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BUSINESS | Page 1

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Amir honours the nation's brightest



Innovation, ambition celebrated at 19th Qatar Education Excellence Award

His Highness the Amir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani patronised the 19th Qatar Education Excellence Award ceremony held yesterday morning at the Sheraton Grand Doha Hotel, celebrating the nation's outstanding achievers across all levels of learning and research. The ceremony was attended by HE the Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman bin Jassim al-Thani, HE Speaker of the Shura Council Hassan bin Abdullah al-Ghanem, Sheikhs, ministers, senior state officials, teachers, and parents of the awardees.

His Highness the Amir honoured 108 winners, including holders of doctoral and master's degrees, university and secondary school graduates, and exceptional students at the preparatory and primary levels.

The award also recognised distinguished teachers, outstanding schools, and remarkable scientific research projects, reflecting the State's commitment to educational excellence and innovation.

A documentary screened during the event highlighted the award's legacy and this year's honourees, showcasing the diversity of talent driving Qatar's education and research landscape.

The programme also featured a speech by HE the Minister of Education and Higher Education Lolwah bint Rashid AlKhatir and remarks delivered on behalf of the honourees by student

Awards for Qatar University students

His Highness the Amir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani honoured Qatar University (QU) students yesterday in recognition of their academic efforts and outstanding achievements across various fields during the 19th cycle of the Education Excellence Award.

This achievement underscores QU's commitment to its strategic vision of preparing an aware and capable generation that contributes meaningfully to society and the labour market. It reflects the university's efforts to provide an integrated educational environment that strengthens

foundational knowledge, fosters research and scientific thinking skills, and promotes creativity and innovation.

In the Excellence Award for University Graduates, the platinum medal was awarded to Latifa Saad Salem al-Ajlan al-Kaabi, Abdulrahman Hashem Bu Hashem al-Sayed, Dana Abdullah Mohammed al-Mansouri, and Maryam Nasser al-Jafali al-Nuaimi. The gold medal in the same category was awarded to Jeham Hilal Jeham al-Kuwari, Tamadur Yousef Hassan Jassim al-Shaib, and Shahad Abdullah Hassan al-Abdullah. **To Page 4**

Fatima Saad al-Mohannadi.

On the sidelines of the ceremony, the Amir met with the award recipients, commending their achievements and describing them as "an outstanding group of national talents". His Highness praised their efforts

as a reflection of the country's spirit of ambition and dedication, emphasising that investment in education and scientific research remains a strategic pillar in building a knowledge-based economy.

The Amir urged the honourees to continue striving for excel-

lence and to contribute meaningfully to Qatar's ongoing development. The recipients expressed their gratitude to His Highness, affirming that the recognition would inspire them to further innovation and national service. The meeting was attended by

Amir congratulates winners

His Highness the Amir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani congratulated the winners of the 19th Qatar Education Excellence Award. In a post on his official account on X platform, the Amir expressed his pride in honouring a distinguished group of the nation's sons and daughters during the Education Excellence Award ceremony yesterday. His Highness the Amir wished them continued success in their educational and professional careers.

Qatar launches award to boost sustainable agriculture

By Ayman Adly
Staff Reporter

HE Minister of Municipality Abdullah bin Hamad bin Abdullah al Attiyah has announced the launch of the "Sustainable Agricultural Production Award", set to take effect this year. The initiative seeks to honour farmers, livestock breeders, and fish producers who adopt modern, sustainable practices that advance national food security and align with the Qatar National Vision 2030. The Ministry of Municipality hopes the award will serve as a competitive platform to drive a genuine shift towards more efficient, higher-quality, and environmentally responsible agricultural production. Assistant Undersecretary for Agriculture and Food Security, Eng. Fahd Mohammed al-Qahtani, noted that the award will follow a specific timeline, beginning with the formation of a Board of Trustees and the development of selection criteria. The official website will launch in April 2026, when nominations open. Eligible applicants will undergo field visits, with winners to be honoured during the first award ceremony at AgriteQ 2027. **To Page 4**

Kuwait Amir felicitates Sheikh Joaan over his election as OCA president



Kuwaiti Amir Sheikh Meshal al-Ahmad al-Jaber al-Sabah yesterday received HE Sheikh Joaan bin Hamad al-Thani, President of the Olympic Council of Asia and President of the Qatar Olympic Committee, during his official visit to Kuwait. During the meeting, the Kuwaiti Amir extended his congratulations to HE Sheikh Joaan on his election as President of the Olympic Council of Asia (OCA), affirming Kuwait's full support for the relevant institutions and for the OCA in a manner that contributes to further strengthening and advancing the sports movement across the Asian continent. HE Sheikh Joaan was also received by Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled al-Hamad al-Sabah, who congratulated him on his election and wished him continued success in serving and elevating the Asian sports movement. **Sport Page 4**

Lusail Circuit unveils futuristic 2026 Formula 1 Show Car

The Lusail International Circuit (LIC) has revealed the Formula 1 Qatar Airways Qatar Grand Prix 2026 Show Car, aligning the launch with its early bird ticket offers and debuting a bold new livery. The design embodies the start of Formula 1's next chapter, as the sport gears up for its fifth consecutive year at LIC. From 2026, the FIA Formula One World Championship will enter a groundbreaking era defined by new technical regulations. The upcoming generation of cars will be shorter, lighter, and more agile, promising closer racing and greater sustainability. At the core of these innovations are Active Aerodynamics systems, enabling drivers to dynamically adjust their car's setup to boost overtaking and on-track performance. **Sport Page 1**



Sheikha Al Mayassa credits father's equal-opportunity ethos for empowerment

GT Report
Doha

Qatar's cultural strategy is anchored in long-term nation-building and equal opportunity, Qatar Museums Chairperson HE Sheikha Al Mayassa bint Hamad bin Khalifa al-Thani said in an interview with Christiane Amanpour on CNN, recalling her father's commitment to providing the same opportunities to daughters and sons. Speaking on the programme, HE Sheikha Al Mayassa outlined Qatar's decades-long investment in culture, describing it as a deliberate strategy to build a knowledge-based society while preserving national identity. Tracing the origins of Qatar's museum movement to the establishment of the National Museum in 1975, she stressed that the country's cultural rise has been cumulative rather than sudden. Major institutions and projects developed under the umbrella of Qatar Museums, she said, reflect sustained planning aimed at education, research and global engagement. During the interview, Amanpour asked about her experience as a woman in leadership and whether she felt empowered growing up. In response, HE Sheikha Al Mayassa spoke warmly of His Highness the Father Amir Sheikh Hamad



Courtesy @almayassabnthamad

Cultural strategy rooted in merit, education and long-term vision, QM chairperson tells CNN

bin Khalifa al-Thani's approach to parenting, emphasising that he did not distinguish between sons and daughters in matters of education, responsibility or ambition. She said her father encouraged all his children equally to pursue their aspirations, including studying abroad at a time when such paths were less common for women in the region. That early encouragement, she noted, helped shape her confidence and sense of purpose. **To Page 4**

Waldorf Astoria Doha Lusail Unveils a Serene Ramadan Setting for Layali Lusail



In celebration of the Holy Month, Waldorf Astoria Doha Lusail introduces Layali Lusail, welcoming guests to Ramadan evenings designed for moments of togetherness and shared moments.

Set within the hotel's Lusail Ballroom and seamlessly connected to the garden, the refined Ramadan tent offers an easy, welcoming atmosphere. Covered yet open, the space allows the evening to unfold naturally, from the quiet start of Iftar to the late conversations of Suhoor.

The experience centres around food that feels comforting and familiar. A generous buffet bringing together traditional Arabic dishes alongside international favourites, offering something for every taste. Live cooking stations bring warmth and energy to the space, featuring culinary flavours from SUSHISAMBA, Scarpetta, Bywater, Wyld Erth, Praia, and Peacock Alley. Guests can enjoy freshly prepared grills, an array of sushi, and a generous selection of Mediterranean mezze.

As the night goes on, Layali Lusail takes on the gentle rhythm of Ramadan. The sound of an oud, subtle percussion and the presence of henna artists add character without overwhelming the moment. Families are especially at ease here, with children welcomed through simple, joyful activities like face painting and various other activities in the Kids Club, allowing parents to relax and enjoy the evening.

For those who prefer to host Ramadan gatherings, the experience extends beyond Layali Lusail with outside catering available for Iftar, Suhoor and Ghabgha, to be enjoyed in more personal settings. Offered in buffet style, with the option of live stations, the menus are designed for sharing, bringing the same sense of ease and togetherness to celebrations at home or beyond.

The Ramadan experience continues across the hotel. Peacock Alley presents a special Ramadan sweet selection, including two cakes created exclusively for the season, available from sunset until 2am. During the Holy Month, the classic afternoon tea is replaced with a refreshed sharing concept, offering small sharing bites that blend Western and Arabic flavours, ideal for pre-Suhoor moments. Scarpetta and Bywater also remain open throughout Ramadan, welcoming both in-house and outside guests.



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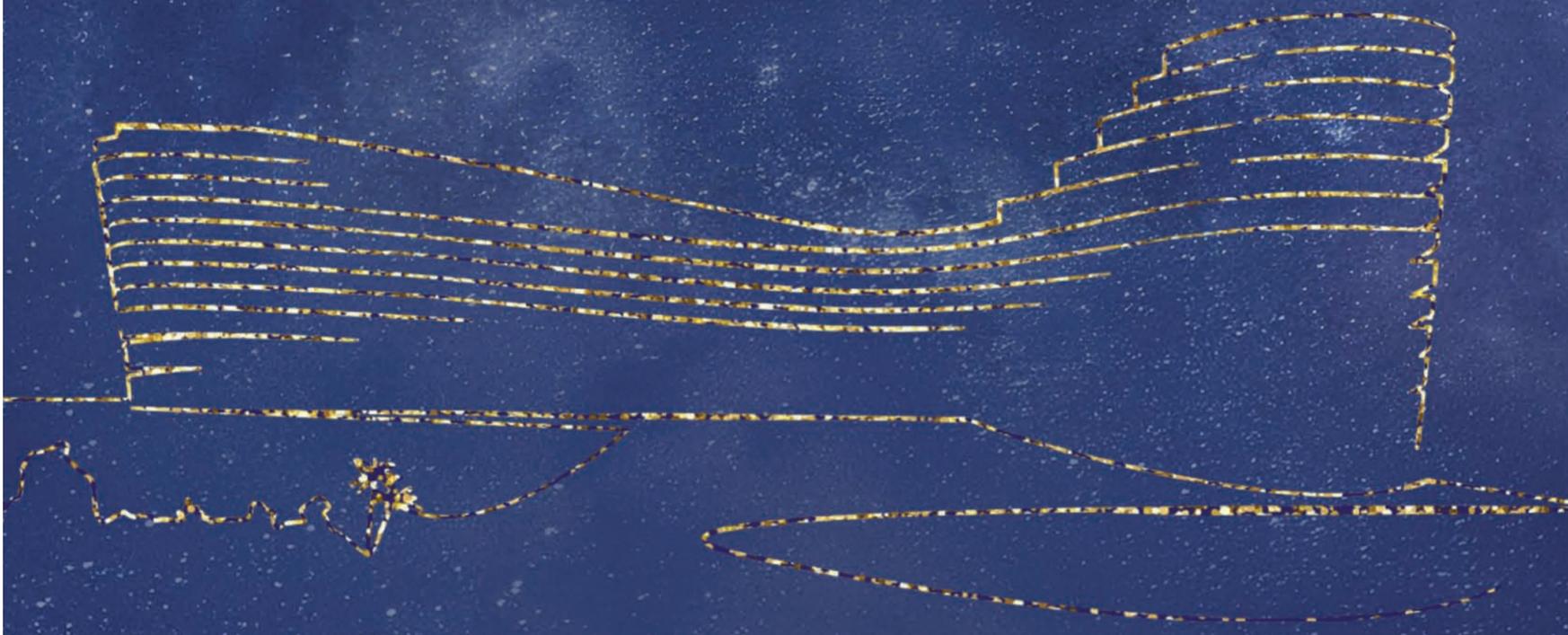


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QEEA 'shows Qatar's focus on education'

HE the Minister of Education and Higher Education Lolwah bint Rashid al-Khater has affirmed that the Qatar Education Excellence Award 2026 (QEEA 2026) carries special significance, with the number of winners from both genders reaching 108 – the most significant figure since the award's inception in 2006.

HE al-Khater noted that the value of the financial accolades has been increased, alongside preparations to further advance the award in the future by introducing new categories – Educational Leader, Diploma, and Educational Research – in a move aimed at strengthening the education ecosystem, institutional readiness, capacity building, and knowledge sustainability.

Addressing the honouring ceremony for the 19th QEEA 2026, the minister emphasised her profound gratitude to His Highness the Amir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani for graciously patronising this award.

HE al-Khater congratulated the honorees, noting that their excellence is achieved by dint of constant effort, a cumulative pathway, and an environment that fosters ambition and commitment.

She said that, as part of the nation's development-oriented approach – grounded in clarity of vision and enhanced competitiveness – education has been treated as a central pillar in building national strength and shaping the future.

The minister noted that the Ministry of Education and Higher Education (MoEHE)'s focus over the past year centred on building a high-quality, equitable education system that strengthens learning outcomes and national identity.

She highlighted the launch of the Supervisory Committee for the National Curriculum Review and Development Project as a strategic initiative to align learning outcomes with future skills and labour market requirements while preserving cultural and linguistic specificity.

In addition, the Foundational Committee for the Development and Enhancement of Quranic and Arabic Language Education was launched, conducting field surveys involving 3,262 students, 4,160 parents, and 1,303 teachers to diagnose actual needs.

Regarding character building and values-based education, the minister said that the Bunyan Student Centre attracted more than 2,000 students over two months, while the digital "Athar" platform recorded more than 13mn views.

This coincided with the launch of the "Rasikh" initiative in partnership with Qatar Foundation (QF) to strengthen national identity within international curricula in private schools.

HE al-Khater said that the MoEHE has revitalised the scouting movement and actively participated in the 18th School Olympic Programme, involving 25,000



students from 502 schools, with the aim of achieving even broader participation in the next edition.

She emphasised the ministry's special focus on inclusive education, including the development of a comprehensive system for students with disabilities, the opening of Warif Academy and Al-Jiwan Kindergarten for Early Intervention, as well as expanding Al Hidayah Special Needs Schools and Preschools to reach seven schools and two preschools, with plans to add four more schools.

HE al-Khater also highlighted the implementation of an educational voucher programme for students with disabilities in accordance with the Disability Rights Law of 2025, benefiting 818 students, and the launch of a private-school social responsibility initiative providing over 7,000 free or subsidised learning seats, with an estimated value of QR2bn over 10 years.

In the field of science and innovation, the minister stated that eight innovation incubators have been launched and 110 digital innovation clubs activated, benefiting 12,840 students.

HE al-Khater noted the pilot implementation of the Smart Teacher Smart Class (STSC) project in three schools and the development of the "HUDURY" application to monitor student attendance on school buses, with plans to implement a biometric attendance system nationwide by next September.

HE al-Khater affirmed the continuation of the National School Facilities Development Programme in partnership with the private sector, with eight new schools operational in the first phase and 14 schools opening in the second phase, alongside the completion of a 10-year school construction plan in collaboration with the Ministry of Municipality and the Public Works Authority (Ashghal).

Regarding higher education, the minister emphasised that Qatar's system includes 27 institutions and has experienced significant growth: private institutions increased by 82% since 2016, while public university enrollment rose 167.59% over the past decade.

She also noted that students from 145 countries now represent 42% of the total student population. Finally, she urged higher education institutions to engage with the national academic accreditation framework, noting that the system had been recognised with an innovation and research quality award from the International Network for Quality Assurance Agencies in Higher Education (INQAAHE).

Student Fatima Saad al-Mohannadi, the Platinum Medalist in the Distinguished Secondary Student category, delivered a speech on behalf of her peers.

She emphasised that this recognition reflects a national vision grounded in human development, investing in human capital, and establishing excellence as a pathway across all stages of education, culminating in research and innovation. – QNA

QEEA exemplifies Qatar's commitment to invest in human capital, says official

HE the Undersecretary of the Ministry of Education and Higher Education (MoEHE) Dr Ibrahim bin Saleh al-Nuaimi has highlighted the great and widespread attention given by the wise leadership to the Qatar Education Excellence Award (QEEA) as well as the increasing participation from students, staff, department and school directors, administrators, postgraduate students, and university graduates, which underscores Qatar's commitment to investing in its human capital and focusing on people as the foundation of societal development and their role in achieving its National Vision 2030.

Talking to the Qatar News Agency (QNA), HE Dr al-Nuaimi emphasised that the patronage of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani and his continued gracing to the closing ceremony to honour the winners affirms His Highness the Amir's interest in the educational system.

Underscoring that His Highness the Amir's commitment makes excellence a prominent feature of society and an inherent character-



istic of the outputs and various educational sectors, from schools to universities, both within and outside Qatar, the official pointed out that the MoEHE oversees this entire system and exerts every effort to provide opportunities that motivate everyone towards creativity and excellence.

HE Dr al-Nuaimi addressed the award's role in fostering creativity and innovation among students, educational institutions, and the Qatari community, and in deepening these concepts through the integration of various efforts to

improve the outcomes of the educational process in the country, adding that all those involved in its categories eagerly anticipate participating year after year.

He noted that 20 years since its inception, the award continues its journey, marked by successes in achieving its objectives, within a conducive environment that embraces and encourages creativity.

This is evident, HE Dr al-Nuaimi said, in the significant participation, development, and competitiveness witnessed in its competitions year after year, particularly in this 19th cycle.

The official clarified that the announcement of expanding the award categories – with the introduction of the Educational Leader, Diploma, and Educational Research, which will be implemented starting with the 21st cycle in 2028 – represents a qualitative and necessary expansion of the award's scope.

This expansion will provide more opportunities for participation, HE Dr al-Nuaimi stated, and called upon everyone to strive for excellence and distinction. – QNA

Minister discusses technological co-operation with US officials



HE the Minister of Communications and Information Technology Mohammed bin Ali al-Mannai met separately yesterday with US

Undersecretary of Commerce for Industry and Security Jeffrey Kessler, and White House Office of Science and Technology Policy (OSTP) director Michael Kratsios. During the two meetings, they discussed ways to develop the strategic partnership between the two countries in the fields of information technology and digital transformation. The discussions also addressed the importance of exchanging expertise and enhancing co-ordination on issues of mutual interest.

The Ministry of Communications and Information Technology (MCIT) said that these meetings come within the framework of the growing bilateral relations between Qatar and the US, which are witnessing continuous development across various fields, particularly in sectors related to technology and the digital economy. – QNA



Qatar, Egypt discuss enhancing co-operation in civil aviation

Qatar Civil Aviation Authority manager Mohamed Faleh al-Hajri met yesterday with Egypt's Minister of Civil Aviation Dr Sameh ElHefny in Cairo.

Al-Hajri also met with Egyptian Civil Aviation Authority president Sameh Fawzy.

During both meetings, discussions focused on ways to develop air transport and strengthen regulatory and operational frameworks in a manner that serves the interests of national carriers and supports travel, trade, and tourism. – QNA



Sheikha Al Mayassa credits Father Amir's equal-opportunity ethos for empowerment

From Page 1

Today, she added, women hold significant leadership roles across Qatar's institutions, including within the QM, where appointments are based on merit and capability.

The discussion also touched on Qatar's expanding international cultural footprint, including preparations for Art Basel's Doha

edition and the development of new institutions such as Lusail Museum and Dadu, Children's Museum of Qatar.

These initiatives, HE Sheikha Al Mayassa said, aim to foster dialogue and broaden participation in the arts locally and internationally.

Addressing questions on cultural sensitivities, she described an approach that balances open-

ness with respect for context, underscoring the role of art in building bridges rather than deepening divides.

The interview highlighted how Qatar's cultural policy is intertwined with broader national development goals, positioning the arts not only as creative expression but also as instruments of education, diplomacy and social progress.

Qatar slams Israeli decision to convert West Bank lands

Qatar has condemned the Israeli occupation's decision to convert West Bank lands into so-called "state property" belonging to the occupation authorities.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs stressed the need for international solidarity to pressure the occupation to halt the implementation of the decision, and reiterated Qatar's stance in supporting the Palestinian cause, based on international legitimacy resolutions and the two-state solution, which guarantees the establishment of an independent Palestinian state on the 1967 borders, with East Jerusalem as its capital. – QNA

Qatar launches award to help boost sustainable agriculture

From Page 1

HE al-Qahtani stressed that the award is more than symbolic – it is intended to incentivise quality improvement, strengthen competitiveness, and foster innovation across the sector, which remains a cornerstone of the state's food security strategy.

The initiative also highlights the ministry's commitment to empowering local producers through continued training, technical support, and the adoption of climate-smart farming solutions.

The award features four main categories: protected vegetable farms (large, medium, and small), date palm farms, livestock production (productive farms and ranches), and fish production (fish farms and outstanding fisherman).

Recipients will be selected based on rigorous scientific and technical criteria, covering sustainability, advanced technology use, biosecurity, good agricultural practices, residue-free product quality, and the efficiency of farm management and marketing systems.

Public urged to help sight Ramadan crescent

The Crescent Sighting Committee at the Ministry of Endowments (Awqaf) and Islamic Affairs has urged Muslims in Qatar to observe the sighting of the crescent moon marking the beginning of the holy month of Ramadan on the evening of tomorrow, the 29th of Sha'ban 1447 AH, corresponding to February 17, 2026.

In a statement yesterday, the committee urged anyone who sights the crescent to promptly report in person to the ministry's headquarters at Dafna Tower to submit their testimony.

The committee will convene immediately after Maghreb prayer. – QNA

Awards for QU students

From Page 1

In the Excellence Award for Doctorate Holders category, the platinum medal was awarded to Dr Ahmed Ali Ahmed al-Kuwari.

He described the recognition as a source of pride for every researcher striving to support national progress.

Dr al-Kuwari added that despite the challenges of his research journey, the university provided a supportive academic environment and infrastructure that were instrumental to his success.

Expressing his appreciation for the honour, Abdulrahman al-Sayed, platinum medal recipient in the University Graduates category, extended his sincere thanks to the QU for its contribution to his achievement, noting its strong role in supporting students throughout their academic journey and preparing them to contribute effectively to national development.

Jeham al-Kuwari, a gold medal recipient in the same category, expressed his



happiness at the recognition and dedicated the victory to everyone who supported him during his studies.

He highlighted the university's important role in providing the academic support that enabled his accomplishment.

Tamadur al-Shaib, also a gold medal recipient in the University Graduates category, said the award had been a goal since the beginning of her studies.

She said that Qatar University helped prepare her for this honour by offering opportunities to participate in local and international programmes, including a fellowship at the United Nations in New York and a peace conference in Bangkok, as well as several university conferences and initiatives.

Gulf Contracting Co. WLL Announces the Sale of, Scrap and Other Material Auction on As Is, Where Is Basis
Auction No: GCC/136/2026

Auction Documents Collection Date	Auction Documents Fee	Technical Submission Date	Commercial Submission Date	Auction Bid Bond	Auction Performance Bond
From 15/02/2026 to 18/02/2026	QAR1000 Non-refundable	On or Before 23/02/2026	26/02/2026	QAR50,000	QAR100,000

1. Auction documents and the terms & conditions can be collected from Spacemaker Factory located in New Industrial Area, Building#64, Street#3, against a fee of QAR1000 paid in cash at the Company's Cashier. Auction Documents Collection Date is from 15/02/2026 to 18/02/2026, from 8:30am to 3:30pm.
2. Auction documents can be reviewed (prior to purchasing the same) to allow bidders to confirm suitability of the auction to the bidders' services.
3. No individuals or middlemen shall be allowed to participate in this Auction, which is restricted to registered companies only.
4. Companies interested to participate in the auction has to collect the auction documents by submitting an authorization letter for the person who will collect the documents (should be under the bidder's sponsorship), along with copy of this QID, Company CR, Tax Card, Commercial Licence, Establishment Card, company's owner QID, National Address Certificate (all valid) and an official email address for communication. The Auction Documents will not be given to any company unless the said Documents Fee is paid and the required documents stated above are provided in full and valid.
5. The auction items will be sold on As Is, Where Is Basis, and subject to the Auction's Terms & Conditions.
6. Viewing of the auction items, which is limited to the companies who obtained the auction documents only and it will be on 15/02/2022 to 21/02/2026, from 8:30am to 3:30pm, except for Fridays. The location for viewing the items is specified in the Auction's Terms & Conditions.
7. Technical submission, auction bid bond submission, and performance bond submission shall be submitted on or before 23/02/2026 as stated in the Auction's Terms & Conditions.
8. Commercial submission shall be on 26/02/2026 at 10:00AM. The commercial submission will be at Spacemaker Factory located in New Industrial Area, Building#64, Street#3.
9. All communications/clarifications/follow-ups/updates related to this Auction is through this email: GCCAS136@gulfcontracting.com. The bidders are strictly prohibited from communicating with Gulf Contracting and its staff through other channels (visits, calls, SMS or WhatsApp messages...etc). Should a bidder fail to comply, this might lead to disqualification from this Auction.
Note: No offer will be accepted unless the Auction's Terms & Conditions are accepted by signing and stamping the same, as well as the required documents are provided in full. Likewise, offers will not be accepted after the specified closing date and time.

Municipality minister meets French envoy



HE the Minister of Municipality Abdullah bin Hamad bin Abdullah al-Attiyah met with ambassador of the French Republic to the State of Qatar Arnaud Pescheux and the accompanying delegation, on the sidelines of the Qatar International Agricultural Exhibition. During the meeting, they reviewed existing co-operation relations between the State of Qatar and France, particularly in the fields of agriculture, food security, and modern agricultural technologies. They also discussed ways to enhance partnership and exchange expertise between the two sides in a manner that serves mutual interests. **(QNA)**

Qatar to send youth delegation on cultural trip to Shanghai

Qatar's Ministry of Culture (MoC) has announced plans to organise a week-long cultural trip to Shanghai for children aged 10-15, as part of efforts to broaden young people's global exposure. The visit, scheduled for March 22-28, is being arranged by the Nomias Center and will include tours of museums, major landmarks and cultural institutions in the Chinese city. Participants will also visit factories to gain insight into industrial



and technological development, alongside interactive activities designed to promote teamwork and independence. Ghanem Abdulrahman al-Kuwari, director of the Nomias Center, described the programme as a comprehensive educational

experience aimed at expanding students' horizons while reinforcing their sense of national identity. Officials say the initiative forms part of wider efforts to equip young people with the skills and awareness needed to engage with a rapidly changing world. Parents interested in enrolling their children have been advised to consult the centre's official communication channels for further details. **(QNA)**

King of Bhutan meets Qatar's ambassador



King Jigme Khesar Namgyel Wangchuck of the Kingdom of Bhutan met with ambassador of the State of Qatar (non-resident) to the kingdom Mohammed bin Hassan Jaber al-Jaber. The meeting discussed co-operation relations between the two countries. **(QNA)**

MoI undersecretary meets US official



HE Undersecretary of the Ministry of Interior (MoI) Abdullah bin Khalaf bin Hattab al-Kaabi met with Undersecretary of Commerce for Industry and Security of the United States of America Jeffrey I Kessler. During the meeting, they reviewed co-operation relations in areas of mutual relevance and discussed a number of topics of common interest, as well as ways to support and further develop them. **(QNA)**

QRCS deploys medical convoy to Syria to enhance healthcare sector capabilities

Qatar Red Crescent Society (QRCS) has launched a specialised medical campaign for Syria, entitled 'Endless Giving', aiming to perform more than 100 specialised cardiac catheterisation procedures for adults and children in Syria. A medical convoy comprised of leading consultants and experts is participating in the campaign, which is part of its ongoing humanitarian efforts to support the healthcare sector, provide high-quality treatment services to patients, train local medical personnel, transfer expertise, and enhance hospital preparedness. Another component of the project is capacity-building for local medical professionals, to help reduce mortality rates and complications associated with cardiology and orthopaedics, improve the quality of life for the patients requiring



urgent medical interventions, and alleviate the mental and economic burdens on Syrian families, who often cannot afford such expensive procedures or have to travel abroad for treatment. During a tour of several Syrian hospitals, ambassador of the State of Qatar to the Syrian Arab Republic Khalifa bin Abdullah al-Mahmoud told Qatar News Agency (QNA) that the campaign was launched in co-operation between the State of

Qatar and several healthcare institutions, including Hamad Medical Corporation and Sidra Medicine. A specialised medical team is participating to perform these specialised procedures for adults and children. He noted that the team has already performed more than 60 procedures, and this number is expected to exceed the target. The campaign also includes practical and scientific training programs for Syrian medical staff.

Al-Mahmoud emphasised the continuation of such initiatives, reflecting the deep fraternal cooperation between the two countries in the healthcare sector. For his part, Medical Convoys Program Co-ordinator at QRCS, Dr Izzedeen Gaafar, explained to QNA that the programme aims to perform cardiac catheterisation procedures directly for the most urgent cases, particularly complex procedures that were previously impossible to perform within Syria. This includes 50 procedures for children, as well as the diagnosis of hundreds of cases. He added that the programme also includes supporting hospitals with necessary medical equipment and supplies, in addition to training local staff, as part of a broader plan to develop the capabilities of the Syrian health sector. He noted that previous

initiatives included providing medical supplies and medications to hospitals. In another statement to QNA, Director General of the National University Hospital in Damascus Dr Abdul Ghani al-Shalabi said that the Qatari initiative provided significant support to patients. The medical team performed an average of six to eight procedures daily, including diagnostic and interventional catheterisations, in addition to emergency cases of heart attacks. He emphasised that the campaign contributed to saving the lives of many patients. Al-Shalabi pointed out that all operations and medical supplies were provided free of charge, which reduced the financial burden on patients, praising the humanitarian role of the State of Qatar in supporting the health sector and enhancing the quality of medical services provided. **(QNA)**

PUBLIC ANNOUNCEMENT NOTICE

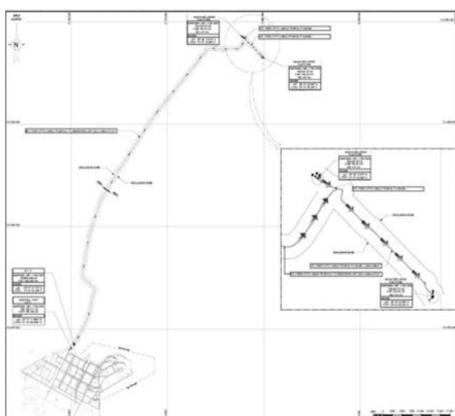
To all Ships, Fishermen, and Mariners

Pursuant to the directives issued by the Seafarers Affairs and Registration Department, Ministry of Transport, State of Qatar, this Public Announcement Notice is hereby issued to inform all vessels, mariners, and fishermen that North Oil Company intends to undertake cable post lay burial and stabilization mattress installation using the Constructor (IMO No: 9524932) Dive Support Vessel chartered by Halul Offshore Services Company W.L.L. along the NFL cable route from 1.3 KM of Land Fall Point (LFP) to Al Shaheen Field at (AB), and (BA) Platforms along the coordinates and map shown below.

Schedule: 17/02/2026 to 30/04/2026

The operations will be conducted within the area bounded by the following coordinates:

Way Point	Nahrwan 1967, UTM Zone 39N, CM 510 E		WGS 84 [Deg0 Mir' Sec"]	
ID	Easting [m]	Northing [m]	Latitude [N]	Longitude [E]
CONSTRUCTOR at KP 1.3	550854.248	2871282.092	25° 57' 47.770"	51° 30' 32.306"
CONSTRUCTOR AT AL SHAHEEN AB	599647.050	2941230.240	26° 35' 32.065"	52° 00' 06.240"
CONSTRUCTOR AT AL SHAHEEN BA	594530.050	2946162.050	26° 38' 13.619"	51° 57' 02.584"



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Qatar Computer Services W.L.L.

QCS: Advancing Qatar's Digital Future in 2026



As Qatar enters 2026, its digital transformation journey continues to gain momentum under Qatar National Vision 2030. This progress is not only powered by advanced technologies but also by a skilled and future-ready workforce, ensuring that innovation is sustainable, inclusive, and impactful across industries.

At Qatar Computer Services (QCS), we believe that people are at the heart of digital progress. With artificial intelligence, cloud computing, automation, and data-driven systems reshaping business landscapes, organizations must equip their teams to manage, secure, and optimize these technologies efficiently and responsibly.

Empowering Businesses Through Managed Services

Guided by our philosophy of One Team, One Goal, QCS helps organizations adopt Managed Services and outcome driven operations. This approach strengthens local expertise, enhances operational resilience, and builds sustainable digital capabilities. Managed Services enable businesses to focus on mission-critical priorities while providing structured pathways for talent development. Professionals gain hands-on experience in AI-enabled operations, cybersecurity, digital governance, and service excellence, preparing Qatar's workforce for the challenges of a rapidly evolving digital environment.

Driving Efficiency, Security, and Innovation

- QCS delivers measurable value to organizations by:
- Optimizing IT environments through automation and efficiency improvements
 - Reducing operational risks with robust cybersecurity frameworks
 - Ensuring business continuity with proactive monitoring and technical support
 - Enabling smarter decision-making through integrated digital solutions
 - Strengthening organizational capability via talent development and knowledge transfer

Comprehensive Services and Solutions

Key Services: Cybersecurity, Infrastructure & Networks, Office IT & Endpoints, Business Applications, IT Outsourcing & HR Services

Solutions: Managed Services, Technical Support, Consulting & Advisory, HR Consulting

As Qatar progresses toward a connected and innovation-driven future, QCS remains dedicated to developing talent, supporting knowledge transfer, and empowering organizations with reliable and scalable technology solutions. By investing in both people and technology, QCS continues to play a pivotal role in advancing Qatar's digital landscape.



قطر الخيرية
QATAR CHARITY

Qatar Charity launches Ramadan campaign 1447 AH, prioritizing faster project delivery

بس تنوي خيرك يوصل

رمضان 1447 - 2026



قطر الخيرية
QATAR CHARITY

بس تنوي
خيرك يوصل



CEO Yousuf bin Ahmed Al Kuwari

“Qatar Charity adopts new mechanisms to accelerate development project implementation, launches the Smart Coupon, and integrates AI into its mobile app”

Qatar Charity (QC) has launched its Ramadan Campaign for 1447 AH (2026) under the slogan “Good Starts With You”, aiming to benefit 3.85 million people through various projects across 43 countries, while supporting development initiatives reaching 22 million beneficiaries throughout the year.

On this occasion, Mr. Yousuf bin Ahmed Al Kuwari, Chief Executive Officer of Qatar Charity, extended Ramadan greetings to Qatar’s leadership, government, people, and residents, praying for peace and relief for affected and vulnerable communities worldwide.



Nawaf AlHammedi

“Around four million people will benefit from Ramadan Campaign projects, while support is being mobilized for development initiatives reaching 22 million beneficiaries throughout the year”

Faster Project Implementation

He said that the organization has adopted a new advanced mechanism starting this year to ensure projects are implemented immediately once donations are received. He added that Qatar Charity has also launched, for the first time in Qatar, the Smart Electronic Coupon through its Alaqraboon Center, and recently upgraded its mobile application by leveraging artificial intelligence technologies to make donations easier, improve access to projects, and enhance the overall user experience.

To ensure faster project implementation, Mr. Mohamed Al Ghamdi, Deputy CEO of Governance and Corporate Services at Qatar Charity, said that the organization has prepared target locations in advance by identifying eligible regions and cities worldwide and verifying their field readiness, allowing work to begin immediately once a project is approved. He indicated that Qatar Charity has also activated early contracting procedures by preparing framework agreements with contractors and suppliers, enabling immediate contracting once funding is received and reducing traditional administrative steps. Qatar Charity also fast tracked the completion of all required government licenses and permits in advance to avoid any delays during implementation. In addition, beneficiary groups were selected before funding, with all verification and due diligence procedures completed, ensuring that project implementation or aid distribution begins immediately upon launch.

Qatar Charity said during a press conference that fundraising efforts during Ramadan will support seasonal projects—including Feed the Fasting, Zakat al Fitr, and Eid Clothing—alongside relief projects in countries affected by prolonged crises and disasters, as well as competitive development projects that will begin immediately once donations are made.

The press conference was attended by Mr. Nawaf Abdulla AlHammedi, Deputy CEO for Programmes and Communications, Mr. Mohamed Al Ghamdi, Deputy CEO of Governance and Corporate Services at Qatar Charity, Mr. Ahmad Yousef Fakhroo, Executive Director of Communications and Community Impact at Qatar Charity, and Mr. Abdulaziz Jassim Hejji, Executive Director of International Operations.

At the start of the press conference, Mr. Nawaf Abdulla AlHammedi, thanked donors for their continued trust and support, urging them to back this year’s Ramadan Campaign to help reach millions of refugees, internally displaced persons (IDPs), and families in need outside Qatar, while supporting low-income groups within the country and strengthening social solidarity.

He also expressed appreciation to media outlets and social media influencers for their role in raising awareness of Qatar Charity’s projects.

Tangible Change

AlHammedi said this year’s Ramadan Campaign puts donors at the heart of the giving journey from the moment they intend to do good, with projects set to begin

immediately once donations are made, under the new mechanism adopted this year for competitive development projects to maximize development impact and deliver tangible change for beneficiaries.

Seasonal Projects outside Qatar

Mr. Abdulaziz Jassim Hejji said that Qatar Charity will implement seasonal Ramadan projects in 42 countries outside Qatar, which will include ‘Feed the Fasting’, ‘Zakat al Fitr’, and ‘Eid Clothing’. The projects will focus on countries affected by conflict and crises, or those with the greatest needs, such as Gaza, Yemen, Sudan, Syria, and Ghana, with an expected 1,195,239 beneficiaries.

He explained that the ‘Feeding the Fasting’ Project will be delivered either through Ramadan food baskets containing essential supplies for families throughout the holy month, or through daily ready to serve meals, benefiting 480,299 people. Eid Clothing will be provided to 8,300 sponsored orphans, while 706,640 people are expected to benefit from Zakat al Fitr.



Ahmad Yousef Fakhroo

“More than one million people are set to benefit from Ramadan projects inside Qatar”

Competitive Development Projects

On competitive development projects, Hejji said they fall under Qatar Charity’s new strategy adopted this year and will begin immediately upon donation, noting that these projects cover social housing, mosque construction, Qur’an memorization centers, water wells, and economic empowerment in countries including Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Chad, Niger, Nigeria, and Djibouti, targeting 819,730 beneficiaries.



Abdulaziz Jassim Hejji

“Seasonal Ramadan projects and competitive development initiatives will be implemented in 42 countries during the holy month”

Relief Projects

He added that support is being mobilized for humanitarian relief projects in crisis affected countries, including Somalia, Chad, Afghanistan, Yemen, Mauritania, and Rohingya refugee camps, focusing on food and shelter assistance for 765,300 beneficiaries, including refugees and IDPs.

Projects inside Qatar

Meanwhile, Mr. Ahmad Yousef Fakhroo said the campaign’s projects inside Qatar focus on seasonal Ramadan initiatives and various forms of assistance expected to benefit 1,067,370 people during the holy month. He noted that this comes alongside the launch of Qatar Charity’s Alaqraboon Center at the start of the year, marking an expanded phase in its social care within the country.

Projects inside Qatar include mobile Iftar meals for workers’ accommodations, benefiting 120,000 workers; 45 Iftar tents across multiple locations nationwide, expected to serve 516,400 people; Mobile Iftar meals distributed at traffic intersections; and daily family Iftar meals for low income households.

The projects also include Ramadan Supply vouchers that allow low income families to purchase essential food items, benefiting 60,000 people, as well as water distribution at mosques during Taraweeh prayers.

Mr. Ahmad Yousef Fakhroo said that additional Ramadan projects within Qatar include the “Khair Kitchen” which provides Iftar meals to low income families

in cooperation with the Ministry of Social Development and Family, while engaging productive Qatari families in meal preparation. The projects also include food basket distribution to families registered with the Alaqraboon Center and needy expatriate households, Eid gifts for around 3,000 orphans, Zakat al Fitr, as well as Iftar gatherings and Ghabga for orphans, strengthening community participation and social solidarity.

In the holy month of Ramadan, the Alaqraboon Center aims to raise QAR 100 million to expand its assistance programs. These include support for low income families, orphans, widows, divorced and abandoned women, patients, persons with disabilities, debtors, the Highly Esteemed, prisoners and their families, workers, students, individuals preparing for marriage, community funds, and emergency humanitarian cases.

In addition to these initiatives, Qatar Charity implements a community based development project titled “Khair Homes,” which aims to promote a culture of giving by linking charitable work with entrepreneurship during Ramadan. The project targets 50 Qatari families and is supported by several partners.



Mohamed Al Ghamdi

“We have taken several practical measures to accelerate project implementation on the ground as soon as donations begin”

Ways to Give

To make donating easier, Qatar Charity offers quick and convenient ways to give Zakat and charity through its website and mobile app, with support available for Zakat calculation for individuals and companies.



قطر الخيرية
QATAR CHARITY

Donations can be made via Qatar Charity’s website (qcharity.org/en), mobile app (qch.qa/appen), the ‘Home Collector’ Service available through the app, by calling 44290000, or through Qatar Charity branches and collectors in shopping malls.

Ministry organises symposium on air quality, sustainability

QNA
Doha

The Ministry of Environment and Climate Change, represented by the Environmental Monitoring and Inspection Department, organised a symposium yesterday entitled “Improving Air Quality and Supporting Environmental Sustainability in Qatar,” bringing together government officials, industry representatives, researchers, and environmental experts.

The event was attended by HE the Minister of Environment and Climate Change Dr Abdullah bin Abdulaziz bin Turki al-Subaie and featured broad participation from governmental, private, research and academic institutions specialising in air quality and environmental monitoring.

The symposium reviewed national efforts to monitor and enhance air quality, highlighted the latest technologies and best practices in environmental monitoring, and strengthened co-operation and knowledge exchange among stakeholders. The initiative aligns with the Ministry’s strategy to advance environmental sustainability in line with Qatar National Vision 2030.

Undersecretary of the Ministry Engineer Abdulaziz bin Ahmad al-Mahmoud affirmed that air quality



remains a national priority due to its direct impact on public health and quality of life.

He noted that the Ministry continues to develop and modernise its environmental monitoring systems using advanced technologies and internationally recognised standards, within a comprehensive legal framework that promotes transparency and sound environmental governance.

He described the symposium as a national platform for exchanging expertise among government entities, research centres and the industrial sector, particularly amid escalating climate challenges. He emphasised the importance of coordinated efforts to safeguard the environment and preserve natural resources. He added that the Ministry is advancing quality-driven initiatives aimed at enhancing the efficiency of the environmental

monitoring system, updating air quality standards, and strengthening partnerships across sectors.

Al-Mahmoud also pointed out that Qatar’s environmental monitoring framework operates in accordance with Environmental Protection Law No. (30) of 2002 and its implementing regulations, ensuring compliance with national and international standards.

He stressed that the Ministry’s ambition extends beyond improving environmental performance indicators to fostering a safe and healthy environment in which development and sustainability are fully integrated, thereby meeting the aspirations of future generations.

Assistant Undersecretary for Environmental Affairs Yousef Ibrahim al-Hamar said the symposium serves as a strategic national forum to discuss initiatives aimed at protecting the environment and en-



hancing air quality – a cornerstone of sustainable development in Qatar.

He highlighted the Ministry’s commitment to raising public awareness by making environmental data accessible in a transparent and simplified manner, enabling individuals to understand air quality indicators and their health implications. This, he noted, contributes to promoting responsible environmental behaviour.

Al-Hamar explained that the Air Quality Index serves as a key communication tool linking scientific data to the community, using a colour-coded system to indicate pollution levels and assist the public – particularly vulnerable groups – in making informed daily decisions. He further underscored the Ministry’s efforts to build national capacity through continuous training, knowledge transfer, and collaboration with research institutions, strengthening technical expertise in environmental monitoring and analysis.

These efforts support Qatar’s active participation in regional and international environmental initiatives and reporting frameworks. The symposium addressed a range of technical topics, including air

quality data monitoring and analysis, clean energy monitoring and associated challenges, low-concentration dust measurement, facility-boundary monitoring, combustion gas monitoring, and quality assurance in environmental measurements. The programme also featured a presentation on a joint research project between the Ministry and the Qatar Environment and Energy Research Institute (QEERI) at Hamad Bin Khalifa University. The event also honoured several partners of the National Air Quality Monitoring Network in recognition of their contributions to environmental monitoring and data analysis, as well as their role in strengthening public-private sector collaboration.

The Ministry operates the National Air Quality Monitoring Network, which comprises more than 45 fixed and mobile stations across the country. Operating around the clock, the network monitors over 30 environmental variables using advanced technologies, ensuring compliance with national and international standards while promoting public awareness and a culture of environmental sustainability.

Qatar Investment Authority participates in Axiom Space’s funding round

The Qatar Investment Authority (QIA) announced its investment in Axiom Space, a leader in commercial human space exploration. A statement issued by the QIA said that the company raised \$350m in a funding round led by the QIA and TypeOne Ventures, with participation from 4iG, LuminArx Capital Management, and Axiom Space founder and Executive Chairman Kam Ghaffarian, along with other investors. Axiom Space is at the forefront of the emerging commercial space exploration sector, focusing on developing infrastructure and providing advanced technology services that support human spaceflight, microgravity research, space manufacturing, and orbital data computing for decades to come.

This investment will support the company’s mission to develop the Axiom Station, which is planned as the future successor to the International Space Station. International Space Station (ISS) is developing next-generation spacesuits for NASA’s Artemis III mission, marking the United States’ first return to the Moon in over 50 years. The funding, a mix of equity and debt components, will support the completion of the Axiom Station and the production of the Axiom Extravehicular Mobility Unit (AxEMU), as part of the company’s contract with NASA to manufacture spacesuits. QIA’s investment in this funding round reflects its approach of partnering with innovative companies in emerging sectors by providing the necessary capital to support growth, technological advancement, and the creation of long-term, sustainable value (QNA).

Al Gannas wins third place in International Federation for Falconry Sports and Racing Cup

The Qatari Society of Al Gannas won third place today in the third edition of the International Federation for Falconry Sports and Racing Cup, titled (Masters Heats 2026), held at Lahbab Track in Dubai, United Arab Emirates, with the participation of 27 teams from 25 countries.

The Qatari Society of Al Gannas team also achieved a significant accomplishment, winning the World Championship title in the Gyrfalcon chick category and setting a new world record for falcons in this category with a time of 17.085 seconds. The team received the official certificate recognising the world record in falconry for the Gyrfalcon category.

The UAE Falcons Federation team won first place, while the Bahraini Committee for Traditional Sports team took second place.

Mutaib Mubarak al-Qahtani, Director of Championships for the Qatari Society of Al Gannas and Head and Manager of the Society’s team in this international competition, stated that the team consists of his deputy, Abdulwahab bin Omair al-Nuaimi, and the falconers who are members of the Society’s team: Mohammed Saif al-Omran, Mubarak Abdulhadi bin Nayfa, and Hamad Abdullah al-Arjani, while expressing his delight at achieving this result. (QNA)

Speaker of Council of Representatives of Iraq meets Qatar’s ambassador

Speaker of the Council of Representatives of the Republic of Iraq Haibat al-Halbousi met with ambassador of the State of Qatar to Iraq Sultan bin Mubarak al-Kubaisi. During the meeting, they discussed bilateral co-operation relations between the two countries. (QNA)



The Diplomatic Club Welcomes Guests with an Exceptional Hospitality Experience This Ramadan



recreation, food and beverage outlets, banqueting and events, spa and wellness facilities, ladies’ and gentlemen’s salons, as well as facilities management services for both governmental and private sector organizations.

Strategically located in the heart of West Bay, The Diplomatic Club enjoys breathtaking sea views and offers a serene and private atmosphere that reflects its clear vision of preserving authenticity while delivering outstanding quality and refined luxury.

The Club provides a diverse dining experience across its four distinctive restaurants, each designed to cater to a wide range of tastes. Guests can enjoy international cuisine and light bites at the Members’ Lounge and Al Borj Restaurant, exceptional sushi at Nassayem Qatar Restaurant, and exquisite Lebanese cuisine paired with premium seafood at Al Sayyad Restaurant. With its unique waterfront location and captivating views, Al Sayyad offers a truly memorable dining experience.

In addition, The Diplomatic Club features elegant indoor halls and open-air venues ideal for social gatherings, private celebrations, and corporate events. A dedicated and creative team oversees every detail, from event planning and menu design to impeccable service and professional execution, ensuring each occasion exceeds expectations.

For leisure and relaxation seekers, the Club stands out as a preferred destination for water sports and recreational activities. Guests can enjoy swimming pool, a private beach, refreshing water games, and a



variety of dining options throughout the day. Fitness enthusiasts can also take advantage of the fully equipped health club and diverse wellness programs supervised by professional trainers, followed by therapeutic massage treatments provided by certified specialists.

The Diplomatic Club further enhances the guest experience through its ladies’ beauty center, offering premium services such as skin rejuvenation treatments, hair styling, cutting and coloring, nail care, and more – all delivered to the highest standards. For gentlemen, the Club features a dedicated men’s salon specializing in grooming, haircuts, and premium shaving services.

Moreover, the Club’s Facilities Management Department continues to demonstrate excellence across a wide range of services, including cafeteria operations, catering services, office support, cleaning, reception, security, and other high-standard operational solutions.

In celebration of Ramadan, The Diplomatic Club has completed all preparations to welcome guests with exclusive Iftar and Suhoor experiences. Al Sayyad Restaurant and its Garden will host a lavish Iftar buffet featuring an extensive selection of local and oriental dishes, along with traditional Ramadan beverages, all set within elegant outdoor seating adorned with traditional Ramadan lanterns. For Suhoor, guests can enjoy a specially curated menu of authentic Ramadan favorites in a refined and tranquil

ambiance. The Club is also fully prepared to host private Iftar and Suhoor events in its banquet halls or through premium off-site catering services, delivered with the highest standards of quality and service.

The Diplomatic Club invites guests to stay connected throughout the holy month and follow its latest news, offers, and activities through its social media platforms:

Facebook: @TheDiplomaticClubDoha
Instagram: @diplomaticclub
X: @TheDipClub





The new cohort brings together 45 experienced executives from sectors central to economic diversification and growth.

HEC Paris, Doha welcomes Executive MBA Class of '27

HEC Paris, one of the world's top-ranked business schools, has welcomed its Executive MBA (EMBA) Class of 2027 to its state-of-the-art Doha campus.

The new cohort brings together 45 experienced executives from sectors central to economic diversification and growth.

Women make up 36% of the class, while Qatari nationals account for 44%, underscoring the programme's role in strengthening national leadership capacity alongside regional and international expertise.

The class reflects a strong international dimension, bringing together executives from 15 nationalities across the Gulf Co-operation Council (GCC), the Levant, and Europe.

Further underscoring the programme's regional reach, eight executives are traveling from Kuwait, the UAE, and France to attend modules in Doha, reinforcing the city's position as a hub for globally connected executive education.

Closely aligned with Qatar National Vision

2030 and broader development priorities across the Middle East, the part-time Executive MBA emphasises strategic leadership, private sector advancement, and sustainable value creation.

Delivered in a modular format, the programme enables participants to balance demanding professional responsibilities and family life while engaging in a rigorous combination of core management disciplines, leadership development, and applied strategic projects, equipping them to lead change across both established organisations and emerging industries.

Through HEC Paris, Doha's technology-enabled campus and its global academic ecosystem, participants gain access to internationally recognised faculty and immersive learning experiences.

This global-local approach enables executives to apply international insights directly to regional challenges amid rapid technological and organisational change.

"Each Executive MBA cohort reflects our am-

bition to prepare leaders who combine strategic clarity with practical impact and who embody HEC Paris's values: curiosity, excellence, diversity, responsibility, and entrepreneurial spirit," said Joshua Kobb, chief growth and impact officer at HEC Paris, Doha. "The Class of 2027 stands out for its depth of experience and diversity of perspectives, positioning its participants to create meaningful value for their organisations and for the region."

"Engaging with senior leaders from different industries and backgrounds, while tackling challenges directly relevant to our region, creates a learning experience that is both inspiring and immediately applicable," said EMBA participant Mansoor al-Ansari.

As the Executive MBA Class of 2027 begins its journey, HEC Paris, Doha continues to play a vital role in shaping leaders who can navigate complexity, drive performance, and contribute to sustainable growth across Qatar and the wider region.



Safari 'Shop & Drive - Win 30 Bestune Cars' announces winners of second draw

Safari Hypermarket, one of Doha's leading hypermarket chains, has announced the winners of the second draw of its mega promotion, "Shop & Drive - Win 30 Bestune Cars".

The draw took place on February 15 at Safari Hypermarket, Al Khor, in the presence of representatives from the Ministry of Commerce and Industry, and members of Safari's management.

The winners of the second draw are: Mostafa - Coupon No: SDB201046131, Thinakar Kumarasamy - Coupon No: SDB200372946, Arup Sushil - Coupon No: SDB200004864, and Mohammad Sarfaraz - Coupon No: SDB200766860.

As part of the "Shop & Drive" promotion, customers receive an e-raffle coupon for every QR50 purchase made at any Safari Hypermarket outlet, giving them a chance to win one of 30 Bestune cars.

In each draw, four Bestune cars are awarded, while the final draw will feature five Bestune cars.

The promotion is currently available across all Safari outlets.

The third draw of the "Shop & Drive - Win 30 Bestune Cars" promotion will be held on March 29 at Safari Hypermarket, Barwa Village.



Musical event at Katara celebrates Kosovo culture

A celebration of Albanian musical heritage took centre stage at Katara Cultural Village, where the "Rona Nishliu Quartet Evening - Pearls of Albanian Music" captivated audiences with a blend of authenticity and contemporary artistry.

The event, held at Katara Drama Theatre (Building 16), was organised in co-operation with the embassy of Kosovo to mark the 18th anniversary of Kosovo's independence and the 15th anniversary of diplomatic relations between Qatar and Kosovo.

The evening was attended by Kosovo am-

bassador Fuad Morina, along with several ambassadors, members of the diplomatic corps, and a large gathering of music and culture enthusiasts.

Kosovar singer Rona Nishliu and her quartet performed a carefully curated selection of pieces that combined tradition with innovation.

The programme featured harmonious melodies rooted in Albanian heritage, presented through a contemporary style that reflected the depth and diversity of cultural identity.

The performance was marked by refined artistic expression, professional delivery, and emotional sensitivity, drawing strong audience engagement.

Morina expressed his appreciation to Katara for hosting and organising the evening, commending its role in strengthening cultural bridges between nations.

He said that the event underscored the strength of bilateral relations between Qatar and Kosovo and further enhanced ties of friendship and co-operation in the cultural and artistic spheres.

Mediation an enduring component of Qatar's foreign policy: envoy

Qatar has made mediation an enduring component of its foreign policy, as well as a firm strategic commitment underscoring the nation's approach based on dialogue, forging understandings, and promoting stability, said Qatar's ambassador to Germany Abdalla bin Ibrahim al-Hamar.



Abdalla bin Ibrahim al-Hamar

He was speaking during the opening of events and panel discussions organised by the Arab Cultural House "Al Diwan" of Qatar's embassy in Germany, as part of Qatar's broad participation and high-profile representation at the Munich Security Conference (MSC).

Al Diwan-organised events, al-Hamar said, are part of extending bridges of convergence between Qatari and German visions, at a time when co-operation has become an urgent imperative to achieve stability.

He stressed the importance of pursuing policies of dialogue and humanitarian and developmental approaches as essential tools in supporting security.

Al-Hamar further emphasised the commitment of the leadership of Qatar to strengthening these policies through forging reliable partnerships and promoting multilateral co-ordination.

The objective is not merely to debate mediation as a theoretical notion, the envoy said, but also to focus on practically implementing it in the current security landscape amid global perturbations and the deceleration of conventional diplomatic channels.

He asserted that mediation is no longer just an integrated tool but has become a strategic imperative imposed by increasing and complex challenges.

Al-Hamar stressed that enduring stability is not based solely on strength and deterrence, but on the capability to keep dialogue channels open under the most challenging circumstances, because when dialogue continues, it provides opportunities for practical solutions.

Qatar's experience in mediation underpins long-term foundations of credibility, discipline, and engagement, as well as constructive work in sensitive political environments, the envoy highlighted.

Al-Hamar further noted that effective mediation goes beyond merely bringing parties together; it encompasses forging trust and ensuring essential spaces are in place for progress even in the most intractable conflicts.

He outlined that the approach pursued by Qatar demonstrates that perseverant, disciplined, and reliable diplomacy is capable of achieving concrete breakthroughs even in the most intractable crises. - QNA

18th Qatar Robotics & AI Competition 'boots up'

The 18th Qatar Robotics & AI Competition, organised by the Ministry of Sports and Youth, represented by the Qatar Scientific Club (QSC), in collaboration with the Ministry of Education and Higher Education (MoEHE), buoyed by support from the Social & Sport Contribution Fund (DAAM), kicked off yesterday in Doha.

Held at Lusail Multipurpose Hall, the two-day competition attracts participants from schools and universities, as well as members of youth centers, alongside those interested in cutting-edge technologies from across the nation.

The opening ceremony was attended by HE the Undersecretary of the Ministry of Sports and Youth Yasir bin Abdullah al-Jamal, along with various department directors and ministry officials.

The tournament is part of the QSC's commitment to deepening the culture of scientific and technological innovation among young people, as well as broadening new horizons before them to innovate in robotics, programming, and artificial intelligence (AI), thereby bolstering their competitive capabilities and keeping up with the rapid evolution the world is witnessing in the domains of the Fourth Industrial Revolution.

The director of the Ministry of Sports and Youth's Youth Affairs Department, Fawaz Abdullah al-Musaifri, highlighted to the Qatar News Agency (QNA) that the ministry has always been keen to back such annual tournaments, as they generate strategic significance in the pursuit of Qatar's National Youth Policy, particularly in the domains of innovation and learning.

He commended the MoEHE and QSC for the organisation of this competition, adding that this year the tournament has undergone numerous updates, including incorporating new events for the first time, such as cybersecurity challenges, as well as advancing certain contests directed at school students, in addition to modernising rules and games.

Winners of this edition will be nominated to represent Qatar in Arab and international competitions in the future, al-Musaifri noted.

He highlighted that altering the name from Schools Robotics Championship to Qatar Robotics & AI Competition is part of the ministry's strategic plan, in alignment with the rapid development in software fields and training within innovation incubators in schools and the QSC, buoyed by the participation of university students in advanced-level competitions.

Head of the Technical, Scientific and Judging Committee for the Championship, Fatima al-Mohannadi, said that school and university students from both genders are participating in the championship, with the number of participants surging to 2,500 students, 100 judging members, as well as over 100 trainers, while the number of participating schools reached 250 public and civil schools.

She noted that this edition includes 18 categories.

The first day was marked by a substantial turnout from participants.



In addition to holding preliminary rounds and accommodating all registered participants, the competition significantly contributes to discovering and nurturing talents, by dint of providing hands-on opportunities and structured mentorship.

Through this platform, the QSC ensures the development of students' technical skills in robotics and AI, while fostering a spirit of competition, communication, and teamwork among them.

The competition primarily aims to advance participants' scientific, engineering, and innovative skills, encouraging analytical thinking, problem-solving, and teamwork through tactile experiences that simulate real-world challenges in robot design and programming, as well as developing solutions based on AI-powered technologies.

It likewise seeks to identify and nurture promising national talents in this vital sector through a competitive environment and specialised scientific supervision.

The event is set to include a variety of contests and challenges, including autonomous robot design, intelligent systems programming, and technical simulation challenges, alongside innovative presentations and projects submitted by participants before panels of judges comprising experts, academics, and specialists in engineering and technology fields.

The event is set to be punctuated by workshops alongside interactive sessions that aim to familiarise participants with trends in robotics and AI, offering the opportunity for sharing expertise among students and specialists. - QNA

Minister participates in Arab Women Committee session

HE the Minister of Social Development and Family Buthaina bint Ali al-Jabr al-Nuaimi participated in the 45th session of the Arab Women Committee, chaired by Qatar, held on February 10-11, which was held virtually, with the participation of ministers from Arab countries as well as representatives of the General Secretariat of the League of Arab States and relevant organisations.

In her address during the session, HE al-Nuaimi stressed that empowering Arab women, safeguarding their rights, and enhancing their full participation constitute fundamental pillars for achieving sustainable development and societal stability.

She underscored the importance of moving from political commitment to practical implementation through integrated, evidence-based, measurable, and sustainable policies.

HE al-Nuaimi expressed sincere appreciation to the State of Palestine for chairing the 44th session, commending its efforts to support Arab women's issues and advance joint Arab action in this field.

She reviewed key national indicators related to women's empowerment in Qatar, noting that women's labour force participation reached 63.3% in 2024, ranking among the highest globally.

The minister also highlighted the decline in the maternal mortality rate to four cases per 100,000 live births in 2023, reflecting the strength of the healthcare system and the quality of maternal care services.

She further noted the rise in female education completion rates, enhancing women's readiness to participate in the knowledge economy and future pathways.

HE al-Nuaimi said that Qatar, within the framework of its National Vision, adopts a comprehensive approach centered on investing in people, promoting equal opportunities, and protecting the most vulnerable groups, particularly women and girls.

The session discussed items, including the adoption of the agenda and review of proposed topics and related explanatory memoranda, culminating in decisions and recommendations reflecting the priorities for the coming phase and strengthening Arab action for women's empowerment. - QNA

Doha Forum convenes panel on sustainable peace in Gaza at MSC

Doha Forum participated in the Munich Security Conference (MSC) 2026, convening a high-level panel on "Conversation on Sustainable Peace in Gaza", addressing pathways toward durable peace amid a fragile ceasefire, an ongoing humanitarian emergency, and the risk of renewed escalation.

The discussion examined what it would take to convert short-term de-escalation into sustainable peace, with a focus on credible sequencing and guarantees to sustain calm, scale humanitarian relief, and unlock reconstruction.

Participants explored viable governance and security arrangements capable

of commanding legitimacy on the ground, while assessing how regional stakeholders, working alongside emerging international co-ordination frameworks, can help underwrite stability, oversight, and long-term recovery.

The conversation also stressed the importance of institutions and incentives that can earn buy-in from Palestinians, Israelis, and key external actors, aiming to move the debate from aspiration to implementable outcomes by identifying obstacles and practical pathways forward.

The discussion featured senior leaders, including HE the Adviser to the Prime Minister and Spokesperson for the Min-

istry of Foreign Affairs Dr Majed bin Mohammed al-Ansari, the Chief Adviser on National Security and Foreign Policy to the Turkish President Akif Cagatay Kilic, Gaza Executive Board member and co-chair of the United Nations Foundation Sigrid Kaag.

"While the ceasefire is holding, the humanitarian situation in Gaza remains deeply fragile," said HE Dr al-Ansari.

"Sustainable peace will require continued mediation, humanitarian access, reconstruction, and a shared commitment from all sides to long-term stability," he said.

"At a time when conflicts are increas-

ingly interconnected and global trust is under strain, the Munich Security Conference remains a vital platform for shaping the conversations that influence international peace and security," said Doha Forum general manager Maha al-Kuwari.

"Convening this discussion on sustainable peace in Gaza reflects Doha Forum's longstanding commitment to inclusive dialogue and to advancing practical, implementable approaches to complex global challenges," the official added.

Looking ahead, Doha Forum's 24th edition is scheduled to take place on December 5-6, 2026 in Doha, under the theme *Redefining Global Trust*. - QNA



Zulal Wellness Resort by Chiva-Som breaks world-record tug of war on National Sport Day

In celebration of Qatar National Sport Day (NSD), Zulal Wellness Resort by Chiva-Som brought the community together for an extraordinary wellness activation, highlighted by a world-record-breaking Tug of War with a 600m rope. Approximately 120 participants joined this epic challenge, uniting for a moment of strength, teamwork, and shared achievement. The tug of war was led by general manager, Ammar Samad, on one side and Wellness Brand ambassador Tim Cahill on the other, creating unmatched spirit, energy, and excitement. The event, held on February 10 from 10am-1pm featured a full schedule of wellness activities for the public, including grounding Hatha Yoga, mindful meditation, and high-energy sessions such as Tabata, Circuit Training, and Boot Camp. The day was a true celebration of movement, wellness, and community.



"It was truly inspiring to see the community come together in the spirit of health, wellness, and teamwork," said Ammar Samad, General Manager of Zulal Wellness Resort by Chiva-Som. "Events like this not only celebrate the joy of movement and connection but also reflect Qatar National Vision 2030 of fostering a healthy, active, and engaged society. We look forward to many more milestones and



achievements together." Zulal Wellness Resort extends its heartfelt gratitude to all participants who helped make this record-breaking achievement possible. This activation was thoughtfully designed to promote community engagement, wellness, and active lifestyles, reflecting Zulal's ongoing commitment to holistic health and shared experiences.

QIB launches exclusive FIFA World Cup 2026 experience, courtesy of Visa

Qatar Islamic Bank (QIB) has launched a new spend campaign offering its QIB Visa credit card holders the opportunity to win an exclusive experience at the FIFA World Cup 2026, courtesy of Visa, reinforcing the bank's commitment to delivering exceptional value and world-class benefits to its customers. As part of the promotion, valid until April 12, 2026, QIB Visa credit and charge cardholders will have the chance to win one of four FIFA World Cup 2026 packages for two, enabling winners to attend live matches and enjoy a premium, all-inclusive experience, courtesy of Visa. Customers who spend a total of QR10,000 using their QIB Visa credit or charge card during the campaign period, locally or internationally, will earn one entry to the draw. Every additional QR10,000 spent will provide an extra chance to win. Each prize package includes round-trip Business Class airline tickets for two, Category 1 match tickets with pre-match hospitality for two, four nights' accommodation at a four-star hotel, airport and match transportation, curated cultural and leisure experiences, access



to the Visa Everywhere Lounge, and on-ground Visa concierge at the hotel, medical and security support. Winners will also receive a \$600 Visa prepaid card (one per package), along with gifts valued at \$400 for the winner and their companion. D Anand, QIB general manager - Personal Banking Group, said: "This promotion reflects QIB's ongoing commitment to rewarding our customers with distinctive, lifestyle-enhancing experiences that go beyond everyday banking. Through our collaboration with Visa, we are pleased to offer Visa cardholders the opportunity to be part of one of the world's most anticipated sporting events, while enjoying a premium experience aligned

with QIB's service standards." Shashank Singh, Visa vice-president and general manager for Qatar and Kuwait, said: "At Visa, we are proud to collaborate with QIB to bring cardholders closer to unforgettable global experiences, such as the FIFA World Cup 2026. "This promotion reflects our commitment to rewarding everyday spending with exceptional opportunities, while delivering secure and innovative payment experiences for consumers across the region." Customers can apply for the QIB Visa credit cards instantly through the QIB Mobile App. For more information, please visit www.qib.com.qa/en-VisaPromotion

Celebrate Ramadan with gold rewards at Al Asmakh Mall and Barwa Plaza Mall



In the spirit of the holy month of Ramadan, Al Asmakh Mall and Barwa Plaza Mall unveil their exclusive "Shop & Win" campaign, giving shoppers the chance to win gold worth QR50,000, sponsored by Malabar Gold and Diamonds. As part of this special

Ramadan initiative, 12 fortunate winners will each receive an 8-gram 22K gold coin. Shoppers who spend QR300 or more at participating outlets including Centrepoint, Home Centre, Max, Home Box, E-Max, and Shoexpress at

either mall will automatically be entered into the electronic raffle draw. The official draw will be conducted electronically in the presence of a Ministry representative to ensure complete transparency and credibility.

HBKU CPP starts using data storytelling

By Joseph Varghese
Staff Reporter

Making use of the generative AI tools, the College of Public Policy (CPP) at Hamad Bin Khalifa University (HBKU), has already started applying data storytelling in some of its programmes.

"The role of data storytelling programme was embedded in the College of Public Policy for our students. It was introduced for 90 students in the fall semester of 2025. They have taken training programmes and received three different certificates throughout this programme," Dr Evren Tok, associate dean for Community Engagement, CPP, HBKU, told Gulf Times.

Dr Tok said that often data is seen as isolated and only a few people such as data scientists, possess a deeper understanding of the visualisation.

"Last term, we did this programme about building narratives and data storytelling with the Kennedy School at Harvard University. It was a longer programme for our students and an important skill development for them. It is not just a skill but I see it as a competency, not only for the students, but for the professionals too," he explained.

The academic said that data storytelling helps people to use tools to access data and to create a more inclusive environment.

"It helps to reflect on the data collectively rather than creating a certain visual that represents data. So here is the idea that the data can be represented in different ways. And in personal experiences, individuals can look at the same data and they can have different vantage points. That is why the data storytelling is a critical tool in public policy and policy making, because it helps



Dr Evren Tok. PICTURE: Shaji Kayamkulam

decision makers to see the same data from different perspectives," he continued.

CPP recently held a workshop about the role of data storytelling and generative AI in progressive education and Dr Tok said that these two are topics directly related to HBKU's thematic research areas.

"The idea behind the workshop is to bring together experts, professionals, both international and national to create engagement, interaction and productive discussions around the idea of generative AI and data storytelling. It also examines how these two are critically important in cultivating better educational experiences. The application of data storytelling necessitates capacity building and the workshop is part of it," he noted.

The official said that data storytelling was initially used only in CPP as it was related to their courses. "It is the communication as data storytelling is really a tool for policy communication especially in the College of Public Policy. We have students becoming more and more aware of what they can be capable of. But in the future, definitely data storytelling, capacity building programmes and initiatives can be scaled at the university level or maybe even at bigger levels," he added.

HBKU workshop examines data storytelling and generative AI in progressive education

Hamad Bin Khalifa University (HBKU) has concluded "The Role of Data Storytelling and Generative AI in Progressive Education" workshop, highlighting the role of artificial intelligence (AI) and data-driven narratives in building adaptive, future-ready learning environments.

Organised by the College of Public Policy (CPP), the two-day workshop gathered international and local experts from academia, policy and technology to examine institutional innovation and digital transformation in education and included over 50 speakers. Discussions emphasised the importance of embedding ethical considerations and societal implications into existing governance frameworks to ensure the safe and responsible use of generative AI (GenAI).

Strategically designed themes, including personalised learning and assessment design, and new models of collaboration and creativity, spanned panels, masterclasses, a book launch, and hackathon, enhancing engagements across sessions.

The programme further touched on how data storytelling can influence policymaking, support cultural and societal priorities, and



enhance human development in the digital age.

By bringing together interdisciplinary expertise, the workshop advances the University's priority areas by translating research into actionable insights for progressive education, social progress and the responsible application of emerging technologies. In doing so, it connected research, policy, and practice, reinforcing the University's role as a knowledge hub and impact-driven institution leading informed policymaking at a time when education systems navigate a rapidly evolving landscape.

"AI is undoubtedly one of the

MoECC announces end of wild hunting season

The Ministry of Environment and Climate Change (MoECC) has announced the end of the bird and wild animal hunting season, effective yesterday (February 15). Accordingly, the ministry confirms that any hunting activities after this date will be considered a violation of the decision, and offenders will be subject to the penalties stipulated under Law No 4 of 2002 on Environmental Protection.

Mitsubishi Canter, MG MG3 models recalled

The Ministry of Commerce and Industry (MoCI), in co-operation Qatar Automobiles Company, Qatar's Mitsubishi dealership, has announced the recall of Mitsubishi Canter 2025 models. The recall is due to a possible defect in the software of the body control module which may lead the lighting lamps to go off. MoCI, in co-operation with Auto Class Cars, Qatar's MG dealership, also announced the recall of MG MG3 2025 models. The recall is due to a possible defect in the driver's seat lock. 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 dealers 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 urges all customers to report any violations to its following channels: Call Centre: 16001, e-mail: info@moci.gov.qa, ministry's accounts on social media: @mociqatar, ministry's Mobile App: MOCIQATAR

QPC concludes podcast production course

By Tawfik Lamari
Staff Reporter

The Qatar Press Center (QPC) concluded a specialised training course recently, titled "The Art of Podcast Production", in collaboration with Drucker Management Training Company. The course, presented by trainer and content creator Sultan al-Sharshani, aims to introduce participants to the fundamentals of producing professional audio content, as well as the skills needed for its presentation and marketing.

The four-day course was part of the QPC's efforts to develop media skills and keep pace with the rapid transformations in the digital content industry. It covered a range of theoretical and practical topics, enabling trainees to learn about the history of podcasts, which emerged globally in 2004 as a new media product before experiencing widespread adoption in the Arab world starting in 2021. Today, podcasts are among the most influential and effective media tools for delivering messages and engaging audiences.

The course also covered the stages of podcast production planning, from choosing a suitable name that reflects the programme's identity, through content preparation and crafting the media message, to publishing platforms and the algorithms that deliver content to the target audience. The workshop also focused on generating creative ideas and using suspense elements, such as selecting key quotes and placing them at the beginning of each episode to capture listeners' attention. The course highlighted one of the most important elements of podcast success: the vocal aspect. Participants learned delivery techniques, presentation skills, dialogue techniques,



Sadiq Mohammed al-Ammari (left) with attendees.



and proper breathing techniques during recording, and how to use verbal bridges to facilitate smooth transitions between ideas during conversations. The workshop also covered the fundamentals of audio production, publishing ethics, and the importance of respecting guests' wishes and ensuring their privacy.

All-Sharshani emphasised that the course is a cornerstone for those wishing to enter the field of podcasting. It enabled participants to understand the importance of podcasts as an influential media communication tool and to learn the keys to success by acquiring skills in dialogue management, persuasion and marketing techniques, asking insightful questions, and creatively extracting new questions from guests' answers.

On the final day, these skills were put into practice through a simulated recording of a complete podcast episode, prepared

and presented by the trainees. This provided them with an opportunity to experience audio media work in a realistic training environment.

Sadiq Mohammed al-Ammari, Director General of the Qatar Press Center, affirmed that the centre continues to open its doors to national talents and all those interested in entering the field of podcasting, by providing a supportive media environment and technical and professional tools that help produce high-quality audio content that meets modern professional standards.

He explained that this approach comes within the framework of the QPC's vision to empower young media talents and transform creative ideas into viable projects through the production of ongoing training and practical programmes that keep pace with the developments in digital media and the demands of the content market.



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Swiss vote on proposal to cap the population may impact EU ties

Switzerland will vote on capping its population at 10mn until 2050, a proposal that speaks to widespread concerns about high immigration but risks depriving the country of much-needed workers and shattering relations with the European Union.

A popular vote is set for June 14, the government said this week. The initiative, launched by the right-wing Swiss People's Party (SVP), wants to write into Switzerland's constitution that the permanent resident population of the country shall not exceed 10mn people before 2050.

In subsequent years, the limit would be adjusted annually by the Swiss government to account for any birth surplus.

Under the slogan "preserving what we love," backers of the initiative want to limit options for asylum-seekers and their families to permanently reside in Switzerland if the population exceeds 9.5mn people before 2050.

In that event, the Swiss government "shall also seek to renegotiate international agreements that drive population growth," according to the proposal.

If the 10mn threshold is permanently crossed, authorities would be required to take all available measures to comply with the limit. That explicitly includes terminating a key agreement with the EU on the free movement of people.

Switzerland's population has risen rapidly this century, stirring concern that infrastructure is being stretched, rents are too high, and wages under pressure.

While the population only passed 7mn in the mid-1990s, it is now over 9mn, growing faster than in most neighbouring countries and putting Switzerland on track to hit the SVP threshold before mid-century.

Switzerland's population has risen rapidly this century, stirring concern that infrastructure is being stretched, rents are too high, and wages under pressure

long-term 2050 timeframe, the initiative would start jeopardising prosperity and straining EU-Switzerland ties which are vital to the local economy.

Its acceptance would require a fundamental realignment of Swiss migration policy and Swiss relations with the EU, the governing Federal Council added.

Business association Economisuisse has termed the proposal "the chaos initiative".

"Our country will continue to depend on labour migration in the future," the group said in a joint paper with the Swiss Employers Association, predicting that without foreign workers, companies would relocate abroad.

Opponents have warned of labour shortages in the healthcare system, public transport, restaurants and construction.

While the Federal Council, most political parties and business associations oppose the proposal, two polls published last year found narrow popular majorities in favour of the initiative.

In November, 48% of surveyed voters said they were in favour or inclined to be in favour of the SVP project in a poll by research institute LeeWas on behalf of two newspapers, with 41% of respondents against and 11% still undecided.

In June and July, a survey by research company Sotomo on behalf of the Swiss Trade Union Federation also found that 48% of respondents intended to vote "yes" or "probably yes", with 45% planning to vote "no" or "probably no", and 7% undecided.

The 10mn population cap has a good chance of being accepted, Sotomo concluded at the time.

"A decline in support during the referendum campaign - as is common with other initiatives - is by no means certain," the researchers added, noting concerns over immigration would likely be sharpened by the referendum campaign itself.

In 2014, a similar proposal for strict immigration limits passed a popular vote but was never fully implemented. It is unclear how the 10mn cap, if accepted, would be put into practice. - Reuters



MEANINGFUL DIALOGUE

"WE'RE ADVANCING CONDITIONAL CONCESSION FRAMEWORKS TO HARMONISE BILATERAL NUCLEAR PREROGATIVES UNDER TARIFF-NEUTRAL SANCTIONS RELIEF."

"WE'LL SEE."



Germany's far-right woos unhappy auto workers

- Firms hold votes for labour representatives in March-May
- Far-right movements seen making inroads in key car sector
- Could provide a greater platform for AfD party

By Rachel More, Sarah Marsh and Andreas Rinke
Reuters

On a dark February morning at Mercedes-Benz's vast Untertuerkheim plant, workers arriving for the early shift are met by activists from Zentrum, a self-styled union affiliated with the far-right Alternative for Germany (AfD) party.

"Game-changer," reads the pamphlet they are handing out ahead of elections to the factory's works council, at which Zentrum aims to challenge mainstream unions it says have failed to shield the automotive industry from thousands of job cuts. Currently confined to the fringes of auto union politics, the far right hopes to harness anxieties among workers in Germany's powerhouse industry to build grassroots influence that could help the AfD on a national stage. The country's carmakers are struggling with the shift to EVs and Chinese competition.

"We have established ourselves," said Oliver Hilburger, 56, who founded Zentrum in 2009 and himself works at the plant in Stuttgart.

Reuters spoke to about a dozen trade union and works council representatives and officials in the auto sector ahead of the elections, held by companies across Germany every four years, as well as politicians and activists. The premier of one of Germany's 16 states, several senior members of the national governing coalition and union representatives were among those who said they are worried the far-right will make gains in votes happening from March to May.

The AfD, which was classified by federal authorities as "right-wing extremist" last year, is shunned by Germany's political mainstream.

"It should be a cause for concern if groups close to the AfD could gain a stronger foothold in companies," said the state premier, declining to be identified in order to speak freely.

'Elections alone are not enough'

Works councils are a pillar of the corporatist model which proponents say helped foster stability and prosperity in Germany after World War Two, giving about 37% of employees a formal voice within companies.

Officials at IG Metall, the main union at companies like Mercedes and Volkswagen, say many far-right candidates plan to stand in elections to works councils in the auto industry's southern heartland.

Although some are only loosely affiliated with the AfD, they could give the party - which leads nationwide opinion polls and is on track to make gains in five state elections this year - a bigger platform to woo workers.

"A works councillor can present AfD arguments once every quarter to tens of thousands of people at a works assembly," said Lukas Hezel, part of an IG Metall initiative to counter the far-right. "That is a much more valuable political position than a local councillor."

Spying an opportunity, the AfD is giving Zentrum, the most established far-right labour movement, more support.

"If you want to shape a society, elections alone are not enough," said the AfD's deputy parliamentary leader Sebastian Muenzenmaier after hosting Zentrum at a party event ahead of March 22's state election in Rhineland-Palatinate.

"You need a mosaic - the party, a trade union, cultural initiatives, maybe a musician, a publisher, a bookshop. Each has its own role, but all move in the same direction."

Mercedes, Volkswagen and VW-owned Audi declined to comment directly on the works council elections but issued statements avowing democratic values like tolerance and diversity.

"The AfD advocates economic policies and, in some cases, even constitutional and xenophobic positions that are incompatible with the values of Mercedes-Benz," a company spokesperson said.

Some observers warn of a broader risk to democracy if the big unions are weakened, drawing parallels with fragmentation of labour movements during the Great Depression that undermined their ability to organise against Nazism in the 1930s.

"To assume the unions will scrape through the next works council elections with nothing more than a black eye would be fatal," said Klaus Doerre, a trade union expert at Kassel University. "The potential for a breakthrough is there."

At Untertuerkheim, some workers stride past the four Zentrum activists but many accept the campaign material.

"We've gone through 800 flyers," Hilburger says, fetching another box from his van.

The rise of a movement

The big unions, which describe themselves as non-partisan but explicitly defend values such as social justice and opposition to racism and far-right extremism, have traditionally dominated works council elections.

The AfD says the unions serve a left-wing agenda that no longer represents ordinary workers, and has sought to discredit them through a series of parliamentary inquiries.

"Today, it's no longer the cigar-smoking factory owner who bullies people. Today, people are more afraid of a powerful works council if they have the wrong opinion," Hilburger said in an interview.

The leaflet handed out to Mercedes workers accuses IG Metall, which has over 2mn members, of standing by as job cuts mount but offers few concrete proposals to fix the crisis.

Zentrum, whose status as a union is disputed because it does not take part in collective bargaining negotiations, currently has around 150 works council members plus 15 affiliates, Hilburger said, out of tens of thousands nationwide. Seven are at Untertuerkheim, where it will stand 207 candidates this year, a few more than in 2022.

An affiliated group at Volkswagen's all-electric plant in Zwickau will field 24 candidates, up from eight in 2022, Hilburger said, while Zentrums three candidates at Audi Ingolstadt could make a breakthrough in auto centre Bavaria.

Hilburger could not give a total number of candidates.

"These are showcase companies, success here is symbolically important," said Doerre. "If they can succeed at Mercedes or Volkswagen, it signals maybe they are a force to be reckoned with."

The crisis in carmaking could offer a chance to scoop up protest

votes from workers disenchanted with established parties and trade unions.

Where weekend football results used to dominate shop floor chatter, now "the conversation immediately and almost exclusively turns to politics", Hilburger said.

Guitarist turned labour leader

The AfD initially put Zentrum, whose leader Hilburger for years played guitar in a skinhead band, on an "incompatibility" list of organisations too extreme to work with. Members voted to remove it in 2022, when the party shifted rightwards.

Jens Keller, a city councillor in Hannover, is one of several AfD officials who are also Zentrum activists.

"The AfD has discovered all these people they already have... They now increasingly want them to become active in workplace politics," said Andre Schmidt, a political analyst at Leipzig University.

An exit poll by Infratest dimap after last year's federal election showed some 38% of blue-collar workers voted AfD, up 17 percentage points from 2021, while just 12% chose the centre-left Social Democrats.

AFD: The new workers' party?

Hildegard Mueller, who heads the VDA automotive industry association, has warned that "simple, populist and emotionally charged" far-right messaging could prove persuasive given job insecurity and policymaker inaction.

"It is not only the AfD waiting at the factory gates; representatives close to the AfD will be running on lists," she said.

Traditional unions are fighting back: Hezel said they have hired 10 people for the Association for the Preservation of Democracy, founded by IG Metall in 2019 to counter workplace extremism.

They argue that groups like Zentrum are sham unions whose goal is disruption not upholding workers' interests.

The Christian Trade Union Confederation (CGB) has warned that some works council candidates are not disclosing ties to the AfD, describing them as "more dangerous than Zentrum, whose closeness to the AfD is at least known".

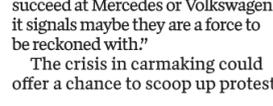
An Opel Ruesselsheim works council member elected in March 2025 on the slate of CGB's metalworkers' union was later reported to have ties to far-right groups.

Trade union density has roughly halved since the 1990s, to about 14% of German employees, and the AfD has challenged their embedded role in civil society and politics.

"Unions are the only ones still competing with them to be the voice of workers," said Schmidt.

Oliver Hilburger, 56, who founded the self-styled union Zentrum in 2009, affiliated with Germany's far-right Alternative for Germany party AfD, hands out "Game-changer" flyers (inset) aiming to challenge mainstream unions "who have failed to shield the automotive sector from thousands of job cuts", before the early morning shift at Mercedes car plant in Stuttgart, Germany. (Reuters)

Oliver Hilburger, 56, who founded the self-styled union Zentrum in 2009, affiliated with Germany's far-right Alternative for Germany party AfD, hands out "Game-changer" flyers (inset) aiming to challenge mainstream unions "who have failed to shield the automotive sector from thousands of job cuts", before the early morning shift at Mercedes car plant in Stuttgart, Germany. (Reuters)



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Municipalities intensify inspection on food outlets in preparedness for Ramadan

QNA
Doha

Several municipalities announced that they have stepped up their readiness for the holy month of Ramadan through conducting surveillance inspections on food enterprises nationwide.

They confirmed that the objective is to ensure food safety and protect the well-being of both citizens and residents, as well as keep up with the tremendous increases in consumption during this holy month by ramping up inspections on all food and service facilities, including restaurants, kitchens, butcheries, shopping centres, and markets, in addition to Ramadan tents and recreational areas, to ensure the provision of safe and healthy food for those who are fasting.

Doha Municipality steps up its surveillance plan on all food and health enterprises by carrying out almost 10,000 inspection rounds during this Ramadan and taking 298 food samples to be analysed in the government laboratory, as well as taking legal action against violators, alongside intensifying awareness

efforts and dealing immediately with complaints.

Director of the Control Department at Doha Municipality, Hamad Sultan al-Shahwani, asserted that an overall health surveillance plan has been devised for Ramadan to ensure heightened enforcement of laws and regulations, foremost of which is the Minister's Decision No. (8) of 1990, on regulating human food surveillance. Emergency and complaint task forces are operating around the clock to receive tips and handle them, as well as take corrective and legal measures instantly against violators, as misdemeanours are punishable by administrative shutdown from one day to two months based on the type of regulatory offence and the hazard level of the infraction, al-Shahwani told Qatar News Agency (QNA).

Al Shahaniya Municipality is conducting a combined surveillance plan, including ramping up regulatory and surprise tours to food facilities and Ramadan tents for those fasting, and increasing the number of veterinarians in the Al Shahaniya slaughterhouse, collecting 30 to 40 samples daily and analysing them in the central laboratory, in addition to intensifying awareness campaigns

and receiving complaints 24/7.

Umm Salal Municipality prepared an inspection plan, including intensified daily surveillance inspections, sampling and laboratory testing, monitoring of cold chain, storage, and transportation, implementation of Good Manufacturing Practices (GMPs) and HACCP systems, regulatory enforcement actions under approved standards, and public education and outreach programmes for workers and consumers.

Al Daayen Municipality plan relies on two phases. The first is a pre-Ramadan preparatory phase, including preemptive inspections of food establishments and inventory of temporary food licenses and Ramadan tents.

In Al Wakrah Municipality, the plan includes morning and evening inspections covering health, technical, and general oversight, with intensified inspections of food establishments, butcheries, fish markets, and live-poultry vendors. For Al Khor and Al Dhakira Municipality, the plan focuses on ongoing field inspection tasks and veterinary oversight to ensure the safety of slaughter and fish products, dividing food establishments into surveillance

zones, carrying out sampling and testing from major producers, restaurants, and butcheries, and using electronic inspection documentation systems to record violations and expedite enforcement.

Al Shamal Municipality emphasises intensive inspection campaigns before and during Ramadan, co-ordinating with slaughterhouses to ensure readiness, extending work hours, maintaining continuous presence of food safety inspectors, conducting sampling and laboratory testing, and assigning inspectors to provide immediate complaint responses.

In Al Rayyan Municipality, inspectors are deployed in morning and evening inspection shifts up to late night, enhancing oversight of the central market and high-demand food establishments, and conducting ongoing food safety education and outreach programmes to ensure safe and healthy food reaches consumers.

The Ministry of Municipality reaffirms its full commitment to implementing these plans according to the highest professional standards, enhancing co-ordination among municipalities to safeguard food safety and public health.

Dukhan Bank announces February winners in Thara'a prize draw

Dukhan Bank announced the names of the most recent round of draw winners for Thara'a, its Shariah-compliant savings account, at the bank's headquarters. The draw was recently conducted under the supervision of a representative of



Alshalabi, Nawaf al-Darwish, Mohammed Keshaiha, Latifa al-Bahr, Muneera al-Hedous, Maryam al-Muhannadi, Samed Ayyash, Sherief Mohamed, Saif Hassiba, Alanoud al-Malik, Muna

Almansouri, Mohammed Al Naama, Sara al-Darwish, Sultan Alfalase, Eiman Mуса, Latifa al-Muhannadi, Ahmad al-Tamimi, and Khaled Mhawch.

Dukhan Bank continues its customer-centric approach with its enhanced Thara'a Savings Account campaign, reaffirming its commitment to rewarding clients. 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. Customers who open a Thara'a Savings Account through Dukhan Bank's branches, website, or mobile application will be automatically entered into the campaign draws, subject to meeting the eligibility criteria. For more information, customers may call 800 8555 or contact Rashid, the bank's virtual assistant, on WhatsApp at 4410 0888.



QCDC signs MoU with Snoonu to strengthen digital infrastructure

Qatar Career Development Center (QCDC), founded by Qatar Foundation, signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with Snoonu Trading and Services LLC to support QCDC's digital transformation and expand career development services across Qatar's education and training landscape.

The MoU was signed by Saad Abdullah al-Kharji, executive director of QCDC, and Hamad Mubarak al-Hajri, founder and CEO of Snoonu, and establishes a framework for joint work that strengthens the digital infrastructure surrounding QCDC programmes: improving access to services, and enabling more efficient, data-informed delivery for students, parents, educators, and career practitioners. It also supports the development of digital tools that make QCDC services easier to access and navigate, with a primary focus on expanding the reach of QCDC's 'Al-Dileela' career counselling programme.

Leveraging Snoonu's advanced technology infrastructure, 'Al-Dileela' will be available through the "Snoonu City" section of the Snoonu app, providing a smoother journey from service discovery to booking and participation. Delivered virtually, 'Al-Dileela' connects users with qualified career guidance and development experts through structured one-to-one sessions that help youth make in-

formed decisions at key education and career transition points. The integration enhances the user experience and reinforces the human connection at the heart of counselling by reducing friction, improving responsiveness, and enabling beneficiaries across Qatar to access timely support with ease.

Al-Kharji said: "Career development today is shaped by how quickly people can access reliable guidance, opportunities, and learning experiences. This MoU reflects QCDC's commitment to modernising the ways we serve our community; building digital pathways that make our programmes easier to reach, simpler to navigate, and stronger in measurable impact. Together with Snoonu, we aim to elevate service quality, improve participant experience, and support national priorities in education, training, and human capital development."

"We are proud to partner with QCDC in a collaboration that reflects Snoonu's commitment to advancing digital transformation across community and education services. By leveraging our advanced technology infrastructure through the Snoonu app, we aim to make career guidance more seamless and flexible for youth and families, helping empower the next generation and support human development in Qatar," al-Hajri added.

Qatar Charity launches Ramadan campaign

Qatar Charity has launched its Ramadan Campaign for 1447 AH (2026) under the slogan "Good Starts With You", aiming to benefit 3.85mn people through various projects across 43 countries, while supporting development initiatives reaching 22mn beneficiaries throughout the year.

Extending Ramadan greetings, Yousuf bin Ahmed al-Kuwari, chief executive officer of Qatar Charity said that the organisation has adopted a new advanced mechanism starting this year to ensure projects are implemented immediately once donations are received. He added that Qatar Charity has also launched, for the first time in Qatar, the Smart Electronic Coupon through its Alaqraabon Centre and upgraded its mobile application to make donations easier, improve access to projects, and enhance the overall user experience.

Mohamed al-Ghamdi, deputy CEO, Governance and Corporate Services at Qatar Charity, said that the organisation has prepared target locations in advance by identifying eligible regions and cities worldwide and verifying their field readiness, allowing work to begin immediately once a project is approved. He indicated that



Qatar Charity officials at the press conference.

Qatar Charity has also activated early contracting procedures by preparing framework agreements with contractors and suppliers.

Qatar Charity officials at a press conference said fundraising efforts during Ramadan will support seasonal projects – including Feed the Fasting, Zakat al Fitr, and Eid Clothing – alongside relief projects in countries affected by prolonged crises and disasters, as well as competitive development projects.

The press conference was attended by Nawaf Abdulla AlHammedi, deputy CEO for Programmes and Communications, Mohamed al-Ghamdi, deputy CEO of Governance and Corporate Services at Qatar Charity, Ahmad Yusef Fakhroo, executive director of Communications and Community Impact at Qatar Charity, and Abdulaziz Jassim Hejji, executive director of International Operations. AlHammedi said this year's

Ramadan Campaign puts donors at the heart of the giving journey from the moment they intend to do good, with projects set to begin immediately once donations are made, under the new mechanism adopted this year for competitive development projects to maximise development impact and deliver tangible change for beneficiaries.

Hejji said that Qatar Charity will implement seasonal Ramadan projects in 42 countries outside Qatar, which will include 'Feed the Fasting', 'Zakat al Fitr', and 'Eid Clothing'. The projects will focus on countries affected by conflict and crises, or those with the greatest needs, such as Gaza, Yemen, Sudan, Syria, and Ghana, with an expected 1,195,239 beneficiaries.

According to Fakhroo the campaign's projects inside Qatar focus on seasonal Ramadan initiatives and various forms of assistance expected to benefit 1,067,370 people

during the holy month. He noted that this comes alongside the launch of Qatar Charity's Alaqraabon Centre at the start of the year, marking an expanded phase in its social care within the country.

Projects inside Qatar include mobile Iftar meals for workers' accommodations, benefiting 120,000 workers; 45 Iftar tents across multiple locations nationwide, expected to serve 516,400 people; Mobile Iftar meals distributed at traffic intersections; and daily family Iftar meals for low income households. In the holy month of Ramadan, the Alaqraabon Centre aims to raise QR100mn to expand its assistance programmes. These include support for low income families, orphans, widows, divorced and abandoned women, patients, persons with disabilities, debtors, the highly esteemed, prisoners and their families, workers, students, individuals preparing for marriage, community funds, and emergency humanitarian cases.

Donations can be made via Qatar Charity's website, mobile app, the 'Home Collector' Service available through the app, by calling 44290000, or through Qatar Charity branches and collectors in shopping malls.

QU showcases food security solutions at AgriteQ 2026

By Shaima Sheriff
Doha

At the Qatar International Agricultural Exhibition (AgriteQ) 2026, Qatar University (QU) showcases its contributions to sustainable agriculture and national food security through research-led innovations.

Dr Kamal Usman, a section head of Research at QU's Agricultural Research Center, told *Gulf Times* that the university's participation reflects its commitment to developing scientific solutions that align with

Qatar's strategic priorities.

"We, alongside other centres, colleges, and departments conducting the most research on natural science, agriculture, and food security, are representing the University. Collectively, we are showcasing research-based solutions for national food security and sustainable development consistent with the National Food Security Strategy and Qatar National Vision," Dr Usman said.

He explained that QU's role extends beyond research exhibition, emphasising the university's responsibility in capacity building, training future professionals, and



Dr Kamal Usman

contributing to evidence-based policy development.

"The significance of this can't be overstated," Dr Usman said.

"AgriteQ provides an excellent opportunity for networking among institutions, companies, and innovators, as well as opportunities for students."

Dr Usman further emphasised that QU's agricultural research spans both basic and applied areas, including resource-efficient vertical farming and eco-friendly post-harvest processing facilities adapted to the Qatari climate for sustainable local production. Through its participation in AgriteQ 2026, QU further solidifies its position as a recognised leader institution in research and development.

AgriteQ 2026 now a huge draw among school students

The fourth day of the 13th Qatar International Agricultural Exhibition (AgriteQ) 2026 recorded strong attendance from school students, with 92 schools and 3,680 students participating in organised field visits aimed at enhancing agricultural and environmental awareness and introducing concepts of sustainability and food security.

Students toured a range of pavilions representing participating companies and farms, including Heenat Salma Farm, Agrico Company, the Farmers Market and Mazzrati, the Honey and Dates Market, the Flower Market, the Panda Zone and the Zoo Garden. The visits form part of the Ministry of Municipality's efforts to engage students in awareness initiatives that strengthen a culture of



agricultural sustainability, in line with the objectives of Qatar National Vision 2030 and the aim of preparing a generation conscious of food security challenges.

Yesterday, the daily conference programme accompanying AgriteQ 2026 launched Biotechnology Day, featuring specialised scientific sessions and research presentations on the latest developments in biotechnology and its applications in agriculture, food

security and environmental sustainability.

The first session examined the potential use of biotechnology in jobba plants to combat desertification, biodiversity genomics in Qatar and its role in safeguarding natural resources, and the future of herbal science in supporting biodiversity and climate adaptation. It also addressed salt-tolerant gene assessment in Qatar and pesticide residue monitoring pro-

grammes, alongside related global regulatory challenges.

The second session included presentations by specialised medical and scientific technology companies, focusing on technology transfer from research to agricultural application and the future of agricultural biotechnology in the region. Discussions concluded with proposals on translating scientific recommendations into actionable plans, attended by decision-makers from research institutions, technical agricultural departments and relevant government entities.

Biotechnology Day was organised as part of the Ministry's efforts to support applied scientific research and strengthen collaboration between research institutions and both public and private sectors.

La Menina sculpture unveiled at Old Doha Port

Old Doha Port unveiled the iconic "La Menina" sculpture by Spanish artist Antonio Zazzo, painted by Qatari artist Muna AlBader, in the presence of Alvaro Renedo, ambassador of Spain to Qatar, and Eng Mohammed Abdulla al-Mulla, CEO of Old Doha Port.

Inspired by Las Meninas by Diego Velázquez, the sculpture reflects Spain's artistic legacy and reimagines tradition through a contemporary lens. Historically associated with the strength of the Spanish monarchy and the brilliance of Spain's Golden Age, La Menina has evolved into a modern symbol of cultural identity and national pride.

At Old Doha Port, the artwork takes on a distinct local dimension. Its blue maritime design pays tribute to Qatar's deep-rooted relationship with the sea, while the flowing wave motifs, drawing inspiration from both the Qatari and Spanish flags, symbolise dialogue and cultural exchange.

Internationally, 'La Menina' serves as a travelling cultural ambassador of Spain, adapting to each host country while preserving its Spanish roots. This balance between global recognition and local interpretation creates a meaningful artistic bridge between Qatar and Spain, making the sculpture both globally recognisable and locally resonant.



Amir patronises Qatar Education Excellence Award ceremony



His Highness the Amir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani has patronised the 19th Qatar Education Excellence Award ceremony held yesterday morning at the Sheraton Doha hotel. The ceremony was attended by HE Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman bin Jassim al-Thani, HE Speaker of the Shura Council Hassan bin Abdullah al-Ghanim, and Their Excellencies sheikhs, ministers and senior state officials, as well as teachers and parents of the awardees. (QNA)

Police Academy holds certificate award ceremony for graduates



In presence of HE Minister of State for Interior Affairs Sheikh Abdulaziz bin Faisal bin Mohammed al-Thani, the Police Academy organised a certificate award ceremony for the second batch of Diploma in Police Sciences (male and female) graduates at the Police Institute, and the first batch of Diploma in International Fire Safety Management graduates at the Ras Laffan Emergency and Safety College.

The ceremony was attended by HE Undersecretary of the Ministry of Interior Abdullah bin Khalaf bin Hattab al-Kaabi, along

with a number of department directors and senior officers, as well as the graduates' families.

HE the Minister of State for Interior Affairs awarded certificates to 107 graduates from the Ministry of Interior, 30 members from the Internal Security Force (Lekhwiya), and 17 female personnel from the Ministry of Interior enrolled in the Diploma in Police Sciences program.

His Excellency also awarded Diplomas in International Fire Safety Management to nine graduates from the Ministry of Interior and three scholarship recipients from Palestine. (QNA)



DFI reveals Qumra 2026 Masters

Doha Film Institute (DFI) announced globally celebrated visionaries - Faouzi Bensaïdi, Gael Garcia Bernal, Alice Diop, Diego Luna and Gustavo Santaolalla - as Qumra Masters for its 12th annual talent incubator event, taking place from March 27-April 1.

Reinforcing Qumra's standing as the Arab world's premier platform for creative mentorship and cinematic development, the 2026 Masters will share creative perspectives forged across their distinguished careers—guiding a new generation of filmmakers as they develop bold, original work.

A cornerstone of DFI's mission, Qumra supports filmmakers from the region and beyond, connecting them with leading international artists and industry experts through intensive mentorship, masterclasses and professional exchange.

For over a decade, Qumra has played a decisive role in nurturing independent voices and expanding the global reach of thought-provoking cinema.

Fatma Hassan Alremaihi, CEO of DFI, said: "Qumra was created to ensure that emerging filmmakers are not only supported, but truly seen - artistically, professionally and globally. Welcoming these luminaries as our 2026 Qumra Masters reflects our belief that generous mentorship can change creative trajectories. Their commitment to storytelling, cultural dialogue and artistic courage will have a lasting impact on the filmmakers they engage

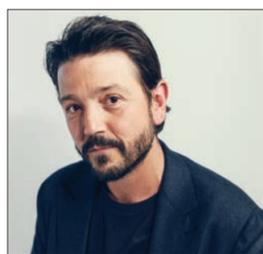


Alice Diop

with, and on the stories that will shape cinema's future.

"Gael Garcia Bernal's return to Qumra is especially meaningful, having been a Master in the very first edition. Over 12 editions, Qumra has grown in scale, ambition and global reach, becoming a space defined by creative exchange, generosity and momentum."

Masterful Moroccan filmmaker and actor Faouzi Bensaïdi crafts films of quiet tension and dark wit, where precise form and human fragility reveal the poetry of everyday disquiet; influential actor-director-producer whose career spans landmark independent cinema and global mainstream projects, Gael Garcia Bernal consistently champions socially driven storytelling; acclaimed filmmaker Alice Diop, whose rigorously observed documentaries and award-winning narrative work have positioned her as a defining voice in contemporary European cinema; a leading ac-



Diego Luna. Photo by: Corey Nickols/Getty Images for IMDb



Gustavo Santaolalla

tor, director and producer, Diego Luna's body of work bridges auteur cinema and major studio productions, while advancing Latino representation across global platforms; and a composer of rare emotional restraint, Gustavo Santaolalla has created some of the most haunting sonic landscapes across film, television and music.

Elia Suleiman, artistic adviser at DFI, said: "Cinema begins where certainty ends. It exists in



Gael Garcia Bernal



Faouzi Bensaïdi

the tension between what is seen and what is felt, offering a language beyond image."

The 12th edition of Qumra will feature masterclasses, one-on-one mentorship sessions and curated industry meetings, offering participants rare access to creative and expert guidance from across the global film ecosystem. Further programme and guest details will be announced in the coming weeks.

MoPH unveils comprehensive food safety plan for Ramadan

The Ministry of Public Health (MoPH) has developed a comprehensive food safety inspection plan for Qatar during the holy month of Ramadan, as part of ongoing efforts to safeguard food safety and public health, and to protect consumers during a period when demand for food products significantly increases.

The plan aims to strengthen compliance with health requirements and ensure the availability of safe and wholesome food for consumers through inspection visits to more than 2,000 retail outlets, including major consumer complexes and supermarkets, groceries, small points of sale, popular kitchens, and Ramadan Iftar banquets. Inspections will be intensified at points of entry for food commodities with high consumption during the holy month, such as dates, juices, meat, poultry, sweets, and vegetables, to ensure compliance with applicable technical regulations and approved standards.

The plan gives particular attention to the most in-demand and circulating food items during the holy month, in addition to intensifying testing of raw materials with increased use, such as oils, nuts, and dates, to verify their safety and the absence of contaminants. Samples of various food products will also be taken to confirm their safety and compliance with approved standards.

MoPH specialised technical units operating at land, sea, and air points of entry will continue working to ensure efficient, streamlined health control procedures and to facilitate the

flow of goods to meet market needs during Ramadan. Inspection will be intensified at points of entry for food commodities with high consumption during the holy month, such as dates, juices, meat, poultry, sweets and vegetables, to ensure their compliance with applicable technical regulations and approved standards.

To support official control activities, the plan also covers registration, permitting and certification processes to ensure continuity and efficiency of services during Ramadan. This includes prioritising the review and approval of registration requests for the most commonly consumed food products, as well as permit applications for establishments operating during Ramadan, such as kitchens, restaurants and Ramadan tents. Procedures will be facilitated as far as possible without compromising approved requirements and conditions and will also strengthen round-the-clock coordination with relevant entities.

The Food Safety Department at MoPH has also focused on enhancing awareness activities to maximise impact. A social media awareness campaign will be launched featuring messages and tips for consumers to promote healthy practices that help protect against food-related risks. A specialised awareness workshop has already been organised for those in charge of popular kitchens to explain food safety requirements and best hygienic practices for preparation, storage and display, as well as mechanisms to prevent food contamination, with a focus on Ramadan-specific requirements to help raise compliance levels and reduce health risks. (QNA)

Visit Qatar announces return of 'Throwback Food Festival'

Visit Qatar announced the return of The Throwback Food Festival for its third edition from today (February 16) until the end of Ramadan at Old Doha Port. The festival revisits the culinary themes of the 1970s, 1980s, and 1990s, with 30 participating vendors and restaurants, including three from the Middle East, presenting menus inspired by those decades.

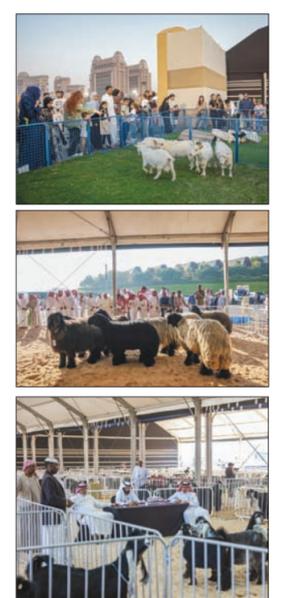
In addition to food offerings, the festival features period-inspired décor, ambiance and programming, positioning it as a family-oriented destination throughout Ramadan.



Halal Qatar Festival at Katara showcases Gulf heritage

Blending competition with tradition, the Halal Qatar Festival 2026 continues at the southern area of Katara Cultural Village, showcasing the authenticity of Qatari and Gulf heritage while reinforcing Bedouin values and supporting local livestock production. The festival has drawn a large turnout and wide Gulf participation from livestock owners and breeders, reaffirming its status as a leading platform within the cultural and economic landscape. Breeders' expertise is on full display, embodying long-standing traditions and highlighting their continued relevance today.

Competitions in the Arab sheep category witnessed strong rivalry between local and Gulf participants, while the Awarid category also saw intense contest. Winners of the Golden Farm Award were crowned in both categories, recognising excellence in breeding and farm management. In addition to the competitions, dedicated pavilions offer visitors an immersive cultural experience, featuring tasting opportunities and direct engagement with exhibitors.



Diplomatic Institute, Lekhwiya sign pact to expand co-operation



The Diplomatic Institute at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Internal Security Force (Lekhwiya) signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) on joint co-operation and the exchange of expertise.

This agreement aims to strengthen institutional partnerships and develop training and capacity-building opportunities between the sides. The MoU was signed by Director of the Diplomatic Institute, Dr Abdulaziz Mohammed al-Horr and Commander of Lekhwiya Training Institute, Colonel

Nawaf Abdullah Bakheet al-Maadadi. The MoU aims to broaden co-operation in training, development, and the exchange of expertise and knowledge, as well as to organise joint programmes and workshops. This will contribute to developing national competencies and enhancing institutional integration among entities involved in capacity building in the diplomatic and security fields. It will also support national efforts to prepare qualified personnel and facilitate the exchange of best practices and experiences. (QNA)