

QIC Qatar Insurance
Financial Results (Q1 2026)

Gross Written Premiums (GWP)	Net Profit	Investment Income:	Insurance Service Results:
13% QAR 3.2B	6% QAR 217M	10% QAR 238M	70% QAR 130M

qic-group.com

GULF TIMES

WEDNESDAY Vol. XXXXVI No. 13732
May 6, 2026
Dhul-Qi'dah 19, 1447 AH
www.gulf-times.com 2 Riyals

Published in QATAR since 1978

Always close. Always connected
Wherever you are in Qatar, we're by your side

What connects us, unites us

ORIXYS POLYDEX
Durable waterproofing-performance for roof protection

44601602/3

THE PERFECT GIFT?
THE ONE THEY CHOOSE

SUMMER DEALS
Family فاميلة عروض الصيف

Ready to GUAC AND ROLL?
Only on talabat

6THSTREET.COM

1200+ Top Fashion Brands

DELIVERY IN 90 MINUTES

SCAN TO SHOP

Sheikha Jowaher honours outstanding QU graduates



Her Highness Consort of His Highness the Amir Sheikha Jowaher bint Hamad bin Suhaim al-Thani yesterday patronised the graduation ceremony for the 49th cohort of Qatar University students. The event, held at the university's Sports and Events Complex, celebrated the achievements of 3,122 female graduates across undergraduate and postgraduate programmes. During the ceremony, Her Highness Sheikha Jowaher honoured 525 outstanding students for their academic excellence. Degrees were formally conferred by the university's president, Dr Omar al-Ansari. The proceedings included speeches by Dr al-Ansari and a graduate representative, Majd Jaber al-Marri, who addressed attendees on behalf of the graduating class. The ceremony was attended by several dignitaries, including Their Excellencies sheikhs, ministers and members of the university's board of trustees, as well as senior academic officials and families of the graduates. The graduation marks a significant milestone for one of Qatar's leading higher education institutions as it continues to expand its academic offerings and student body. (QNA) Page 12

Our Say



Faisal Abdulhameed al-Mudahka, Editor-in-Chief of Gulf Times

At QBC, Qatar steps into the global markets conversation

I didn't expect, when I walked into the new headquarters of QBC for a field visit, that the scene would be quite this intense. Screens streaming live numbers from New York, London, Tokyo and Frankfurt — all at once. An editorial team tracking opening bells minutes apart. Correspondents reporting from some twenty-one financial capitals around the world. And cameras carrying all of it in 4K HDR — said to be a first in the world for economic broadcasting. In that moment, I understood that what was happening was not simply the launch of a new channel. It was a statement: Qatar is taking its seat at the table where the global economy is discussed — not as a subject written about, but as a voice that writes. When I asked about the names behind the achievement, one of the leaders smiled quietly and said: "Don't mention our names. Don't mention the officials. You are free to write about the achievement — but we are not the story." I respected his decision, and the decision of those with him. I will not name them here, even though everyone — near and far — already knows who they are, and even though naming them would add nothing to what is already known. But what does deserve to be named is the culture behind that quiet refusal: work in silence, and let the work serve the country, not your name. This is an authentic Qatari ethic — one that an entire generation of leaders was raised on, and one that today's young Qataris and Arabs in this newsroom are inheriting. I watched them moving cameras, drafting bulletins, tracking markets minute by minute. Behind every shot on a QBC screen, someone has chosen to stay behind it. **To Page 4**
falmudahka@gulf-times.com

LIGHTS, CAMERA, ACTION!



QBC takes centre stage as Qatar's first dedicated 4K business channel

By Ayman Adly
Staff Reporter

Qatar Media Corporation (QMC) yesterday officially launched the Qatar Business Channel (QBC), the country's first specialised economic television channel broadcasting in 4K, as a significant addition to Qatar's evolving media landscape. Accordingly, QBC started its live broadcast yesterday morning in the presence of senior media figures and executives, marking a new chapter in the nation's efforts to strengthen its economic storytelling and global media footprint. Broadcasting in Arabic, QBC is designed to deliver comprehensive economic coverage from Qatar to international audiences. The channel has also been integrated into the Table QMC app, QMC's official digital streaming platform, allowing viewers to access live broadcasts online. This move reflects a growing emphasis on digital accessibility and aims to extend the channel's reach to broader, more diverse audiences seeking reliable, timely economic content. According to QMC, the launch of QBC aligns closely with its long-term strategy to develop specialised media platforms that reflect Qatar's national priorities. It also forms part of a broader initiative to expand niche broadcasting channels and support the promotion of Qatar's rapidly growing economy at both regional and global levels. With the country continuing to position itself as a key economic hub, officials see targeted media as an essential tool for amplifying its achievements and opportunities. Currently, QBC broadcasts for 15 hours daily, from 9am until midnight, with nine of those hours dedicated to live programming. Plans are already in place to expand operations into a full 24-hour broadcasting cycle in the near future, signalling the



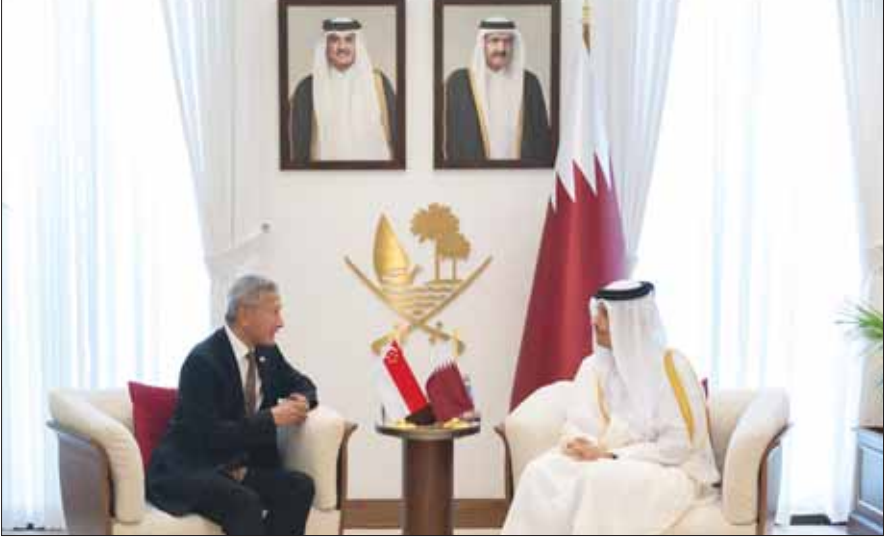
Dr Sara al-Derham



Marwan Aboushanab

channel's ambition to become a constant and authoritative source of economic news. The channel's programming lineup is built around a mix of specialised news bulletins, in-depth analysis, and real-time reporting across key economic sectors. In addition to core financial and business coverage, QBC will feature a range of thematic programmes exploring topics such as the film industry, the role of women in business, legal frameworks in Qatar and the wider Gulf region, and major economic developments shaping markets locally and internationally. **To Page 4**

PM, Singapore FM hold talks



HE the Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman bin Jassim al-Thani met yesterday with Singaporean Minister of Foreign Affairs Vivian Balakrishnan, who is currently visiting the country. The two sides discussed strategic co-operation between the two countries and ways to further strengthen and expand it across various fields. They also exchanged views on regional developments, particularly with regard to the ceasefire between the US and Iran as well as efforts aimed at de-escalation in a manner that contributes to enhancing regional security and stability. (QNA)

UAE claims, Iran denies, fresh attack; truce 'intact'

The UAE said it was under attack from Iranian missiles and drones yesterday, which Iran categorically denied even as Washington insisted a four-week-old ceasefire remained intact. The Emirates' foreign ministry called the attacks a serious escalation and a direct threat to its security, reserving its "full and legitimate right" to respond. The strikes followed a US naval push, dubbed "Project Freedom", to escort stranded tankers through the Strait of Hormuz. The US military said it destroyed six Iranian small boats, cruise missiles and drones. Defence Secretary Pete Hegseth said the operation was temporary and the truce held: "We're not looking for a fight." Iran's Revolutionary Guards issued a new map expanding Tehran's claimed control over the strait and warned vessels to stick to designated corridors or face a "decisive response". (Reuters)

PM, Lavrov discuss truce, de-escalation

HE Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman bin Jassim al-Thani held a phone call with Russian Minister of Foreign Affairs Sergey Lavrov. They discussed bilateral co-operation and ways to enhance it, and regional developments, particularly the ceasefire between the US and Iran as well as efforts to de-escalate and bolster regional security and stability. The prime minister stressed the need for all parties to respond to ongoing mediation efforts to address the root causes of the crisis through dialogue and peaceful means, and to reach a sustainable agreement that prevents renewed escalation. (QNA)

New channel 'to lift economic media landscape'

Economic experts yesterday said the launch of the new QBC business television channel by the Qatar Media Corporation marks a significant strategic step, amid robust economic growth and ongoing transformations aligned with the diversification and sustainability goals of Qatar National Vision 2030. In statements to QNA, the experts said the new channel would serve as a key platform to showcase Qatar's economic achievements and highlight its investment opportunities, noting that it is expected to strengthen dialogue between the public and private sectors. They added that increasing attention to sectors such as energy, investment, technology, and entrepreneurship highlights the need for a specialised media platform capable of delivering credible economic content and in-depth analysis, ultimately enhancing public awareness.

First Vice-Chairman of Qatar Chamber Mohamed bin Ahmed bin Twar al-Kuwari said the launch of the QBC channel, a Qatari platform specialising in business and economic affairs, represents a significant qualitative step that strengthens the economic media landscape in Qatar. He noted that the channel is expected to support the business environment and promote economic awareness among both the business community and the wider public. Speaking to QNA, al-Kuwari said the initiative comes at a time when the global economy is undergoing rapid transformations and facing significant challenges, underscoring the importance of specialised media platforms capable of delivering professional, analytical content that reflects market realities and keeps pace with developments at the local, regional, and international levels. **To Page 4**

Deputy PM holds talks with Singapore minister



HE the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of State for Defence Affairs Sheikh Saud bin Abdulrahman bin Hassan al-Thani has discussed defence co-operation and regional developments with Singapore's Minister of Foreign Affairs Dr Vivian Balakrishnan. The meeting, which took place yesterday during the Singaporean minister's visit to Qatar, was attended by officials from both sides, including senior military officers. - **QNA**

Al-Khulaifi holds meeting with US under-secretary of state in Washington

HE the Minister of State at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Dr Mohammed bin Abdulaziz bin Saleh al-Khulaifi met yesterday with US Under-Secretary of

State for Political Affairs Allison Hooker in Washington. Their meeting discussed the close strategic relationship between the two countries

and ways to support and enhance them, and the regional developments, particularly those related to a ceasefire between the US and Iran.

The two sides also discussed various efforts being undertaken to de-escalate and bolster regional security and stability. - **QNA**

Amir, Deputy Amir send cables of condolences to Amir of Kuwait

His Highness the Amir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani, His Highness the Deputy Amir Sheikh Abdullah bin Hamad al-Thani, and HE the Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman bin Jassim al-Thani have sent cables of condolences to Amir of Kuwait Sheikh Meshal al-Ahmad al-Jaber al-Sabah following the death of Sheikh Abdullah Mohammed al-Jaber al-Sabah. - **QNA**

Qatar condemns targeting of site on Khartoum airport grounds

Qatar has condemned the targeting by drones of a site in the grounds of Khartoum International Airport in Sudan, considering it a blatant violation of Sudan's sovereignty and a clear breach of the rules of international law and the Charter of the United Nations. - **QNA**

MoEHE opens applications for Khibrat 2026-27 programme

The Ministry of Education and Higher Education (MoEHE) has announced the opening of applications for the third edition of the Khibrat programme for the academic year 2026-27, with the deadline on May 14.

The ministry said in a statement that the Khibrat programme aims to develop national educational cadres by providing Qatari teachers in government schools with distinguished teaching experiences and practices, and allowing them to learn about diverse educational experiences.

The programme encompasses two main phases.

The first phase begins with six weeks in Saudi Arabian schools during the first semester of the 2026-27 academic year, while the second phase is completed in Qatar from the date of return until the end of May 2027.

The programme targets teachers and co-ordinators of Arabic language and Islamic education in government schools.

The ministry stipulated that applicants must be Qatari citizens, have between 3-5 years of experience, be medically fit to travel, pass a test and personal interview, and commit to applying via the electronic link within deadlines.

The MoEHE said that only one candidate from each school will be accepted, and registration does not guarantee final acceptance into the programme. - **QNA**

Work complete on 47 pedestrian crossings

The Public Works Authority (Ashghal) has announced the completion of 47 pedestrian bridges and tunnels across Qatar to enhance road safety and ease pedestrian movement.

In a post on X, Ashghal said the projects were carried out in co-ordination with the Ministry of Transport and span key corridors and densely populated areas. - **QNA**

QU 'committed to future of nation'

Qatar University (QU) president Dr Omar bin Mohammed al-Ansari has affirmed that the university will continue to play a pivotal role in preparing qualified national cadres for the labour market and supporting national development through high-quality academic education aligned with evolving demands of a knowledge-based economy, building on a distinguished journey spanning five decades.

In a speech delivered at the graduation ceremony of the 49th cohort, Class of 2026, of female undergraduate and postgraduate students at Qatar University, he said that the country's wise leadership has long placed paramount importance on investing in human capital as the nation's true and enduring wealth.

He reaffirmed that education remains at the forefront of national priorities and will continue to play a central role in preparing generations capable of leading the future with confidence and competence.

Commemorating the gradu-

ation of the 49th cohort, Dr al-Ansari noted that approximately 4,024 graduates are joining the nation-building process, underscoring the university's enduring role in supporting national development.

He added that the university continues to advance with steady and confident steps to strengthen its standing locally and globally, through a strategic initiative to reassess its positioning in a manner that reinforces its identity, enhances its leadership in higher education, and supports the knowledge-based economy.

Dr al-Ansari said that this role stems from a genuine national vision that positions the university as an institution integrating education and research to serve the nation and create a lasting impact.

He added that this same vision has supported women's empowerment, noting the active presence of Qatari women across various fields and the prominent role played by Qatar University graduates in advancing development and progress.

The QU president further noted



that the high proportion of female graduates reflects the outcomes of this empowerment, alongside the students' efforts, the support of their families, and the community's confidence in the university.

Addressing the graduates, Dr al-Ansari said they were marking the culmination of years of hard work and dedication, having reached this well-deserved milestone through their excellence and determination.

He added that what they have achieved goes beyond obtaining a degree, encompassing experience, values, and the ability to contribute to shaping the future.

The QU president also called on the graduates to move forward with confidence in their future endeavors, pursue their ambitions, and serve their country.

He expressed appreciation for the efforts of parents, whom he described as partners in this success, as well as the dedication of faculty members and administrative staff in fulfilling the university's mission and sustaining its academic excellence.

Dr al-Ansari expressed hope that this graduation would mark the beginning of a journey rich in achievement and leadership, and prayed for the continued security, stability, and prosperity of Qatar under its wise leadership.

Majd Jaber al-Marri, a graduate of the QU's College of Education, addressed her fellow graduates, reflecting on their academic journey and highlighting key milestones, achievements, and challenges along the way.

She said they were marking a defining moment that encapsulates years of perseverance and hard work, carrying with it stories of effort and hope, setbacks and success, and a transition from uncertain beginnings to confident and fulfilling outcomes.

Al-Marri stressed that the 49th graduating cohort remains com-

mitted to continuing the journey of Qatar's progress and achieving accomplishments at the local, regional, and international levels, emphasizing that graduation represents not an end, but the beginning of a new chapter filled with ambition, hope, and optimism.

Master of ceremonies Aisha Mohammed al-Emadi, a graduate of the QU's College of Arts and Sciences, described the university as a beacon of creativity and thought and a hub for science and knowledge.

She said the university continues to advance with determination toward excellence and leadership, guided by a forward-looking vision that contributes to national development, fulfills the aspirations of the leadership, and meets the ambitions of the people.

She added that the graduates are determined to move forward with a spirit of passion, perseverance, and optimism, serving their nation and contributing to the realisation of Qatar's vision, which she said merits the highest levels of dedication and commitment. - **QNA**



Congratulations Class of 2026

Abdulaziz Mohammed Alabdian
Abdullah Saeed Albogami
Ahmad Mohammed Alghamdi
Ahmed Hassan Nazer
Aljawhara Saad Alomairi
Anas Mohammed
Atheer Khalid Almanee
Fahad Alajaji
Faisal Ibrahim Khashoggi
Hamad Mohammed Alsheddi
Hanadi Abdulaziz Abduldayem
Hattan Osama Bahanshal
Hussin Mana Aljafar
Ibrahim Zamil AlSughayer
Imran Haleem Shaikh
Jhanzaib Shah
Maisa Khalid AlBelushi
Mubarak Bakhit Alwadaani
Nouf Fahad Bin Tamran
Omar Yousif Tobbat
Quan Wei
Saeed Abubaker Alamoudi
Saleh Ahmed Alanazi
Saud Khalif Alhamdan
Yassen Kattan
Yazeed Saleh Almuzini
Abdulaziz Al Thani

Aisha AlMisned
AlAnoud Mohammed AlGhamdi
Alya Kamal Alemadi
Amena Al-Yousef
Amira Ben Ammar
Amrita Singh
Amna Khalid Al Mannai
Anichadi Moussa
Ankita Bagri
Aveed Sheikh
Aysha Waheed Alsaad
Bilal Benaissa
Haya Mohammed AlGhanim
Hussein El Ajouz
Hussein Nabil AlHunaidi
Maryam Al Danwish
Mohammad Ahmad AlSooj
Mohammad Bassam Albow
Muneera Abdulla AlObaidiy
Muneera Mohammed Al Mana
Najlaa Abdulrahman AlKuwan
Nasser Khalifa Alsayed
Noor Al Jaber
Noor Ibrahim Al Zainal
Noora Hamad AlKhalifa
Pawel Marciniak
Quratulain Azhar
Reem Abdulrahman AlEmadi

Sara Mohammed Al Hajri
Shaikha Jassim Al Hardan
Tajal Essa Al-Mohammadi
Tariq Nabil Atiyah
Zalfa Khalid Al Thani
Zohour Omer Al Fardan
Abdallah Mohamed Elsaedy
Abdulrahman Ahmad AlObaidan
Abdulrahman Al Jumaily
Abir Bouguerna
Ahmad Hassan Alemadi
Ali Hassan
Areg Azarian
Basel Owies
Chen Hua
Hamad Ibrahim AlMeghaiseeb
Humza Abid Khan
Imtiyaz Ahmed Khan
Jacques Bernard
Jose Daniel Saucedo
Khadeja Yousef Abuallain
Maha Mohammed AlSulaiti
Maryam Khalifa Al Thani
Maryam Mohammed AlKawari
Mashaal Mohammed AlSulaiti
Mohab Samy Misallam
Mohammed Hashem Al Den

Mami Gul Khattak
Muna Mohammed Altamimi
Naveen Pulicharla
Noor Mohammed AlGhanim
Nour Abdulaziz Albaghli
Saad Mohammed Alkubaisi
Wadha Mana Alhajri
Abdelrahman Khalifa
Abdulkarim Ibrahim Aldueb
Abdullah Saleh Almaghlooth
Ahmed Magdy ElAzab
Ahmed Yassen
Daniel Sader
Daniela Kanisova
Esraa Abdulrahman Albuti
Ibrahim Abdulrahman Fatani
Jalawi Sulaiman AlShudukhi
Khalid Abdullah
Lamees Mohammed Alkhamis
Mohamed Kamel Mansour
Nour Ethouda Mustafa Zorgui
Patrick Khadra
Rayan Saud Shahini
Ridha Nassar Shaikh
Saleh Alsalamah
Sami Sultan
Yasser Ismail Alismail

DARE THE IMPOSSIBLE

We are proud to celebrate the exceptional achievements of HEC Paris, Doha graduates, who are making an impact in their organizations and communities.

We wish you continued success in your personal and professional transformation.



qatar.exed.hec.edu



At QBC, Qatar steps into the global markets conversation

From Page 1

It is no accident that this is happening here. Qatar did not stumble into media through a back door. It built its presence one institution at a time, one speciality at a time. The story began with Qatar Radio, broadcasting on shortwave in the 1960s. Then came Al Jazeera, which redefined Arab news and made Doha a capital no global media conversation could afford to skip. Then Al Kass Sports, offering the Arab world a model of specialised sports journalism. Then beIN Sports, which turned Qatar into a global player in broadcasting rights stretching from European stadiums to Asia and the Americas. And now QBC completes the arc – Qatar’s first economic channel speaking to the world in the world’s language. It is the product of years of patient work by the Qatar Media Corporation, which once again demonstrates that investing in media is not a luxury that comes after development. It is one of its pillars. But many will still ask: Why an

economic channel? Why now? And why from Qatar? The answer needs no theory. It only needs you to look around. When the summer heat in Madrid climbs past 40°C, and air conditioners hum in every home from Lisbon to Berlin, the gas cooling those homes begins its journey from our fields. When a cargo plane lifts off from Frankfurt, when a container ship transits the Strait of Hormuz, when a fuel truck rolls along a highway in Asia – in every one of those moments, what happens in the Gulf has a direct effect on price, on speed, on access. This is not exaggeration. This is daily life, lived. The Gulf is an energy source no global economy can breathe without. Its sovereign wealth funds are an investment engine in the world’s major financial capitals. Its ports and airports are arteries of maritime, air and overland transport. Those who live this reality are the ones with the most right to tell its story; not the ones to have the story told about them. This is the role QBC steps in to

play. Not just another channel on the menu, but a serious effort to bring the economic narrative back to its natural home. Because the one who produces the energy has the right to explain its price. The one who manages sovereign wealth has the right to speak about its destination. And the one who sits along one of the world’s most strategic energy corridors has the right to be heard in any reading of that corridor. At the end of my visit, I watched the ringing of the bell. That ritual every market in the world knows, from New York to Tokyo, announcing the start of a new session. It was not a passing gesture. It was an announcement that Doha has decided to take its place in this global rhythm – not as a listener, but as part of its sound. I left the building that day certain that what I had seen was not a passing experiment. This is a channel born at the right moment, in the capital of media, from an institution that knows what it is doing and why. From Doha, the story begins. And the world will be listening.



Senior media figures and executives, including *Gulf Times* editor-in-chief Faisal al-Mudahka (centre), at the QBC launch yesterday. **PICTURES:** Shaji Kayamkulam

QBC takes centre stage as Qatar’s first dedicated 4K business channel

From Page 1

Marwan Aboushanab, general supervisor of news and programme content at QBC, emphasised the channel’s unique position in the global media landscape. He noted that its 4K broadcasting capability sets it apart technologically, while its editorial identity distinguishes it as one of the first economic channels originating from an Arab country rather than operating under a global media brand. Aboushanab also revealed that QBC is supported by a network of more than 30 correspondents stationed across major regional and international capitals. In addition, the channel has secured agreements with four global agencies to provide up-to-date market data and economic insights, ensuring the accuracy and depth of its reporting.

QBC officials further highlighted the strong presence of Qatari talent across editorial, production, and technical roles. This emphasis on national expertise reflects a broader commitment to nurturing local media professionals in tandem with the country’s expanding economic influence. Besides, plans are under way to recruit additional Qatari specialists, reinforcing the channel’s identity as a homegrown platform



with global ambitions.

In the meantime, Dr Sara al-Derham, acting director of news and digital media at QBC, described the launch as a milestone moment for Qatari media. She underscored the growing importance of economic journalism as a dynamic and integrated field,

particularly in an era of rapid global change.

Dr al-Derham also revealed that the dedicated QBC team had spent nearly nine months preparing for the channel’s launch, working intensively to ensure it would stand out in both content and presentation.

New channel ‘to lift economic media landscape’

From Page 1

He added that such platforms play a vital role in enhancing investor and entrepreneur confidence in the national economy. Al-Kuwari further noted that the launch of a specialised economic channel contributes to promoting economic awareness across different segments of society and aligns with the transformations taking place in the national economy, particularly amid the expansion of major projects and efforts to diversify income sources. He stressed that the QBC channel will provide professional, analytical media content that reflects the realities of the local market, showcases investment opportunities, and highlights the role of the private sector in achieving sustainable development, as well as the State’s efforts to support economic diversification and strengthen the private sector’s role as a key partner in development. He said Qatar Chamber welcomes this initiative and supports all

efforts aimed at developing the business environment by enhancing transparency and providing accurate information to business leaders and investors, enabling them to make well-informed decisions. He also emphasised the importance of strengthening communication between the public and private sectors and ensuring greater integration between media and economic institutions to achieve shared objectives. In conclusion, al-Kuwari expressed hope that the QBC channel will achieve its goals of becoming a leading media platform that reflects Qatar’s economic standing and keeps pace with its future aspirations. Mansour al-Nuaimi, a Qatari businessman, hailed the launch as a boost to specialised media and the country’s economic ambitions. QBC would serve as a key platform for spreading economic knowledge across society and backing the goals of Qatar National Vision 2030, al-Nuaimi said. He said the channel is expected to

highlight investment opportunities, promote innovation and strengthen dialogue between the public and private sectors. Al-Nuaimi added that providing reliable analytical content and hosting experts would help raise economic awareness, support the business environment and enable investors to make informed decisions, contributing to sustainable economic growth. He also said the channel would go beyond traditional broadcasting, positioning itself as an interactive platform aligned with digital transformation and innovation. He highlighted its potential to showcase local success stories, support start-ups and small and medium-sized enterprises, and encourage entrepreneurship among the youth. Al-Nuaimi suggested the channel could further enhance Qatar’s position as a regional hub for economic dialogue, particularly if it succeeds in attracting international expertise and influential voices to deliver in-depth, professional content. **(QNA)**

Virginia Commonwealth University School of the Arts in Qatar celebrates Class of 2026 at annual commencement ceremony

Virginia Commonwealth University School of the Arts in Qatar (VCUarts Qatar) proudly celebrated its Class of 2026 at its 25th annual Commencement ceremony held Monday, May 4, at the Sheraton Grand Doha Resort & Convention Hotel.

The occasion marked the achievements of 69 students from undergraduate and graduate programs, including Art History, Graphic Design, Interior Design, Painting and Printmaking, and the MFA in Design, who will now join a growing global network of VCUarts Qatar alumni.

Despite the challenges of moving to online learning during the spring semester, the Class of 2026 upheld VCUarts Qatar’s standards of quality and academic rigor to deliver high-caliber work under evolving conditions.

Opening remarks were shared via a recorded address by several members of Virginia Commonwealth University (VCU) leadership, including Dr. Michael Rao, President of VCU; Dr. Arturo Saavedra, Executive Vice President and Provost of VCU; and Dr. Carmenita Higginbotham, Dean of VCUarts and Special Assistant to the Provost for VCUarts Qatar.

This year, President Rao shared a message of hope and encouragement with the graduates: “We know this celebratory moment comes amid challenges...which makes your achievement even more meaningful. You are graduating at a time when the world needs thoughtful, creative leaders more than ever. I am confident you will go forward with creativity and compassion to shape a future that is more positively connected than ever before.”

Additionally, from VCUarts Qatar, the University’s leadership team, including Dean Amir Berbić, associate and assistant deans, department chairs, faculty, and staff, were in attendance to support the graduating class.

Marking the occasion, Dean Amir Berbić reflected on the challenges that graduates overcame during their final semester.

He noted that the shift to virtual learning that required students to complete their senior theses and final projects from home—away from the studios, labs, classrooms, and creative community that they were accustomed to—did not stop them from continuing to push their work forward.

“That took real perseverance. It required discipline, flexibility, patience, and determination,” Dean Amir Berbić said. “You kept making, thinking, researching, revising... even when the conditions were far from what you had imagined for your final semester.”

“What this class demonstrated was about more than resilience, though there was certainly plenty of that. You showed maturity, focus, and a real commitment to your work and to one another.”

“You proved that meaningful creative work does not depend on perfect conditions. It depends on curiosity, rigor, resourcefulness, and the willingness to continue when the path changes unexpectedly.”

This year’s Commencement speaker was Sheikha Reem Al-Thani, Deputy CEO of AL RIWAQ, Public Art, and Rubaiya Qatar at Qatar Museums (QM), who had led major exhibitions and public art initiatives that have elevated Qatar’s cultural profile regionally and internationally.

Addressing the graduating class, she encouraged them to embrace uncertainty and remain committed to depth over speed in their practice, noting: You are stepping into a world that is very different from the one



I entered. There is more visibility. More opportunity. More infrastructure. But with that comes expectation. Resist the pressure to rush. Meaningful work takes time. It takes time to understand context, to build something thoughtful, and to create work that resonates. Don’t let speed define your value. Depth will always matter more. You are graduating in a place that is still shaping its cultural identity - that is rare. You are stepping into something still being written. And that means—you are part of that story.”

The title of Valedictorian was bestowed upon two students this year, Khawla Zaki Al-Essa (GDES, 2026) and Sruthi Subash (GDES, 2026), who hold the highest academic ranking among the graduation class. Their joint speech reflected on a journey that was far from linear and expressed deep gratitude for the support of family, friends, and the VCUarts Qatar community.

They left their peers with a note of optimism: “We are not graduating in a time of simplicity,” said Al-Essa, “we are graduating in a time that asks more of us. But perhaps that is exactly why our work matters. You just need to keep showing up. Keep creating, and keep questioning. So wherever we go next, whether we design, research, or create, I hope we all carry that responsibility with us. Not as a burden, but as a purpose.”

Subash echoed the sentiment saying, “This moment marks our entry into the next chapter of our lives. The future can be unpredictable and things may seem bleak, but one lesson I have learned through my time here at VCUarts Qatar is that love and support can get you far in life. Our departure is both melancholic and exciting. I’m sad to be leaving the community that I have built for the last four years, as I am sure most of you are as well. But to know that I am going out into the world with such creative and talented people as all of you makes me feel hopeful for our futures. This is not the end, but our beginning.”



Qatar Post achieves data privacy milestone

Qatar Post has become the third national organisation to obtain the ISO/IEC 27701:2019 certification for Personal Information Management Systems (PIMS), marking a milestone in its data protection efforts. The certification recognises the company's role as both a controller and processor of personal data, and its commitment to safeguarding the privacy of stakeholders, including customers, employees, suppliers and third parties. It builds on a range of existing international standards already held by Qatar Post, including ISO 27001, ISO 20000, ISO 9001, ISO 14001, ISO 45001 and ISO 39001. Officials said the certification process was completed entirely by internal teams, including the Personal Information and Privacy Management Working Group, without external support.

Sidra Medicine advances paediatric sports care with tailored techniques

Sidra Medicine, a member of Qatar Foundation, is advancing orthopaedic care in Qatar with the introduction of a specialised paediatric orthopaedic sports medicine service. The latest offering from the Sidra Medicine's Orthopaedics Department delivers growth-sparing surgical techniques, tailored for children and young adults. Dr Farhan Ali, chief of Orthopaedic Surgery at Sidra Medicine, said: "Accurate and early diagnosis is critical in paediatric sports injuries, as delayed or incorrect treatment can significantly impact outcomes." "Unlike adult sports medicine, treating young athletes requires a fundamentally different approach, as children have open growth plates that are highly vulnerable to long-term damage if not managed correctly," he explained. "Our paediatric orthopaedic sports medicine service reinforces our position as a regional hospital of choice for highly specialised paediatric care," Dr Ali continued. "It addresses a critical gap in pae-

diatric orthopaedics and reduces the need for families to travel abroad for treatment." The impact of the service was recently demonstrated through the successful treatment of a rare and complex paediatric case, highlighting Sidra Medicine's ability to deliver advanced, precision-led care for growing children. A 12-year-old patient with a sports-related knee injury continued to experience pain and instability despite being treated at another external facility. He was referred to Sidra Medicine for further assessment. Upon evaluation, specialists conducted a comprehensive reassessment and confirmed the diagnosis of a rare femoral avulsion of the anterior cruciate ligament (ACL). Dr Nedal Alkhatib, attending orthopaedic surgeon at Sidra Medicine, said: "While sports injury procedures are widely available across private hospitals in Doha, this level of paediatric specialisation remains limited." "Thanks to our experience, we were able to identify an excep-



Dr Farhan Ali



Dr Nedal Alkhatib

tionally uncommon injury, with only a limited number of cases reported worldwide," he said. "Our care programme involved a highly specialised approach tailored to a growing patient." The procedure used a minimally invasive arthroscopic technique with all-suture anchors, without metal or permanent implants. Crucially, the procedure preserved the patient's growth plates which are particularly vulnerable in children and young adults. The patient has since shown strong recovery, with restored joint stability and improved function. "Treating sports injuries in children is fundamentally different from adult care," Dr Alkhatib pointed out.

"Growth plates are the most vulnerable part of a child's skeleton," he added. "If not addressed correctly, they can create long-term complications such as limb length discrepancies or deformities." "Our approach focuses on repairing the injury while preserving normal development to ensure long-term outcomes are not compromised," Dr Alkhatib said. The patient's family also highlighted the impact of the care journey at Sidra Medicine. "After months of uncertainty and seeing our son continually struggling with pain, coming to Sidra Medicine was a turning point for us," they recounted. "The team took the time to reassess his condition thoroughly and

explained everything clearly!" "What gave us the most reassurance was their focus on treating the injury while protecting his growth and future mobility," they added. "We are incredibly grateful to see him regain his strength and confidence." Sidra Medicine's latest paediatric orthopaedic sports medicine offering from the Department of Orthopaedics is led by Dr Alkhatib, a dual fellowship-trained attending surgeon, specialised in paediatric orthopaedics and orthopaedic sports medicine. The service offers comprehensive management of sports-related injuries in children and young adults, supported by advanced surgical techniques and tailored rehabilitation programmes. As participation in youth sports continues to grow, the demand for precise, age-specific care is increasing, and Sidra Medicine continues to meet this need by ensuring patients receive the right care at the right time, with outcomes that support both recovery and long-term health. For more details, visit www.sidra.org

QU Press to unveil new titles at DIBF

Qatar University Press (QU Press) is set to participate in the 35th edition of the Doha International Book Fair (DIBF), scheduled to take place on May 14-23 at the Doha Exhibition and Convention Centre (DECC). During the event, QU Press will launch a number of new titles spanning cultural, academic and research fields, alongside translated works. QU Press director Sheikha Sheikha Ahmed al-Thani said the participation marks an important milestone in reinforcing the press's role as a contributor to academic output and a platform for scholarly research. Since its establishment, QU Press has published 103 books. During the 2025-26 academic year alone, it produced 20 books and 14 peer-reviewed journal issues across a range of disciplines, including law, social sciences, humanities and education. The DIBF is one of the region's leading cultural events, bringing together publishers, writers and readers from around the world. This year's edition will feature more than 515 publishing houses from over 36 countries, alongside participation from government and private institutions. - QNA

Workshop on sustainable production, consumption

The Ministry of Environment and Climate Change (MoECC) has organised a workshop to present and discuss a proposed national strategy on sustainable production and consumption. The initiative, led by the ministry's Green Development and Environmental Sustainability Department, reflects Qatar's efforts to promote more efficient use of resources and align with the goals of Qatar National Vision 2030. Officials said the strategy aims to reduce waste, cut emissions and improve energy and resource efficiency, while supporting local production and encouraging responsible consumption. It also seeks to promote the adop-

tion of clean technologies across key sectors. The workshop focused on mechanisms and methods for measuring outcomes, alongside discussions on the main pillars of the strategy and updates on ongoing studies. Participants also examined different stages of production cycles and ways to improve them. The MoECC stressed the importance of co-ordination between relevant entities to ensure the strategy is practical and applicable at the national level. It added that further workshops will be organised in the coming period, involving a range of national stakeholders to ensure alignment across sectors. - QNA




Qatar-Poland ties steadily growing in various fields

Qatar-Poland relations are gaining notable momentum, driven by converging political perspectives, expanding economic partnerships, and growing co-operation across various sectors, according to Polish ambassador Tomasz Sadzinski. The ambassador pointed out that bilateral ties have become increasingly dynamic and multifaceted, with stronger co-ordination on regional and international issues alongside tangible growth in trade, energy co-operation, and investment flows. He noted that tourism is also emerging as a promising opportunity, as the numbers of visitors from both countries are on the rise. The ambassador's remarks coincided with Poland's national holidays on May 2-3, which reflect key pillars of Polish identity and history. It marks the anniversary of the Polish Constitution of May 3, 1791, widely regarded as Europe's first modern constitution and the second in the world, symbolising a long-standing commitment to freedom, the rule of law, and religious tolerance. Meanwhile, May 2 is celebrated as Polish Flag Day, honouring a national symbol composed of white, representing purity and truth, and red, symbolising courage and sacrifice. In Doha, the embassy is marking the occasion through cultural events, social media initiatives, and community engagement activities, including public readings of constitutional excerpts and a photography competition for the Polish community. In the meantime, on the political and security front, ties between Qatar and Poland continue to deepen. Poland's economy surpassed \$1tn in GDP in 2025, and the country is set to participate for the first time in the G20 summit scheduled to take place in Miami in December 2026. The strength of bilateral co-ordination was evident during the recent regional tensions. Following attacks targeting Qatar, Poland issued a statement on March 1 calling for de-escalation, adherence to international law, and civilian protection, while expressing solidarity with Doha. This was followed by high-level diplomatic engagement, including a phone call between Polish Foreign Minister Radoslaw Sikorski and Qatar's Prime Minister and Foreign Minister HE Sheikh Mohamed bin Abdulrahman bin Jassim al-Thani, focusing on crisis management, energy security, and diplomatic co-ordination. Defence co-operation has also intensified, with discussions between the defence ministers of both countries, and continued participation by Qatari delegations in the International Defence Industry Exhibition in Kielce, Poland, one of Europe's largest defence exhibitions, as well as collaboration during DIMDEX 2026 in Doha. Poland has also been training Qatari Coast Guard personnel at its maritime academy since 2016. Further, economic relations remain a cornerstone of the partnership. Bilateral trade reached approximately \$1.38bn in 2025, with Polish exports to Qatar accounting for \$238mm. Energy co-operation, particularly in liquefied nat-



Poland's ambassador to Qatar Tomasz Sadzinski.

ural gas (LNG), continues to anchor the relationship, with Qatari LNG exports to Poland exceeding \$960mm in the same year. Notably, Qatar became Poland's first non-Russian gas supplier in 2015, helping Warsaw diversify its energy sources. Investment ties are also gaining traction. Doha hosted the first Polish-Qatari investment forum in November 2025, while representatives from Invest Qatar participated in economic events in Poland in 2026. Polish companies are increasingly exploring opportunities in Qatar, particularly in food production, infrastructure, and logistics. A key example is the establishment of a supply and export hub by the LuLu Group International near the Polish city of Łódź. Co-operation in higher education and scientific research is also on the rise, especially following agreements signed during His Highness the Amir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani's 2024 visit to Poland. A high-level Polish academic delegation visited Doha in February 2026, engaging with local institutions and helping launch a joint action plan. Poland's advanced innovation ecosystem is seen as offering significant opportunities for collaboration in technology transfer and research development. Tourism is rapidly becoming a key pillar of bilateral engagement. Efforts to promote Poland as a destination for Qatari and Gulf tourists have intensified through workshops and promotional campaigns in Doha involving dozens of companies from both countries. Warsaw serves as the main entry point for visitors, while destinations such as Krakow, as well as the country's mountain and coastal areas, attract tourists with their natural beauty. Emerging coastal cities such as Gdansk and Gdynia are also gaining popularity. The ambassador noted that Poland's hospitality sector has adapted to meet the needs of travellers from the Middle East, with a growing number of halal dining options available, particularly in major cities.



وزارة البلدية
Ministry of Municipality
دولة قطر • State of Qatar

Major Tenders and Auctions Committee

Public Auction Announcement

Sale of a Number of Animals at Al Sheehaniya Animal Production Research Station

The Ministry of Municipality hereby announces the sale of a number of animals at Al Sheehaniya Animal Production Research Station via public auction, in accordance with the following details:

Auction Location: Animal Production Research Station at Al Sheehaniya (Building No. 2335, Street No. 373, Zone 80)
Auction Date and Time: Saturday, May 16, 2026, at 7:00 AM

The animals may be inspected at the auction site daily from 8:00 AM to 1:00 PM, starting Thursday, May 7, 2026, and ending Thursday, May 14, 2026, excluding Fridays and Saturdays. Such inspection shall be considered sufficient to eliminate ambiguity, and the auction will proceed according to the numbers listed below:

Serial No.	Type	Females	Males	Young Males	Total
1	Camels	2	1	0	3
2	Awassi Sheep	60	17	20	97
3	Arabian Sheep	2	3	3	8
4	Najdi Sheep	2	2	4	8
5	Harri Sheep	0	5	0	5
6	Barbary Sheep	0	5	0	5
7	Shami Goats	25	17	0	42
8	White Ardi Goats	0	4	0	4
9	Black Ardi Goats	0	18	0	18
Total		91 heads	72 heads	27 heads	190 heads

Conditions of the Public Auction

- Doors will open to the public at 6:00 AM on the day of the auction at the aforementioned location.
- The following documents shall be presented:
 - Original ID Card
 - Authorization letter for individuals issued by the companies they represent
 - Izba License
 - Commercial Registration, including livestock trading activity
 - Original Establishment Card
 - Copy of all the above-mentioned documents
- If the auction is awarded to the successful bidder, he shall pay 20% of the sale price as a deposit/down payment. The remaining balance must be paid within two days (48 hours) from the date of sale, noting that the deposit is non-refundable.
- If the successful bidder withdraws from the purchase or fails to pay the remaining balance within two days, the down payment mentioned in Para (3) hereinabove shall be forfeited.
- The successful bidder shall pay the remaining balance within two working days from the date of award of the auction. Failure to do so will result in the cancellation of the award, forfeiture of the 20% deposit, and the bidder will be charged for any shortfall in the price, storage fees, and administrative expenses equal to 10% of the new sale price. No refunds will be issued for any increase in the sale price.
- The purchaser shall collect the animals within three working days from the date of award of the auction. The Ministry shall not be liable for the consequences of any delay in collecting the animals.
- If the purchaser fails to collect the animals within the specified period without a valid excuse, he shall pay storage fees equivalent to 1% of the price of the animals, up to a maximum of 15 days. After this period, the animals will be sold at the purchaser's expense, and he will be charged for any shortfall in the price, storage fees, and administrative expenses equal to 10% of the new sale price. No refunds will be issued for any increase in the sale price.
- This announcement is valid from the date of publication until the end of the auction period.
- Each person participating in the auction acknowledges having read all the terms and procedures of the Auction adopted by the organizing Committee and accepts all its decisions in this regard.

21 nations, one HOPE: Celebrating HOPE Qatar's International Day 2026

The air at the HOPE Qatar Centre for Persons with Disabilities was recently filled with the rhythmic beat of traditional music and the aroma of home-cooked food as the Centre marked its ongoing 2-decade celebration in Qatar.

In a vibrant explosion of colour and sound, HOPE Qatar celebrated its International Day 2026, a milestone event that transformed the campus into a sprawling global village, representing the 21 unique nationalities that make up its diverse heartbeat.

Since its inception in 2005, HOPE Qatar has been a pioneer in special education, and as it celebrates its 20th anniversary, it continues to serve as a beacon of progress, perfectly aligned with the Human Development Pillar of the Qatar National Vision 2030 and the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (UNSDGs).

By empowering differently-abled children and young adults to hone their abilities, HOPE Qatar directly contributes to Quality Education (SDG 4), Reduced Inequalities (SDG 10), and Partnerships for the Goals (SDG 17).

This commitment to excellence is underscored by the fact that HOPE Qatar remains the only educational institution in the entire GCC region to hold four



prestigious international ISO certifications – ISO 9001 for Quality Management, ISO 14001 for Environmental Systems, ISO 45001 for Occupational Health and Safety, and ISO 21001 for Educational Management Systems.

The Centre's journey from its humble beginnings in 2005 to an internationally accredited and respected powerhouse was palpable throughout the festivities, showcasing a continued dedication to safety, sustainability, and holistic inclusion for every student in its care.

The highlight of the celebration was a grand, meticulously choreographed display of global

heritage that brought the spirit of four continents to life right here in Doha. The stage became a whirlwind of movement and music as staff members, hailing from nine different nationalities, performed traditional dances that told ancestral stories of joy, resilience, and community.

Energy radiated through the spectators as staff from various African nations performed rhythmic, high-energy dances that echoed the heartbeat of the continent. This was followed by the mesmerising grace of the Arab world, with performances that honoured the host nation's rich regional heritage and hospitality,

Qatar. The Indian sub-continent was represented through a kaleidoscope of colours, rhythmic clapping, and intricate folk dance that captivated the audience, while the elegance of Filipino traditional dance added a unique rhythmic grace to the proceedings, with staff and students joining in. These performances served as a powerful visual metaphor for the Centre itself: many different movements coming together to create one beautiful, harmonious masterpiece.

This sensory journey extended beyond the stage to the "Flavours of the World" pavilion, where the "One HOPE Family" philosophy

was tasted through an extraordinary culinary spread.

In a display of community spirit, staff members prepared and shared authentic dishes cooked in their own homes, representing the diverse cuisines of their native lands. The food shared was a powerful symbol of unity and a reminder of the home that every staff member and student finds within the Centre's walls.

Simultaneously, the "Arts of the World" corner offered a tactile and immersive experience of tradition. One of the most popular attractions was the live demonstration of Pakistani 'Henna Art', where staff members meticulously

decorated the hands of students, teachers, and guests with swirling, meaningful patterns. This ancient art form, along with other traditional crafts on display, provided a hands-on way for the community to connect with the heritage of Pakistan and other nations, making the abstract concept of "diversity" something tangible and beautiful.

"For the students representing 16 different nationalities, International Day 2026 was more than just a commemorative event," said Prof Aparna Merugu, the acting Centre head. "It was a profound, life-changing opportunity to experience the rich diversity that HOPE Qatar represents firsthand."



QCDC marks milestone for first cohort of post-graduate diploma

Qatar Career Development Centre (QCDC), founded by Qatar Foundation, held midterm examinations for the first cohort of the post-graduate diploma in career development, in partnership with the Community College of Qatar.

The examination marks the completion of the cohort's first academic term in the first Arabic-language programme of its kind in Qatar and the region.

The milestone celebrates the programme's move from launch to implementation, with the first cohort now enrolled and progressing through its academic and professional journey. The post-graduate diploma programme was developed by QCDC in partnership with EduCluster Finland and is delivered in partnership with the Community College of Qatar under license from the Ministry of Education and Higher Education.

Participants concluded the first term by completing their midterm examinations, reflecting their progress in an academic and professional pathway designed to respond to Qatar's local context and equip practitioners with modern knowledge and tools that help individuals make more in-



formed academic and career decisions.

The diploma combines theoretical learning with practical application through academic modules covering career development concepts, professional ethics, contextualised practice in Qatar, guidance and counselling methods, and labour market informa-

tion. Together, these components support the development of professional competencies that enable practitioners to deliver evidence-informed services aligned with Qatar's needs and development priorities.

Saad Abdulla al-Kharji, executive director of QCDC, said: "Completing the first academic

term of this diploma marks an important step in advancing the professionalisation of career guidance and development in Qatar. This programme is the result of institutional collaboration among several partners, to whom we extend our sincere appreciation.

"This ambitious endeavour would not have been possible

without their complementary roles and continued support. It also reflects their shared commitment to building professional and sustainable competencies that enhance the quality of guidance provided to young people, strengthen the connection between education outcomes and labour market needs, and support national efforts to develop human capital and prepare future generations."

The diploma forms part of a broader national pathway aimed at developing a more integrated career development ecosystem in Qatar by preparing specialised practitioners with the knowledge and tools needed to support individuals across different stages of their education and career journeys. It also aligns with the goals of Qatar National Vision 2030 by investing in people and strengthening the future readiness of the workforce.

Participants will continue completing the programme requirements over the coming terms, including further applied and specialised components that will enable them to use their acquired knowledge and skills across different educational and professional settings.

Recall of Hyundai Palisade 2026 models

The Ministry of Commerce and Industry, in co-operation with Skyline Automotive, Qatar's Hyundai dealership, has announced the recall of Hyundai Palisade 2026 models.

The recall is due to a potential malfunction in the third-row power seats, which may prevent them from detecting the presence of passengers or objects during the automatic folding process. The Ministry said the recall campaign comes within the framework of its ongoing efforts to protect consumers and ensure that car dealers follow up on vehicle defects and repairs.

The Ministry said that it will co-ordinate with the dealer to follow up on the maintenance and repair works and will communicate with customers to ensure that the necessary repairs are carried out. The Ministry urges all customers to report any violations to its Consumer Protection and Anti-Commercial Fraud Department, which processes complaints, inquiries and suggestions through the following channels: Call Centre: 16001, e-mail: info@moci.gov.qa, ministry's accounts on social media: @mociqatar, ministry's Mobile App: MOCIQATAR (available on iOS and Android devices).

Doha Debates Podcast examines the global questions shaping society

Qatar Foundation's Doha Debates continues the rollout of its weekly podcast episodes, airing every Tuesday through June 2. Since launching on January 6, the season has brought leading global thinkers into direct conversation on the defining questions of our time.

The Doha Debates Podcast extends themes first explored in Doha Debates' flagship debates and town halls, offering deeper, sustained exchanges that connect disciplines, regions and worldviews through open, truth-seeking dialogue.

The latest episode, "Do conspiracy theories have any value?", moderated by Daren Abughaida, brings together Heather Berlin, Alex Berenson, Nuuriant Jalli and Andrea Kitta to examine the growing influence of conspiracy theories, misinformation and so-called "fake news" in shaping public discourse.

Conspiracy theories used to be dismissed as paranoid fringe thinking. But in recent years, they've migrated to the mainstream. Claims about election meddling, public health and the deep state circulate on the Internet and are even repeated by government officials.

This episode asks whether con-



spiracy theories have any actual value in a world where uncertainty is high and institutional accountability is low. Do they only make the spread of misinformation and disinformation worse? Or are they a way for people to express real suspicion toward systems that often feel hidden or unaccountable?

Berlin points to the cognitive roots of conspiracy thinking, explaining: "Such narratives are inherently appealing because they create a sense of order and closure, making complex or uncertain realities feel coherent and understandable."

Upcoming episodes this season

cover themes including social justice movements, resistance, contemporary art, childlessness and football, each exploring how cultural, social and political shifts are reshaping societies and identities.

Additional debates will continue to examine how information ecosystems, media narratives and emerging technologies are influencing public opinion, trust and collective identity in an increasingly complex global landscape.

Together, the season reflects Doha Debates' commitment to creating space for thoughtful, truth-seeking dialogue – where complex issues can be explored with depth, nuance and a diversity of perspectives.

"Do conspiracy theories have any value?" is available now, along with all episodes released this season, across major podcast platforms, on YouTube and at DohaDebates.com



QNA launches Arabic training course for media professionals

QNA
Doha

Qatar News Agency (QNA) launched yesterday a training course on developing Arabic language skills for media professionals, as part of QNA Training Center's 2026 training plan, with the participation of media professionals from the agency and several government bodies.

Represented by Associate Dean for Languages, Communications and Translation at the College of Arts and Science of Qatar University (QU), Dr Seeta

al-Athba, the three-day course aims to develop participants' skills in using correct Arabic in media work according to sound professional principles, which contributes to improving the quality of media content.

The training course includes theoretical and practical topics covering the basics of the Arabic language in media, proper journalistic writing methods, language editing skills and methods of rewriting texts, as well as the construction of an integrated media text that combines accuracy and appeal, in addition to reviewing common errors in media texts and ways

to address them. This training course comes as part of QNA's efforts – through the QNA Training Center, to develop national media competencies and keep pace with the rapid developments in the digital content industry, in order to contribute to enhancing the quality of media production.

In March 2023, QNA opened "QNA Training Halls," equipped with the latest training methods, as part of its vision to enhance the capabilities of Qatari media professionals and create a generation capable of leading the future of national media.

Museum of Islamic Art hosting Haj event on May 9

The Museum of Islamic Art (MIA) is organising an interactive cultural event, titled "Family Day: Haj - Traditions, Art, and Heritage" on May 9 at the museum atrium from 2.30pm to 4.30pm, as part of its programmes aimed at enhancing cultural awareness among various sections of society.

The event targets families, offering a comprehensive educational experience that allows visitors to learn about the traditions of Haj and its associated artistic and heritage dimensions through a range of interactive activities that combine knowledge and enjoyment.

The programme allows participants to explore the cultural and artistic significance of Haj through educational stations designed in a simple, engaging style, highlighting rituals and history, as well as artistic representations that have depicted this spiritual journey throughout the ages.

The event includes interactive hands-on activities that encourage children and family members to participate and discover, contributing to a deeper understanding of the values and symbolism of Haj and strengthening the connection of generations to Islamic heritage in a contemporary context.

This event is part of a series of family programmes organised by the MIA, as part of its ongoing efforts to provide educational cultural content that combines learning and interactive experience, and enhances the role of museums as vital spaces for learning and discovery.



Workshop on visual storytelling at Katara

The Qatar Photography Centre has announced an advanced training workshop titled "How to Tell Stories Through Images", presented by trainer Khaled Ismail, on May 11-12, at the centre's headquarters, Katara - Building 18 from 4pm to 8pm.

This workshop is part of the centre's efforts to develop photographers' skills and enhance their ability to utilise photography as a comprehensive visual storytelling tool, keeping pace with modern developments in photography and visual content creation.

The workshop focuses on empowering participants to construct cohesive stories through images by understanding the elements of visual storytelling, such as composition, lighting, and shot sequence, as well as how to express ideas and emotions using various photographic tools.

The workshop includes a practical component, giving participants the opportunity to work on real photography projects under the trainer's direct supervision, thereby refining their skills and enhancing their ability to produce professional visual content.

The programme targets photographers of all skill levels, particularly those wishing to move beyond taking individual photos to producing complete visual narratives with artistic and human dimensions.

The Qatar Photography Centre invites interested participants to register via the provided link, as places are limited.

The centre emphasises its commitment to offering high-quality training programmes that support the artistic and cultural movement in Qatar and develop a new generation of creative photographers.

Civil Service Bureau delivers digital solutions projects for two ministries

By Tawfik Lamari
Staff Reporter

The Government Innovation and Development Department at the Civil Service Bureau has concluded two innovation rounds under the Government Initiatives Accelerator programme, delivering high-quality outcomes for the Ministry of Labour and the Ministry of Sports and Youth.

The initiative is part of ongoing efforts to advance digital transformation and enhance the efficiency and quality of government services across Qatar.

In the first project, the department delivered the outputs of the "Development of the Labour Dispute Resolution Platform" to the Ministry of Labour, supporting its efforts to strengthen digital services and improve the efficiency of its dispute resolution system.



This picture taken from social media shows the officials at the delivery ceremony.

The project introduced an integrated operational model, supported by a prototype digital solution designed to accelerate dispute resolution, enhance transparency, and provide more seamless access to services. It is expected to improve user experience and

strengthen institutional performance in this vital sector.

In parallel, under the Innovation Lab framework, the department completed deliverables for an innovation round to develop a prototype unified digital platform for the Ministry of Sports and Youth.

The platform is designed to integrate services, support youth empowerment, and promote sports participation nationwide.

The proposed platform enables the ministry and relevant entities to plan, manage, and promote sports and youth events, and to measure their impact using advanced analytical tools that support data-driven decision-making.

This project supports the ministry's strategic objectives, reinforces digital governance, and promotes a data-driven approach to addressing sector challenges, ultimately enhancing performance and ensuring sustainable impact.



DDD issues final call for Public Art submissions

The Doha Design District (DDD) has issued a final call for submissions to its Public Art open call ahead of its May 14 deadline.

Artists, designers, and creatives are encouraged to submit their proposals via the official website before the closing date.

The initiative reflects the DDD's ongoing commitment to shaping a dynamic and engaging urban environment through creativity, innovation, and cultural exchange.

By integrating public art into the fabric of the district, the DDD reinforces its vision of becoming a leading global platform for design while celebrating Qatari identity and fostering meaningful community interaction.

Through such initiatives, the DDD aims to support creative talent, encourage interdisciplinary collaboration, and contribute to the development of a vibrant, sustainable, and culturally rich public realm in the heart of Msheireb Downtown Doha.

Old Doha Port Fishing Competition returning next week

The Old Doha Port Fishing Competition returns for its third edition on May 13-16, bringing together teams from across Qatar for four days of competitive fishing in Qatar's waters.

Recognised as the largest fishing competition of its kind, this year's edition follows the Ministry of Transport's announcement on the full resumption of maritime navigation for all types of vessels.

This year's edition features the competition's most valuable prize lineup to date, reflecting its continued growth and rising profile.

The top three teams will each receive a vehicle: a GWM Tank 500 for first place, a GWM Tank 300 for second, and a Haval H9 for third.

The fourth-place winner will receive a boat provided by Haloul Boat Factory.

Teams placing fifth to tenth will



be awarded cash prizes.

Teams will depart from Old Doha Port to compete for the largest Kingfish ("Kanad"), with winners determined by the weight of the catch.

The three-day competition begins with the teams' departure before sunset on Wednesday (May 13) and concludes with the judging and awards ceremony on the evening of Saturday (May 16) at Old Doha Port.

More than a sporting event, the competition celebrates Qatar's rich maritime heritage.

It also brings a contemporary competitive spirit to long-standing

traditions led by "Nukhatha", traditional boat captains, in line with Old Doha Port's vision to preserve and promote the nation's seafaring legacy.

Registration will take place daily until May 10 at Doha Marine Sports Club, from 9am to 4pm.

To complete registration, participants must call +97455734539.

Teams must be led by a Qatari captain (Nukhatha), while residents may participate as team members.

A completed entry form, valid identification for all team members, and a valid boat registration are required.

EAA backs completion of 100 learning spaces across 10 Gaza school sites

In co-operation with the Qatar Fund for Development (QFFD), the Education Above All Foundation (EAA) has announced the completion of 100 learning spaces across 10 school sites in the Gaza Strip, in partnership with the United Nations Development Programme/Programme of Assistance to the Palestinian People (UNDP/PAPP), the Palestinian ministry of education and higher education, and the Gaza Culture and Development Group.

The EAA said in a statement yesterday that this intervention is part of the broader partnership "Rebuilding Hope for Gaza: Emergency Support for High School Exam (Tawjihi) for Gaza Students," which aims to support the continuity of formal education and national examination processes in Gaza.

The statement noted that the completed school sites are located across North Gaza, Gaza City, and the Middle Area, helping expand equitable access to education during a period of immense need.

Civil works included the installation of protective fencing and the establishment of transitional structured school units designed to support formal learning and provide students with a safer environment to continue their education.

"Education is a lifeline for children and youth in Gaza," the statement cited the EAA chief executive as saying. "The completion of these 100 learning spaces represents



an important step towards restoring hope, dignity, and a pathway back to learning for thousands of students whose education has been interrupted by conflict."

Palestine's Minister of Education and Higher Education Dr Amjad Barham said that this project represents a fundamental pillar in his ministry's recovery plan, which places the restoration of in-person education in the Gaza Strip at the forefront of its priorities.

"Enabling students to return to well-equipped classrooms is essential to safeguarding their right to a digni-

fied future," he said. "These schools will complement virtual school initiatives to address learning loss and support exam preparation."

"The completion of these 100 learning spaces reflects the UNDP's commitment to supporting early recovery and restoring essential services in Gaza," said Special Representative of the Administrator Jaco Cilliers.

The 10 school sites will operate as part of a broader education network alongside 128 learning centres across the Gaza Strip, where the UNDP/PAPP is supporting the establishment of essential infrastructure to enable the continuity of education.

Relief Housing Units will also be repurposed to support school administration and storage functions, alongside the provision of latrine facilities to ensure safe and dignified learning conditions.

The strengthened network of schools and learning centres will play a pivotal role in enabling the Palestinian education ministry to conduct the Tawjihi General Secondary examinations, scheduled to begin on June 20.

This will mark the first round of in-person Tawjihi examinations in Gaza since 2023, following the participation of more than 60,000 students in examinations conducted earlier this year, with the remaining 30,000 students scheduled to sit for their exams in cycles starting in June. - QNA

Lebanese School team is the inaugural Mini World Cup champion

The Mini World Cup 2025-26 season concluded yesterday at Aspire Academy with the Lebanese School winning the title after overcoming the Philippine International School Qatar (PISQ), 58-47.

The tournament was held under the auspices of the International Basketball Federation (FIBA), in partnership with the Qatar Basketball Federation (QBF) and the Qatar School Sports Federation.

The Lebanese team claimed the title of the inaugural edition, held in a vibrant atmosphere and attended by members of the Organising Committee, Lebanese and Filipino supporters.

During the awards ceremony, QBF secretary-general Saoud Sabah al-Kuwari, joined by FIBA World Basketball Cup Qatar 2027 director Predrag Bogosavljev and Ahmed al-Darwish, competitions director of the Organising Committee of the FIBA Basketball World Cup Qatar 2027, crowned Lebanese School with the championship trophy and gold medals.

The PISQ secured second place with silver medals, while GEMS American Academy Qatar claimed third place and bronze medals.

The tournament stood as a pioneering initiative in the Middle East and globally, delivered through a competitive format inspired by the upcoming FIBA Basketball World Cup Qatar 2027.



It reflects Qatar's commitment to sustainability in sport, its dedication to building a lasting basketball legacy, and its efforts to expand the game's popularity across the region.

This event coincided with the finals of the School Olympic Programme for the 2025-26 seasons, within a comprehensive vision that blends athletic excellence with educational values.

This approach contributes to developing a generation that is both sports-aware and socially responsible, capable of supporting the future of basketball while strengthening sport as a platform for human connection and friendship among nations.

Thirty-two secondary schools from across Qatar participated in the 2025-26

season of the Mini World Cup, representing a diverse and vibrant educational landscape.

Based on the final standings of the 2025-26 season, participating schools in the second edition (2026-27) will be eligible to represent the national teams qualified for the FIBA Basketball World Cup Qatar 2027.

This initiative strengthens students' connection to the global event and adds a strategic dimension beyond competition, contributing to a sustainable sporting legacy and reinforcing basketball's growing presence locally and regionally.

"By empowering young talents and students, we are not only raising awareness but also laying the foundations for a strong and sustainable basketball legacy," Bogosavljev

said. "Attracting more youth to the sport in this region remains a key objective."

Al-Kuwari highlighted the tournament's success as an advanced model for leveraging sport as a tool for education and development.

He emphasised that it fostered teamwork, encouraged active student participation, and expanded opportunities for volunteering, further supporting the growth and popularity of basketball among youth.

Al-Darwish lauded the success of the 2025-26 World Cup season, highlighting it as a progressive educational model that seamlessly integrates sport and learning under a unified vision.

Mini World Cup Project director Marwan Egho said that the tournament's organisation embodies our unwavering commitment to upholding FIBA standards in officiating, competition formats, and court specifications.

Sharing his thoughts after securing the inaugural Mini World Cup title, Lebanese School coach Gaspard Ishak commended the tournament's excellent organisation and said that his team is determined to defend their crown in the next edition.

PISQ head coach Arsenio Lacson voiced his satisfaction with his team's performance, highlighting their solid display despite some lapses in rebounding and ball control, and conceding that the better side prevailed in the end.



Child, two others killed in Israeli attacks on Gaza

Reuter
Cairo/Gaza

Israeli strikes killed at least three Palestinians, including a child, and wounded several others in the Gaza Strip yesterday, health officials said.

Medics said a Palestinian was killed and two others were wounded by an Israeli airstrike near the Sheikh Radwan neighbourhood in Gaza City, while another was killed and several others were wounded by Israeli tank shelling near the central area of the enclave.

Later yesterday, an Israeli strike targeted a police station in northern Gaza, killing a 15-year-old child, medics said. The Hamas-run interior ministry said some policemen were also wounded in the attack.

Reuters has previously reported that Israel has intensified its attacks on Gaza's Hamas-run police force, which the group has used to reinforce its hold in the areas it controls in the strip. There was no immediate Israeli comment on any of the incidents. Violence in Gaza has persisted despite an October 2025 ceasefire, with Israel conducting almost daily attacks on Palestinians. Israel and Hamas have blamed each other for ceasefire violations.

At Al Shifa Hospital, the largest medical facility still partially functional in the en-



A boy looks on as he sits on rubble at the site of an Israeli strike on a police station in Gaza City yesterday. (AFP)

clave, relatives and friends arrived to bid farewell to one of those killed yesterday, Mohammed Al-Ghandour. Two girls were crying and being comforted by a woman outside the hospital's morgue.

"The Zionist enemy doesn't know anything called truce and does not commit to international treaties or laws or humanitarian laws," said the victim's uncle, Abu Omar Al-Naffar. At least 830 Palestinians have been killed since the ceasefire deal took effect, according to local medics, while Israel says Hamas fighters have killed four of its soldiers over the same period.

Israel says its strikes are aimed

at thwarting attempts by Hamas and other Palestinian fighter to stage attacks against its forces.

More than 72,500 Palestinians have been killed since the war that has ravaged the Gaza Strip broke out in October 2023 – most of them civilians, according to Gaza health authorities.

Since the truce last October, Israel still occupies more than half of Gaza, where it has ordered residents out and demolished almost all remaining structures. Nearly the entire population of more than 2 mn Palestinians now lives in a narrow strip along the coast, mainly in tents and damaged buildings, under the de facto control of Hamas.

Zelensky offers Bahrain drone deal in Gulf trip



President Volodymyr Zelensky and Bahrain's King Hamad bin Isa al-Khalifa. (Ukrainian Presidential Press Service/ AFP)

AFP
Manama

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky yesterday offered a drone deal to Bahrain as he met with the king of the Gulf island state that has been attacked by Iran.

Zelensky has toured the Gulf since the outbreak of the US-Israeli war against Iran, signing defence deals as Kyiv leverages its expertise in fighting Russia and downing its drones, which are said to be based on Iranian technology.

"Ukraine is ready to share this security expertise with Bahrain and help strengthen the protection of life," Zelensky said in a statement published online after meeting King Hamad bin Isa al-Khalifa.

"I proposed signing a drone

deal and scaling up co-operation with Bahrain, and we agreed that our teams will work out the details," he added.

Ukraine has signed a string of defence agreements in the region since the Middle East war broke out in late February, including with Qatar, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates. Ukrainian military experts dispatched by Kyiv have also downed Iranian drones in several Middle Eastern countries.

The Gulf nations are being attacked with the same Iranian-designed Shahed drones that Russia fires on Ukraine.

"Our country is facing similar terrorist strikes almost every day, and our people have relevant experience in full-scale defense," Zelensky said in his statement. He said the pair also discussed opening embassies in each others' countries.

In brief

RELIEF

German FM wants Gaza's aid improved

German Foreign Minister Johann Wadepuhl said yesterday aid deliveries to Gaza had to be improved and he repeated Berlin's position that any de facto annexation of parts of the occupied West Bank by Israel would not be acceptable to Germany. "The plight of the more than two million people whose situation has not improved must not be overlooked amidst the conflict in Iran. Humanitarian aid must be improved as a matter of urgency," Wadepuhl said at a joint news conference in Berlin with his visiting Israeli counterpart Gideon Saar. (Reuters)

FIRE ALARMS

Fire at a shopping centre in Tehran

At least 10 people were hurt after a fire broke out in a shopping centre west of Tehran, Iranian media reported yesterday. Iran's state broadcaster IRIB cited the fire department as saying that the fire had been "largely contained". The cause of the incident remains unknown. Iranian media, including Fars, showed video of a plume of heavy smoke rising from the site. The fire broke out as a fragile ceasefire between Iran and the United States comes under renewed pressure. (Reuters)

ATROCITIES

Two killed in Israeli airstrikes in Lebanon

Lebanese authorities said two people were killed in an Israeli airstrike targeting a house in the southern area of Al Kharab, according to the National News Agency. Israeli warplanes also struck multiple towns across southern Lebanon, while an Israeli force backed by military vehicles and bulldozers advanced into the Marj area near Rmeish and deployed at a nearby junction. In a related development, Israeli forces warned residents in several towns to evacuate their homes. (QNA)

INTERROGATION

Gaza flotilla activists' detention extended

An Israeli court yesterday extended the detention of two foreign activists taken from a Gaza-bound flotilla by six days, a lawyer representing them said. Spanish national Saif Abu Keshek and Brazilian Thiago Avila appeared before a court in Ashkelon for their second hearing, after questioning last week. The extension is to allow police more time to interrogate them, the pair's lawyer said. (AFP)

DE-ESCALATION

Saudi Arabia calls for de-escalation

Saudi Arabia called yesterday to de-escalate the conflict in the Middle East after Iran and the United States traded fire, rattling a fragile ceasefire. "The Ministry of Foreign Affairs expresses the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia's concern regarding the current military escalation in the region, and calls for the need to de-escalate," the foreign ministry said in a statement posted on X. The ministry said it supported "diplomatic efforts to reach a political solution" in the war. (AFP)

Political foray of Yasser Abbas under lens

Reuters
Ramallah

The millionaire businessman son of Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas is expected to run for a steering role in his 90-year-old father's political party, sources say, as a succession fight looms for control of the embattled Palestinian Authority.

Yasser Abbas runs tobacco and contracting firms in the parts of the Israeli-occupied West Bank where the PA exercises limited self rule. His critics have long accused him and his brother Tarek, also a businessman, of using public funds to fuel their businesses, allegations both men reject.

His foray into politics has fuelled widespread speculation within the Palestinian Territories that Mahmoud Abbas may be seeking to position Yasser, 64, to succeed him as head of his powerful Fatah party that controls the PA. That has drawn criticism from some Fatah officials, who say that Yasser Abbas would be unable to unify Palestinians or help them chart a political future after years without any national elections or tangible steps toward statehood.

Yasser Abbas is expected to seek one of 18 seats on Fatah's Central Committee that are being contested during a party conference in the West Bank city of Ramallah from May 14-16, its first such gathering in almost 10 years, sources familiar with his plans said. In recent weeks, Yasser Abbas has held meetings with party factions representing the PA's security establishment as well



Mahmoud Abbas, accompanied by his son Yasser, leaves a hospital in Ramallah. (Reuters/File Photo)

as groups representing prisoners held by Israel, an influential constituency whose support could bolster him when Fatah's estimated 2,500 voting members cast ballots for the committee.

He has long joined his father in political meetings, including on a visit to Moscow last year when they met President Vladimir Putin and Egypt's Abdel Fattah el-Sisi. Last year, his father asked him to lead Lebanon affairs for the Palestine Liberation Organisation, overseeing weapons handovers by Palestinian fighters to the Lebanese army.

Yasser Abbas, who has never held an official role within Fatah

or the PA, declined to be interviewed for this story.

Sabri Saidam, who was elected to the Central Committee during the last Fatah conference in 2016, said the party had democratic bylaws that allow any member meeting requirements to run for the body. "I hope to see a renewal in leadership and a renewal in the movement's capabilities, safeguarding for a future stage that is clearly more complex and difficult," Saidam said.

The PA was set up as an interim administration under the 1990s Oslo accords between Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organisation, an umbrella group still

internationally recognised as the representative of the Palestinian people. In the more than two decades since Mahmoud Abbas was elected as the successor to the charismatic Fatah founder Yasser Arafat, the PA's public standing has sunk among Palestinians, who have grown to view it as ineffective and corrupt.

In 2007, the PA was driven out of the Gaza Strip by Hamas fighters, who had won an election there on an anti-corruption platform. No Palestinian leadership elections have been held since, and Abbas has ruled by decree since his mandate expired in 2009.

A peace process meant to lead

to the creation of a Palestinian state in the West Bank, Gaza and East Jerusalem collapsed in 2014, and expanding Israeli settlements have since carved up areas once slated for eventual Palestinian control. The PA has also been battered by a severe financial crisis.

The entry into politics of Yasser Abbas further expands a succession fight for control of both the PA and the PLO. Those viewed as possible successors to Mahmoud Abbas include Hussein Al Sheikh, his longtime confidant and vice president of the PLO. They also include Marwan Barghouti, a leader of two intifadas, or uprisings, against Israel from 1987-1993 and in the early 2000s, who enjoys great popularity among Palestinians despite being jailed by Israel since 2002 over charges including murder.

One Fatah leader described Yasser Abbas' potential role on the Central Committee as "the beginning" and said he would eventually seek a role on the PLO's top Executive Committee, giving him sway over the umbrella group.

"This seems to be what Yasser Abbas is being prepared for," said the Fatah leader, who spoke on condition of anonymity.

But critics within Fatah say the elevation of Yasser Abbas could further entrench distrust among Palestinians with their government after years without national elections. "Abbas is trying to make holes in the Fatah ship before (his death) by installing his son as heir to the crown. This should be confronted and rejected by all Fatah men," said another senior Fatah official, also on condition of anonymity.

Beirut school-cum-wartime shelter becomes flashpoint for societal tensions

Reuters
Beirut

A private school in the heart of Beirut converted into a wartime shelter has become a flashpoint for social tensions brewing across Lebanon over the mass displacement caused by the war between Israel and the Lebanese armed group Hezbollah.

Since Israel invaded Lebanon in pursuit of Iran-backed fighters who fired across the border in March, the Hariri School has been shut to students and converted to a collective shelter, with more than 1,500 displaced people living in its classrooms and tents in the school courtyard.

In early May, parents of pupils – who have been taking classes online – protested against the indefinite closure and called for their children to be able to return to class.

In a statement to Reuters, a representative of the school administration said it sympathised with



A boy rides a bicycle in Hariri High School used as a temporary shelter for displaced people. (Reuters)

the displaced. "But just as we are sympathising with them, there are also rights for our students to be at their premises," the statement said.

The two-month war has displaced more than a million peo-

ple in Lebanon. While most are staying with relatives or renting apartments, at least 124,000 are staying in government-run collective shelters.

The displaced mostly hail from Lebanon's Shia Muslim commu-

nity, from which Hezbollah draws most of its support. They have largely fled to areas predominantly inhabited by other sects, deepening sectarian tensions.

The Rafic Hariri School is named after a former prime min-

ister whose 2005 assassination triggered an era of instability in Lebanon. An international tribunal found members of Hezbollah responsible for his killing.

This year, many of Hezbollah's critics have blamed the group for pulling Lebanon into another war by firing on Israel in support of Iran.

As internal divisions simmer, many Lebanese see echoes of the country's 1975-1990 civil war.

The representative of the Rafic Hariri School said she was worried history would repeat itself. She said that during a 2024 war between Israel and Hezbollah, displaced people broke into the school and damaged it, leaving the administration to foot the bill without state support.

She said displaced families again entered the school this year without administrators' permission.

Mohammed Hammoud, 40, who supervises displaced families in the school and was himself displaced from southern Lebanon, said the families had been handed the keys and did not force their way in.

They would leave if the school administration formally asked them to, but the government should find them a new shelter, he added.

Lebanese Social Affairs Minister Haneen Sayed told Reuters in March the government was working on plans to cope with long-term displacement.

For those staying at the school, returning home is not an option. Um Mahmoud's apartment was badly damaged in Israeli strikes, rendering it uninhabitable. "Something might fall on me while I am in the house," she said from the school's kitchen. "We can't fix it because the war is still on. We want to fix it and go back, but we can't."

Volunteers helped the displaced families set up a kitchen to prepare thousands of meals daily, distributed both to the displaced and the surrounding community as a goodwill gesture.

Despite a ceasefire agreed on April 16, fighting has continued in southern Lebanon, where Israeli troops are occupying a strip of Lebanese land.

US can impose visa sanctions on China over migrants issue

Reuters
Washington

China is slowing its efforts to repatriate Chinese nationals who are in the US illegally, a senior Trump administration official told Reuters, warning that Washington was prepared to increase travel restrictions on the country if Beijing didn't reverse course.

The new US threat toward China comes just days before President Donald Trump's planned May 14-15 visit to Beijing, where, among other issues, he is expected to raise the deportation issue during meetings with his counterpart Xi Jinping.

The trip is an important one for Trump, who is hoping to win trade concessions from Beijing that the President can present to voters ahead of November's midterm elections that polls suggest could deliver losses for the president's Republican party.

Since returning to the White House early last year, Trump has threatened tariffs and sanctions on a list of countries due to their failure to accept deportees, which seemingly has remained a central pillar of his campaign for the White House and hard-line immigration policies.

China for years has resisted US requests to take back tens of thousands of its citizens who have overstayed or illegally entered the United States. When Trump took office, China had suggested it was willing to repatriate "confirmed Chinese nationals" following verification. But so far Beijing has said doing so takes time.

After accepting about 3,000 deportees via charter and commercial flights in early 2025, China has scaled back co-operation in the past six months, the senior US official said. The official spoke on condition of anonymity in order to speak candidly about administration plans.

China "refuses to fully cooper-



A five-year-old migrant boy from China chases his brother down a trail after he and his family crossed the Rio Grande river into the United States from Mexico in Fronton, Texas. (Reuters/File Photo)

ate with the US to take back its citizens," the official said, calling it a violation of China's international obligations and responsibility toward its people.

The official said that if China didn't increase cooperation on deportations, the US would consider increased cash bonds accompanying visa applications, as well as denying more visas and blocking more entries at the border.

"Inaction by the Chinese government will jeopardise future travel for law-abiding Chinese citizens," the official said.

The Chinese embassy in Washington did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

Previously Beijing has said it opposes illegal migration, and calls it an "international issue that requires cooperation between countries."

Trump has pursued a hard-line immigration policy, including an aggressive deportation drive, revocations of visas and green cards, and checks of social media posts

and past speeches of immigrants.

During the Biden administration, the number of Chinese nationals illegally crossing the US southern border surged from negligible numbers to tens of thousands, as China's economy faced headwinds and US visas were harder to acquire due to COVID era restrictions.

There are now more than 100,000 undocumented Chinese nationals in the US, the official said. More than 30,000 have final orders of removal, and of those, authorities have detained more than 1,500 awaiting deportation. Most in this last category have committed other crimes, the official said. Independent estimates of the number of undocumented Chinese nationals in the US vary. The Migration Policy Institute (MPI) said that in mid-2022 as many as 239,000 Chinese immigrants were not authorised to be in the country.

Other countries with large numbers of undocumented people in the US, including India, are fully

cooperating with the US, the official said. The US wants Beijing to provide travel documents and approve Customs and Border Protection charter flights with deportees, paid for by the US, to land in the country.

Under Section 243(d) of the Immigration and Nationality Act the US can place visa sanctions on countries deemed "recalcitrant" in complying with repatriation requests, a label the Department of Homeland Security has routinely applied to China.

US authorities going back to the Obama administration have said they believe China slow rolls the issuance of new travel documents for the deportees because it doesn't want to take them back or sees the issue as a useful point of leverage with Washington.

US law enforcement officials have told Reuters that China at times seeks to link Washington's requests on deportations to Beijing's requests to extradite economic or political fugitives who have fled to the US.



A US flag flutters outside the US Supreme Court building in Washington, DC. (Reuters/File Photo)

US Supreme Court allows Voting Rights Act ruling to take effect sooner

Reuters
Washington

The US Supreme Court on Monday allowed its recent ruling that gutted a key part of the Voting Rights Act to take effect ahead of schedule, bolstering Louisiana Republicans as they pursue a new congressional voting map ahead of the November midterm elections.

The action by the justices, though procedural, potentially could undercut challenges to the decision by Louisiana Republicans to delay the state's congressional primary elections and seek a new electoral map that could be beneficial to Republicans.

The court's move came in response to a request from a group of Louisiana voters who described themselves in court papers as "non-African American" whose lawsuit led to the 6-3 ruling on April 29 striking down an electoral map that had given Louisiana a second Black-majority US congressional district. The ruling gutted a key provision

of the Voting Rights Act that had barred electoral maps that would result in diluting the clout of minority voters.

President Donald Trump's fellow Republicans are fighting to maintain their control of the House, as well as the Senate, in the November elections.

To give the losing side a decision the chance to ask for a rehearing, the Supreme Court typically waits 32 days before its formal judgment is issued. But the prevailing party can ask the court to issue its judgment more quickly, as the "non-African American" voters did here.

Governor Jeff Landry responded to the court's ruling by declaring an emergency and announcing he would postpone his state's congressional primary elections that had been scheduled for May 16.

Landry's move prompted lawsuits. Some challengers have argued, among other things, that the governor exceeded his authority to declare an emergency because the Supreme Court's ruling had not yet taken effect.

New governor general in Canada named

Canadian Prime Minister Mark Carney yesterday named former Supreme Court Justice Louise Arbour as the country's next governor general, serving as the representative of the country's head of state, King Charles.

Born in Montreal, Arbour, 79, has also worked as the United Nations' chief prosecutor for the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia and for Rwanda and as the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights. She will replace Mary Simon, who was the first Indigenous Canadian in the post.

"As Canada's next Governor General, Louise Arbour will represent the best of Canada to our citizens and to the world — a Canada clear-eyed about the challenges we face, and steadfast in the values we uphold," Carney said in a statement.

The governor general performs functions such as swearing in governments and formally signing legislation, but is also the commander in chief of the military and can summon or dissolve Parliament. (Reuters)

CM Banerjee refuses to resign after Modi's party wins Bengal

Reuters
New Delhi

An Indian chief minister who was swept from power by Prime Minister Narendra Modi's Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) in state elections said yesterday that she had "not been defeated" and would not resign, in an unprecedented political twist.

Modi's BJP defeated Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee's Trinamool Congress (TMC), which has been in power in West Bengal state since 2011, securing more than two-thirds of the 294 seats when votes were counted on Monday.

BJP has never ruled West Bengal, a populous eastern state that borders Bangladesh, and its victory is considered a political milestone as the party now controls almost all states in eastern India.

The TMC tally fell to 80 seats from its earlier 215, with Banerjee herself losing her seat.



BJP supporters celebrate after taking a lead during vote counting for the West Bengal Legislative Assembly elections on Monday. (AFP)

Banerjee said about 100 seats were "forcibly taken" from her party, which also had to contend with a "biased" Election Commission. She did not back her accusation with evidence.

"I will not resign, I did not lose... officially, through the Election

Commission, they (the BJP) can defeat us, but morally, we won the election," she told a news briefing.

West Bengal's Chief Electoral Officer Manoj Kumar Agarwal termed the allegations "baseless". The BJP's Suvendu Adhikari, who defeated Banerjee, said

"everything is mentioned in the constitution".

According to the Indian constitution, the state's governor can demand Banerjee's resignation or wait for her term to expire, after which newly elected lawmakers would be sworn in and the process of forming a new government would begin. Banerjee's term is set to end on Thursday.

A defeated candidate in an Indian state election can challenge the result in court on grounds including corrupt practices, improper acceptance or rejection of nominations or votes, candidate disqualification, or non-compliance with election laws that affected the outcome. Banerjee did not say if she would go to court.

Modi, his closest aide and Home Minister Amit Shah, and several senior BJP leaders campaigned for weeks in the state, focusing on what they called illegal immigration from Bangladesh and the weak local economy under Banerjee.

First Russian oil arrives in Japan: Media

Japan has taken delivery of its first stockpile of oil from Russia since global supplies were choked off by the closure of the Strait of Hormuz at the start of the Iran war, reports said.

A tanker carrying crude that was produced as part of a Sakhalin-2 natural gas development project reached the coast of Imabari in western Japan on Monday, media reported.

Japan, which depends on the Middle East for around 95% of its oil imports, has tried to diversify sources of energy procurement since the outbreak of war, resulting in Tehran effectively shutting the Strait.

The project in Russia's Sakhalin region is not subject to global economic sanctions against Moscow that were put in place after it invaded Ukraine in 2022. Taiyo Oil received a request from the economy ministry to take in the petroleum, the reports said. The crude is expected to be sent to a refinery, where it will be turned into gasoline, naphtha — used to make various products. (AFP)

'Super El Nino' feared in Asia reeling from energy crisis

AFP
Bangkok

Already reeling from the effects of conflict in the Middle East, Asia is now facing the prospect of strong El Nino conditions that could spike energy demand, sap hydropower, and damage crops.

El Nino is a naturally occurring climate phenomenon that brings worldwide changes in winds, air pressure, and rainfall patterns.

Last week, the United Nations' weather and climate agency said El Nino conditions could develop as soon as May to July.

The World Meteorological Organization, meanwhile, said early signs indicated the event could be particularly strong, with some dubbing the impending event a "super El Nino", although the term

is not used by scientists.

That is not good news for Asia, parts of which are traditionally heavily affected by the heatwaves, drought and heavy rains that El Nino can bring.

The phenomenon essentially shifts traditional weather patterns around, for example moving rain that normally falls over Indonesia out to sea, leaving the country vulnerable to drought and wildfires.

El Nino occurs around every two to seven years and is forecast based on sea temperatures. "The subsurface anomaly that we're seeing so far is pretty strong," said Peter van Rensch, a climate scientist at Australia's Monash University.

"It does look a little bit like what we saw in the 1997/98 event, and that was probably the strongest El Nino," he told AFP.

There are still plenty of uncertainties, and van Rensch cautioned

it was possible an El Nino might not develop at all.

But the 1997 El Nino brought catastrophic impacts, including extreme drought and devastating wildfires in Indonesia that burned through millions of hectares and created regional air pollution.

Authorities there have already identified peatlands at risk, and warned the country could see its lowest rainfall in 30 years.

The warnings come with Asia buckling under the strain of an energy supply crunch and fears over shortages of fertiliser and other industrial and agricultural components which pass through the Strait of Hormuz.

Iran has effectively closed the strategic waterway since the United States and Israel launched attacks on the country on February 28, disrupting global fuel supplies. Hotter weather will strain en-

ergy grids already experiencing fuel shortages, as populations seek to cool homes and workplaces, warned Haneea Isaad, energy finance specialist at the Institute for Energy Economics and Financial Analysis.

"For countries that are highly dependent on the Strait of Hormuz for oil and gas deliveries and other trade, strained supply will lead to further fuel rationing, demand-side management and a reduction in economic activities... impacting overall GDP growth," she told AFP.

The droughts that El Nino can bring to parts of the region also pose a threat to countries that are highly dependent on hydropower, said Dinita Setyawati, senior energy analyst for Asia at the Ember thinktank.

"Most ASEAN countries use a lot of hydropower," she warned, highlighting Mekong countries,

Nepal, and parts of Malaysia as particularly vulnerable because of their dependence on the sector.

The risks were laid bare in 2022, when a heatwave in China saw hydropower generation in Sichuan fall over 50%, creating shortages that impacted households and industry alike.

Hotter, drier conditions will also create fresh risks for agriculture, already under pressure as the on-going conflict raises the costs of fertiliser and fuel needed for farming equipment.

"If crop prices do not rise enough to offset these higher input and shipping costs, producer margins will be squeezed, raising the likelihood of lower fertiliser application and weaker yields," warned BMI, a unit of the Fitch Solutions research company.

"This would intensify food price inflation and worsen food insecurity,

especially in import-dependent and climate-vulnerable markets." For some parts of Asia, an El Nino can bring bouts of intense rain and provoke flooding, which could impact sectors like southern China's late-season rice harvest, added Isaad.

How climate change affects the emergence and strength of El Ninos is still not well understood. But research shows climate change itself will bring more frequent intense heatwaves, as well as sudden heavy rainfall that can cause flooding.

So experts said countries across the region should further insulate energy systems against more frequent disruptive weather events by diversifying and greening their grids. "Solar and wind, coupled with batteries, provide a more resilient infrastructure than a centralised fossil infrastructure," said Setyawati.



CHAIRMAN

Abdullah bin Khalifa al-Attiyah

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

Faisal Abdulhameed al-Mudahka

Deputy Managing Editor

Kamran Rehmat

- 📍 P.O.Box 2888, Doha, Qatar
- ✉ editor@gulf-times.com
- ☎ 44350478 (News),
- ☎ 44466404 (Sport),
- ☎ 44466636 (Home delivery)
- ☎ 44350474
- 📘 facebook.com/gulftimes
- 🐦 twitter.com/gulftimes_Qatar
- 📷 instagram.com/gulftimes
- 📺 youtube.com/GulftimesVideos

GULF TIMES

China's carmakers chase 'Yaris moment' to spur growth abroad

China's carmakers are hunting for their own "Yaris moment" - the kind of locally tailored breakthrough that helped Toyota conquer Europe - as they race to turn booming exports into lasting overseas growth. After early attempts that largely involved exporting China-designed cars with minor tweaks, automakers are now re-engineering vehicles from the ground up for foreign buyers, driven as much by fierce margin pressure at home as by opportunity abroad. China's overcrowded domestic market has been locked in a bruising price war for years, leaving many manufacturers struggling to make money. Overseas markets, by contrast, offer room to grow - and to charge more - if Chinese brands can persuade consumers they understand local tastes.

Major carmakers including BYD, Chery, Changan, SAIC's MG brand and FAW's premium Hongqi all have models in the pipeline designed specifically for export markets - from small hatchbacks for Europe to pickup trucks for Australia and Mexico. At home, Chinese automakers cram cars with technology and sell them cheaply to compete. In Western markets such as Europe, they can often sell at double the price and still undercut established brands.

At the Beijing Auto Show in late April, Hongqi unveiled a small "global SUV" targeted for sale in 80 countries. But the vehicle was primarily designed for urban European buyers, design chief Giles Taylor told Reuters. "That's the reason why that car exists," Taylor said.

BYD's Dolphin G hatchback was designed specifically for Europe and will launch in June. Stella Li, the electric vehicle maker's No. 2 executive, said the model was critical because hatchbacks account for more than 40% of new car sales in parts of southern Europe - a segment that barely exists in China. "If we don't have the right car in this sector, we lose," Li told Reuters.

Chinese companies are now re-engineering vehicles from the ground up for foreign buyers



For many Chinese carmakers, exports are a matter of survival as analysts predict consolidation will thin an industry crowded with more than 100 manufacturers. Vehicle sales in China are expected to remain flat or decline. That excess capacity has already helped make China the world's largest vehicle exporter, overtaking Japan in 2024.

Gartner analyst Pedro Pacheco described the push to design cars for export as Chinese automakers' "Yaris moment", referring to Toyota's Yaris hatchback, designed in Europe for European buyers and credited with helping the Japanese carmaker gain a foothold on the continent after its 1999 launch.

Analysts say matching regional preferences will increasingly determine success as European rivals respond to Chinese competition. "Just competing on price works first time around," said Phil Dunne, a managing director at consultancy Grant Thornton Stax. "But the Europeans are fighting back on cost."

He added: "The Chinese need to take it to the next level," by designing cars in Europe for Europeans. For Europe, that also means going smaller.

Chery, China's biggest vehicle exporter, is heavily skewed towards SUVs, which accounted for 2.3mn of the 2.8mn vehicles it sold globally in 2025. But Ivan Dulanovic, head of design at Lepas - Chery's new international brand - said a Europe-focused hatchback, the Lepas 2, is in development.

"We have recognised a need in the market," he said, "and we are tackling that."

SAIC's MG also plans an MG2 hatchback for Europe where consumers "don't like huge cars", design chief Jozef Kaban said. BYD aims to roll out more Europe-specific models and has told investors it wants half of sales to come from overseas by 2030.

Jetour, an SUV brand owned by Chery, designed its first fully electric car - the compact TX - with European buyers in mind, said Jetour International President Ke Chuandeng. Its upcoming F700 pickup will target markets such as Australia and Brazil and will launch in Mexico ahead of China, he said. — Reuters

Takaichi returns



Japan's Prime Minister Sanae Takaichi walks towards her aircraft at a Royal Australian Air Force base in Canberra yesterday, ahead of her departure following a three-day official visit to Australia. (AFP)

UDST's academic goals aligned with Qatar National Vision 2030

UDST President Dr Salem Al-Naemi highlights university's achievements ahead of convocation, which will see around 550 male and 650 female students receive degrees across a range of programs and disciplines

QNA
Doha

Under the patronage of HE the Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman bin Jassim al-Thani, University of Doha for Science and Technology (UDST) is set to graduate more than 1,200 students at a ceremony later this month. The graduation, scheduled for May 19, will see around 550 male and 650 female students receive degrees across a range of programs and disciplines.

UDST President Dr Salem Al-Naemi told QNA that the PM's patronage reflects strong support for applied education and its role in developing national talent. He described the event as both a recognition of students' achievements and a milestone marking their transition into the workforce, adding that it also highlights the university's position as a leading national institution in applied education.

More than 200 students from the graduating class are expected to be honoured for academic excellence, underlining what officials say is a high level of achievement among graduates. This year's cohort includes the first graduates from several newly introduced programs, including digital communication and media production - developed in collaboration with Qatar Media Corporation - as well as construction engineering and a number of postgraduate degrees such as artificial intelligence, cognitive cybersecurity and process safety.

Research projects

Dr Al-Naemi noted that some graduates have already begun launching start-ups or contributing to applied research projects in partnership with industry and strategic organizations. The university currently enrolls more than 9,000 students from over 86 nationalities, with Qatari students making up around a quarter of the student body, reflecting what officials describe as a diverse and internationally oriented academic environment.

Speaking to QNA about UDST's most prominent achievements over the past two years, Dr Al-Naemi said that the university has launched several new academic programs aligned with labour market needs across various fields, these include: the Executive Master of Health Administration, the Master of Science in Midwifery, in addition to both a Bachelor and Diploma programs in Animal Health and Veterinary Sciences.

This was accompanied by strengthening applied education through developing advanced laboratories and simulation centers, launching the Center of Excellence for Sustainability and Food Security, and Qatar's first Maritime Training and Simulation Centre, as well as including STEM and TVET programs in internal scholarship programs under the "Tomouh" initiative, spearheaded by the Ministry of Education and Higher Education, he added.

Dr Al-Naemi said that the university's success was also evident in its participation in international conferences and exhibitions such as in the Expo 2025 Osaka, Kansai, Japan, in addition to the Shell Eco-

Marathon Europe and Africa 2025 regional competition held in Poland, where UDST's Wolves Racing Team secured 2nd place in the Autonomous Urban Concept category.

Moreover, UDST made progress in obtaining local and international academic accreditations, with the Department of Healthcare Professions at the Ministry of Public Health officially approving the "Pharmacy Technologist" title for UDST's Pharmacy Technology program graduates. Conducted in partnerships with government and industrial entities to ensure a direct impact on society and the economy, the UDST president said that the university saw a notable growth in applied scientific research linked to national priorities, such as sustainability, renewable energy, food security, health technology, and digital transformation.

UDST enjoys an extensive network of 81 local and 52 international partners including government entities, national institutions, major industrial and technology companies, as well as global universities and research centers, with these partnerships providing students with practical training opportunities, developing joint academic programs, conducting applied research, aligning educational outcomes with labour market needs, and promoting innovation, Dr Al-Naemi added.

On the university's ranking, the UDST president said that it is among the leading institutions locally in the field of applied education, focusing on excellence in teaching quality, applied research, graduate employability, innovation, and

entrepreneurship.

UDST is making steady progress in regional and international rankings, something that reflects both the academic and industrial communities' confidence in the university, he said. Designed to support outstanding and high-achieving students, UDST scholarships include those for top academic performers, Qatari students in national programs, and student-athletes, Dr Al-Naemi added, these scholarships contribute to enhancing equal educational opportunities, attracting talented individuals, supporting the quality of higher education in Qatar, and focusing on strategic fields aligned with national priorities.

Vocational education

With regard to vocational, technical, and specialized education secondary schools in Qatar, the UDST president said that the university views these types of schools positively for their role in preparing students academically and professionally, however, he noted that admission to UDST is not automatic for these schools' graduates, rather, it depends on the admission criteria for each program.

The Ministry of Education and Higher Education and UDST are in constant co-ordination to ensure the alignment between secondary education outcomes and the university's requirements, as to facilitate students' transition to higher education, providing them with orientation programs and guidance to support their academic choices, he said.

When asked about UDST's distinction, reputation, and standing locally and internationally, Dr Al-Naemi attributed the university's success to UDST's applied education approach, modern academic programs aligned with market needs, its adoption of the latest technologies and digital transformation in education, its strong public and private sector partnerships, its high-quality graduates that are well prepared for the job market, in addition to UDST's multicultural educational environment that fosters innovation and creativity.

UDST contributes directly to achieving the Qatar National Vision 2030 by preparing qualified national cadres in vital fields, supporting a knowledge-based economy, and enhancing innovation and applied research, said Dr Al-Naemi in his remarks to QNA. The university aligns its programs with the Third National Development Strategy, through its focus on sustainability and digital transformation and by supporting priority sectors such as energy, healthcare, and technology, all the while fulfilling its role as a driver of human and economic development in Qatar, he concluded.



UDST President Dr Salem Al-Naemi speaking to QNA.

To Advertise
✉ gtadv@gulf-times.com

Display 44466621
Classified 44466609 44418811
44418811 gtcad@gulf-times.com

Subscription
✉ circulation@gulf-times.com



HE Mansoor bin Ebrahim bin Saad al-Mahmoud and Dr Javid Sheikh with the new doctors of the WCM-Q Class of 2026.

WCM-Q celebrates largest graduating class in its history

Weill Cornell Medicine-Qatar (WCM-Q) has celebrated its largest ever graduating class, which also includes a record 22 Qatari nationals.

The elite medical college awarded US-accredited Cornell University medical degrees to 52 new doctors at its annual commencement ceremony, which was attended by local dignitaries, members of the faculty, and the friends and family of the graduating students.

The WCM-Q Class of 2026 comprises 30 women and 22 men from 15 countries, bringing the total number of doctors educated at WCM-Q since its inaugural graduation ceremony in 2008 to 693. The nationalities represented in the Class of 2026 are Qatar, the US, Algeria, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Canada, Egypt, India, Iraq, Jordan, the Republic of Korea, Pakistan, Russia, Sudan, and Sweden. The class valedictorian for the WCM-Q Class of 2026 is Dr Lina Ahmed.

Acknowledging the challenges faced by the graduating students, Dr Javid I Sheikh, dean of WCM-Q, said: "Class of 2026, you deserve great credit for the quiet dignity with which you have completed your studies, enduring two unprecedented periods of crisis, firstly during the pandemic, and more recently through the turmoil that afflicted our region. Your perseverance and resilience, the way you have supported one another, and your laser focus on learning the art and science of medicine have been truly impressive. I have no doubt that you will make remarkable physicians and researchers."

In attendance to witness the special occasion were HE Sheikh Bandar bin Mohammed bin Saoud al-Thani, Governor of Qatar Central Bank; HE Mansoor bin Ebrahim bin Saad al-Mahmoud, Minister of Public Health; HE Dr Hanan al-Kuwari, Adviser to Prime Minister for Public Health Affairs; HE Sheikh Faisal bin Qassim al-Thani; HE Dr Ibrahim bin Saleh al-Naimi, Undersecretary of the Ministry of Education and Higher Education; Sheikh Mohamed bin Faisal bin Qassim al-Thani; Yousef al-Naama, CEO of Qatar Foundation (QF); and Dr Hilal A Lashuel, Research, Development and Innovation Adviser to the chairperson and executive director of RDI.

Dr Sheikh's speech also gave



Dr Javid Sheikh, dean of Weill Cornell Medicine-Qatar.



Dignitaries in attendance at the graduation ceremony.



Dr Abdullah al-Ansari, associate professor at WCM-Q, deputy chief Medical Officer for Surgical Services and medical adviser for the managing director at HMC, places the academic hood upon his son, Dr Ahmad Abdulla al-Ansari, at the graduation ceremony of the WCM-Q Class of 2026.

thanks to Her Highness Sheikha Moza bint Nasser, Chairperson of QF, and HE Sheikha Hind bint Hamad al-Thani, vice-chairperson and CEO of QF, along with the leadership of Qatar, acknowledging the vital guidance and support they continue to provide to enable WCM-Q to produce highly accomplished doctors capable of giving world-class patient care.

The keynote speech was delivered by WCM-Q alumna Dr Muneera Ali AIMuhannadi, of the Class of 2009, now a senior consultant in family medicine at the Primary Health Care Corporation.

She said: "As you step out of these doors and into your residences, you will no longer just be students; you will be leaders, advocates, and healers. Approach every patient with humility and respect. Be lifelong learners, for medicine is a journey of continuous learning. And most importantly, support one another. The colleagues sitting beside you today will be your greatest allies in the years to come."

Dr Thurayya Arayssi, vice-dean for academic and curricular affairs at WCM-Q, said: "We feel the greatest happiness in seeing our Class of 2026 reach this tremendously important milestone in their careers. The adaptability they have shown in such disruptive circumstances demonstrates not only their firm commitment to medicine but also the mental agility required to thrive in an era of rapid technological innovation. We look forwards to seeing them accomplish great things in their careers."

The graduates were presented with their diplomas by Dr Moune Jabre, assistant dean for academic affairs. Cornell University president Michael I Kotlikoff said: "Although we are spread across continents, we are one Cornell community — in Ithaca, in New York City, in Doha, and everywhere Cornellians work, study, and advance our mission. Our thoughts have been with all of our Cornellians, wherever they may be, affected by the conflict of these past months. On



Newly qualified physician Dr Kareem Aly delivered the student English address at the WCM-Q graduation ceremony.



Newly qualified physician Dr AIDana al-Khalaf delivered the student Arabic address at the WCM-Q graduation ceremony.

behalf of our entire community, I am delighted to congratulate the Weill Cornell Medicine-Qatar Class of 2026 on their tremendous achievements, and wish them all the best as they carry the Cornell ethos forward through their lives and careers."

This year, Dr Amine Rakab, assistant dean for clinical learning, was macebearer, and Dr James Roach, associate dean for pre-medical education, was university marshal. The graduate Arabic address was given by Dr AIDana al-Khalaf, and the graduate English address by Dr Kareem Aly. Their fellow graduate Dr Abdelrahman Mahmoud Abdalla gave the Qur'an recitation.

Also in attendance at the prestigious ceremony were Rama Chakaki, president of QSTP; Mohammed al-Suwaidi, director general at HMC; Prof Ibrahim Janahi, Chief Medical Officer at Sidra Medicine; Dr Francisco Marmolejo, president of Higher Education at QF; Ali Ahmed R A al-Kuwari, president and CEO of Qatar Satel-

ite Company "Es'Hailsat"; Sheikh Salman bin Hassan al-Thani, CFO at QF; Dr Emmanouil Dermitzakis, president of QPHI; Dr Ahmed Elmagarmid, executive director of QCRI and deputy chairman of Qatar Innovation and Scientific Research Foundation; Abdulali Hussain; and Muhammad Aamer, ambassador of Pakistan.

Giving the ceremony's farewell address, Dr Robert A Harrington, the Stephen and Suzanne Weiss Dean of Weill Cornell Medicine and Provost for Medical Affairs of Cornell University, said: "Members of the Class of 2026, your fortitude in the face of recent challenges is admired by the entire Cornell community. To have triumphed over these circumstances and completed your studies speaks to your commitment and resolve; both are essential traits for those who answer the call to serve the health and wellness of others. We wish you the greatest of success in your future endeavours."

The new doctors of the Class of 2026 will shortly begin the



Dr Thurayya Arayssi, vice-dean for Academic and Curricular Affairs, addresses the new graduates.



Keynote speaker and WCM-Q Class of 2009 alumna Dr Muneera Ali AIMuhannadi congratulated the WCM-Q Class of 2026.



Dr Moune Jabre presents the class valedictorian, Dr Lina Ahmed, with her diploma.



Dr Robert A Harrington, dean of Weill Cornell Medicine, addresses the graduates.

next stage of their careers when they take up residency positions at elite-level healthcare institutions in Qatar and the US, including HMC, Sidra Medicine, Johns Hopkins Hospital, Case Western/University Hospitals Cleveland Medical Center, and New York-Presbyterian Hospital/Weill Cornell Medical Center, among many others.

Sweden announces new spy agency in Ukraine war reset

AFP
Stockholm

Sweden's government said yesterday it would push forward with a plan to form a new spy agency targeting overseas threats, part of a wider reset prompted by Russia's war in Ukraine.

The new agency would be called Sweden's foreign intelligence service (UND) and would start operations in January 2027, Foreign Minister Maria Malmer Stennergard told a press conference.

"During the ongoing war in Ukraine, it has become very clear that an information advantage and the ability to rapidly and continuously adapt various technical systems are just as crucial as advanced weapons systems," Stennergard told reporters, adding the new service would be comparable to the UK's Mi6.

Sweden already has a military intelligence service — called the Military Intelligence and Security Service (MUST) — with a responsibility for foreign threats as well as the non-military Swedish Security Service (Sapo) which is

focused on domestic threats.

Stennergard said the new service would take over some of the responsibilities of MUST, and work closely with Sweden's Armed Forces and Sapo, as well as the National Defence Radio Establishment (FRA) which is tasked with signal intelligence.

The Nordic country dropped two centuries of military non-alignment and joined Nato in the wake of Russia's invasion of Ukraine and Stennergard noted that as an ally Sweden faced "new expectations".

"As we now develop our intelligence structure, we will also be better aligned with the structures that exist within Nato and among our allies," she said.

The new agency would be tasked with identifying "external threats against Sweden."

"Its activities are to be conducted through the collection, processing, and analysis of information," Stennergard said.

A bill was being sent to Council on Legislation, which scrutinises draft laws, with the government saying in a statement it was planning to send it to parliament in June.

Romanian government collapses after no-confidence vote

Reuters
Bucharest

Romanian lawmakers toppled Prime Minister Ilie Bolojan's pro-EU government in a no-confidence vote yesterday, putting at risk the country's sovereign debt ratings, its access to EU funds and the stability of its currency. Bolojan has led a minority government since late April when the leftist Social Democrats — the largest party in parliament — called for his resignation and then walked out of the four-party coalition and teamed up with the far-right opposition to file a no-confidence vote.

Yesterday's no-confidence motion garnered 281 votes, above the 233 needed to pass, the official parliamentary count showed.

Centrist President Nicusor Dan, who nominates the prime minister, said he expected a new pro-European government to be created within a "reasonable" amount of time, even though Bolojan's Liberals and another junior coalition ally ruled out further talks with the leftists. Although a snap election looks unlikely, financial markets



Romanian Prime Minister Ilie Bolojan addresses the Parliament in Bucharest yesterday. (AFP)

are concerned that the turbulence could mean Bucharest wavers in its commitment to narrowing the European Union's biggest budget deficit. Romania's leu currency fell to a record low against the euro ahead of yesterday's vote. The current coalition came to power 10 months ago with a view to containing the gains of the far-right after a series of polarising elections, and it had begun to reduce the deficit, narrowly avoiding a ratings downgrade from the last rung of investment grade.

But the Social Democrats — without whom a pro-EU majority cannot be achieved — have repeatedly clashed with Bolojan as his austerity measures have hit their voters and patronage networks, while their popular support has bled away to the far-right.

Nevertheless, opinion polls show Bolojan is the most popular politician in the ruling coalition.

"Can anyone say how Romania will function from tomorrow, do you have a plan?" Bolojan asked lawmakers before the vote.

Romania's next parliamentary election is not due until 2028. It has never held an early election and analysts say the likelihood of one now is small as the opposition hard-right Alliance for Uniting Romanians (AUR) leads in opinion polls.

The Social Democrats (PSD) have often said they would rejoin a pro-EU coalition under a different premier. Bolojan's party leaders reiterated yesterday after the vote that they would no longer collaborate with PSD, even though some senior party members have pushed for reconciliation. Junior coalition member Save Romania Union (USR) has also ruled out a new coalition with the PSD.

"There is life after the no-confidence vote," PSD leader Sorin Grindeanu told reporters. "We want to keep broadly this coalition." A Romanian Liberal member of the European Parliament, Siegfried Muresan, called the alliance between the leftists and AUR in support of the no-confidence motion "anti-European".

"The formation of a new government will become their responsibility," he told Reuters.

Sheikha Jowaher felicitates top achievers at QU graduation



Her Highness Consort of the Amir Sheikha Jowaher bint Hamad bin Suhaim al-Thani has patronised the graduation ceremony for the 49th cohort of Qatar University students. The event celebrated the achievements of 3,122 female graduates across undergraduate and postgraduate programs. Her Highness Sheikha Jowaher honoured 525 outstanding students for their academic excellence. Degrees were formally conferred by HE the university's president, Dr Omar al-Ansari. (QNA)

QU graduates distinguished female students as part of the 49th cohort



Under the patronage of Her Highness Consort of the Amir, Sheikha Jawaher bint Hamad bin Suhaim al-Thani, Qatar University (QU) organised the graduation ceremony of its 49th batch of distinguished female students, the Class of 2026, at the QU Sports and Events Complex yesterday.

The ceremony was attended by guests, dignitaries, members of the University's Board of Regents, university vice-presidents, college deans, and students' families. Her Highness Sheikha Jawaher honoured 525 distinguished female students out of a total of 3,122 female graduates from various academic disciplines at the bachelor's, master's and doctoral levels.

In his speech, HE QU president Dr Omar al-Ansari said: "Today, we celebrate the graduation of the 49th cohort of Qatar University students and welcome 4,024 graduates into the ongoing journey of advancing our nation."

"Over nearly five decades, Qatar University has continued to fulfil its role in preparing qualified graduates for the labour market and contributing to national development through high-quality academic education that keeps pace with evolving demands and supports a knowledge-based economy."

Dr al-Ansari added: "Our wise leadership has placed strong emphasis on investing in people, recognising them as the nation's greatest asset. Education has remained at the forefront of these priorities, as a foundation for preparing generations capable of leading the future with confidence and competence."

He further stated: "Qatar University has long stood as a beacon of knowledge, grounded in the belief that learning is both essential and lifelong. Today, it continues to move forward with confidence, strengthening its position locally and globally through the implementation of its strategic positioning review, an initiative that reinforces its identity and its role in leading the higher education system and advancing a knowledge-based economy."

"This role is rooted in a national vision that brings together education and research in service of the nation and in pursuit of sustainable impact. It is the same vision that has supported the empowerment of women, enabling Qatari women to play an active role across various fields."

"Graduates of Qatar University have contributed meaningfully to national development, and today, the growing proportion of female graduates reflects the outcomes of this empowerment, alongside the dedication of students, the support of their families, and the trust placed in the University by society," Dr al-Ansari said.

Addressing the female graduates, the QU president said: "My daughters, today you mark the culmination of years of dedication and hard work, reaching this well-deserved moment through your excellence and determination. What you achieve today is not simply a degree, but a foundation of experience, values, and the ability to shape the future."

"Carry the University's values with you, move forward with confidence, let knowledge be your light and integrity be your guide."

The future ahead of you is full of promise. Move toward it with confidence to fulfill your aspirations and serve your nation."

Graduate Majd Jaber al-Marri from the College of Education said: "When I look back on the past, I remember how often our steps faltered at the beginning, and how many times we thought our

aspirations were beyond reach—that the road ahead was difficult and distant, and that we might not make it."

"Yet, the strength of good company and sincere friendship reassured us at every stumble: yes, we can. Today, as we stand on this graduation stage, we carry not only degrees, but stories, mo-

ments and memories that will stay with us."

Graduate Aisha Mohammed al-Emadi from the College of Arts and Sciences said: "The patronage of Your Highness Sheikha Jawaher bint Hamad bin Suhaim al-Thani for this occasion reflects the vision of our leadership, which places people at the heart of development

QF graduates shape future through innovation, purpose and impact

By Shaima Sheriff
Staff Reporter

Graduates from Qatar Foundation (QF) universities are translating education into real-world impact with inspiring journeys spanning medicine and design, reflecting innovation, resilience, and a commitment to shaping communities and future industries. From advancing women's healthcare to redefining creative expression, graduates from institutions within Education City are turning their academic journeys into meaningful contributions across diverse fields.

For Noor Faisal al-Sayegh, a graduate of Weill Cornell Medicine-Qatar, the path ahead is rooted in both science and service. Planning to pursue obstetrics and gynaecology at Hamad Medical



Nada Abdo

Corporation's Women's Wellness and Research Centre, she described her motivation as deeply personal.

"I chose obstetrics and gynaecology due to my profound interest in women's health. I want to

encourage and empower women and be part of their journey, especially when new life begins," she said.

Al-Sayegh highlighted the unique nature of the specialty, which combines medical and surgical disciplines while fostering long-term patient relationships. "It allows you to guide patients through various stages of life, from adolescence to menopause," she added.

Beyond clinical ambitions, she has already begun bridging gaps in healthcare communication through her podcast, Dakhtar. "It's a platform that connects people across the Arab world, correcting misconceptions and educating them about medical knowledge," she said, noting its role in making healthcare information more accessible to the public.

Reflecting on her time at QF, she

credited the ecosystem for shaping her mindset. "QF gave me important skills such as confidence, leadership, innovation and adaptability," she said. "It enabled me to think outside the box, not only in my studies but also beyond the clinic."

In a different field, Nada Abdo, a graduate of Virginia Commonwealth University School of the Arts in Qatar, represents a creative journey marked by exploration and self-discovery.

Graduating with a Bachelor of Fine Arts in Interior Design, with a minor in Film and Design, Abdo was also recognised with the QF Excellence Award, a milestone she described as both humbling and empowering.

"It's such an honour. It shows my academic and personal achievements, and that my work has been seen and recognised,"

"QF instilled in me confidence, leadership, and adaptability"

she said. "It makes me proud and motivates me to continue and be a successful woman in future projects."

Her experience at QF extended far beyond the classroom. "I was able to go on trips that strengthened my personality and pushed me out of my comfort zone," she said, adding that the environment encouraged her to take on diverse roles, from a teaching assistant in mathematics to working in gallery and film production teams.

"As a shy person, I usually don't like to showcase myself, but being part of this experience was incredible," she said. "Pushing yourself



Noor Faisal al-Sayegh

and trusting the process, you realise you can do things you never thought possible." Both graduates reflect a broader narrative emerging from Qatar Foundation, where education is not confined to academic achievement but serves as a platform for innovation, confidence, and societal contribution.