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Financial Results (FY 2025)

Gross Written Premiums (GWP)

9% ▲

QAR 9.9B

Net Profit Before the Impact of P/L: Tax, Etc.

19% ▲

QAR 874M

Net Profit Profit attributable to QIC shareholders

9% ▲

QAR 791M

Earnings Per Share:

10% ▲

QAR 0.188

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## PM, Saudi FM review military escalation, push for cessation




HE the Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman bin Jassim al-Thani held a telephone call with Saudi Minister of Foreign Affairs Prince Faisal bin Farhan bin Abdullah al-Saud. Discussion during the call focused on the developments of the military escalation in the region and its serious repercussions on regional and international security and stability, as well as ways to resolve all disputes peacefully. Both sides reiterated their condemnation of the unjustified Iranian attacks on Qatar, Saudi Arabia, and a number of other sisterly countries. They stressed, in this context, the need for an immediate cessation of all escalatory actions, a return to the negotiating table, the prioritisation of reason and wisdom, and working to contain the crisis in a way that preserves the security of the region. They also emphasised the importance of strengthening Arab co-ordination to face current challenges. (QNA)

## Qatar urges immediate halt to Iranian attacks

By Ayman Adly  
Staff Reporter

Qatar will defend itself against Iran's relentless missile and drone attacks but is not seeking escalation, the country's top foreign affairs spokesman said yesterday – warning Tehran to halt its strikes immediately and stressing that the onus was entirely on the aggressor to stand down. “The attacker should take an immediate decision to stop these unjustified attacks,” said Dr Majed bin Mohamed al-Ansari, Adviser to the Prime Minister and official spokesperson for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, speaking at the ministry's weekly media briefing. He paid warm tribute to the Qatari Armed Forces, praising their “highest level of readiness and preparedness” in successfully intercepting every single missile and drone launched against the country since the attacks began, describing their performance as reflecting great professionalism and dedication in the defence of the nation. Al-Ansari dismissed Iran's proposal to form a joint investigation committee to examine the nature of targets struck across Gulf states, calling it entirely unnecessary and beside the point. “Iran must stop its attacks on countries that have not targeted Iranian territory – the issue does not require a joint investigation committee or joint teams,” he said flatly. He revealed that Iranian strikes have deliberately targeted civilian and residential areas, with attempts also made against key industrial installations including the strategically vital Ras Laffan energy complex and Hamad International Airport. He added that threats – some unofficial – had also been made against further residential and commercial targets, and stressed that Qatari authorities were taking every such warning with the utmost seriousness, putting in place all necessary precautionary measures to protect the safety and well-being of residents, facilities, and state assets. He confirmed that missile attacks aimed squarely at residential areas at around 2am on Saturday were successfully intercepted and neutralised, prompting authorities to evacuate residents from zones considered at risk as a precautionary measure, ensuring that all those affected were relocated swiftly and comfortably to safe and secure locations. **To Page 8**

The Silent Reality of Drone Interception

The absence of early warning messages on certain days did not mean that attacks had ceased altogether. Intercepted drones, for instance, do not always produce the large explosions that might alert the public



Dr Majed bin Mohamed al-Ansari,  
MoFA spokesperson

Security situation stable

The Ministry of Interior yesterday affirmed that the security situation in the country was stable, emphasising the paramount importance of obtaining information from official sources. It also reiterated the importance of refraining from spreading rumours or disseminating unreliable information. In a statement earlier, the ministry stressed that it would not hesitate to take legal action against anyone who spreads rumours or deliberately publishes misleading information, affirming that the safety of citizens, residents, and visitors is a top priority. (QNA)

### Qatar intercepts ballistic missiles; downs drones

The Ministry of Defence announced yesterday that Qatar was subjected to an attack involving 14 ballistic missiles and a number of drones launched from Iran. In a statement, the ministry said that Qatar's Armed Forces had successfully intercepted all drones and 13 ballistic missiles, while one missile fell in an uninhabited area without recording any casualties. (QNA)

### Qatar Airways to resume limited flights from 18th

By A Staff Reporter  
Doha

Qatar Airways will operate a reduced flight schedule to and from Doha between March 18 and 28, as the airline works to support passengers affected by the ongoing closure of Qatari airspace. The airline stressed that it remains committed to resuming full operations as swiftly as possible, and will do so as soon as the Qatar Civil Aviation Authority gives the green light to reopen airspace. In the meantime, the limited schedule has been designed to offer passengers greater flexibility during this difficult period. Passengers are advised to check the updated timetable on the Qatar Airways website or app, or through a travel agent. Those with confirmed bookings on routes included in the new schedule will be contacted directly, and are urged to ensure their contact details are kept current. **To Page 8**

## Qatar's retail scene gets holiday boost

By Joey Aguilar  
Staff Reporter

Crowded fitting rooms, stacks of colourful fabrics and extended midnight shopping hours signal the final countdown to Eid al-Fitr across Qatar. As Ramadan enters its closing days, malls, neighbourhood markets, and traditional souqs are bustling with activity as residents prepare for the festival that marks its end. This can also be attributed to a shift in travel plans among residents, as regional tensions have cast uncertainty over parts of the Middle East, prompting them to spend Eid in Qatar rather than travel abroad. An employee at an apparel boutique at a major mall in Doha told *Gulf Times* that customer traffic has noticeably increased in recent days. “One reason could be that many people are staying in Qatar for Eid this year,” she said. “If they're not travelling, they're more likely to shop, go out and celebrate here.” This was echoed by several retailers across Qatar, noting that extended operating hours have attracted many shoppers, particularly families who arrive after evening prayers to browse stores adorned with Ramadan lanterns and Eid-themed displays. Promotions and seasonal discounts are also helping businesses capture the final wave of holiday spending. **To Page 8**



A crescent moon Ramadan-themed installation decorates a shopping mall in Doha, where increased footfall reflects the festive atmosphere and last-minute preparations for Eid. **PICTURE:** Joey Aguilar

### GCC, UK invoke self-defence right

The foreign ministers of the Gulf Co-operation Council and British Foreign Secretary Yvette Cooper have jointly declared that GCC states reserve the full right to defend themselves against Iran's ongoing attacks, as they met in an extraordinary session to address the deepening regional crisis and welcomed a landmark UN Security Council resolution demanding an immediate halt to Iranian strikes. Resolution 2817 (2026), backed by an overwhelming 136 UN member states, condemns Iran's attacks on GCC member states and Jordan in the strongest terms, describing them as a violation of international law and a serious threat to international peace and security. The resolution also condemned Iranian targeting of residential areas and civilian infrastructure, including oil facilities and public services, which has resulted in casualties and widespread damage. The GCC side was led by Bahraini Foreign Minister Dr Abdullah bin Rashid al-Zayani, in his capacity as chairman of the current GCC Ministerial Council session, alongside GCC Secretary-General Jassim Mohammed Al-Budaiwi and the foreign ministers of all member states.

### Shura Council hails national unity

Shura Council yesterday strongly condemned what it describes as Iran's ongoing military aggression against the country, which began last month. Meeting under HE the Speaker Hassan bin Abdullah al-Ghanem, the Council praised the Qatari armed forces and security services for their professionalism in defending the nation. The Council affirmed that national unity remains Qatar's greatest defence, noting that the country continues to function normally under His Highness the Amir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani's leadership, with all public services maintained throughout the crisis. **Page 7**

RAMADAN THOUGHT

And those who remain patient, seeking their Lord's Countenance, perform As-Salat (the prayers), and spend out of that which We have bestowed on them, secretly and openly, and repel evil with good, for such there is a good end. (Qur'an 13:22)

Prayer times

Fajr...4:24; Zuhr...11:42; Asr...3:08; Maghrib...5:47; Isha...7:17

Fasting times

Iftar today .....5:47pm  
Imsak tomorrow.....4:13am

## MoPH outlines health services for Eid al-Fitr

By A Staff Reporter  
Doha

The Ministry of Public Health has outlined how government health services will operate during the upcoming Eid al-Fitr holiday. All emergency and inpatient services at Hamad Medical Corporation hospitals – including paediatric emergency centres – will run around the clock as normal, alongside the ambulance service and the unified healthcare contact centre (16000). The Qatar National Blood Donation Centre will continue accepting donors during the remaining days of Ramadan in two daily shifts: 8am to 1pm and 6pm to midnight, with the exception of Eid's first day and the coming Friday. From Saturday through Monday, the centre will operate from 9am to 9pm. Of the 31 health centres run by the Primary Health Care Corporation, 21 will remain open over the holiday. Emergency care will be available at 14 centres, eight of which are dedicated to urgent children's care. Several ministry departments will also maintain limited hours. The Medical Relations and Treatment Abroad Department will receive visitors from 9am to noon, while the Newborn Registration Office at the Women's Health and Research Centre will operate from 8am to noon – both closed on Eid's first day and on Fridays and Saturdays. The Death Registration unit will receive visitors daily from 8am to noon throughout the holiday period.

### A fruitful Eid: Shelves stocked with plenty



Fruit hampers stacked high at a Doha supermarket tell a reassuring story – Qatar's food supplies remain plentiful and well-stocked as residents prepare to celebrate Eid al-Fitr, with authorities ensuring uninterrupted delivery of essential goods despite the ongoing regional crisis. **PICTURE:** Thajudheen



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Amir of the State of Qatar

His Highness  
**Sheikh Hamad Bin Khalifa Al Thani**  
Father Amir

His Highness  
**Sheikh Abdullah Bin Hamad Al Thani**  
Deputy Amir

and to all the honorable people of Qatar  
on the occasion of

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wish that Qatar always enjoys security, welfare and prosperity  
under the wise leadership of His Highness The Amir

The Chairman, Board of Directors, Group Chief Executive Officer and  
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# The View Hospital Launches "Peace of Mind"

**Free 24/7 Online Mental Wellbeing  
Support for the Community in Qatar**

The View Hospital has announced the launch of Peace of Mind, a community initiative designed to provide free online mental wellbeing support to people across Qatar through qualified, multilingual psychologists, available 24 hours a day, seven days a week. The initiative reflects the hospital's commitment to supporting the community not only through physical healthcare, but also by making emotional and mental wellbeing support more accessible when it is needed most.



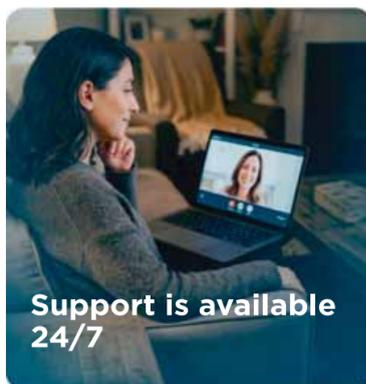
**Mental Wellbeing support  
is available for free**

Built around the message "You are not alone," the campaign acknowledges that during difficult times, uncertainty, pressure, anxiety and emotional exhaustion can affect anyone, and no one should have to face those feelings alone. Through Peace of Mind, The View Hospital aims to create a safe, supportive and professional pathway for individuals seeking reassurance, guidance or simply someone to talk to.

The initiative offers free 30-minute online mental wellbeing sessions with qualified, multilingual psychologists delivered through video calls, allowing individuals to access support conveniently and privately from wherever they are. The service is available 24/7, ensuring that help is within reach day or night. There is no referral required, no fee, and complete confidentiality is maintained.

According to The View Hospital, Peace of Mind was launched to support the wider community in Qatar and to help ensure that mental wellbeing care remains available and accessible to everyone whenever it is needed. The service is intended for anyone who may be feeling overwhelmed, anxious, emotionally drained, or simply in need of a compassionate and professional conversation.

The sessions are designed to provide a confidential conversation with a qualified psychologist, a safe space



**Support is available  
24/7**

## You Are Not Alone

During difficult times, nights may feel long and hope may seem distant. Sudden anxiety and psychological pressure can affect anyone, and no one should have to face them alone.

## Key Features of the Initiative

- 30-minute sessions
- Qualified multilingual psychologists
- Services available 24/7 throughout the week
- Complete privacy and confidentiality
- No referral or fees required
- Book via phone: 41442650

to express emotions openly, ongoing support when needed, and professional guidance with practical coping strategies to help individuals navigate emotional and psychological challenges. By removing common barriers such as cost and referral requirements, the initiative seeks to make access to care simpler, more immediate and more inclusive.



**Qualified multilingual  
psychologists for all ages**

The campaign also reflects The View Hospital's broader philosophy, captured in its message: "A Family, Above All." Through this initiative, the hospital reinforces its belief that mental wellbeing is an essential part of overall health and that caring for the community means supporting every aspect of a person's wellbeing, including emotional and psychological health.

By extending this support to the entire community, The View Hospital is helping to normalise mental wellbeing conversations and encouraging people to take the first step towards feeling better. The campaign emphasises that asking for support is a courageous step and the beginning of healing, reassurance and recovery.

Individuals wishing to benefit from the initiative can book their free online session by calling **+974 4144 2650**. Support is available around the clock, reinforcing the hospital's message that peace of mind matters and that trusted help should always be within reach.



## A Family, Above All

The View Hospital remains committed to supporting the community and promoting all aspects of health, including mental and emotional wellbeing.

Book your free session now by scanning the QR code or by calling **+974 4144 2650**



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## HMC announces operating schedule during Eid al-Fitr holiday

The Hamad Medical Corporation (HMC) has announced the operating hours of its services during the Eid al-Fitr holiday.

The Trauma and Emergency Centre operates as normal, 24 hours a day, seven days a week, for medical emergencies.

The Paediatric Emergency Centres will remain open 24 hours a day, seven days a week, for medical emergencies involving children under the age of 14.

The Ambulance Service will continue to

operate 24 hours a day, seven days a week, for people requiring emergency medical assistance.

The Nesma'ak 16060 call centre will operate 24/7, as will the 16000 Government Healthcare Hotline.

Meanwhile, HMC Outpatient Clinics will be closed from March 17-23, and reopen on March 24.

Similarly, the Urgent Consultation Service will be closed from March 17-23 and reopen on March 24.

The Pharmacy Home Delivery Service will be closed on March 20-21. The service will operate from 8am to 1pm on March 17-19 and on March 22-23.

The National Mental Health Helpline will operate from 8am to 6pm Saturday to Thursday and will continue throughout the Eid holidays.

The HMC's Diet and Nutrition Services will operate at Hamad General Hospital from March 17-23 from 7am to 12 noon. There will be no service on March 20-21.

At Al Wakra Hospital, services will be available from March 17-23, from 8am to 1pm, and there will be no service on March 19-21.

The Qatar National Blood Donation Centre will be operating on March 19 from 8am to 1am and 6pm to 12am. It will be closed on March 20 and open from March 21-23, from 9am to 9pm.

For more information about blood donation, people can contact 4439 1081 or 44391082.

## Three days of Eid al-Fitr holiday for private sector staff: ministry

The Ministry of Labour (MoL) has announced that the Eid al-Fitr holiday for employees in private sector establishments subject to the Labour Law will be three days with full pay.

The ministry clarified that if work requirements necessitate an employee working during the Eid holiday, the provisions governing overtime hours and the related allowances stipulated in Article (74) of the Labour Law will apply. - QNA



## Sheikha Alya holds meeting with top Kyrgyzstan official

HE the Permanent Representative of Qatar to the United Nations (UN) Sheikha Alya Ahmed bin Saif al-Thani held a meeting with the deputy chairman of Kyrgyzstan's Cabinet, Edil Baisalov, at the Permanent Mission in New York.

During the meeting, HE Sheikha Alya reiterated Qatar's condemnation of the ongoing Iranian attacks on Qatar's territory, referring in this context to UN Security Council Resolution 2817 (2026), which condemned Iranian attacks on the territories of the Gulf Co-operation Council member states and called for their immediate cessation.

Baisalov affirmed his country's solidarity with Qatar and highlighted the importance of consolidating security and stability in the region. - QNA

# Shura Council commends society's cohesion, tenacity

The Shura Council has commended, during its regular weekly session yesterday at its headquarters in the Tamim Bin Hamad Hall under the chairmanship of HE the Speaker of the Council Hassan bin Abdullah al-Ghanim, the steadfastness and cohesion of Qatari society in facing the "blatant Iranian aggression" to which Qatar has been subjected since February 28.

The Council praised the role of the Qatari Armed Forces and all security agencies in demonstrating full readiness and a high degree of professionalism in safeguarding the nation, protecting its territorial integrity, and maintaining the security and stability of society.

The Council affirmed that national unity and social cohesion constitute the first line of defence in the face of challenges, stressing that "our true strength lies in solidarity, collective resolve, and confronting adversity with a spirit of national responsibility".

The Council emphasised that this national unity remains the fundamental pillar upon which the country relies to overcome crises and challenges, achieve comprehensive development across all sectors, and safeguard its achievements and gains.

The Council further affirmed that, despite the difficult circumstances and challenges, conditions in the country remain stable, thanks to the grace of Almighty God and the efforts of the esteemed government under the directives of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani.

These directives, the Council noted, have resulted in the implementation of a carefully designed and well-co-ordinated action plan, alongside prudent measures that have ensured the uninterrupted delivery of services across all sectors, while continuously monitoring developments and responding to them promptly.

The Council highlighted that popular solidarity, national awareness, support for state institutions, and the prioritisation of national



interests during this period collectively represent essential factors in strengthening the country's ability to confront the aggression and safeguard its national interests.

The Shura Council reiterated its strongest condemnation and denunciation of the Iranian aggression against Qatar, describing it as a flagrant violation of Qatar's sovereignty, a direct assault on its security, territorial integrity, and national interests, and a blatant breach of international law, the Charter of the United Nations, and established moral norms.

The Council stressed that the repeated Iranian attacks involving ballistic missiles and unmanned aerial vehicles endanger civilian populations and target vital state infrastructure, including facilities linked to water and food security.

It noted that 65% of these attacks have targeted civilian facilities and energy installations in Qatar.

The Council categorically rejected any justification for the Iranian attacks against Qatar, affirming that such actions cannot be accepted under any pretext.

It underscored that Qatar has been among the first countries to

advocate dialogue with Iran and has exerted considerable efforts to facilitate such dialogue between Iran and the international community.

This, the Council stated, reflects Qatar's longstanding policy that disputes and conflicts should be resolved through peaceful means, mediation, and negotiations.

The Council expressed strong dismay at Iran's continued targeting of Qatar's territory, stating that such actions reflect ill intent and treachery, contradict the principles of good neighbourliness, and undermine the foundations of understanding upon which bilateral relations between the two countries have been built over past decades.

It called on Iran to cease its aggression against Qatar, adopt the language of wisdom and reason, preserve regional security, and spare the peoples of the region from further risks.

The Shura Council welcomed the UN resolution issued last Wednesday condemning Iranian attacks on countries in the region, including Qatar, and calling for the immediate cessation of all such at-

tacks, as well as an end to provocations or threats against neighbouring states, including through the use of proxies.

The Council stressed the necessity for the international community, as well as regional and international parliamentary unions and organisations, to assume their legal and moral responsibilities in halting what it described as the grave and ongoing violations of the sovereignty of Qatar and other countries in the region, and to work toward containing the crisis in a manner that preserves regional and global security.

The Council warned of the serious repercussions of Iranian attacks on regional and international security and stability.

It cited Iranian threats to maritime security and the movement of vessels through the Strait of Hormuz, saying that such have had far-reaching consequences for global energy security, the stability of the international economy, and the sustainability of global supply chains, leading to what it described as the largest supply disruption in the history of the global oil market.

The Council also referred to a recent announcement by the World Food Programme warning that disruptions to supply chains threaten the food security of millions of people in the Middle East.

During the session, HE the Speaker al-Ghanim, on behalf of the Council, extended his congratulations and best wishes to His Highness the Amir on the approaching occasion of Eid al-Fitr, for continued health and well-being, and to return this blessed occasion to the people of Qatar and all residents with goodness, prosperity, and blessings, while preserving Qatar's security and stability.

Following this, HE the Secretary-General of the Shura Council Nayef bin Mohammed al-Mahmoud read the session's agenda.

The Council then discussed the listed items and took the appropriate decisions regarding them. - QNA

## Qatar reiterates strong condemnation of Iranian attacks on neighbours

Qatar has reiterated its strong condemnation of the Iranian attacks targeting Qatar's territory and that of other countries with missiles and drones, in a flagrant violation of national sovereignty, a direct threat to the safety and security of civilians, a clear breach of international law and the Charter of the United Nations, and an unacceptable escalation that threatens the security and stability of the region.



This came in a statement delivered today by HE the Permanent Representative of Qatar to the United Nations Office in Geneva Dr Hend Abdulrahman al-Muftah during her participation in the interactive dialogue with the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Iran, within the framework of the 61st session of the Human Rights Council in Geneva.

She welcomed the adoption by the UN Security Council of Resolution 2817, which condemns the Iranian attacks on countries in the region and affirms respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of states and rejects the targeting of civilians and vital infrastructure.

HE Dr al-Muftah noted that the deliberate and indiscriminate targeting of civilian facilities, civilians, and residential areas constitutes a grave violation of international humanitarian law and international human rights law, and that the continuation of such acts is deeply concerning and cannot be tolerated.

She stressed that targeting a state that is not a party to the conflict and has not permitted the use of its territory or airspace for hostilities constitutes a serious violation of international law and negatively impacts international peace and security, as well as the enjoyment of fundamental rights, foremost among them the rights to life, education, health, security, and development.

HE Dr al-Muftah affirmed that Qatar reserves its full right to respond in accordance with Article 51 of the UN Charter in defence of its sovereignty and security, while reiterating the call for an immediate cessation of escalation, a return to dialogue, and the exercise of wisdom to preserve the security and stability of the region. - QNA

## Qatar slams deadly Iranian attack on UAE

Qatar has expressed its strong condemnation of the Iranian attack that led to a missile striking a civilian vehicle in the UAE's Al Bahia area, which killed one person, describing it as a serious escalation and a blatant violation of the UAE's sovereignty, as well as a direct threat to the region's security and stability.

In a statement issued yesterday, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MoFA) affirmed that Iran's continued opening of new fronts and expanding escalation with neighbouring countries is extremely dangerous.

It called on Iran to immediately halt these irresponsible policies that undermine the region's security and stability, and to prioritise the interests of the region's peoples while adhering to the principles of good neighborliness and international law.

The ministry also affirmed Qatar's solidarity with the UAE and its support for all measures taken to preserve its sovereignty, security, and territorial integrity. - QNA



## Old Doha Port event postponed

Old Doha Port has announced that the second edition of the Fishing Exhibition and the third edition of the Fishing Competition, originally scheduled to take place from March 23-28 at Mina Park, has been postponed until further notice.

Updates on rescheduled dates will be shared across Old Doha Port's official channels as soon as they are confirmed.

Old Doha Port remains committed to Qatar's maritime heritage and looks forward to welcoming back the fishing community in due course.



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## Means of acquiring refined morals

Undeniably, changing one's morals for the better is the toughest change for the human being, but it is not impossible.

There are many ways and methods to help one acquire refined morals, which include the following:

### ○ Pure creed:

Having a pure creed is a serious matter, as one's conduct and behaviour are, very often, the fruits of one's creed and ideology.

A person's conduct is the practical translation of what he believes in.

Accordingly, any sense of deviation in behaviour is the result of a defective creed.

The Prophet, sallallaahu 'alaihi wa sal-lam, said: "The believers who are the most perfect in respect of their faith are those who have the best morals."

### ○ Supplication:

Indeed, supplications are a great means to attain refined morals; once Allah the Exalted accepted a person's supplications, he will be showered with bounties and graces.

Hence, he who aspires to be well-mannered, giving up his bad morals, should resort to supplication.

In fact, the Prophet, sallallaahu 'alaihi wa sal-lam, used to implore Allah the Exalted to grant him good morals.

He used to supplicate: "Allaahumma Ihdini li Ahsan Al-Akhlaaq, la yahdi li ahsaniha illa anta, wa Isrif 'anni sayi'aha, la yasrifu 'Anni sayi'aha illa anta (O Allah, guide me to the best morals, as none can guide to the best morals except You, and save me from bad morals, as none can save me from bad morals except You)."

### ○ Striving:

Acquiring refined morals is a form of guidance

that one acquires through exerting great effort.

Allah the Exalted says (what means): {And those who strive for Us - We will surely guide them to Our ways. And indeed, Allah is with the doers of good.} [Qur'an 29: 96]

### ○ Self-reckoning:

This can be done through self-criticism; whenever one commits a reprehensible deed, he can adopt the carrot-and-stick principle.

Reflecting on the implications and fruits of refined morals and pondering over its good consequences is one of the greatest reasons that drive one to strive to acquire that quality.

Moreover, bear in mind that the harder the deed is, the greater its reward becomes.

### ○ Pondering on the consequences of bad morals:

This reflection brings to mind the evil consequences of bad morals: they give rise to pain, grief, worry, misery, regret and hatred in the hearts of people.

### ○ Patience:

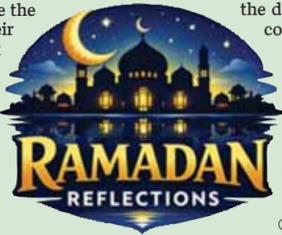
Indeed, patience is one of the major moral bases of the Muslim character and is one of the fundamental refined morals.

Patience helps people to endure and accept calamities, restrain their anger, adopt forbearance, kindness, sympathy, and shun recklessness and haste.

### ○ Justice:

Justice urges one to maintain a balance in terms of morals, i.e. to be moderate in one's morals and not to be excessive or lax; not to be cowardly or reckless, or lenient, in a negative sense, and angry.

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



## Qatar urges immediate halt to Iranian attacks

From Page 1

Al-Ansari also clarified that the absence of early warning messages on certain days did not mean that attacks had ceased altogether, explaining that intercepted drones, for instance, do not always produce the large explosions that might alert the public.

He called on all members of society to remain vigilant, stay alert, and follow official guidance closely at all times.

On the question of maritime security, al-Ansari issued a stark warning that threats to the Strait of Hormuz endangered not just Qatar but the stability of the entire global economy.

He noted that beyond oil and liquefied natural gas (LNG) exports, Qatar ranks among the world's largest exporters of urea, and any prolonged disruption to free and safe navigation through the strait would trigger dangerous shortages in global energy supplies and fertilisers, ultimately threatening food security on a worldwide scale.

Al-Ansari stressed that a threat to maritime navigation was a

threat to all nations, not Qatar alone, and urged the international community to act collectively and pursue intensive diplomatic efforts to bring the crisis to an end without further delay.

He noted that Qatar, drawing on its experience of navigating previous crises, had built up robust strategic stocks of essential goods capable of sustaining the country for an extended period should the situation deteriorate further.

Al-Ansari confirmed that Qatar had written formally to UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres and the UN Security Council to condemn the attacks and place its position firmly on record.

Arab, Gulf Co-operation Council (GCC) and regional co-ordination, he added, is continuing on a daily basis at the highest levels, with leaders, ministers, and senior officials in constant contact.

Diplomatic and communication channels with the US, European partners, and other stakeholders remained open, he stressed, with Qatar working actively and constructively to de-

## Qatar Airways to resume limited flights from 18th

From Page 1

The airline cautioned that schedules remain subject to change or cancellation depending on operational, regulatory, or safety conditions, and urged travellers not to proceed to the airport without a confirmed, valid booking. Passengers holding confirmed bookings for travel between February 28 and March 28 have two options: they may rebook their flights twice, free of charge, for travel on any date up to April 30, 2026, or claim a full refund on the unused portion of their ticket.

escalate tensions across the board.

Al-Ansari cautioned that Iran's attempts to drag Gulf states into the wider conflict are entirely without justification, pointing out that the Gulf countries are not party to the conflict and had not targeted Iranian territory.

Continued Iranian aggression, he warned, would do nothing to resolve the dire situation in Gaza, Lebanon, or the West Bank - but would only risk igniting further dangerous escalation across an already deeply troubled region.

## Qatar's retail scene gets a holiday boost

From Page 1

While modern malls attract much of the holiday crowd, it is learnt that Qatar's traditional marketplaces are experiencing their own surge in activity.

In areas such as Matar Qadeem, Al Sadd and Mansoura, tailoring and textile shops are packed with customers seeking custom-stitched garments for the Eid.

Inside small shops lined with colourful fabrics and intricate embroidery, tailors say the days leading up to Eid are their busiest period of the year.

It has been observed that customers, especially women, are browsing a range of fabrics and designs, balancing contemporary styles with traditional patterns that remain popular for festive occasions.

While some customers explore new and trendy designs, many still prefer classic cuts and traditional embroidery for Eid.

The process of selecting fabric and commissioning a tailor-made outfit remains deeply rooted in Gulf culture, especially during religious celebrations.

Unlike ready-made clothing purchased at malls, these garments often require several days of preparation, contributing to the late-Ramadan rush as residents ensure their outfits are ready in time for Eid prayers.

Tailors say the period is not only busy but economically significant.

For many small tailoring businesses, the final



Retailers showcase festive outfits, including children's clothing, ahead of the Eid holiday as many families prepare for traditional celebrations and gatherings.



Eid sweets and desserts are displayed at a supermarket counter, with shoppers stocking up on traditional treats typically shared with family and guests during the holiday. PICTURES: Joey Aguilar

weeks of Ramadan generate a substantial portion of their annual revenue.

Meanwhile, the continued flow of shoppers reflects a broader sense of stability in everyday life across Qatar amid tensions elsewhere in the region.

Residents appear keen to maintain familiar traditions: shopping with family, preparing festive meals and selecting new clothes for Eid prayers.

Jamie, an employee at a boutique in Al Sadd area, said that timing is critical, noting that the Eid period is among the most lucrative times of the year for businesses, as it rivals the year-end holiday season in consumer spending.

Despite the festive atmosphere, she said that conversations among customers often reveal a cautious awareness of developments across the region.

However, the steady flow of shoppers also suggests a determination among residents to continue celebrating the holiday as they traditionally would.

For many retailers, the pre-Eid crowds represent more than just seasonal commerce.

Shop owners say consumer confidence remains relatively strong, which they partly attribute to trust in Qatar's stability and governance.

Even as headlines across the region focus on geopolitical developments, daily life in Doha continues at a steady pace.

## Qatar Press Centre mourns journalist Jamal Rayyan

With profound sadness and sorrow, the Qatar Press Centre (QPC) mourns prominent journalist Jamal Rayyan, who passed away at the age of 73, following a distinguished media career spanning more than five decades, during which he left a lasting mark on the history of Arab television journalism.

The late journalist was one of the founders of Al Jazeera and the first voice heard on its screen when it launched in 1996, presenting its inaugural news bulletin and signalling the beginning of a new era in Arab media.

For nearly three decades, Rayyan remained one

of the channel's most prominent and influential figures, known for his professionalism, confident voice, and composed on-screen presence, which helped establish traditions of serious, credible news broadcasting.

The QPC extends its sincere condolences and deepest sympathies to the family, colleagues, and admirers of the deceased, praying that God grants him His vast mercy, admits him into His eternal paradise, and grants his family and loved ones patience and comfort.

"Indeed, to God we belong and to Him we shall return."

# QF student's home initiative promotes the culture of giving

At a time when students are spending most of their time at home in compliance with state guidelines, student-led initiatives have emerged that seek to use this time in positive and meaningful ways.

Jassim al-Musallam (pictured), a fourth-grade student at Qatar Academy Msheireb (QAM), part of the Qatar Foundation (QF)'s Pre-University Education (PUE), has launched an initiative titled "My Initiative at Home", encouraging students to carry out simple initiatives within their homes that promote a sense of social responsibility.

The idea for the initiative stemmed from al-Musallam's desire to continue engaging in charitable acts despite the circumstances that have limited activities outside the home.

He therefore sought a way for himself and his peers to keep doing good from within their homes.

The initiative encourages students to undertake simple daily actions, such as helping their parents, organising the house, planting a plant, reading a story, preparing a simple dish, or bringing joy to family members.

Al-Musallam said: "Because we stayed at home in line with the government's instructions, I started thinking that doing good is not tied to a specific place, and that we can make a difference anytime and from anywhere, even from our homes."

"That's how the idea for the ini-



tiative came about for each person to start a simple initiative from their home," he added.

Through this initiative, al-Musallam aims to encourage his peers to make good use of their time and engage in meaningful activities.

"My goal is to show that doing good does not stop even in difficult circumstances," he said.

"I feel happy because the idea did not remain with me alone but spread among my classmates," al-Musallam continued. "From this experience, I learned that a small idea can create a big impact, and that a person can help spread goodness even from their own home."

The initiative has been strongly supported by his family, who helped him refine and organise the idea.

## Mechanisms 'adopted for continued student interaction' in times of crisis

President of Higher Education and education adviser at the Qatar Foundation for Education, Science and Community Development (QF), Francisco Marmolejo (pictured), has affirmed that the Education City universities have adopted a range of innovative mechanisms and solutions to ensure the continued student engagement in virtual learning environments, commending the level of creativity demonstrated by faculty and students in adapting to the demands of the current situation.

He told the Qatar News Agency (QNA) that the universities have employed interactive teaching methods, including mutual discussions, small group activities, and collaborative projects to enhance active student participation, and noted the success of faculty members in utilising digital tools to provide immediate feedback, conduct surveys and discussion sessions, and offer virtual office hours to ensure the continuity of academic support.

Marmolejo highlighted respect for the academic autonomy of the universities in making their decisions, while maintaining ongoing co-ordination to exchange information and supportive strategies, in a way that contributes to understanding and addressing challenges in innovative ways.



He noted that universities have prioritised the safety and security of students and faculty, while also minimising any potential impact on the curriculum.

He also touched upon the QF's preparedness for a rapid response, stressing that important lessons were learned during the coronavirus (Covid-19) pandemic.

Marmolejo said that the QF formed a team comprising deans of partner universities and representatives from the higher education sector, which meets daily to co-ordinate efforts and address emerging challenges jointly.

Regarding psychological support, he said that the mental health and emotional well-being of students are a priority during times of crisis.

The official said that universities have made psychological counseling services available remotely through confidential sessions with specialists, while the QF's Counseling and Mental Health Support Office continues to provide services to students residing in Education City.

The official emphasised the students' ability to persevere and turn challenges into opportunities for growth, stressing that commitment to learning and perseverance are the two essential pillars for moving forward despite difficulties. - QNA

## 'Student mental health, well-being are priority'

The president of Pre-University Education (PUE) at the Qatar Foundation for Education, Science, and Community Development (QF), Abeer al-Khalifa (pictured), has affirmed that students' mental health and well-being are priorities, especially under circumstances that may cause anxiety and stress.

She told the Qatar News Agency (QNA) that QF schools offer clear channels for psychological support as well as counseling services and professional protection programmes, whether in terms of in-person or remote learning.

Al-Khalifa added that students with disabilities receive special attention to ensure overall care and education.

She said that QF schools have instituted remote learning, given

the current regional situation, in a stable and organised manner, with a focus on reading, writing, arithmetic skills, and core learning outcomes, particularly for students in the early stages and those preparing for examinations.

Al-Khalifa stressed that the measures helped protect fundamental educational fields and overcome prolonged disruption.

She underlined that the accumulated experience from recent years, particularly during the coronavirus (Covid-19) pandemic, redounded to bolstering the ability for rapid and seamless transition to remote learning.

The official noted that the QF's schools demonstrated high readiness and effective co-ordination among leadership teams to ensure the availability of digital platforms



and necessary support systems.

Students are monitored daily to ensure effective engagement, al-Khalifa pointed out, asserting that immediate intervention mechanisms are in place should any deceleration in student interaction levels be observed.

She stressed that parents have a substantial role as the core pillar in any school community, as they contribute to educating students and undertake a fundamental role in mitigating anxiety and supporting the daily activities of their children, transforming the home atmosphere into a vital element that backs remote learning success. - QNA



The Dubai skyline with the landmark Burj Khalifa skyscraper (right) is pictured as a smoke plume rises from an ongoing fire near Dubai International Airport, yesterday. (AFP)

## One dead, travel disrupted after attacks across UAE

AFP  
Dubai

Missiles and drone attacks struck across the UAE yesterday, disrupting travel at Dubai airport, causing a fire in a crucial oil hub in the east and killing one civilian.

Even the usually quiet northern emirate of Umm Al Quwain was not spared, with a drone attack damaging an unspecified building but inflicting no casualties, authorities said.

The slew of attacks came a day after Iran's foreign minister Abbas Araghchi said US bases in the Middle East were used to bomb it and that missiles had been launched from the UAE to strike Kharg Island. UAE officials have denied the claim. In the eastern emirate of Fujairah, a drone attack on oil infrastructure sparked a fire, days after an AFP journalist saw smoke rising from a major Emirati energy installation there.

A Palestinian civilian was killed on the outskirts of the Emirati capital Abu Dhabi when a missile hit a car, the Abu Dhabi Media Office said in a statement.

The UAE has reported seven deaths since the war began, including five civilians and two military personnel, who died in a helicopter crash blamed on a technical malfunction.

Earlier yesterday, Dubai Air-



Smoke billows from a fire near Dubai International Airport as a train of the Dubai Metro moves over vehicles on a highway in Dubai, yesterday. (AFP)

ports said flights were gradually resuming at what is usually the world's busiest international hub, following a nearby fuel tank fire sparked by a "drone-related incident". Authorities said they had contained the fire and reported no injuries.

Dubai airport has been targeted by several attacks since Iran began its Gulf campaign, as have many airports in the Gulf.

Two witnesses told AFP they saw a thick plume of black smoke rising from the direction of the airport at around 10:00 am local time, hours after the incident.

A witness at Dubai airport told

AFP that passengers awaiting their flights had been evacuated to a lower floor for several hours after the attack.

"It has been a difficult few weeks hearing explosions regularly, but the Iranian attacks followed me in my last hours before I could fly back home," the witness added.

Iran has fired over 1,900 missiles and drones at the United Arab Emirates, more than any other country targeted by Tehran since the start of the Middle East war, upending travel plans in the financial hub despite its air defence intercepting the vast majority of projectiles.

# Iran at UN insists it will not submit to 'aggression'

AFP  
Geneva

Iran vowed at the UN yesterday that it would not submit to "lawless aggression", saying 90mn citizens were in "grave danger" from US and Israeli strikes.

At the UN Human Rights Council in Geneva, where countries were discussing the rights situation in Iran, UN experts highlighted Tehran's deadly crackdown on protesters in recent months and warned that repression would likely worsen amid the Middle East war.

Iran's ambassador Ali Bahreini hit back, insisting the focus instead should be on the aggression against his country, "carried out by some of the most lawless and unscrupulous actors on the international stage".

"The most urgent and fundamental human rights issue concerning Iran is the imminent threat to the lives of 90mn people whose lives are in immediate and grave danger under the shadow of reckless military aggression," he told the council.

Bahreini said that if such "reckless militarism" was met with indifference, "Iran will most certainly not be the last country to suffer such treatment".

On February 28, the US and Israel launched their war on Iran, that has seen the Islamic republic in return strike targets in multiple countries in the Middle East.

During the session on Iran's record, Bahreini urged the UN's top rights body to instead discuss the Iranian cultural heritage under "indiscriminate" attack and "the innocent children massacred at their school desks".

Iran has accused the US and Israel of conducting a deadly missile attack on a school in the southern city of Minab. Washington has said it is investigating the incident. AFP does not have access to the site.

The ambassador said more than 1,300 people had been killed in Iran and more than 7,000 injured since the US-Israeli strikes began.



Emergency personnel work at the site of a strike on a residential building, amid the US-Israeli conflict with Iran, in Tehran, yesterday. (Reuters)

"Under such circumstances, what exactly is Iran expected to do?" he asked, stating: "Iran is not a nation that submits to coercion, intimidation or lawless aggression".

The six Gulf Co-operation Council (GCC) countries, plus Jordan, condemned Iran's attacks on their territories, saying they endangered regional security and civilian lives, and "cannot be justified under any pretext".

The US and Israel have stopped participating in the Human Rights Council.

Russia condemned the US and Israel for "seeking to destroy this dissenting country" and urged them to "end their aggressive actions". China said it was "gravely concerned" by the strikes against Iran, condemned all attacks on civilians and urged all parties to "cease military operations immediately and return to dialogue".

Britain said it wanted a "swift return to security and stability" and said Tehran must not "exploit conflict to inflict further violence on its people".

France said a lasting diplomatic solution was necessary "to end the war and for Iran to stop being a threat to its neighbours and the

entire international community".

The UN Human Rights Council was holding an interactive dialogue between nations and the council's special rapporteur on rights in Iran and its fact-finding mission on the country.

Special rapporteur Mai Sato said that the US-Israeli strikes "remain unlawful, no matter the assumed or stated objectives".

She said Tehran's deadly crackdown on the nationwide protests that began on December 28 — in which, in a conservative figure that may rise, "over 7,000 deaths have been reported by civil society" — had followed a "pattern of persecution" that long predated the uprising.

"No-one should have died for expressing grievances with the state," she told the UN correspondents' association.

Sato said that after last year's US-Israeli attacks on Iran, repression in the country worsened, and if "the war ends with a weakened Islamic republic, I can totally see that there will be a very big crackdown".

She said the war had "exacerbated" what was already a "critical human rights situation in the country", that had worsened further still during the protests.

## Iranian families weep as war dead are buried

Reuters  
Tehran

As gravediggers prepared new burial plots for those killed in the US-Israeli attack on Iran, Marzia Rezaei wept for her son Erfan Shamei, who died in a blast at a military training camp days before he was due home on leave.

The war that began on February 28 with a blitz of air strikes on Tehran and other cities has killed more than 1,300 Iranians so far, according to Iranian officials, and plunged the Middle East into crisis.

Tears streamed down Rezaei's face and she stared vacantly, hugging a large portrait of Shamei, 23, her voice breaking with grief as she recalled her last conversation with him when they discussed his coming trip back home to his family.

"I hadn't seen him for two months," she said, adding that his last day before heading home was meant to have been yesterday, the day Reuters met her.

He was to have been married soon afterwards and the trip home was part of the preparations for

the wedding. Shamei was killed in a blast at his training camp in Kermanshah in western Iran on March 4 that turned his tent into a ball of flame and left his body so charred that Rezaei was not able to see it.

"My son used to be scared of the dark," she said, sitting in front of his grave in the massive Behesht-e Zahra cemetery that sprawls across a large area just south of Tehran, the rain drizzling steadily around her.

Shamei and others killed in the current conflict are buried in Section 42 of the cemetery, where a dozen gravediggers were busy yesterday preparing for burials while workers readied white marble stones engraved with the names of the deceased.

As another body was brought in for burial, the bier carried on the shoulders of family members, the sound of an air strike echoed across the cemetery, grey smoke rising up from a nearby district.

Graves lay under a canopy decorated with pictures of the dead and Iranian flags, as families gathered, crying and talking. Women sat by the graves, some quietly weeping, others so distraught they were beating their chests with their fists.



A woman reacts as she sits beside her son's grave at Behesht-e Zahra cemetery, amid the US-Israeli conflict with Iran, in Tehran, yesterday. (Reuters)

A truck stood nearby, loaded with colourful flowers, and petals had been strewn across the graves as loudspeakers played hymns of mourning.

Other graves in the section contained members of the Basij, a volunteer militia group affiliated with the Revolutionary Guards, and officials and detainees from Evin Prison, which was targeted in the current war and in strikes in June

last year. Fatima Darbechi, 58, had lost her 44-year-old brother early in the war as he tried to rescue people trapped in a bombed car when another blast sprayed him with shrapnel, leaving him mortally injured.

Their parents had died when he was a small child. "He grew up without a mother. I raised him," she said, tears coursing down her cheeks.

## Sudan paramilitary launches two-pronged attack on Kordofan

AFP  
Khartoum

Sudan's paramilitary Rapid Support Forces launched co-ordinated attacks yesterday in the Kordofan region in a bid to isolate a strategic city, while also carrying out assaults on towns along the border with Chad, RSF and army sources said.

Paramilitary fighters simultaneously hit the North Kordofan city of Bara, according to a paramilitary source, as well as the South Kordofan city of Dilling, according to another from the army, striking two stepping stones on the way to the major hub of El-Obeid.

Both sources requested anonymity because they were not authorised to speak to the media. Kordofan is currently the fiercest battlefield in the three-year war between the army and the RSF that has killed tens

of thousands and created the world's largest hunger and displacement crises.

Near-daily drone strikes kill dozens at a time across the region, where hundreds of thousands are threatened by mass starvation.

The RSF source said "our forces have recaptured Bara", which lies on a key highway linking the army-held capital Khartoum with El-Obeid, Kordofan's biggest city.

Bara — a key staging post for attacks on El-Obeid — has repeatedly changed hands, most recently falling to the army earlier this month.

Some 200 kilometres south, the RSF and their local allies attacked the South Kordofan city of Dilling "from three axes", an army source said.

The army broke a years-long paramilitary siege on Dilling in January, and the RSF has launched artillery and drone strikes on it since.

## Canada, France, Germany, UK warn against Israeli ground offensive in Lebanon

Reuters/AFP  
Washington

A "significant Israeli ground offensive" in Lebanon must be averted since it could have devastating humanitarian consequences, Canada, France, Germany, Italy and Britain said in a joint statement yesterday.

"A significant Israeli ground offensive would have devastating humanitarian consequences and could lead to a protracted conflict," the countries said.

"It must be averted. The humanitarian situation in Lebanon, including ongoing mass displacement, is already deeply alarming."

The statement also said the countries support efforts by the Lebanese government to disarm Hezbollah.

Earlier, Israel's military launched what it called a "limited" ground operations against Hezbollah in southern Lebanon yesterday, as Beirut said more than one mn people had been displaced

in two weeks of fighting, AFP reported. Israel's defence minister warned that those displaced in Lebanon would not return home until northern Israel was secure, while Hezbollah said it targeted a north Israel city where first responders reported a man was wounded.

Lebanon was drawn into the Middle East war on March 2 when Hezbollah attacked Israel in response to the killing of Iranian supreme leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei in US-Israeli strikes.

Israel has responded with broad air raids on its northern neighbour and troop incursions into border areas. An Israeli military statement said that in recent days its troops "have begun limited and targeted ground operations against key Hezbollah strongholds in southern Lebanon".

"This activity is part of broader defensive efforts" and includes "the dismantling of infrastructure and the elimination of fighters... in order to remove threats and create an additional layer of security

for residents of northern Israel," it said. The ground operations were preceded by air and artillery strikes, it added.

The announcement echoes similar statements issued in 2024, when Israel and Hezbollah fought a major war in Lebanon, and in 2023, when the military launched a ground assault in Gaza in response to Hamas's October 7 storming of Israel.

In a later statement, Israeli military chief Eyal Zamir said his army was "reinforcing the Northern

Command with additional troops in order to strengthen the forward defensive posture". They have killed "more than 400 fighters" in their latest war with Hezbollah, according to him. Hezbollah said it launched rockets and attack drones at the northern Israeli city of Nahariya yesterday.

Israel's Magen David Adom (MDA) emergency responders said paramedics were treating a man "in mild to moderate condition suffering from blast injuries" and six other people for smoke inhalation.



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**GULF TIMES**

# How Iranians are communicating in the face of internet blackout

Iran's latest internet blackout has lasted more than 14 days, connectivity monitor Netblocks said earlier this week. The nature of the limits on internet activity shows "this is a government-imposed measure" and not the result of damage from US and Israeli airstrikes, Netblocks research chief Isik Mater told AFP. "It is a deliberate shutdown imposed by the authorities to suppress the flow of information and prevent further dissent," said Raha Bahreini, Iran researcher at Amnesty International. Here are some of the ways information is still flowing in and out of Iran.

Amsterdam-based nonprofit Radio Zamaneg began shortwave broadcasts during the January protests, sending a nightly Farsi news programme from 11pm Tehran time. "It's really difficult for the regime to jam shortwave because it's a long-distance broadcast," executive director Rieneke van Santen told AFP.

"People can just listen on a super cheap, small, simple radio... It's one of those typical emergency fall-back solutions." Declining to specify where the transmitter is located, she said it is "closer to the Netherlands than to Iran" — although Tehran "can figure it out" if they choose.

Many with ties to Iran are still receiving landline phone calls from inside — "quite surprising" given the internet blackout, said Mahsa Alimardani of global rights organisation Witness. Fearing the authorities listening in, people often avoid speaking directly about political topics, such as the killing of Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, she added. "It's not possible to communicate about sensitive issues through these brief phone calls," Amnesty's Bahreini said.

The required prepaid international calling cards are expensive and often fail to provide their face value in minutes. "You buy a phone card for 60 minutes, but in eight minutes, it's out," van Santen said. "It's really just phone calls from family members saying, after the bombing, we're still alive." Virtual private networks (VPNs) — widely-used services that encrypt internet traffic — can't create an internet connection where none is available. But even at around one percent of typical levels, Iran's connectivity is "still a large figure in absolute terms", Netblocks' Mater said. Iranians suspected of using VPNs since the war began have received warning text messages claiming to be from the authorities. Before the war, millions turned to Toronto-based company Psiphon, which creates specialist tools more capable than typical "off-the-shelf" VPNs. Offering techniques including disguising users' data as different types of internet traffic, Psiphon "is able to evade detection more successfully", data and insights director Keith McManamen told AFP.

With up to 6mn unique daily users in Iran before the latest internet shutdown, connections have now tumbled to fewer than 100,000. Few but the most tech-savvy users can reach Psiphon's network for now. Nevertheless, "the situation is extremely dynamic. We're seeing changes not just day to day, but hour by hour," McManamen said. A similar service, US-based Lantern, is also widely used in Iran.

Created by US-based nonprofit NetFreedom Pioneers, Toosheh is a "filecasting" technology using home satellite TV equipment to broadcast encrypted data to people in Iran. Users record from the Toosheh satellite TV channel onto a USB stick plugged into their set-top box, which they can then decrypt using a special app installed on their phone or computer.

From that initial download, the data can be copied and shared across multiple households. The group estimated around 3mn active users in Iran across 2025, with "thousands to hundreds of thousands... since the (internet) shutdown in January," the group's director of projects Emilia James told AFP. From its usual educational repertoire ranging from English lessons to news, content these days includes more on "personal safety and digital security... helping people to stay safe," she added.

Since people are tuning in to a broadcast signal, there is no way for the government to track them, she added.

Elon Musk-owned satellite internet service Starlink was used during this year's protests to get information out, while the government attempted to jam its signals. At around \$2,000 on Iran's black market, the terminals are expensive and very rare in poorer regions like Balochistan or Kurdistan that have suffered the most government repression, Alimardani said.

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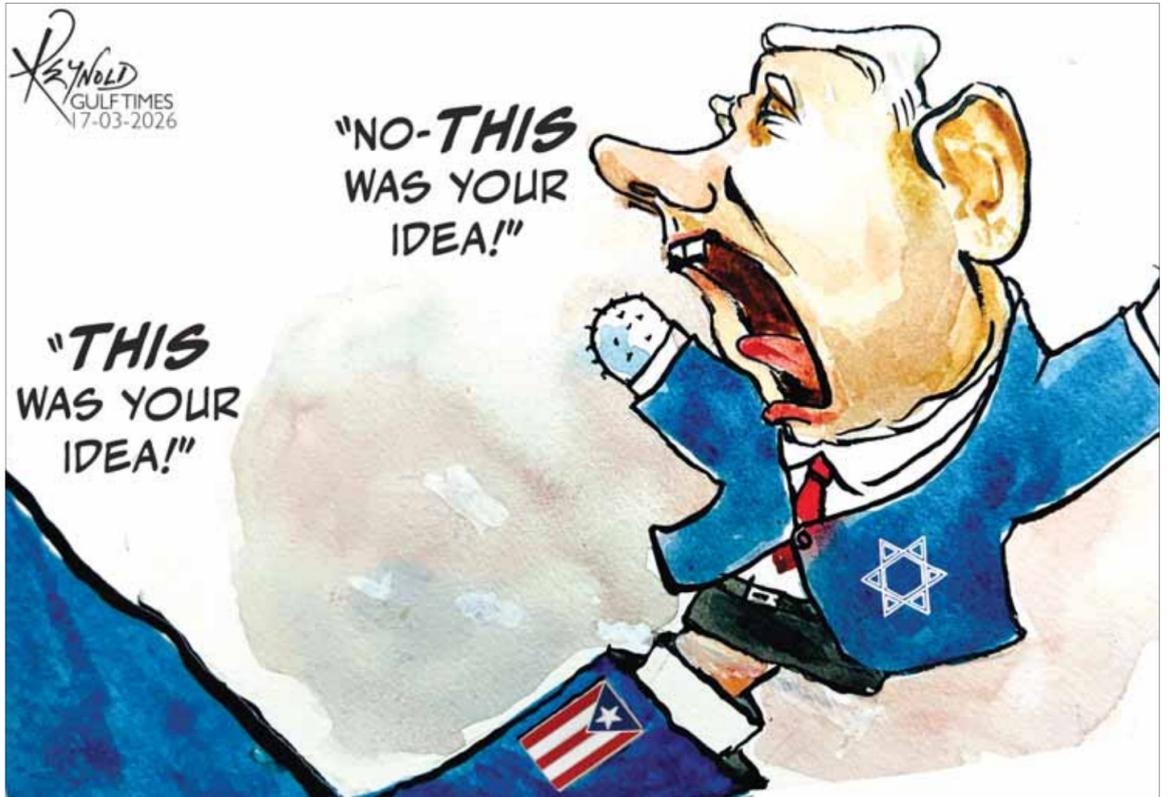
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# British teens resist Australian-style social media ban despite risks



- Experts say evidence on bans is inconclusive
- Regulation, not bans, suggested for safer platforms
- Experts call on platforms to do more

By Paul Sandle and Marissa Davison  
Reuters

British teenagers, like their peers abroad, have a conflicted relationship with social media. They know it can feed them a diet of "brain rot" content that keeps them glued to their phones while making money for big tech. Yet it is central to their lives, and many do not think it is the government's job to ban it.

Britain, like other countries in Europe and beyond, is considering ways to restrict social media after becoming increasingly aware of the risks to children. It could follow Australia in imposing a ban for under-16s. The government has asked "everyone with a view" to contribute to a public consultation, which closes in May.

Young people aged 16 to 18 at one south London school said Snapchat, Instagram and TikTok helped them socialise, make new connections and learn about the world. But there were downsides: the platforms sometimes left them unhappy or exhausted, vulnerable to bullying and harmful content, and they knew the apps were designed to keep them scrolling.

**GLUED TO PHONES FOR HOURS A DAY**

"During the summer, I'd spend around eight hours a day on just TikTok," said Awand Khdir, 17, who added there was little else to do on that platform besides scrolling. "But now it's more like three or four hours. It's still not good." "Doom scrolling is an issue on its own, but... the content that you see sometimes, especially on TikTok, there's a lot of dodgy stuff".

TikTok, Instagram and Snapchat pointed to the safety, privacy and security features they have for teenage users. Snapchat has age-specific protections for 13 to 17-year-olds, including making the account private by default and no access to public profiles for younger teens. Instagram Teen Accounts offers a sensitive content control setting and the platform offers supervision tools for parents and guardians.

TikTok's teen accounts set an automatic screen time limit of 60 minutes and users are prompted to switch off after 10pm,

according to a spokesperson. TikTok also age-restricts content that may not be suitable for teens.

But the young people Reuters interviewed said they were able to get round controls. While many parents and politicians back a ban, some psychologists and researchers say there is no proof that it would work.

Research Professor Amy Orben from the University of Cambridge said the impact of social media was far from uniform, stressing that while some teens face significant risks, for many others, the platforms serve as a valuable means of connection.

"The online world, like the offline world, is very complex and its impacts will be very dynamic," she said.

Sumiksha Senthuran, 16, said "mindlessly scrolling" was a good contrast to the stress of revision for exams. Elizabeth Alayande, 17, said social media could help build confidence and identity. "You can express yourself by posting videos or just relating with other people... and I don't think it's the biggest waste of time if you spread it out evenly with other priorities," she said.

But the teenagers had been exposed to distressing content and online abuse. "Sometimes it's quite negative because all you see is bad stuff... it's quite tiring," said Teyanna Charley, 17. Vish Ragutharan, 16, who has created his own blog about film, agreed. He said his posts could attract negative as well as positive responses, which was a "real disadvantage". Some of the students were fed content about body image.

"When you see other girls on TikTok, you kind of want to look like them. And that's really crushing people's self-esteem," said Joelle Azebaze Ayangma, 18.

**DIFFICULTY OF ENFORCING A BAN**

Despite knowing of the risks of social media, the pupils were mostly opposed to a ban. Ali Raza, 16, uses apps to communicate with family abroad. Dua Arshia, 16, said restrictions could push young people towards platforms "where there's more dangerous things," and Leah Osando, 17, said enforcement would be difficult. "Even if children get banned... they'll go onto the dark

web or use a VPN," said Osando.

Some teenagers also described the risk of not recognising ever more sophisticated AI-generated content.

Three experts, all of whom have advised lawmakers on children's internet safety, said there was no clear evidence that bans work. One-fifth of Australian teenagers under 16 were still using social media two months after the ban, industry data showed, raising questions about the effectiveness of platforms' age-gating methods.

The experts said pressure should be placed on social media companies to build safer platforms, as algorithm-driven feeds become increasingly addictive and in some cases, direct children towards pro-anorexia or self-harm videos. "These are commercial platforms," Orben said. "They are designed to harness attention, and... young people are increasingly saying that they struggle to get off".

Professor Julia Davidson, an expert in child online safety from the University of East London, said for children over 13, it may already be too late. British regulator Ofcom in 2022 said six in 10 children aged eight to 12 had social media profiles, despite many platforms requiring users to be at least 13. "How are we going to enforce a ban with 14 and 15-year-olds who have grown up with it and built extensive networks?" she said.

Professor Sonia Livingstone, leader of the Digital Futures for Children centre at the London School of Economics, said policymakers risked reaching for the wrong solution, with a ban seen as "a very blunt hammer to crack a nut". She said politicians should demand "safety by design... without eliminating children's access to the digital world, which is what they want and have a right to". She said the government's focus should be on how it tackles big tech, suggesting they take a "divide and conquer" approach.

"Why don't we say: Snapchat is the one where the randomers can get in touch with you. Instagram is the one where you can see the self-harm content. And TikTok is the one that wants you on so long that you can never get to sleep or do your homework," she said.



Lawyer Paul Schmidt, representing Meta, arrives at court as the jury deliberates in a key test case accusing Meta and Google's YouTube of harming children's mental health through addictive social media platforms, in Los Angeles, California. (Reuters)

# Britain unveils jobs drive for young people to tackle high unemployment

Reuters  
London

Britain will invest an additional £1bn (\$1.3bn) to unlock jobs for young people, the government said yesterday, part of a drive to reduce the nearly 16% to 24-year-olds not in education, employment or training.

Britain's youth unemployment has reached a 10-year high, according to figures released last month, outpacing other European nations and posing tough questions for the governing Labour

Party over its decision to raise the minimum wage.

Work and pensions minister Pat McFadden announced that the £1bn will be invested in grants to companies willing to engage young people and in more subsidised jobs — measures that he says will help create 200,000 jobs.

"These measures will give life-changing opportunities to young people and significantly reverse the increase we inherited in those not in education, employment or training," McFadden said in a statement.

Businesses will receive a 3,000-pound subsidy if they hire

someone aged 18-24 who has been receiving unemployment benefits for the past six months. Small and medium-sized businesses will get £2,000 for each apprentice aged 16-24.

A scheme offering 25 hours a week of subsidised work to people who have been unable to find work for 18 months will be widened to include those aged up to 24.

Some companies say they struggle to afford to hire younger people, citing increases to the minimum wage alongside a rise in employers' social security contributions and other costs.

The Recruitment and Employ-

ment Confederation, an industry body, welcomed the steps but said rules around apprenticeships remained too rigid and hiring costs were too high.

"It is time for more decisive action to get young people into work by making taking a chance on young people more practical for firms, from employment tax costs to the approach taken to new employment rights," REC Chief Executive Neil Carberry said.

Some employers complain that new legislation giving more rights to workers will make hiring more expensive.

The government has also

pledged to end lower minimum pay rates for 18 to 20-year-old workers. The main minimum wage rate now stands at £12.21 an hour — up 29% over the past three years — while the rate for 18- to 20-year-old workers has risen 46% to £10 an hour over the same period and is due to increase to £10.85 in April.

McFadden said he accepted that "business costs matter, and of course we're mindful of them, but this issue is deep-rooted and is long term".

Later, business minister Peter Kyle told the body that oversees Britain's minimum wage that he

was giving it "full flexibility" on the rate it recommends for 2027 for workers aged 18-20 "with priority being given to the employment prospects of younger workers".

Kyle said the government was still committed to abolishing the lower minimum wage rate, but the remit he has given to the Low Pay Commission this year places greater emphasis on minimising the impact on employment than in 2025. Official figures show Britain's jobless rate for people aged 16-24 rose to 16.1% in the final quarter of last year, up from 13.8% in the middle of 2025.

## Festive shopping



Women buy colourful bangles at a shop ahead of Eid al-Fitr celebrations in Peshawar, Pakistan, yesterday. (Reuters)

# Pakistan-bound oil tanker passes through Hormuz Strait amid war

Reuters  
Karachi

Ship-tracking data shows a Pakistan-bound oil tanker passing through the Strait of Hormuz over the weekend, indicating that some countries are able to negotiate safe passage for their vessels despite the US-Israeli war on Iran.

Since the war began more than two weeks ago, Iran has attacked several ships in the Gulf, in effect closing the strait, conduit for a fifth of the world's crude oil and liquefied natural gas, and driving up global energy prices.

Iran has, however, let some vessels through. Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent said yesterday that the US believed some Indian and Chinese as well as Iranian fuel tankers had passed through the strait.

The Kpler data provider MarineTraffic said the Karachi was "the first non-Iranian cargo to transit the chokepoint while broadcasting its AIS signal, suggesting that select shipments may be receiving negotiated safe passage" in a post on X.

The Aframax tanker Karachi, operated by Pakistan National Shipping Corp, transited the strait around March 15 after loading crude at Das Island in Abu Dhabi, and is expected to arrive at Karachi on

March 17, according to LSEG vessel-tracking data. The data shows the vessel sailing along the Iranian side of the strait before turning east toward Pakistan.

Pakistan relies heavily on imported crude and refined fuels from Gulf producers, most of which come through the Strait of Hormuz.

It has good ties with Iran while also maintaining close relations with Washington and Saudi Arabia, with which it has a mutual defence pact, leaving Islamabad walking a diplomatic tightrope as tensions escalate.

Iranian Foreign Minister Seyed Abbas Araghchi thanked Pakistan for its "solidarity" in a post on X yesterday.

Pakistan's navy last week launched an operation to safeguard shipping lanes, including escorting merchant vessels.

A military source told Reuters the navy had contacted Iranian counterparts. "No escort was needed, being Pakistani vessels," the source added.

Pakistan's navy and military, as well as the foreign, petroleum and information ministries, did not immediately respond to requests for comment.

Another PNSC tanker, the Lahore, which loaded crude at Saudi Arabia's Red Sea port of Yanbu, was about three vessel days from Pakistan, LSEG vessel data showed.

# Western allies push back on Trump call for Nato help to reopen Hormuz

AFP  
London

Nato allies and other Western nations pushed back yesterday on US President Donald Trump's demand that military alliance members help reopen the Strait of Hormuz, the critical conduit for crude oil Iran has effectively closed.

UK Prime Minister Keir Starmer said London was working with allies to craft a "viable" plan to reopen the strategic waterway but ruled out a Nato mission, while Berlin insisted it "has been clear at all times that this war is not a matter for Nato".

"There was never a joint decision on whether to intervene. That is why the question of how Germany might contribute militarily does not arise. We will not do so," German Chancellor Friedrich Merz.

Poland, Spain, Greece and Sweden were among the other European nations to distance themselves from any military involvement in the Strait of Hormuz in the wake of Trump's call.

Japan and Australia voiced similar sentiments earlier yesterday, with Canberra saying it would not be sending a navy ship to the Strait of Hormuz.

Trump over the weekend called on countries including China, France, Japan, South Korea and Britain to send warships to escort tankers through the strait, warning refusing would be "very bad for the future of Nato".

And he stepped up pressure again yesterday saying he expected Britain and France to help secure shipping in the key waterway, and criticising US allies for their lukewarm response.

"We strongly encourage the other nations to get involved with us and get involved quickly and with great enthusiasm," he said,



Activists hold placards during a rally against the US demand for South Korea to deploy troops to the Strait of Hormuz, outside the US embassy in Seoul, South Korea, yesterday. (Reuters)

adding he believed Britain would get involved in a Hormuz mission.

Oil prices jumped after the strait was closed and remained yesterday above \$100 per barrel as the Iran war moved into a third week.

The volatility further underlined the importance of ensuring safe passage for tankers through the vital transport route.

Starmer, who had faced stinging criticism from Trump over Britain's refusal to join the US and Israel in offensive attacks on Iran, told reporters he had discussed the waterway with the US leader Sunday.

"We're working with all of our allies, including our European partners, to bring together a viable collective plan that can restore freedom of navigation in the region as quickly as possible and ease the economic impacts," he said in Downing Street.

"Let me be clear: that won't be, and it's never been envisioned to be, a Nato mission," Starmer said, while also stressing Britain "will not be drawn into the wider war."

"That'll have to be an alliance of partners," he added of any Strait

of Hormuz mission. A Nato official noted that members "have already stepped up to provide additional security in the Mediterranean".

"We are aware that individual allies are talking with the US and others on what more they might do, including in the context of security in the Strait of Hormuz," the official said.

Following Trump's demand for military support, some European countries sought to appear open-minded while remaining non-committal.

"We did not want this war. From day one, we have called for de-escalation," Denmark's Foreign Minister Lars Lokke Rasmussen told Danish media in Brussels before an EU foreign ministers' meeting.

"That said, I believe we need to keep an open mind and look at how we can contribute," he said, describing the situation as "very, very serious".

Dutch Prime Minister Rob Jetten told the country's ANP press agency that it would be "very difficult to launch a successful mission there in the short-term".

# Kenyans will no longer be enlisted to fight for Russia in Ukraine: minister

Reuters  
Moscow

Kenya said yesterday that it had agreed with Russia that Kenyans would no longer be eligible for signing up to fight in the war with Ukraine after the scale of Russian recruitment triggered anger in some African countries.

Kenya says that more than 1,000 Kenyans have been recruited to fight, attracted by monthly salaries of several thousand dollars and bonuses of more than \$6,000 for contract

soldiers. After meeting Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov in Moscow, Kenyan Foreign Minister Musalia Mudavadi praised the relationship with Moscow, including Soviet recognition of Kenyan independence from Britain in 1963.

On the issue of Kenyans fighting in what the Kremlin calls its "special military operation" in Ukraine, Mudavadi said agreement had been reached to no longer allow Kenyans to sign up to fight.

"His excellency has conversed with us on the issue of the welfare of Kenyans who are

in Russia and more specifically those who are involved in the special operation," Mudavadi said at a joint news briefing with Lavrov.

"And I want to make it clear that we have now agreed that Kenyans shall not be enlisted through the (Russian) Ministry of Defence - they will no longer be eligible to be enlisted," he said. "There will no further enlisting." He added that consular services would be organised through proper diplomatic channels for those Kenyans who had already signed up and required assistance.

Reuters  
New Delhi

Iran has asked India to release three tankers seized in February as part of talks seeking the safe passage of Indian-flagged or India-bound vessels out of the Gulf via the Strait of Hormuz, three sources with knowledge of the matter told Reuters.

Indian authorities seized the three Iran-linked tankers near Indian waters alleging they had concealed or altered their identities and were involved in illegal ship-to-ship transfers at sea.

Tehran has also sought supplies of certain medicines and medical equipment, according to one of the sources, an Iranian official.

Iran's ambassador to New Delhi met Indian foreign ministry officials yesterday to discuss the issue, the source said.

The sources declined to be named due to the sensitivity of the matter.

India's foreign ministry, the Iranian embassy in New Delhi, and Iran's foreign ministry did not immediately respond to Reuters' requests for comment.

Iran recently allowed two Indian liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) tankers to pass through the strait, according to Indian officials, and one of them returned to western India yesterday. Traffic has ground to a near standstill on either side of the strait since the beginning of the war in Iran.



A coastguard boat approaches an Indian liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) carrier, Shivalik, as it arrives at Mundra Port via the Strait of Hormuz, amid the US-Israel conflict with Iran, in Gujarat, yesterday. (Reuters)

Asked about negotiations to ensure passage for Indian vessels, foreign ministry spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal said yesterday that recent movements reflected a "history of engagement, of dealing with each other".

He told a daily news briefing that nothing was being exchanged.

Since the start of US and Israeli attacks on Iran in late February, Tehran has responded with attacks across the region including on ships attempting to transit the Strait of Hormuz, killing three Indian sailors and leaving one missing.

India said yesterday that at least 22 Indian-flagged vessels and 611 Indian seafarers remained in the Gulf.

An Indian source said six of the vessels were loaded with LPG and

the country was keen for their passage first to ease a shortage of the cooking fuel. About 90% of India's total LPG imports come from the Gulf.

Indian authorities seized the tankers Asphalt Star, Al Jafzia and Stellar Ruby alleging they had concealed or altered their identity and movements, and were involved in illegal ship-to-ship transfers.

Stellar Ruby is Iranian-flagged, while the other two vessels are flagged to Nicaragua and Mali.

A police complaint filed by the Indian Coast Guard on February 15, and seen by Reuters, said Asphalt Star was involved in the smuggling of heavy fuel oil that was transferred to Al Jafzia and bitumen to Stellar Ruby. All three are currently docked off Mumbai.

## Ecuador launches US-backed anti-drug operations

Ecuador has started two weeks of operations against drug traffickers with support from the United States, the latest joint show of force against drug cartels in the South American country, AFP reported from Guayaquil.

The two countries are part of a 17-country cartel-fighting alliance launched by President Donald Trump at a summit earlier this month. Ecuador's President Daniel Noboa, one of Trump's staunchest allies on the continent, has spent the past two years targeting cocaine traffickers, but the rates of associated crimes including murders, disappearances and extortion have not fallen.

Interior Minister John Reimberg had announced on Tuesday a "very strong offensive" to begin in areas worst affected by drug-related violence. Nighttime curfews have also been imposed in the coastal provinces of Guayas, Los Rios, Santo

Domingo de los Tsachilas and El Oro during the next two weeks. "We're at war," Reimberg said. "Don't take any risks, don't go out, stay home." Around 30,000 soldiers will be deployed along with armoured cars and helicopters, according to images shown by authorities.

No further details were provided, and it was not clear if US soldiers would take part directly on Ecuadorian soil, as has happened previously during Noboa's presidency. Earlier this month, US and Ecuadorian forces conducted joint strikes inside Ecuador, and last week the FBI said it would open an office in Ecuador to investigate organised crime, money laundering, and corruption in conjunction with local police. Around 70% of the drugs produced by Colombia and Peru, the world's largest and second-largest cocaine producers, respectively, are shipped through Ecuador.

# QR40mn raised in three hours during the '27th Night Challenge'

Qatar Charity's "27th Night Challenge" has raised more than QR40mn in just three hours despite the exceptional circumstances, with the funds set to support life-saving medical initiatives in several countries, including Qatar.

The initiative was held under the theme "Warding off Calamity" on Sunday from 9pm to midnight, coinciding with the 27th night of Ramadan.

Qatar Charity and its partners thanked generous individuals, companies, and banks for their strong support of the initiative. It became the largest fundraising event on YouTube Live, broadcast through the Al Ghafri YouTube channel (QQQ) and Qatar Charity's channel,

in partnership with Mirsal Qatar.

Qatar Charity prayed to Allah to accept the contributions of all partners, donors, and supporters, making their generosity a source of protection and well-being for them, their families, and their communities during these challenging times. The organisation also expressed its appreciation for their trust and for the collective efforts of partners, social media influencers, digital platforms, media outlets, and supporting medical centres.

The "Warding off Calamity" campaign received support from numerous benefactors, alongside institutions and companies, including Ooredoo, Qatar Islamic Bank, Qatar National Bank, Al Rayan Bank, Ahli Bank, Dukhan

Bank, Doha Bank, Alfardan Corporation, Mowasalat, Al Jaber Group, Hazm Mall, Katara Cultural Village, Snoonu Qatar, Banquet Hospitality, Essa Al Sulaiti Law Firm, and Hand & Stone.

The list of supporters also included Oakberry, Sugar and Spice, Single Bani, Canteen, Bold Cafe, Karak Marmi, and Khadeer Tea. Support also came from digital platforms including Al-Thuraya, Al Zubarah, Mjhar, Msheireb, Marsad Qatar, Marsad Football, Islami Marsad, Ahal Qatar, Elan, and Elan Deco.

The "27th Night Challenge" was held this year under the theme "Warding off Calamity", with media participation from influencer Abdullah al-Ghafri and Dr Abdulrahman al-Harami, who drove

community engagement and mobilised donations during the event. They were joined by several influencers, doctors, digital platforms, and supporting medical centres.

This year, the '27th Night Challenge' placed special emphasis on the health sector in response to the rising number of critical cases requiring urgent treatment in countries with high need. The health initiatives to be supported include open-heart surgeries and the correction of congenital heart defects in children, along with the treatment of eye diseases and surgeries that restore sight. They also cover cochlear implants for children with hearing loss, helping them hear and communicate, as well as the treatment of severe malnutrition



in children. In addition, medical interventions will be carried out within Qatar to support patients with chronic illnesses and critical health conditions. Together, these efforts aim to save lives and create new stories of recovery.

Overall, the "27th Night Challenge" aims to carry out approximately 6,770 surgeries, in addition to providing malnutrition treatment and supporting cancer patients

within Qatar – impacting thousands of people and their families.

Generous supporters can still donate to the campaign over the next two days through the link: <http://qch.qa/27night>, by requesting the Home Collector service, by calling 44290000, or by visiting Qatar Charity's branches and mall-based collectors. Contributions will remain open for two days after the live broadcast.

## QC expands Ramadan campaigns to support vulnerable communities locally and globally

By Shaima Sheriff  
Staff Reporter

Qatar Charity (QC) has launched a series of Ramadan campaigns aimed at supporting vulnerable communities in Qatar and abroad, combining humanitarian aid, development initiatives and strong public engagement to maximise social impact.

Ahmed Fakhroo, executive director of Communications and Community Impact at Qatar Charity, said Ramadan remains one of the most significant periods for charitable work, bringing together donors and humanitarian organisations to expand support for those in need.

Among the organisation's key initiatives this year is the Ramadan campaign "Good Starts With You", which serves as an umbrella for several charitable programmes designed to deliver immediate assistance while supporting long-term development.

"The main campaigns this year include the Ramadan campaign 'Good Starts With You', the '27th Night Challenge' initiative, the 'Forgotten Crises' initiative, the 'Al-Aqraboon' campaign, 'Labbeh Gaza', the 'Keep Doing Good' campaign and the 'Furqan' programme for teaching the Qur'an," Fakhroo said.

The initiatives aim to provide ur-



Ahmed Fakhroo

gent humanitarian relief while reinforcing sustainable development programmes.

According to Fakhroo, Ramadan campaigns focus on addressing both local and international needs through a comprehensive humanitarian response.

"Ramadan campaigns support vulnerable communities through a comprehensive humanitarian approach that combines meeting urgent needs with strengthening long-term development impact," he said.

In Qatar, the organisation focuses on assisting low-income families and vulnerable groups by distributing food baskets, Iftar meals, Zakat al-Fitr, and Eid clothing, as well as providing gifts for orphans. Social programmes are also implemented

through the Al-Aqraboon Centre, which aims to strengthen family and community stability.

Internationally, Qatar Charity delivers a wide range of humanitarian projects, including Iftar meals for fasting individuals, food distribution, Zakat al-Fitr and Eid clothing, in addition to medical and humanitarian initiatives supporting children and patients in crisis zones.

Beyond immediate aid, the organisation also implements development projects once funding is secured. These include social housing initiatives, mosque construction, Qur'an memorisation centres, water well drilling and economic empowerment programmes in several countries.

Fakhroo noted that digital systems and rapid implementation mechanisms allow these projects to begin quickly once donations are received, ensuring aid reaches beneficiaries efficiently.

Despite the regional challenges currently facing parts of the world, the Qatari community has continued to demonstrate strong support for humanitarian initiatives.

"Despite the exceptional circumstances and challenges in the region, the Qatari community has shown strong engagement and humanitarian responsiveness," Fakhroo said.

He pointed to the "27th Night Challenge" initiative, which suc-

cessfully raised more than QR40mn, as a clear example of community trust in Qatar Charity's mission.

"This reflects the community's confidence in Qatar Charity and its commitment to supporting impactful humanitarian initiatives during times of crisis," he added.

Ensuring transparency and accountability remains a central priority for the organisation. According to Fakhroo, Qatar Charity relies on a comprehensive governance system that includes independent financial auditing, internal control systems and strict compliance standards.

The organisation also uses digital platforms to track donations from donor to beneficiary.

"We utilise digital systems that allow donations to be tracked from the donor to the beneficiary, ensuring transparency and efficient implementation," Fakhroo said.

While Ramadan remains a key period for charitable giving, Qatar Charity continues its humanitarian and development work throughout the year through a sustainable institutional strategy.

"Charitable work during Ramadan is not just a simple donation; it is a decision that creates real impact," Fakhroo said.

"Every act of charity opens a door of hope for someone in need and makes a tangible difference in their life."

## Bosnia and Herzegovina community distributes Iftar meals

The Bosnia and Herzegovina community in Qatar distributed more than 1,160 Iftar meals to workers in Al Wakra and the Industrial Area during Ramadan, in co-operation with local volunteer initiatives Feed a Friend and Wa'hab. The initiative was part of a broader community effort to support low-income workers and promote social solidarity during the holy month, when charitable activities and community outreach typically increase across Qatar.

Feed a Friend is a volunteer-driven initiative known for organising food drives, Ramadan meal distributions, community fridge programmes and food box assistance for workers and low-income residents across the country. Wa'hab focuses on reducing food waste and supporting vulnerable communities by collecting surplus food from restaurants, companies and events and redistributing it to those in need.

In addition to the Iftar distribution, the Bosnia and Herzegovina community provided 33 Ram-



adan food packages to workers' households in co-operation with Wa'hab. Community members also organised a desert clean-up activity with DEAP Qatar, a local environmental volunteer group, as part of efforts to support sustainability and civic engagement in the country.

Over the past four years, the Bosnia and Herzegovina community in Qatar has distributed more than 5,000 Iftar meals and participated

in several humanitarian and volunteer initiatives to support workers and promote community service.

Dr Vahid Suljic, founder and project manager of the Bosnian community initiative in Qatar, said the project reflects the community's commitment to humanitarian work and constructive engagement with local society. "Our community believes that the best way to represent Bosnia and Herzegovina abroad is through good deeds and co-operation with the society in which we live," Suljic said. "Through initiatives like this, we aim to support those in need and contribute positively to the community in Qatar." Community member Seid Halilcevic highlighted the importance of solidarity among diaspora communities and their role in supporting workers during Ramadan.

"Living away from our homeland reminds us of the importance of helping others and staying united," Halilcevic said.

## Ramadan in Qatar reflects generosity, unity: Polish envoy

Ramadan in Qatar is a unique spiritual and humanitarian occasion that reflects the country's strong values of solidarity, generosity, and community cohesion, as pointed out by the ambassador of Poland to Qatar, Tomasz Sadzinski.

Speaking about his sixth Ramadan in Qatar, the ambassador noted that the holy month is characterised by vibrant evenings where families and friends gather for Iftar, alongside widespread charitable initiatives and acts of kindness across society.

He added that Ramadan in Qatar offers an opportunity for people from different cultures and religions to connect and better understand Islamic traditions.

However, he noted that this year's Ramadan has been affected by regional security concerns. He expressed Poland's solidarity with the leadership and people of Qatar during this challenging period, stressing his country's support for diplomatic efforts to resolve conflicts in the Middle East and to ensure the safety of civilian infrastructure, air transport, and maritime navigation.

The ambassador also highlighted the Polish embassy's role in assisting Polish citizens in the region. In co-ordination with Qatari authorities and Qatar Airways, the embassy helped facilitate the return of around 300 Polish nationals from Qatar, particularly individuals requiring special assistance, including people with disabilities and families with young children.

Reflecting on Qatari Ramadan traditions, Sadzinski praised the strong culture of hospitality and charitable initiatives, including community Iftars and food distribution programmes that support workers and those in need. He also discussed cultural traditions, such as the Garangao celebration, which reflects the festive atmos-



Ambassador of Poland to Qatar Tomasz Sadzinski

phere of the holy month.

The ambassador said Muslims have contributed significantly to Poland's cultural and social development. Islam has been present in Poland for more than six centuries, particularly through the historic Tatar community that settled in the region in the 14th century and played an important role in defending the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth.

Today, Poland's Muslim population is estimated at around 60,000 people, including Tatars as well as students, professionals, and workers from diverse backgrounds. During Ramadan, Muslims gather in mosques and community centres for prayers, Iftar meals, and charitable activities, while interfaith dialogue and open mosque events have become increasingly common.

Accordingly, Sadzinski said he would remember this year's Ramadan in Qatar for both the regional challenges and the strong spirit of compassion and solidarity demonstrated by the community. He also expressed appreciation to the Polish community in Qatar for their resilience and support, extending his wishes for health, safety, and peace to all residents of the country.

## Nando's Qatar organises an inclusive community experience in collaboration with Shafallah Centre

Nando's Qatar recently hosted a number of participants from the Shafallah Centre for Persons with Disabilities, one of the centres operating under the umbrella of the Qatar Social Work Foundation, at the Nando's restaurant in Tawar Mall.

The visit was part of an interactive experience designed to promote inclusion, build confidence, and strengthen community connections.

Across two dedicated sessions, Shafallah Centre participants took part in a guided activity titled "Build Your Own Burger," supervised by the Nando's team. The experience encouraged creativity, teamwork, and independence in a safe, supportive environment, allowing participants to develop new skills while enjoying the warm, welcoming hospitality Nando's is known for.

The event extended beyond the kitchen, fostering meaningful human connections between participants and team members and



highlighting the importance of inclusion and shared experiences within the communities where Nando's operates. Each participant also received a certificate of participation and symbolic gifts to commemorate the occasion.

The initiative also provided Nando's team members with the opportunity to engage directly and purposefully with the Shafallah participants, reinforcing the values of social inclusion and collaborative spirit. By creating an environment where every partici-

tant felt supported and appreciated, the event demonstrated how simple, yet thoughtful initiatives can create a lasting positive impact.

Parents, specialists, and representatives from the Shafallah Centre expressed their appreciation for the experience, noting the confidence and joy it brought to the participants. This partnership highlights the importance of collaboration between the private sector and community institutions in creating inclusive oppor-

tunities that empower youth and strengthen social integration.

This initiative reflects Nando's ongoing commitment to supporting and engaging with local communities through meaningful experiences that place people at the heart of its priorities.

Venkatesh Jaiswal, COO of Nando's Qatar, stated: "At Nando's, we believe our responsibility goes beyond serving great food. It's about showing up for our community and creating experiences where everyone feels welcome. Our partnership with the Shafallah Centre reflects who we are – a people-first brand that cares."

Tabrez Paloji, head of People at Nando's Qatar, added: "Inclusivity is not a campaign for us – it's part of our culture. When we open our doors to experiences like this, we're not just hosting an activity, we're creating confidence, dignity, and real human connection. Initiatives like these are part of our 'Changing People's Lives' promise – and that includes the lives of our guests and our own Nandocas."

