



Qatar Insurance
Financial Results (FY 2025)

Gross Written Premiums (GWP)
9%
QAR 9.9B

Net Profit Before the Impact of P11r Two Taxes
19%
QAR 874M

Net Profit Profit attributable to QIC shareholders
9%
QAR 791M

Earnings Per Share:
10%
QAR 0.188

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Ramadan Mubarak

Vodafone extends its warmest wishes to you and your family over the blessed month of Ramadan



ORYX POLYDEX
Durable waterproofing-performance for roof protection

BUSINESS | Page 1

Milaha to continue fleet expansion, deepen trade flows between Asia and Middle East

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IFTAR TREATS

GUAC AND ROLL?
Only on talabat

Amir receives well-wishers as Ramadan begins

His Highness the Amir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani received at Lusail Palace last evening a group of well-wishers on the occasion of the holy month of Ramadan. His Highness the Amir received HE Speaker of the Shura Council Hassan bin Abdullah al-Ghanem, Sheikhs, ministers, undersecretaries, and members of the Shura Council, alongside citizens. His Highness the Amir exchanged greetings and felicitations with the well-wishers on this blessed occasion, praying to Allah the Almighty to make it a month of goodness and blessings for Qatar and its people. The reception was attended by His Highness the Personal Representative of the Amir, Sheikh Jassim bin Hamad al-Thani, His Highness Sheikh Abdullah bin Khalifa al-Thani, and HE Sheikh Jassim bin Khalifa al-Thani, along with a number of Sheikhs and high-ranking officials. (QNA)



Qatar to pay students to study nuclear engineering abroad

Grads assured of govt jobs with 85% allowance

By A Staff Reporter
Doha

Three government ministries joined forces yesterday to unveil a scholarship programme that will send Qatari students abroad to study nuclear engineering – with their salaries running the entire time they're in class.

Standing at the podium of the Ministry of Education and Higher Education (MoEHE)'s press conference, officials from MoEHE, the Ministry of Environment and Climate Change (MoECC), and the Civil Service and Government Development Bureau laid out what they billed as one of the most generous scholarship



packages the state has offered in a specialised technical field.

The pitch is straightforward: students who qualify will receive a full government salary throughout their undergraduate studies overseas, have those study years counted towards their civil service tenure, and walk into a guaranteed Grade Nine government position upon graduation – with a path to postgraduate funding waiting after that.

"This is a strategic qualitative step," said Dr Hareb Moham-

med al-Jabri, MoEHE's Assistant Undersecretary for Higher Education Affairs, describing nuclear engineering as "one of the most critical and future-oriented scientific disciplines". He was direct about the programme's intent – it isn't simply about producing graduates, it's about filling a specific institutional gap. Appointments will go directly to MoECC's Radiation Protection Department, which regulates radiation use across Qatar's medical and industrial sectors. **To Page 8**

PM, Venezuela leader hold talks

The Acting President of Venezuela Delcy Rodríguez met yesterday in Caracas with HE the Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman bin Jassim al-Thani.

HE the Prime Minister conveyed the greetings of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani to the acting president, along with His Highness' wishes of continued health and happiness for her, and further progress and prosperity for the government and people of Venezuela. The Venezuelan leader entrusted the Prime Minister to convey her greetings to the Amir, wishing His Highness continued health and happiness, and Qatar continued progress and development. They discussed bilateral relations as well as a number of regional and international issues of common interest.

HE the Prime Minister affirmed Qatar's commitment to supporting efforts aimed at enhancing security and stability at both the regional and international levels. (QNA)



Cabinet backs finance reforms, agreements

By A Staff Reporter
Doha

HE the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of State for Defence Affairs Sheikh Saud bin Abdulrahman bin Hassan al-Thani chaired the Cabinet's regular meeting yesterday at the Amiri Diwan. At the beginning, the Cabinet extended greetings to His Highness the Amir Sheikh Tamim

bin Hamad al-Thani on the advent of Ramadan, wishing continued prosperity for Qatar under His Highness' leadership and peace for the Arab and Islamic nations. The Cabinet praised the Amir's patronage of the 19th Education Excellence Award ceremony, affirming education and scientific research as central pillars of Qatar National Vision 2030 and the Third National Development Strategy 2024-2030.

The Cabinet approved a draft decision to amend the organisation of administrative units within the Ministry of Finance, assigning the Public Projects Management Department responsibilities for developing and implementing policies related to government asset management. The move aims to strengthen governance and support financial sustainability in line with the national strategy. **Page 4**

RAMADAN THOUGHT



O mankind! Worship your Lord (Allah), Who created you and those who were before you so that you may become Al-Muttaqun (the pious). (Qur'an 2: 21)

Prayer times

Fajr...4.48; Zuhr...11.48; Asr...3.04; Maghrib...5.33; Isha...7.03

Fasting times

Iftar today5.33pm
Imsak tomorrow.....4.37am

Morning fog reduces visibility across Doha

By Joey Aguilar
Staff Reporter

Residents and commuters in Doha woke up to unusually misty conditions early yesterday as a blanket of fog settled over the city, temporarily reducing visibility on major roads and in residential districts. According to the Qatar Meteorology Department, fog and mist formed in the early hours before sunrise, with visibility dipping significantly in some areas. The atmospheric conditions were linked to high overnight humidity, cooler temperatures near the surface, and light winds, which together created an environment favourable for fog formation.



Foggy conditions seen in Al Wakra yesterday morning. PICTURE: Thajudheen

In the capital's downtown districts and surrounding

suburbs, many reported hazy conditions around 5:30-7am,

prompting motorists to exercise caution as they began

their morning commute. Although no major traffic disruptions or accidents were reported, officials advised drivers to use low-beam headlights and maintain safe following distances during periods of reduced visibility. Weather forecasters had anticipated the phenomenon as part of the region's typical late-winter weather pattern. The Meteorology Department had noted that misty to foggy conditions at dawn were likely, especially where humidity levels remained elevated overnight. By mid-morning, however, the fog had largely dissipated as temperatures warmed and winds increased slightly, restoring clear skies and normal visibility across the city. Daytime conditions are expected to remain mild and dry, with temperatures climbing into the low 20s Celsius and gentle breezes prevailing through the afternoon.

Snoonu Launches Its Ramadan Campaign “Delivering Kindness” to Strengthen Community Giving and Connection



Snoonu has announced the launch of its Ramadan 2026 campaign under the theme “Delivering Kindness,” an initiative inspired by the spirit and values of the holy month. The campaign aims to empower the community to experience Ramadan as it should be, a time when generosity is renewed, compassion deepens, and joy and togetherness flourish.

The campaign is built on the belief that Ramadan is not merely a seasonal occasion, but a holistic human experience that reshapes priorities and brings hearts closer together. Through its digital platform and diverse services, Snoonu seeks to serve as a daily partner during the holy month — simplifying life’s details while fostering meaningful moments of connection and tranquility in every home.

A Platform That Connects Goodness Through Strong National Partnerships

This year, Snoonu continues its tra-

dition of launching impactful community initiatives in collaboration with leading national humanitarian and development organizations, including Qatar Charity, Education Above All, the Qatar Cancer Society, the Qatar Red Crescent, Qatar Foundation, and several private-sector partners.

These partnerships reflect Snoonu’s vision of being more than a service platform. It aspires to be a bridge between people and meaningful causes, connecting community initiatives with individuals through a seamless, technology-driven experience that enables everyone to contribute to positive impact. Through these collaborations, Snoonu works to expand the culture of giving, strengthen social responsibility, and reinforce solidarity as an essential part of the Ramadan experience.

Engaging Digital Experiences Blending Technology and Tradition

As part of this year’s campaign,

Snoonu will introduce a series of interactive digital experiences within its app, thoughtfully designed for Ramadan. These experiences blend technological innovation with cherished Ramadan traditions to create a unique user journey.

The initiative will feature interactive spaces, Ramadan-themed content, and digital activations that encourage community participation. By integrating technology with the spirit of the month, Snoonu transforms its platform into a space that combines service, engagement, and purpose.

These digital experiences aim to inspire daily interaction that reflects the atmosphere of Ramadan, enabling users to participate in charitable and community-driven activities in simple and accessible ways, bringing the campaign’s message of “Delivering Kindness” to life.

Community Initiatives That Reflect the Spirit of the Month

The campaign also includes a range of initiatives designed to translate

Ramadan values into tangible action. These include programs supporting charitable causes, initiatives promoting gratitude and appreciation, and volunteer activities that encourage youth engagement during the holy month, in alignment with the Year of Youth vision.

In addition, Snoonu will launch “Freej Snoonu,” its Ramadan Village, a thoughtfully designed community space that brings families, children, and youth together in an authentic Ramadan atmosphere. The village will offer cultural, interactive, and entertainment experiences that strengthen social bonds and revive the spirit of the holy month in a contemporary setting.

The concept of “Freej” holds deep meaning in Qatari culture. More than just a traditional neighborhood, it symbolizes belonging, warmth, and the close-knit relationships that shaped generations. It was where identities were formed, where homes stood close and hearts were even closer, and where joys and hardships were shared as one extended family. In drawing inspiration from this heritage, Snoonu seeks to revive the spirit of traditional neighborhoods within a modern framework that strengthens connection and community in today’s urban landscape.

Technology in Service of Values

Snoonu emphasized that “Delivering Kindness” goes beyond traditional service offerings. The campaign is about translating the values and emotions of Ramadan into meaningful action. Through an integrated digital ecosystem that connects the app with community-driven initiatives, Snoonu enables individuals to support society in simple and direct ways.

Every interaction within the app — every order, every engagement — becomes an opportunity to create a positive impact and embody the true spirit of Ramadan.

Through this campaign, Snoonu reaffirms its commitment to fostering a culture of local giving, empowering individuals to make a difference, and ensuring that Ramadan 2026 is experienced as it should be: closer, warmer, and deeply connected to the community.

Promotion valid from 19.02.2026 to 21.02.2026. Bulk Purchase not allowed. These Promotions are available only at our major Hypermarkets.

	<p>2 DAYS ONLY</p> <p>QAR: 16.50</p> <p>QAR: 9.75</p> <p>مانجو يمني 1 كيلو Taimoor Mango Yemen 1kg</p>	<p>QAR: 7.50</p> <p>QAR: 5.75</p> <p>تفاح فوجو جامبو صيني 1 كيلو Apple Premium Fuji Jumbo China 1kg</p>	<p>QAR: 8.75</p> <p>QAR: 7.25</p> <p>كيوي ايطالي 1 كيلو Kiwi Fruit Italy 1kg</p>	<p>QAR: 6.50</p> <p>QAR: 4.75</p> <p>طماطم عضوية قطري 1 كيلو Organic Tomato Qatar 1kg</p>	<p>QAR: 69.75</p> <p>QAR: 52.75</p> <p>لحم ضروف مفروم استرالي 1 كيلو Lamb Mince Australia 1kg</p>
<p>2 DAYS ONLY</p> <p>QAR: 12.75</p> <p>QAR: 6.75</p> <p>سمك بلطي مصري 1 كيلو Tilapia Egypt 1kg</p>	<p>QAR: 39.75</p> <p>QAR: 29.75</p> <p>سمك دنيس مزارعة عمالي 1 كيلو Farmed Sea Bream Oman 1kg</p>	<p>QAR: 34.75</p> <p>QAR: 27.75</p> <p>قطع لحم بقري برازيلي 1 كيلو Beef Cubes Brazil 1kg</p>	<p>QAR: 12.00</p> <p>QAR: 7.75</p> <p>دجاج كامل 800 غرام Sadia Whole Chicken 800gm</p>	<p>QAR: 31.75</p> <p>QAR: 24.75</p> <p>ي اف ام بي سي دقيق 5 كيلو + 1 كيلو KFMBK All Purpose Flour 5kg + 1kg</p>	<p>QAR: 29.00</p> <p>QAR: 22.00</p> <p>زيتون اخضر يوناني جامبو 1 كيلو Greek Green Olives Jumbo 1kg</p>
<p>QAR: 24.75</p> <p>QAR: 15.50</p> <p>ابو قوس حليب عضوي كامل الدسم 1 لتر / 3 حبات Rainbow UHT Milk Organic Full Fat 1Ltr X 3pcs</p>	<p>QAR: 119.75</p> <p>QAR: 79.00</p> <p>پامبرز حفاظات اطفال منوعة ا حبة Pampers Baby Diaper Pants Asstd x 1pc</p>	<p>QAR: 29.50</p> <p>QAR: 19.75</p> <p>دافيدوف قهوة منوعة 90 غرام / حبة Davidoff Coffee Asstd 90gm X 1pc</p>	<p>QAR: 19.00</p> <p>QAR: 12.75</p> <p>كي دي دي عصير منوع 125 مل / حبة KDD UHT Juice Asstd 125ml X 16pcs</p>	<p>QAR: 28.50</p> <p>البادية ارز بسمي سيلبا ذهبي 5 كيلو Al Badia Golden Sella Basmati Rice 5kg</p>	<p>QAR: 34.50</p> <p>QAR: 15.00</p> <p>اربال مسحوق غسيل برائحة الخزامى 2.25 كيلو Ariel Washing Powder Lavender 2.25kg</p>

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Super Deals أفضل العروض

18th to 21st of February

19th to 21st of February 2026

١٨ إلى ٢١ فبراير ٢٠٢٦

<p>Per KG</p> <p>Red onion, India</p> <p>1.50 QAR</p>	<p>Per Pack</p> <p>Mushroom white 250g, Local</p> <p>4.25 QAR</p>	<p>Per KG</p> <p>Broccoli, Oman</p> <p>4.75 QAR</p>	<p>Per KG</p> <p>Sweet corn, Local</p> <p>5.75 QAR</p>
<p>Per KG</p> <p>تمر العراق Dates, Iraq</p> <p>4.75 QAR</p>	<p>Per KG</p> <p>مندرين نادوركوت المغرب Nadorcott mandarine, Morocco</p> <p>7.75 QAR</p>	<p>Per Pack</p> <p>Blueberry 500g, Morocco</p> <p>31.75 QAR</p>	<p>Per KG</p> <p>Labneh, Local</p> <p>12.75 QAR</p>
<p>Per KG</p> <p>Tang orange tub 2kg assorted</p> <p>29.50 QAR</p>	<p>Per KG</p> <p>Anchor milk sachet 2.25kg</p> <p>49.75 QAR</p>	<p>Per KG</p> <p>Edam cheese ball, Netherland</p> <p>27.75 QAR</p>	<p>Per KG</p> <p>Buffalo cubes, India</p> <p>19.50 QAR</p>

18th to 24th of February

18th to 24th of February 2026

١٨ إلى ٢٤ فبراير ٢٠٢٦

<p>Per KG</p> <p>Perla chicken tenderized breast 2kg</p> <p>25.00 QAR</p>	<p>Per KG</p> <p>كوكاكولا ٣٥٠ مل متنوعة Coca Cola 350ml assorted</p> <p>8.75 QAR</p>	<p>Per KG</p> <p>جبنه ايدام هولندا Edam cheese ball, Netherland</p> <p>27.75 QAR</p>	<p>Per KG</p> <p>مكعبات لحم جاموس الهند Buffalo cubes, India</p> <p>19.50 QAR</p>
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18th to 24th of February 2026

١٨ إلى ٢٤ فبراير ٢٠٢٦

<p>Per PC</p> <p>بطانية 10 سم x 200 سم متنوعة Flannel blanket 150cm x 200cm assorted</p> <p>10.75 QAR</p>	<p>Per PC</p> <p>بنطال للسيدات Ladies loose pant</p> <p>10.75 QAR</p>	<p>Per PC</p> <p>طقم أواني طهي هومواي متنوع Homeway marble cookware set assorted</p> <p>89.00 QAR</p>	<p>Per PC</p> <p>تلفاز هايسنس Hisense UHD TV 55A61Q</p> <p>849.00 QAR</p>
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Amir sends congratulations to Gambia president

His Highness the Amir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani, His Highness the Deputy Amir Sheikh Abdullah bin Hamad al-Thani and HE Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman bin Jassim al-Thani sent yesterday cables of congratulations to President of Gambia Adama Barrow on the anniversary of his country's Independence Day. (QNA)

Labour minister meets Kenyan envoy



HE Minister of Labour Dr Ali bin Smaikh al-Marri, held a meeting yesterday with Kenya ambassador to Qatar Mohamed Nur Adan. The discussion focused on bilateral co-operation between Qatar and Kenya in the field of labour, exploring avenues to strengthen and further develop these collaborative efforts. (QNA)

Public Prosecution reveals Ramadan work hours

The Public Prosecution has announced its working hours during the holy month of Ramadan, ensuring the continued, efficient, and smooth delivery of its services to the public. The working hours at the Public Prosecution building designated for public services will be from Sunday to Thursday, from 9am to 2pm and from 9pm to 1am. On Fridays and Saturdays, working hours will be limited to the evening period from 9pm to 1am. The Residency Affairs Prosecution, located in the Search and Follow-up Department building at the Ministry of Interior, will operate from Sunday to Thursday in two shifts: a morning shift from 9am to 2pm, and an evening shift from 9pm to 1am. The Judgments and Cheques Enforcement Prosecution at Hamad International Airport will continue to operate 24 hours a day to ensure the uninterrupted completion of travel-related procedures and legal enforcement processes.

MoCI recalls beauty creams, face wash

The Ministry of Commerce and Industry (MoCI), in co-operation with Mohseni Trading Stores, has announced the recall of beauty creams Aneza Gold, Goree Beauty Cream, Goree Whitening Face Wash, Faiza Beauty Cream, Golden Pearl Beauty Cream, and Jiaoli Cream. The recall is due to the products containing very high levels of mercury, which may pose a serious risk to consumer health. The ministry has urged all customers to report any violations to its Consumer Protection and Anti-Commercial Fraud Department, which processes complaints, inquiries and suggestions through the following channels: Call Centre: 16001, e-mail: info@moci.gov.qa, ministry's accounts on social media: @mociqatar, ministry's Mobile App: MOCIQATAR (available on iOS and Android devices)

Cabinet praises Education Excellence Award winners

HE Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of State for Defence Affairs Sheikh Saoud bin Abdulrahman bin Hassan al-Thani chaired the Cabinet's regular meeting held yesterday morning at the Amiri Diwan.

Following the meeting, HE Minister of Justice and Minister of State for Cabinet Affairs Ibrahim bin Ali al-Mohannadi stated the following:

At the outset of the meeting, the Cabinet extended its highest greetings to His Highness the Amir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani on the advent of the blessed month of Ramadan, praying to Almighty Allah to return this occasion to His Highness with good health and happiness, to the beloved country of Qatar and its people and residents with prosperity and growth under His Highness the Amir's wise leadership, and to the Arab and Islamic nations with security, peace and stability.

On the other hand, the Cabinet commended His Highness the Amir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani's honouring of the winners of the Education Excellence Award in its 19th edition, as well as His Highness' patronage of the award's ceremony. This engagement is in continuation of His Highness' approach to celebrating science and scientists, and considering investment in education and scientific research, in addition to focusing on human beings, as a national and strategic choice for the country, and a fundamental pillar in Qatar National Vision 2030 (QNV 2030) and the Third National Development Strategy 2024-2030.

The Cabinet also extended congratulations to the ministries and government agencies that won the Government Excellence Award in its second edition, hailing their outstanding performance



that qualified them to win this prestigious award, which has contributed since its inception to developing the level of institutional performance and the quality of government services.

Afterwards, the Cabinet reviewed the topics on its agenda, as it approved the draft Cabinet decision to amend the organisation of some of the administrative units that make up the Ministry of Finance and to assign their responsibilities. The draft decision aims to strengthen the institutional and organisational framework for managing government assets, by assigning the responsibilities of preparing policies, governance frameworks, and related operational models and following up on their implementation to the Public Projects Management Department at the Ministry of Finance, in implementation of the ministry's strategy aimed at enhancing the efficiency of financial sustainability in line with the Third National Development Strategy.

The Cabinet approved the draft Cabinet decision amending some provisions

of Decision No 36 of 2014 establishing the National Committee for the Customs Clearance System and trade facilitation across borders (single window). Prepared by the Ministry of Finance in co-ordination with the General Authority of Customs, the draft decision aims to strengthen the role of the committee and to enable it to carry out its tasks in accordance with the highest performance standards.

The Cabinet also decided to approve a draft agreement between the government of Qatar and the UN regarding the arrangement for the World Investment Forum 2026 in Doha, a draft agreement between the government of Qatar and the government of Tanzania regarding the elimination of double taxation with respect to taxes on income and the prevention of tax avoidance and evasion, and a draft agreement between the government of Qatar and the government of Namibia regarding the elimination of double taxation with respect to taxes on income and the prevention of tax avoidance and evasion.

The Cabinet concluded its meeting by reviewing four reports and taking the appropriate measures in their regard. The documents included the annual report on the work of the state affairs sector for 2025, the annual report on the activities of Qatar Development Bank for 2025, a report and protocol on the outcomes of hosting the meetings of the third session of the Qatari-Turkmen Joint Commission for Economic and Trade Co-operation (Doha - November 2025), and a report and protocol on the outcomes of hosting the meetings of the fourth session of the Joint Economic and Trade Committee between the government of Qatar and the government of Azerbaijan (Doha - November 2025). (QNA)

Role of civil society organisations discussed

The Ministry of Social Development and Family (MSDF) represented by the Private Associations and Institutions Department, in collaboration with the Excellence Center for Training and Consulting at the Doha Institute for Graduate Studies, organised a specialised panel discussion titled "Private Associations and Institutions in Light of Qatar National Vision 2030."

The session, attended by a number of experts and leaders of associations and private institutions, aimed to highlight the current state of civil society organisations and to analyse their roles in supporting sustainable development paths. Participants also discussed ways to enhance partnership and integration between these organisations and both the government and private sectors, in line with the priorities of Qatar National Vision 2030.

During the session, Director of the



Private Associations and Institutions Department at the Ministry Abdullah Mohammed al-Hajri emphasised the importance of involving these associations in the dialogue to listen to their perspectives on their current status and the requirements for development under the national vision.

Other speakers delivered an introductory presentation on the session's objectives and methodology.

Several experts also spoke about dig-

ital governance and its role in increasing the efficiency of civil society organisations, while reviewing the sector's contributions to promoting sustainable development in Qatar.

The event featured focused discussions to analyse the working environment of private associations and institutions, diagnosing the reality of governance and sustainability, as well as the level of partnership with the public and private sectors. (QNA)

Ministry recalls GWM Tank 500, Volkswagen models

The Ministry of Commerce and Industry (MoCI), in co-operation with Teyseer Motors Co. WLL, Qatar's GWM dealership, has announced the recall of GWM Tank 500 vehicle's 2025 models. The recall is due to the possibility of the rear windshield not being able to perform the defrosting function, which may obstruct rear vision while driving in certain circumstances, increasing the risk of a crash occurring.

"MoCI, in co-operation with Q-Auto, Qatar's Volkswagen dealership, has also announced the recall of Volkswagen Beetle, Crafter, Eos, CC, Polo, Tiguan, Passat, T5 Van, Multivan 2014- 2018 models. The recall is due to potential deterioration of front air bag propellant due to humidity which may lead to burst of the gas generator housing, causing injuries to the passengers. This may trigger the brake warning light, display a pop-up message

advising the driver to slowly bring the vehicle to the dealer, and potentially lead to a reduction in the vehicles braking performance. The ministry said the recall campaign comes within the framework of its ongoing efforts to protect consumers and ensure that car dealers follow up on vehicle defects and repairs. The ministry said that it will co-ordinate with the dealer to follow up on the maintenance and repair works and will communicate with customers to ensure that the necessary repairs are carried out. The ministry has urged all customers to report any violations to its Consumer Protection and Anti-Commercial Fraud Department, which processes complaints, inquiries and suggestions through the following channels: Call Centre: 16001, e-mail: info@moci.gov.qa, ministry's accounts on social media: @mociqatar, ministry's Mobile App: MOCIQATAR (available on iOS and Android devices)

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مركز للطاقة QatarEnergy

The General, Limited Tenders Committees and Supply Chain Department announces the following Tenders:

Important Notice: Suppliers and Contractors who are already registered with QatarEnergy via Mushtaryat Portal can "Buy Tender Online and download Tender Document" from QatarEnergy website (Mushtaryat Portal). Effective from 1st July 2023, bids submitted by a Local company (companies incorporated in Qatar) acting as Tenderer in accordance with this Invitation to Tender, will not be accepted by QatarEnergy without any further notification, if such companies are not in possession of a valid ICV score in the ICV portal (https://icv.qa/en-US) by the specified Original Tender Closing Date or Original due date for submission of COMMERCIAL Package in case of two stage Tendering as per ITT. However, any Local company that has been established within last two (2) years is exempt from this mandatory ICV certification requirement.

Sl. No	Tender Number	Tender Sale Period		Tender Closing Date	Tender Bond	Bond Curr.	Tender Fee	Fee Curr.
		Start Date	End Date					
1	LT26MT0006	19.02.2026	25.02.2026	30.03.2026	10,000.00	QAR	N/A	

Title of Tender: SUPPLY OF PAINTS, VARNISHES, PRIMERS & THINNERS ON CALL OFF AGREEMENT BASIS

Mid-Tender Meeting Location: To be advised if required

Mid-Tender Meeting Date & Time: To be advised if required

- Tender documents can be purchased and downloaded from QatarEnergy Website -> Supply Management -> Tenders page during the Tender Sale Period mentioned above against each Tender. Request for issuance of Tender after the specified Tender Sale Period will not be entertained.
- Always refer to QatarEnergy Website (www.qatenergy.qa) -> Supply Management -> Tenders page for up to date information on QatarEnergy Tenders. Subscribe to Tender Alert to receive notification in your email on new Tenders
- Changes to Tender Sale Period and Bid Closing Date will be updated in QatarEnergy website/Mushtaryat Portal only.
- Brief Scopes of Work for the above tenders are posted on the QatarEnergy website/Mushtaryat Portal.
- Suppliers and Contractors who are in possession of a valid SAP ID issued by QatarEnergy are instructed to maintain their Company Registration and Communication details up to date and valid via QatarEnergy Mushtaryat Portal on urgent basis.
- No queries will be entertained, or bids received, from entities who have not purchased tender documents in compliance with the above provisions.
- QatarEnergy invites all prospective Suppliers and Contractors interested to participate in QatarEnergy Tenders to register online and obtain a QatarEnergy SAP Vendor Code, a mandatory requirement for the issue of Tender Documents by QatarEnergy.
- Prospective Qatar based Suppliers and Contractors interested to participate in future QatarEnergy Tenders shall obtain an ICV score. Relevant information pertaining to ICV, ICV Scorecard, ICV Certification, and ICV Guidelines are available on the ICV Digital Portal - https://icv.qa/en-US

مؤسسة قطر Qatar Foundation

INVITATION TO TENDER

Tender Reference	Description	Tender Fee (QAR)	Tender Bond Value (QAR)	Bid Closing Date
CO-RFQ-445	Supply, Installation and Commissioning of Furniture requirements for HBKU Classrooms	1,000.00	N/A	17-March-2026 2:00 PM
CO-RFQ-443	Supply, Installation and Commissioning of Furniture for Qatar Academy Classrooms	500.00	N/A	16-March-2026 2:00 PM
CO-RFQ-447	Supply, Installation and commissioning of Ballon light cover envelope at Oxygen Park	500.00	N/A	17-March-2026 2:00 PM
CO-RFQ-448	Security Manned Guarding Services for Qatar Foundation on Call-off basis for 5 years	1,000.00	100,000.00	02-APRIL-2026 2:00 PM

Qatar Foundation (QF) Procurement Directorate is inviting companies to participate in the above listed public tenders. To receive the tender documents, please follow the below steps:

- Supplier Registration** It is mandatory to be registered as a supplier with QF in order to participate in the above tender(s). Only QF registered suppliers will be allowed to pay the tender fees online. Therefore, please visit QF website at <https://www.qf.org.qa/supplier-registration> to complete the Supplier Registration process.

Tender Fee: Interested bidders can Sign in by visiting this link <https://suppliers.qf.org.qa/abstract> and pay the respective non-refundable and non-transferable tender fee online. All Tender Fees are to be paid using credit cards only.

Tender Fee Payment Dates: Payment of Tender Fee online will be from 19th February 2026 to 26th February 2026.

- All bidders, who are registered and have paid the required tender fees online to QF, will then be granted access to download the Tender Document.
- Technical and commercial bids need to be submitted and attached online in QF Supplier Portal as per instructions provided in the "Supplier Portal" work instruction.
 - The commercial bid must be valid for **180 days** from Bid Closing Date.
 - The commercial bid must be accompanied by a bank guarantee (tender bond) issued by a local bank in Qatar and should be valid for **180 days** from the bid closing date (where applicable as per the Tender documents).
 - The successful tenderer will be required to submit a performance bond as prescribed in each of the above tender documents.
 - Qatar Foundation special qualifications, terms and conditions shall apply as stipulated in the tender document.

Note: All work instructions for Supplier registration and Supplier portal can be found in below link: <https://www.qf.org.qa/supplier-registration>

الذوقية AL-AWALIA

Invitation to Tender

Tender / Auction Number	Subject	Tender / Auction Document Fees (Non-refundable)	Tender / Auction Bond	Tender/Auction Offer	Closing Date
AL-AWALIA/TD/2026/05	Call-Off Agreement for Port & Cargo Clearing Agency Services for the Vessels at Gabbro Berth Terminal, Mesaleed for Qatar Primary Materials Company ("Services")	500 QAR	4,000 QAR	Two Bids (Technical & Commercial)	26 February 2026 01:00 PM
AL-AWALIA/TD/2026/06	Call-Off Agreement for the Supply and Delivery of OEM Spare Parts for Caterpillar Dozers and Caterpillar Wheel Loaders for Qatar Primary Materials Company ("Supplies")	1,000 QAR	81,000 QAR	Two Bids (Technical & Commercial)	26 February 2026 01:00 PM

In accordance with the following conditions:

- Tender Documents can be collected online by sending email to tenderdocs@qpmc.qa along with requested documents in point No.2.
- Tender Documents will be shared only after delivery of Deposit Slip Stamped by Commercial Bank along with Authorization Letter to the designated person signed by authorized person as per Computer ID. Copy of commercial Registration (CR), Business License and Computer ID.
- Bids are to be submitted in two sealed (in red wax) envelopes (Technical & Commercial) and addressed to Tenders and Auction Committee. Tender reference number and subject are to be clearly written on the envelopes, provided that the last date for submitting bids is one o'clock in the afternoon on the closing day. Any bids submitted after this date and time will not be accepted.
- Tenders shall submit the proposals to our head office located at Lusail, Building No. 108, St. No. 303, Burj Marina Tower, 17th Floor above the closing date. (To get the map of the new building, please scan the QR code below).
- Tender Fees are non-refundable and can be transferred online to Account of Qatar Primary Material Company - Bank A/C: 40550-65111-0066 at Commercial Bank of Qatar. IBAN No. (QA 18 0204 0000 4055 65111 0066) Tender reference number and subject are to be written on the deposit slip.
- Tender Bond (Bank Guarantee/ Manager Cheque) must be valid for 120 days after closing date and must be submitted in separate & sealed envelope along with technical bid and a photocopy to be attached with commercial bid. Bids without tender bond will be rejected.
- Bids must be valid for 90 days after the closing date.
- Any queries relating to the Tender Documents must only be raised in writing, preferably by email, to the address specified in the respective Tender Document. Any response issued by Qatar Primary Material Company will be in the form of a question and answer and will be distributed to all bidders without revealing the identity of the originator of the queries) in the Form of Tender Bulletins. Queries must be received at the address specified in the respective ITT Documentation at least five (5) calendar days prior to the Tender closing date. Any queries received after such a date will be ignored.
- The amount of the Performance Bond to be provided by the awarded bidder is (10% of the contract value) and its validity period must remain valid under the contract implementation period and the guarantee period according to the terms of the Tender.
- The Technical Bids shall be opened within one week of the closing date.
- Qatar Primary Material Company has the right, during the contract period, to request an increase or decrease in the amounts of the items, works or services by a percentage not exceeding (20%) of the contract value with the same conditions and prices, provided that the increase is of the same type of contracted items, works or services.
- Qatar Primary Material Company's tendering terms and conditions apply.
- For any inquiries about the tender except collecting the documents, please contact: tender@qpmc.qa
- Location of the new building

For further Inquiry, please send your queries at Fax Number: **44479559** or email to tender@qpmc.qa or visit Qatar Primary Material Company website @ www.qpmc.qa

شركة قطر للمواد الأولية (فديوه ق) | مركزها الرئيسي: الوجدة - قطر | منطقة لوسيل، برج مارينا، رقم 108، إس. ن. 303، برج مارينا، 17 طابق فوق مستوى الأرض | هاتف: 22095 | فاكس: 4447 9411 | قطر | CR No.: 33204 | P.O. Box: 22095 | Tel: +974 4447 9411
Qatar Primary Materials Company (Q.P.S.C.) | Head Office: Doha-Qatar, Lusail, Marina Tower No.: 108 | CR No.: 33204 | P.O. Box: 22095 | Tel: +974 4447 9411
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LuLu, Qatar Charity renew strategic partnership for 9th consecutive year

LuLu Hypermarket Qatar and Qatar Charity have renewed their strategic partnership for the ninth consecutive year, reaffirming their shared commitment to humanitarian initiatives with a special focus on the holy month of Ramadan 2026.

The long-standing collaboration strengthens LuLu Hypermarket Qatar's role as a key member of Qatar Charity's 'Charity Partner' programme and highlights its continued support for Qatar Charity's Ramadan campaign under the slogan 'Good Starts With You', through the impactful 'Shop & Donate' initiative.

The partnership agreement was signed by Amer Mohammed al-Besiri, head of the collection, Donor Relations Department

at Qatar Charity, and Shanavas Padiyath, regional director of LuLu Hypermarket Qatar.

Ramadan, a season defined by compassion, unity, and generosity, remains central to the partnership. Over the past nine years, both organisations have worked closely to extend meaningful assistance to vulnerable communities, reflecting Qatar Charity's mission to deliver essential humanitarian aid while aligning with LuLu Qatar's strong commitment to corporate social responsibility and community welfare.

Under the renewed agreement, LuLu will leverage its extensive marketing platforms to further enhance awareness of the Charity Partner programme, encouraging increased engagement from

businesses and institutions in charitable initiatives.

As part of the Ramadan campaign, LuLu Hypermarket will contribute a designated amount to Qatar Charity, including proceeds generated through the 'Shop & Donate' campaign.

Now marking its ninth year, 'Shop & Donate' features a curated selection of more than 1,200 supermarket and department store products, with a portion of sales dedicated to Qatar Charity's 'Good Starts With You' initiative—ensuring vital support reaches those most in need.

Al-Besiri expressed his appreciation for LuLu Qatar's continued partnership over the past nine years, emphasising the important role of corporate



The partnership agreement was signed by Amer Mohammed al-Besiri, head of the collection, Donor Relations Department at Qatar Charity, and Shanavas Padiyath, regional director of LuLu Hypermarket Qatar.

institutions in supporting humanitarian causes, particularly during Ramadan. Padiyath reaffirmed LuLu Hypermarket Qatar's dedication to social responsibility, stating: "As we renew our partnership with Qatar Charity for the ninth consecutive year, we remain committed to making a positive

difference in the communities we serve. Ramadan is a time that embodies compassion and shared responsibility.

"Through our 'Shop & Donate' initiative, we aim not only to provide meaningful support to those in need but also to encourage our customers to be active participants in this

journey of giving." The renewed partnership reflects both organisations' shared vision of creating sustainable impact through collective responsibility—ensuring that the Holy Month of Ramadan is marked by compassion, generosity, and tangible support for communities in need.

WCM-Q experts call for global rethink on statin guidelines for older adults

Population health experts at Weill Cornell Medicine-Qatar (WCM-Q) have published a perspective article, which outlines the need to rethink global statin guidelines for older adults in resource-diverse settings.

The paper highlights that guidelines for statin medications – used to control cholesterol levels – are largely based on evidence from high-income countries, where older adults, especially those 75 years, are underrepresented in clinical trials.

In the context of increased global life expectancy, biological and regional variation in lipid profiles and CVD risk and regional differences in health-care services, current uniform guidelines for statin use may not be appropriate and should be reviewed to improve appropriateness, feasibility, and equity of prevention strategies, the paper

argues. The paper, published in the 'Journal of Global Health', is authored by Dr Karima Chaabna, manager of population health research; Dr Sohaila Cheema, associate professor of clinical population health sciences and assistant dean for the institute for population health; and Dr Ravinder Mamtani, professor of population health sciences, professor of medicine (Center for Global Health), and vice-dean for population health and lifestyle medicine.

Dr Mamtani, said: "Statins are widely prescribed and are proven to be effective at reducing the risk of heart attacks and strokes by reducing total and low-density lipoprotein (LDL) cholesterol levels. In the paper we emphasise, that a one-size-fits-all approach for prescribing statins is suboptimal on a global basis because it fails to account for biological and regional diversities, and healthcare resource



Dr Ravinder Mamtani, Dr Sohaila Cheema and Dr Karima Chaabna.

limitations, particularly in low- and middle-income countries. We believe there is a need to review guidelines on statin use on a regional, context-specific basis in order to secure the best long-term outcomes for patients across the globe."

The study highlights global disparities in statin guidelines, which mean that the same patient may qualify for statins under US guidelines but not under European ones, reflecting diver-

gent thresholds and treatment philosophies. Meanwhile, many low- and middle-income countries struggle to apply either the US or the European guidelines due to limitations in data, infrastructure, and access. Additionally, regional differences are more pronounced in adults aged over 60 because of a lack of data, which stems from historic under-representation of older adults in clinical trials.

Biological diversity and cho-

The study highlights global disparities in statin guidelines, which mean that the same patient may qualify for statins under US guidelines but not under European ones, reflecting divergent thresholds and treatment philosophies

lesterol targets are also a factor, explained Dr Cheema: "The data shows that many people living for 100 or more years may often have high cholesterol levels yet do not have higher rates of heart disease. Also, cholesterol levels considered as normal or even healthy may be labelled as high-risk in some populations. This applies to regions where genetics, diet and environmental factors can affect how the body processes fats and how the heart-disease risk develops," she said.

Dr Chaabna added: "Our pa-

per demonstrates that in order to reach equitable cardiovascular guidelines, statin recommendations must evolve to reflect biological diversity, local health system capacity, and the complexities of ageing. We call for collaborations between national governments and non-governmental organisations, such as the World Health Organisation, to develop context-sensitive guidelines based on evidence that extends beyond high-income countries. There is also a need for more region-specific research on statin use."

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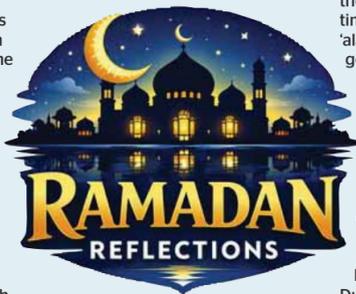
The month of the Qur'an

Each one of us in this world, regardless of his/her position, needs something at times to strengthen him, help him stay steadfast and increase his faith and reliance on Allah so he can face strong desires and new challenges.

When a person feels lonely, or a problem occurs, when things are bad, when he is about to give up hope on the Mercy of Allah, or when he does wrong; he needs what guides him through such conditions to help him solve the problem, to remind him of the Mercy of Allah and to warn him when he does wrong. Unless a person heads in the right direction with his entire body (his feelings, heart and limbs) towards the Book of Allah, by reading it, contemplating its verses and practising what it contains, then one cannot hope to be steadfast and strong in his faith. The Qur'an is the Word of Allah that cannot be likened to any other words. It is protected from falsehood being entered into it from any direction. It was sent down by The All-Wise, Worthy of all praise, Allah, Glory be to Him, Who took it upon Himself to protect it so no one can add to it or subtract from it.

The Prophet, sallallaahu 'alaihi wa sallam, said: "He who recites or reads a letter from the Book of Allah gets a reward and the reward is multiplied by ten. I don't mean 'Alif Laam Meem' is a letter, rather, Alif is a letter, Laam

is a letter and Meem is a letter." [At-Tirmithi]
Tranquillity and true happiness lie in glorifying the Book of Allah, reading it, resorting to it as a reference and using it as a guidance. Wretchedness lies in turning one's back on the Qur'an, degrading it and deserting it. The blessed month of Ramadan should remind the believing



Muslim Nation of the importance of going back truly and sincerely to the Book of Allah, the great Book that Allah has honoured by having revealed it during this month. He, The Almighty, Says (what means): "The month of Ramadan [is that] in which was revealed the Qur'an, a guidance for the people and clear proofs of guidance and criterion." [Qur'an 2: 185]

The best way to spend time during Ramadan is to give increased importance to the Qur'an by memorising, reciting,

practicing and contemplating it. Let us look at our best model, the Messenger, sallallaahu 'alaihi wa sallam. Ibn'Abbaas, may Allah be pleased with him, reported that: "The Prophet, sallallaahu 'alaihi wa sallam, was the most generous of people and he used to be more generous during the month of Ramadan, when he used to meet Jibreel (Angel Gabriel) and review the Qur'an with him. During this time, the Prophet, sallallaahu 'alaihi wa sallam, was faster (in his generosity and bringing good) than a blowing wind". [Al-Bukhari & Muslim]

We understand from this Hadith that it is recommended to review the Qur'an and study it in Ramadan. In addition, we can conclude from it that it is recommended to repeatedly recite the Qur'an during Ramadan. During Ramadan, Allah gives honour and elevates people with the Qur'an and degrades others as a result of neglecting it. About the Qur'an, Allah Almighty says (what means): "Indeed, this Qur'an guides to that which is most suitable and gives good tidings to the believers who do righteous deeds that they will have a great reward. And that those who do not believe in the Hereafter - We have prepared for them a painful punishment." [Qur'an 17: 9-10]

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

Qatar Charity begins implementing Iftar project in 42 countries

Qatar Charity (QC) began today the implementation of its Iftar project in 42 countries worldwide, as part of this year's Ramadan campaign "Good Starts With You".

In a press release, QC revealed the details of the Iftar project in the Republic of Djibouti, where thousands of people from the most vulnerable families especially families of orphans and people with special needs benefited. So far, the project has supported 3,600 people in Djibouti through the distribution of Ramadan food baskets containing basic food supplies that meet the needs of beneficiary families throughout the month of Ramadan, helping them

observe the fast with ease and reassurance. A total of 600 Ramadan baskets has been distributed so far. The project was launched in the presence of officials from the Ministry of Social Affairs and the National Agency for Persons with Disabilities in Djibouti, reaffirming the importance of partnership and co-operation in implementing humanitarian initiatives targeted toward the most vulnerable groups. Several beneficiaries with special needs also expressed their gratitude for this humanitarian gesture, confirming that the Ramadan basket is not merely food supplies, but also a symbol of care and inclusion. One

of them said: "We face additional challenges in securing our daily needs, and these baskets lift a great burden off us, especially in Ramadan when expenses increase." It is worth noting that the Iftar project is being implemented as part of QC's Ramadan campaign in 42 countries around the world, supported by generous donors. The assistance is offered either through Ramadan baskets containing essential food supplies sufficient for families throughout the month, or through daily ready-made Iftar meals. It is expected that 480,299 people will benefit from this project this year. (QNA)

Siraj launches Ramadan season

Siraj, an initiative of Qatar Foundation's (QF's) Pre-University Education (PUE) has launched its special Ramadan edition for children in Qatar and across the Arab world, featuring five episodes that highlight the meanings of the Names of Allah.

Each episode explores one of the Names of Allah Al-Baseer (The All-Seeing), Al-Khaliq (The Creator), Al-Karim (The Most Generous), Al-Qadir (The All-Powerful), and Al-Ghafur (The All-Forgiving). The episodes will air weekly on Qatar TV every Friday at 2.25pm, with a repeat broadcast on Saturday at 7.55am. All episodes will also be published on the Siraj YouTube channel after their television broadcast.

The content has been developed using an innovative educational approach designed to simplify these profound concepts for children and encourage them to reflect on how to embody the values derived from them in their daily behaviour. Commenting on the launch, Buthina al-Derham, director, Communications and Outreach at QF's Pre University Education, said: "Through Siraj, we aim to offer a holistic Ramadan experience that combines knowledge with practical application."

"Exploring the Names of Allah in a simplified and engaging way equips children with the tools to internalise positive values during this blessed month, in line with our vision of nurturing a conscious community that remains deeply connected to its identity."

"Our goal with this Ramadan series is to transform viewing into a living, interactive experience. We do not simply offer visual content; rather, we build bridges of connection between the child and their Creator. We aspire for every child to emerge from this month having truly embraced the



meaning of Al-Kareem in their generosity and Al-Baseer in their actions." Al-Derham explained that, through its storytelling approach and interactive activities, Siraj goes beyond being merely an educational programme to become a values-driven companion for children and their families. It fosters a culture of reflection and builds religious and educational awareness in an engaging way, while ensuring that the content is delivered in authentic and accessible Arabic that strengthens children's connection to their

language and cultural identity. Coinciding with the airing of the episodes, the Siraj Ramadan Set has been launched as a practical educational toolkit designed to support children's learning throughout the Holy Month. It is currently available via the Snoonu app and at the Education City Gift Store. The set includes four key items: a daily planner to organise activities, dua cards, a tote bag, and a prayer mat, offering an integrated learning experience that combines knowledge with practice during Ramadan.



Qatari calligraphy show draws visitors in city of Cordoba

QNA
Madrid

The exhibition of winning artworks from the Qatar International Arabic Calligraphy Competition, Al Raqim, organised by the Ministry of Endowments (Awqaf) and Islamic Affairs, attracted a diverse international audience at the Cordoba Conference Palace, reflecting the growing presence of Arabic calligraphy in the European cultural scene.

The display features 15 pieces

representing the top three winners of the competition's first edition, spanning five distinct Arabic calligraphy styles. The works showcase the richness of different schools and techniques, demonstrating both the authenticity of this historic art and its capacity for contemporary creative expression within a unified aesthetic vision.

Saleh bin Ali al-Marri, head of the organising committee, emphasised that the competition aims to serve as a global platform nurturing Arabic cal-

ligraphy talent, opening new horizons for creativity and visibility, while enhancing Qatar's role as a hub for arts and culture with international influence. He added that the participation reflects the competition's growing presence in major global art exhibitions, with winning pieces attracting wide interest from cultural institutions and specialised audiences, standing as sophisticated artistic assets that embody the spirit of Arabic calligraphy and affirm its status as a universal human art form.

QU hosts 11th Annual IPE Student Association Forum

The 11th Annual Interprofessional Education (IPE) Student Association Forum at Qatar University (QU) marked a significant milestone in the ongoing development of collaborative health profession education. The forum brought together students, health professionals, educators, and leaders in the field to discuss key issues in patient care, with the overarching theme, "Seeing the Person Beyond the Diagnosis." The forum, led by the IPE Student Association, showcased the vital role of interprofessional collaboration in addressing the complex challenges faced in modern healthcare. It emphasised that effective care requires not just understanding a disease but understanding the individual – their values, context, and needs. This year's event saw students from various health professions engage in team challenges, debates, and presentations aimed at tackling the pressing issues in autism care and other complex health topics.

The forum featured dynamic events throughout the day, including interprofessional team challenges, debates, and presentations. Prof Asmaa al-Thani, Vice-President for Health and Medical Sciences at QU, reflected on the event's significance: "The 11th Annual IPE Student Association Forum is a remarkable testament to the power of collaboration and interdisciplinary learning. At Qatar University, we are committed to fostering an environment where future healthcare professionals are not only equipped with specialised knowledge,

but also the ability to work seamlessly across disciplines to address the complex challenges of modern healthcare. The forum's success underscores the immense potential of our students to become leaders in shaping a healthcare system that is inclusive, patient-centred, and driven by mutual respect and understanding."

Dr Banan Mukhalalati, Director of the Integrated Learning in QU's Health Sector said: "Reaching the 11th edition of this forum is far more than a milestone. It is a powerful testament to continuity, resilience, and shared belief."

Dr Alla El-Awaisi, Adviser to the VP of Health and Medical Sciences and Head of the IPE Program at QU, expressed her pride in the students' involvement, stating: "Our students' remarkable contributions, from the debates to the team challenges and presentations, demonstrate their readiness to lead in an evolving healthcare landscape. I am confident that this generation of students will continue to drive the transformation of healthcare in Qatar and beyond, bridging gaps and fostering collaborative solutions that place the individual at the centre of care." The forum provided students with a platform to demonstrate their leadership abilities and engage in key healthcare challenges. The success of this event highlights QU's commitment to providing world-class education that prepares future health leaders to navigate and address the complexities of modern healthcare systems. - QNA

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QIB announces Ramadan working hours

Qatar Islamic Bank (QIB) has announced its official working hours for the holy month of Ramadan, ensuring customers can continue to access banking services with ease and convenience. In line with its commitment to providing uninterrupted service, QIB has adjusted its branch timings while maintaining 24/7 access to its award-winning mobile apps and Internet banking platforms. QIB's mall branches, including Al Gharafa (Q-Mall), Doha Festival City, Mall of Qatar, Tawar Mall, Place Vendôme, City Center, and Dar Al Salam, will operate from Saturday to Thursday in two shifts: 10am to 2.30pm and from 8.30pm to 11.30pm. On Fridays, these branches will be open from 8.30pm to 11.30pm.

The rest of the branches, QIB Towers, Grand Hamad Street (Corporate Branch), Al Fanar, Old Airport Street, Al Rayyan, Al Sadd, C-Ring Tamayuz Centre, Al Khor, Salwa Road, Mesaieed, Industrial Area, Al Shihaniya, Al Jazeera Media Network, and QatarEnergy will operate from Sunday to Thursday, 9am to 2pm. Corporate and SME customers can access services at the Grand Hamad Street branch during the same hours, while cash and cheque transactions will be available at Salwa Road and Al Rayyan branches. Service centres located on C-Ring Road, Al Fanar, and the Wage Protection System (WPS) Centre in the industrial area will also follow adjusted Ramadan timings, operating from Sunday

to Thursday, 9am to 2pm. The C-Ring Centre and the Wage Protection System (WPS) Centre will extend the hours into the evening from 8.30pm to 11.30pm. QIB continues to encourage customers to make the most of its comprehensive digital banking services via the QIB Mobile App, QIB Lite App for workers, and Internet Banking, ensuring seamless transactions anytime, anywhere. Similarly, Corporate and SME customers are encouraged to use the Corporate Mobile App and Internet Banking. Customers can also reach QIB's 24/7 Call Centre at 4444 8444 and access a wide network of ATMs and cash deposit machines across Qatar. For more details, visit www.qib.com.qa

Wishing you all a blessed Ramadan.
Our branches will be open as per the below schedule:

Branches	Timing
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> QIB Towers Corporate - Grand Hamad Street Al Fanar Old Airport Street Al Rayyan Industrial Al Jazeera Media Network 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sunday to Thursday Friday & Saturday Morning Shift: 9:00 AM to 02:00 PM Closed
Mall Branches	Timing
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Al Gharafa (Q-Mall) Dar Al Salam Doha Festival City City Center Mall of Qatar Place Vendôme Tawar Mall 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Saturday to Thursday Friday Morning Shift: 10:00 AM - 2:30 PM Evening Shift: 8:30 PM - 11:30 PM 8:30 PM - 11:30 PM

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QIB المصرف

Rawabi distributes Silver Jubilee Bonanza prizes

Rawabi Wholesale Division, a leading FMCG distribution network under Al Rawabi Group of Companies, successfully distributed the grand prizes of its much-anticipated "Silver Jubilee Bonanza" campaign on February 16 at Wholesale Plus - Al Nayef Square, Al Rayyan.

The campaign was conducted as part of the 25th Silver Jubilee celebrations of Rawabi Wholesale Division, marking a remarkable journey of growth, innovation, and customer trust since its establishment in 2000.

Designed to reward both B2B and B2C customers across Qatar, the campaign offered shoppers who purchased QR250 or more an E-affle coupon to enter the grand draw.

During the prize distribution ceremony, the grand prize Haval H9 SUV was awarded to Shawaya Restaurant Maider, while 10 winners received the all-new iPhone 17 Air (256GB). The event was attended and the prizes were handed over by Muhammed Jaseel, associate director; and Naushad KTK, assistant general manager (Wholesale Division), along with department heads and store managers from across the group. The ceremony highlighted Rawabi's strong engagement with its valued customers and business partners.

Mohammed Abdulla, managing director, stated that for 25 years Rawabi Wholesale Division has proudly served the Qatar market with dedication, integrity, and a strong



commitment to quality service. He emphasised that the division's success is built on the trust and long-standing relationships it shares with both B2B and B2C customers, and reaffirmed that Rawabi will continue to introduce impactful campaigns in the future to create added value and rewarding experiences for customers across Qatar.

Over the past two and a half decades, Rawabi Wholesale Division has grown into one of Qatar's most trusted

FMCG distribution networks, offering 10,000+ products sourced from over 50 countries and serving customers across the nation. The division supplies a comprehensive range of high-quality food and non-food products to hypermarkets, supermarkets, restaurants, cafeterias, and retail customers, reinforcing its leadership position in the wholesale sector and its commitment to delivering global quality to the Qatar market.

Emergency dept has an effective plan in place for services during Ramadan

The Emergency Department at Hamad General Hospital has made the necessary preparations to meet the anticipated demand for its services during the holy month of Ramadan, according to Dr Warda Ali al-Saad, senior consultant in Emergency Medicine and deputy director of the department.

The department has implemented a comprehensive operational plan based on analytical studies of peak hours recorded in previous years to ensure the highest level of healthcare throughout the month. She noted that accumulated data indicate peak hours are typically concentrated after 6pm and extend late into the night. The management has increased the number of medical staff on duty during these periods to ensure smooth workflow and reduce waiting times, particularly for cases requiring immediate attention.

The department has also observed a recurring annual pattern of increased patient visits approximately an hour before Iftar, when cases of fatigue, headaches, and low blood sugar tend to rise. Patient numbers increase again after Iftar and continue into the early hours of dawn. This distinct time distribution during Ramadan presents one of the department's most significant operational challenges.

In response, Dr al-Saad said emergency management has reinforced staffing during evening and nighttime hours. Shifts from 3pm to 11pm and from 11pm to 7am have been strengthened, with additional supporting physicians available immediately after Iftar. She also underscored the importance of continuous co-ordination with internal medicine, intensive care, critical care, and ambulance services. Patients are assessed immediately upon arrival and classified according to the approved triage system, with critical cases transferred directly to the resuscitation unit for rapid intervention.

Dr al-Saad noted that during the first week of Ramadan, headaches tend to increase, particularly among individuals accustomed to daily caffeine intake, due to sudden withdrawal. Digestive disorders and stomach pain also become more common as a result of overeating at Iftar or consuming heavy meals after prolonged fasting. Dehydration is another frequent cause of emergency visits during Ramadan, often stemming from insufficient fluid intake between Iftar and Suhoor. This can affect kidney function and electrolyte balance, especially among the elderly and patients with chronic illnesses. She added that one of the main challenges during Ramadan is the sharp influx of patients during specific hours, along with minor cases that do not require emergency care and could be treated at health centres or urgent care facilities affiliated with the Primary Health Care Corporation. Such cases may affect the speed of service delivery for critical patients.

Dr al-Saad also pointed to a notable increase in traffic accidents before Iftar, often due to haste, reduced concentration and fatigue. She urged motorists to adhere to traffic safety rules and avoid rushing in order to protect themselves and others.

QPC marks 15 years of NSD legacy

By Tawfik Lamari
Staff Reporter

The Qatar Press Center (QPC) organised a panel discussion titled "National Sport Day (NSD): Results and Legacy" as part of its Press Club activities. This session reviewed the journey of the celebration since its launch in 2011, as one of the leading national initiatives that has contributed to a qualitative shift in community awareness of the importance of sports and its role in improving the quality of life.

Participants in the session included Abdulaziz al-Ma'arifi, managing editor of Al-Sharq newspaper, and Abdullah al-Dosari, executive director of the Qatar Sports for All Federation and a member of the NSD Committee. The discussion, moderated by journalist Hussein al-Kathiri, was attended by a number of journalists, media professionals, sports enthusiasts, and those interested in Qatari achievements in both the sporting and social spheres.

Hussein al-Kathiri welcomed the attendees, emphasising that the topic of 'National Sport Day: Results and Legacy' is particularly significant given its connection to a national initiative launched by His Highness the Amir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani, in 2011. This initiative designates the second Tuesday of February each year as NSD, a step that has, over time, become an integral part of Qatari society's culture.

Al-Ma'arifi affirmed that Qatar has established a pioneering global model by dedicating an NSD and granting employees a paid holiday, an initiative that reflects the country's commitment to enhancing the quality of life and establishing a culture of physical activity as a sustainable societal choice.

Al-Ma'arifi pointed out that the Qatari experience has garnered regional and international attention, with many countries seeking to benefit from its model. He emphasised that the initiative will remain Qatari, as it is not a fleeting event but a comprehensive national project based on planning and sustainability, with a posi-



From left: Abdullah al-Dosari, Hussein al-Kathiri and Abdulaziz al-Ma'arifi.

tive health and social impact evident year after year.

Al-Dosari affirmed that NSD clearly embodies the vision of the wise leadership and the state's commitment to the health and quality of life of the community, noting the remarkable growth in participation and the accompanying events. Al-Dosari reviewed the most prominent achievements of 2025, explaining that the Qatar Sport for All Federation organised a wide range of community events for children, youth, women, and senior citizens, with a total of 215,506 participants spread across

various regions of the country, including the north, south, central Doha, and the western areas of Dukhan and Al Jumailiyah, in addition to public parks, youth centres, and sports clubs. He noted that the sports championships saw the participation of 6,984 athletes across 74 tournaments, while community running races recorded 38,696 participants, with a growing female presence reaching approximately 8,000 participants in 59 races. The school sector also organised 91 events in 60 schools, clearly demonstrating the expanding base of sports participation and solidifying the



A section of the audience.

legacy of National Sport Day as a sustainable national initiative.

Al-Maarefi added that the continued support of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani, particularly his direct participation in the National Sport Day events, sends a powerful national message that promotes a culture of sport and affirms its importance in the lives of individuals and society. Al-Dosari pointed out that NSD extends a gradual awareness campaign, reflected in its annual themes. He noted that the Qatar Sport for All Federation has targeted more than 200,000 people through its programmes and events, and that major events such as the "Ooredoo" Marathon serve as practical proof of the development of the sports scene and the rise in community awareness.

Al-Dosari noted the growing presence and participation of women in various events, alongside the positive momentum of the NSD Award and the stimulating competitive spirit it fosters. He also highlighted the role of the "Sports for All" app in encouraging regular exercise and motivating participants to commit to physical activity. He emphasised that the next phase requires strengthening targeted, high-quality programmes, with a clear focus on integrating people with obesity and people of determination into community sports activities. This will reinforce the principle of inclusion and amplify the initiative's health and social impact.

Partnership accord between QPC and Middle East Council on Global Affairs

The Qatar Press Center has signed a co-operation agreement with the Middle East Council on Global Affairs to strengthen collaboration between media and research institutions in Qatar and the wider Arab region.

The agreement aims to advance media and research work, organise scientific, cultural, and knowledge-based events, and promote the exchange of expertise and information on issues of mutual interest.

The agreement was signed at the Abdullah bin Hussein Al-Nu'ma Hall at the centre's headquarters by Sadiq al-Amari, director-general of the centre, and Khalid al-Jaber, executive director of the council. Al-Amari said the agreement aims to enhance co-ordination between the two sides across several areas, including organising conferences, seminars, and specialised workshops on media and re-

search. It also provides for joint publications and the exchange of existing publications to broaden audience reach, strengthen intellectual dialogue, and encourage collaboration among researchers, journalists, and the local community. He described the agreement as a strategic step toward building a sustainable bridge between research and media, contributing to higher-quality content and the development of cultural and academic activities at the local and regional levels. The partnership, he added, will offer an integrated platform to support research initiatives, enhance knowledge sharing, and advance common objectives in the service of the community.

Al-Jaber said the agreement marks the council's first partnership with a specialised media institution, underscoring its importance in expanding the media's role within the council's activities and amplifying its impact

in disseminating knowledge and analysing international affairs. He noted that the agreement will support research and studies in economics, defence, security, and international policy, elevating intellectual discourse and expanding regional and international scientific and media co-operation. The partnership forms part of a broader strategy to strengthen ties between media and research institutions and bridge the gap between journalism and academic studies in ways that benefit Qatari and Arab audiences.

The agreement also includes plans to organise lectures and workshops in Qatar and abroad, to offer consultations in cultural, scientific, and media fields, to implement specialised training programmes for executive and administrative leaders, and to publish books and media-focused materials targeting local, Gulf, and Arab audiences.



(From left) Khalid al-Jaber and Sadiq al-Amari at the signing ceremony.



Palestinians gather for a mass fast-breaking Iftar meal organised by the Turkish IHH Foundation, amid the rubble of destroyed buildings in Gaza City, yesterday.

First Ramadan after truce brings flicker of joy in devastated Gaza

AFP
Gaza City

Little Ramadan lanterns and string lights appeared on streets lined with collapsed buildings and piles of rubble in Gaza City, bringing joy and respite as Islam's holiest month began — the first since October's ceasefire.

In the Omari mosque, dozens of worshippers performed the first Ramadan morning prayer, fajr, bare feet on the carpet but donning heavy jackets to stave off the winter cold.

"Despite the occupation, the destruction of mosques and schools, and the demolition of our homes... we came in spite of these harsh conditions," said Abu Adam, a resident of Gaza City who came to pray.

"Even last night, when the area was targeted, we remained determined to head to the mosque to worship God," he said.

A security source in Gaza told AFP yesterday that artillery shelling targeted the eastern parts of Gaza City that morning.

The source added that artillery shelling also targeted a refugee camp in central Gaza.

Israel does not allow international journalists to enter the Gaza Strip, preventing AFP and other news organisations from independently verifying casualty figures.

In Gaza's south, tens of thousands of people still live in tents and makeshift shelters as they wait for the territory's reconstruction after a US-brokered ceasefire took hold in October.

Nivin Ahmed, who lives in a tent in the area known as Al-Mawasi, said this first Ramadan without war brought "mixed and varied feelings".

"The joy is stifled. We miss people who were martyred, are still missing, detained, or even travelled," she said.

"The Ramadan table used to be full of the most delicious dishes and bring together all our loved



Palestinian street vendors make falafel in Gaza City's Zawiyah market, yesterday, on the first day of the holy fasting month of Ramadan.

ones," the 50-year-old said.

"Today, I can barely prepare a main dish and a side dish. Everything is expensive. I can't invite anyone for Iftar or suhoor," she said, referring to the meals eaten before and after the daily fast of Ramadan.

Despite the ceasefire, shortages remain in Gaza, whose battered economy and material damage have rendered most residents at least partly dependent on humanitarian aid for their basic needs.

But with all entries into the tiny territory under Israeli control, not enough goods are able to enter to bring prices down, according to the United Nations and aid groups.

Maha Fathi, 37, was displaced from Gaza City and lives in a tent west of the city.

"Despite all the destruction and suffering in Gaza, Ramadan is still special," she said.

"People have begun to empathise with each other's suffering again after everyone was preoccupied with themselves during the war."

She said that her family and neighbours were able to share moments of joy as they prepared food for suhoor and set up Ramadan decorations.

"Everyone longs for the atmos-

phere of Ramadan. Seeing the decorations and the activity in the markets fills us with hope for a return to stability," she added.

On the beach at central Gaza's Deir el-Balah, Palestinian artist Yazeed Abu Jarad contributed to the holiday spirit with his art.

In the sand near the Mediterranean Sea, he sculpted "Welcome Ramadan" in ornate Arabic calligraphy, under the curious eye of children from a nearby tent camp.

Nearly all of Gaza's 2.2mn residents were displaced at least once during the more than two years of war between Israel and Hamas, sparked by the latter's unprecedented October storming of Israel.

Mohammed al-Madhoun, 43, also lives in a tent west of Gaza City, and hoped for brighter days ahead.

"I hope this is the last Ramadan we spend in tents. I feel helpless in front of my children when they ask me to buy lanterns and dream of an Iftar table with all their favourite foods."

"We try to find joy despite everything," he said, describing his first Ramadan night out with the neighbours, eating the pre-fast meal and praying.

"The children were as if they were on a picnic," he said.

Qatar to pay students to study nuclear engineering abroad

From Page 1

The financial incentives are notable. Yousef Ibrahim al-Hamar, MECC's Assistant Undersecretary for Environmental Affairs, and Yaqoub Saleh al-Ishaq of the Civil Service Bureau confirmed that nuclear engineering carries an 85% work nature allowance under Prime Minister's Decision No. 25 of 2025 — the highest work nature allowance of any engineering discipline in the government structure.

Officials were candid about why the scholarship must send students abroad: nuclear engineering is not taught anywhere in Qatar. Graduates will train at internationally accredited universities, working in labs and

technical units within the Radiation Protection Department when they return, giving them hands-on exposure across medical imaging, industrial applications, and regulatory oversight.

Al-Ishaq framed the Bureau's role as more than administrative. "We're ensuring alignment between educational outputs and actual career pathways," he said, describing the programme as an "integrated path" designed from the first day of undergraduate study through to a defined career trajectory in government service.

Selection criteria are tight. Candidates must demonstrate academic excellence, meet specific grade thresholds from prior qualifications, satisfy English language requirements, and hold

unconditional admission from an accredited university. Officials acknowledged the number of seats will be small, reflecting both the rarity of the specialisation and the precision of the workforce need.

An awareness campaign targeting secondary school students is planned to accompany the launch, with officials keen to demystify a field many young Qataris may know little about.

The initiative falls under Qatar National Vision 2030's push to diversify the economy and reduce dependence on expatriate expertise in technically sensitive sectors.

Applications are expected to open following the awareness rollout.

First woman diplomat for Palestine dies in France: family

AFP
Paris

Leila Shahid, the first woman diplomat representing Palestine abroad, died in southern France aged 76, her family said.

"She died today," her sister Zeina said.

She did not provide further details. According to initial findings, Shahid had reportedly been ill for several years.

"Leila Shahid, the iconic ambassador of Palestine, has

left us. This is a huge loss for Palestine and for the world that believes in justice," Hala Abou-Hassira, the Palestinian representative in France, said on X.

Born in Lebanon in 1949, Shahid was the first woman to represent the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) abroad, beginning her career in Ireland before also becoming representative in the Netherlands.

She served as representative in France and later as the representative at the European Union.



File photo shows Palestinian delegate to France, Leila Shahid.

Intense US naval, air power buildup amid regional tension

AFP
Washington

The United States is building a major force of naval and air assets in the Middle East, potentially setting the stage for a sustained military campaign against Iran.

President Donald Trump has repeatedly threatened Tehran with military action if ongoing talks do not reach a replacement for the nuclear deal the US president tore up in 2018, during his first term in office.

In addition to the ships and warplanes being deployed in the Middle East, the United States has tens of thousands of troops deployed on bases throughout the region, some of which could be vulnerable to Iranian counter-attacks.

Washington currently has 13 warships in the Middle East: one aircraft carrier — the USS Abraham Lincoln — nine destroyers and three littoral combat ships, with more on the way, according to a US official.

The USS Gerald R Ford — the world's largest aircraft carrier

— is currently in the Atlantic Ocean en route from the Caribbean to the Middle East, after being ordered there by Trump earlier this month. It is accompanied by three destroyers.

It is rare for there to be two US aircraft carriers — which carry dozens of warplanes and are crewed by thousands of sailors — in the Middle East.

The United States had two of the massive warships in the region in June last year when it targeted three Iranian nuclear sites during Israel's 12-day campaign of strikes on Iran.

The United States has also sent a large fleet of aircraft to the Middle East, according to open-source intelligence accounts on X and flight-tracking website Flightradar24.

These include F-22 Raptor stealth fighter jets, F-15 and F-16 warplanes, and the KC-135 aerial refueling aircraft that are needed to sustain their operations.

Yesterday, Flightradar24 showed multiple KC-135s flying near or in the Middle East, as well as E3 Sentry airborne warning and control aircraft

and cargo planes operating in the region. Trump ordered the Lincoln to the Middle East as Iran cracked down on protests that were initially driven by economic grievances, but which turned into a mass movement against the leadership.

The leadership that took power after the 1979 revolution responded to the demonstrations with deadly force and has held onto power, with many opponents of the system looking to outside intervention as the most likely driver of change.

Trump had repeatedly warned Iran that if it killed protesters, the United States would intervene militarily, and also encouraged Iranians to take over state institutions, saying "help is on the way."

US and Iranian officials held talks in Geneva on Tuesday aimed at averting US military intervention.

Iran said following the talks that they had agreed on "guiding principles" for a deal to avoid conflict, but US Vice President JD Vance said Tehran had not yet acknowledged all of Washington's red lines.

TRAGEDY 38 killed in gas blast at Nigeria lead mine

Thirty-eight lead miners were killed when gas exploded at a pit in central Nigeria's Plateau state, local sources said, AFP reported from Jos Plateau. Twenty-seven others were injured in the blast at the Kampanin Zurak mining site in Plateau state's Bashar district, the acting traditional ruler told AFP. "So far 38 people are confirmed dead and about 27 others have been rushed to hospital," said the leader, Alhaji Aliyu Adamu Idris. Ibrahim Dattijo Sani, a miner at a nearby pit, told AFP that the victims were below ground in the mine where the explosion struck between 7:30 and 8:00 am (0630 and 0700 GMT).

"We are close to the sites, people were inside the mining pits and suddenly a gas exploded," Sani said. "We tried many efforts for rescue but unfortunately 38 people have died... others have been taken to hospital."

A confidential security report seen by AFP attributed the death of the miners to "carbon monoxide poisoning". Kampanin Zurak is an old mining settlement in the Wase district. Idris said that the site of the explosion is operated by Solid Unit Nigeria Limited.

Ramadan sale in Mogadishu



Somali traders sell lime at an open-air grocery market as Muslims start the fasting month of Ramadan, within Bakara market in Mogadishu, yesterday.

UN human rights chief raises alarm after drone strikes kill 50 in Sudan

Reuters
Geneva

The UN human rights chief expressed alarm yesterday following reports of more than 50 civilians being killed in drone strikes in Sudan in two days in the last week.

At least 57 civilians were killed between Sunday and Monday, including at least 15 children, in separate drone attacks in four states across Su-

dan, according to the UN. UN human rights chief Volker Turk said the killings were a reminder of the devastating consequences of drone warfare in Sudan, with civilians and civilian infrastructure targeted. Some 28 civilians were killed on Sunday in an alleged Sudanese Armed Forces drone strike on Al Safiya market in Sudari locality, North Kordofan, the UN said.

The next day 26 civilians were killed in West Kordofan in an alleged SAF drone strike at a displacement shelter in Al Sunut.

Iran, Russia set to conduct joint drills in the Sea of Oman

AFP
Tehran

Iran and Russia will conduct naval manoeuvres in the Sea of Oman today, following the latest round of talks between Tehran and Washington in Geneva, Iranian media reported.

On Monday, the Revolutionary Guards, the ideological arm of Iran's military, also launched exercises in the strategic Strait of Hormuz, a challenge to US naval forces deployed in the region.

"The joint naval exercise of the Islamic Republic of Iran and Russia will take place tomorrow (Thursday) in the Sea of Oman and in the northern Indian Ocean," the ISNA agency reported, citing drill spokesman, Rear Admiral Hassan Maghsoudloo.

"The aim is to strengthen maritime security and to deepen relations between the navies of the two countries," he said, without specifying the duration of the

drill. The war games come as Iran struck an upbeat tone following the second round of Oman-mediated negotiations in Geneva on Tuesday. Previous talks between the two foes collapsed following the unprecedented Israeli strike on Iran in June 2025, which sparked a 12-day war that the United States briefly joined. US President Donald Trump has deployed a significant naval force in the region, which he has described as an "armada."

Iranian officials have repeatedly threatened to block the Strait of Hormuz, particularly during periods of tension with the United States, but it has never been closed. A key passageway for global shipments of oil and liquefied natural gas, the Strait of Hormuz has been the scene of several incidents in the past and has returned to the spotlight as pressure has ratcheted amid the US-Iran talks. Iran announced on Tuesday that it would partially close it for a few hours for "security" reasons during its own drills in the strait.

Bangladesh PM names cabinet after election win

AFP
Dhaka

Bangladesh's Prime Minister Tarique Rahman has named a former commerce minister to steer the country's troubled economy and kept the defence portfolio for himself as he formed his first cabinet.

Rahman was sworn into office on Tuesday after a landslide election victory, taking over from the interim administration that had led the country of 170 million people since a deadly 2024 uprising that

topped the autocratic government of Sheikh Hasina.

The 50-member cabinet announced in a gazette notification issued late Tuesday includes Amir Khasru Mahmud Chowdhury, 76, a businessman and veteran lawmaker who has now returned to the finance ministry.

Chowdhury is tasked with reviving growth after months of turmoil that rattled investor confidence in the world's second-largest garment exporter.

He had previously served in the cabinet of Rahman's late mother, three-time prime minister Kha-

leda Zia, but was forced to resign in 2004.

According to media reports, his resignation came after he had granted permission for Taiwan to open a commercial office in Dhaka. Chowdhury has not spoken publicly about the issue.

He was also arrested several times during Sheikh Hasina's 15-year rule, as her government regularly targeted opposition leaders in cases often decried as politically motivated.

Rahman, 60, has appointed himself defence minister, as his government faces a daunting list



Tarique Rahman

of challenges including improving security and healing rifts in a country polarised by years of bitter rivalry.

Khalilur Rahman is the foreign minister, an experienced diplomat and former UN official who holds degrees from universities in Dhaka and the United States.

Khalilur Rahman held the security portfolio in the caretaker government and helped mediate trade talks with the United States.

He faces the tricky task of balancing regional relations after ties with neighbour India soured during the interim government,

and Dhaka deepened engagement with New Delhi's arch-enemy Pakistan.

India's Foreign Minister Subrahmanya Jaishankar congratulated his counterpart yesterday, saying in a statement that they would work together to "advance our co-operation".

Prime Minister Rahman is expected to chair his first cabinet meeting later on Wednesday.

Other members of the cabinet include veteran politicians, former ministers and lawmakers, as well as academics and several party workers.

Modi meets Kazakh counterpart



India's Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Kazakhstan's Prime Minister Olzhas Bektenov shake hands as they meet in New Delhi, India, yesterday.

Takaichi formally reappointed as PM

AFP
Tokyo

Japan's Sanae Takaichi was formally reappointed as prime minister yesterday, 10 days after her historic landslide election victory.

Takaichi, 64, became Japan's first woman premier in October and won a two-thirds majority for her party in the snap lower house elections on February 8.

She has pledged to bolster Japan's defences to protect its territory and waters, likely further straining relations with Beijing, and to boost the flagging economy.

Takaichi suggested in November that Japan could intervene militarily if Beijing sought to take Taiwan by force.

China, which regards the democratic island as part of its territory and has not ruled out force to annex it, was furious.

Beijing's top diplomat Wang Yi told the Munich Security Conference on Saturday that forces in Japan were seeking to "revive militarism".

At a news conference yesterday, Takaichi said she believed the election victory had shown the public wanted "important policy shifts".

Those included "responsible and proactive fiscal policy, a fundamental strengthening of security policy, and enhancing the government's intelligence capabilities", she said.

She plans to submit legislation to establish a National Intelligence Agency, she added.

And in a policy speech expected to take place on Friday, Takaichi will pledge to update Japan's "Free and Open Indo-Pacific" (FOIP) strategic framework, local media reported.

"Compared with when FOIP was first proposed, the international situation and security environment surrounding Japan have



Japan's Prime Minister Sanae Takaichi walks down the stairs to pose for a photo session with members of her cabinet at the Prime Minister's Office in Tokyo yesterday.

become significantly more severe," chief government spokesman Minoru Kihara said on Monday.

In practice this will likely mean strengthening supply chains and promoting free trade through the Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP) pact that Japan is a member of alongside several major economies including Britain, Canada and Mexico.

Takaichi's will also begin concrete discussions towards an anti-espionage law, according to media reports.

Takaichi told reporters yesterday that revising the imperial family's rules, to ease a looming succession crisis, was "an urgent matter".

Many within her Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) oppose making it possible for a woman to become emperor, but rules could be changed to "adopt" new male members.

Discussions are currently underway in both houses of parliament on the issue, she said Wednesday, with the hope they "will advance toward revising" the law.

Her ruling coalition wants too to accelerate debate on changing the constitution and on Wednesday she vowed to seek reform.

Takaichi has also promised to tighten rules surrounding im-

migration, even though Asia's number two economy is struggling with labour shortages and a falling population.

On Friday, Takaichi will likely repeat her campaign pledge to suspend consumption tax on food for two years in order to ease inflationary pressures on households.

This promise has exacerbated market worries about Japan's colossal debt, with yields on long-dated government bonds hitting record highs last month.

Rahul Anand, the International Monetary Fund chief of mission in Japan, said Wednesday that debt interest payments would double between 2025 and 2031.

"Removing the consumption tax (on food) would weaken the tax revenue base, since the consumption tax is an important way to raise revenues without creating distortions in the economy," Anand said.

To ease such concerns, Takaichi again yesterday repeated her mantra of having a "responsible, proactive" fiscal policy and promised to reduce government debt.

She will also announce in her policy speech the creation of a cross-party "national council" to discuss taxation and how to fund ageing Japan's ballooning social security bill, media reports said.

Sara Duterte announces 2028 presidential run

Philippine Vice-President Sara Duterte announced yesterday she will run for president of the southeast Asian nation of 116 million in 2028.

Duterte, who is embroiled in a bitter feud with President Ferdinand Marcos, was impeached last year only to see the country's Supreme Court throw the case out over procedural issues.

Her announcement comes just days before her father, former president Rodrigo Duterte, begins a pre-trial hearing at the International Criminal Court in the Netherlands over crimes against humanity allegedly committed as part of a brutal crackdown on drugs.

"I offer my life, my strength, and my future in the service of our nation," the 47-year-old vice president said at a Wednesday press briefing where she assailed Marcos's record.

"I am Sara Duterte. I will run for president of the Philippines."

Duterte accused Marcos of corruption in her brief speech, saying he had failed to live up to his word during the short-lived alliance that saw them storm to a landslide victory in the 2022 presidential election.

Cleve Arguelles, president of Manila-based WR Numero Research, suggested Duterte's public declaration could be more about keeping allies in line at a time of political uncertainty. "By projecting an inevitable 2028 run, she raises the perceived cost of defection - reminding politicians in Congress that her faction could still return to power," he said.

The announcement was aimed at drawing "a clear line among those who are with her or against her, given the ICC and the impeachment (cases)", agreed Jean Franco, political science professor at the University of the Philippines.

Philippine presidents are limited to a single six-year term, which eliminates Marcos from the field. **AFP**

Some Democrats to boycott Trump State of the Union speech for rally

Reuters
Washington

A group of liberal US lawmakers will abandon President Donald Trump's State of the Union speech on Tuesday for an outdoor rally to protest his policies, marking a rare coordinated boycott as partisan tensions around the annual address intensify.

About a dozen Democrats in the Senate and House of Representatives have announced their participation in a "People's State of the Union" event on the National Mall, near the Capitol, to highlight their opposition to the Republican administration's policies, organisers said yesterday.

Among the lawmakers set to appear at the 8:30pm (0130 GMT on Wednesday) rally - just ahead of Trump's 9 pm speech - are Senators Jeff Merkley of Oregon, Chris Murphy of Connecticut and Chris Van Hollen of Maryland, along with Representatives Becca Balint of Vermont, Greg Casar of Texas, and Pramila Jayapal of Washington state.

"It's not a surprise that they refuse to celebrate and honour the Americans who have benefited from the commonsense policies Republicans have governed with," said White House spokeswoman Abigail Jackson, who added that Democrats have voted against Trump initiatives on taxes and

mass deportation of immigrants.

The boycott underscores how Trump's return to the national stage has deepened partisan fissures, turning a once-stately ritual into a battlefield over the direction of US democracy.

By rallying outside the Capitol where Trump will be speaking to Congress, the lawmakers say they aim to frame the moment as a public challenge to Trump's agenda.

About a dozen Democrats in the Senate and House of Representatives have announced their participation in a "People's State of the Union" event on the National Mall, near the Capitol, to highlight their opposition to the Republican administration's policies

"Donald Trump has made a mockery of the State of the Union speech - taking a moment that is meant to bring the country together and turning it into a campaign rally to spew hatred and division," Murphy said in a statement.

Constituents of theirs who have been affected by Trump policies will also speak at the rally, according to a statement by MeidasTouch, which calls itself a pro-democracy, independent news network. The liberal group MoveOn Civic Action

is also an organiser, the groups said.

Other House progressives plan to attend Trump's speech, or at least part of it, but will demonstrate their discontent in other ways.

Representative Mark Pocan of Wisconsin, for example, has invited Wisconsin Soybean Association President Doug Rebut to the speech.

US soybean producers worry that Trump's tariffs on foreign goods have hurt American farmers, resulting in retaliation from China that has at times interrupted soybean trade and have contributed to higher prices for many consumer goods, said Pocan spokesman Matt Handverger.

The Democratic boycott, first reported by the *New York Times*, highlights the increasingly partisan tone of the annual address, which in recent years has included lawmakers interrupting the speech, displaying protest signs or coordinating attire to highlight various such causes as women's rights.

Last year, it was Representative Al Green of Texas, a Democrat who stood up and shouted in protest of Republican plans to cut the Medicaid health insurance plan for the poor and disabled. He was removed from the chamber by security guards and later reprimanded by the Republican-controlled House.

Regret slow progress on spotting U-13s on Instagram, Zuckerberg tells jury

Meta CEO Mark Zuckerberg yesterday said he regretted the slow progress his company made in identifying underage users on Instagram as he testified at a landmark social media addiction trial in Los Angeles.

Asked to comment on complaints from inside the company that not enough was being done to verify whether children under 13 were using the platform, the 41-year-old head of Meta, which also owns Facebook and WhatsApp, said improvements had been made.

But "I always wish that we could have gotten there sooner," he added.

Zuckerberg was the most hotly anticipated witness in the California trial, the first in a series of cases that could set legal precedent for thousands of lawsuits filed by American families against social media platforms.

The trial marked the first time the multibillionaire addressed the safety of his world-dominating platforms directly before a jury.

Zuckerberg was very reserved at first, an AFP journalist in the courtroom reported, but then he began to grow animated, showing signs of annoyance, shaking his head and waving his hands as he turned toward the jury.

The 12 jurors in Los Angeles heard the increasingly testy testimony as plaintiff lawyer Mark Lanier pressed Zuckerberg on age verification and his

guiding philosophy for making decisions at the vast social media company he controls.

The trial is set to last until late March, when the jury will decide whether Google-owned YouTube and Meta's Instagram bear responsibility for the mental health problems suffered by Kaley GM, a 20-year-old California resident who has been a heavy social media user since childhood.

Zuckerberg was confronted with an internal document that said Instagram had four million users under 13 in 2015, at the time of the plaintiff's adoption of the app, and that 30% of all 10- to 12-year-olds in the United States were users.

Zuckerberg said that "we're in the right place now" when it comes to age verification, and that new tools and methods would be added over time.

Lanier went on to argue that when enforcement of these rules were more lax, young people like Kaley were also subject to Meta's efforts to increase time spent on its world-dominating apps.

Zuckerberg admitted that "we did used to have goals around time," but that the company's goal was always to "build useful services that help people connect to the people they care about and learn about the world."

The trial will determine whether Google and Meta deliberately designed their platforms to encourage compulsive use among young people, damaging their mental health in the process. **AFP**

First night of Ramadan in Banda Aceh



Indonesian Muslim women offer evening mass prayers Tarawih on the first night of holy fasting month of Ramadan, at Baiturrahman Grand Mosque in Banda Aceh, Aceh, Indonesia, yesterday.



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North Korea's new Congress to reset weapons development goals

North Korea is set to unveil new weapons development goals at its Ninth Party Congress this month, amid assessments that Pyongyang has checked off only part of a sweeping list of capabilities that leader Kim Jong-un targeted at its 2021 Congress. While nuclear weapons and ballistic missiles remain central to Kim's strategy, analysts say the more mixed record lies in the conventional systems that could sharpen North Korea's ability to find targets, coordinate forces and apply pressure below the nuclear threshold – including drones, submarines and space-based surveillance.

In his report to the Eighth Party Congress, Kim urged development of a range of systems, including hypersonic weapons, a solid-fuel intercontinental ballistic missile, and military reconnaissance satellites and drones, according to state media. The full report also referred to the design of a new nuclear-powered submarine as being in its "final examination" stage, and said work had been completed on "unmanned striking equipment", "means of reconnaissance and detection" and a "military reconnaissance satellite", among other electronic weapons.

Since 2021, state media has repeatedly shown Kim overseeing tests of reconnaissance drones, while urging that unmanned systems and artificial intelligence be prioritised for modern warfare. A September analysis by 38 North, a US think-tank, said North Korea is expanding its drone programme and production capacity.

Kim has urged that unmanned systems and artificial intelligence be prioritised for modern warfare

The Institute for National Security Strategy, a think-tank run by South Korea's National Intelligence Service, also flagged in a September report Ukrainian officials' claims that Russia set up production capacity in North Korea for Russian drones. "If this is true, North Korean-Russian drone co-operation goes beyond simple technology exchange and carries significant strategic implications for the security environment on the Korean Peninsula and in Northeast Asia," the report said, noting the "grave threat" posed to South Korea's security apparatus.

Kim has highlighted conventional strike capability as a core pillar, including "super-large" multiple rocket launcher drills and orders issued in late 2025 to increase production of rocket launchers that state media KCNA called the mainstay of modernised long-range artillery. South Korea's military has also said North Korea supplied Russia with conventional systems such as 240mm rocket launchers and 170mm self-propelled howitzers, pointing to stockpiles and industrial capacity even under sanctions.

In terms of its conventional arsenal, "the biggest achievement for Pyongyang was arms exports stemming from the Ukraine war," said Yang Uk, a military expert at South Korea's Asan Institute for Policy Studies. Massive exports of arms by North Korea cleared out its "dead stock" from wartime reserves and it is now "modernising step by step with resources freed up", said Yang.

In 2023, North Korea unveiled what it called a "tactical nuclear attack submarine" that analysts said appears to be a modified Romeo-class submarine, but South Korean officials questioned whether it was fully functional.

In late December 2025, state media published photos of what it said was Kim inspecting the construction of an 8,700-tonne nuclear-powered submarine capable of launching surface-to-air missiles.

Analysts say the submarine push signals intent, but that propulsion, sensors, weapons integration and crew proficiency remain major barriers for a heavily sanctioned state. "With submarines, they seem to have failed," said Yang, arguing that after unveiling a new vessel in 2023, North Korea "still hasn't even properly tested it, which suggests significant problems with submerging."

Claims of Russian support in submarine development are hard to prove, Yang said, adding that the bottleneck is integrating a nuclear reactor into a workable design. One of North Korea's most consequential weapons goals from 2021 may be military reconnaissance from space. The country succeeded in putting its first military spy satellite in orbit in November 2023, though observers, including the US-based Heritage Foundation, said its capabilities were largely unknown.

A later attempt to launch another reconnaissance satellite in May 2024 failed when the rocket exploded in flight. Kim vowed in a speech that the programme would continue, but Pyongyang has yet to announce any new launches. – Reuters



FORWARD



Calls to rationalise spending in Ramadan and promote a culture of preserving blessings

QNA
Doha

The holy month of Ramadan is a blessed season during which Muslims seek generous reward through charity and good deeds, while deepening awareness of the rights of the poor and needy. Islam urges that this blessed month should not become an occasion for extravagance, ostentation, or wasteful consumption of God's blessings, which the faith commands believers to safeguard and not squander or corrupt in any form.

During Ramadan, purchasing power rises across most Muslim countries, even amid price increases, creating a dual challenge: avoiding waste while meeting essential Ramadan needs without excess. Many Muslim nations are enduring difficult economic conditions due to conflicts and crises that have led to daily hardship for their citizens. Such pressures are likely to intensify during the holy month, when spending increases to meet the needs of the Ramadan table.

Extravagance, defined as excessive spending on permissible matters, and wastefulness, spending on what is unlawful or without benefit, are both condemned in Islam. They are not acts of generosity but sins prohibited by God and warned against by the Prophet (peace be upon him), as they lead to squandering wealth and resources.

Ramadan often witnesses significant food and beverage waste, with lavish tables prepared in excessive variety and quantity without regard to actual need or moderation in spending. Such practices contradict the true spirit and objectives of the holy month, which centre on worship, drawing closer to God, compassion, and solidarity with the needy.

Food banks

To maximize the benefit of surplus food during Ramadan and throughout the year, many

countries, including Qatar, have established food preservation centers or food banks aimed at reducing hunger and poverty, enhancing food security, and redistributing safe, healthy surplus meals from hotels, farms, and social events to families in need and workers, while reducing food waste.

Such institutions operate independently or in partnership as bridges of social solidarity. They contribute directly and indirectly to sustainable development, promote volunteerism, and foster responsible consumption.

In this context, Ali Aayed al-Qahtani, Executive Director of the Hizf Al Naema Center, said in an interview with Qatar News Agency (QNA) that Ramadan is a month of values and moderation. Islam calls for balance and forbids excess, citing the Qur'anic verse: "Eat and drink, but do not waste." He noted that negative practices such as overpreparing and wasting food contradict the month's noble purposes.

Al-Qahtani explained that the centre plays an active social and awareness-raising role aimed at instilling a culture of rational consumption, preserving the blessing of food, and transforming suitable surplus into a beneficial resource that helps meet the needs of vulnerable groups, thereby reinforcing social solidarity and community responsibility.

He stressed that gratitude for blessings lies in managing them wisely and avoiding waste, whether during Ramadan, social events, weddings, banquets, or in hotels. He called on individuals and institutions to plan consumption carefully, assess actual needs, and coordinate with the centre to utilize edible surplus food instead of discarding it, noting the significant spiritual reward and positive humanitarian and environmental impact of doing so.

Responding to a question on how the centre contributes to food sustainability in line with Islamic values, al-Qahtani said it

directly advances sustainability by reducing waste, maximizing surplus utilisation, and linking these efforts to Islamic principles that call for stewardship of the earth and preventing corruption.

He added that the centre promotes public awareness of preserving food resources, achieving a balance between responsible consumption and social solidarity, and supporting sustainable development goals.

Regarding the volume of food redistribution over the past year and during the previous Ramadan, al-Qahtani stated that the centre intensified operations last year, especially during Ramadan, by receiving consumable surplus food and redistributing it to eligible families and individuals under an integrated system adhering to the highest food safety and quality standards.

He revealed that during Ramadan the centre received an average of 4,371 iftar meals daily, which were preserved, prepared, and distributed to beneficiaries, bringing the total number of fasting beneficiaries throughout the month to approximately 127,359. Under the Zakat Al Fitr project, the centre also received about 66,839kg of grains, distributed to 492 families and 10,416 eligible workers.

Additionally, 2,000 food baskets were distributed in co-operation with the Ministry of Endowments and Islamic Affairs, represented by the General Directorate of Endowments, in implementing the annual Ramadan "Food Basket" project, now in its sixth year, distributing comprehensive food baskets to registered families in need. This co-operation also includes logistical support, such as refrigerated transport to ensure the safety and quality of food supplies until delivery, enhancing distribution efficiency and maximizing social impact. The centre also seeks to launch awareness programs and innovative initiatives targeting various segments of society to broaden and sustain its humanitarian mission.

Concluding his interview with QNA, al-Qahtani stressed that Ramadan is a valuable opportunity to reassess consumption patterns, manage family budgets prudently, avoid unnecessary spending, and direct surplus toward charitable causes. He called for expanding social and solidarity efforts and strengthening compassion within the community, underscoring their great spiritual reward and their role in achieving the solidarity advocated by Islam.

Ramadan and social occasions, discouraging excess and ostentation.

The efforts of charitable institutions in Qatar and other Muslim countries to preserve surplus food and distribute it to the poor embody Islamic objectives and reflect solidarity and compassion among Muslims. Those engaged in such initiatives are rewarded for safeguarding blessings and delivering them to those in need.

Conversely, many religious scholars warn that excessive food preparation, unnecessary spending, extravagance, and waste are sinful acts contrary to Islam's call for moderation and are considered reprehensible traits.

Integrated network

Al-Qahtani noted that the centre is keen to build an integrated network of strategic partnerships with government and private entities, including hotels, restaurants, catering companies, and shopping malls, to collect fresh or chilled surplus food under the highest food safety standards, preserve it, and redistribute it to eligible families and individuals year-round, particularly during Ramadan.

He added that the centre collaborates with the Ministry of Endowments and Islamic Affairs, represented by the General Directorate of Endowments, in implementing the annual Ramadan "Food Basket" project, now in its sixth year, distributing comprehensive food baskets to registered families in need.

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It is clear that Ramadan embodies noble Islamic and social values as a blessed month of worship, spiritual closeness to God, good deeds, and mindful consumption, raising awareness of the rights of the poor and needy, rather than serving as an occasion for ostentation, extravagance, and waste of God's blessings, which Islam commands believers to preserve and protect in all forms.



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Pakistan PM to seek clarity on troops for Gaza in US visit: sources

Reuters
Islamabad

Before Pakistan commits to sending troops to Gaza as part of the International Stabilisation Force (ISF) it wants assurances from the United States that it will be a peacekeeping mission, three sources told Reuters.

Pakistan's Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif is set to attend the first

formal meeting of President Donald Trump's Board of Peace in Washington today, alongside delegations from at least 20 countries.

Trump, who will chair the meeting, is expected to announce a multi-billion dollar reconstruction plan for Gaza and detail plans for a UN-authorised stabilisation force for the Palestinian enclave. Three government sources said during the Washington visit Sharif wanted to better understand the goal of the ISF, what

authority they were operating under and what the chain of command was before making a decision on deploying troops. "We are ready to send troops. Let me make it clear that our troops could only be part of a peace mission in Gaza," said one of the sources, a close aide of Sharif.

Pakistan's foreign ministry did not respond to a Reuters request for a comment. Trump's 20-point Gaza plan calls for a force from Muslim nations to oversee a transition pe-

riod for reconstruction and economic recovery in the devastated Palestinian territory, and Washington has been pressing Islamabad to join. Analysts say Pakistan would be an asset to the multinational force, with its experienced military that has gone to war with arch-rival India and tackled insurgencies.

"We can send initially a couple of thousand troops anytime, but we need to know what role they are going to play," the source added.

Two of the sources said it was likely Sharif, who has met Trump earlier this year in Davos and late last year at the White House, would either have an audience with him on the sidelines of the meeting or the following day at the White House.

Initially designed to cement Gaza's ceasefire, Trump sees the Board of Peace, launched in late January, taking a wider role in resolving global conflicts. Some countries have reacted cautiously, fearing it

could become a rival to the United Nations. Husain Haqqani, a former Pakistan ambassador to the United States, said the Pakistani public supported sending troops to Gaza only to help protect Palestinians.

"If developments in Gaza after the deployment do not improve the position of Palestinians, there could be a massive reaction at the public level in Pakistan," said Haqqani, currently a scholar at the Hudson Institute in Washington.

Ukraine-Russia peace talks end with no breakthrough

Reuters
Geneva

Two days of peace talks in Geneva between Ukraine and Russia ended yesterday without a breakthrough, with President Volodymyr Zelensky accusing Moscow of stalling US-mediated efforts to end the four-year-old war.

Ukraine has faced repeated pressure from US President Donald Trump to agree to a deal that could mean painful concessions, as Russian forces pound its power grid and slowly advance on the battlefield.

As the delegations met for a second day at a hotel in the Swiss city, under the mediation of US envoy Steve Witkoff and Trump's son-in-law Jared Kushner, Zelensky had called the first day "difficult".

"We can state that Russia is trying to drag out negotiations that could already have reached the final stage," he wrote on X. Moments after his statement, the delegations broke off the talks and said they would meet again in the future, without providing a date.

Russia's chief negotiator, former culture minister Vladimir Medinsky, described the talks as "difficult, but business-like".

Medinsky - whom Ukrainian officials have accused of engaging in history lectures rather than substantive talks - spoke with the Ukrainians for nearly two hours after formal talks ended, according to a representative of Kyiv's chief negotiator, Rustem Umerov.

A spokesperson for Zelensky said the formal part of the talks had addressed territory in Ukraine's east and the fate of the Russian-controlled Zaporizhzhia Nuclear Power Plant, both sticking points since the beginning of the process.

Moscow wants Ukraine to cede the roughly 20% of the eastern region of Donetsk that Russian forces have been unable to conquer - something Kyiv has repeatedly rejected.

Kyiv, meanwhile, wants Zaporizhzhia, Europe's largest nuclear plant, to be operated by the US and Ukraine, which Russia has said is unacceptable.

Tuesday is the fourth anniversary of Russia's full-scale invasion, which has killed hundreds of thousands, driven millions from their homes, and ravaged Ukrainian cities, towns and villages. Russia denies deliberately targeting civilians.

Trump has twice suggested in recent days that it is up to Kyiv to make sure a deal is agreed quickly. He had told reporters on Monday:

"Ukraine better come to the table fast. That's all I'm telling you."

In an interview with the US news outlet Axios, Zelensky was quoted as saying that it was "not fair" that Trump kept publicly demanding concessions from Ukraine, not Russia.

Zelensky also said any plan requiring Ukraine to give up territory that Russia had not captured in the east would be rejected if put to a referendum.

"I hope it is just his tactics and not the decision," Zelensky was quoted as saying.

The Geneva meeting follows two rounds of US-brokered talks in Abu Dhabi that made no breakthrough.

Both Zelensky and Umerov have made a point of repeatedly thanking the US for its mediation in recent weeks.

Zelensky has expressed concern that US Congressional mid-term elections in November could draw Washington's attention away from efforts to end Europe's biggest conflict since World War Two.

Kyiv is also seeking strong US-backed security guarantees to prevent future Russian attacks in the event of a peace deal.

US Army Secretary Daniel Driscoll and Brigadier General Michael Adamski took part in three-way military negotiations yesterday, according to a US official.

Ramadan in Rawalpindi



Worshippers perform Tarawih prayers marking the start of the holy month of Ramadan at a mosque in Rawalpindi, Pakistan, yesterday.

Turkiye lawmakers back moves to 'reintegrate' former Kurdish fighters

AFP
Ankara

Kurdish fighters who have laid down their arms should be reintegrated into society, Turkish lawmakers urged in a key report released yesterday, while ruling out an "amnesty".

The recommendations of the cross-party parliamentary commission are meant to prepare the legal groundwork for peace moves between Türkiye and the outlawed Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK).

Last year the PKK formally renounced its armed struggle against Türkiye after four decades of violence that claimed some 50,000 lives on both sides.

"The law should seek the reintegration of individuals who reject weapons and violence into society," the report said, but stressed it "should not create a perception of impunity and amnesty".

The commission's 50 lawmakers overwhelmingly approved the report, with only two votes against and one abstention, an

AFP reporter in the room said. It will now be put to the Turkish parliament for approval before becoming law.

President Recep Tayyip Erdogan hailed the report as "a significant achievement" and pledged "concrete steps" to ensure the PKK's complete dissolution.

"Now deliberations will begin in parliament regarding the legal dimension of the process," he said. Lawmakers told AFP it was likely to be after the Muslim holy month of Ramadan, which begins today.



Secretary of the National Security and Defence Council of Ukraine Rustem Umerov and other members of the Ukrainian delegation pose for a photo after a meeting with delegations from Russia and the US on the second day of the third round of trilateral talks, amid Russia's attack on Ukraine, in Geneva, Switzerland, yesterday.

Nato trains storming Baltic beach to deter Russia

AFP
Putlos, Germany

Thousands of Nato troops including from Spain and Türkiye joined an exercise yesterday on Germany's Baltic coast that defence officials labelled a show of readiness to deter Russia.

Naval and special forces practised seizing a beach at the Putlos training ground near the port city of Kiel as part of the wider Steadfast Dart 2026 exercise to test the alliance's ability to rapidly move troops across Nato territory.

Under the command of German General Ingo Gerhartz, about 3,000 forces took part in the drill, which included Ger-

man Eurofighter jets and 15 naval vessels as well as Spanish combat divers and Turkish units using Zaha amphibious assault vehicles.

German Defence Minister Boris Pistorius, observing the manoeuvre, said it showed that Nato was united and "ready for action".

"Particularly in the Baltic Sea, the security situation has worsened dramatically," he said, adding that such exercises showed "we are serious about deterrence".

Moscow's ongoing full-scale invasion of Ukraine, raging for almost four years, has stoked fears that Russia could in future use force against European nato members.

The German military's top general, Carsten Breuer, said Berlin

and its Nato allies faced a "real threat".

"Russia continues to orient its armed forces westward," he said, adding that drills like the Putlos exercise also had a "diplomatic effect".

European governments have also sounded the alarm over what they say is Russia's rising malign activity, including sabotage of railway lines in Poland and arson and cyberattacks across the continent.

The Putlos drill forms part of the multinational exercise Steadfast Dart 2026, running from January to March, which involves about 10,000 troops from 11 European Nato member states. Some 7,300 of them are deployed in Germany alone.

Hacker accesses info on 1.2 mn French bank accounts: ministry

The French economy ministry said yesterday that a hacker gained access to a national bank account database and consulted information on 1.2 million accounts.

Since the end of January, the hacker used the stolen credentials of an official to access and consult "parts of the file of all of the accounts open in French banks and which contains personal data

such as bank account numbers, name of the account holder, address and in certain cases the account owner's tax number," the ministry said in a statement.

The Direction General of Public Finances told AFP that gaining access to the database "doesn't allow you to check bank account balances, let alone conduct operations."

The ministry said that once

the unauthorised access was detected measures were immediately taken to block the hacker and prevent the removal of information.

Owners of the 1.2 million affected bank accounts will receive notifications in coming days, it added. It said a criminal complaint had been filed and the CNIL data protection watchdog informed. (AFP)

Reuters
Frankfurt

European Central Bank President Christine Lagarde plans to leave her job early, ahead of next year's French presidential election, to give outgoing French leader Emmanuel Macron a say in picking her successor, the Financial Times said yesterday.

Lagarde's term leading Europe's most important financial institution is due to end in October 2027, but a victory by the far-right party National Rally (RN) in the spring 2027 French vote could complicate selection of the next ECB chief.

RN president Jordan Bardella on Tuesday accused Macron of attempting to stage a "democratic power grab" that would let him maintain influence even after leaving office.

France is the second-biggest European Union economy and no ECB president has been picked without a sign-off from Paris. Concerns about central bank independence have risen with US President Donald Trump's campaign against Federal Reserve Chair Jerome Powell, demanding sharp interest-rate cuts.

Citing a person familiar with the matter, the FT reported Lagarde had not decided the exact timing of her departure but was keen that Macron and German Chancellor Friedrich Merz be the key European leaders choosing who succeeds her. Macron cannot run for a third presidential term. A German government spokesperson said Berlin would "always propose a suitable candidate" to head the ECB, who would support Germany's "ideas of stability" - a reference to its preference for strict inflation targeting and sound public finances.

"President Lagarde is totally focused on her mission and has not



File photo shows ECB President Christine Lagarde, ECB Vice-President Luis de Guindos, Director General Communications Wolfgang Proissl and Governor of the Bank of Italy Fabio Panetta arriving for a press conference following the Governing Council's monthly monetary policy meeting in Florence, Italy.

taken any decision regarding the end of her term," an ECB spokesperson said.

That is a departure from earlier guidance. Last year, when the FT suggested she may leave early, the ECB said Lagarde was "determined to complete her term".

Market reaction to Lagarde's possible departure was muted on Wednesday as potential successors are not expected to transform policy. "The ECB takes monetary policy decisions by building consensus, and whoever replaces Lagarde is unlikely to radically shift or change the way the ECB works, in particular should her replacement be one of those being touted in the media," Nomura economist Andrzej Szczepaniak said.

Lagarde's early departure could strengthen the case for EU leaders to make ECB Executive Board appointments as a package when the terms of chief economist Philip Lane and market operations chief Isabel Schnabel expire next year.

ECB presidential appointments are subject to political horse-trading, so filling the three jobs together might make sense, especially as the bloc's biggest economies - France, Italy and Germany - have de facto permanent seats on the board.

Candidates often mentioned for the top job include former Dutch central bank chief Klaas Knot, Bank for International Settlements General Manager Pablo Hernandez de Cos and German Bundesbank president Joachim Nagel. Schnabel has expressed interest in the role but EU law may prevent her candidacy: board members serve non-renewable terms.

"All the likely candidates are mainstream central bankers and, even if the eventual successor is not one of the current supposed front-runners, he or she would be sure to be from a similar background," Andrew Kenningham at Capital Economics said.

Lagarde would leave the ECB at a relatively tranquil time.

Tennis star Hady Habib visits EAA Foundation's First Assalam School

Lebanese-American tennis star Hady Habib inspired students and educators during a special visit to First Assalam School, an initiative of Education Above All (EAA) Foundation, a global foundation dedicated to advancing education and development.

Launched in 2019, the First Assalam School supports non-Arab children aged 7 to 12 who face financial and structural barriers to accessing quality education. To date, the school has enrolled more than 5,300 students, providing inclusive learning opportunities and structured academic pathways that enable students to reintegrate into formal education systems.

During the visit, Habib shared insights from his professional journey, underscoring the importance of perseverance, discipline, and ambition in achieving success at the highest levels of international sport.

His engagement reflects the school's commitment to exposing students to posi-



tive role models who demonstrate how resilience and hard work can unlock opportunity, both inside and outside the classroom.

As part of the programme, Habib toured the school library, engaged learners through a health and wellness session, a rapid-fire game, and led an interactive

sports session with students and educators, reinforcing the role of sport as a powerful tool for building confidence and holistic development.

Speaking on the visit, Al Jazi Hasan Darwish, director, Communications and Engagement at EAA Foundation, said: "At Education Above All Foundation, we believe education is not only about academic attainment, but about nurturing confidence, resilience, and aspiration. Welcoming an athlete of Hady Habib's calibre offers our students a living example of what determination and self-belief can achieve. These moments help children see beyond their immediate circumstances and imagine futures shaped by opportunity, purpose, and possibility."

The First Assalam School delivers the British curriculum and integrates specialised, non-traditional programmes such as accelerated learning and homeschooling to bridge learning gaps, address foundational deficits, and support students in excelling academically. The school plays a critical role in assisting children whose education has been disrupted, ensuring they are not left behind.

Endowments Ministry pledges 'Giving Basket' for 2,000 families

By A Staff Reporter
Doha

The General Directorate of Endowments at the Ministry of Endowments (Awqaf) and Islamic Affairs has restated its yearly pledge to direct waqf funds to vulnerable groups during key charitable periods, led by the holy month of Ramadan.

This commitment is reflected in the continuation of the 'Giving Basket' initiative, organised with the Hifz Al Naema Center and financed by the Waqf Fund for Righteousness and Piety, through which essential food items are supplied to more than 2,000 low-income families across Qatar.

Director-General Eng Hassan bin Abdullah al-Marzouqi underlined that the directorate prioritises delivering charitable endowments to those entitled to them, particularly during Ram-

adan, when social solidarity and compassion are especially prominent. He said the Giving Basket programme is closely aligned with the purpose of waqf in serving society and illustrates practical social cohesion, made possible by donors' contributions and the participation of implementing partners.

Al-Marzouqi noted that the project offers a working example of coordination between the General Directorate of Endowments and the Hifz Al Naema Center. Under the scheme, full food baskets are provided to help cover the basic needs of families facing financial hardship, with an emphasis on delivering assistance promptly and respectfully.

He added that the directorate continues to pursue and expand partnerships within the community in order to generate lasting humanitarian benefits, ease the burdens on struggling households and embed a stronger cul-

ture of mutual support in Qatari society. Hifz Al Naema Center Director Ali Ayed al-Qahtani said the current edition of the Giving Basket marks the sixth year of co-operation with the General Directorate of Endowments, which he said demonstrates the project's continuity and effectiveness in reaching families in need throughout the country.

Al-Qahtani explained that the initiative is designed to offer integrated food parcels that help beneficiaries meet their needs throughout Ramadan, thereby strengthening food security and supporting those who qualify for assistance.

He urged benefactors to continue backing waqf-based programmes that deliver enduring humanitarian outcomes, stressing that collaboration between donors and operational institutions reinforces social solidarity and confirms waqf's role as a key instrument of development and community service.

QRCS Ramadan Campaign to reach out to 18 countries

As the holy month of Ramadan began, Qatar Red Crescent Society (QRCS) initiated the activities of its annual Ramadan Campaign under the theme 'Keep Your Balance of Good Deeds Alive', the drive involves numerous humanitarian projects and charitable initiatives to be implemented in Qatar and 17 other countries, thanks to the generous contributions of Qatari and non-Qatari donors.

Managing Director, Secretary-General of QRCS Eng Ibrahim bin Hashem al-Sada said: "This year, Ramadan comes at a critical time for the region and the whole world, with alarmingly escalating tensions and crises that threaten safe and stable communities and worsen things for the communities that have long been affected by natural disasters and armed conflicts."

Eng al-Sada stated: "As usual every year, QRCS's Ramadan Campaign is divided into two main parts. The first part focuses on Ramadan Iftar projects, with one-month Ramadan food parcels containing local food staples distributed to families (an average of six persons per family), to help those in need find Iftar and Suhoor meals."

He noted: "QRCS plans to distribute Ramadan food parcels to more than 300,000 people in 18 countries.

Several categorized are available as follows: QR 500 (Qatar); QR 475 (Gaza); QR 385 (Sudan, Syria, Somalia, Afghanistan, the West Bank, Chad, Tanzania, and Djibouti); and QR 255 (Yemen, Niger, Bangladesh, Lebanon, Jordan, Mauritania, Albania, Kazakhstan, and Uganda).

For the third consecutive year, QRCS is implementing the On-the-Go Ramadan Iftar initiative, which has Lulu Hypermarket as a sponsor and Katara Cultural Village as a partner.

During the holy month of Ramadan, QRCS volunteers will be stationed at Katara to distribute light Iftar meals to the visitors of the Cannon area, as well as to the drivers passing by during Iftar time. Every day, 350 meals will be distributed, or 10,000 meals throughout Ramadan.

A recently launched Ramadan initiative is Hero Meals, which enables talabat customers to donate meals to riders directly through the app. The participating restaurants will offer specially curated meal options, so that customers can support riders by adding a Hero Meal to their order in just a few taps.

The donated meals will be distributed to riders, offering a

simple and meaningful way for customers to show appreciation during the holy month of Ramadan. Other local Ramadan-bound projects include (1) Ramadan Iftar and Zakat projects for the benefit of 1,500 families, or 6,000 people, registered with social assistance programs; (2) multiple distributions of food parcels, dates, and in-kind aid under the Stand Together program; and (3) the "Joy of Eid" initiative, with a total of 10,000 beneficiaries from expatriate workers.

The second part of the Ramadan Campaign comprises year-round humanitarian and development projects. QRCS seeks to mobilize community support to implement nearly 190 food security, shelter, education, health care, medical convoys, water and sanitation, livelihoods, and other humanitarian projects.

In Qatar, QRCS will continue to implement permanent development programs, designed to support vulnerable social groups, including Relief for Those Heavily in Debt, Support for Orphans and Disabilities, Treatment for Patients, Relief from Distress for Families and Individuals, Support for Students with Disability, Clothing for Children, and My Wish. (QNA)

WEEKEND DEALS

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 <p>17 QR.75 لحم بقري بالعظم باكستاني ١ كجم Pakistan Beef with Bone 1 kg</p>	 <p>42 QR.00 لحم ضاني هندي ١ كجم Indian Mutton 1 kg</p>	 <p>22 QR.50 لحم جاموس هندي ١ كجم Indian Buffalo Meat 1 kg</p>	 <p>18 QR.50 جمبري وسط اماراتي ١ كجم Fresh Prawns Medium UAE 1 kg</p>	 <p>29 QR.50 سمك دنيس عمان ١ كجم Fresh Sea Bream Oman 1 kg</p>	
 <p>QR 179 مجوس دجاج (تكفي ١٠ أشخاص) Chicken Majboos (Good For 10 Persons)</p>	 <p>11 QR.50 بيض ابيض ٣٠ حبة Fresh White Egg 30's Tray</p>	 <p>1 QR.25 بصل هندي ١ كجم Onion India 1 kg</p>	 <p>1 QR.00 بطاطس باكستاني ١ كجم Potato Pakistan 1 kg</p>	 <p>4 QR.50 موز اكوادر ١ كجم Banana Ecuador 1 kg</p>	
 <p>3 QR.00 برتقال نيفال افريقيا ١ كجم Orange Navel Africa 1 kg</p>	 <p>5 QR.75 تفاح رويال جالا فرنسا ١ كجم Apple Royal Gala France 1 kg</p>	 <p>20 QR.00 كراون ديلوكس ارز بسمتي ٥ كجم - ١ حبة Crown Deluxe Basmati Rice 5 kg x 1 pc</p>	 <p>9 QR.50 بلفيس زيت دوار الشمس ١.٥ لتر - ١ حبة Belkis Sunflower Oil 1.5 Ltr x 1 pc</p>	 <p>12 QR.00 ساديا دجاج شويبة ١٤٠٠ جم - ١ حبة Sadia Chicken Griller 1400 gm x 1 pc</p>	

SHOWROOM TIMING DURING RAMADAN

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