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BUSINESS | Page 1

Milaha reports 13.39% jump in net profit to QR1.27bn in 2025; suggests 45% cash dividend



Doha Legal Forum ends with focus on future challenges

By A Staff Reporter
Doha

The first Doha Legal Forum wrapped up yesterday after two days of discussions on current legal challenges and ways to strengthen the rule of law at regional and international levels. The event was organised by the Ministry of Justice in co-operation with the Qatar International Court and Dispute Resolution Center, under the patronage of HE the Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman bin Jassim al-Thani. It brought together senior officials, legal experts and academics from a wide range of countries.

In his closing remarks, HE Undersecretary of the Ministry of Justice Saeed bin Abdullah

al-Suwaidi said the forum had laid a solid foundation for future editions and confirmed it would be held every two years. He described the gathering as a "rich legal experience" that showcased ambition, innovation and initiative, and provided a leading platform for dialogue, knowledge-sharing and debate on emerging legal issues. He noted that the forum hosted 19 panel sessions with 55 speakers, covering legislative reform, trade and investment, dispute resolution, energy regulation, public-private partnerships, cybersecurity, financial services regulation and the use of artificial intelligence. Al-Suwaidi added that the outcomes would be compiled into a set of recommendations, to be drafted by a dedicated committee, to help shape future legal frameworks in co-ordination with strategic partners. **Page 4**



Qatar, Armenia in political consultation

The Ministries of Foreign Affairs of Qatar and Armenia held the first round of political consultation yesterday in Yerevan, Armenia. HE Secretary-General of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Dr Ahmed bin Hassan al-Hammadi led the Qatari side, while the Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of Armenia Vahan Kostanyan led the Armenian side. The consultation round discussed the co-operation between the two countries and ways to support and strengthen them. Qatar's ambassador to Armenia Mansour bin Abdulla al-Sulaitin, Director of Asian Affairs Department at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs al-Johara bint Yousef al-Obaidani Fakhro, and the accompanying delegation attended the consultation round. **(QNA)**

Amir, Sudan TSC chairman hold talks

High-level engagement boosts co-operation, support for Sudan's security and sovereignty



Amiri Diwan Abdullah bin Mohammed al-Khalifa, and several of ministers and ranking officials. On the Sudanese side, the

meeting was attended by Foreign Minister Mohi El Din Salem, Director of the Office of Chairman of the Transitional Sovereignty

Council Major General Adel Sabedrat, and several of ranking officials and members of the official delegation. **(QNA)**

Qatar to make art history with Art Basel debut

By Joseph Varghese
Staff Reporter

Qatar is set to make history next month as it becomes the first Middle Eastern nation to host Art Basel, the world's most prestigious contemporary art fair. The inaugural Art Basel Qatar, from February 5-7 at Msheireb Museums and M7 in Doha, marks a turning point for the region's cultural scene and underscores Qatar's rise as a global hub for artistic exchange and innovation.

Wael Shawky, artistic director of Art Basel Qatar, said the country's long-term investment in cultural

infrastructure and its growing community of collectors made it a "natural choice" for the fair's regional debut. "Qatar's comprehensive arts ecosystem – from education and institutions to public engagement – creates the right conditions for an art fair to thrive," he told *Gulf Times* in an exclusive interview.

"Qatar has invested seriously in cultural infrastructure over a long period of time, building a comprehensive arts ecosystem that supports artists through education, exchange, and sustained support. For Art Basel, this kind of long-term commitment matters," Wael Shawky, artistic director, Art Basel Qatar, told *Gulf Times* in an exclusive interview. **To Page 7**

Sheikh Thani honours Arab Book Award winners



HE Sheikh Thani bin Hamad al-Thani, Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Qatar Fund for Development (QFFD), honoured the winners of the third Arab Book Award during an official ceremony yesterday. The ceremony was attended by a number of Sheikhs and ministers, members of diplomatic missions accredited to Qatar, and distinguished guests including scholars, academics, researchers, heads of cultural and scientific institutions and publishing houses and a large number of Arab media representatives. **Page 7**

Where travel meets tranquillity: Inside HIA's living oasis

Nature, design, serenity converge at airport's tropical garden

By Joey Aguilar
Staff Reporter

Airports are synonymous with urgency, defined by queues, boarding calls and tight connections that set the rhythm of travel. At Hamad International Airport (HIA), however, one space has been purposely designed to slow that pace.

The Orchard, a vast indoor tropical garden at the heart of the terminal, is redefining the passenger experience by weaving nature, innovation and sustainability into a setting built for constant movement.

"Walking into The Orchard at HIA was a total vibe shift. Entering this tropical garden before my flight felt like a literal sanctuary. With all the lush



greenery and natural light, you totally forget you're even in an airport," Fili-

pino traveller Zoey told *Gulf Times*. She recalled spending nearly an hour

soaking in the calm energy and the soothing sounds of flowing water, while her one-year-old daughter explored the space.

"It's the ultimate spot to reset your brain before take-off. Honestly, every airport needs this level of biophilic healing," says Zoey.

Dinah, a frequent traveller herself, shares a similar experience, saying: "It is refreshing to see a garden inside the airport as it creates a relaxing atmosphere while waiting for a flight. It offers a pleasant space to read books, enjoy a cup of coffee, or have a quiet conversation with a friend."

Spanning 6,000sq m, The Orchard is filled with natural light, dense greenery and the gentle sounds of water, all proven indicators of relaxation. Since its unveiling in 2022, it has become a visual and emotional anchor within the airport.

More than 300 trees and over 25,000 plants and shrubs sourced from sustainable forests around the world populate the garden, with around 30 tree species and

90 varieties of plants carefully selected to thrive together in a single indoor environment. The tallest tree rises to 16 metres, highlighting the rainforest-like atmosphere.

For frequent travellers like Miriam from Kenya, the impact is immediate and lasting: "I always look forward to visiting the Orchard at HIA because of the tranquillity it offers both my mind and body."

"The moment one steps into the space, the usual rush and noise of an airport seem to fade away. Surrounded by lush greenery and the gentle presence of water, one hardly feels like they are in a transit hub at all."

Water plays a key role in shaping that experience. A 575sq m water feature includes a sustainable bio-pond that has evolved over time, from aquatic plants at launch to flowering water lilies and lotus flowers today.

Since opening, Orchard has seen multiple blooms, including the introduction of new orchid species, subtly renewing the environment for repeat visitors. **To Page 7**

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS AND INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2025

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT

To the Shareholders

Damaan Islamic Insurance Company "BEEMA" (Q.P.S.C.), Lusail – Qatar

Report on the Audit of the Financial Statements

We have audited the financial statements of Damaan Islamic Insurance Company "BEEMA" (Q.P.S.C.) (the "Company"), which comprise the statement of financial position as at 31 December 2025, and the statement of policyholders' revenues and expenses, statement of changes in policyholders' surplus, shareholders' income statement, statement of changes in shareholders' equity and statement of cash flows for the year then ended, and notes to the financial statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies.

In our opinion, the accompanying financial statements present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of the Company as at 31 December 2025, and its financial performance and its cash flows for the year then ended in accordance with the Financial Accounting Standards ("FAS") issued by Accounting and Auditing Organisation for Islamic Financial Institutions (AAOIFI).

Basic for Opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (ISA). Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statements section of our report. We are independent of the Company in accordance with the International Ethics Standards Board for Accountants International Code of Ethics for Professional Accountants (including International Independence Standards) (IESBA Code), as applicable to audits of financial statements of public interest entities, together with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audits of the financial statements of public interest entities in the State of Qatar. We have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements and the IESBA Code. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

Key Audit Matters

Key audit matters are those matters that, in our professional judgment, were of most significance in our audit of the financial statements for the year ended 31 December 2025. These matters were addressed in the context of our audit of the financial statements as a whole, and in forming our opinion thereon, and we do not provide a separate opinion on these matters.

Key Audit Matters

1. Adoption of FAS 42 "Presentation and Disclosures in the Financial Statements of Takaful Institutions" and FAS 43 "Accounting for Takaful: Recognition and Measurement".

During the year the Company adopted FAS 42 and FAS 43. These standards establish principles for the recognition, measurement, presentation and disclosure of takaful arrangements and related re-takaful arrangements. The Company issued a wide range of takaful arrangements and consequently a large number of judgements and estimates need to be applied and made respectively.

The Company has applied the full retrospective approach, including accounting policy elections made (refer to note 2.1.7), to each group of takaful arrangements which results in comparative information presented in the financial statements being restated. The adoption of these standards resulted in total policyholders' surplus decreasing by QR 32.6 million on 31 December 2024 (1 January 2024: QR 24.3 million). In addition, the adoption of these standards has resulted in significant changes to the presentation and disclosure

The application of FAS 42 and FAS 43 required management to apply the following significant judgements and make the following estimates:

- Application criteria for the contribution allocation approach
- Level of aggregation of arrangements and assessment for onerous or potentially (in future) onerous arrangements
- Estimate of fair value of cash flows
- Treatment of takaful acquisition cash flows as an expense

The adoption of FAS 42 and FAS 43 is considered as a key audit matter due to the significant judgements and estimates applied by management, the consequential level of fundamental presentation and disclosure changes made to the financial statements and the level of audit effort required.

Refer to note 2 for impact of transition, accounting policy, significant accounting judgements, estimates and assumptions.

2. Valuation of estimates of expected and fair value of future cashflows under takaful arrangement liabilities and related re-takaful arrangement assets

As at 31 December 2025, the liability for incurred claims (LIC) for takaful arrangements and related re-takaful arrangement assets amounted to QR 132 million (2024: QR 131.3 million), and the fair value of future cash flows of the takaful and re-takaful liability of QR 286.4 million and QR 132 million (2024: QR 215.1 million and QR 131.3 million) respectively, as detailed in note

The valuation of the expected and fair value of the incurred claims takes the Company's expectations regarding future payments for known and unknown claims, including associated expenses, takes into account and utilises models and assumptions made by management. These are key elements of Contribution Allocation Approach (CAA). Its accuracy is dependent, inter alia, on the reliability of the inputs used.

The valuation requires management to apply significant judgements, make significant estimates and use specialist models. The risk of error arises as a result of inappropriate choice of specialist methodologies, techniques and assumptions. Management used an external specialist to assist them in the valuation.

We considered the abovementioned valuation to be a key audit matter as a result of the following:

- The quantitative significance of takaful arrangement liabilities and assets to the financial statements;
- The level of judgements applied and estimates made by management; and
- The level of audit effort required.

Other Information

The Board of Directors is responsible for the other information. The other information comprises the Board of Directors' Report but does not include the financial statements and our auditor's report thereon. The Board of Directors' Report is expected to be made available to us after the date of this auditor's report.

Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon.

In connection with our audit of the financial statements, our responsibility is to read the other information identified above and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements, or our knowledge obtained in the audit, or otherwise appears to be materially misstated.

If, based on the work we have performed on the other information that we obtained prior to the date of this auditor's report, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report that fact.

Reporting of Material Events That May Change with Governance for the Financial Statements

Management is responsible for the preparation and the presentation of the financial statements in accordance with FAS issued by AAOIFI, the Islamic Shari'a rules and principles as determined by the Shar'i Supervisory Board of the Company, the Articles of Association of the Company, applicable provisions of Qatar Commercial Law No. 11 of 2015, including subsequent amendments through Law No. 8 of 2021 and the applicable provisions of the Qatar Central Bank's rules and regulations, and for such internal control management determines is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, management is responsible for assessing the Company's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and the going concern basis of accounting unless management either intends to liquidate the Company or to cease operations, or has no realistic alternative but to do so.

Those charged with governance are responsible for overseeing the Company's financial reporting process.

Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statements

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with ISA will always detect a material misstatement in the financial statements, even if it exists. The audit evidence obtained is not a complete audit of the financial statements, but is designed to provide a high level of assurance about its overall fairness.

As part of an audit in accordance with ISAs, we exercise professional judgment and maintain professional skepticism throughout the audit. We also:

- Identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error, design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks, and obtain audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control;

Obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the internal control;

Evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates and related disclosures made by management;

Conclude on the appropriateness of management's use of the going concern basis of accounting and, based on the audit evidence obtained, whether a material uncertainty exists related to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on the Company's ability to continue as a going concern. If we conclude that a material uncertainty exists, we are required to draw attention in our auditor's report to the related disclosures in the financial statements or, if such disclosures are inadequate, to modify our opinion. Our conclusions are based on the audit evidence obtained up to the date of our auditor's report. However, future events or conditions may cause the Company to cease to continue as a going concern;

Evaluate overall presentation, structure and content of the financial statements, including the disclosures, and whether the financial statements represent the underlying transactions and events in a manner that achieves fair presentation.

We communicate with those charged with governance regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit and significant audit findings, including any significant deficiencies in internal control that we identify during our audit.

We also provide those charged with governance with a statement that we have complied with relevant ethical requirements regarding independence, and to communicate with them all relationships and other matters that may reasonably be thought to bear on our independence, and where applicable, related safeguards.

From the matters communicated with those charged with governance, we determine those matters that were of most significance in the audit of the financial statements of the current year and those matters as to which the key audit matters relate.

We describe those matters in our auditor's report unless law or regulation precludes public disclosure about the adverse consequences of doing so or when in extremely rare circumstances, we determine that a matter should not be communicated in our report because the adverse consequences of doing so would reasonably be expected to outweigh the public interest benefits of such communication.

Report on Other Legal and Regulatory Requirements

Further, as required by the Qatar Commercial Companies Law, we are also of the opinion that proper books of account were maintained by the Company. We have obtained all the information and explanations which we considered necessary for the purpose of our audit. To the best of our knowledge and belief and according to the information given to us, no contraventions of the applicable provisions of Qatar Commercial Companies Law and the Company's Articles of Association were committed during the year which would materially affect the Company's financial position or its performance.

Doha – Qatar
27/01/2026

For Deloitte & Touche
Qatar Branch
Joseph Khalife
Partner, License No. 433
QFMA Audit Registration 120156

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION As at 31 December 2025

	31 December 2025	31 December 2024	11 January 2024
Notes	QR	QR	QR
Policyholders' assets			
Cash and bank balances			
3	229,079,245	182,050,916	76,890,544
Investments at fair value through equity	597,155,015	452,306,628	427,481,383
Investments at fair value through income statement	6,418,117	6,254,312	11,475,535
Re-takaful arrangement assets	92,010,715	97,755,863	78,931,884
Takaful arrangement assets	19,768	315,637	1,004,936
Property and equipment	1,875,947	4,147,513	6,214,446
Other receivables	9,938,772	11,673,827	6,412,912
Total policyholders' assets	936,497,579	754,504,696	608,411,640
Shareholders' assets			
Cash and bank balances	94,363,204	61,638,159	50,685,709
Investments at fair value through equity	413,682,993	369,813,340	335,822,659
Investments at fair value through income statement	9,134,785	8,928,697	19,497,979
Prepayments and other receivables	4,851,275	6,309,666	4,885,837
Due from policyholders	120,153,859	87,576,000	51,591,014
Right-of-use assets	2,597,641	2,721,339	2,845,037
Property and equipment	106,495,139	111,987,297	114,979,955
Total shareholders' assets	751,278,896	648,974,498	580,308,190
TOTAL ASSETS	1,687,776,475	1,403,479,194	1,188,719,830
Policyholders' liabilities			
Takaful arrangement liabilities	578,396,196	437,189,209	353,404,518
Re-takaful arrangement liabilities	1,001,388	482,336	2,461,245
Other payables	12,384,013	24,451,474	13,655,301
Murabaha finance	—	—	1,006,116
Due to shareholders	120,153,859	87,576,000	51,591,014
Distributable surplus payable	66,864,527	63,033,707	61,115,196
Total policyholders' liabilities	778,801,983	612,732,726	483,233,390
Policyholders' surplus			
Fair value reserve	(123,031)	(13,847,169)	(19,934,682)
Equalization reserve	90,000,000	90,000,000	90,000,000
Retained surplus	67,818,627	65,619,139	55,112,932
Total policyholders' surplus	157,695,596	141,771,970	125,178,250
Total policyholders' liabilities and surplus	936,497,579	754,504,696	608,411,640
Shareholders' liabilities			
Provisions and other payables	117,556,823	77,642,367	61,897,092
Due to related parties	6,093,342	5,998,418	6,174,565
Net Ijarah liability	2,865,558	2,932,037	2,973,442
Employees' end of service benefits	5,562,457	4,808,023	4,291,220
Total shareholders' liabilities	132,078,180	91,380,845	75,336,319
Shareholders' equity			
Share capital	200,000,000	200,000,000	200,000,000
Legal reserve	200,000,000	200,000,000	200,000,000
Fair value reserve	2,988,954	(5,448,602)	(11,557,398)
Retained earnings	216,211,762	163,042,255	116,529,269
Total shareholders' equity	619,200,716	557,593,653	504,971,871
TOTAL LIABILITIES, POLICYHOLDERS' SURPLUS AND SHAREHOLDERS' EQUITY	1,687,776,475	1,403,479,194	1,188,719,830

Sheikh Jassim Bin Hamad Bin Jassim J. Al Thani
Chairman

Nasser Rashid Al Misnad
Chief Executive Officer

STATEMENT OF POLICYHOLDERS' REVENUES AND EXPENSES For the year ended 31 December 2025

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CRA takes part in GCC telecom panel meeting in Bahrain

The Communications Regulatory Authority (CRA), representing Qatar, participated in the 48th meeting of the Technical Committee of the Telecommunications Technical Bureau at the General Secretariat of the Gulf Co-operation Council (GCC), held in Bahrain recently. The meeting brought together representatives of telecommunications regulatory authorities and technical experts from GCC member states to discuss regional priorities related to wireless communications and radio spectrum management. The meeting serves as a key regional platform for co-ordination on technical and regulatory telecommunications matters, supporting alignment among GCC countries on spectrum management and wireless communication issues. This co-ordination contributes to unified regional positions at Arab and international levels and strengthens collective engagement in global regulatory processes in response to rapid technological change. During the meeting, Qatar made several technical contributions

demonstrating active engagement in discussions. The Qatari delegation presented a consensus working paper on the 6GHz frequency band, addressing growing demand for wireless services and emphasising the importance of balanced and forward-looking spectrum allocation approaches that support innovation while ensuring long-term sustainability. Qatar also submitted a working paper focusing on applications installed on certain mobile devices, examining key regulatory and technical considerations, including impacts on network performance, consumer protection, and compliance with national regulatory frameworks. In addition, the delegation presented a working paper on harmful interference affecting positioning systems, outlining related technical challenges and potential mitigation solutions. The meeting further provided an opportunity for Qatar to highlight its hosting of the ITU Plenipotentiary Conference 2026, reaffirming the country's readiness to contribute to global decision-making in the field of information and communication technologies. (QNA)

Canada governor general receives credentials of Qatar's envoy



The Governor General of Canada Mary Simon received yesterday the credentials of Tariq Ali Faraj al-Ansari as ambassador extraordinary and plenipotentiary of Qatar to Canada. The ambassador conveyed the greetings of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani to Governor General of Canada, along with His Highness' wishes of good health and happiness for her and progress and prosperity for the government and people of Canada. The Governor General of Canada asked the ambassador to convey her greetings to His Highness the Amir, wishing His Highness continued health and happiness, and Qatar ongoing progress and growth. (QNA)

Libya's High Council chief meets Qatar's envoy

Chairman of Libya's High Council of State Dr Mohammed Mofah Takala met yesterday with Qatar's ambassador to Libya Dr Khaled bin Mohammed Zabin al-Dosari. During the meeting, they discussed the bilateral co-operation between the countries. (QNA)



Damaan Islamic Insurance Company Q.P.S.C

Beema
بِيمَا

شركة الضمان للتأمين الإسلامي
(شركة مساهمة عامة قطرية)

Beema Reports a 12.9% Growth in Shareholders' Net Profit in the financial year 2025

- Financial results reflect adoption of AAOIFI Standard FAS 43 effective 1 January 2025
- Recognised Takaful Contributions rose 28.3% year-on-year to QAR 605.2 million (FY 2024: QAR 471.8 million), driven by growth across all segments
- Shareholders' Net Profit: Grew by 12.9% to QAR 95.6 million (FY 2024: QAR 84.6 million)

Financial year 2025 key financial highlights:



Damaan Islamic Insurance Company Q.P.S.C. ("Beema" or the "Company"), a leading provider of Islamic insurance in Qatar, announced its financial results for the fiscal year ended December 31, 2025, demonstrating strong performance across financial and operational metrics. The results have been prepared in accordance with the new accounting standard for Islamic insurance (Takaful) institutions, FAS 43, issued by the Accounting and Auditing Organization for Islamic Financial Institutions (AAOIFI) and effective from 1 January 2025. The prior year figures have been restated for comparability.

Recognised Takaful Contributions for the period amounted to QAR 605.2 million, representing a 28.3% increase compared to QAR 471.8 million in 2024. Performance was supported by growth across all core business lines. The takaful and health segment increased to QAR 296.2 million from QAR 238.6 million in the prior year, fire and general accident rose to QAR 140.3 million from QAR 104.3 million, and Motor increased to QAR 151.2 million

from QAR 120.0 million over the same period.

Net Investment Income rose by 31.6% to QAR 49.1 million, compared to QAR 37.3 million in 2024. Of this amount, QAR 30.2 million was attributable to policyholders, while QAR 18.9 million was attributable to shareholders. The increase reflects Beema's disciplined and diversified investment approach, with a continued focus on capital stability and consistent investment performance for both policyholders and shareholders.

Policyholders' funds remained stable during the year, supported by disciplined underwriting practices, reinsurance arrangements, and investment income attributable to policyholders.

The Company maintained strong profitability, with Shareholders' net profit rising 12.9% to QAR 95.6 million, compared with QAR 84.6 million in 2024. This reflects ongoing business growth and disciplined operational management, underpinning continued value creation for shareholders. Earnings Per Share rose to QAR 0.48, up from QAR 0.42.

Earnings Per Share: Reached QAR 0.478, up by approximately 12.9% (FY 2024: QAR 0.423)

Shareholders' Equity: Increased by 11% to QAR 619.2 million (FY 2024: QAR 557.6 million)

Net Investment Income: Increased by 31.6% to QAR 49.1 million (FY 2024: QAR 37.3 million)

As at 31 December 2025, investments measured at fair value reached QAR 1,026.4 million, compared with QAR 837.3 million a year earlier, reflecting continued allocation of capital into the investment portfolio. Shareholders' equity rose to QAR 619.2 million, supported by retained earnings and a positive fair value reserve, reversing the negative balance recorded at 31 December 2024. The Company maintains a debt-free balance sheet and a strong liquidity position. The solvency ratio stood at 340% as at 31 December 2025, above applicable regulatory requirements.

Damaan Islamic Insurance Company Q.P.S.C. ("Beema") is a pioneering Islamic insurance provider listed on the Qatar Stock Exchange (Ticker: BEMA). It holds a Moody's A3 Long-Term Insurance Financial Strength Rating and an AM Best A- (Excellent) rating, underscoring its commitment to offering innovative, Shari'a-compliant solutions.

Commenting on the results, Nasser Al Misnad, CEO of Beema, stated: "The year 2025 reflected disciplined execution and financial resilience for Beema. Growth in recognised Takaful contributions, investment income, and shareholders' net profit demonstrates the strength of our operating model and the effectiveness of our underwriting and investment discipline. Supported by a debt-free balance sheet, strong liquidity, and a prudent risk management framework, we remain focused on delivering sustainable value while maintaining our responsibilities to policyholders and shareholders within Qatar's Islamic insurance sector".

For the complete financial statements for the twelve-month period ended 31 December 2025 and additional information, please visit www.beema.com.qa. For any inquiries, please contact Beema's Investor Relations Department at investorrelations@beema.com.qa

Important information

This press release has been prepared by Damaan Islamic Insurance Company "Beema" (Q.P.S.C.)

HE the Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman bin Jassim al-Thani received yesterday a written message from Minister of External Affairs and Co-operation of Mozambique Maria Lucas, pertaining to bilateral relations and the means to enhance them. The message was received by HE the Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Sultan bin Saad al-Muraikhi during his meeting with Mozambique ambassador to the state Isac Mamudo Massamby. (QNA)

NPC reviews strategy at Doha Data Forum

The National Planning Council (NPC), represented by the National Statistics Centre, organised the Doha Data Forum yesterday.

Participating in the forum were representatives of government agencies, the private sector, and civil society organisations, alongside a number of experts and decision-makers, to discuss the role of national data in supporting the development planning process in Qatar and to review key developments in the national data ecosystem.

The forum served as a national platform to highlight the achievements of 2025 within the National Data Programme, which saw the launch of several initiatives and national platforms, including the National Data and Statistics Strategy, the Qatar Data Trust Index, the QInsights Platform, and the revamped Qatar Open Data Platform. This was complemented by capacity-building programmes, including the Qatar Datathon, the Data Summer Camp, and a series of other initiatives aimed at promoting a data-driven culture.

Addressing the forum, Director-

General of the National Statistics Centre at NPC, Ahmed Hassan al-Obaidly, said the forum convenes at a profoundly critical time, marking an advanced executive phase Qatar has attained in implementing the Third National Development Strategy, placing high-quality data and statistics at the core of achieving its socio-economic and development targets as key enablers of effective planning.

The ambition for the upcoming phase goes beyond data collection to maximising strategic value through improving data quality, broadening the use of administrative records, adopting advanced analytics, and leveraging artificial intelligence to enable more accurate policies, more flexible planning, and faster responses to change, al-Obaidly said.

The forum reviewed the directions of the National Data Programme for 2026, which include several upcoming national initiatives, notably the National Data Compliance Platform to monitor progress towards national objectives, alongside the continued development of the Central Data Bank Project as a pivotal initiative

providing high-quality data accessible to decision-makers.

The forum highlighted the commitment to data transparency, reflected in its specialised sessions that showcased the achievements of the National Data Programme in 2025 and outlined priorities for the next phase.

Discussions also addressed the state of data and artificial intelligence at both national and regional levels, emphasising the role of trusted, high-quality data in enabling the responsible use of advanced technologies.

The forum's panel discussions further focused on data governance, implementation challenges, and mechanisms to enhance co-operation among government entities, ensuring the development of a more integrated and efficient national data ecosystem.

Concluding its deliberations, the forum underscored the importance of continuous collaboration among multiple state sectors, fostering a data culture, and accelerating the adoption of cutting-edge technologies, particularly AI and advanced data analytics. (QNA)



Chairman of Sudan's Transitional Sovereignty Council leaves Doha



Chairman of the Transitional Sovereignty Council of Sudan, Lt Gen Abdel Fattah al-Burhan, left Doha yesterday, after a working visit to the country. The chairman and his accompanying delegation were seen off at Hamad International Airport by HE the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of State for Defence Affairs Sheikh Saud bin Abdulrahman bin Hassan al-Thani and Sudan ambassador to Qatar Badreddine Abdullah Mohammed Ahmed. (QNA)

Justice minister visits Doha Legal Forum pavilions

HE the Minister of Justice and Minister of State for Cabinet Affairs Ibrahim bin Ali al-Mohannadi visited the pavilions participating in the exhibition accompanying the first edition of Doha Legal Forum.

His Excellency was briefed during the tour on the offerings by various participants and sponsors of the forum. His Excellency's tour included visits to the pavilions of the

Ministry of Justice, Qatar International Court and Dispute Resolution Center, Ooredoo Group, Qatar Financial Centre, QNB, and Qatar Lawyers Association.

The pavilions' offerings reflected the advanced level of services available in the legal sector, and the role it plays in improving the ease of doing business, particularly in terms of using modern technology and AI to provide serv-

ices to the public. HE al-Mohannadi expressed his thanks and appreciation to all entities participating in the exhibition for their role in enriching the forum and familiarising the public with the services offered by Qatari legal institutions.

He added that the modernisation and development efforts undertaken by the institutions make it an example to follow for the region. (QNA)

Attorney-general meets Turkish justice minister



HE Attorney-General of Qatar Dr Issa Saad al-Jafali al-Nuaimi met yesterday with visiting Minister of Justice of Turkey, Yilmaz Tunc. During the meeting, they exchanged views on several topics of mutual interest and ways to strengthen co-operation, especially in the legal field and the exchange of experiences. (QNA)



QAPCO invites qualified bidders to participate in the following tender:

Effective from 01-07-2023, Bids from Local Suppliers and Contractors (companies established under the Law of State of Qatar) who are not in possession of an ICV score in the ICV portal (<https://icv.qa/en-US>) by Tender closing date (or commercial bid submission date if separately mentioned / notified) will not be accepted. Local companies that have been established for less than 2 years are exempted from this requirement.

For further details, please visit ICV portal (<https://icv.qa/en-US>).

SI No.	Tender Reference and Description	(i) Deadline for Submission of Information & Interest for Bidding	(ii) Tender fee (non-refundable); Date	(iii) Tender Publication on ARIBA	(iv) Tender Bond	Bid Closing Date
1	RFP- P10-01-373 Legacy Report Modernization: Transitioning SAP BOBJ to Power BI & Data Platform	29 th January 2026	QAR 750. 00 29 January 2026	01 February 2026	QAR 100,000.00	19 th Feb 2026, 12:00 Noon
2	RFO: P05-01-200 5 Years Contract for Radiographic Examination Services in QAPCO Complex on Call off basis	29 th January 2026	QAR 750. 00 29 January 2026	01 February 2026	QAR 100,000.00	18 th Feb 2026, 12:00 Noon

i. Interested bidders to communicate their willingness to bid and contact details to QAPCO Procurement (procurement@qapco.com.qa) indicating company name, address, telephone, official E-mail, etc. latest by the deadline for Submission of Information & Interest for Bidding indicated above. Reference Number and Description of the tender must be mentioned in the email.

ii. Non-refundable tender fee as indicated above is payable to QAPCO through QNB account # 0013-001688-060 only at any QNB branch latest by 29 January 2026. (Tender Number, Subject and bidder name are to be stated in the payment receipt)

iii. Tender link will be sent via email notification from ARIBA system to the confirmed bidders. Tender Document will be accessible only after attaching the evidence of the tender fee payment in ARIBA by the bidder followed by Qapco approval.

QAPCO shall reply with the access to "ARIBA eSourcing RFP event" along with necessary instructions and guidelines for the bid submission.

ARIBA Registration: Bidders who are not registered in QAPCO are requested to complete the registration process during the tendering period (Details on ARIBA registration can be accessed via QAPCO website www.qapco.com)

iv. Tender Bond (Bank Guarantee): Original tender bond must be submitted by hand to the following address latest by the Bid closing date & time:

Qatar Petrochemical Company (QAPCO) Q.P.J.S.C.
QAPCO HEADQUARTERS, P.O. Box 756,

Building: 12, Zone No. 92, Street No. 556, Muather Leafawiya Street
Mesaieed, Qatar

Tel: 4033 8109

Attention: Procurement Group Manager
Bidder to attach copy of tender bond to the offer in ARIBA. Offer without Tender Bond will not be considered.

Tender Clarifications: Please send your queries with tender reference and description to email procurement@qapco.com.qa

Notes:

1. ARIBA Registration: Bidders who are not registered in QAPCO are requested to complete the registration process during the tendering period (Details on ARIBA registration can be accessed via QAPCO website www.qapco.com)

For more information about QAPCO please visit our website: www.qapco.com

Justice minister meets Moroccan counterpart

HE the Minister of Justice and Minister of State for Cabinet Affairs Ibrahim bin Ali al-Mohannadi met yesterday with Minister of Justice of Morocco, Abdellatif Ouahbi, on the sidelines of Doha Legal Forum. During the meeting, the two sides discussed legal co-operation between Qatar and Morocco, and ways to enhance and develop them. They also discussed several issues listed on the forum's agenda. (QNA)



Forum discusses role of legislation in Qatar National Vision 2030



A panel discussion held on the second day of the Doha Legal Forum examined the theme "Qatar National Vision 2030: Future Prospects and Aligning Regulations to the Vision", along with new development projects in the country and prospects for foreign investment.

Participants stressed the importance of strengthening Qatar's position as an attractive destination for both domestic and foreign investment.

Assistant Secretary-General for Legislative Affairs at the General Secretariat of the Council of Ministers, Abdulaziz Mubarak al-Boainin, said investment-related legislation constitutes a core pillar in achieving economic diversification and boosting the national economy in line with Qatar National Vision 2030. He noted that the state is working to develop a competitive, multi-sector economy that ensures a high standard of living for current and future generations by encouraging innovation, supporting entrepreneurship, and developing priority sectors.

Al-Boainin highlighted that implementation of the Vision is being carried out through the Third National Development Strategy, which aims to achieve sustainable economic growth at an annual rate of 4%, accelerate economic diversification through specialised clusters, enhance fiscal and environmental sustainability, develop a productive workforce, strengthen innovation, improve quality of life, and upgrade government institutional performance

by 2030. He noted that economic legislation serves as the main driver of any economic transformation, as it provides the legal frameworks needed to attract capital and direct it towards targeted sectors by creating a competitive and investor-friendly environment through laws aligned with global developments.

Among these is Law No 1 of 2019, which allows up to 100% foreign ownership in most sectors, alongside tax and customs incentives to steer investment towards priority sectors and accelerate their growth compared to the oil and gas sector.

He also underscored efforts to enhance investor confidence and legal certainty through clear dispute resolution mechanisms and protection of intellectual property rights, as well as the adoption of free zones and the Qatar Financial Centre as leading models for attracting companies and capital. These frameworks are supported by the Qatar International Court and clear regulatory mechanisms that provide a flexible and secure business environment.

Al-Boainin further emphasised the role of Law No 12 of 2020 on public-private partnerships in strengthening the private sector as a key driver of development through contractual frameworks that reduce the financial burden on the state and open new investment opportunities.

He noted that these laws have contributed to the growth of the digital economy and attracted global companies in data and artificial intelligence.

He added that involving the private sector in drafting economic legislation ensures the effectiveness and sustainability of laws by bridging the gap between legal texts and practical realities through the participation of practitioners in identifying real challenges.

This approach enhances ownership of legislation, accountability, and compliance, enables future-oriented and flexible legal frameworks, and improves legislative effectiveness through feedback from the private sector, providing investors with a predictable environment for long-term planning.

Al-Boainin also said Qatar has achieved significant advances in a number of international rankings and indicators in 2025 and 2026.

The country ranked among the world's top 10 in the 2025 Global Competitiveness Index issued by the International Institute for Management Development (IMD), placed 27th globally and second regionally in the Economic Freedom Index published by the Heritage Foundation, and was classified among the top 20 countries worldwide in digital competitiveness and innovation.

Qatar also ranked 48th globally in the Global Innovation Index (GII) and sixth worldwide in the use of information and communications technology, reflecting its transformation into a secure and attractive environment for investment and capital, with a high level of legal and digital security that supports sustainable economic growth and the objectives of Qatar National Vision 2030. (QNA)

Call to align legislation with global standards to boost investment

Academics and legal experts emphasised the importance of aligning national legislation with international standards and modern investment requirements to foster the competitiveness of the national economy, improve the business environment, and attract investments. In a roundtable discussion on enhancing the role of the legal profession in developing the legislative framework and improving the investment climate in Qatar, the panelists stressed the importance of preserving legislative identity and national sovereignty. Chairman of the Board of the Qatar Lawyers Association, lawyer Mubarak Abdullah al-Sulaiti, affirmed that the association plays an active role in developing the nation's legislation by providing guidance on draft laws and legislative proposals, particularly legislation related to judicial procedures, civil procedure, and family law.

This is part of supporting what he described as the legislative reform movement in Qatar, in accordance with international legal standards and societal requirements.

He explained that the association participates through specialised legal committees composed of a select group of lawyers, focusing on reviewing draft legislation and providing technical feedback to ensure alignment with rapid developments, and underscored the importance of involving relevant experts in drafting legislation to achieve effectiveness and fairness. Al-Sulaiti also highlighted the association's role in promoting awareness through organising conferences and workshops and providing specialised digital platforms, thereby contributing to raising professional standards in legal practice, training lawyers, and reinforcing confidence in the legal system. He emphasised that the judicial environment is one of the primary factors investors consider before making investment decisions, and that the speed of dispute resolution, integrity of the judiciary, clarity of procedures, and ease of profit repatriation are essential elements of an attractive investment environment, cautioning that procedural

complexity or restrictions on capital movement could hinder investment attraction. Al-Sulaiti further stressed the importance of developing a comprehensive dispute resolution system, noting that it should not be limited to arbitration alone, despite its importance, but should also strengthen amicable settlement and reconciliation mechanisms, which provide faster, more flexible, and cost-effective solutions.

Dr Noura al-Sahlawi, senior lawyer and law professor at Qatar University, emphasised that aligning Qatari legislation with international standards and modern investment requirements remains one of the key challenges amid the economic and legislative transformations Qatar has undergone over the past two decades. She noted that this issue represents the core of the current legislative, economic, and institutional transformation. Dr al-Sahlawi pointed out that legislative alignment is a fundamental condition for the success of countries seeking integration into the global economy, without undermining legal sovereignty or legislative identity. She noted that the quality of laws, clarity of provisions, and speed of procedures are now decisive factors in boosting legal certainty and the attractiveness of the business environment.

Dr al-Sahlawi highlighted Qatar's recent legislative progress, including updates to company laws, regulation of foreign investment, strengthening arbitration independence, and issuing legislation in technology, financial services, e-commerce, labour, taxation, and customs, alongside the development of specialised courts, most notably the Investment and Trade Court. She clarified that legislative alignment does not imply copying ready-made legal models, but rather adapting them to the national context, noting that investors seek legislative stability, clear procedures, and effective dispute resolution channels.

Dr al-Sahlawi addressed the challenges posed by rapid technological advancements and modern business models, such as fintech, digital trade, and artificial intelligence, calling for a proactive legislative vision based on planning and flexible laws capable of keeping pace with these transformations. (QNA)

For more information about QAPCO please visit our website: www.qapco.com

Dukhan Bank's Thara'a savings drive offers four grand prizes of QR1mn

Dukhan Bank has announced the launch of its Thara'a Savings Account Campaign for 2026, offering customers the opportunity to save while qualifying for a wide range of annual and monthly cash prizes.

Running until December 31, 2026, the campaign offers more customers the chance to win, with four grand prizes of QR1mn each, alongside multiple monthly prizes, including two monthly prizes of QR20,000 and 60 monthly prizes of QR5,000, awarded through scheduled draws throughout the year.

As part of the campaign, prize draws will take place on February 4, March 4, May 4, June 8, August 4, September 8, November 4, and December 8, 2026.

The QR1mn grand prize draws are scheduled for April 8, July 8, and October 7, 2026, with the fourth and final grand prize draw taking place on January 6, 2027.

To qualify for the QR1mn grand prize, customers are required to maintain their Thara'a Savings Account balance for a minimum of three consecutive calendar months, with up to three withdrawals permitted during this qualifying period. Monthly prizes may be won once per year per customer, while monthly prize winners remain eligible for the grand prize draw.

The Thara'a Savings Account campaign reflects Dukhan Bank's continued focus on encouraging



aging disciplined saving habits while offering meaningful rewards through Shariah-compliant banking solutions.

Customers can easily open a Thara'a Savings Account at any Dukhan Bank branch or via the mobile application. For more information, customers may call

800 8555 or contact Rashid, the bank's virtual assistant, on WhatsApp at 4410 0888.

Shura Council takes part in 16th APA plenary session in Manama

The Shura Council participated in the 16th Plenary Session of the Asian Parliamentary Assembly (APA) and its accompanying meetings, held in Manama, Bahrain, over four days.

This participation aimed to strengthen Asian parliamentary co-operation and to co-ordinate common positions on issues of concern to the continent's nations.

The Council was represented at the Assembly by Engineer Ahmed bin Hitmi al-Hitmi, Member of the Shura Council and vice-president of the APA; along with the following members, Saud bin Jassim al-Buainain; Yousef bin Ahmed al-Sada; and Nasser bin Metrif al-Hemeidi.

The plenary session discussed items on the agenda, and re-



viewed the secretary-general's report on the activities of the APA for 2025 and appointed the APA's vice-presidents for 2026.

In this context, the APA elected Engineer Ahmed bin Hitmi al-Hitmi as vice-president of the APA and chairman of the standing committee on budget and planning for 2026.

The attendees also considered the final reports of the standing committees on economic affairs, social and cultural affairs, political affairs, and budget and plan-

ning, in addition to the report of the Assembly bureau meetings and the draft agenda for the 17th APA Plenary Session.

Ahmed bin Hitmi al-Hitmi had participated in the APA bureau meeting, which was dedicated to reviewing the draft agenda, organisational reports, and several procedural matters related to the Assembly's work.

He also participated in the Gulf Co-operation Council (GCC) co-ordination meeting held prior to the General Assembly (QNA)

Qatar takes part in Arab panel meeting on nuclear weapons



Qatar participated in the meeting of Senior Arab Officials Committee on Nuclear Weapons and Other Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD), which started on Monday and will continue for three days, at the headquarters of the General Secretariat of the League of Arab States in Cairo. Qatar was represented at the meeting by Chairperson of the National Committee for the Prohibition of Weapons (NCPW) Brigadier Sultan Rashid al-Hudhaifi. The meeting's agenda included

several topics of interest to Arab states in the field of disarmament and non-proliferation, including the co-ordination of Arab positions for participation in the Eleventh Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) and the 70th Session of the IAEA General Conference. In a speech during the event, Assistant Secretary-General and Head of the International Political Affairs Sector of the League of Arab States ambassador Khalid

Al-Misnad meets Brazilian envoy



HE the Minister of State for International Co-operation Dr Maryam bint Ali bin Nasser al-Misnad met yesterday with Brazil ambassador to Qatar, Marcelo Otavio Dantas Loures da Costa. During the meeting, they discussed co-operation between the countries and ways to support and enhance them, particularly in the field of development, in addition to several topics of mutual interest. (QNA)

Final preparations completed ahead of Web Summit Qatar 2026



The Permanent Web Summit Organising Committee announced operational readiness to host Web Summit Qatar 2026, set to take place from February 1 to 4, at the Doha Exhibition and Convention Center (DECC), with tickets expected to sell out within the coming hours.

This was announced during the committee's final meeting, which confirmed the completion of all organisational and logistical preparations, ensuring the delivery of an exceptional edition and reaffirming Qatar's capability to host major global events to the highest international standards.

The committee noted the expanded venue of the third edition of the summit to include the park and surrounding outdoor areas of DECC to accommodate record participation and provide additional space for discussions and activations.

This edition aims to enhance the overall attendee experience and reflect the summit's continued growth and rising global profile.

HE Sheikh Jassim bin Mansour bin Jabor al-Thani, director of the Government Communications Office and chairman of the Permanent Web Summit Organising Committee, said: "With days remaining to the summit, we are prepared to welcome a record

number of participants at the region's largest technology event, reflecting the summit's sustained growth and international appeal over successive editions."

He added: "This growth reinforces the summit's standing as a leading global platform for technology and innovation, while also affirming Qatar's position as a destination for innovation, investment, and entrepreneurship.

This success aligns with Qatar National Vision 2030 to advance a knowledge-based economy, attract investments, and enable broader collaboration between startups, investors, and institutions.

In the years ahead, the focus will be on sustaining this momentum and strengthening the summit's role as a long-term driver of innovation and strategic partnerships, regionally and globally."

Recognised as the fastest-growing technology event in the Mena region and a leading platform connecting entrepreneurs with investors and strategic partners, Web Summit Qatar 2026 attracts leading startups and technology leaders from across sectors, providing an interactive platform that supports scalable ideas, and reinforcing Qatar's position as a global hub for innovation and entrepreneurship and a gateway to regional and international markets. (QNA)

Ministry recalls Honda CB1000, CB600 and UD Truck Croner models

The Ministry of Commerce and Industry (MoCI), in co-operation with Doha Marketing Services Company (Domasco), Qatar's Honda dealership, has announced the recall of Honda CB1000, and CB600 2024- 2025 models.

The recall is due to a potential engine malfunction due to low engine oil level.

The Ministry of Commerce and Industry (MoCI), in co-operation with Jaidah Automotive, Qatar's UD Truck dealership, has announced the recall of UD Truck Croner 2017-2025 models.

The recall is due to the possibility of certain left-hand drive Croner vehicles experiencing mud buildup around the resistor.

This is caused by dust accumulation and evaporator pipe routing, which creates a potential risk of smoke

or fire within the dashboard area. 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 Insurance joins Web Summit Qatar 2026 as Diamond Sponsor



Salem al-Mannai, Group CEO of Qatar Insurance.

Qatar Insurance has announced its participation as a Diamond Sponsor in Web Summit Qatar 2026, taking place from February 1 to 4 at the Doha Exhibition and Convention Centre (DECC).

Marking its third participation in the largest global tech event hosted in Doha, Qatar Insurance will showcase its journey to build the region's first insurance-powered digital ecosystem. The participation will also highlight the company's transition from being primarily an insurance provider to becoming a fully integrated ecosystem, and how this shift has redefined digital services in Qatar.

Qatar Insurance's presence will feature a dedicated pavilion, serving as an open platform for the global tech community to discover the latest trends in the digital sector and explore the dynamics shaping the innovation and InsurTech landscapes across the Middle East and North Africa.

The Qatar Insurance pavilion will host seminars and panel discussions led by the company's executives alongside regional and global experts, shedding light on the present and future of innovation and investment in digital services across the region and

worldwide. On the sidelines of the summit, Qatar Insurance will sign several agreements and memoranda of understanding with leading organisations, as part of the company's commitment to leveraging its expertise to enhance digital services in Qatar while delivering efficient and convenient experiences to all users.

Salem al-Mannai, Group CEO of Qatar Insurance, said: "Qatar Insurance is proud to be a national leader in innovation, and the region's most successful insurer in developing digital solutions that enhance customer journeys and improve operational efficiency at the same time."

"One of the defining aspects of

our digital strategy in recent years, in line with the Qatar National Vision 2030 and QCB's Third Financial Sector Strategic Plan, has been our shift from predominantly developing insurance products to building our own digital ecosystem that also covers the non-insurance needs of individuals." He said, "Thanks to this approach, we are now the only insurer in the market providing a single-platform experience for customers to manage most of their daily requirements without navigating multiple digital systems."

"Qatar Insurance has become a true benchmark in effectively investing in digital services and accurately understanding and responding to customers' needs. Accordingly, we look forward to sharing our digital vision and experience with all participants and visitors, and to once again contributing as a Diamond Sponsor to the success of the Summit while showcasing Qatar's digital model to the entire world."

For more details on Qatar Insurance's programme at Web Summit Qatar 2026, visit ecosystem.qic.digital. To learn more about Qatar Insurance, visit qic.online



QatarEnergy honours 152 long-serving employees

QatarEnergy celebrated 152 employees with career milestones of 30, 35, and 40 years of service, including three employees who had 45 years' worth of distinguished continuous service.

The "My Legacy" recognition ceremony was held under the patronage and in the presence of HE the Minister of State for Energy Affairs Saad bin Sherida

al-Kaabi, who is also the president and chief executive of QatarEnergy.

The minister thanked the recognised employees for their dedication and commitment during their years of service.

Speaking at the ceremony, HE al-Kaabi congratulated the honorees on their achievements and contributions towards making QatarEnergy what it is today.

"You have been part of our transformation journey over the years from Qatar General Petroleum Corporation to Qatar Petroleum, and now to QatarEnergy, which is a name to reckon with home and abroad, and a name that is synonymous with great talents and accomplishments," he said.

"We owe a lot to the men and women who have worked in this company for

years before us, with us today, and even those who will join us in the future," HE al-Kaabi continued. "There is no doubt that our accomplishments are testament to your dedication to your jobs and to your contributions as you helped to develop the many people around you to help make this company even better."

The minister also thanked the honoured employees for their remarkable

long service, and for the good work and dedication they have demonstrated over the years.

The "My Legacy" ceremony is a continuation of QatarEnergy's recognition of its most valuable asset, its human capital.

This year's honorees included 22 employees with 40 years of service, 65 employees with 35 years of service, and 62 employees with 30 years of service.

QatarDebate Centre concludes Mutual Dialogue Summit 2026

QatarDebate Centre, founded by Qatar Foundation, concluded the 3rd Mutual Dialogue Summit following two days of focused discussions on pressing issues at the local and regional levels.

The summit was organised in partnership with the Ministry of Sports and Youth, and with Msheireb Museums serving as the cultural partner.

During the closing session, HE Yasser al-Jamal, undersecretary of the Ministry of Sports and Youth and vice-chairman of QatarDebate Centre, highlighted that the summit reflects a strong belief that youth empowerment is achieved not through slogans, but through genuine dialogue that develops critical thinking, enhances analytical skills, and transforms ideas into responsible action and tangible outcomes.

"Throughout the summit, we witnessed specialised workshops, engaging roundtable discussions, and deep dialogue sessions with leading experts and professionals," said QatarDebate Centre (administration and strategy) director Abdurrahman al-Subai. "These initiatives allowed the centre to elevate young voices, enhance their skills, and build understanding across different perspectives."

Following the closing remarks, a panel discussion on "From Local Ideas to Regional Enterprises: The Rise of Startups in the Gulf" took

place, bringing together Hamad al-Hajri (Qatari entrepreneur, founder of Snoonu, and chief executive of International Markets at Jahez International) and Talal al-Awadhi, Kuwaiti founder and chief executive of Ottu.

The discussion was moderated by Jamal al-Mulla, a media professional, content creator, and podcast host from the United Arab Emirates.

The second day of the summit featured a panel discussion on "Beyond Algorithms: Gulf Efforts in Building Artificial Intelligence Models", moderated by QatarDebate Centre ambassador Moza al-Hajri.

The discussion brought together a distinguished group of experts, including Ministry of Communications and Information Technology director of digital innovation Eman al-Kuwari, New York University Abu Dhabi research assistant professor and associate vice-provost (Research Translation and Entrepreneurship) Dr Hoda al-Khazaimi, and Dr Ibrahim al-Muslim, assistant research professor at the National Centre for Artificial Intelligence at King Abdulaziz City for Science and Technology.

The summit provided a comprehensive platform for discussions on education, architecture, and innovation.

One of the panels, titled "Redefining Education in the Digital



Snapshots from the summit.

Age through EdTech", examined how digital innovation can transform education systems, enhance learning quality, and shape future opportunities.

The session was moderated by QatarDebate Centre ambassador Salem al-Shamakhi and featured World Innovation Summit for Education programme associate Aldana Alsemaith, Dawrat co-founder and chief executive Mohammad Alsuraye, and Ahmed Faraj, entrepreneur, founder, and EdTech expert.

Another session, on "Gulf Ar-

chitecture between Memory and Innovation", featured Ibrahim Jaidah, group chief executive and chief architect of the Arab Engineering Bureau, and Kuwaiti



architect Bashar al-Salem, chief executive of Kayan.

It was moderated by architect and public policy researcher Mohaz al-Obaidan.

that job creation is among the most pressing priorities in the global economy, emphasising that the provision of sustainable employment opportunities constitutes a fundamental pillar for achieving growth and stability.

He highlighted the importance of empowering young people by equipping them with relevant skills and education, and expanding access to economic opportunities to address labour market challenges and ensure more inclusive and resilient growth.

Banga noted that the WBG continues to support countries in this area through promoting inclusive economic policies, investing in human capital, supporting education and training, building capacity, financing development projects, and providing

technical and advisory support.

GUQ dean Safwan Masri outlined the role played by the university in promoting intellectual dialogue, linking academic research to real-world development challenges, and empowering youth to actively engage in international discussions on the future of work and economic opportunities.

EAA chief executive (Economic Empowerment) Mana Mohammed al-Ansari said that improving employment opportunities requires a practical and direct linkage between education and labour market needs, noting that such linkage represents the most realistic pathway to expanding employment opportunities and strengthening economic stability in the medium and long term. - QNA



Prof Seungah Sarah Lee

HEC Paris, Doha brings AI leadership intelligence to Web Summit Qatar 2026

As more than 30,000 founders, investors, developers, and innovators gather at the Doha Exhibition & Convention Centre (DECC) for Web Summit Qatar 2026, HEC Paris, Doha will contribute to the global dialogue on technology and organisational decision-making through a masterclass addressing one of the most critical leadership challenges of today's digital economy.

Titled "Leading in the Age of AI: Building Digital Intelligence", the masterclass will take place on February 3 and will be led by Prof Seungah Sarah Lee, assistant professor of entrepreneurship and organisations at HEC Paris, Doha.

While Web Summit highlights cutting-edge developments in technology and innovation, HEC Paris, Doha's contribution places the spotlight on the human dimension of artificial intelligence (AI) – how leaders think, decide, and shape organisations in an AI-driven world.

Prof Lee's research focuses on entrepreneurship, organisational design, and innovation, with particular attention to how global models can be adapted to local and regional contexts.

The session challenges a common misconception: that artificial intelligence adoption alone is sufficient to deliver competitive advantage.

Instead, the masterclass emphasises that sustainable value creation depends on leadership capabilities – how leaders set priorities, manage risk, shape culture, and enable teams to experiment and execute responsibly.

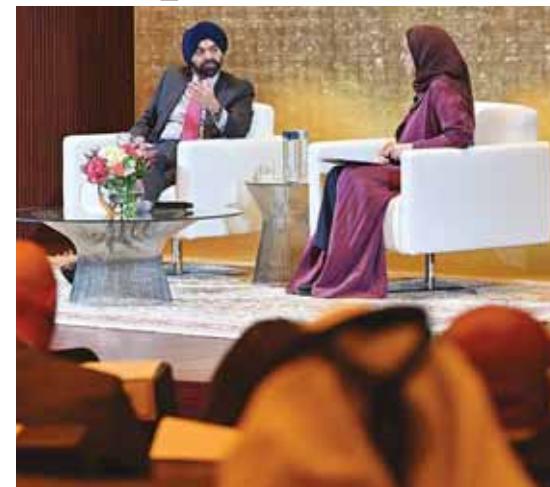
Participants will gain a practical framework for building digital intelligence, defined as the combination of strategic clarity, human judgement, and organisational routines that allow AI to be deployed confidently, ethically, and at scale.

Joshua Kobb, chief growth and impact officer at HEC Paris, Doha, said: "Artificial intelligence is no longer a future concept; it is a present reality."

"Yet technology without leadership is simply acceleration without direction," he said.

"At HEC Paris, Doha, we believe that the true driver of impact in the age of AI is the leader who applies technology with purpose, responsibility, and judgement," Kobb added.

WBG president takes part in QatarDebate youth dialogue on jobs



Ay Banga, president of the World Bank Group (WBG), participated in a panel discussion on "Redefining Education in the Digital

Age through EdTech", examining how digital innovation can transform education systems, enhance learning quality, and shape future opportunities.

The session was moderated by architect and public policy researcher Mohaz al-Obaidan.

architect Bashar al-Salem, chief executive of Kayan.

The session discussed how to balance the preservation of Gulf architectural identity with innovation in contemporary urban design.

ANNOUNCEMENT

I, MOHAMMED AHAMMED SAFEED

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QID No. 29535611992

hereby change my name

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MOHAMMED AHAMMED SAFEED

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AHAMMED SAFEED MOHAMMED

Any objection, please contact

THE PERMANENT COMMITTEE FOR

NATIONALITY AFFAIRS

within 15 days from the publication of this notice.

Registration open for Qatari students at Qatar Science and Technology Schools

The Ministry of Education and Higher Education (MoEHE) has announced the opening of applications for Qatari students, both boys and girls, to enrol in Qatar Science and Technology Schools for the 2026-27 academic year, in conjunction with the inauguration of two new schools for boys and girls.

Applications will be accepted from now until February 20, through the Maaref Public Services Portal on the ministry's official website.

The schools are specialised government institutions offering high-quality education based on the integration of STEM (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics), with curricula designed in line with the national curriculum framework and the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS).

The new schools are the Qatar Science and Technology Preparatory Secondary

School for Boys in Al Sakhama, targeting Grade 7 with a capacity of 100 students, and the Qatar Science and Technology Secondary School for Girls in Rawdat Al Hamama, targeting Grade 9 with a capacity of up to 100 students.

Registration will also continue at the boys' school in Umm Al Seneem for Grades 7 and 9, with an intake capacity of 48 students per grade.

English will be the language of instruction for science subjects, while Arabic language, Islamic studies, and social studies will be taught in Arabic.

The admission process comprises several stages, beginning with application screening to ensure applicants have achieved a minimum of 80% in mathematics, science, and English, followed by specialised admission tests, including a mathematics test covering the previous two academic years, the English proficiency test (APTIS), the Cognitive Abilities

Test (CAT4), and an Arabic language skills test.

Applicants meeting the initial criteria will be invited, alongside their parents or guardians, to attend a personal interview to assess their personal characteristics and academic interests.

Qatar Science and Technology Schools provide an advanced educational environment that prepares students to obtain a specialised secondary school certificate accredited locally and internationally.

The MoEHE also provides free transportation services across all areas of the country, with school hours running from 7am-2.30pm from Sunday-Wednesday and until 1.40pm on Thursdays.

Final results for accepted students will be announced no later than the end of May 2026, based on the highest scores achieved and within each school's capacity.

Sheikh Thani honours winners of 3rd Arab Book Award

By Tawfiq Lamari
Staff Reporter

HE Sheikh Thani bin Hamad al-Thani, chairman of the Board of Directors of the Qatar Fund for Development (QFDF), honoured the winners of the 3rd Arab Book Award at an official ceremony yesterday.

The ceremony was organised

at the Grand Hyatt Hotel.

In this year's single-book category for linguistic and literary studies – focusing on literary and critical examinations of Arab heritage up to the end of the 10th century AH – Abdullah al-Rashid was awarded first place for his work *The Recording of Debauchery in the Arab Heritage: Presentation, Explanation, and Interpretation*.

Second place went to Amer Abu



HE Sheikh Thani bin Hamad al-Thani (centre) with the winners.

Muharib for his book *Treasures of the Forgotten: The Etiquette of the Followers in the Literary Heritage – Genres, Rhetoric, and Archives*.

Third place was awarded to Khalid Abdul Raouf al-Jabri for his book *Reception in the Arab Intellectual Heritage*.

In the field of historical studies, this session was dedicated to Arab and Islamic history from the end of the 6th century AH to the end of the 12th century AH.

Nasser al-Rabat won second place for his work on Taqi al-Din al-Maqrizi's *The Conscience of Egyptian History*, and Ahmed

Mahmoud Ibrahim also won second place (a tie) for his book *Noah's Ark: Eastern Migrations to Egypt and the Levant during the Mamluk Sultanate*.

HE Sheikh Thani also presented awards to the winners in the field of Islamic sciences and studies, which focused on biography and hadith studies.

Ahmed Sanoubi won second place for his book *Political Authority and the Movement of Hadith Transmission and Criticism: A Historical Study of the Hadiths on the Virtues of the Companions*, and Mohammed Anas Sarmini received

an encouragement award for his book *The Definitive and the Probable between the People of Opinion and the People of Hadith*.

In the field of social and philosophical studies, which focuses on intellectual and economic studies, Sawsan al-Otaibi won third place for her book *The Concept of Man According to Taha Abd al-Rahman*.

In the field of dictionaries, encyclopedias, and textual criticism, Yasser al-Dumyati won for his *Encyclopaedia of Jurisprudence According to the Four Schools of Thought*.

HE Sheikh Thani also presented

the Arab Book Award to the individual winners in the Achievement category: Dr Kian Ahmed Hazem from Iraq, Dr Muhammad Suhail Taqoush from Lebanon, Dr Muhammad Saleh al-Musfir from Qatar, Mukhtar al-Ghouth from Mauritania, Muqbil al-Tam al-Ahmad from Yemen, and Dr Nadia Mustafa from Egypt.

The Institutional Achievement Award was presented to the Juma Al Majid Centre for Culture and Heritage in UAE, Dar al-Ihyaa Publishing and Distribution from Morocco, and Dar Kunooz al-Ma'rifah from Jordan.

Qatar Museums announces final phase of its diverse exhibition programme



Qatar Museums (QM) has announced the final phase of a diverse programme of exhibitions set to conclude in February, as part of the Qatar Creates fall-winter 2025 season.

These exhibitions bring together leading voices in art, architecture, and environmental research, collectively presenting powerful narratives around cultural memory, artistic creativity, environmental responsibility, and architectural excellence, reaffirming the QM's role as a leading platform for cultural production and knowledge exchange.

Among the highlights is the exhibition "A Nation's Legacy, A People's Memory: Fifty Years Told" at the National Museum of Qatar (NMQ), running until February 7.

Marking the 50th anniversary of the NMQ, the exhibition takes visitors on a journey through time, tracing the museum's evolution

niques and visual storytelling to present Qatar's history, featuring contemporary re-creations of beloved elements of the original site, such as the Earth Dome, alongside rare documents and photographs from the museum's early years.

In a related context, the immersive exhibition "Lehmesa: Return by Moonlight" explores the life cycle of the sea turtle known locally as "Lehmesa", with a particular focus on the Hawksbill turtle that returns to Qatar's shores each nesting season.

The exhibition addresses pressing environmental challenges, including habitat loss, pollution, and climate change, as well as the fragile marine ecosystems along Qatar's coasts.

"Lehmesa: Return by Moonlight" underscores Qatar's commitment to marine conservation and the protection of its natural heritage for future generations. – QNA



Green waste from pruning is composted and reused as organic fertiliser within Orchard itself.

The garden is also seamlessly integrated into the HIA's retail and dining landscape.

More than 65 boutiques and food and beverage outlets surround the space, blending luxury brands, experiential retail and global gastronomy within a naturally lit concourse.

Two food courts offer diverse international cuisine, while a lower-level garden-view dining strip allows passengers to dine amid the greenery.

"When you're at the Orchard, you really feel the luxury and comfort," said Christine Lavidon, a Filipino who has travelled to several countries.

"There's an array of shops to choose from, excellent restaurants, and extreme comfort for passengers with long layovers," she said. "It's clean, spacious and very relaxing."

The expanded Concourse D and E cater to convenience shopping, cultural gifting and everyday travel needs, while the nearby North Node Terminal appeals to younger travellers and collectors with lifestyle collectables and designer toys.

Souq Al Matar adds a distinctly local touch, recreating a traditional Qatari market atmosphere with cultural gifts and dining concepts.

As global travel evolves, so do traveller expectations.

Comfort today extends beyond efficient check-ins and premium lounges to include wellbeing and mental reset.

In a high-speed environment, moments of calm are no longer indulgent extras but essential parts of the journey, and Orchard is the HIA's answer to that shift.

Where travel meets tranquillity: Inside HIA's living oasis

From Page 1

Behind the scenes, technology ensures the garden's long-term health.

A smart irrigation system uses sensors and algorithms to respond dynamically to soil and environmental conditions, improving plant health while sharply reducing water waste and energy consumption.

More than 350 fogging nozzles maintain humidity levels essential for a rainforest environment, while the HIA's in-house nursery propagates and nurtures plants, many of which are grown on site.

"The Orchard transforms a long and tiring journey into something more bearable, even quietly uplifting," Miriam said. "It creates a rare pause within a place defined by constant movement, allowing travellers to slow down, breathe and reset."

Sustainability underpins the entire concept and aligns with Qatar National Vision 2030.

Irrigated water is collected, recycled, and converted into Treated Sewage Effluent (TSE), which is then reused for outdoor landscaping across the airport, reducing energy demand and the airport's carbon footprint.



Study examines experiences of Palestinian therapists in war

By Tawfiq Lamari
Staff Reporter

The perspective of Liberation Psychology was among the key themes debated on the third day of the 4th Palestine Annual Forum, during the third track of the seventh session on "Mental Health under Genocide and Settler Colonialism".

Einas Odeh Haj presented her paper *The Experience of Palestinian Psychotherapists inside the Green Line: The Perspective of Liberation Psychology*.

She is the founder and director of the Liberation Psychology Programme at Mada al-Carmel – the Arab Centre for Applied Social Research in Haifa, where she previously served as associate director.

A certified psychotherapist, she operates a private practice and holds a postgraduate diploma in psychotherapy, a master's degree in educational counselling, and professional accreditations from local and European institutions.

Her research focuses on structures of oppression and their impact on the mental health and psychosocial wellbeing of Palestinian individuals and communities.

In an interview with *Gulf Times*, Odeh Haj said that since the onset of Israel's war on Gaza, "violent and sustained attempts by the State of Israel to intimidate, persecute, and silence Palestinian citizens of Israel have intensified markedly", affecting workplaces, academic institutions, and the healthcare system, including mental health services.

Within this environment, she noted, Palestinian mental health professionals find themselves in an exceptionally complex professional, personal, and psychological position.

Odeh Haj stressed that Palestinian therapists have been constrained by Western-oriented frameworks that impose an Israeli narrative of trauma and



Psychotherapist Einas Odeh Haj.

suffering, defined exclusively through Israeli society, marginalising Palestinian lived realities.

Her study traces the experiences of Palestinian therapists, examining their human, intellectual, and professional encounters with the war, the policies of silencing and restriction they face, and the psychological impact of these conditions on their political and professional identities.

It also explores the psychological and behavioural mechanisms therapists employ to cope with such pressures.

Odeh Haj explained that the study adopts a qualitative approach grounded in critical liberation psychology as its overarching conceptual framework.

This approach engages with the lived experiences of oppressed communities from both psychosocial and political perspectives and seeks points of convergence between the therapeutic self and the collective Palestinian self.

On the impact of psychotherapists' work on patients, Odeh Haj said: "We can feel that our agency is contributing something."

"When we hold together, we enact a form of resistance against atomisation and silencing," she continued. "The impact of this collective agency is that psychotherapists themselves feel empowered – they are not alone or isolated."

"It gives a sociological dimension to psychological suffering by showing that everyone is experiencing similar conditions," she said.

"We emphasise that we are part of the Palestinian people, fragmented and dismembered into ashlaa – dismembered body parts," Odeh Haj stressed.

"This word should be internationalised, because our psyches are also dismembered," Odeh Haj stated. "When we hold together, we perform an act of resistance against this dismemberment, moving towards the reassembly of the whole Palestinian self."

Qatar to make art history with Art Basel debut

From Page 1

Qatar has invested seriously in cultural infrastructure over a long period of time, building a comprehensive arts ecosystem that supports artists through education, exchange, and sustained support. For Art Basel, this kind of long-term commitment matters," Art Basel Qatar artistic director Wael Shawky told *Gulf Times*.

He said that it creates the right conditions for an art fair to function not only as a marketplace, but as part of a broader ecosystem – one that connects artists, institutions, collectors, and the public in a meaningful way.

"Equally important is the region's growing, internationally oriented collector base and strong tradition of patronage," he underlined. "These conditions make Qatar an ideal place to develop an Art Basel fair that is both globally connected and deeply rooted in its local context."

According to Shawky, Art Basel Qatar is distinct because it is curatorially driven and artist-centred. "This is the first Art Basel fair to operate under such a strong thematic framework," he said. "The fair focuses on single-artist presentations rather than dense booth displays, which allows for deeper engagement with each practice."

Art Basel Qatar will debut as a concisely curated showcase cel-

brating Qatar's vibrant cultural landscape and the dynamic arts ecosystem of the Mena (Middle East and North Africa) region.

The inaugural edition of Art Basel Qatar will be held at M7, as well as at the Doha Design District in downtown Msheireb.

Shawky said that it is essential to place significant emphasis on artists from the region and the wider Global South, while remaining globally connected.

"Art Basel Qatar will strengthen connections between local artists and international galleries, between collectors and regional practices, and between institutions across borders," he stressed. "The fair will expand global demand for art from the Menasa (Middle East, North Africa and South Asia) region. For Qatar, it reinforces the country's position as a cultural hub where ideas, not just objects, circulate."

Shawky strongly feels that by establishing a flagship event in Qatar, new opportunities can be created for established collectors, emerging collecting communities and first-time art audiences.

"Beyond Qatar, the fair helps reposition the region not as an emerging market, but as a site of serious artistic and intellectual production. It also opens new pathways for artists from the Menasa region to engage with the global art ecosystem on their own terms," he continued.

"Art Basel Qatar will take place annually," Shawky said. "Unlike



Wael Shawky, artistic director at Art Basel Qatar.

traditional exhibitions, it is not only a showcase of artworks, but a platform that brings together galleries, artists, collectors, institutions, and the public within a shared framework, and the intent is to extend programming outside of the fair year-round. Each edition will evolve in response to its context."

One of the key highlights of Art Basel Qatar, according to Shawky, is the focused, single-artist presentations, which allow visitors to engage deeply with each artist's work.

Another is the Special Projects programme, which activates important public and heritage sites in Msheireb Downtown Doha.

"Art Basel Qatar is part of a larger process, one that supports artists, encourages thoughtful collecting, and invites the public to engage with art as a way of understanding the world around them. If the fair succeeds in creating curiosity, dialogue, and sustained interest, then it will have achieved something meaningful," he added.



Minister receives copies of credentials of Gambia and Indonesia ambassadors



HE the Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Sultan bin Saad al-Muraikhi received yesterday copies of the credentials of ambassador of the Republic of Gambia to the State of Qatar Omar Jah and ambassador of the Republic of Indonesia to the State of Qatar Syahda Guruh Langkah Samudera. HE the Minister of State for Foreign Affairs wished both ambassadors success in fulfilling their duties, affirming the state's readiness to provide all necessary support to strengthen bilateral relations between the State of Qatar and their respective countries across various fields. (QNA)

QRCS deploys new medical, relief aid convoy to Syria

As part of Qatar's ongoing relief programme for the people of Syria, Qatar Red Crescent Society (QRCS) has deployed a new land aid convoy to Syria, in co-operation with the embassy of Qatar in Damascus and the Syrian Arab Red Crescent Society (SARCS).

The aid convoy comprised eight trucks, carrying a total of 34 tonnes of medical, food, and non-food aid, at a total cost of QR4.2mn. Earlier this month, it departed from QRCS warehouses in Doha and travelled overland through Saudi Arabia and Jordan, heading for Damascus, Syria.

SARCS will be responsible for receiving and distributing the aid shipment to those most in need, according to the plan.

The aid provided by QRCS included medical equipment and supplies to support Syrian health facilities (such as dental clinic equipment, panoramic X-ray machine, and medical beds), medical aids for persons with special needs (such as wheelchairs, walkers, and electric patient lift), and thousands of medical supplies needed for everyday activities at health facilities (such as wound dressings, bandages, medical gloves, vital signs monitors, and other medical materials for treatment, nursing, and ICU).

Also, the convoy was loaded with more than 30,000 units of various essential medications, including antibiotics, pain killers, respiratory/topical medications, and maternal and child health care supplies.

There were large quantities of winterisation clothing and items, totalling more than 65,000 pieces for adults and children (male and female), along with essential food items, such as olive oil, and other necessities for living and shelter.

Moreover, service equipment was provided, including solar-powered refrigerators, coolers, and water and sanitation equipment, to help maintain essential services at the target locations and bolster health and safety measures.



This is one of a series of Qatari aid convoys provided for the people of Syria. QRCS had already provided successive air and land aid convoys from Doha to Damascus.

These shipments included medical equipment and relief supplies, in co-operation with Sidra Medicine, the embassy of Qatar in Damascus, and SARCS, adopting a humanitarian approach aimed at enhancing the resilience of major institutions and alleviating the suffering of affected and displaced people in Syria.

MoPH conducts 800 inspection visits, collects 1,335 laboratory samples during QIFF 2026

The Ministry of Public Health (MoPH) intensified its monitoring efforts during the recently concluded Qatar International Food Festival (QIFF) 2026. This initiative formed part of MoPH's ongoing commitment to protecting public health and enhancing food safety at major events and large gatherings, in co-ordination with Qatar Tourism and the festival's organisers. The Food Safety Department teams carried out 800 inspection visits during the festival, during which 1,335 food product samples were collected and tested at MoPH's Food Safety Laboratories to verify their safety and compliance with requirements.

Prior to the launch of the festival, MoPH developed a comprehensive regulatory plan that included assessing the level of compliance among local restaurants participating in the event.

In addition, specialised training support was provided to international restaurants through the implementation of

an intensive two-day training programme ahead of the festival, aimed at raising awareness of food safety principles and the requirements for storage, preparation, and presentation. Wasan Abdullah al-Baker, director of the Food Safety Department at MoPH, stated: "These intensive regulatory efforts reflect the ministry's commitment to ensuring the highest standards of food safety during major events. This is achieved through a risk-based approach that integrates field inspections with awareness raising and pre-event training, thereby contributing to the protection of visitors' health and strengthening their confidence in the services provided in Qatar." A team of 14 inspectors from MoPH's Food Safety Department monitored food safety practices throughout the festival, including weekends and all operating hours. Inspection rounds were intensified during peak periods and times of high visitor turnout. The inspection teams

applied the provisions of the risk-based inspection checklist to ensure greater compliance with health requirements and to raise the level of safety of food served to visitors, particularly in light of the large public attendance at the festival. The inspection covered all points of sale at the festival site, amounting to 220 kiosks, including 46 international restaurants. In addition, daily morning follow-ups were conducted at the central preparation units supplying the restaurants to ensure proper health practices were applied across all stages of preparation, including transportation. Upon reviewing the recorded violations, the Food Safety Department confirmed that most were low risk and did not pose a threat to public health as they were related to the temporary structures of the kiosks and the limited working spaces. These were addressed immediately through the required corrective measures.

Hosting major sports events 'has enabled young Qataris to realise their full potential'

By Ayman Adly
Doha

Qatar plans to host more high-profile sports and football tournaments over the next five years, building on the success of the FIFA World Cup Qatar 2022, the FIFA Arab Cup, the AGCCF U-23 Gulf Cup, and other major events, according to Jassim al-Jassim, CEO of the Local Organising Committee for Football Events.

Al-Jassim was speaking at the third edition of the Mutual Dialogue Summit during a session titled "From Hosting to Legacy: How Gulf Sports Shape a Youth-Led Future," moderated by Asrar al-Ansari, director of the Youth Department at the Co-operation Council for



Arab States of the Gulf (Kuwait). He said the experience gained from hosting global tournaments, coupled with Qatar's advanced infrastructure, has positioned the country to stage major international sporting events. He noted that many young Qataris discovered and developed their capabilities through hands-on involvement in these tournaments, enabling them to assume senior organisational and management roles without external supervision. Al-Jassim stressed that Qatari professionals have earned FIFA's full confidence to organise events independently, without direct intervention. He added that Hamad International Airport, security agencies, administrative bodies, and other state institutions are

now fully equipped to manage large-scale international events, supported by effective contingency plans to address unforeseen challenges. He also highlighted

Qatar's growing reputation as a family-friendly, safe, and welcoming destination for women, noting that the country's sporting events consistently record high ticket sales. While embracing modern technologies and global best practices, al-Jassim said Qatar has remained committed to showcasing its heritage and traditions. He cited Al Bayt Stadium's architecture and the Gulf bishir presented to Lionel Messi at the 2022 World Cup final as examples of this cultural emphasis. He further noted that Souq Waqif has emerged as one of the most popular destinations for visitors during international tournaments. This outcome was not deliberately planned, but one that reflects the enduring appeal of authentic Gulf heritage. Respect for national traditions, customs, and laws, he said, has remained central to all event-planning efforts. Among the most significant outcomes of the FIFA World Cup

Qatar 2022, al-Jassim added, was the importance of investing in local youth by training and engaging them in planning and organisational processes. This approach has paid off, with many trainees now holding senior management and supervisory positions and performing their roles with high efficiency. The third edition of the Mutual Dialogue Summit concluded on Monday. Organised by the Qatar Debate Centre, the two-day event was held at Msheireb Museums in Doha and brought together more than 100 young men and women from GCC countries. It was held in strategic partnership with the Ministry of Sports and Youth, in co-operation with Msheireb Museums as the cultural partner.

GCC, VCM sign pact to accelerate carbon market growth



Qatar based, Global Carbon Council (GCC) and the Regional Voluntary Carbon Market Company (VCM), established by the Public Investment Fund and Saudi Tadawul Group, announced a strategic partnership to scale voluntary carbon markets through trusted standards and institutional-grade exchange infrastructure.

Under this strategic partnership, carbon credits certified by the Global Carbon Council are now traded on Saudi Arabia's VCM exchange platform.

This strategic partnership has already demonstrated strong market traction, with more than 600,000 tonnes of GCC-certified carbon credits traded within the first month of the integration on the exchange.

The early trading activity highlights growing regional demand for high-integrity, independently verified carbon credits and underscores VCM's role in enabling price discovery, liquidity, and transparent market access.

GCC is an international carbon crediting programme that issues tradable credits to registered projects based on verified, results-based greenhouse gas (GHG) emission reductions and removals.

In the Global South, GCC's Programme is the first international GHG and sustainable development programme fully accredited by the International Civil Aviation Organisation for Carbon Offsetting and Reduction Scheme for International Aviation, as well as

International Carbon Reduction and Offset Alliance, positioning the GCC Programme as a critical gateway for channelling high-integrity climate finance into emerging markets.

Credits certified by the GCC Programme can be used by governments and companies to meet and enhance climate ambitions, including supporting Nationally Determined Contributions and enabling the trade of Internationally Transferred Mitigation Outcomes.

The availability of GCC credits on VCM's platform expands access to globally recognised credits for buyers in Saudi Arabia and the wider region.

Dr Yousef Alhorr, founding chairman of GCC, said: "Partner-

ing with VCM enables GCC-certified projects to access a transparent, institutional marketplace and reach new sources of demand. The early trading volumes not only demonstrate how exchange-based platforms can accelerate climate finance and support national climate objectives but also reflect the strong standing and deep-rooted trust that the Global Carbon Council has developed as a leading global carbon market programme."

Fadi Saadeh, acting CEO and head of technology of VCM, said: "This strategic partnership with the Global Carbon Council reflects our efforts towards scaling voluntary carbon markets through credible standards and real market activity."

"The strong trading volumes seen in the first month since their inclusion demonstrate growing confidence in the Saudi carbon market and the role played by VCM's exchange in connecting high-quality supply with regional and global demand."

VCM launched Saudi Arabia's first voluntary carbon credit exchange platform in November 2024. The exchange is designed to support a transparent, scalable and increasingly liquid market by offering institutional-grade infrastructure, price and data discovery, open connectivity with global registries and multiple trading mechanisms including auctions and request-for-quote functionality."

Stricter regulations on cupping therapy services needed: CMC

By Ayman Adly
Doha

Stricter rules for cupping therapy services should be introduced to ensure the safety and quality of services provided, the Central Municipal Council (CMC) has stressed.

CMC recently held the 48th meeting of its seventh term, chaired by HE Mohamed bin Ali al-Athba, CMC Chairman, during which a proposal to make the Industrial Area and an independent municipality into a full administrative unit was presented. The meeting discussed several items on its agenda, as part of the council's keenness to follow up on service-related and regulatory issues directly linked to the lives of residents and the quality of services provided.

The council started its proceedings by approving the minutes of the previous meeting and reviewing incoming correspondence, reflecting the continuity of institutional work and the council's follow-up on proposals and observations submitted within the scope of its mandate. Accordingly, the council discussed the recommendations and report of its Services and Public Utilities Committee regarding stricter oversight of cupping therapy practitioners.



This discussion stemmed from the importance of regulating this activity and ensuring it is practised in accordance with approved health regulations to safeguard public safety and curb irregular practices that may pose a risk to public health. The council issued its recommendations to both the Ministry of Municipality and the Ministry of Commerce and Industry. The meeting also addressed the recommendations and report of the Services and Public Utilities Committee regarding a review of procedures for issuing licences for rest houses within residential neighbourhoods.

The views of the competent committee were reviewed regarding regulating this activity in a manner that balances residents' needs with maintaining the residential qualities of

neighbourhoods, while taking into account associated regulatory and environmental aspects. The council approved submitting the appropriate recommendations to both the Ministry of Municipality and Qatar Tourism. Meanwhile, the council reviewed the briefing by the Services and Public Utilities Committee on responses to the regulation of kiosks within shopping malls, placing greater emphasis on the importance of a clear regulatory framework that ensures optimal use of commercial spaces and preserves the general appearance and internal organisation of such malls. In addition, the meeting discussed several proposals to establish an independent municipality in the Industrial Area, aimed at regulating industrial activities, bringing them under unified management, and improving municipal services for industrial workshops and garages.

Doha Municipality receives EFQM four-star recognition

QNA
Doha

oping a sustainable service environment that responds to community needs and contributes to improving the quality of life."

Doha Municipality received four-star recognition from the European Foundation for Quality Management (EFQM). This recognition is among the highest levels of institutional excellence globally and reflects the maturity of its institutional framework and the efficiency of its performance in delivering municipal services in line with international best practices.

On the occasion, the Director General of Doha Municipality, Engineer Jamal Matar al-Nuaimi, stated that "this achievement embodies the tangible progress achieved by Doha Municipality within an integrated institutional framework, and reflects our commitment to applying best practices in service quality and enhancing municipal performance efficiency. It also affirms our dedication to devel-

oping a sustainable service environment that responds to community needs and contributes to improving the quality of life."

EFQM commended the efforts exerted by the ministry of municipality and the Doha Municipality team, affirming that the achievement represents a model to be emulated at the regional level and reflects a genuine commitment to continuous improvement and effective governance.

EFQM is a leading international body in the field of institutional excellence. Its model is widely used globally as a management framework to support organisations in managing change and improving performance.

The EFQM model has contributed to enhancing the performance of more than 50,000 organisations worldwide through multi-level assessments, fostering a culture of quality, innovation, and the delivery of sustainable value for all stakeholders. (QNA)

Qatar Society of Engineers marks Qatari Engineers Day

The Qatar Society of Engineers marked Qatari Engineers Day with the support and participation of the Ministry of Social Development and Family, and in co-operation with the College of Engineering at Qatar University.

Qatari Engineers Day is an occasion to celebrate and highlight the pivotal role of engineers in building a sustainable future and supporting Qatar National Vision 2030. It also underscores the Qatar Society of Engineers' pioneering role in launching national professional platforms that bring together decision-makers, academic institutions, and the labour market in a practical dialogue aimed at developing the engineering profession and empowering national talent.

Chairperson of the Qatar Society of Engineers, Engineer Amina Mohammed al-Naama, said the celebration coincides with the society's anniversary. She noted the achievements of Qatari engineers and their active contributions to all engineering sectors and the nation's development.

She explained that the celebration, in addition to showcasing the engineers' achievements, addressed the challenges they face, including the various engineering specialisations, labour market needs, the integration of artificial intelligence and new technologies into the engineering sector and their impact, as well as the field of cybersecurity.

She added that among the many achievements of the association, particularly during the past year, were those related to training and organising engineering conferences and forums. For example, the association launched



the "Engineers Without Borders" programme and its website, in addition to organising the Qatar International Facilities Management Conference and Exhibition, the LED Technology and Renewable Energy Exhibition last October, and other important events.

In her speech during the celebration, al-Naama emphasised that holding the event at the College of Engineering at Qatar University reflects the depth of the partnership between the association and academic institutions and the belief that empowering engineers begins with integrating education with professional practice and the needs of the labour market.

She pointed out that the engineering sector is witnessing rapid transformations that present new challenges and opportunities, noting that the true investment is in human capital, and that empowering engineers is a fundamental pillar for achieving Qatar National Vision 2030 and building a future based on knowledge and innovation.

Assistant Undersecretary for Social Development Affairs at the Ministry of Social Development and Family, Fahad Mohammed al-

Khayarin, commended the efforts of the Qatar Society of Engineers in his speech during the ceremony, praising its dedicated work in serving the profession, engineers, and the community.

He stated the Ministry of Social Development and Family believes that associations and private institutions are essential partners in development, particularly professional associations, given their crucial role in advancing the profession, empowering national talent, and building sustainable career paths.

He explained that, from this perspective, the ministry plays its role in supervising, regulating, supporting, and empowering institutions, as well as promoting governance and sustainability within the legal frameworks governing the work of associations.

This ensures their stability, growth, and societal impact.

He specifically mentioned the Qatar Society of Engineers, which he described as a distinguished model of an effective professional association, highlighting its high-quality initiatives, targeted programmes, and its role in supporting engineers, promoting a culture of professional volunteering, and building partnerships with aca-

demic, governmental, and private sector entities.

He noted that the ministry views professional associations as strategic partners that contribute to raising the efficiency of national talent, supporting innovation and professional excellence, and ultimately achieving the goals of Qatar National Vision 2030.

Al-Khayarin reiterated the Ministry of Social Development and Family's full commitment to continuing its work with the Qatar Society of Engineers and all professional associations, thereby strengthening their role, enhancing their impact, and serving the nation and its citizens.

Dean of the College of Engineering at Qatar University, Dr Mohammed Hussein Farouk, also spoke at the event, emphasising that this gathering represents a significant milestone as it addresses pivotal issues of concern to both the academic and industrial sectors in Qatar.

He highlighted Qatar's remarkable progress and development across various sectors, and the active and influential role of engineering graduates in these achievements.

During the celebration, two panel discussions were held, addressing topics related to the challenges facing engineers and the job market, as well as the societal role of national associations in empowering national talent.

These discussions touched upon the rapid advancements in technology, particularly digital technologies, and their impact on education, the nature of work in the industrial sector, and the job market in general. The role of artificial intelligence in reshaping the job market and the skills required was also discussed. (QNA)

MCIT, MoPH hold workshop on digital transformation and AI

The Ministry of Communications and Information Technology (MCIT), in collaboration with the Ministry of Public Health (MoPH), organised an awareness workshop under the SMEs Go Digital Programme.

The workshop targeted institutions operating within the healthcare sector and aimed to promote the adoption of digital transformation solutions and the use of artificial intelligence (AI) to enhance services provided across the national healthcare system.

The workshop highlighted the role of digital transformation and AI in driving innovation within healthcare institutions and featured a specialised session delivered by experts in digital transformation in the healthcare sector.

Participants gained valuable insights into the pivotal role of emerging technologies in em-

powering healthcare institutions, along with practical applications of digital transformation and artificial intelligence that contribute to improving patient experience, increasing operational efficiency, and creating new opportunities for business growth.

The workshop is part of a series of specialised sessions organised under the SMEs Go Digital Programme by MCIT. The programme targets SMEs operating across vital sectors, including tourism, education, healthcare, retail and wholesales, as well as transport and logistics. It aims to support the development of innovation-driven business models and accelerate the digital transformation of SMEs in Qatar by enabling the adoption of advanced technologies and enhancing their readiness for the digital future, in line with the objectives of the Digital Agenda 2030.

Shell Eco-marathon Qatar highlights student teams' technical prowess



Semeru Team Kumbolo UM from Universitas Negeri Malang, Indonesia, wins in the Prototype Internal Combustion Engine category. PICTURE: Christophe Viseux



Four winners of the Global Championship celebrate during the award ceremony on day five of Shell Eco-marathon Qatar 2026 at Lusail International Circuit. PICTURE: Mahmoud Khaled

The second edition of the Shell Eco-marathon Qatar successfully concluded at the Lusail International Circuit, bringing together student teams to showcase their innovative, energy-efficient vehicles. Results in the 2026 edition highlighted both the scale and diversity of the competition, with student teams competing across Prototype and Urban Concept categories and multiple energy

pathways, including battery-electric, hydrogen fuel cell and internal combustion. Teams from Indonesia emerged as standout performers, securing top positions across several categories, with multiple vehicles exceeding the 1,000km per litre efficiency milestone. The teams from Qatar put in a valiant effort - pushing the limits of their vehicles on and off the track. A major highlight of the awards

ceremony was the announcement of four winning teams to advance to the 2027 Shell Eco-marathon Global Championship. Returning to Qatar, these teams will compete against the highest-performing student teams from Europe and the Americas, marking the launch of the first truly global championship in the programme's history. Rob Maxwell, managing director of Shell Companies Qatar, said: "Shell Eco-marathon Qatar 2026

has been an incredible showcase of ingenuity and determination. The creativity and technical excellence demonstrated by these student teams reflect the bright future of sustainable mobility". Shell Eco-marathon Qatar highlighted the technical prowess of the student teams and emphasised the importance of sustainability and innovation in addressing future energy challenges. The

event featured workshops, networking opportunities and technical inspections, providing a comprehensive learning experience for all participants. Dr Alkindi Aljawabrah, director of Qatar Auto Museum said: "Shell Eco-marathon is a testament to how design thinking can solve our most pressing global challenges. While we celebrate the technical achievements on the track today, we are equally impressed by the

creative spirit these students have shown. "Through the Qatar Auto Museum, we are proud to champion a generation that views the vehicle not just as a tool for transport, but as a canvas for sustainable innovation. These students and engineers are crafting the next chapter of our global mobility heritage, proving that the future is as much about human imagination as it is about energy efficiency."

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GULF TIMES

‘Water bankruptcy’: Need for equitable global access to water

Water is the ultimate renewable resource, but global water supplies are becoming less reliable amid dangerous floods, droughts and threats to agriculture.

A new era has begun of “global water bankruptcy,” with humans depleting freshwater systems to the point they can’t recover, according to a United Nations report last week.

Three-quarters of the world’s population – about 6.1bn people – now live in countries where freshwater supplies are insecure or critically insecure, according to the report, published by UN University’s Institute for Water, Environment and Health.

Around 4bn people experience severe water scarcity for at least one month each year, while drought impacts cost an estimated \$307bn annually.

The UN report defines water bankruptcy as a “persistent over-withdrawal from surface and groundwater relative to renewable inflows and safe levels of depletion” with “irreversible or prohibitively costly loss of water-related natural capital”.

This differs from water stress which reflects high-pressure situations that remain reversible or a water crisis, which is used to describe acute shocks that can be overcome. Drought and water scarcity are likely to drive migrations in parts of Sub-Saharan Africa, South Asia and Latin America, says the report.

Cities are experiencing more Day Zero events in which municipal water systems near collapse. An acute water shortage in Tehran recently led authorities to warn it may become necessary to evacuate parts of the city or even relocate the capital.

Climate change is shifting fresh water on a planetary scale and, on a smaller scale, those effects can be made worse by local actions. A hotter, drier planet experiences more water-evaporating droughts. That concentrates salts in the soil, as do certain farming practices.

A paper published this month in ‘Nature’ predicted that crop droughts will worsen in much of Europe, northern South America and western North America even as big rain events increase. That’s because rising temperatures more strongly affect evaporation and loss of soil moisture in those regions, which means more water will be required for irrigation.

In late 2020, the Chicago Mercantile Exchange launched the first water futures market. Water then joined gold, oil, and other commodities traded on the Wall Street. Apart from being a tradable contract, the futures launch also highlighted growing worries that the life-sustaining natural resource is becoming scarce across the world.

Proponents of the market say that the futures contracts will function more like insurance. But the United Nations had warned in late 2020 that water futures risked an essential public good being treated like gold and oil, leaving the market vulnerable to speculative bubbles.

The Middle East and North Africa (Mena) region has the world’s scarcest supplies of water, and more than 60% of the people in Mena nations live under conditions of high or very high water stress, according to the World Bank.

Higher GDP and population growth levels, as well as the increasingly hot climate, mean the Gulf countries need to spend heavily to meet their energy needs.

Water is becoming a significant geopolitical risk, as scarcity and unequal access to water contribute to rising political tensions when demand exceeds supply.

However, when access to water is managed equitably and transparently, it can become a powerful catalyst for socioeconomic growth, co-operation and peacebuilding, fostering cross-border collaboration and contributing to long-term stability.

The UN report calls for the recognition of water bankruptcy in policy debates, and for the creation of a global monitoring framework to track water resources, while governments should consider blocking projects that further degrade water supplies.

In July 2010, the UN General Assembly declared access to water and sanitation as a human right, with its sixth Sustainable Development Goal being access to clean water and sustainable sanitation for all by 2030.

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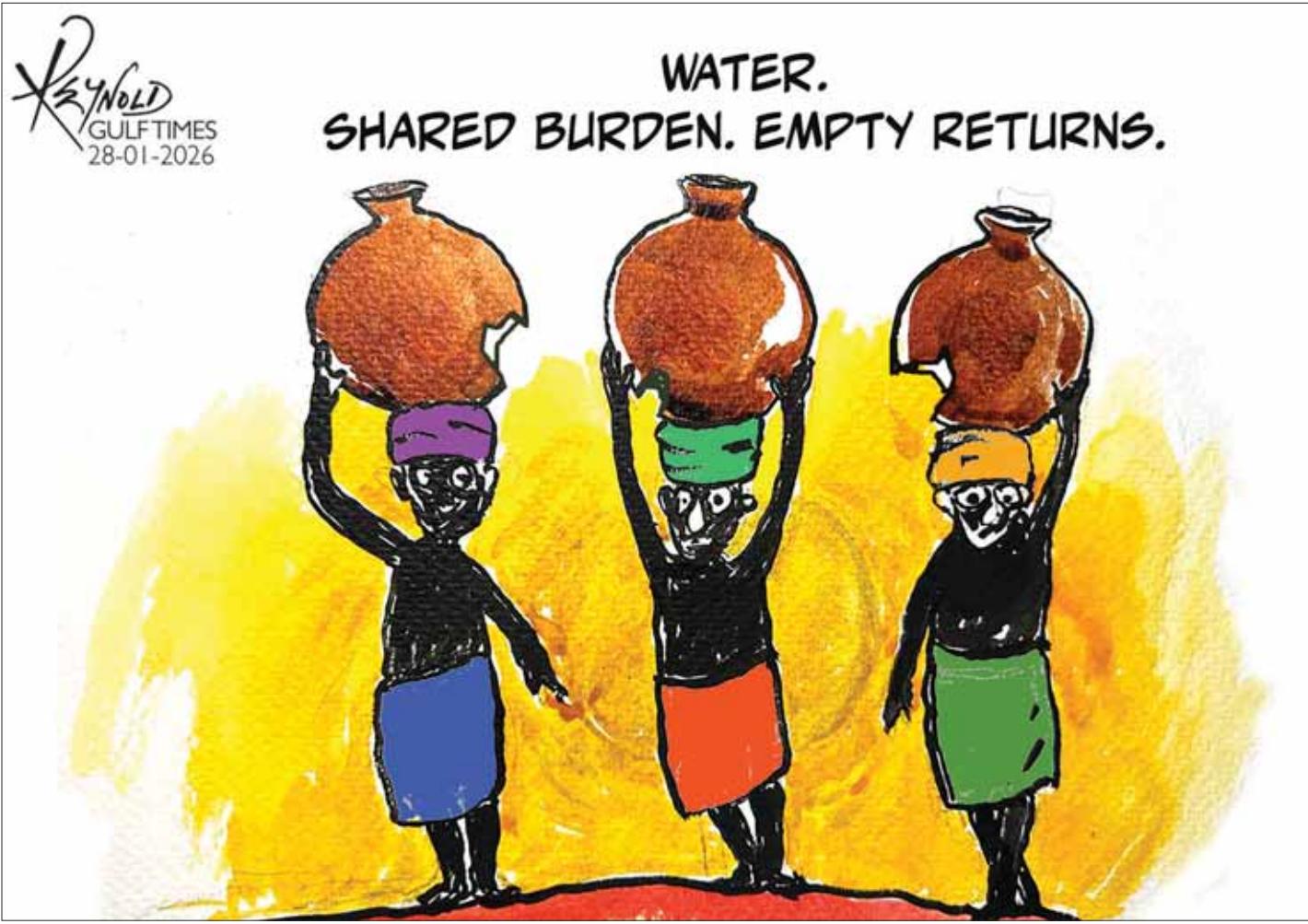
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Geopolitical analysis on the rise for investors as risks multiply

By Suzanne McGee & Divya Chowdhury
Reuters

Demand for geopolitical analysis is rising, as asset managers and corporate investors seek guidance on the best way to price in risk from wars, territorial sabre-rattling and global political risk.

The need for such advice was highlighted last week when the US threatened various countries with tariffs unless a deal was reached over the US taking control over Greenland, causing a rollercoaster reaction in markets.

Other geopolitical events that have roiled markets include Russia’s 2022 invasion of Ukraine, US President Donald Trump’s 2025 call for broad tariffs and subsequent negotiations with individual countries, and this month’s US intervention in Venezuela.

For investors, geopolitical risk used to be overshadowed by factors including economic data points and central bank decisions. But since the Ukraine war, the demand for insight has been climbing steadily, said Mehill Marku, lead geopolitical analyst for PGM Fixed Income.

“Before 2022, geopolitics wasn’t necessarily an important function in portfolio investment terms; it was a good thing to

have but not a ‘must have,’” Marku said, adding the number of client calls had spiked. “It’s the interconnectedness of all the crises that feels really challenging to many.”

Investors and consultancy firms say the rising need for geopolitical advice and analysis has prompted them to either ramp up their own in-house capabilities, seek more independent analysis or increase the advice to give clients. Such analysis can include written reports, more tailored advice or developing scenario analyses.

“We have to develop a new muscle, almost,” Rishi Kapoor, vice-chairman and chief investment officer of Investcorp, the Middle East’s biggest alternative investment firm, told the Reuters Global Markets Forum on the sidelines of the World Economic Forum in Davos. “Earlier on, the geopolitical backdrop was something that we kind of took for granted and just assumed that it was a stable backdrop.”

Pandu Patria Sjahrir, CIO of Indonesia’s sovereign wealth fund Danantara, said his fund now did a lot of work on political leaders’ risk. “This year, maybe even more so than any other year, we’re focusing a lot more on geopolitical risks,” he said. “We think about worst case now in terms of underwriting. In fact, my base case is worst case.”

The second Trump

administration’s policies have helped catapult geopolitics to the top spot on the list of client priorities, from being “somewhere in the top 20” about a decade ago, said Marc Gilbert, head of the BCG Center for Geopolitics.

Everything is “faster, harder, more volatile” he said of US trade and foreign policy pronouncements. In the last 18 months, he has had 235 meetings with C-suite officers and corporate board members on these topics, which he said marked a dramatic increase.

Asked for comment on increasing demand for geopolitical analysis, White House spokesman Kush Desai said the president’s “shakeup of this broken status quo is finally putting America First” and that “trillions in investments pouring into the United States is proof” that investors believe it is the most dynamic global economy.

CONSULTANCY FIRMS GRASP OPPORTUNITY

Banks have been dedicating resources to the theme. JPMorgan last year launched a dedicated Center for Geopolitics, while Lazard Asset Management and Goldman Sachs launched geopolitical advisory divisions in 2022 and 2023 respectively.

JPMorgan did not return requests for comment on the centre. Goldman and Lazard

did not respond to requests for comment.

Heightened awareness of global risk is increasing the need for specialist geopolitical analysis firms, said Matt Gertken, chief geopolitical analyst at investment consulting firm BCA, who said his company was growing, without giving specifics.

Consulting firm Signum Global Advisors has also seen increased demand, boosting its roster of partners by 25% last year as its client list grew, said Charles Myers, the firm’s chairman and founder.

There was particular interest from investors trying to understand what may result from the shifting power dynamics in Venezuela, said Myers, adding that he had 20 spots for an investor trip to the country on March 23, but 60 clients eager to participate, and was considering making the trip a full-fledged investor conference at a Caracas hotel.

Jens Larsen, London-based head of Eurasia Group’s geo-economics team, said competition to provide geopolitical insights was growing. “I’m still not sure that the supply of advice is keeping up with demand as the nature of the challenges becomes multi-faceted,” said Larsen.

• Suzanne McGee in New York & Divya Chowdhury in Davos, Switzerland; editing by Megan Davies and Nia Williams



Traders work on the floor at the New York Stock Exchange (NYSE) in New York City. Geopolitical events that have roiled markets include Russia’s 2022 invasion of Ukraine, US President Donald Trump’s 2025 call for broad tariffs and subsequent negotiations with individual countries, and the US intervention in Venezuela.

CRITICISM

US decision to strip migrant children of legal aid flayed

UN human rights experts yesterday denounced the US decision last year to cut legal aid for unaccompanied children in US immigration proceedings. The condemnation came days after UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Volker Turk urged the Trump administration to ensure its migration policies respect international law. "Denying children their rights to legal representation and forcing them to navigate complex immigration proceedings without legal counsel is a serious violation of the rights of children," said the independent experts, who are appointed by the UN Human Rights Council. - Reuters

ANNOUNCEMENT

US to conduct multi-day military exercise in Middle East

The US yesterday announced a major multi-day Air Force exercise in the Middle East, as Washington and Tehran face off. The announcement came a day after the US military said the Abraham Lincoln carrier strike group had arrived in the Middle East, dramatically boosting American firepower in the region. The exercise will "demonstrate the ability to deploy, disperse, and sustain combat airpower across" the Middle East, the US Air Force component of Central Command, which is responsible for American forces in the region, said in a statement. No date or exact location for the exercise were released. - Reuters

LEGAL

US sued over deadly missile strikes on alleged drug boats

Relatives of two Trinidadian men killed last year in a US military strike on a boat allegedly carrying drugs filed a wrongful death lawsuit yesterday against the US government. It is the first such case to be brought against the Trump administration over the three dozen missile strikes in the Caribbean and eastern Pacific, which have left at least 125 people dead since September. President Donald Trump alleged at the time that "six male narco-terrorists" were killed in a boat allegedly ferrying drugs from Venezuela to the US. Washington has yet to release any evidence supporting its claims. - AFP

DECISION

French lawmakers pass bill on social media ban for under-15s

French lawmakers have passed a bill that would ban social media use by under-15s, a move championed by President Emmanuel Macron as a way to protect children from excessive screen time. The lower house, the National Assembly, adopted the text by a vote of 130 to 21 in a lengthy overnight session from Monday to Tuesday. It will now go to the Senate, France's upper house, ahead of becoming law. The legislation, which also provides for a ban on mobile phones in high schools, would make France the second country to take such a step following Australia's ban for under-16s in December. - Reuters

Trump weighs less aggressive approach in Minneapolis

Reuters

Washington/Minneapolis

Donald Trump's border czar, Tom Homan, yesterday met with Minnesota's governor ahead of talks with the mayor of Minneapolis, as the White House seeks to defuse the unrest that has gripped the city after the fatal shootings of two US citizens by federal agents.

The move to install Homan in charge of the operation in place of Border Patrol official Gregory Bovino, who sources said is leaving after having led most of Trump's crackdowns in Democratic-led cities, is part of a broader reset by the president to soften his administration's aggressive posture in Minneapolis. Some advisers are concerned that Saturday's killing of 37-year-old Alex Petti by federal officers, which sparked national outrage, could derail Trump's immigration agenda.

Homan's job in Minneapolis is to "recalibrate tactics" and improve cooperation with state and local officials, a source with ties to the White House said.

"The goal is to scale back, eventually pull out," the source added.

A senior Trump administration official said Homan would move away from the broad, public neighbourhood sweeps that Bovino had conducted in Los Angeles, Chicago, Minneapolis and other cities and adopt a more traditional targeted approach.

In a statement, governor Tim Walz said he had outlined the state's priorities to Homan, including impartial investigations into the two shootings and reducing the 3,000-strong force of federal agents that has been deployed to the city. Homan and Walz agreed to "continue working toward those goals," the governor said.

Homan was also expected to sit down with Minneapolis mayor Jacob Frey, Trump said on social media.

The president spent the weekend huddling with senior advisers to reassess the administration's response to Petti's death on Saturday, according to the same source and a White House official.

As in the aftermath of the fatal shooting of 37-year-old Renee Good earlier this month, some Trump administration officials initially responded by accusing Petti of domestic terrorism, a claim belied by witness video verified by Reuters that showed he posed no threat.

The discussions included reducing the number of agents in Minnesota, recalibrating the mission to focus more narrowly on deportations and exploring greater co-ordination with state authorities. Trump also weighed whether immigration officers should be required to have body-worn cameras, as many police officers do, according to the White House official.

The killing of Petti, an ICU nurse shot multiple times by Border

Patrol agents on Saturday during daytime protests, has become a full-blown political crisis for Trump, with even some Republicans in Congress calling for investigations.

Coupled with the fatal shooting of Good, a mother-of-three, earlier this month by an Immigration and Customs Enforcement officer, Petti's shooting sparked renewed anger over the aggressive tactics of the federal agents who have been roving the streets of Minneapolis for weeks.

Late on Monday, Minnesota's chief federal judge threatened to hold the acting head of US Immigration and Customs Enforcement, Todd Lyons, in contempt for his agency's failures to comply with court orders that some detainees receive bond hearings.

"The court's patience is at an end," US district judge Patrick Schiltz wrote in ordering Lyons to appear before him on Friday.

Public support for Trump's immigration enforcement tactics appeared to be waning both before and after the Petti shooting, a Reuters/Ipsos poll showed. The issue has put Republicans on the defensive ahead of November's midterm elections, when the party's narrow congressional majorities are at stake.

The president held a two-hour meeting with Homeland Security Secretary Kristi Noem in the Oval Office on Monday evening after Noem asked to meet, a source briefed on the matter confirmed.

The discussions included reducing the number of agents in Minnesota, recalibrating the mission to focus more narrowly on deportations and exploring greater co-ordination with state authorities. Trump also weighed whether immigration officers should be required to have body-worn cameras, as many police officers do, according to the White House official.

The killing of Petti, an ICU nurse shot multiple times by Border



India's Prime Minister Narendra Modi (centre) embraces European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen (right) as European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen looks on during the joint press statements after their meeting at the Hyderabad House in New Delhi yesterday.

India, EU sign landmark trade agreement

AFP
New Delhi

India and the European Union (EU) yesterday announced the "mother of all deals", a huge trade pact to create a market of 2bn people, reached after two decades of negotiations.

EU chiefs and Prime Minister Narendra Modi hope the pact will help shield against challenges from the world's two leading economies, the US and China.

The agreement will cut or eliminate tariffs on almost 97% of European exports, saving up to 4bn euros (\$4.75bn) annually in duties, the 27-nation bloc said.

"A mother of all deals," Modi said yesterday in the capital New

Delhi, where he met with European Commission president Ursula von der Leyen and European Council president Antonio Costa.

"This deal will bring many opportunities for India's 1.4bn and many millions of people of the EU," Modi said, adding the agreement "represents about 25% of global GDP, and one-third of global trade".

The EU has eyed India - the world's most populous nation - as an important market for the future.

"Europe and India are making history today," von der Leyen said in a statement, a day after she and Costa were feted as guests of honour at India's Republic Day parade.

"We have created a free trade

zone of 2bn people, with both sides set to benefit."

EU officials said the deal was the most ambitious India had ever agreed, and European companies would benefit from so-called "first mover advantage".

Europe's key agricultural, automotive and service sectors stand to gain.

But sensitive agricultural sectors, such as beef, rice and sugar whose inclusion in an earlier deal struck with South American bloc Mercosur sparked farmers' anger in Europe, were left out of the agreement.

New Delhi sees the European bloc as an important source of much-needed technology and investment to rapidly upscale its infrastructure and create millions of new jobs.

Landslide leaves Sicilian town teetering on cliff edge

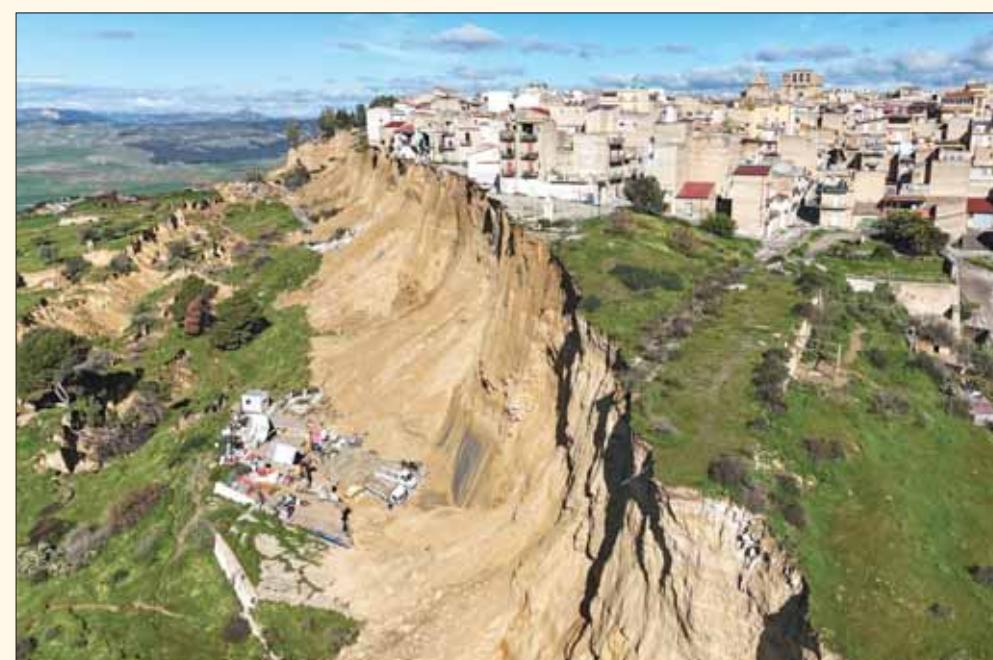
Homes in the Sicilian town of Niscemi have been left teetering on the edge of a cliff after a landslide that was triggered by a storm, Italy's civil protection chief said yesterday.

Niscemi, a town of about 25,000 in south-central Sicily, sits on a plateau that authorities say is gradually collapsing toward the plain below. More than 1,500 people have had to be evacuated.

Buildings were overhanging the edge after large sections of the slope gave way. A car was left with its front end poking into the chasm.

"Let's be clear: there are homes on the edge of the landslide that are uninhabitable," the civil protection head Fabio Ciciliano told reporters in Niscemi, saying residents from the affected areas would be permanently relocated. "Once the water has drained away and the moving section has stopped or slowed, a more accurate assessment will be made... The landslide is still active," he added.

On Monday, the Italian government of Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni declared a state of emergency for Sicily, Sardinia and Calabria, the three southern regions battered by the violent storm last week.



A drone picture shows houses perched along the edge of a cliff after a landslide in Niscemi, Sicily, Italy, yesterday.

TikTok settles social media addiction lawsuit

AFP
Los Angeles, US

Video sharing app TikTok has made an eleventh-hour deal to avoid a landmark US trial accusing it, along with Meta and YouTube, of addicting young people to social media, lawyers said yesterday.

The deal was made as jury selection was to begin in a Los Angeles court that could establish a legal precedent on whether social media companies deliberately designed their platforms to addict children.

The case being heard in the California state court is being called a "bellwether" proceeding because its outcome could set the tone for a tidal wave of similar litigation across the US.

The remaining defendants in the suit are Alphabet and Meta,

the tech titans behind YouTube and Instagram.

Meta co-founder and chief executive Mark Zuckerberg is slated to be called as a witness during the trial.

"The parties are pleased to have reached an amicable resolution of this dispute," the Social Media Victims Law Center said, noting that the terms of the settlement with TikTok are confidential.

The case focuses on allegations that a 19-year-old woman identified by the initials K.G.M. suffered severe mental harm because she was addicted to social media. After joining YouTube at age six, Instagram at 11, Snapchat at 13, and TikTok at 14, the Californian claims to have developed an addiction to the sites that contributed to her depression, anxiety, body image issues and that stoked suicidal thoughts.

School materials enter Gaza after being blocked for two years: Unicef

Reuters
Geneva

The UN children's agency yesterday said it had for the first time in two-and-a-half years been able to deliver school kits with learning materials into Gaza after they were previously blocked by Israeli authorities.

Thousands of kits, including pencils, exercise books and wooden cubes to play with, have now entered the enclave, Unicef said.

"We have now, in the last days, got in thousands of recreational kits, hundreds of school-in-a-carton kits. We're looking at getting 2,500 more school kits in, in the next week, because they've

been approved," Unicef spokesperson James Elder said.

"It's been a long two years for children and for organisations like Unicef to try and do that education without those materials"

A spokesperson for COGAT, the arm of the Israeli military that oversees aid flows into the Gaza Strip, confirmed it had recently allowed Unicef to bring in learning kits though not text books. A COGAT spokesperson said learning kits had been let in several times during the war, without saying how.

Children in Gaza have faced an unprecedented assault on the education system, as well as restrictions on the entry of some aid

materials, including school exercise books and pencils, meaning teachers had to make do with limited resources, while children tried to study at night in tents without lights, Elder said.

During the conflict some children missed out on education altogether, facing basic challenges like finding water, as well as widespread malnutrition, amid a major humanitarian crisis.

"It's been a long two years for children and for organisations like Unicef to try and do that education without those materials. It looks like we're finally seeing a real change," Elder stated.

Unicef is scaling up its education to support half of children of school age - around 336,000 - with learning support. Teaching will mainly

happen in tents, Elder said, due to widespread destruction of school buildings in the enclave during the war.

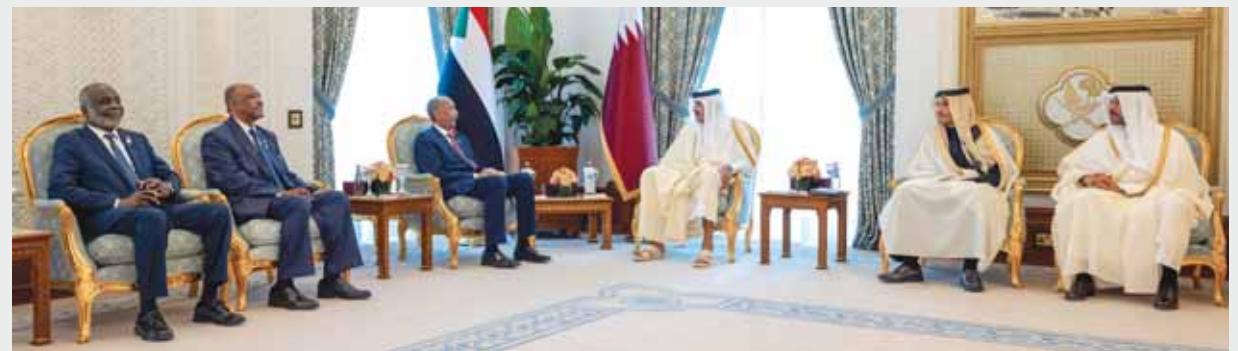
At least 97% of schools sustained some level of damage, according to the most recent satellite assessment by the UN in July.

The bulk of the learning spaces supported by Unicef will be in central and southern areas of the enclave, as it remains difficult to operate in the north, parts of which were badly destroyed in the final months of the conflict, Elder said.

Israel's latest assault has killed 71,000 Palestinians, Gaza's health authorities say. More than 20,000 children were reported killed, including 110 since the October 10 ceasefire last year, Unicef said, citing official data.



A displaced Palestinian girl looks out from her tent in Gaza City.

**Amir holds talks with Sudan leader**

His Highness the Amir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani and the chairman of the Transitional Sovereignty Council of Sudan, Lieutenant-General Abdel Fattah al-Burhan, held official talks at the Amiri Diwan. The meeting dealt with bilateral relations and the means to enhance them in different fields, in addition to discussing developments in Sudan, international efforts made to establish security, stability, and peace that maintain the unity and sovereignty of Sudan over its land. His Highness the Amir and al-Burhan also exchanged views on the most prominent and latest regional and international developments of joint interest. - QNA

Katara art exhibitions display blend of heritage, modernity

Tariq al-Jaidah



Khalid Bumatar



Asma Sami



Hilva Alizadeh

By Ayman Adly
Staff Reporter

Katara Arts Centre (KAC) has been hosting the works of three contemporary artists, presenting art lovers and enthusiasts with remarkable pieces that reflect unique approaches blending modernity with tradition and heritage.

The exhibitions, running until February 28, are open daily to the public from 11am to 9pm.

The featured works include 25 portrait paintings by Qatari artist Khalid Bumatar, titled "Faces 2"; a collection of the works of Qatari artist Asma Sami, titled "What Remains Familiar"; and a collection of the works of Iranian-born artist Hilva Alizadeh, titled "Singing in the Hanging Gardens of Babylon".

KAC founder and director Tariq al-Jaidah stressed the importance of these three art exhibitions as they represent three different schools.

For instance, he said, Bumatar is considered a naturalist and self-taught artist with a unique style that blends heritage with modern perspectives, while Sami is a practising artist committed to featuring local tradition, culture and everyday life, evolving them into new forms and compositions.

Alizadeh is considered an international artist with a unique approach to representing Persian miniatures in lively designs using vibrant tapestries of synthetic hair.

Al-Jaidah said that the artistic scene and movements in Qatar are witnessing a great revival as the concerned entities.

Those in charge of culture and arts in the country give great attention to promoting arts and artists, especially emerging Qatari artists, and offer them all the due support, in addition to encouraging them to be active participants locally, regionally and internationally.

However, al-Jaidah said that all artists are welcome in Qatar, and they are also offered the due support and encouragement to develop and display their work.

Bumatar said that he had always been drawing and creating new works but only started to take part in exhibitions after his early retirement.

He sees great potential in exploring the various angles of human faces and draws them from different perspectives with various unique and expressive postures.

All his portraits feature intrinsic element of the original Qatari heritage, culture and traditions with lively faces that give the viewers ample areas of interpretation.

Bumatar said that the arts and culture atmosphere and environment in Qatar have been very encouraging for artists and innovators, stressing that such a positive approach at both the popular and official levels encourages artists, Qatars, and others to further exercise their creativity and produce original and diverse works.

He added that this is his second solo exhibition, and that he is ready to collaborate with the relevant entities to participate in both local and international exhibitions.

The artist also said the artistic movement in Qatar has been witnessing an unprecedented boom, with multiple museums, galleries, display halls, and specialised arts events all year round.

True gift and talent, Bumatar added, would certainly prevail and produce authentic art in the age of modern technology, as such technology can be utilised to spread that creativity and reach a wider audience.

Sami meanwhile said that she focuses on various elements of local heritage and culture, using them as symbols to capture moments of nostalgia.

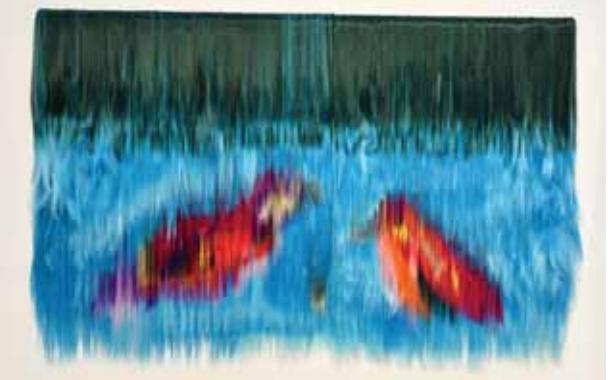
In this exhibition, she has 17 different paintings with such focus.

Alizadeh said that he is happy to display his works in Doha, adding that Doha is an excellent position to be a global hub for innovative arts and artists from around the world.

He noted that the overall artistic scene in Qatar is very encouraging and promising of greater potential.



Snapshots
from the three
exhibitions at the
Katara Arts Centre.

**Healing through leadership and art**

By Shaima Sheriff
Staff Reporter

From hospitals to canvases, Banan Soliman is reshaping wellbeing in Qatar, blending public health, art, and leadership to help people reconnect with themselves and thrive in uncertain times.

Soliman is not one to stay in a box.

A public health leader and accomplished artist, she has spent over two decades moving seamlessly between government corridors and creative studios, guided by one question: "How can I make a real difference in people's lives?"

Her role in Qatar's health sector has seen her co-ordinate national operations during the coronavirus (Covid-19) pandemic and the FIFA World Cup 2022, ensuring hospitals and health systems were ready under immense pressure.

"Leadership is not about control or only managing systems," she told *Gulf Times*. "It's about having clarity under

Banan Soliman blends leadership, creativity and compassion to redefine wellbeing in Qatar

pressure and helping teams stay focused when uncertainty is high."

Soliman recalled the human side of these crises.

"During Covid-19, many teams were anxious about their safety, and it affected performance and even their immunity," she recounted. "My role was to bring focus and empathy into the system. Leadership meant not only co-ordination and efficiency, but also protecting trust and psychological safety."

"Even at peak demand, we stay committed to patient experience, because how people are treated is just as important as what systems deliver," she added.

Alongside public service, Soliman has built a parallel life as an artist.

Her works, rooted in Arabic calligraphy and contemporary abstraction, have been exhibited worldwide and commissioned

by Formula 1 champions, FIFA athletes, and cultural icons.

Her calligraphy series, "Light Upon Light", merges Qur'anic verses with contemporary design.

"Each artwork reminds people of their own inner strength and divine connection," she said. "Art became the bridge between science and the spiritual dimension - it restores us, regulates the nervous system, and speaks to the soul."

Her commitment to service extends into her creative practice.

In Germany, she curated charity exhibitions supporting Syrian children's hospitals.

In Qatar, she organised fundraising events for Palestine, with proceeds directed to the Red Crescent Society.

"Beauty gains meaning when it moves energy into action," Soliman explained.

"Creating with intention feels lighter, more alive. And giving heals all sides - the artist, the buyer, and the cause being supported."

She is now expanding her work in Qatar through retreats blending art, public health insights, and even kitesurfing.

"Thriving comes naturally when what you do matches who you are. It's less about productivity, more about inner balance," she said. "Qatar's landscape, where desert meets sea, offers the perfect space to pause, realign, and remember who you are."

For Soliman, success is measured not in titles or exhibitions, but in impact.

"Whether designing a policy, a building, or a painting, my goal is the same: to create environments where people feel supported to live with balance and flourish," she told *Gulf Times*.



From leading health operations to painting calligraphy, Banan Soliman shows that true leadership, creativity, and wellbeing are inseparable.

Her journey is a reminder that passion is a compass, and the real measure of success is helping people feel more at home within themselves.

Buchbinder brings Beethoven's piano concertos to life with QPO

The Qatar Philharmonic Orchestra (QPO) is set to welcome one of the towering figures of classical music, as legendary pianist Rudolf Buchbinder takes centrestage for a landmark Beethoven piano concerto cycle at Katara Cultural Village's Opera House.

Renowned for his lifelong dedication to Beethoven's music, Buchbinder brings decades of scholarship, performance experience and interpretative authority to this ambitious programme.

Widely regarded as one of the world's foremost Beethoven interpreters, his return to the concert hall promises performances marked by intellectual depth, emotional clarity and formidable virtuosity.

The cycle opens tomorrow (January 29) at

8pm with Piano Concertos Nos. 2, 3 and 4, offering audiences a vivid journey through Beethoven's artistic evolution.

Together, the three works trace the composer's transformation from a brilliant young virtuoso working within classical traditions to a bold innovator reshaping the concerto form itself.

Piano Concerto No. 2 in B-flat major, despite its numbering, is Beethoven's earliest concerto and reflects his classical roots, combining elegance with youthful energy.

The dramatic Concerto No. 3 in C minor marks a decisive shift, introducing a stormy intensity and signalling the emergence of Beethoven's "heroic" style through its tense dialogue between soloist and orchestra.

Concerto No. 4, with its revolutionary open-

ing for solo piano, broke convention entirely, introducing a new psychological and narrative depth that would influence generations of composers.

Buchbinder concludes the Beethoven cycle on Saturday (January 31) at 7.30pm, with Piano Concertos Nos. 1 and 5.

The programme highlights Beethoven's stylistic breadth, moving from the bright, festive brilliance of the First Concerto to the commanding grandeur of the Fifth, famously known as the "Emperor".

Opening with a bold, improvisatory piano cadenza, the "Emperor" stands as a triumphant statement of heroic scale and ambition.

Together, the performances promise a rare and immersive celebration of Beethoven's enduring genius.



Rudolf Buchbinder. PICTURE: Marco Borggreve