



# GULF TIMES



TUESDAY Vol. XXXXVI No. 13724

April 28, 2026  
Dhul-Qi'dah 11, 1447 AH

www.gulf-times.com 2 Riyals

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## BUSINESS | Page 1

Baladna joins hands with IFC to support recovery in Syria's dairy sector

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SCAN TO SHOP

## Shura Council debates AI governance

By A Staff Reporter  
Doha

The Shura Council yesterday called for a coherent national framework to govern artificial intelligence, as members warned that the pace of technological innovation is outstripping legislative scrutiny and raising fresh concerns over privacy, data protection and digital sovereignty.

The regular sitting in Doha was presided over by HE the Speaker Hassan bin Abdullah al-Ghanem, and opened with HE the Secretary-General Nayef bin Mohammed al-Mahmoud reading the order paper. Members then agreed the minutes of the previous sitting. Opening the debate, the Speaker commended Qatar's efforts to keep pace with digital transformation and the adoption of advanced technologies, particularly artificial intelligence, in line with the directives of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani. His Highness has highlighted the country's ambition to build a knowledge-based, technology-driven economy that supports sustainable development and enhances international competitiveness.

HE al-Ghanem told members that artificial intelligence is no longer merely a technical tool but an increasingly important factor in shaping public policy and decision-making, stressing the need for a coherent national framework that balances innovation with robust oversight.

**To Page 11**

# Qatar unveils new rules

By Santhosh V Perumal  
Business Reporter

In a far reaching move, Qatar is regulating the delivery and service activities through digital platforms and applications to prevent monopolistic practices and ensure consumer protection.

In this regard, the Ministry of Commerce and Industry (MoCI) has issued a guideline directed at delivery companies, retail outlets, and supporting service providers, keeping pace with the sector's rapid growth.

This guideline, which is grounded in the legislative framework related to competition protection, prevention of monopolistic practices, and consumer protection, will enhance efficiency and reinforce a business environment built on transparency and fair competition.

It aims to establish a clear structure governing the relationship between digital platforms and applications, providers, and consumers, while precisely defining rights and obligations in a way that reduces unfair practices, strengthens trust in digital commerce, and supports the growth and sustainability of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) amid the expanding delivery sector.

It affirms pricing freedom for providers, allowing restaurants to adopt one price list for delivery platforms and another for in-store use.

Pricing remains the exclusive right of the provider after approval of price lists by the ministry, while platforms are prohibited from imposing or modifying prices or discounts without explicit consent, and from unifying or restricting pricing.

## MoCI bars price-fixing, hidden fees; safeguards SMEs and consumers

PRICING AND TRANSPARENCY	OPERATIONAL STANDARDS
<p><b>Pricing Autonomy for Providers</b> Providers set their own prices; platforms cannot modify them without explicit consent.</p>	<p><b>Ranking Transparency</b> Platforms must disclose when provider rankings result from paid promotions or specific criteria.</p>
<p><b>Mandatory Fee Disclosure</b> All platform commissions must be fully disclosed with no hidden charges allowed.</p>	<p><b>Fair Cancellation Policies</b> Costs are assigned based on fault; consumers pay nothing before order preparation.</p>
<p><b>Fair Delivery Costing</b> Platforms may determine delivery costs provided the pricing is fair and transparent.</p>	<p><b>Authorised Promotional Offers</b> All discounts must be MOCI-licensed and display genuine before and after pricing.</p>

**GT GRAPHICS**

Setting out the parameters for delivery service pricing, permitting platforms to determine the cost of delivering products to consumers, provided that such pricing is fair and maintains the public interest. It said full and transparent disclosure of all fees and commissions in contracts between delivery platforms and restaurants is required, with a clear prohibition on hidden or undisclosed charges.

It further regulates cancellation and refund policies based on assigning responsibility according to fault, ensuring that consumers bear no cost before order preparation, and only the actual cost after preparation, without additional fees.

In the area of paid advertising, platforms and digital appli-

cations are required to disclose when the ranking of providers, such as restaurants and stores, results from paid promotion.

Disclosure of the general criteria governing provider ranking, such as geographical distance, ratings, delivery time, and execution accuracy, is also mandated, alongside a prohibition on discriminatory practices or arbitrary restrictions on visibility.

The guideline addresses un-received cash orders by introducing prior order confirmation mechanisms and defining responsibility, with liability distributed between the provider and the platform based on the reason for non-receipt, and allowing for restrictions on consumers who repeatedly cancel.

**To Page 6**

## Important to back mediation, PM tells Saudi, Egyptian FMs

HE the Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman bin Jassim al-Thani yesterday held a telephone conversation with Saudi Foreign Minister Prince Farhan bin Abdullah al-Saud.

The two sides touched on bilateral relations and ways to support and strengthen them. They also discussed developments in the region, particularly those related to the ceasefire between the United States and Iran and efforts aimed at de-escalation to enhance security and stability in the region.

The prime minister stressed the need for all parties to engage with the ongoing mediation efforts in a way that paves the way for addressing the root causes of the crisis via dialogue and peaceful means, through to reaching a sustainable agreement that prevents re-ignition of the crisis.

The prime minister also received a phone call from Egyptian Minister of Foreign Affairs, Immigration, and Egyptian Expatriates Affairs Badr Abdelaty.



The two sides touched on bilateral relations and ways to support and strengthen them. They also discussed developments in the region, particularly those related to the ceasefire between the US and Iran, and efforts aimed at de-escalation to enhance security and stability in the region.

The prime minister underscored the need for all parties to engage with the ongoing mediation efforts to pave the way for addressing the root causes of the crisis through peaceful means and dialogue. **(QNA)**

## School hours revised to beat heat

By A Staff Reporter  
Doha

The Ministry of Education and Higher Education has announced revised school hours at government institutions, taking effect from Sunday, May 3, until June 3.

Under the temporary timetable, the school day will begin at 7am across all levels. Dismissal times will vary by stage: kindergartens will close at 12:00, primary schools at 12:30pm, and preparatory and secondary schools at 12:45pm on most days of the week.

In a statement, the ministry said the adjustment is designed to better

align the school day with seasonal weather conditions as temperatures rise across the country. It added that the change will not affect the number of teaching periods, ensuring academic requirements remain unchanged.

Administrative and teaching staff will follow a slightly extended schedule, working from 7am to 1:15pm to maintain the smooth running of schools and continuity of learning.

The revised timetable comes as students prepare for end-of-term examinations, which are scheduled to begin on June 4, in line with the official academic calendar for the 2025-2026 school year.

## Qatar holds firm in GEM top 10 as SMEs power non-oil growth

By Ayman Adly  
Staff Reporter

Qatar's small and medium enterprises (SMEs) have emerged as a powerhouse of the country's economic diversification drive, accounting for between 15% and 17% of non-oil GDP and posting annual growth of around 6% – a performance that has placed Qatar consistently among the

top 10 economies in the Global Entrepreneurship Monitor (GEM) rankings over the past five years. According to a Qatar TV report, the sector's strong showing has been buoyed by accelerating digital transformation and an expansion of government financing channels directed at smaller firms.

SMEs now represent some 97% of all private sector companies and establishments in Qatar, with their

numbers estimated at around 71,000, spanning information technology, real estate, tourism, commerce and a host of other economic activities.

To preserve this momentum, Qatar is rolling out a fresh raft of plans, initiatives and measures aimed at sustaining the high tempo recorded by the sector under the GEM report.

Central to this push is the Third National Development Strategy

(NDS3) for 2024-2030, launched in January 2024, which sets ambitious targets to deepen and sustain the country's entrepreneurship ecosystem. The strategy seeks to lift SMEs' share of total GDP, channel some 7% of credit to these firms, and ensure that 70% of venture capital is supplied through the private sector. It also aims to allocate around 0.1% of total GDP to financing SMEs.

The initiatives set to be rolled out by the government include programmes to accelerate the digital transformation of SMEs, fresh regulations governing alternative finance, a review of public-private partnership frameworks, improved access to capital markets, and an expansion of bank credit – alongside other practical measures designed to sustain growth in this vital sector.

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Captain Akram Afif lifts the Qatar Stars League (QSL) shield as Al Sadd players and team officials celebrate following their 3-2 win over Al Shamal in the final round of the league at Jassim Bin Hamad Stadium in Doha yesterday. **PICTURE:** Noushad Thekkayil **Sport Page 1**

## Qatar plays stabilising role in global economy: Envoy

By Peter Alagos  
Business Editor

Qatar plays a pivotal role as a stabilising actor in the global economy, particularly in ensuring energy security and market stability, Malaysia's ambassador to Qatar has said.

At the same time, ambassador Faizal Razali noted that Qatar has positioned itself as a key mediator and advocate for the Global South, promoting dialogue and peaceful resolution of conflicts.

Both Malaysia and Qatar are strong advocates of a rules-based multilateral trading system, centred on the World Trade Organisation (WTO), Razali said, adding that both countries support open,



Malaysian ambassador Faizal Razali.

fair, and non-discriminatory trade and uphold these principles in their regional and global engagements.

"At the regional level, Malaysia and Qatar can serve as bridges between Asean (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) and the Gulf Co-operation Council (GCC).

Both countries occupy strategic geographic positions and maintain strong connectivity with their respective regions," Razali told *Gulf Times* in an exclusive interview.

In light of the evolving geopolitical landscape, the ambassador said there is a need for Malaysia and Qatar to deepen strategic coordination, particularly in trade, supply chains, and economic resilience.

He pointed to the Asean-GCC-China Summit, held in Kuala Lumpur during Malaysia's Asean chairmanship in 2025 and attended by His Highness the Amir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani, as reflecting a growing inter-regional economic partnership and shared commitment towards deeper co-operation. **To Page 11**

CONSOLIDATED FINANCIAL RESULTS FOR THE THREE MONTH PERIOD ENDED 31 MARCH 2026

# Baladna achieves 6% net profit growth in Q1 2026, demonstrates operational resilience amid regional tensions, and strengthens Qatar's food security



بلادنا ش.م.ع.ق.  
BALADNA Q.P.S.C.



Doha, Qatar, 27 April 2026: Baladna Q.P.S.C., Qatar's leading dairy and juice company, announced its financial results for the three-month period ended 31 March 2026. The Company delivered strong profitability during the quarter, supported by operational efficiencies and disciplined cost management. Reinforcing its strategic role in supporting Qatar's food security, Baladna maintained stable operations across its core business and ensured the continued supply of high-quality locally produced dairy and juice products to the domestic market. The Company's integrated operating model and proactive planning across the value chain enabled it to navigate a dynamic external environment effectively, while performance also benefited from seasonal demand during Ramadan.

### Financial Highlights

Revenue for the quarter stood at QAR 329.9 million, remaining broadly in line with the prior year. Performance during the period was supported by strong seasonal demand associated with Ramadan, alongside revenue growth in core dairy segments.

Gross profit increased by 22% YoY to QAR 106.3 million, with margins improving to 32% compared to 26% in the same period last year. The improvement was driven by operational efficiencies, including improved milk yield and overall cost optimization within farm and production operations.

EBITDA increased by 4% to QAR 118.9 million, with margins improving to 36.1% from 34.6% in the prior year period, supported by operational improvements and cost discipline across the business.

Net profit increased by 6% to QAR 61.5 million, with margins at 18.6% compared to 17.6% in the same period last year.

### Operational Highlights

Baladna maintained stable operations across its farm, production, and distribution activities, demonstrating its ability to operate effectively in a rapidly evolving external environment. The Company once again ensured the food security of the State of Qatar, reinforcing its position as one of the most resilient food and beverage companies in the region. Baladna's proven ability to successfully navigate disruptive periods such as the current geopolitical tensions, the Red Sea supply chain disruptions, and the COVID 19 pandemic highlights the strength and resilience of its operations.

Recently, the Company welcomed the Minister of Municipality to its facilities, where Baladna's role in supporting Qatar's food security and maintaining continuity of supply was acknowledged.

Baladna continues to prioritize consistency of supply within the domestic market, supported by forward planning of key inputs and coordination across its value chain.

The Company continues to actively monitor regional developments and respond through structured planning across procurement, inventory, and supply chain operations.

### Sales and Marketing Highlights

The Company maintained its market leadership position in Qatar and expanded its product portfolio to 268 SKUs, introducing 16 new products across categories including flavored yogurt, protein drinkables, milk powder, and flavored kefir during the quarter.

The customer base increased to 3,821, while sales routes reached 149, compared to 3,631 customers and 147 sales routes in Q1 2025, respectively.

In parallel, the Company initiated steps to enhance sustainability across its operations, including the introduction of zero-emission transportation within its logistics network.

### Strategic Highlights

Baladna continued to progress its international projects during the quarter, with ongoing development across key markets and continued engagement with global stakeholders on food security and agricultural development.

In Algeria, Baladna reached a key execution milestone with the signing of Phase Two contracts exceeding USD 635 million and the launch of a dairy cattle airlift program from the United States. The program, scheduled to commence in November 2026, will support the gradual importation of 30,000 high-quality dairy cows over a ten-month period, marking a critical step toward herd build-up and operational readiness. Phase Two expands construction and infrastructure activities across farms and support facilities, advancing the project's transition from foundational works into large-scale execution and reinforcing progress toward local milk powder production in Algeria.

Development of the integrated agri-industrial project advanced across multiple areas. Groundwater infrastructure continued to expand, with a significant number of wells completed and additional wells under development and regulatory review. Arable farming activities progressed with the cultivation of key crops including barley, wheat, alfalfa, rhodes grass, and corn, supported by the expansion of irrigation systems. Construction activities also advanced, including the commencement of civil works for the dairy farm, alongside continued progress on design and planning for processing facilities.


In Syria, development of the manufacturing project progressed across site preparation, design, and permitting stages. Site layout and grading activities advanced, with key design submissions completed for major facilities including dairy, warehouse, and utilities. Geotechnical and foundation works remained on track, while permitting processes, including environmental and building approvals, continued to move forward.


In parallel, Baladna signed an upstream engagement agreement with the International Finance Corporation (IFC), a member of the World Bank Group, to assess the viability of a large-scale dairy processing investment in Syria. Under the agreement, IFC will undertake a comprehensive supply side diagnostic of the country's smallholder dairy sector, evaluating milk supply potential, productivity, infrastructure, and farm economics. The engagement will deliver detailed market analysis, scenario assessments, and a bankability review to support private sector financing. Commencing in May 2026, the study is expected to de-risk the investment and strengthen institutional and lender confidence in Baladna's integrated dairy expansion strategy.

The Company continues to evaluate additional opportunities in a measured and selective manner, including across Africa, as part of its broader "Baladna From Qatar to the World" vision, with a continued focus on long-term value creation.


## Key Highlights

 Continued focus on supporting Qatar's food security, with stable production and supply across operations, with the Ministry of Municipality commending Baladna's resilience and its role in safeguarding national food security.

 Profit from operations improved by 30% vs same period last year.

 Baladna Algeria launches dairy cattle airlift from the United States as part of its integrated project following \$635 million phase two signing.

 Signed a Landmark Agreement with the International Finance Corporation to Unlock Syria's Dairy Sector Potential.

 Introduction of zero-emission transportation within the logistics network as part of ongoing sustainability initiatives.

For the complete financial statements, please visit, <https://baladna.com/corporate> or email [ir@baladna.com](mailto:ir@baladna.com)



SCAN ME

## PM discusses Iran-US ceasefire with Senegal counterpart



HE the Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman bin Jassim al-Thani received a phone call yesterday from Senegal's Prime Minister Ousmane Sonko to discuss bilateral ties and regional developments.

They reviewed co-operation between Doha and Dakar, and explored ways to strengthen and expand their partnership.

They also discussed the latest developments in the region, particularly those related to a ceasefire between the US and Iran as well as ongoing efforts to de-escalate tensions and enhance regional security and stability.

HE Sheikh Mohammed stressed the importance of all parties engaging constructively with mediation efforts, saying this would help address the root causes of the crisis through dialogue and peaceful means.

He added that such engagement could pave the way for a lasting agreement that would prevent a renewed escalation in tensions. - QNA



## Al-Khulaifi meets UN under-secretary-general Lacroix

HE the Minister of State at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Dr Mohammed bin Abdulaziz bin Saleh al-Khulaifi met yesterday with UN Under-Secretary-General for Peace Operations Jean-Pierre Lacroix, who is currently visiting the country. They discussed co-operation, relations between Qatar and the United Nations, and ways to support and strengthen them.

Developments in the work of peacekeeping forces in Lebanon and the Democratic Republic of the Congo were also discussed, along with issues of mutual interest. Lacroix praised the role played by Qatar in mediation and the peaceful resolution of international disputes, in pursuit of international peace and security. - QNA



# PHCC emphasis on making workplaces *Ready and Safe*

The Primary Health Care Corporation (PHCC) has underscored the importance of fostering safe and healthy working environments to protect staff and ensure continuity of services, marking the World Day for Safety and Health at Work observed annually on April 28.

The organisation said the occasion is aimed at raising awareness of preventing occupational injuries and accidents, while promoting a culture of safety that extends beyond physical protection to include employees' psychological and social wellbeing.

The director of the PHCC's Occupational Health and Safety, Dr Maryam al-Muslemani, said that in light of the current regional situation and development, the organisation has adapted this year's theme to focus on emergency readi-

ness under the slogan *Ready and Safe*.

She noted that preparedness is no longer optional, particularly in critical sectors such as healthcare, emphasising the need for regular staff training on emergency response procedures.

Clear guidance and easy access to information during crises, Dr al-Muslemani said, are essential to safeguarding lives.

She also highlighted the importance of psychological support as a core pillar of workplace safety, especially during emergencies.

Exposure to stressful situations, Dr al-Muslemani pointed out, can have lasting effects on staff, including anxiety, stress and sleep disturbances, potentially impacting their performance.

She called for comprehensive mental health

support systems, including confidential communication channels, counseling services before, during and after emergencies, and fostering a workplace culture built on empathy and mutual support.

Leadership, Dr al-Muslemani added, plays a crucial role in providing reassurance, maintaining clear communication and recognising staff efforts.

Integrating psychological support into emergency planning, she said, strengthens institutional resilience, reduces long-term impacts of crises, and helps employees return more quickly to stable performance levels.

Ensuring a safe working environment is a shared responsibility, the official stressed, requiring collective commitment across all levels of an organisation. - QNA

## OFFICIAL

### Amir, Deputy Amir congratulate Dutch monarch on National Day

His Highness the Amir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani sent yesterday a cable of congratulations to the Netherlands's King Willem-Alexander on the occasion of his country's National Day.

His Highness the Deputy Amir Sheikh Abdullah bin Hamad al-Thani sent a similar cable of congratulations to King Willem-Alexander.

Meanwhile, HE the Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman bin Jassim al-Thani sent a cable of congratulations to the Netherlands's Prime Minister Rob Jetten on the occasion. - QNA

### Amir congratulates S Africa leader on nation's Freedom Day

His Highness the Amir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al-Thani sent yesterday a cable of congratulations to South Africa's President Cyril Ramaphosa on the occasion of his country's Freedom Day.

His Highness the Deputy Amir Sheikh Abdullah bin Hamad al-Thani sent a similar cable of congratulations to the South African president.

HE the Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman bin Jassim al-Thani also sent a cable of congratulations to Ramaphosa on the occasion of South Africa's Freedom Day. - QNA

### Amir sends congratulations to Sierra Leone's President Bio

His Highness the Amir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani sent yesterday a cable of congratulations to Sierra Leone's President Dr Julius Maada Bio, on the occasion of his country's Independence Day.

His Highness the Deputy Amir Sheikh Abdullah bin Hamad Al-Thani sent a similar cable of congratulations to the Sierra Leonean leader.

HE the Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman bin Jassim al-Thani also sent a cable of congratulations to Dr Maada Bio on the occasion of Sierra Leone's Independence Day. - QNA

### Amir congratulates Togo leader on nation's Independence Day

His Highness the Amir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani sent a cable of congratulations yesterday Togo's President Jean-Lucien Savi de Tove on the anniversary of his country's Independence Day.

His Highness the Deputy Amir Sheikh Abdullah bin Hamad al-Thani sent a similar cable of congratulations to the Togo president.

HE the Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman bin Jassim al-Thani meanwhile sent a cable of congratulations to Togo's Prime Minister Faure Essozimna Gnassingbe on the occasion of the country's Independence Day. - QNA



## BALADNA Q.P.S.C.

### INTERIM CONDENSED CONSOLIDATED STATEMENT OF PROFIT OR LOSS AND OTHER COMPREHENSIVE INCOME FOR THE THREE-MONTH PERIOD ENDED 31 MARCH 2026

	For the three-month period ended	
	31 March 2026 (Unaudited) QR	31 March 2025 (Unaudited) QR
Revenue from contract with customers	329,984,593	330,520,589
Cost of sales	(223,703,737)	(243,479,641)
<b>GROSS PROFIT</b>	<b>106,280,856</b>	<b>87,040,948</b>
Other income	16,853,705	22,059,502
Gain on investment in financial assets at fair value through profit or loss	-	11,277,762
Selling and distribution expenses	(24,595,437)	(25,368,551)
General and administrative expenses	(18,525,873)	(17,563,410)
<b>Operating profit for the period</b>	<b>80,013,251</b>	<b>77,446,251</b>
Finance cost	(18,257,888)	(18,759,540)
<b>Profit before income tax</b>	<b>61,755,363</b>	<b>58,686,711</b>
Income tax expense	(488,391)	(347,868)
<b>NET PROFIT FOR THE PERIOD</b>	<b>61,266,972</b>	<b>58,338,843</b>
<b>Net profit for the period attributable to:</b>		
Equity holders of the parent	61,495,616	58,231,428
Non-controlling interests	(228,644)	107,415
	<b>61,266,972</b>	<b>58,338,843</b>
<b>Other comprehensive income</b>		
Other comprehensive income that may be reclassified to profit or loss in subsequent periods (net of tax):		
Exchange difference on translation of foreign operation	(7,400)	-
<b>TOTAL COMPREHENSIVE INCOME FOR THE PERIOD</b>	<b>61,259,572</b>	<b>58,338,843</b>
<b>Total comprehensive income for the period attributable to:</b>		
Equity holders of the parent	61,488,216	58,231,428
Non-controlling interests	(228,644)	107,415
	<b>61,259,572</b>	<b>58,338,843</b>
<b>Basic and diluted earnings per share (2025: restated)</b>	<b>0.029</b>	<b>0.027</b>

### INTERIM CONDENSED CONSOLIDATED STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION AT 31 MARCH 2026

	31 March 2026 (Unaudited) QR	31 December 2025 (Audited) QR
<b>ASSETS</b>		
<b>Non-current assets</b>		
Property, plant and equipment	3,318,188,964	3,285,605,491
Right-of-use assets	102,385,023	105,276,839
Intangible assets	5,332,096	4,914,015
Investment in financial assets at fair value through profit or loss	994,476,800	994,476,800
Biological assets	195,020,677	193,661,272
Goodwill	6,792,635	6,792,635
Advance to suppliers	614,886,885	372,583,615
Other non current assets	5,151,447	3,524,427
	<b>5,242,234,527</b>	<b>4,966,835,094</b>
<b>Current assets</b>		
Inventories	423,688,453	400,494,534
Trade and other receivables	334,878,227	336,242,665
Biological assets	294,898	446,200
Due from related parties	24,457,928	29,457,007
Cash and bank balances	245,007,022	374,789,122
	<b>1,028,326,528</b>	<b>1,141,429,528</b>
<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>	<b>6,270,561,055</b>	<b>6,108,264,622</b>
<b>EQUITY AND LIABILITIES</b>		
<b>Equity</b>		
Share capital	2,143,984,962	2,143,984,962
Legal reserve	120,595,369	120,595,369
Acquisition reserve	201,123,011	201,123,011
Retained earnings	526,065,547	464,569,931
Translation reserves	(206,361)	(198,961)
<b>Equity attributable to equity holders of the parent</b>	<b>2,991,562,528</b>	<b>2,930,074,312</b>
Non-controlling interests	390,060,236	390,288,880
<b>TOTAL EQUITY</b>	<b>3,381,622,764</b>	<b>3,320,363,192</b>
<b>LIABILITIES</b>		
<b>Non-current liabilities</b>		
Islamic financing contracts	2,100,445,630	1,939,005,167
Employees' end of service benefits	22,962,582	22,244,706
Lease liabilities	87,716,394	87,245,526
	<b>2,211,124,606</b>	<b>2,048,495,399</b>
<b>Current liabilities</b>		
Bank overdrafts	90,055,150	21,022,878
Islamic financing contracts	373,944,249	508,338,571
Trade and other payables	207,417,921	201,963,875
Lease liabilities	84,149	83,316
Due to related parties	6,312,216	7,997,391
	<b>677,813,685</b>	<b>739,406,031</b>
<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES</b>	<b>2,888,938,291</b>	<b>2,787,901,430</b>
<b>TOTAL EQUITY AND LIABILITIES</b>	<b>6,270,561,055</b>	<b>6,108,264,622</b>

These interim condensed consolidated financial statements were approved and authorized for issuance by the Board of Directors on 27 April 2026 and signed on their behalf by:

Mr. Ramez Mhd Ruslan Al Khayat  
Managing Director

Mr. Marek Warzywoda  
Group Chief Executive Officer

Mr. Saifullah Khan  
Group Chief Financial Officer

# MoPH urges public to get their routine vaccines on time

By Joseph Varghese  
Staff Reporter

As Qatar marks World Immunisation Week from April 24-30, the Ministry of Public Health (MoPH) has highlighted the importance of getting the routine vaccines on time and urged the public to make sure not to miss it.

In a number of social media messages, the ministry noted that it is a commitment on the part of the public to get administered with the necessary vaccinations.

"Do not miss your routine vaccinations," the MoPH said. "Your commitment to vaccination protects you and your family from preventable diseases."

Held under the theme *For every generation, vaccines work*, the World Immunisation Week is focusing this year on strengthening vaccination services and raising awareness.

The campaign emphasises the critical role of vaccines in protecting people of all ages.

The MoPH, in collaboration with the Hamad Medical Corporation (HMC) and the Primary Health Care Corporation (PHCC), emphasises that high coverage of vaccination is essential to maintaining public health.

The current campaign highlights the need for vaccinations across all age groups, including children, pregnant women, and the elderly.

The MoPH is organising specialised training to enhance the capacity of healthcare facilities to expand essential immunisation services.

As Qatar's immunisation programme is aligned with the global Immunisation Agenda 2030, the initiative aims to enhance community awareness regarding the importance of vaccination to prevent the resurgence of preventable diseases.

Qatar's expanded programme on immunisation is recognised as one of the leading national



immunisation programmes in the Eastern Mediterranean region.

It provides a comprehensive range of vaccines for children and adults, protecting against more than 16 diseases.

The programme has successfully achieved and sustained high national coverage rates above 90% for most essential vaccines, contributing effectively to the eradication of polio and the significant control of diseases such as measles and rubella.

A PHCC study recently published on the *Qatar Medical Journal* noted that vaccine-preventable diseases remain a public health concern despite the country's high immunisation coverage.

The study, *Geographic and age-specific trends in vaccine-preventable diseases in Qatar*, found out that age-specific disparities in vaccine-preventable diseases incidence were noted

in the country, with the highest burden among children under five years and in the Western region.

It has also highlighted that there is a need to sustain high vaccination coverage, enhance parent focused health education, strengthen surveillance to detect immunity gaps and improve data linkage.

In line with World Health Organisation (WHO) policies and guidance, the MoPH's Department of Health Protection and Communicable Disease Control has developed a package of awareness activities emphasising the importance of vaccination across all age groups.

These activities highlight the need for parents to ensure that children complete all scheduled doses on time, while also stressing the importance of adults receiving the recommended vaccines appropriate to each stage of life.



## Director-general of QNA meets Kyrgyz envoy

Qatar News Agency (QNA) director-general Ahmed bin Saeed al-Rumaihi met yesterday with Kyrgyzstan's ambassador to Qatar Aibek Toktobolotov. The meeting discussed aspects of joint co-operation in the field of media. - **QNA**



## NHRC delegation visits Elderly Council at Katara

The Centre for Empowerment and Care of the Elderly (Ehsan) received a delegation from the National Human Rights Committee (NHRC), led by NHRC Secretary-General Sultan bin Hassan al-Jamali, during a visit to the Elderly Council at Katara Cultural Village.

The visit aimed at strengthening co-operation and reviewing Ehsan's efforts in empowering senior persons and promoting their rights.

The delegation toured the Elderly Council and was briefed on programmes and initiatives focused on improving quality of life, encouraging community participation, and raising awareness of seniors-related issues.

Accordingly, both sides discussed ways to enhance partnership, exchange expertise in awareness and education, and adopt best practices that support the status and rights of senior persons in society.

Ehsan executive director Manal Ahmed al-Mannai



said that the visit reflects stronger institutional co-ordination and supports national efforts to empower and protect elderly rights, highlighting ongoing programme development in co-operation with various entities.

Al-Jamali praised Ehsan's role, stressing that senior persons in Qatar receive priority care and are deeply respected culturally, religiously, and legally.

He welcomed stronger collaboration and proposed formalising co-operation through a memorandum of understanding to establish strategic, long-term co-ordination.



Officials and competitors of the QatarDebate Open (3v3) Championship, hosted by the UDST.



## Landmark announces winner of GWM Tank 500 in 'Ramadan Shop & Win Promotion'

Landmark Group has announced Abeer Kamal Hassan Ahmed as the winner of the GWM Tank 500, awarded as part of its "Ramadan Shop & Win Promotion", sponsored by GWM Teyseer Motors.

The promotion ran throughout the holy month of Ramadan.

Participants had the opportunity to enter the draw by shopping at Landmark Group's extensive portfolio of leading retail brands, including Centrepoint, Home Centre,

MAX, Home Box, Shoexpress, Emax, Babyshop, Splash, Shoe Mart, and Lifestyle.

The official key handover ceremony was held at Al Asmakh Mall.

The vehicle was presented to the winner by senior vice-president and territory head - Landmark Group Qatar Shumalan, alongside Makram al-Rassamny, division manager - GWM at Teyseer Motors.

Teyseer Motors head of marketing Abhishek Basu was also present at the ceremony.

## Qatar Airways to resume daily flights to Bahrain, Kozhikode

Qatar Airways has announced the resumption of daily flights to Bahrain and Kozhikode, India, starting May 1, as part of its ongoing efforts to reinstate its global network.

In a statement released yesterday, Qatar Airways confirmed that this announcement follows the airline's recent resumption of daily flights to Dubai and Sharjah, which began April 23, and to

Damascus, Syria, starting May 1.

The statement added that building on this momentum, Qatar Airways is advancing the phased restoration of its global network.

The airline advised passengers to visit the Qatar Airways website or app and ensure their contact information is up to date, noting that passengers with tickets issued for travel between Febru-

ary 28 and September 15, 2026, are eligible for several options.

These options include complimentary date changes to a new travel date up to October 31, 2026 when rebooking on flights operated by Qatar Airways, subject to availability and fare seasonality.

Passengers can also receive a refund of the unused ticket value, subject to standard fare rules.

Refunds may take up to 28 working days to be processed.

The statement further indicated that if a flight changes occur, passengers can still make additional booking changes free of charge until October 31, 2026, maintaining their original class of travel, irrespective of fare seasonality, in addition to receiving a refund of any unused ticket value. - **QNA**

## UDST, DPS Modern Indian School win QatarDebate championship

QatarDebate Centre, a member of Qatar Foundation for Education, Science and Community Development (QF), has concluded the QatarDebate Open (3v3) Championship, hosted by the University of Doha for Science and Technology (UDST), with wide participation from leading educational institutions in the country.

The centre said yesterday that the championship saw fierce competition among 22 teams representing nine educational institutions, comprising 33 debaters and 32 adjudicators.

Participating in this year's championship were Qatar University, Georgetown University in Qatar, Doha University of Science and Technology, Texas A&M University at Qatar (TAMUQ), Carnegie Mellon University in Qatar, DPS Modern Indian School, DPS Monarch International School, the Lebanese School in Qatar, and Team Qatar.

The tournament rounds addressed a range of vital and current issues, namely the role of academic prestige in university choices, government support for elderly care, and critiques of knowledge economy careers.

Advanced rounds tackled complex issues such as online trading platforms, environmental justice, and narratives around illness and recovery.

In terms of results, the UDST claimed the championship title.

The team comprised students Zaid Zubair Maloul, Asiyil Alaswad and Qass Behzad.

The TAMUQ team, which came in second, comprised of Mohammed Bakri, Rhee Jeremiah Costan and Aiman Mohammed Ali.

In the individual awards, Asiyil Alaswad was named Best Finals Speaker, while Mohamed Bakri and Victoria Honoridez took Best Speaker Overall honours.

In the Schools Category, DPS Modern Indian School secured first place, with another team from the same school as runner-up.

Saara Bhardwaj won both Best Finals Speaker and Best Speaker Overall in the schools division.

At the conclusion of the competition, winners were honoured by QatarDebate communications manager Reem al-Mosallam and UDST Student Engagement manager Eman al-Sharshani.

This championship is part of QatarDebate's efforts to cultivate a culture of constructive dialogue and refine critical thinking skills among young people. - **QNA**

### ANNOUNCEMENT

I, MOHAMMED SAIFUL AZIM

holder of

Bangladesh Passport No. EJ0502051  
QID No. 29405001766

hereby change my name

from

MOHAMMED SAIFUL AZIM

to

MD SAIFUL AZIM

Any objection, please contact  
**THE PERMANENT COMMITTEE FOR NATIONALITY AFFAIRS**  
within 15 days from the publication of this notice.

### ANNOUNCEMENT

I, JEWEL KHALASHI KOHEL KHALASHI

holder of

Bangladesh Passport No. EH0298127  
QID No. 28905019988

hereby change my name

from

JEWEL KHALASHI KOHEL KHALASHI

to

JUEL KOHEL KHALASHI

Any objection, please contact  
**THE PERMANENT COMMITTEE FOR NATIONALITY AFFAIRS**  
within 15 days from the publication of this notice.

### ANNOUNCEMENT

I, HESHARA SENADEERA GUNAWARDANA

holder of

SRILANKA Passport No. N8969394  
QID No. 30614400113

hereby change my name

from

HESHARA SENADEERA GUNAWARDANA

to

SENADEERA PATHIRANHELAGE  
HESHARA THIMASH GUNAWARDANA

Any objection, please contact  
**THE PERMANENT COMMITTEE FOR NATIONALITY AFFAIRS**  
within 15 days from the publication of this notice.

# MASHREQBANK PSC – QATAR BRANCH

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

### INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT

To the Board of Directors  
**Mashreq Bank PSC**  
 Dubai, United Arab Emirates  
 Report on the Audit of the Financial Statements  
**Opinion**

We have audited the financial statements of Mashreqbank PSC – Qatar Branch (the "Bank"), which comprise the statement of financial position as at 31 December 2025, and the statement of profit or loss and other comprehensive income, statement of changes in head office equity and statement of cash flows for the year then ended, and notes to the financial statements, including material accounting policy information.

In our opinion, the accompanying financial statements present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of the Bank as at 31 December 2025, and its financial performance and its cash flows for the year then ended in accordance with IFRS Accounting Standards as issued by the International Accounting Standards Board (IASB).

#### Basis for Opinion

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

#### Key Audit Matters

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

Key audit matter	How our audit addressed the key audit matter
<b>Impairment of loans and advances to customers</b> The Bank's loans and advances to customers are carried on the statement of financial position at QR. 2,318 million (2024: QR. 2,205 million) as at 31 December 2025, which represent 61 % (2024: 66%) of total assets. The expected credit losses ("ECL") allowance was QR.106 million (2024: QR.186 million) as at this date, which comprises an allowance of QR. 6 million (2024: QR. 6 million) against Stage 1 and 2 exposures and an allowance of QR. 100 million (2024: QR.180 million) against exposures classified under Stage 3. The loans and advances to customers are assessed individually for a significant increase in credit risk ("SICR") and measurement of ECL. This requires management to make a reasonable and supportive assessment to capture all qualitative and quantitative forward-looking information while assessing SICR or while assessing credit-impaired criteria for the loans and advances. Management judgement is also applied in manually overriding stages in accordance with the Bank's accounting policies. The measurement of ECL for exposures classified as Stage 1 and Stage 2 are carried out collectively by ECL models with limited manual intervention or overrides. It is important that these ECL models and their parameters (Probability of Default (PD), Loss Given Default (LGD), Exposure At Default (EAD) and macroeconomic adjustments) are valid throughout the reporting period and are subject to a validation and monitoring process by an independent reviewer. However, the accuracy of the results produced from these ECL models is dependent on using reasonable parameters and up to date inputs to the PD, LGD, EAD and macroeconomic adjustments which are relevant for the reporting period and are subject to a timely validation process. The exposures are classified as impaired as soon as there is doubt about the borrower's ability to meet payment obligations to the Bank in accordance with the original contractual terms. The impairment loss on these loan and advances to customers is calculated based on the shortfall between the carrying value of impaired loans and advances to customers compared to the net present value of future estimated cash flows. The audit of impairment of loans and advances to customers is a key area of audit focus because of the quantitative significance of the amount in the context of the financial statements, the significance and complexity of the estimates and judgments which were used in classifying these loans and advances to customers into various stages and determining the ECL allowance and the level of audit effort required. Refer to Note 4 of the financial statements for the accounting policy, Note 6 for critical accounting judgements and estimates and Note 5.1 for disclosures on credit risk.	The audit procedures which we performed to address this key audit matter included, but were not limited to, the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We obtained a detailed business process understanding of the Bank's loans and advances to customers and ECL in order to assess the reasonableness of these adjustments along with the other critical accounting estimates and judgments that management had applied. We involved our subject matter experts to assist us in auditing the ECL models as at 31 December 2025.</li> <li>We assessed the relevant controls in the aforementioned business process to determine if they had been appropriately designed and implemented and, where applicable, also tested these controls to determine if they were operating effectively. These controls include:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>System-based and manual controls over the timely recognition of impaired loans and advances;</li> <li>Controls over the ECL calculation models, model inputs, monitoring, validation and approval;</li> <li>Controls over the governance and approval process related to impairment provisions and ECL models including continuous reassessment by the management.</li> </ul> </li> <li>For a sample of individual loans, we performed a detailed credit review, assessed the information for evaluating the creditworthiness and challenged the Bank's staging and determination of the allowance for ECL of these loans.</li> <li>We understood and evaluated the theoretical soundness of the ECL model by involving our subject matter experts to determine its compliance with the requirements of IFRS Accounting Standards. We tested the mathematical integrity of the ECL model by performing recalculations on a sample basis. We assessed the consistency and reasonableness of various inputs and assumptions used by the Bank's management to determine ECL.</li> <li>For allowances against exposures classified as Stage 1 and Stage 2, we obtained an understanding of the Bank's methodology to determine the allowance, assessed the reasonableness of the underlying assumptions and the sufficiency of the data used by the management. We assessed the Bank's determination of significant increase in credit risk and the resultant basis for classification of exposures into various stages. For a sample of exposures, we assessed the Bank's staging criteria, including the basis for movement between stages.</li> <li>For loans tested collectively, we challenged key assumptions, inspected the calculation methodology and traced a sample back to source data.</li> <li>We selected samples of loans and advances measured at amortised cost and assessed the accuracy of the EAD, appropriateness of the PD and calculations of the LGD used by management in their ECL calculations.</li> <li>For impaired loans and advances, we assessed the impairment allowance by recalculating the ECL for a sample of exposures, to determine if the ECL was in accordance with the requirements of IFRS Accounting Standards and Bank's accounting policies.</li> <li>We assessed the disclosure in the financial statements against the requirements of IFRS Accounting Standards.</li> </ul>

#### Responsibilities of Management and Those Charged with Governance for the Financial Statements

Management is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of the financial statements in accordance with IFRS Accounting Standards as issued by the IASB, and for such internal control as management determines is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

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

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

#### Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statements

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with ISAs will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

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

- Identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error, design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks, and obtain audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal controls.
- Obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the Bank's internal controls.
- Evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates and related disclosures made by management.
- Conclude on the appropriateness of management's use of the going concern basis of accounting and based on the audit evidence obtained, whether a material uncertainty exists related to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on the Bank's ability to continue as a going concern. If we conclude that a material uncertainty exists, we are required to draw attention in our auditor's report to the related disclosures in the financial statements or, if such disclosures are inadequate, to modify our opinion. Our conclusions are based on the audit evidence obtained up to the date of our auditor's report. However, future events or conditions may cause the Bank to cease to continue as a going concern.
- Evaluate the overall presentation, structure and content of the financial statements, including the disclosures, and whether the financial statements represent the underlying transactions and events in a manner that achieves fair presentation.

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

From the matters communicated with those charged with governance, we determine those matters that were of most significance in the audit of the financial statements of the current period and are therefore the key audit matters. We describe these matters in our auditor's report unless law or regulation precludes public disclosure about the matter or when, in extremely rare circumstances, we determine that a matter should not be communicated in our report because the adverse consequences of doing so would reasonably be expected to outweigh the public interest benefits of such communication.

Doha – Qatar  
 April 27, 2026

For Deloitte & Touche  
 Qatar Branch  
 Yamen Maddah  
 Partner  
 License No. 434  
 QFMA Auditor License No. 120156

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION As at 31 December 2025		
2025	2024	
QR'000	QR'000	
<b>ASSETS</b>		
Cash and balances with Qatar Central Bank	234,320	116,643
Deposits and balances due from banks	12,210	21,913
Due from head office and branches	301,774	393,218
Loans and advances to customers	2,318,028	2,204,846
Investment securities	854,465	566,393
Other assets	49,328	52,364
PROPERTY, furniture and equipment	22,132	9,172
Intangible Assets	523	785
<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>	<b>3,792,780</b>	<b>3,365,337</b>
<b>LIABILITIES AND HEAD OFFICE EQUITY</b>		
<b>Liabilities</b>		
Deposits and balances due to banks	126,013	75,518
Due to head office and branches	29,342	5,087
Customers' deposits	1,828,586	1,562,261
Other liabilities	135,423	138,907
<b>Total liabilities</b>	<b>2,119,364</b>	<b>1,781,773</b>
<b>Head office equity</b>		
Capital	10,000	10,000
Legal reserve	10,000	10,000
General reserve	677,122	677,122
Retained earnings	982,294	886,842
<b>Total head office equity</b>	<b>1,679,416</b>	<b>1,583,964</b>
<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES AND HEAD OFFICE EQUITY</b>	<b>3,792,780</b>	<b>3,365,337</b>

The financial statements were approved by the Board of Directors of Mashreqbank PSC, Qatar Branch, on 27 April 2026, and signed on its behalf by the General Manager, Mashreqbank PSC – Qatar Branch on 27 April 2026.

Salman Gular  
 General Manager

STATEMENT OF PROFIT OR LOSS AND OTHER COMPREHENSIVE INCOME For the year ended 31 December 2025		
2025	2024	
QR'000	QR'000	
Interest income	171,744	171,378
Interest expense	(55,075)	(34,737)
<b>Net interest income</b>	<b>116,669</b>	<b>136,641</b>
Fee and commission income	18,146	15,106
Fee and commission expense	(320)	(440)
<b>Net fee and commission income</b>	<b>17,826</b>	<b>14,666</b>
Other income, net	33,311	31,506
<b>Operating income</b>	<b>167,806</b>	<b>182,793</b>
General and administrative expenses	(74,448)	(76,954)
Depreciation and amortisation	(4,430)	(21,770)
Net impairment reversal	24,340	27,530
<b>Profit before income tax</b>	<b>113,668</b>	<b>131,199</b>
Income tax expense	(18,216)	(4,000)
<b>Profit for the year</b>	<b>95,452</b>	<b>127,199</b>
Other comprehensive income	—	—
<b>Total comprehensive income for the year</b>	<b>95,452</b>	<b>127,199</b>

STATEMENT OF CHANGES IN HEAD OFFICE EQUITY For the year ended 31 December 2025					
	Capital QR'000	Legal reserve QR'000	General reserve QR'000	Retained earnings QR'000	Total QR'000
Balance as at 1 January 2024	10,000	10,000	677,122	759,643	1,456,765
Total comprehensive income for the year	—	—	—	127,199	127,199
<b>Balance as at 31 December 2024</b>	<b>10,000</b>	<b>10,000</b>	<b>677,122</b>	<b>886,842</b>	<b>1,583,964</b>
Balance as at 1 January 2025	10,000	10,000	677,122	886,842	1,583,964
Total comprehensive income for the year	—	—	—	95,452	95,452
<b>Balance as at 31 December 2025</b>	<b>10,000</b>	<b>10,000</b>	<b>677,122</b>	<b>982,294</b>	<b>1,679,416</b>

# MASHREQBANK PSC GROUP

## CONSOLIDATED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2025

CONSOLIDATED STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION AS AT 31 DECEMBER 2025		
2025	2024	
AED'000	AED'000	
<b>ASSETS</b>		
Cash and balances with central banks	33,532,283	40,592,508
Loans and advances to banks	65,721,062	52,271,604
Financial assets measured at fair value	21,457,498	26,327,534
Securities measured at amortised cost	28,906,304	9,797,117
Loans and advances to customers	138,070,975	103,080,846
Islamic financing and investment products	26,277,704	21,677,551
Acceptances	10,372,108	3,495,184
Reinsurance contract assets	3,222,503	3,379,148
Investment in associate	260,380	296,878
Investment properties	183,935	151,620
Property and equipment	1,350,125	1,339,360
Intangible assets	423,331	374,333
Other assets	4,855,663	4,669,475
<b>Total assets</b>	<b>334,633,871</b>	<b>267,453,158</b>
<b>LIABILITIES AND EQUITY</b>		
<b>LIABILITIES</b>		
Deposits and balances due to banks	38,922,265	43,374,316
Repurchase agreements with banks	7,136,046	2,075,517
Customers' deposits	178,891,181	143,564,793
Islamic customers' deposits	26,004,253	17,374,901
Acceptances	10,372,108	3,495,184
Borrowings	13,473,859	3,902,528
Insurance and Investment contract liabilities	6,501,987	6,187,190
Sukuk Issued	1,836,500	-
Other liabilities	10,919,117	9,698,535
<b>Total liabilities</b>	<b>294,057,316</b>	<b>229,672,964</b>
<b>EQUITY</b>		
<b>Capital and reserves</b>		
Issued and paid up capital	2,006,098	2,006,098
Tier 1 capital notes	2,938,400	2,938,400
Other reserves	669,832	(359,453)
Retained earnings	33,759,840	32,127,720
Equity attributable to owners of the Parent including noteholders of the Group	39,374,170	36,712,765
Non-controlling interests	1,202,385	1,067,429
<b>Total equity</b>	<b>40,576,555</b>	<b>37,780,194</b>
<b>Total liabilities and equity</b>	<b>334,633,871</b>	<b>267,453,158</b>

To the best of our knowledge, the consolidated financial statements present fairly in all material respects the financial condition, results of operation and cashflows of the Group as of, and for, the periods presented therein:

Abdul Aziz Abdulla Al Ghurair  
 Chairman  
 Ahmed Abdelaal  
 Group Chief Executive Officer

CONSOLIDATED STATEMENT OF PROFIT OR LOSS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2025		
2025	2024	
AED'000	AED'000	
Interest income	13,959,584	14,271,348
Income from Islamic financing and investment products	1,906,055	1,666,368
<b>Total interest income and income from Islamic financing and investment products</b>	<b>15,865,639</b>	<b>15,937,716</b>
Interest expense	(7,140,971)	(6,892,160)
Distribution to depositors - Islamic products	(583,322)	(657,945)
<b>Net interest income and income from Islamic products net of distribution to depositors</b>	<b>8,141,346</b>	<b>8,388,111</b>
Fee and commission income	5,269,686	4,560,133
Fee and commission expense	(3,936,650)	(3,095,628)
<b>Net fee and commission income</b>	<b>1,333,036</b>	<b>1,464,505</b>
Net investment income	350,437	228,576
Other income, net	2,751,595	3,334,511
<b>Operating income</b>	<b>12,576,414</b>	<b>13,415,703</b>
General and administrative expenses	(3,871,265)	(3,695,864)
<b>Operating profit before impairment</b>	<b>8,705,149</b>	<b>9,719,839</b>
Net impairment (charge)/reversal	(444,165)	166,065
<b>Profit before tax</b>	<b>8,260,984</b>	<b>9,885,904</b>
Tax expense	(1,290,791)	(868,527)
<b>Profit for the year</b>	<b>6,970,193</b>	<b>9,017,377</b>
<b>Attributable to:</b>		
Owners of the Parent	6,839,622	8,917,202
Non-controlling interests	130,571	100,175
<b>Profit for the year</b>	<b>6,970,193</b>	<b>9,017,377</b>
<b>Earnings per share</b>	<b>AED 32.98</b>	<b>AED 43.66</b>

CONSOLIDATED STATEMENT OF OTHER COMPREHENSIVE INCOME FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2025		
2025	2024	
AED'000	AED'000	
Profit for the year	6,970,193	9,017,377
<b>Other comprehensive income/(loss)</b>		
<i>Items that will not be reclassified subsequently to profit or loss:</i>		
Changes in fair value of financial assets measured at fair value through other comprehensive income (equity instruments), net of tax	148,310	46,908
Changes in currency translation reserve, net of tax	(53,149)	(242,447)
Changes in fair value of financial assets measured at fair value through other comprehensive income (debt instruments) net of tax	220,855	(279,751)
Changes in insurance finance income and expense reserve	(3,875)	(1,137)
<b>Total other comprehensive income/(loss) for the year</b>	<b>312,141</b>	<b>(476,427)</b>
<b>Total comprehensive income for the year</b>	<b>7,282,334</b>	<b>8,540,950</b>
<b>Attributed to:</b>		
Owners of the Parent	7,114,708	8,421,662
Non-controlling interests	167,626	119,288
<b>Total comprehensive income for the year</b>	<b>7,282,334</b>	<b>8,540,950</b>

CONSOLIDATED STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2025		
2025	2024	
AED'000	AED'000	
<b>Cash flows from operating activities</b>		
Profit before taxation for the year	8,260,984	9,885,904
<b>Adjustments for:</b>		
Depreciation and amortisation	294,556	277,708
Allowances for impairment, net	444,165	(166,065)
Gain on disposal of property and equipment	(1,858)	-
Loss on disposal of investment properties	50	7,897
Unrealised gain on other financial assets held at FVTPL	(14,223)	(16,077)
Fair value adjustments of investment properties	(33,915)	(10,426)
Net realized gain from sale of financial assets measured at FVTPL	(115,521)	(107,720)
Dividend income from financial assets measured at FVTOCI	(86,369)	(65,926)
Net realized gain from sale of financial assets measured at FVTOCI and securities measured at amortised cost	(133,309)	(38,023)
Impairment allowance on investment in associate	36,498	-
Unrealised loss/(gain) on derivatives	4,767	(17,248)
Gain on sale/bargain purchase	-	(1,211,017)
Gain on revaluation of Forex	-	(167,589)
<b>Operating cash flows before tax paid and changes in operating assets and liabilities</b>	<b>8,655,825</b>	<b>8,358,561</b>
Tax paid	(906,088)	(138,346)
<b>Changes in operating assets and liabilities</b>		
Increase in deposits with central banks	(3,327,470)	(4,374,606)
Increase in loans and advances to banks with original maturity after three months	(10,224,077)	(6,541,729)
Increase in loans and advances to customers	(35,322,750)	(9,652,081)
Increase in Islamic financing and investment products	(4,582,324)	(4,670,555)
Increase/(decrease) in reinsurance assets	156,645	(622,285)
Increase in other assets	(206,302)	(612,548)
(Increase)/Decrease in financial assets carried at FVTPL	(1,626,969)	712,508
Increase in repurchase agreements with banks	5,600,529	1,012,526
Increase in customers' deposits	35,326,388	10,955,102
Increase in Islamic customers' deposits	8,629,353	3,752,418
(Decrease)/Increase in deposits and balances due to banks	(4,452,051)	6,039,268
Increase in Insurance and Investment contract liabilities	314,797	852,232
Increase in other liabilities	657,910	1,096,849
<b>Net cash (used in)/ generated from operating activities</b>	<b>(1,846,584)</b>	<b>5,967,314</b>
<b>Cash flows from investing activities</b>		
Purchase of property and equipment	(184,203)	(167,298)
Purchase on intangible assets	(192,310)	(149,055)
Proceeds from sale of property and equipment	24,053	37,927
Purchase of other financial assets measured at fair value or amortised cost</		

# Qatar attends OECD Skills Summit in Istanbul

**QNA**  
Istanbul

Qatar participated in the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) Skills Summit in Istanbul, held under the theme 'Unlocking Talent Across Generations', featuring ministers of labour, senior officials, and international experts. HE Minister of Labour, Dr Ali bin Samikh al-Marri chaired Qatar's delegation to the Summit.

The two-day summit brings together policymakers to exchange experience and best practice on education, vocational training and labour market development, as governments respond to structural shifts driven by digital transformation, artificial intelligence and

the transition to a green economy. These developments are reshaping labour markets and redefining skills requirements across sectors.

Qatar's participation in the 2026 edition follows an OECD invitation to selected non-member countries, reflecting its expanding engagement in international dialogue on labour market governance and skills policy.

In a ministerial session, HE Dr al-Marri said the summit addressed one of the most pressing global challenges: developing skills and empowering individuals across all stages of life amid rapid demographic and technological change.

He underlined that Qatar places investment in human capital at the top of its national priorities, noting that this approach has been translated into a comprehensive



package of labour market reforms aimed at promoting fair employment, enhancing workforce efficiency, attracting skilled labour and improving working conditions, in line with the Qatar National Vision 2030.

On rethinking education and training, HE the Minister of Labour

said that Qatar was strengthening alignment between education outputs and labour market needs through expanded vocational and technical training systems and deeper private sector partnerships, to equip workers for digital and green economy transitions.

With regard to adult skill de-

velopment, HE the Minister highlighted the special attention the Ministry of Labour attaches to continuous training and upskilling programmes designed to improve productivity and employability. On labour market inclusion, HE the Minister noted efforts to increase women's participation in the labour market, strengthen labour rights protections, improve dispute resolution mechanisms, and enhance wage protection systems.

He added that Qatar introduced various reforms in recent years including the Wage Protection System, a non-discriminatory minimum wage, labour mobility allowing workers to change employers, the establishment of Qatar Visa Centers (QVCs), and the Workers' Support and Insurance Fund.

## Qatar unveils new rules

From Page 1

It also emphasises the regulation of promotional offers and discounts, requiring that they be licensed by the MoCI, genuine and not misleading, with clear display of prices before and after the discount, and adherence to the specified duration.

Obligations of providers are outlined, including adherence to announced prices, prohibition of additional charges upon delivery, disclosure of preparation time, and ensuring product quality and safety, it said.

The guideline further defines the responsibilities of delivery personnel, including adherence to timelines, maintaining order safety, demonstrating proper conduct, and prohibiting the imposition of any additional charges on consumers, it added.

## Labour minister meets Finnish and UK counterparts

HE Minister of Labour Dr Ali bin Samikh al-Marri met separately with Finland's Minister of Employment, Matti Mattila, and UK Minister of State at the Department for Work and Pensions, Dame Diana Johnson, on the sidelines of the OECD Skills Summit 2026 currently being held in Istanbul. The meetings reviewed bilateral co-operation in the labour sector and ways to further strengthen and expand co-operation. (QNA)



## Qatar holds firm in GEM top 10 as SMEs power non-oil growth

From Page 1

Qatar Development Bank, meanwhile, has notched several key milestones in supporting and encouraging SMEs through its distinctive and innovative financing solutions and the specialised advisory services it has extended to stakeholders over the years.

Qatar's National Entrepreneurial Context Index, which gauges the strength of entrepreneurial framework conditions, registered a score of 6.0 in 2023, up from 5.5 in 2021. The country's private sector is poised for robust expansion across multiple economic fields, in line with national plans to deepen its engagement across industries including food and beverage, pharmaceuticals and consumer goods, alongside services and retail.

## Qatar-led initiative spurs global day to raise awareness of uveitis

A Qatar-based ophthalmology body has launched an international initiative to establish a global awareness day for uveitis, a potentially sight-threatening condition if left untreated. The Qatar Society of Ophthalmology (QSO) announced the initiative in co-operation with the Saudi Ophthalmological Society and the Saudi Uveitis Society, aiming to unify international efforts and raise public awareness of the disease. An international virtual meeting was held to

mark the launch, bringing together experts from 25 countries, including representatives from Europe, Asia, the Middle East and the Americas. Participants emphasised the importance of strengthening global collaboration to improve diagnosis, treatment, and patient support, as well as to reduce complications and prevent vision loss.

The meeting endorsed the second week-end of April each year as World Uveitis Day, with a focus on promoting early detection,

advancing research, and enhancing medical training. Dr Zamzam al-Baker, a senior ophthalmology consultant and chair of the initiative's founding committee, told Qatar News Agency (QNA) that the Qatari-led effort had gained strong backing from regional and international partners, reflecting growing global co-operation in tackling the condition. Discussions also highlighted awareness activities in Qatar, including the role of Hamad Medical Corporation in

treating complex eye conditions through a multidisciplinary approach aligned with international standards. Speakers noted that uveitis -- an inflammation affecting the middle layer of the eye, including the iris, ciliary body and choroid-can lead to permanent visual impairment if not diagnosed and treated early. Symptoms such as eye redness, pain, light sensitivity and blurred vision require prompt medical attention. (QNA)

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## Virginia Commonwealth University School of the Arts in Qatar students recognized by Arab Engineering Bureau for design excellence

Four students from Virginia Commonwealth University School of the Arts in Qatar (VCUarts Qatar) have been recognized through the prestigious Arab Engineering Bureau (AEB) Design Excellence Award and the Creative Achievement and Potential Award.

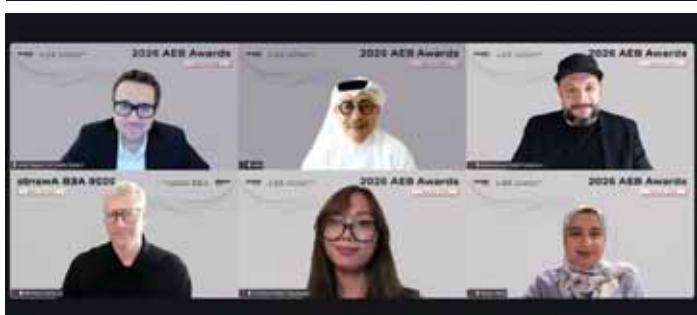
The awards, launched in 2007 and 2014 respectively, were conceptualized by AEB Group Chief Executive Officer and Chief Architect, Dr. Ibrahim Jaidah, as a way to nurture emerging talent and encourage distinguished VCUarts Qatar students in their academic and professional journeys.

"Our longstanding partnership with the Arab Engineering Bureau reflects a shared commitment to supporting emerging designers, from the moment they begin their education at VCUarts Qatar through to their entry into the professional field," said Amir Berbić, Dean of VCUarts Qatar. "Industry recognition affirms the caliber of talent emerging from VCUarts Qatar and provides our students with meaningful exposure and opportunities as they begin their careers."

Dr. Jaidah added: "For nearly three decades, VCUarts Qatar has cultivated a dynamic environment where creativity, critical thinking, and cultural dialogue converge. The continued emergence of forward-looking designers reflects an academic culture that balances regional identity with global relevance."

"Sponsoring these awards is part of Arab Engineering Bureau's broader commitment to sustaining design excellence across generations. As we mark our 60th anniversary this year, and celebrate the 20th cycle of AEB Excellence Award, this initiative holds particular significance: it bridges our legacy in practice with the promise of those who will shape what comes next. Recognizing these students is not only a moment of celebration, but a reaffirmation of our role in nurturing the evolving design industry."

This year's online iteration of the AEB Awards honored senior students Nada Tamer Abdo, Interior Design, and Julianne Villanueva Pagulayan, Graphic Design, with the Design Excellence Award, while two junior students Sophia Isabel Flores, Interior Design, and Shamma Al-Ali, Graphic Design, received the Creative Achievement and Potential Award.



"Being recognized by the prestigious Arab Engineering Bureau is a profound honor that I accept with immense gratitude. As a designer, receiving an award from an institution of this caliber is a significant milestone in my career. It inspires me to continue pushing the boundaries of creativity and innovation," Pagulayan said.

Reflecting on her plans after graduation, she added: "My primary focus is to bridge the gap between industry experience and my goal of independent entrepreneurship. My time at VCUarts Qatar was transformative. It allowed me to discover that my strengths lie in the digital realm. I developed a versatile toolkit spanning Brand Identity, Motion Graphics, Sound Design, Game Design, and UI/UX."

For her part, Flores discussed the inspiration behind her work and how VCUarts Qatar has helped students

meet professional standards while opening pathways into the creative sector.

"I'm drawn to small and overlooked details like objects, routines, and shared habits, and how they shape the way people experience a space. I try to incorporate both physical objects and intangible ones to make spaces feel more meaningful and familiar," she said.

"As an emerging designer, it feels reassuring to know that the ideas I'm exploring resonate beyond the academic setting," she said of the AEB award.

In his remarks, Dean Berbić commended the recipients for their achievement: "To our deserving students, congratulations. I am confident you will embody the spirit of VCUarts Qatar as you move forward on your journey and continue to contribute to the evolving design landscape through your work."

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# Israeli strikes hit east Lebanon

Reuters  
Beirut

The Israeli military began carrying out strikes in eastern Lebanon yesterday, expanding the scope of its bombing campaign during a ceasefire that has failed to fully halt hostilities with Lebanese armed group Hezbollah.

The strikes on Lebanon's eastern Bekaa Valley marked the first time the area has been hit since a US-brokered ceasefire came into force on April 16, significantly reducing the pace of attacks without entirely stopping the exchanges of fire.

Israel has continued to carry out strikes across southern Lebanon, and its troops are occupying a strip of the country's south, destroying homes they describe as infrastructure being used by Hezbollah. The Iran-backed group, meanwhile, has kept up its drone and rocket attacks against Israeli troops in Lebanon and on northern Israel.

A spokesperson for the Israeli military said it was beginning to strike Hezbollah infrastructure in the Bekaa as well as areas in southern Lebanon. Security sources told Reuters strikes had hit near the town of Nabi Chit, near Lebanon's eastern border



Smoke rises after explosions in southern Lebanon as seen from border in Israel yesterday. (Reuters)

with Syria, with no immediate reports of casualties. Lebanon's state media agency reported several strikes across the south that left at least three people wounded.

Hezbollah said yesterday it had attacked an Israeli tank in southern Lebanon with a drone.

The Israeli military said a drone launched by Hezbollah exploded near its troops in southern Lebanon, without causing casualties.

More than 2,500 people have been killed in Israeli strikes across Lebanon since Hezbollah's attack on Israel on March 2 in support

of its ally Iran that triggered an Israeli ground and air campaign which has left swathes of southern Lebanon in ruins. The war has deepened differences among people in Lebanon, who are divided over Hezbollah's arms and over prospective peace talks with

Israel. The Lebanese and Israeli ambassadors to the United States have met twice to discuss the ceasefire, intended to pave the way for direct talks to secure a peace deal between the longtime foes. Hezbollah fiercely opposes direct negotiations, with its head Naim Qassem describing the talks in a written statement yesterday as a "humiliating and unnecessary concession." "Let it be clear, these direct negotiations and their outcomes are considered nonexistent to us and do not concern us at all. We will continue our defensive resistance for Lebanon and its people," Qassem said.

Lebanese President Joseph Aoun has defended the government's move to engage in face-to-face talks and yesterday made a jab at Hezbollah without naming the group. "What we are doing is not treason; rather, treason is committed by whoever takes his country to war to achieve external interests," he said in a statement released by his office, an apparent reference to Hezbollah's decision to enter the regional war last month.

"Some hold us accountable for deciding to go to negotiations on the pretext of the lack of national consensus, and I ask: When you went to war, did you first obtain national consensus?" Aoun said.

## Leaders review Middle East crisis

Sultan Haitham bin Tariq of Oman held a call on yesterday with King Hamad bin Isa al-Khalifa of Bahrain to discuss the latest developments in the region. The two leaders during the call stressed upon the need to intensify both regional and international efforts to protect national interests and ensure safety of people, while resolving disputes through peaceful diplomatic means in accordance with international law. (QNA)

## Plane crash in South Sudan kills 14

A small plane crashed yesterday in South Sudan near Juba, killing all 13 passengers and the pilot, local officials said. South Sudan — plagued by instability, conflict and poverty — witnesses frequent plane crashes due to overloading and bad weather. (AFP)

## Teen among two killed in Gaza

A Palestinian was killed yesterday by Israeli forces in the southern Gaza Strip. Medical sources reported that the 31-year-old was shot in Khan Younis. Elsewhere, a 15-year-old boy was killed by Israelis in the Beit Lahia project in the northern Gaza Strip. (QNA)

# Mali at risk of splintering after attacks

Reuters  
Dakar

In simultaneous attacks launched on Saturday, an alliance of Al Qaeda-linked militants and separatist rebels killed Mali's defence minister, hit the capital's airport and drove Russian soldiers out of a desert town over a thousand kilometres away.

The scale and the scope of the offensive on multiple sites around the capital Bamako and at least three towns across the vast West African country demonstrated an unprecedented ability to coordinate fighters from different groups with different goals and strike at the heart of the military government.

Having cooperated loosely for years, the militants affiliated with Al Qaeda known as JNIM and Tuareg rebels who want to carve out an independent desert state in northern Mali are now openly talking about their alliance for the first time.

"It demonstrates reach," said Justyna Gudowska, executive director of The Sentry, an investigative and policy group. "(It) tells every Malian, every regional capital, and every foreign partner that JNIM can operate at will inside the supposedly secure heart of the state." For now, the militants appear focused on consolidating their gains, recruiting fighters and gaining political traction in Mali — as rebels did in Syria — rather than carrying out attacks abroad or hitting foreign interests in the region.

But by killing Defence Minister Sadio Camara with a car bomb that flattened his home, JNIM has removed a key leader, created a power vacuum and raised the prospect of a broader national implosion, one senior diplomat said.

Mali's military government has said the situation is under control though its head, Assimi Goita, has not been seen in public or made any statements since the attacks on Saturday.

Corinne Dufka, an expert on the Sahel region, said the weekend



A Malian soldier stands in position during an attack on Mali's main military base Kati outside the capital Bamako on Saturday. (Reuters)

offensive had moved the needle on JNIM's military and political demands, exposed Mali's intelligence failures and the efficacy of its partnership with Russia, and also demonstrated the formidable military capacity of JNIM and its Tuareg allies.

### Interlinked insurgencies

It is far from clear how long the groups will be able to work together, nor how they might govern areas they want to control. But with Burkina Faso and Niger also fighting interlinked insurgencies inspired by Al Qaeda and Islamic State, governments across the Sahel are severely weakened.

"After nearly 20 years of military interventions by the US, French, European, African and Russian partners, the jihadists have only multiplied their areas of operation," Dufka said, adding that if the situation were to deteriorate and the jihadist groups veered from their current local agenda, they might eventually threaten Europe and the US.

Tuareg separatists and Al Qaeda-linked militants first swept across Mali in 2012, triggering a French military intervention that drove them back to their desert

bases — at least at first.

Thousands of UN peacekeepers deployed to Mali and the US set up a \$100 mn drone base in Niger to monitor the desert.

However, the militants regrouped, carrying out hit-and-run attacks in Mali and expanding into Burkina Faso and Niger.

Frustrated by losses, military officials seized power in all three countries and promised to restore security. They expelled UN and Western forces and sought military help from Russia. But over the last year, militants have imposed a siege around Bamako, controlling the flow of fuel to the capital.

On Saturday, Bamako residents reported seeing militants on motorbikes moving freely on the outskirts of the capital in broad daylight for the first time. They left hours later, but the damage had been done and the message was clear.

"This is a massive operation, both in terms of the kind of scope and size and the extent of the coordinated attacks across the country," said Andrew Lebovich, research fellow at Clingendael's Conflict Research Unit. "This took a lot of planning, a lot of money, a lot of logistical support."

Yvan Guichaoua, a Sahel specialist at German research centre bicc, said the attacks on military and government targets were intended to "decapitate" leadership and paralyse the chain of command and decision making.

While the military was scrambling to defend Bamako, the insurgent alliance launched simultaneous attacks on at least three other towns, leaving security forces thinly spread.

Military bases in Sevare, in the middle of Mali, and Gao, the north's biggest town, came under attack for hours. And by Saturday afternoon, Tuareg separatist group the Azawad Liberation Front (FLA), had raised its flag in Kidal, a town near the border with Algeria considered the spiritual home of the Tuareg dream to carve out a state in the Sahara.

The seizure of Kidal reversed one of the few tangible gains the government made in 2023, when it drove the FLA rebels from the town with Russian military backing.

### Leaning on Moscow

Since expelling French and UN troops, Mali has leaned heavily on Moscow for military support, initially from Wagner and more recently with troops from Africa Corps, a force more closely linked to the Russian government.

There are currently about 2,500 Russians deployed across 20 bases in Mali, according to Investigations with Impact (INPACT), a group that examines Russian operations.

Russian troops deploy alongside Mali's army although there have been tensions between the two forces and the attacks over the weekend showed the limitations of this support.

The FLA said on Sunday that Russian troops were withdrawing from the city after they reached an agreement.

Videos on social media showed a convoy of trucks carrying foreign soldiers driving through the town's sandy streets.

INPACT said about 200 Russians had left Kidal. Russia's foreign ministry said Saturday's attack had been repelled and efforts to eliminate the insurgents were ongoing. But it remains unclear where the fighting leaves Russia's commitment to Mali.

After maintaining an ambiguous relationship for years — co-operating at times despite their contradictory ambitions — the FLA and JNIM have now publicly joined forces. "They are 100% together, at least on a tactical level," said Guichaoua. "Attacks perpetrated in the north are led by the FLA and attacks in the centre and the south are carried out by JNIM."

The cooperation, built largely on pragmatism, combines their pool of firepower and men and ensures representation from a wide range of ethnic communities across Mali. In 2012, the movements also worked together before clashing, with the jihadists routing the separatists. Guichaoua says JNIM remains the dominant force in the relationship.

"The alliance remains structurally fragile," said Djenabou Cisse, research fellow at the Foundation for Strategic Research think-tank in Paris. "The two actors pursue distinct, and in some respects incompatible, political projects."

The FLA has long stressed it is a secular organisation seeking an independent state in the north and has previously worked with French forces fighting jihadists. As an Al Qaeda franchise, JNIM has pushed a jihadist agenda.

Dufka said JNIM appears increasingly inspired by Syria's transformation and is seeking to distance itself from its Al Qaeda core and "terrorist" label by governing with parallel systems of justice, taxation and policing in areas it controls.

As a result, she urged international actors to find ways of engaging in some kind of dialogue. "There appears to be no military solution to this conflict," she said.

## Bahrain revokes dozens of citizenships over Iran support

Bahrain has revoked the citizenship of 69 people over what the country described as sympathy with Iran's hostile acts and collaboration with foreign entities, the kingdom's interior ministry said in a statement.

The ministry said that the 69 people including family members of accused individuals were all of non-Bahraini origin. "The Bahraini nationality has been revoked from those individuals for glorifying or sympathising with the hostile Iranian acts, or engaging in contacts with external parties," the ministry said.

It said the revocations had been carried out in accordance with royal directives from King Hamad bin Isa al-Khalifa and were based on Article 10/3 of the Bahraini Nationality Law. The article provides for the revocation of citizenship in cases of "causing harm to the interests of the kingdom or acting in a manner that contradicts the duty of loyalty to it."

The interior ministry said the competent authorities were "continuing to study and review" who deserves Bahraini citizenship.

Sayed Ahmed Alwadaei, Advocacy Director at the Britain-based Bahrain Institute for Rights and Democracy (BIRD), condemned the move, calling it "the beginning of a dangerous era of repression" and saying the decisions were "imposed without legal safeguards or any right of appeal." BIRD said it was the first such revocation of citizenship in Bahrain since 2019. Between 2012 and 2019, Bahrain revoked the citizenship of at least 990 nationals, the group said. Iran fired at targets in Bahrain and other Gulf Arab states where the US has military bases after it was attacked on February 28.

Bahrain's National Communication Centre did not immediately respond to a request for comment. (Reuters)

# Jet fuel crisis: A boon for Nigeria's Dangote, but not for local airlines

Reuters  
Lagos

Nigeria's giant Dangote refinery is benefiting from record margins for producing jet fuel that it is mostly selling abroad, while the domestic airlines it also supplies have threatened to stop flying because of the surge in fuel prices.

The refinery, the largest on the continent, was built to turn Africa's biggest oil producing country into a net exporter of refined products, end Nigeria's reliance on fuel imports, and shield its economy from global energy shocks.

It became fully operational at the start of this year and is producing at its maximum capacity of 650,000 barrels per day.

That has improved local fuel availability but domestic fuel prices are still among the highest in Africa as Nigeria's market is fully deregulated, meaning fuel



A file photo of Dangote crude oil tank at Dangote Industries oil refinery and fertiliser plant site and an aircraft at Murtala Muhammed International Airport in Lagos, Nigeria. (Reuters)

prices are not subsidised by the government as they are in most African countries.

The issue is further complicated by the state oil company's long-standing debt repayment agreements that mean Dangote has to import most of its crude oil, making it easier to balance its books if it sells abroad.

Industry body the Airline Op-

erators of Nigeria said prices, taking logistics and storage costs into account, have climbed to 3,300 naira (\$2.44) per litre, nearly triple the level in February before the start of the Iran war.

Nigeria's energy regulator said Dangote was selling jet fuel at 1,879 naira (\$1.39) per litre, little changed from imported fuel prices of about 1,900 naira

(\$1.41) per litre delivered to Lagos earlier this month. The Middle Eastern conflict has led to unprecedented energy disruption and the risk of jet fuel shortages is pressing. Airlines around the world have hiked prices, added fuel surcharges and grounded planes.

Nigerian airlines last week threatened to halt all flights,

prompting the government on Thursday to approve measures including some relief on debts owed by local airlines and ordering talks to try to agree lower prices. Dangote, meanwhile, as a new, highly efficient refinery, has been able to take advantage of record margins for producing jet fuel from crude. Its profits could be even higher if it could rely on Nigerian crude and avoid almost all freight costs.

State oil firm, the Nigerian National Petroleum Company Limited's joint-venture crude, however, is tied to oil-backed loans and pre-export deals. That means much of Nigeria's roughly 1.5 mn barrels per day of production goes to paying debts to international oil majors, banks and traders. The NNPC does not disclose its obligations, but analysts estimate they amount to about 400,000 bpd.

Dangote Group Vice President Davekumar Edwin said Dangote imported most of its crude from

the US, as well as some from other African producers and Brazil. He did not give precise figures.

He said the bulk of the 24 mn litres of jet fuel it produces daily was shipped to Europe, although he also said the refinery largely supplied the needs of Nigerian airlines, which the aviation industry estimates at about 2.1 mn litres per day.

As European buyers are willing to pay a premium ahead of the peak demand summer travel season, European imports from Nigeria have averaged 78,000 to 96,000 barrels per day in April so far, data from Kpler and LSEG showed, the highest on record.

Alan Gelder, senior vice president for refining, chemicals and oil markets at Wood Mackenzie, said European refiners had earned about \$15 per barrel. He estimated Dangote's margins at more than double that as a result of access to Nigerian crude and the plant's scale and sophistication.

## PM Starmer faces possible parliament probe

AFP  
London

British lawmakers will vote on whether embattled Prime Minister Keir Starmer should face a parliamentary probe over the Peter Mandelson scandal, the House of Commons speaker announced yesterday.

Members of Parliament will debate today on whether to refer Starmer to a committee to consider if he misled parliament over the appointment of the former associate of the late convicted US criminal Jeffrey Epstein, Lindsay Hoyle said.

It is the latest development in an unrelenting scandal that has plagued Starmer's government for months and led to calls for him to resign.

Hoyle added that his decision followed requests from "numerous" lawmakers, including opposition Conservative party leader



British Prime Minister Keir Starmer delivers a speech in North-West England, yesterday. (Reuters)

Kemi Badenoch, Hoyle added.

Badenoch has accused Starmer of misleading lawmakers by insisting "due process" was followed ahead of the 2024 appointment of Mandelson as Britain's ambassador to the US despite having failed his security vetting.

Starmer has sacked the most senior civil servant in the foreign ministry for not telling him or oth-

er ministers that Mandelson had not passed the checks. He has also denied claims that his office applied pressure on the foreign ministry to approve the appointment.

Starmer commands a large majority in the lower house of parliament, meaning that lots of MPs from his ruling Labour party would have to vote for an inquiry for one to be launched.

A spokesman from the prime minister's office called the debate "a desperate political stunt by the Conservative party", insisting that "their claims have no substance".

The Privileges Committee was responsible for former prime minister Boris Johnson's exit from frontline politics after it investigated him for misleading parliament over the so-called "partygate" breaches of Covid-19 laws.

He quit as an MP in 2023 before the committee published a report recommending his suspension.

Starmer sacked Mandelson in September 2025 after a fresh batch of revelations over the latter's friendship with Epstein came to light.

UK police are currently investigating Mandelson over allegations he committed misconduct in office while serving as a Labour minister more than a decade ago by leaking information to the late disgraced financier.

## China vows countermeasures if EU enacts 'Made in Europe' plan

AFP  
Beijing

Beijing slammed yesterday an EU plan aimed to bolster the bloc's industries against fierce competition from China, vowing countermeasures if it is enacted.

The EU unveiled in March new "Made in Europe" rules for companies trying to access public funds in strategic sectors including cars, green tech and steel, obliging firms to meet minimum thresholds for EU-made parts.

The proposal, held up for months by wrangling over the measures, is a key part of a European Union drive to regain its competitive edge, reduce its industrial decline and stave off hundreds of thousands of job losses.

Beijing's commerce ministry said yesterday that it had submitted comments to the European Commission on Friday, expressing China's "serious concerns" regarding the act it

called "systemic discrimination".

"If the EU... presses ahead with the legislation, and thereby harms the interests of Chinese companies, China will have no choice but to take countermeasures to firmly safeguard the legitimate rights and interests of its enterprises," the commerce ministry warned in a statement.

European businesses in many of the sectors concerned by the proposal have long lamented they face unfair competition from heavily subsidised Chinese rivals.

The EU proposal, formally known as the "Industrial Accelerator Act", implicitly targets Chinese makers of batteries and electric vehicles by requiring foreign firms to partner with European firms and pass on technological know-how when setting up shop in the bloc.

The Chinese Chamber of Commerce to the EU said this month the plan marked a shift towards protectionism that would affect trade co-operation between the EU and China.

## Kim Jong-un reaffirms support for Russia's 'sacred' Ukraine war

AFP  
Seoul

North Korean leader Kim Jong-un has reaffirmed Pyongyang's support for Russia's invasion of Ukraine, vowing to help Moscow achieve victory in its "sacred" war, state media reported yesterday.

Pyongyang has sent missiles, munitions and thousands of troops to assist Russia in Ukraine, and analysts say Moscow is sending financial aid, military technology, food and energy to the diplomatically isolated country in return.

A string of high-level Russian officials have visited North Korea in recent days, with Defence Minister Andrey Belousov meeting Kim on Sunday, according to official statements.

North Korea "will as ever fully support the policy of the Russian Federation to defend the national sovereignty, territorial integrity and security interests", Kim told Belousov, according to the Korean Central News Agency (KCNA).

Kim expressed "belief that the Russian army and people would surely win a victory in the just sacred war", KCNA reported.

Both sides said their delegations had discussed deeper military ties, with Belousov saying Moscow was ready to sign a co-operation plan covering the period from 2027 to 2031.

Kim, Belousov and Russian parliamentary speaker Vyacheslav



North Korean leader Kim Jong-un walks with Russia's Defence Minister Andrey Belousov and Russia's State Duma Chairman Vyacheslav Volodin during the opening ceremony of the Memorial Museum of Combat Feats at the Overseas Military Operations honouring North Korean troops killed while fighting for Russia in the war against Ukraine, in Pyongyang. (Reuters)

Volodin also attended the opening ceremony of a memorial complex honouring North Korean soldiers killed in Ukraine.

In a speech, Kim paid tribute to their "unrivalled bravery, mass heroism, indomitable fighting spirit and noble sacrifice", KCNA said.

He took part in a ceremony to bury the war dead, recalling their "last heroic moments" and covering the remains of a soldier with earth.

The inauguration also included a concert, a fireworks display and an air force flyover, KCNA reported.

The audience were moved by portrayals of "life-and-death bloody battles" and "death-defying hand-to-hand fights and he-

roic suicidal explosions the young soldiers chose without hesitation", it said.

North Korea and Russia signed a military treaty in 2024, obligating both states to provide military assistance "without delay" in the event of an attack on the other.

The opening of the memorial coincides with the first anniversary of Moscow's recovery of parts of Kursk, a region in Russia where Ukraine launched a major counter-offensive starting in mid-2024.

North Korean soldiers were deployed in the area to help beat back the Ukrainian advance.

In his meeting with Belousov, Kim hailed the "brilliant war re-

sults in liberating Kursk", according to KCNA.

Russian President Vladimir Putin praised the "extraordinary bravery and genuine devotion" of North Korean troops in a letter to Kim that was published by KCNA.

Seoul estimates about 2,000 North Koreans have been killed in the Ukraine war.

North Korean troops are said to have been instructed to kill themselves rather than be captured in battle.

Only two North Korean soldiers have been taken alive and are currently in custody of Ukrainian authorities.

In contrast with its ties with Russia, North Korea has called South Korea its "most hostile" adversary despite Seoul's efforts at engagement.

South Korean President Lee Jae-myung said yesterday that it was "the destiny of both the South and the North to make the flowers of peace bloom".

He vowed to act "proactively" to restore trust with Pyongyang, adding: "We hope the North will trust the sincerity of our government and respond in kind."

Lee's comments marked the anniversary of the 2018 inter-Korean summit, at which Kim and South Korea's then-president Moon Jae-in memorably crossed into the other country's territory.

The summit yielded a declaration to work towards an official end to the Korean War, but was later suspended as bilateral tensions rose again.

Reuters  
Taipei

The top US diplomat in Taiwan yesterday pressed the island's opposition-majority parliament to pass a "comprehensive" defence budget, saying integrated air and missile defence systems and drones are critically important and in high demand globally.

Taiwan President Lai Ching-te last year proposed \$40bn in supplemental defence spending, covering not only new US weapons but also homemade weapons like drones, saying Taipei needs to more effectively deter the threat from China, which views the island as its own territory.

Lai says only Taiwan's people can decide the island's future.

But talks in parliament to advance the proposal have stalled, with the main Kuomintang (KMT) opposition party saying while they support defence spending, they won't sign "blank cheques" and want more details from the government.

In an interview with Taiwanese newspaper the *China Times*, Raymond Greene (pictured), the de facto US ambassador in Taipei, said it was vital for Taiwan to pass a "comprehensive budget package".

"This would not only send a critical signal to the international community, but is also essential for ensuring Taiwan acquires the full range of defence capabilities it has requested," he said.

While the US has already announced the sale of weapons including the Lockheed Martin-made HIMARS multiple launch rocket system, Taiwan's special defence budget also seeks integrated air and missile defence systems and drones, among other things, Greene added.

"As evidenced on the battlefields of the Middle East and Ukraine, these systems are not only critically important but are



also in extremely high demand worldwide," said Greene, who is head of the American Institute in Taiwan, which handles the unofficial relations between Washington and Taipei.

"The sooner the special defence budget act passes, the better," he added.

Taiwan's government has said delays to passing the budget could mean Taiwan risks losing its place in the production and delivery queue for US weapons.

Speaking at parliament on Monday, Defence Minister Wellington Koo said the threat Taiwan faced was not just "random talk," pointing to Chinese warships spotted in recent days to the southwest of Taiwan's Penghu islands in the Taiwan Strait.

"This is a matter that bears on the very survival of our country," he said, referring to the need to pass the defence spending legislation.

The latest talks between the ruling and opposition parties on the budget ended yesterday without agreement, though KMT lawmaker Hsu Chia-hsin suggested a figure of NT\$800bn (\$25.46bn), closer to the government's NT\$1.25tn.

The next talks are set for May 6. The US is Taiwan's most important international backer and arms supplier and in December it unveiled an \$11bn arms package, the largest ever for Taipei.

China has repeatedly demanded that the US stop selling weapons to Taiwan.

## Jailed ex-PM Najib withdraws appeal on house arrest

Jailed former Malaysian prime minister Najib Razak has withdrawn his appeal against a court ruling denying his request to serve the remainder of his sentence at home, local media The Edge reported yesterday, citing court documents. Najib was found guilty of a string of graft offences in connection to his role in the multibillion-dollar 1MDB scandal. Najib has been serving a six-year jail sentence since August 2022 after being convicted of graft and money laundering in one of several cases linked to the alleged theft of billions of dollars from

1Malaysia Development Berhad — a state fund he helped establish in 2009 while he was premier. The ex-premier launched a legal bid for home detention after his sentence was halved by a pardons board decision chaired by Malaysia's former king in 2024.

Najib insists the board's decision was accompanied by an addendum order issued by the king that allowed him to serve the remainder of his jail term at home, which he alleges was ignored by authorities.

The Kuala Lumpur High Court denied Najib's house arrest bid on December 22, a decision that Najib subsequently appealed. Najib has since withdrawn the appeal without liberty to file a fresh appeal, with the Court of Appeal acknowledging the withdrawal. The Edge reported yesterday, citing letters from Najib's lawyers and the court, dated April 3 and April 6 respectively, Najib's lawyers and the Attorney General's Chambers did not immediately respond to Reuters' requests for comment. (Reuters)

## Clashes in Papua as hundreds protest military presence

Students and civilians clashed with law enforcement personnel in Indonesia's insurgency-hit Papua yesterday during a protest attended by hundreds of residents demanding the withdrawal of military personnel from the region, a police official said.

A military operation conducted in the region earlier this month allegedly resulted in the death of 15 people, including women and children.

The operation was carried out against armed separatists who have sought independence for the resource-rich Papua region since 1969, when a vote overseen by the UN brought it under Indonesian control following more than six decades of Dutch colonial rule.

The country's human rights watchdog last week confirmed the deaths and called for the government to review operations in the region. The military has yet to acknowledge the casualties. Yesterday, around 800 protesters rallied in three locations in the capital of Papua province, Jayapura, before gathering in the city centre, said Cahyo Sukarnito,

the spokesperson for the Papua provincial police.

They called on the government to withdraw the military from all of Papua's six provinces, and ensure that decades of violence were brought to an end, Cahyo told Reuters, acknowledging that the deaths during recent military operations had sparked local anger.

Tear gas and a water cannon were deployed to disperse protesters in one location after they threw rocks at the police, Cahyo said. He said five police personnel were injured but there were no report of injuries among the protesters.

Footage from local media Tribun Papua showed police personnel in protective gear carrying batons as they approached the protesters. Once the clashes abated, the demonstrations continued peacefully and several regional lawmakers arrived on site to meet protesters and listen to their demands. Papua is home to the world's second-largest gold and copper mine, Grasberg, which is owned jointly by the Indonesian government and US mining giant Freeport. (Reuters)

## India names envoy to Bangladesh as ties thaw

Reuters  
New Delhi

India named veteran politician Dinesh Trivedi as its next high commissioner to Bangladesh yesterday, in a rare appointment of a non-foreign service officer as New Delhi seeks to reset ties with its eastern neighbour.

Ties between the countries soured after a popular uprising forced Bangladesh's long-serving Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina to flee to New Delhi in 2024, where she remains. Trivedi's appointment highlights India's push

to rebuild trust with Bangladesh as it faces stiff competition from China for influence and business.

Trivedi, 75, a former railways and health minister, joined Prime Minister Narendra Modi's Bharatiya Janata Party in 2021 from a regional party in West Bengal, a border state that plays a key role in India's ties with Bangladesh and where Modi has been seeking to expand his party's influence in ongoing local elections.

"He is expected to take up the assignment shortly," India's Ministry of External Affairs said in a statement about Trivedi.

Relations between the two countries began

improving only after an election in February brought Tarique Rahman of the Bangladesh Nationalist Party to power, replacing an interim government that had veered strongly towards China.

Bangladesh was part of India in the colonial era and became East Pakistan at the end of British rule in 1947. New Delhi helped Bangladesh win independence from Pakistan in 1971.

Bangladesh's foreign minister visited Delhi this month seeking increased fuel and fertilizer supplies, closer energy co-operation and eased travel restrictions, but one of the biggest sticking points remains India's refusal so far to extradite Hasina.

## BJP gains ground in India's upper house after lawmakers defect

Reuters  
New Delhi

Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi's BJP party strengthened its position in parliament's upper house after seven opposition lawmakers joined it, a parliamentary list showed yesterday, a shift that could ease the government's passage of legislation.

All seven defectors are from the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP), led by one of Modi's most high-profile critics, Arvind Kejriwal. The party governs the northern state of Punjab and previously ran the national capital territory of Delhi.

The defections leave the AAP with just three

seats in the Rajya Sabha house, while Modi's Bharatiya Janata Party now has 113 members, 10 short of a simple majority in the 245-member chamber. Modi's broader National Democratic Alliance coalition holds about 140 seats in the house, also known as the Council of States.

Rajya Sabha members are elected for six-year terms by elected members of state legislatures and federal territories with legislatures, using a proportional representation system. Modi's coalition rules 19 of India's 28 states and two of its three federal territories with legislatures.

The defectors include former Indian cricketer Harbhajan Singh and Raghav Chadha, the de facto leader of the group who gained promi-

nence by raising middle-class concerns such as the high cost of food at airports.

Chadha accused the party of being run by "corrupt and compromised" people. The AAP said the defectors were being opportunistic.

All but one of the former AAP members were elected from Punjab, where state polls are due next year and Modi's party has never won a majority on its own. Several other AAP leaders, including Kejriwal, have faced court cases over corruption allegations.

A New Delhi court in February declined to proceed with a trial against Kejriwal and other party colleagues in one such case, which the AAP has described as politically motivated. The matter is now before a higher court.



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**GULF TIMES**

# Iran war fertiliser squeeze could spell trouble for next year's grain harvests

Farmers around the world are facing the second surge in fertiliser prices in four years due to the Iran war. But with grain prices too low to cushion the blow from the deeper supply crunch this time around, many are rethinking planting plans, putting global food production at risk.

The Middle East is a leading fertiliser production hub, and much of the global fertiliser trade typically passes through the Strait of Hormuz, which has seen traffic brought to a standstill by the conflict.

Supplies of urea -- a nitrogen-based fertiliser -- from the world's largest production facility in Qatar have been halted, and flows of sulphur and ammonia, common inputs for a range of fertilisers, have also been curbed.

With a resolution of the conflict proving elusive, analysts, traders, fertiliser producers and agronomists are looking back at the last supply crisis, Russia's 2022 invasion of Ukraine, worried that this time things could get even worse. "Back in 2022, a lot of the fertiliser was ultimately flowing through," said Shawn Arita of the Agricultural Risk Policy Center at North Dakota State University. "It's a much steeper supply crunch that we're seeing now."

As fertiliser prices have jumped since the onset of the war in late February, urea has seen the sharpest price spike, reflecting the loss of the roughly one-third of globally traded volumes typically exported from the Gulf. Some are paying, India, the world's largest rice producer and second-biggest wheat grower, has booked record volumes of urea in a single import tender, paying nearly twice as much as it did just two months ago. But such price levels are beyond the reach of many, analysts say.

## Many growers today lack the revenue to absorb ballooning fertiliser bills

In 2022, high global grain prices helped farmers offset the steep increase in input costs caused by the Ukraine war. But ample harvests of grains and oilseeds in recent years have restrained crop prices. Chicago wheat prices are roughly half what they were four years ago, for example. Soybeans were nearly 50% higher than now.

As a result, many growers today lack the revenue to absorb ballooning fertiliser bills.

Nitrogen-based fertilisers such as urea must be applied each season for many crops and directly influence annual yields as well as quality parameters, including protein content in wheat. Farmers can cut back on other core nutrients, such as phosphate and potash, without immediate yield losses.

At least 2mn metric tonnes of urea production -- equivalent to some 3% of annual seaborne trade -- have been lost since the conflict began, according to Sarah Marlow of commodity data provider Argus, as plants shut down in the Middle East as well as in India, Bangladesh and Russia.

Nearly 1mn tonnes already loaded on vessels, meanwhile, remain stuck in the Gulf.

Even if hostilities end soon and the Hormuz strait reopens, just clearing the queue will take weeks, said Mark Milam of commodity market intelligence firm ICIS. And fertiliser availability will likely remain constrained for months due to damage to Gulf production facilities and competition for limited alternative supplies. "It's going to take a while to get back to normal," said Stephen Nicholson, Rabobank's head of North American grains and oilseeds.

Many farms still have fertilisers on hand, while record harvests last year have boosted global grain stocks. So the immediate impact of the current crisis on global food supplies may be limited.

In 2022, high fertiliser costs contributed to exacerbated hunger in poor, import-dependent countries, and analysts say regions like East Africa are again vulnerable. In Europe, spring planting decisions are shifting against input-intensive corn in countries including France, while reduced top-up nitrogen applications may trim protein content in this summer's wheat harvest, analysts said. The larger risk, however, will come during autumn planting, when cash-strapped European farmers could cut overall grain area. "That's why we're starting to get a little worried about the 2027 harvest," said Benoit Fayaud of Expana. — Reuters

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## Rainbow across the Tokyo skies



A general view shows the city skyline and a rainbow from the Tokyo Metropolitan Government Building observation deck in the Shinjuku district of central Tokyo yesterday.

# Qatar at forefront to promote safe and sustainable work environment

**Q**atar and the rest of the world celebrate the World Day for Safety and Health at Work, which falls annually on April 28, as part of the efforts made by the State to care for and protect workers, reinforce the concepts of occupational safety and health in workplaces, and encourage private sector establishments and governmental and semi-governmental bodies to place the safety of employees and workers at the top of their priorities.

The State and its various institutions and agencies emphasise on all occasions the need for workers exposed to workplace hazards to receive comprehensive and integrated care, in accordance with human rights standards stipulated in all international agreements and conventions.

On this occasion, the Ministry of Labour, in co-operation with the International Labour Organization (ILO), organized a virtual event on Sunday, as part of the ministry's ongoing efforts to protect workers, consolidate a culture of occupational safety and health, and promote safe and sustainable work environments that support the mental health and well-being of workers.

This year, the ministry's event highlighted mental health in the workplace as one of the essential pillars for increasing productivity and institutional sustainability, in light of the rapid changes in the labour market and the challenges it imposes, which require the adoption of effective and integrated practices that enhance the well-being of workers and support their psychological and professional balance.

On April 16, the ministry, represented by the Occupational Safety and Health Department, in co-operation with the Sheraton Grand Doha Resort and Convention Hotel, Doha Trading and Contracting Group, and Group Security System Certis International, organized awareness seminars targeting workers and employer representatives, with the participation of the Health Promotion Department at the Ministry of Public Health, and the Workers' Support and Insurance Fund, to raise the level of preventive awareness among workers and employers and promote a culture of safety and awareness of workplace hazards regarding biological hazards in the workplace.

The ministry affirmed that promoting preventive awareness is not only an option but a necessity, because it protects lives, reduces losses, and increases work efficiency, adding that investing in awareness and continuous training is a direct investment in human safety and the success of companies and workplaces.

The annual World Day for Safety and Health at Work promotes the prevention of occupational accidents and diseases globally. It is an awareness campaign intended to focus international attention on the scale of the problem to promote and create a culture of health and safety that can help reduce the number of workplace-related deaths and injuries.

The psychological and social work environment is determined

## On World Day for Safety and Health at Work, Qatar highlights the need for workers to receive comprehensive and integrated care in accordance with human rights standards



**Manal Azzi**

Team Lead of the ILO's Occupational Safety and Health Policy and Systems

- **Qatar emphasize** the need for workers exposed to workplace hazards to receive comprehensive and integrated care
- **The Ministry of Labor** organized an event that highlighted mental health in the workplace
- **April 16, the Ministry** organized awareness seminars targeting workers and employer representatives
- **The International Labour Organization** celebrates this day and emphasizes the prevention of accidents and diseases in the workplace

Psychosocial risks are among the most prominent challenges facing occupational safety.

Improving the psychosocial work environment is essential for enhancing productivity, institutional performance, and sustainable development.

More than 840,000 people die each year due to health conditions linked to psychosocial risks.

**%1.37**  
economic losses of global GDP are lost annually



by the work design, organization, management, and organizational practices that shape daily working conditions, indicating psychosocial factors, such as workload, working hours, role clarity, autonomy, support, and fair and transparent procedures, significantly impact the work experience and are reflected in employee safety, health, and performance.

When psychological and social factors harm employees, they become hazards that must be addressed and managed, just like physical, chemical, and biological hazards, to ensure safe and healthy work environments. The International Labour Organisation (ILO) has commemorated World Day for Safety and Health at Work since 2003, emphasising the prevention of workplace accidents and diseases through its longstanding tripartite approach, which brings together governments, workers' organizations, and employers' organisations, as well as social dialogue.

The ILO marks this occasion by publishing a global report focused on prevention, examining psychosocial factors across three levels: the job itself, how work is managed and organized, and the broader policies, practices, and procedures that govern work.

According to the ILO report issued on April 22, more than 840,000 people die each year due to health conditions linked to psychosocial risks such as long working hours and job insecurity. These work-related risks are primarily associated with cardiovascular diseases and mental health disorders, including suicide.

The report, titled 'The psychosocial working environment:

Global developments and pathways for action; highlights the growing impact of how work is designed, organized, and managed on workers' safety and health. It warns that psychosocial risk factors, including long working hours, job insecurity, high demands coupled with low control, and workplace bullying and harassment, can create harmful work environments if not properly addressed.

It further notes that while many psychosocial risks are not new, major shifts in the workplace, such as digitalisation, AI, remote work, and new employment patterns, are reshaping the psychosocial work environment. These changes may exacerbate existing risks or create new ones if not managed appropriately. At the same time, these challenges offering opportunities to improve work organization and increase flexibility, underscoring the need for proactive measures.

Team Lead of the ILO's Occupational Safety and Health Policy and Systems, Manal Azzi, said that psychosocial risks are among the most prominent challenges facing occupational safety and health of the modern worker. She stressed that improving the psychosocial work environment is essential not only for protecting workers' mental and physical health but also for enhancing productivity, institutional performance, and sustainable economic development. The report echoed this by concluding that by proactively addressing these risks, countries and organizations can create healthier workplaces that benefit both workers and employers, while boosting productivity and economic resilience. (QNA)

# Qatar plays stabilising role in global economy: Envoy

From Page 1

The ambassador noted that Malaysia and Qatar could jointly promote flows of talent, capital, and investments within the Global South, leveraging complementarities in sectors such as energy, the digital economy, and advanced manufacturing.

“Such collaboration would not only strengthen bilateral ties but also contribute to broader inter-regional connectivity and sustainable economic growth,” he pointed out.

On the current state of bilateral relations, Razali described ties between Malaysia and Qatar as warm and forward-looking, underpinned by long-standing

diplomatic relations and regular engagements spanning trade, education, health, tourism, and defence.

He noted that this partnership is underpinned by a close political relationship dating back to the time of former prime minister of Malaysia, Dr Mahathir Mohamad, and continuing to this day, with leaders from both countries maintaining close engagement over the past month alone, including two calls between the prime ministers and a separate engagement between the deputy prime ministers.

“This reflects the high level of trust and continuous dialogue between our leadership,” Razali emphasised.

On Malaysia’s contribution to

Qatar National Vision 2030, the ambassador said Malaysian companies can contribute across five key sectors: Islamic finance and fintech, the halal economy and food security, agri-technology, digital and smart cities, and cybersecurity and artificial intelligence (AI).

He explained that Malaysia has an established global halal certification system and can support Qatar in setting standards, enhancing integrity and transparency in the halal ecosystem, and strengthening food security through halal supply chains.

In the area of agri-technology, he said both countries can collaborate on food production and supply resilience, particularly amid global

disruptions, with Malaysia sharing technology and expertise in smart farming, hydroponics, and vertical agriculture to support Qatar in reducing its dependence on food imports.

On digital infrastructure, Razali said Malaysia has growing capabilities in smart city solutions and can support Qatar in urban digitalisation initiatives, smart governance, and integrated city systems.

He added that cybersecurity and AI are critical for Qatar’s transition to a knowledge-based economy, with Malaysia able to contribute to cybersecurity frameworks, talent development, and AI applications across sectors such as healthcare, logistics, and government.



## Shura debates AI governance

From Page 1

Members across the chamber underlined the importance of establishing clear legal and ethical frameworks to safeguard privacy, uphold human dignity and strengthen digital sovereignty, in line with Qatar National Vision 2030.

During the debate, members raised a number of concerns, including the widening gap between the pace of technological innovation and legislative scrutiny, as well as risks tied to algorithmic bias, data protection, privacy and intellectual property rights. Questions were also raised over legal liability arising from the use of AI systems.

They further flagged challenges linked to reliance on external technologies, the implications for digital sovereignty, and structural shifts in the labour market, stressing the need to equip the national workforce with skills suited to the digital economy.

Members also reflected on international approaches to AI

regulation, noting a range of models from risk-based frameworks to more flexible, sector-led oversight. There was broad agreement that emerging global practice favours proportionate regulatory approaches that balance risk management with support for innovation, while taking into account national contexts.

Following the debate, the motion was referred to the Health, General Services and the Environment Committee for detailed scrutiny and a report back to the chamber.

Separately, the Council considered a draft Gulf Co-operation Council bill on voluntary work, which was given a first reading and referred to the Social Affairs, Labour and Housing Committee for further examination.

The Speaker also informed members that proposed amendments to the State Audit Bureau law had been referred to the Legal and Legislative Affairs Committee in accordance with the Council’s standing orders.

# Putin offers full support to Iran in talks with Araghchi

Reuters  
Moscow

Russian President Vladimir Putin yesterday praised the Iranian people for battling to stay independent in the face of US and Israeli pressure and said Moscow would do all it could to help Tehran.

Russia has offered to mediate to try to help restore calm to the Middle East following US and Israeli strikes, which Moscow has strongly condemned. It has also repeatedly offered to store Iran’s enriched uranium as a way of defusing tensions, a proposal spurned by the US.

“We see how courageously and heroically the Iranian people are fighting for their independence and sovereignty,” Putin told Araghchi, saying he hoped they could get through what he called a “difficult period” and that peace would prevail.

“For our part, we will do everything that serves your interests and the interests of all the peoples



Russian President Vladimir Putin and Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi attend a meeting at the Boris Yeltsin Presidential Library in Saint Petersburg, yesterday. (Reuters)

of the region to ensure that peace is achieved as quickly as possible,” said Putin.

Putin received Araghchi in the presidential library in Russia’s former imperial capital St Peters-

burg as sources from mediator Pakistan said work had not halted to bridge gaps between the US and Iran.

Putin said he received a message from Iran’s new Supreme Leader,

Mojtaba Khamenei, last week, and asked Araghchi to convey to him that Russia intended to continue its strategic partnership with Tehran.

That 20-year agreement was sealed last year. Russia is building two new nuclear units at Bushehr – the site of Iran’s only nuclear power plant – and Iran has supplied Russia with Shahed drones for use against Ukraine, the production of which Moscow has since localised.

Araghchi, who said he wanted to brief Putin on the situation around his country, thanked Putin for Moscow’s support.

“It has also been proven to all that Iran has friends and allies, such as the Russian Federation, who stand by Iran precisely in difficult times,” he said.

Dmitry Peskov, Putin’s spokesman, said that Moscow wanted to see the US and Iran continue negotiations. There should be no return to military action, he added, something he said was not in anyone’s interests.

# Merz says Iran humiliating US as talks stall

Reuters  
Berlin

German Chancellor Friedrich Merz said yesterday Iran’s leadership was humiliating the US and getting US officials to travel to Pakistan and then leave without results, in an unusually abrupt rebuke over the conflict.

Merz also said he not see what exit strategy the US was pursuing in the Iran war – comments that underlined deep divisions between Washington and its European Nato allies, which had already been festering over Ukraine and other issues.

“The Iranians are obviously very skilled at negotiating, or rather, very skilful at not negotiating, letting the Americans travel to Islamabad and then leave again without any result,” he said during a talk to students in the town of Marsberg.

“An entire nation is being humiliated by the Iranian leadership, especially by these so-called Revolutionary Guards. And so I hope that this ends as



German Chancellor Friedrich Merz waves as he arrives to visit the Carolus-Magnus-Gymnasium, as part of the EU Project Day in Schools, in Marsberg, yesterday. (Reuters)

quickly as possible,” he added at the venue in the state of North Rhine-Westphalia.

US President Donald Trump has harshly criticised Nato allies for not sending their navies to help open the Strait of Hormuz dur-

ing the conflict. The waterway has remained virtually shut, causing market turmoil and unprecedented disruption in energy supplies.

Merz reiterated that Germans and Europeans were not consulted before the US and Israel started at-

tacking Iran on February 28, and that he had conveyed his scepticism directly to Trump afterwards.

“If I had known that it would continue like this for five or six weeks and get progressively worse, I would have told him even more emphatically,” Merz said, comparing it to previous US wars in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Hopes of reviving peace efforts have receded since Trump scrapped a visit on Saturday by his envoys Steve Witkoff and Jared Kushner to Islamabad, the Pakistani capital.

Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi travelled to Russia yesterday after failed talks in Pakistan and Oman.

Merz said it was evident the Strait of Hormuz had been at least partially mined. “We have offered, also as Europeans, to send German minesweepers to clear the strait, which has obviously been mined in part,” he said.

He said the conflict was costing Germany “a lot of money, a lot of taxpayers’ money and a lot of economic strength.”

# Trump holds talks on Iran with security team

AFP  
Washington

US President Donald Trump met with his top security advisers yesterday to discuss an Iranian proposal that would reportedly re-open the Strait of Hormuz as broader negotiations over the war continue, the White House said.

When asked about the reported plan – which would see both Iran and the US lift their blockades ahead of further talks on the thorny issue of Tehran’s nuclear programme – spokeswoman Karoline Leavitt told a White House briefing that “the proposal was being discussed.”

“Only because it’s been reported, I will confirm the president has met with his national security team this morning,” she said, refusing to say if Trump would accept the proposal.

Secretary of State Marco Rubio meanwhile said Iran’s stance on the Strait of Hormuz, a key waterway through which a fifth of global oil and liquid

natural gas normally transits, did not meet US demands.

“If what they mean by opening the straits is, ‘yes, the straits are open as long as you co-ordinate with Iran, get our permission or we’ll blow you up and you pay us,’ that’s not opening the straits,” Rubio said in a Fox News interview.

“They cannot normalise – nor can we tolerate them trying to normalise – a system in which the Iranians decide who gets to use an international waterway, and how much you have to pay them to use it,” he said.

US outlet Axios had earlier reported that Trump would meet with his national security team to discuss an offer by Iran on re-opening the strait and postponing nuclear negotiations to a later stage.

ABC News, citing two anonymous US officials, meanwhile reported that the deal fell short of Washington’s red lines.

Leavitt told reporters that “the president’s red lines with respect to Iran have been made very, very clear, not just to the American public, but also to them as well.”

# Four killed, 70 injured in attacks: Afghan govt

Reuters  
Kabul

Mortar and rocket attacks launched by Pakistan against Afghanistan killed four people yesterday and injured 70 more, the Taliban government said, as fighting between the countries erupted again and threatened to derail fragile peace talks.

Pakistan’s government dismissed the claims as a “blatant lie.”

About 30 students, women, and children were among those injured in the attacks, which targeted homes and the Syed Jamaluddin Afghani University in Kunar province’s Asadabad, the Taliban’s deputy spokesperson Hamdullah Fitrat said.

“We strongly condemn these attacks by the Pakistani military regime, in which ordinary people, academic, and educational institutions were targeted, and declare them unforgivable war crimes,” he said in a post on X.

Pakistan’s information minis-

try in a post on X said no strike had been carried out on the university. “The claims are frivolous and fake,” it said.

The Pakistani military did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

The worst fighting in years erupted between the allies-turned-foes in February, with Pakistani air strikes inside Afghanistan that Islamabad said targeted militant strongholds.

Islamabad has said Kabul provides safe haven to militants executing attacks on Pakistan from its soil. The Taliban has denied the allegations and said militancy in Pakistan is an internal problem.

More than 400 people were killed in a Pakistani strike on a drug rehabilitation centre in Kabul last month, the Taliban had said, before the neighbours suspended fighting. Pakistan rejected the Taliban’s statements, saying it “precisely targeted military installations and terrorist support infrastructure.”

The UN Assistance Mission in Afghanistan had put the death toll at 143.

# King Charles arrives in US to shore up Trump ties

AFP  
Washington

Britain’s King Charles III arrived in Washington yesterday for a high-stakes state visit aimed at salvaging frayed ties with Donald Trump, amid extra-tight security following an attack on a gala dinner attended by the US president.

Tensions over the Iran war have rocked the so-called “special relationship” ahead of a trip that was meant to mark the United States’ 250th anniversary of independence from the British monarch’s ancestors.

Charles and Queen Camilla will now be using their four-day visit – their first time on American soil since he became king in 2022 – to

mount a diplomatic charm offensive targeting the royalty-obsessed Trump.

The royal couple arrived at Joint Base Andrews near Washington on a plane with the Union Jack painted on the tail.

Charles and Camilla then descended red-carpeted steps to be greeted by Britain’s ambassador Christian Turner and White House protocol chief Monica Crowley on the tarmac.

White House Press Secretary Karoline Leavitt said yesterday the visit would “honour the long-standing and special relationship between the US and the United Kingdom.”

Trump and his wife Melania will greet the British royals at the White House later yesterday before hosting them for tea and a tour of a new beehive installed by the First Lady.



Britain’s King Charles and Queen Camilla walk with US Protocol Chief Monica Crowley as they arrive at Joint Base Andrews, Maryland, yesterday. (Reuters)

# ExxonMobil, Teach for Qatar renew strategic partnership, commit to enhance education

ExxonMobil Qatar has renewed its strategic partnership with Teach For Qatar for an additional three years, reaffirming a longstanding commitment to strengthen the education sector of Qatar and support the development of future generations.

Building on a collaboration that began in 2014, the renewed agreement reflects a shared vision to advance a high-quality education system which can support the country's transition toward a knowledge-based economy.

Over the past decade, ExxonMobil Qatar's support has played a key role in advancing Teach For Qatar's mission to recruit, train, and develop exceptional teachers who bring leadership, innovation, and lasting impact to classrooms across the country.

To date, the partnership has supported more than 474 fellows in completion of their teaching and leadership journeys. Plus, it continues to positively impact over 62,000 students studying in public schools of the country. These efforts have contributed to improving student learning experiences while strengthening a pipeline of future education leaders.

Under the renewed agreement, Teach For Qatar will continue to expand its training and professional development programmes for Fellows teaching core subjects, including Arabic, Mathematics, Science, and English.

The ExxonMobil-Teach For Qatar partnership will also enable the introduction of enhanced initiatives focused on digital learning and STEM education – aligning closely with Qatar's national priorities.

These initiatives include continued development of platforms such as Diwan Al Ta'aleem, as well as the expansion of advanced STEM-focused programmes designed



HE Sheikha Hind bint Hamad al-Thani, Vice Chairperson of Qatar Foundation along with ExxonMobil and Teach For Qatar officials.

to equip students with critical skills for the future.

"Education is a cornerstone of sustainable development, and partnerships like this enable long-term investments in Qatar's future," said Taher Hamid, president and general manager at ExxonMobil Qatar. "Our continued partnership with Teach For Qatar reinforces ExxonMobil Qatar's position as a STEM partner of choice and a meaningful contributor to Qatar National Vision 2030 – particularly the Human Development Pillar – as well as the Third National Development Strategy. We are proud to support Teach For Qatar in equipping teachers with the tools, and capabilities needed to inspire

and prepare the next generation."

"Our partnership with ExxonMobil Qatar demonstrates a shared commitment to the next generation of Qatar's leaders, its students. ExxonMobil Qatar's continued support has allowed us to recruit, train, and place dedicated and passionate teachers into public school classrooms to motivate and inspire students to excel," said Nasser al-Jaber, CEO at Teach For Qatar.

As the country advances toward a diversified, knowledge-driven economy, ExxonMobil Qatar remains dedicated to support initiatives that build human capital, foster innovation, and create a lasting impact across the education sector.

## Minister meets US diplomat



HE the Minister of Municipality Abdullah bin Hamad bin Abdullah al-Attiyah met yesterday with charge d'affaires at the United States Embassy in Qatar Mo Barghouty. Discussions during the meeting dealt with co-operation relations between the two countries in areas of common interest. (QNA)

## Dr Majed al-Ansari to deliver NU-Q's graduation address

Northwestern University in Qatar (NU-Q) announced Dr Majed Mohammed al-Ansari (pictured), adviser to the Prime Minister and official spokesperson for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Qatar, as the 2026 graduation speaker. A leading voice in regional diplomacy and global public communication, Dr al-Ansari will address the graduating class at this year's ceremony on May 4. Appointed to his current role in 2022, Dr al-Ansari has played a central part in shaping and communicating Qatar's foreign policy narrative to international audiences. Through regular media briefings, high-level engagements, and global outreach, he has become a key figure in articulating the country's diplomatic positions and fostering dialogue across political, academic, and media spheres. "Dr al-Ansari's work exemplifies the power of communication in shaping global understanding and advancing dialogue," said Marwan M Kraidy, dean and CEO, NU-Q. "His leadership and experience offer our graduates a compelling perspective on how media, policy,



and public engagement come together in moments that matter." Dr al-Ansari commented, "It's a privilege to join Northwestern Qatar's Class of 2026 at such a meaningful moment. As we live in a world ridden with conflict, the significance of truth, and those who protect it and seek it as communicators and journalists, increases. I look forward to celebrating this milestone with you and reflecting on the impact you can have in fostering understanding and connection." Before joining the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Dr al-Ansari served as director of policy at the Institute of Social and Economic Survey Research at Qatar University, where he also held a faculty position in the Department of International Affairs.

## Cruise season sails to record heights with 200,000 visitors

By A Staff Reporter  
Doha

Qatar's cruise tourism sector has charted a banner 2025-2026 season, with the Old Doha Port cruise terminal welcoming 49 ship calls and ferrying in more than 200,000 passengers and crew – a haul that cements the country's rising stature as a marquee stop on the global cruise circuit.

Announcing the figures on its official X account, Mwani Qatar said the season also drew three cruise ships making their maiden visit to Qatar, a telling marker of the country's growing prominence on the world cruise map.

Visitors arriving at the terminal step into a seamless and well-rounded tourism experience. Strategically anchored in the heart of Doha, the cruise facility lies just minutes from Qatar's leading attractions, and offers modern amenities, swift entry and exit procedures, and a curated portfolio of excursions that showcase both the country's rich cultural heritage and its contemporary flair.

These gains dovetail with the wider push by Qatar Tourism to

deepen partnerships with international cruise lines, underpinning sustainable growth across the sector and advancing the national drive for economic diversification. Cruise tourism also plays a pivotal role in delivering the goals of Qatar National Vision 2030 by lifting international visitor numbers and enriching the country's tourism offering.

At the heart of this success story is the transformation of Old Doha Port. Recently redeveloped into a fully integrated tourism destination, the port now boasts a state-of-the-art cruise terminal spanning more than 23,000sqm, with 750 meters of berths and a basin built to host two mega cruise ships simultaneously.

In parallel, Qatar's wider ports sector has undergone sweeping modernisation over the past decade, propelled by infrastructure upgrades and digital transformation. A standout among them is Hamad Port – one of the region's most advanced – which harnesses automation and digital systems, including the 'Mwani' platform, to streamline operations and reinforce Qatar's standing as a premier hub for maritime transport and cruise tourism.



## Renad observes Autism Awareness Day

Renad Academy – a part of Qatar Foundation's Pre-University Education – organised a special event marking World Autism Awareness Day, aimed at raising community awareness, celebrating the abilities of students with autism, and strengthening the role of community partnerships in supporting and empowering them.

The event, held at the academy's campus, brought together parents, specialists, and representatives of partner entities, alongside students, in an interactive environment that provided opportunities to exchange expertise, highlight inclusive educational practices, and strengthen communication across different segments of the community.

The event also featured distinguished student performances by Renad Academy students, showcasing their diverse talents and creative abilities. These performances ranged from artistic displays and interactive activities to expressive segments through which students confidently expressed themselves, reflecting their potential and highlighting their unique strengths. The event also shed light on Renad's innovative educational approach, including diverse teaching methods and varied communication strategies aimed at empowering students.

On this occasion, Noof al-Mal-



ki, director of Renad Academy, said: "On World Autism Awareness Day, we reaffirm that this day is not merely an annual event, but a profound human message that we believe in at Renad Academy and strive to embody in our daily practices.

We do not view autism solely as a challenge; rather, we see it as a rich form of diversity that carries unique abilities and remarkable potential that deserve to be understood, embraced, and nurtured."

Al-Malki emphasised that education extends beyond academic skills to include character development, fostering independence, and building life skills, enabling

students to become active and valued members of their community.

"This day reminds us that educational environments can be the greatest challenge for students with autism, yet at the same time they represent the greatest opportunity to make a difference. This drives us to create flexible, supportive, and inclusive environments that open pathways to excellence and create a lasting impact in our students' lives.

"We also aspire to achieve true inclusion not only within the school, but beyond it, recognising that empowerment is a shared responsibility across all sectors of society."



Noof al-Malki, director of Renad Academy, speaking at the event.

"Success cannot be achieved without a genuine partnership with parents, who form the cornerstone of our students' journey. Through this collaboration, we build bridges of trust and create a lasting impact," she emphasised. "Each year, we renew our commitment to raising awareness and promoting a culture of acceptance and inclusion, because our communities thrive when they embrace difference and value diversity."

The event also recognised a number of community partners in appreciation of their continued contributions and their active role in supporting educational initiatives and programs aimed at enhancing the inclusion of students with autism in society.

## A discussion at Science Café on disability inclusive futures

By Shaima Sherif  
Staff Reporter

A Science Café session in Msheireb brought experts, institutions and families together to bridge awareness gaps on autism and learning disabilities, emphasising practical inclusion and shared responsibility across Qatar's community.

Experts and stakeholders gathered at Bin Jelmood House yesterday for the second Science Café session of 2026, focusing on neurodevelopmental conditions and the importance of collaboration in building a more inclusive society.

The session, titled "Different Abilities, Shared Futures: Disability and Success," was organised by Msheireb Museums in partnership with Sidra Medicine. It explored autism and learning disabilities through scientific research, education, technology and mental health perspectives.

Speaking on the sidelines, Dr Mohamed Tolefat, Director of Clinical and Rehabilitation Services at Shafallah Centre for Per-



Dr Mohamed Tolefat

sons with Disabilities, highlighted the importance of such platforms in connecting institutions with families and the wider public.

"We take care of persons with disabilities from early childhood and early intervention until 21 years old," he said, noting that services span "different severity and intensity" levels, including autism spectrum disorders.

Dr Tolefat stressed that one of the centre's strengths lies in its



The second Science Café session of 2026 was on neurodevelopmental conditions.

integrated model. "All the services are under one umbrella... physiotherapy, occupational therapy, speech and language therapy, special education, psychologists and

psychiatry, all in one place," he explained.

However, beyond service provision, he underlined the critical role of awareness and collabora-

tion. "We do have awareness programmes throughout the year... for corporations, schools and even tourism areas like hotels," he said, adding that parents are also sup-

ported through direct training and communication channels.

Events such as the Science Café, he noted, play a vital role in strengthening these efforts. "We do interact not only with parents but with all the different entities that take care for autism in Qatar... we bridge the gaps and act as a complement to others like Sidra, HMC and the Ministry of Education."

He emphasised that the value of such gatherings lies in shared learning. "It is important for everyone to come together to bridge the gap between themselves and try to learn from each other," he said.

Dr Tolefat added that participants benefit most from practical engagement.

"They interact not only theoretically but practically... and come up with inclusive ideas for activities between autism and other children and people in society."

The session forms part of ongoing efforts in Qatar to promote inclusion, encourage dialogue and ensure that awareness translates into meaningful, everyday practices across communities.