Board of Peace, that aims to resolve conflicts globally.

Trump yesterday ruled out the use of force in his bid to control Greenland, but said in a speech

to world leaders in Davos that no other country can secure the Danish territory.

His comments overshadowed a speech that was intended to focus primarily on the US economy. Trump has struggled to convey a message on affordability that resonates with voters, and the president's aides and allies fear blowback in November since foreign policy is rarely a winning issue in US congressional elections.

While Trump is not on the ballot in November, Republicans view him as their best messenger

on the economy and plan to use him to win over sceptical voters.

Some 36% of Americans approve of Trump's overall handling of the economy, according to a recent Reuters/Ipsos poll. That is well below his initial 42% rating on the issue when he first took office last year, but up from a low of 33% in December poll.

In recent days, the White House has scrambled to offer Americans a slew of populist economic proposals to ease cost-of-living concerns. Trump has proposed a cap on credit card interest rates

**Ecuador to impose 30% tariff on Colombian goods**

Reuters

Quito/Bogota

Ecuador will impose a 30% tariff on goods from Colombia starting February 1, President Daniel Noboa said yesterday, citing a trade deficit and lack of co-operation on fighting drug trafficking at their shared border.

"This measure will remain in place until there is a real commitment to jointly tackle drug trafficking and illegal mining on the border, with the same seriousness and determination that Ecuador is currently demonstrating," Noboa said on X.

Colombia's president's office, trade and foreign ministries said they were examining the measure.

Shortly after Noboa's announcement, Colombia's defence ministry said it had seized a shipment of marijuana at the shared border during a joint operation between

both countries' militaries. The US has also signalled it could put pressure on Colombia as well as Mexico over drug trafficking through organised crime in their countries, following its dramatic January 3 attack on Caracas and capture of president Nicolás Maduro, whom Washington

accused of being a "narco-dictator."

Noboa has made the fight against crime a cornerstone of his administration. He has declared several states of emergency and recently mobilised over 10,000 soldiers to the country's three most violent provinces in a push to tackle organised crime in the Andean nation, which has sent murder rates soaring.

Ecuador also militarised the city of San Lorenzo, in the border area with Colombia, at the end of last year due to violent clashes between criminal groups there.

# Trump plans weekly US travel before midterms

Reuters

Davos, Switzerland

President Donald Trump will begin weekly trips around the US to speak to voters ahead of November's midterm elections, beginning on Tuesday with a stop in Iowa, White House chief of staff Susie Wiles said.

The speech in Iowa will focus on the economy and energy, Wiles told reporters on the way to Davos, Switzerland. Cabinet officials will also increase their domestic travel

in the coming months, she said. The domestic travel comes as frustration has grown among senior White House aides and Republican lawmakers over Trump's emphasis on foreign policy, rather than the economic and healthcare concerns dominating the election year.

Opinion polls are broadly unhappy with Trump's handling of the economy, and Trump conceded in an interview last week that his Republican Party could struggle to retain its tenuous grip of Congress because

the party of the president historically suffers losses during mid-term elections.

Trump's attention on foreign policy has included a military operation that led to the capture of Venezuelan President Nicolás Maduro, escalating rhetoric about seizing Greenland, negotiating an end to Russia's war in Ukraine, and pushing an ambitious international Board of Peace, that aims to resolve conflicts globally.

Trump yesterday ruled out the use of force in his bid to control Greenland, but said in a speech

to world leaders in Davos that no other country can secure the Danish territory.

His comments overshadowed a speech that was intended to focus primarily on the US economy. Trump has struggled to convey a message on affordability that resonates with voters, and the president's aides and allies fear blowback in November since foreign policy is rarely a winning issue in US congressional elections.

While Trump is not on the ballot in November, Republicans view him as their best messenger

on the economy and plan to use him to win over sceptical voters.

Some 36% of Americans approve of Trump's overall handling of the economy, according to a recent Reuters/Ipsos poll. That is well below his initial 42% rating on the issue when he first took office last year, but up from a low of 33% in December poll.

In recent days, the White House has scrambled to offer Americans a slew of populist economic proposals to ease cost-of-living concerns. Trump has proposed a cap on credit card interest rates

# UK 'will not yield to pressure from Trump on Greenland'

Reuters  
London

**B**ritish Prime Minister Keir Starmer said he would not yield to Donald Trump on his opposition to US demands to acquire Greenland, adding that the US president had reversed his prior

support for a Chagos Islands deal to put pressure on Britain.

Starmer has called for "calm discussion" on Greenland and indicated on Monday he did not wish to escalate a trade war, after Trump threatened tariffs on Britain and other European countries unless he was allowed to buy Greenland.

The next day Trump said Brit-

ain had been stupid and weak to agree a deal to cede sovereignty of the Chagos Islands in the Indian Ocean in order to secure the future of a US-UK air base there. When the deal was announced, Trump's administration expressed support for it.

Starmer has sought close ties with Trump in order to preserve

trade and security ties, but in some of his sharpest criticism of Trump, Starmer said he would not be bullied into changing his view that the future of Greenland should be decided by its people and by Denmark.

"I will not yield, Britain will not yield, on our principles and values about the future of Greenland un-

der threats of tariffs, and that is my clear position," Starmer told lawmakers, adding the Danish prime minister would visit London today.

Starmer said that Trump's criticism of the Chagos Islands deal with Mauritius was because "he wants me to yield on my position, and I'm not going to do so".

"President Trump deployed

words on Chagos yesterday that were different from his previous words of welcome and support," Starmer said.

"He deployed those words yesterday for the express purpose of putting pressure on me and Britain in relation to my values and principles on the future of Greenland."

# Former S Korea PM Han jailed for 23 years in martial law case

Reuters  
Seoul

**A** South Korean court jailed former prime minister Han Duck-soo for 23 years yesterday, on charges that included revolt relating to ex-President Yoon Suk-yeol's declaration of martial law in December 2024.

Han, 76, is the first former cabinet minister to be handed a ruling by a court on criminal charges directly related to martial law, which legal experts have said could prove a bellwether for other trials.

The Seoul Central District Court found Han guilty because he was instrumental in setting up the outward appearance of a cabinet meeting that facilitated the declaration, a judge said, a move he described as a "top-down revolt".

Han also discussed plans to block the function of major institutions such as parliament as part of the revolt, the judge added.

"The defendant was a prime minister who had been indirectly given democratic legitimacy and responsibility... Nevertheless, the defendant chose to turn a blind eye... and participate as a member of the December 3 revolt," the judge said.

"As a result, South Korea was in danger of returning to the dark past when the basic rights and liberal democratic order of the people

were violated, potentially preventing them from escaping... dictatorship for a long time."

The court found Han guilty of "engaging in (the) key action of revolt", as well as on related charges of perjury and falsifying an official document.

"I will humbly follow the judge's decision," Han, clad in a suit and green tie, said after the ruling.

He had denied wrongdoing on all charges except perjury, saying in November that while he regretted not being able to stop Yoon from declaring martial law, he "never agreed to it or tried to help".

In an unusual instance in South Korean court proceedings, the 23-year term exceeded a sentence of 15 years sought by prosecutors in November.

Han was detained by the court immediately after the ruling, which can be appealed. Han's lawyer said it would be taken to the Supreme Court.

"This ruling is something that citizens who oppose martial law can fully accept," 23-year-old Kim Su-hyeon, a commuter watching the news on television at a train station, said.

Han is an experienced technocrat who served in senior posts under five presidents. He became acting president after Yoon was impeached, before his own impeachment on accusations of having aided Yoon in the martial law declaration.

## Farage failed to declare 17 payments on time: UK inquiry

Nigel Farage, head of Britain's populist Reform UK party, inadvertently committed 17 breaches of rules on declaring financial interests including payments from Google and Elon Musk's X Corporation, a parliamentary official said. The payments totalled about £380,000, most of them made in 2025, with several from Britain's right-leaning broadcaster GB News. Parliament's standards commissioner Daniel Greenberg concluded the failures were unintentional and caused by staffing and other administrative issues. He said the breaches related to Farage's failure to declare the payments within 28 days. Farage said he took responsibility for the lapses and the late declarations fell short of what was expected from public figures. "This was an administrative error on behalf of me and my team, for which I can only reiterate our sincere apologies," he said. - Reuters

**T**he gunman charged with killing Japan's former prime minister Shinzo Abe was yesterday found guilty and jailed for life, as the judge declared the broad-daylight assassination "despicable and extremely malicious".

The shooting more than three years ago forced a reckoning in a country with little experience of gun violence, and ignited scrutiny of alleged ties between prominent conservative lawmakers and a secretive sect, the Unification Church.

## Indonesia president meets King Charles



Britain's King Charles III (right) poses for a photo with Indonesia's President Prabowo Subianto during an audience at Clarence House in London, Britain.

## Journalists asked to sign pledge vowing to keep peace

AFP  
Srinagar, India

**P**olice in Kashmir have asked at least three journalists working in the region to sign a pledge vowing not to "disturb peace" in the region, two of them said yesterday.

A third journalist, an assistant editor with *The Indian Express* newspaper, was summoned to a police station in Srinagar, the capital of the federal territory, but did not sign the pledge, the news-paper said in a report.

The government has imposed several restrictions in the region after revoking its constitutional autonomy in 2019, laying out rules for how the insurgency in the region is covered and reported. A spokesperson for Srinagar police did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

*The Indian Express*, one of India's most respected dailies, said its journalist was summoned four times between January 15 and 19

and asked to sign the pledge on January 16. "He has not signed the bond as asked by the police. *The Indian Express* is committed to doing what is necessary to uphold and protect the rights and dignity of its journalists," the paper's chief editor, Raj Kamal Jha, said in the report.

Two other journalists Reuters spoke to said they had also been summoned, but one of them was travelling and the other did not go to the police station. They declined to be named because of the sensitive nature of the issue.

The journalists and *The Indian Express* said the summons were issued after they reported that police in the region were seeking information from mosques about their funding, management and budgets. The Press Club of Kashmir, an association of journalists in the region said in a statement dated Tuesday that several of its members had been either summoned or advised by police to stop covering stories on profiling of religious institutions.

# Gunman jailed for life in killing of Japan ex-PM Abe

AFP  
Nara, Japan

**T**he gunman charged with killing Japan's former prime minister Shinzo Abe was yesterday found guilty and jailed for life, as the judge declared the broad-daylight assassination "despicable and extremely malicious".

The shooting more than three years ago forced a reckoning in a country with little experience of gun violence, and ignited scrutiny of alleged ties between prominent conservative lawmakers and a secretive sect, the Unification Church.

As he handed down the sentence at a court in the city of Nara, judge Shinichi Tanaka said Tetsuya Yamagami, 45, had been "determined" to shoot Abe.

The fact he "shot him from behind and did so when (Abe) was least expecting it" points to the "despicable and extremely malicious" nature of his act, he said.

Yamagami looked down and expressed little emotion during the sentencing for charges including murder and firearms control law violations, after he used a homemade gun to kill Japan's longest-serving leader during a campaign speech in July 2022.

The defence team of Yamagami

- who had admitted to murder at the trial opening in October - told a press conference they had not yet decided whether to appeal, which under Japan's legal system must be done within two weeks.

In a statement to Japanese media, Abe's widow Akie urged Yamagami to "face up to what he has done and pay for the crime of taking the life of my precious husband".

Prosecutors had argued that the defendant's motive to kill Abe was rooted in his desire to besmirch the Unification Church.

The months-long trial highlighted how his mother's blind donations to the church plunged his family into bankruptcy and how he

came to believe "influential politicians" were helping the sect thrive.

Abe had spoken at events organised by some of the church's groups. Judge Tanaka said "it is undeniable that the defendant's upbringing influenced the formation of his personality and his mindset... and that it even played a distant role" in his actions. But "each criminal action he took was based on nothing but his own decision-making, the process of which deserves strong condemnation", he added.

Katsuya Nakatani, a 60-year-old member of the public who was in the courtroom, said the judge had convinced him that "even if there was room for extenuating circum-

stances... opening fire with so many people around is, after all, something that cannot be forgiven".

"I even began to think it might have been a stroke of luck that only one person died," he said.

Another man outside the court held a banner urging the judge to take Yamagami's difficult life circumstances "into the fullest consideration".

Yamagami "thought if he killed someone as influential as former prime minister Abe, he could draw public attention to the Church and fuel public criticism of it", a prosecutor told a district court in western Japan's Nara region in October.

The Unification Church was es-

tablished in South Korea in 1954, with its members nicknamed "Moonies" after founder Sun Myung Moon.

In a plea for leniency, his defence team stressed his upbringing had been mired in "religious abuse" stemming from his mother's extreme faith in the Unification Church.

In despair after the suicide of her husband - and with her other son gravely ill - Yamagami's mother gave all her assets into the Church to "salvage" her family, Yamagami's lawyer said, adding that her donations eventually snowballed to around 100mn yen (\$1mn at the time).

**CHAIRMAN**

Abdullah bin Khalifa al-Attiyah

**EDITOR-IN-CHIEF**

Faisal Abdulhameed al-Mudahka

**Deputy Managing Editor**

Kamran Rehmat

- ✉ P.O.Box 2888, Doha, Qatar
- ✉ editor@gulf-times.com
- 📞 44350478 (News),
- 📞 44466404 (Sport),
- 📞 44466636 (Home delivery)
- ✉ 44350474
- ✉ facebook.com/gulf-times
- ✉ twitter.com/gulf-times\_Qatar
- ✉ instagram.com/gulf-times
- ✉ youtube.com/GulfTimesVideos

**GULF TIMES**

## China's buzzing AI scene a year after DeepSeek shock

Before DeepSeek shook up the tech world and put Chinese artificial intelligence on the map, Wu Chenglin's own startup had nearly folded three times – but in the past year it has raised \$30mn. The January 2025 release of a low-cost generative AI model from DeepSeek that performed at a similar level to ChatGPT and other top American chatbots upended assumptions of US dominance in the sensitive sector.

The breakthrough has galvanised China's AI scene, despite hurdles posed by rivalry with the United States, and fears of a global market bubble. "It gave a lot of people confidence" that China's AI community previously lacked, Wu told AFP. His venture DeepWisdom, whose flagship product is a platform for AI-powered software development, had struggled to stay afloat despite its popularity among programmers.

But as excitement around DeepSeek fuelled a boom in spending, Wu raised 220mn yuan in two funding rounds. Meanwhile, Shi Yaqiong and her team at Beijing-based Jingqiu Capital have closed deals with more than 50 AI firms over the past 12 months. Shi, the fund's vice-president, described a "clear surge" in enthusiasm around Chinese AI and competition among investors since the DeepSeek shock. "The kind of projects with an initial valuation in 2024 of \$10-20mn were, in 2025, expected to have initial valuations around \$20-40mn," she said.

Shares in two leading Chinese AI startups, Zhipu AI and MiniMax, soared on their market debuts in Hong Kong this month. Frenzy over the much-hyped potential of AI to change the world is driving global stocks to record highs, led by chipmakers and tech giants. But the big-spending euphoria has sparked fears of a market crash, with many investors hyper-focused on any sign the AI bubble could burst, and questioning when new companies will become profitable.

Access to top-end chips made by US giant Nvidia is also restricted in China under White House policies designed to curb China's technological development. But that hasn't dampened the spirits of young developers in the world's second largest economy.

At an AI networking event held on a brisk winter afternoon last week in a stylish Beijing cafe, animated discussion filled the air about the future of the fast-moving industry. Chip export controls

mean Chinese AI is more likely to be "open-source and cheap" which could make it more useful to society, said one participant, entrepreneur Li Weijia.

China is often said to enjoy an "engineer dividend" that benefits its AI sector, and talent is flocking to the field

mean Chinese AI is more likely to be "open-source and cheap" which could make it more useful to society, said one participant, entrepreneur Li Weijia.

China is often said to enjoy an "engineer dividend" that benefits its AI sector, and talent is flocking to the field. Online hiring platform Zhilian Zaopin reported a 39 percent increase in applications to AI-related jobs in the first three quarters of 2025, after DeepSeek's breakout.

"China has a huge application developer ecosystem and people are very good at building apps," Shen Qiajin, founder of ideaFlow, told AFP. "But for a very long time, we didn't have a good cost-efficient model," he said. That is a gap DeepSeek has now filled.

The firm began in 2023 as a side project of a data-driven hedge fund co-founded in the tech hub Hangzhou by Liang Wenfeng, which had access to a cache of powerful Nvidia processors.

Today, the company – expected to release its next AI model within weeks – holds four percent of global market share for chatbots, according to web traffic analysis company Similarweb.

ChatGPT dominates at 68 percent while Google's Gemini is catching up at 18 percent, Similarweb estimates. DeepSeek's decision to make its systems' inner workings public, in contrast to the closed AI models sold by OpenAI and other Western rivals, has boosted adoption of its tools by developers and businesses, Neil Shah at Counterpoint Research said.

Its tools have had "strong adoption in cost-sensitive emerging markets," he said.

But the West users are more cautious, "primarily on account of privacy and national security concerns." Even so, the domestic market is huge. By June 2025, more than half a billion Chinese Internet users reported having used generative AI products, according to the China Internet Network Information Center.

Entrepreneur Yang Yiwen said her parents had their first meaningful encounter with AI during last year's Chinese New Year, when they watched her use DeepSeek to plan a family trip.

"They found it quite fun," she said. – AFP

**To Advertise**

✉ gtadv@gulf-times.com

**Display**

📞 44466621 📞 44418811

**Classified**

📞 44466609 📞 44418811

✉ gtcad@gulf-times.com

**Subscription**

✉ circulation@gulf-times.com

© 2026 Gulf Times. All rights reserved



## People with special needs can enjoy full life potential in Qatar

**In Qatar, a person with a disability can realise their full potential and move freely, including while using public transportation, as all public and private buildings are designed and equipped accordingly, including recreation and entertainment facilities and public parks**

**By Ayman Adly**  
Staff Reporter

Qatar has adopted a practical approach to fully integrate people with special needs into society, providing them with the care, protection, and support they need to realise their full potential and lead a normal life. The move also gives them easy access to all public services and protection against any attempts at discrimination or abuse.

Accordingly, His Highness the Amir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani issued Law No. 22 of 2025 on the rights of persons with disabilities to further cement the privileges and care afforded to this category of society and to make their rights legally binding by the force of law.

The law upholds principles of non-discrimination, dignity, and full societal integration for those people. It ensures that such people have full and easy access to all services, indicating that modifications to public buildings, infrastructure, digital platforms, and transport facilities are mandatory to make them easily usable by people with special needs.

The law also ensures that persons participate in public life actively and enjoy full legal rights. Besides, the law allows them to assume public jobs and provides a certain quota at government and private entities.

Such classes are offered in regular schools with inclusion services and specialised placements for specific needs, such as visual and hearing impairments. Further, MoEHE operates various specialised schools under the name 'Al-Hidaya Special Needs Schools', offering tailored educational programmes for students with

Further, the law entails penalties for violators, including up to five years in jail and a maximum fine of QR500,000, or any combination of such penalties for violating the law's stipulations. The law guarantees that such people enjoy their full rights and lead normal lives alongside others.

In Qatar, a person with a disability can realise their full potential and move freely, including while using public transportation, as all public and private buildings are designed and equipped accordingly, including recreation and entertainment facilities and public parks.

Besides, the country has given due care to special needs education through various designated centres, establishments, and institutes. The Ministry of Education and Higher Education (MoEHE) has established inclusive classrooms in 82 schools across the country to support students with disabilities in mainstream education, providing adapted learning environments and support according to individual needs.

Such classes are offered in regular schools with inclusion services and specialised placements for specific needs, such as visual and hearing impairments. Further, MoEHE operates various specialised schools under the name 'Al-Hidaya Special Needs Schools', offering tailored educational programmes for students with

disabilities, including intellectual disabilities and autism, from kindergarten through Grade 12. These schools provide multidisciplinary support services to enhance academic development and independence.

Other related educational institutes include the Audio Education Complex, specifically targeting those with hearing impairments. Further, Roa'a Centre, operating under the Department of Special Education in MoEHE, conducts evaluations and counselling to determine the most appropriate educational setting and support services for students with special needs.

In January 2025, MoEHE, in partnership with Qatar Foundation (QF), launched Warif Academy, the first specialised government academy in Qatar, providing educational and therapeutic services for students with profound and multiple disabilities, targeting students aged 3-21 years.

Numerous private and non-profit centres and initiatives serve the needs of different categories of these people, helping them improve their skills and realise their aspirations. Meanwhile, organisations like Mada provide assistive technology stations and training throughout Qatar to support students with disabilities in accessing educational content and digital learning environments.

Shafallah Centre for Persons with Disabilities, established in

1999, has been actively providing its services as a premier non-profit organisation dedicated to empowering individuals with intellectual disabilities and autism.

The country also offers special welfare and healthcare services designed to provide maximum benefits to this category of people, with specialised health facilities offering free services and excellent social protection packages that extend to even the families of these people.

Qatar has hosted major international conferences to promote and enhance the rights and protection of people with disabilities, including the Doha International Conference on Disability and Development 2019, held in December 2019.

The Second World Summit for Social Development 2025, held in November 2025, featured the International Disability Alliance as a central partner to ensure disability rights remain at the heart of the global social development agenda. Other related international events

scheduled for this year include the International Conference on Disability and Inclusive Education, the International Conference on Disability and Rehabilitation, the International Conference on Ageing Disability and Independence, and the International Conference on Disability and Diversity. Qatar also announced its readiness for the Global Disability Summit 2028.

## A global stage for culture, innovation, events

**By Maria Del Rio**  
Doha

Qatar continues to strengthen its role as a global destination for major international events, offering a carefully curated calendar that brings together culture, innovation, business, tourism, and sport. This positioning is the outcome of sustained co-ordination across multiple sectors, supported by the work of Visit Qatar and Qatari Tourism in strengthening international outreach and event attraction.

Among the most anticipated cultural milestones is Art Basel, whose arrival in Doha marks a defining moment in Qatar's cultural evolution. As one of the world's most prestigious contemporary art fairs, Art Basel brings together leading galleries, artists, collectors, curators, and museum directors from across the globe. Its presence reinforces Qatar's commitment to the creative economy and cultural diplomacy, positioning the country as a bridge between regional artistic expression and the global art market, while also driving tourism, hospitality demand, and international visibility.

Technology and innovation form the next pillar of Qatar's global positioning through Web Summit Qatar. The event attracts tens of thousands of participants, including startup

**Sport remains a central component of Qatar's events ecosystem over the coming months. International competitions such as the MotoGP Qatar Airways Grand Prix at Lusail International Circuit, elite tennis tournaments, and high-profile football matches hosted in world-class stadiums continue to attract global audiences, athletes, and media, reinforcing Qatar's status as a premier sports destination**

founders, venture capitalists, policymakers, and global technology leaders. With a strong focus on entrepreneurship, artificial intelligence, digital transformation, and investment, Web Summit Qatar supports Qatar's economic diversification strategy and reinforces Doha's emergence as a regional hub for innovation and future industries.

Sport remains a central component of Qatar's events ecosystem over the coming months. International competitions such as the MotoGP Qatar Airways Grand Prix at Lusail International Circuit, elite tennis tournaments, and high-profile football matches hosted in world-class stadiums continue to attract global audiences, athletes, and media, reinforcing Qatar's status as a premier sports destination.

At the lifestyle and community level, the Qatar International Food Festival adds a social dimension to the events calendar. Featuring a wide selection of local and international

restaurants, food concepts, and family-friendly experiences, the festival draws large public attendance and highlights Qatar's diverse culinary scene while supporting local businesses and entrepreneurs.

These examples represent only a small part of a much broader and continuously expanding events calendar in Qatar. As Qatar looks ahead, its growing reputation as a world-class events destination reflects more than infrastructure and scale – it reflects vision, coordination, and a long-term commitment to global connection.

(Maria Del Rio is a Qatar-based media professional with academic training in finance and a Master's degree in Business Administration. She is an accredited journalist with the Qatar Press Center and the presenter of Diplomatic Dialogues for Gulf Times, focusing on diplomacy, tourism, economic development, and the promotion of cultural diversity.)

## CRIME

**Germany arrests woman accused of spying for Russia**

A German-Ukrainian woman was arrested in Berlin yesterday accused of spying for Russia by passing on information on military aid to Ukraine, prosecutors said. The suspect, partially named as Ilona W, had allegedly maintained intelligence contacts with the Russian embassy in Berlin since at least November 2023, prosecutors said in a statement. She "compiled background information on participants in high-profile political events and gathered information on arms industry sites, drone tests and planned deliveries of drones to Ukraine", said prosecutors. - **Reuters**

## INDUSTRIAL ACTION

**Spain train drivers call strike after deadly accidents: union**

Spanish train drivers will strike for three days in February to "demand measures that guarantee rail safety" after two deadly accidents struck just days apart, their union said yesterday. The February 9-11 walkout will affect all train companies and is "the only legal route left for workers to demand the restoration of the rail system's safety" for staff and users, the Semaf union said in a statement. Sunday's high-speed collision in the southern region of Andalusia, which killed 43 people, and another disaster near Barcelona on Tuesday that left the driver dead "represent a turning point", the union said. - **AFP**

## TREND

**Romania's far-right opposition dominates in latest opinion poll**

Romania's hard-right opposition party the Alliance for Uniting Romanians is towering over the four parties of the pro-European coalition government in popular support, an opinion poll showed yesterday, although no election is due until 2028. AUR, the second-largest party in the country, led surveys throughout 2025 despite its leader George Simion ultimately losing a presidential election re-run last May. The party opposes extending military aid to neighbouring Ukraine, is critical of the European Union's leadership and supportive of US President Donald Trump's policies including on energy and immigration. - **AFP**

## ANNOUNCEMENT

**Hungary's govt to cover rise in household heating bills for Jan**

Hungary's government is going to pay the extra cost facing households in their heating bills for January, which stems from their increased fuel consumption due to freezing temperatures, Prime Minister Viktor Orban said. "The government has decided to introduce a January utility bill cap. This means the government will cover the costs of the excess consumption for families for heating in January," Orban said in a video on Facebook, ahead of an April 12 election. It was not immediately clear how the measure would affect the existing state subsidy scheme that has been in effect for households' gas and electricity consumption. - **AFP**

# Trump rules out 'force' against Greenland but demands talks

**AFP**  
Davos, Switzerland

**U**S President Donald Trump for the first time ruled out using force to take Greenland as he addressed world leaders in Davos yesterday, but demanded "immediate negotiations" to acquire the island from Denmark.

Trump's quest to take control of Greenland from a Nato ally has deeply shaken the global order and the markets, and it dominated his first address to the World Economic Forum in six years.

In a speech lasting more than an hour in the Swiss ski resort, Trump slammed "ungrateful" Denmark for refusing to give up Greenland, and said the US alone could guarantee the security of the "giant piece of ice".

But Trump appeared to take the threat of military action off the table, in a dramatic turnaround from his previous threats that the US could use force to take control of the mineral-rich Arctic island.

"We probably won't get anything unless I decide to use excessive strength and force where we would be, frankly, unstoppable - but I won't do that," Trump said.

"I don't have to use force. I don't want to use force. I won't use force,"

All the US is asking for is a place called Greenland."

Wall Street stocks opened higher yesterday after Trump's comments.

Denmark said it was a "positive" sign that Trump had said he wanted to avoid military force - but stressed that the US president had not backed away from his push to acquire Greenland.

"What is quite clear after this speech is that the president's ambition remains intact," Foreign Minister Lars Lokke Rasmussen said.

Greenland's government meanwhile unveiled a new brochure yesterday offering advice to the population in the event of a "crisis" in the territory, saying it was an "insurance policy".

Trump repeatedly pushed his claims to Greenland - which he mistakenly called Iceland several times - during lengthy remarks on the deepest crisis in transatlantic relations for decades.

He said he was "seeking immediate negotiations to once again discuss the acquisition of Greenland by the US" and added that Washington would "remember" if Denmark said no.

Trump says Greenland is under threat from Russia and China.

The US president also lambasted Europe on a number of fronts from security to tariffs and the economy,

saying it was "not heading in the right direction".

Trump flew into Davos by helicopter, stepping onto a red carpet laid in the snow - but he flew into a growing international storm over Greenland.

He arrived some two hours behind schedule, after an electrical issue earlier forced Air Force One to turn back to Washington and the president to switch planes.

Europe and Canada had earlier closed ranks against what they view as a threat to the US-led global order from Trump's territorial ambitions.

Canada's Prime Minister Mark Carney won a standing ovation at Davos on Tuesday when he warned of a "rupture" to the US-led system. French President Emmanuel Macron meanwhile said Europe would not be bullied.

But Trump, who was due to meet a number of leaders in Davos, renewed his attacks on the two leaders, mocking Macron in particular for wearing sunglasses at Davos, which the French president said was because of an eye condition.

Trump also repeatedly expressed doubts on Nato during his speech, saying Washington was treated "so unfairly" and questioning whether the alliance would defend the US if asked.



US President Donald Trump speaks at the 56th annual World Economic Forum (WEF) meeting in Davos, Switzerland, yesterday.

## Trump chides Carney, says Canada should be 'grateful'

**Reuters**  
Davos, Switzerland

**U**S President Donald Trump chided Mark Carney in a speech in Davos yesterday after the Canadian prime minister delivered a rousing address on a "rupture" in the international rules-based order.

In a wide-ranging speech at the World Economic Forum annual meeting in Switzerland, Trump touched on everything from his aim to acquire Greenland to his plans for Venezuela and the next chairman of the Federal Reserve.

But he reserved strong words for Carney, who received a standing ovation for his remarks at the fo-

rum on Tuesday. "They should be grateful to us, Canada. Canada lives because of the US. Remember that, Mark, the next time you make your statements," Trump said.

In his special address, Carney expressed Canada's desire to forge new alliances with like-minded countries as he navigates a tricky relationship with the Trump administration in Washington.

"We are in the midst of a rupture, not a transition," Carney said, pointing to how "great powers" were using economic integration as weapons and tariffs as leverage. He did not directly name Trump or the US. "We know the old order is not coming back. We shouldn't mourn it. Nostalgia is not a strategy," he said. Trump has previously

threatened to annex Canada, and on Tuesday shared an AI image of a map showing Canada and Greenland as part of the US.

Earlier UN chief Antonio Guterres warned of world leaders upending international order in a statement made as Trump said the US needs to acquire Greenland.

"When leaders run roughshod over international law, picking and choosing which rules to follow - they are undermining global order and setting a perilous precedent," Guterres said on X.

"When a handful of individuals can bend global narratives, sway elections, or dictate the terms of public debate, we are facing inequality and the corruption of institutions & our shared values."

## Death toll in Karachi mall fire climbs to around 50

**Reuters**  
Karachi, Pakistan

**P**akistani firefighters yesterday retrieved the bodies of up to 25 people from the debris of a shopping mall fire in Karachi, taking the death toll to around 50.

The port city's largest fire in more than a decade broke out late on Saturday and quickly spread through the sprawling Gul Plaza shopping complex, famous for its 1,200 family-owned stores selling wedding clothes, toys, crockery and other goods.

"We have found 20 to 25 dead bodies, or you call them remains," deputy commissioner Javed Nabi Khoso told reporters. He said the remains had been taken to a hospital for DNA matching.

Due to the difficulties in identification, he said it was hard to

give a precise update on the death toll, which stood at 29 on Tuesday.

A small crowd paying tribute to the victims lit candles near the site, with some holding images of those presumed killed.

Firefighters had been battling the inferno inside the mall until Tuesday. By the time it was brought under control, Gul Plaza was reduced to a pile of ash and debris. A total of 84 people had been registered missing, according to a state-run rescue service. Police have said most of the missing are feared dead, meaning the toll could rise still further.

"It is a ghastly scenario," said shopkeeper Rehmat Khan after seeing inside what was left of the plaza. He said around 18 to 20 people had been in the shop, including six staff, when the fire erupted in the mall. All of them were missing, he said.

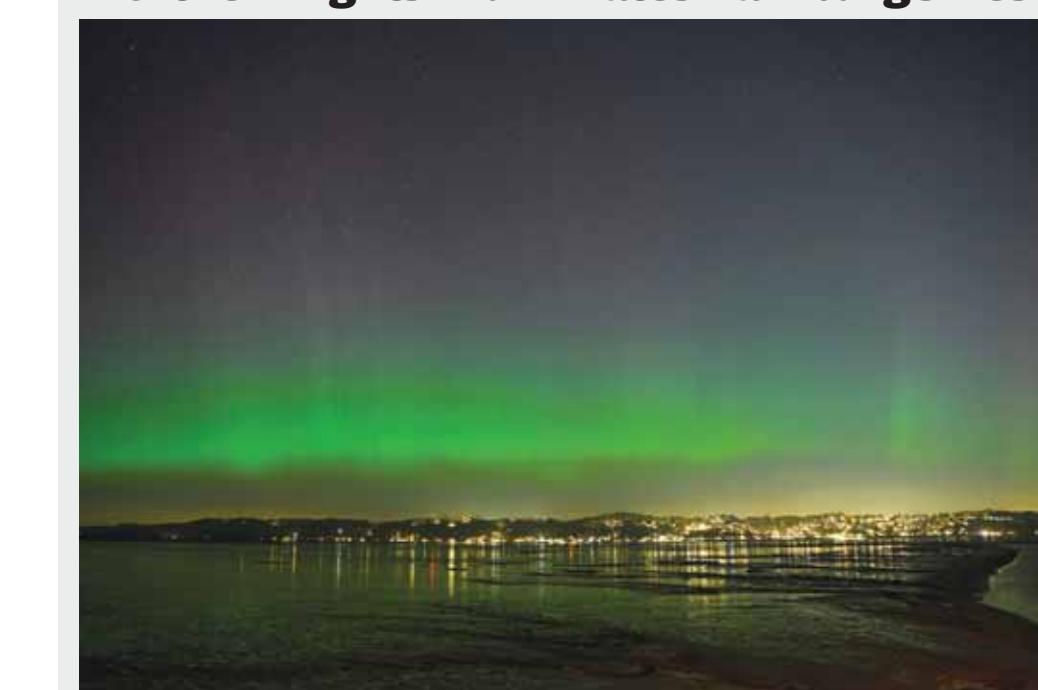
# Le Pen insists party acted in 'good faith' at EU fraud appeal

**AFP**  
Paris, France

**F**rench far-right leader Marine Le Pen told an appeals trial yesterday that her party acted in "good faith", denying an effort to embezzle European Parliament funds as she fights to keep her 2027 presidential bid alive.

A French court last year barred Le Pen, a three-time presidential candidate from the far-right National Rally (RN), from running for office for five years over a fake jobs scam at the European institution.

It found her, along with 24 former European Parliament lawmakers,



The Aurora Borealis, also known as the "northern lights", illuminates the sky over Hamburg, Germany, yesterday.

assistants and accountants as well as the party itself, guilty of operating a "system" from 2004 to 2016 using European Parliament funds to employ party staff in France.

Le Pen - who on Tuesday rejected the idea of an organised scheme - said on her second day of questioning that even if her party broke the law, it was unintentional.

"We were acting in complete good faith," she said in the dock yesterday.

"We can undoubtedly be criticised," the 57-year-old said, shifting instead the blame to the legislature's alleged lack of information and oversight.

"The European Parliament's ad-

ministration was much more lenient than it is today," she said.

Le Pen also argued that the passage of time made it "extremely difficult" for her to prove her innocence.

"I don't know how to prove to you what I can't prove to you, what I have to prove to you," she told the court.

Asked about the hiring of her longtime personal assistant Catherine Griset under a Brussels contract despite working in Paris, Le Pen replied: "It's not because she's in Paris that she isn't doing her job as a parliamentary assistant."

She however went on to admit "the mistake" of having "hired

people who worked at party headquarters".

On Tuesday, Le Pen was also asked about Julien Odoul, who was listed as her "special adviser" on the party's website in 2015 despite being contracted as a MEP's assistant.

She claimed he just contributed notes as her adviser, and did so little work for her she assumed he had "another job". She said she did not know he was supposed to be working for an MEP.

Eleven others and the party are also appealing in a trial to last until mid-February, with a decision expected this summer.

Le Pen was also handed a

four-year prison sentence, with two years suspended, and fined 100,000 euros (\$116,000) in the initial trial.

She now again risks the maximum sentence of 10 years in prison and a one-million-euro (\$1.16mn) fine if the appeal fails.

Le Pen is hoping to be acquitted - or at least for a shorter election ban and no time under house arrest.

On Tuesday, Le Pen pushed back against the argument that there was an organised operation to funnel EU funds to the far-right party.

"The term 'system' bothers me because it gives the impression of manipulation," she said.

EU Parliament official Didier Kletti last week said that the legislature's rules were "clear".

EU lawmakers could employ assistants, who were allowed to engage in political activism, but this was forbidden "during working hours", he said.

If the court upholds the first ruling, Le Pen will be prevented from running in the 2027 election, widely seen as her best chance to win the country's top job.

She made it to the second round in the 2017 and 2022 presidential polls, before losing to Emmanuel Macron. But he cannot run this time after two consecutive terms in office.



الدفعة الثامنة - 2026



## Police Academy graduates felicitated in grand ceremony

From Page 1

Collectively, they completed 1,473 hours of military training, which included 408 hours of marching drills, 160 hours of parachuting courses, 133 hours of weapons training, 425 hours in the Thunderbolt course, 135 hours of marksmanship, 90 hours of driving courses, 88 hours of World Cup training and qualification, and 34 hours of riot control training.

With such intensive training, the graduates are fully equipped to handle the challenges and tasks they may encounter throughout their professional careers. Besides, the graduates received a total of 836 hours of sports training, including 508 hours of physical fitness, 96 hours of swimming, and 232 hours of self-defence, making them fully prepared to undertake any potential security tasks and handle them with due efficiency and professionalism.

Further, the graduates were equipped with the necessary legal and academic studies in the security field, with hands-on training in relevant departments.

Following the recitation of verses from the Holy Qur'an, President of the Police Academy, Major General Abdulrahman Majid al-Sulaiti, delivered a speech on the occasion, stressing the high qualifications and skills of the graduates and emphasising their readiness to assume responsibility and serve the nation accordingly.

The decree of His Highness the Amir appointing the graduate officers at the various departments of the Ministry of Interior was read out, granting them the rank of lieutenant.

His Highness the Amir honoured the top graduating students. Next, the flag was handed over from the



eighth batch to the ninth batch, the appointment order was read aloud, and the graduates' queue exited.

The programme then included a marching display by the graduates, a military parade, and the entrance of the "Officers of Tomorrow" queue, a line of schoolchildren dressed in the same uniform as the graduates. They also took part in the police parade and marched in synchrony with their seniors, delivering a harmonious, highly

skilled, and disciplined performance. The ceremony concluded with the officers of the eighth batch taking the oath and performing the college anthem.

After the conclusion of the ceremony, the graduates, their parents, families and friends expressed their joy, happiness and pride at achieving this milestone and becoming part of the new generation to serve the country and maintain its security and stability

under the wise leadership of His Highness the Amir. They were also keen to express their appreciation and gratitude to the academy and its leadership for the quality education and training they received, which have qualified them for the honour of serving their nation.

Many of them posed for photos with their loved ones in their new professional uniforms to document vital moments in their lives and careers. — with inputs from QNA



## WEEKEND DEALS

العرض متاح في جميع منافذ سفاري بتاريخ: ٢٢-٠١-٢٠٢٦ في جميع منافذ سفاري  
Promotion available at all Safari outlets on: 22-01-2026 at all Safari Outlets

قد يكون هناك حدود لبعض منافذ سفاري حذف بعض منافذ سفاري  
Purchase limit may apply. Offer valid until stocks last. Offer valid until stocks last.



22.75 QR

لحم بقري باكتشانى بالعظم اكجم  
Pakistan Beef With Bone 1 kg

39.00 QR

لحم خروف استرالى اكجم  
Australian Lamb 1 kg

36.75 QR

سلمون نرويجي اكجم  
Fresh Salmon Norway 1 kg

38.75 QR

سمك فاروص تركي اكجم  
Fresh Seabass Turkey 1 kg

19.50 QR

حبار وسط عمان اكجم  
Fresh Squid Medium Oman 1 kg

9.00 QR

سمك ميلك كبير سعوديه اكجم  
Fresh Milk Fish Big KSA 1 kg

3.75 QR

سمك ماكيريل صغير سعوديه اكجم  
Fresh Mackerel Small KSA 1 kg

1.25 QR

بصل هندي اكجم  
Onion India 1 kg

1.50 QR

بطاطس باكتشانى اكجم  
Potato Pakistan 1 kg

3.50 QR

جزر استراليا اكجم  
Carrot Australia 1 kg

6.00 QR

بروكلي صيني اكجم  
Broccoli China 1 kg

1.75 QR

برازيليا مصرى اكجم  
Strawberry Egypt (Approx 250 gm) 1 Box

11.00 QR

صن فلور زيت دوار الشميس ١.٥ لتر - احده  
Sunflow Sunflower Oil 1.5 Ltr x 1 pc

6.00 QR

ثالاسيري بريانى دجاج ٥٠٠ جم - احده  
Thalassery Chicken Biryani 500 gm

9.25 QR

بردكس دجاج شواية ١٢٠٠ جم - احده  
Perdix Chicken Griller 1200 gm x 1 pc

**VISIT & WIN**  
VISIT SAFARI HYPERMARKET,  
EZDAN MALL- AL GHARAFFA

GRAB YOUR FREE  
COUPON TO WIN

2  
TESLA MODEL Y CARS

SECOND LUCKY DRAW  
ON 19-02-2026

Promotion Valid Till: 18-02-2026  
This Promotion is Available Only at  
Safari Hypermarket, Ezdan Mall - Al Gharaffa

SPEND QR.50 & GET  
AN E-RAFFLE COUPON TO WIN



WIN 4 CARS  
IN EVERY LUCKY DRAW

Promotion Valid Till: 12-09-2026

This promotion is available at all Bestline outlets across Qatar

SHOP & DRIVE  
WIN

30



SECOND LUCKY DRAW  
ON 15-02-2026

at Safari Hypermarket, Al Khor (4 Winners)

SAFARI MALL  
Abu Hamour  
Tel: +974 441 91 441

SAFARI HYPERMARKET  
Salwa Road  
Tel: +974 400 01 004

SAFARI HYPERMARKET  
Al Khor  
Tel: +974 400 01 050

SAFARI HYPERMARKET  
Barwa Village  
Tel: +974 441 88 704

SAFARI HYPERMARKET  
Industrial Area  
Tel: +974 446 89 058

SAFARI HYPERMARKET  
Birkat Al Awamer  
Tel: +974 441 88 699

SAFARI HYPERMARKET  
Ezdan Mall, Al Gharaffa  
Tel: +974 414 74 844