



Qatar Insurance

Financial Results (Q1 2026)

Gross Written Premiums (GWP)

13% ▲

QAR 3.2B

Net Profit

6% ▲

QAR 217M

Investment Income:

10% ▲

QAR 238M

Insurance Service Results:

70% ▲

QAR 130M

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SCAN TO SHOP

Amir's luncheon for 2026 Amir Cup champions, runners-up



His Highness the Amir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani hosted a luncheon at Lusail Palace yesterday to honour Al Gharafa Sports Club, the 2026 Amir Cup champions, and runners-up Al Sadd SC. The banquet celebrated the winning players, coaching, and management staff, along with a lineup of sports and media personalities and representatives of the tournament's sponsors. The Personal Representative of His Highness the Amir, His Highness Sheikh Jassim bin Hamad al-Thani; His Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Khalifa al-Thani; and HE the President of Qatar Olympic Committee and the Olympic Council of Asia, Sheikh Joaan bin Hamad al-Thani; attended the luncheon. (QNA)



PM, Pakistani counterpart, Saudi, Iranian FMs review mediation

HE the Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman bin Jassim al-Thani met yesterday with US Secretary of State Marco Rubio and Special Envoy of the US President to the Middle East Steve Witkoff. During the meeting, the close strategic partnership and co-operation between Qatar and the US were reviewed, along with ways to support and strengthen it in various fields, particularly defence and energy. They also discussed the latest developments in the region as well as the Pakistani mediation aimed at reducing escalation that contributes to enhancing security and stability in the region. The Prime Minister expressed the need for all parties to respond to the ongoing mediation efforts, which would open the way for addressing the root causes of the crisis through peaceful means and dialogue, and lead to reaching a comprehensive agreement that achieves sustainable peace in the region. (QNA)

During the call, relations between the two countries and ways to support and enhance them were reviewed. They also discussed the latest developments in the region as well as Pakistani mediation efforts aimed at reducing escalation in a way that contributes to enhancing security and stability in the region.

HE the Prime Minister expressed Qatar's appreciation for Pakistan and other parties for their mediation and good offices that contributed to reaching a ceasefire between the US and Iran.

He also affirmed Qatar's full support for the Pakistani mediation efforts aimed at ending the crisis through peaceful means, stressing the need for all parties to respond to these efforts in order to create the appropriate conditions for progress in the negotiations, leading to a comprehensive agreement that achieves sustainable peace in the region.

The Prime Minister also held a phone call with Saudi Minister of Foreign Affairs Prince Faisal bin Farhan al-Saud.

The two sides reviewed bilateral co-operation and ways to enhance it besides regional developments, particularly those related to the ceasefire as well as efforts aimed at de-escalation to support security and stability in the region.

The Prime Minister held a phone call yesterday with Iranian Minister of Foreign Affairs Abbas Araghchi.

During the phone call, the PM discussed efforts aimed at achieving peace and promoting security and stability in the region.

He also affirmed Qatar's full support for mediation efforts aimed at resolving the crisis through peaceful means, stressing the need for all parties to respond to these efforts in a way that contributes to creating the appropriate conditions for progress in negotiations and limits the possibilities of renewed escalation.

HE Sheikh Mohammed also stressed that freedom of navigation is a well-established principle that must not be compromised, and that closing the Strait of Hormuz or using it as a pressure card would only lead to deepening the crisis and exposing the vital interests of the region's countries to danger. He further noted the potential negative repercussions this could have on global energy food supply chains. (QNA)

A unified digital platform for volunteer work

National Volunteer Platform aligns with QNV 2030 goal

Qatar took a significant step towards formalising and expanding its volunteer sector yesterday with the launch of the National Volunteer Platform, a unified digital portal designed to bring scattered volunteering efforts under a single, regulated framework and amplify their long-term social impact.

The platform was inaugurated by HE the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of State for Defence Affairs Sheikh Saud bin Abdulrahman bin Hassan bin Ali al-Thani, under the auspices of HE the Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman bin Jassim al-Thani. Carrying the slogan "A Lasting Impact", it forms a centrepiece of the Ministry of Social Development and Family (MSDF)'s 2025-2030 strategy.

The portal is intended to serve as a single point of contact between volunteers and accredited organisations, licensing entities that offer volunteering opportunities and making those opportunities accessible across all segments of society. Among its core functions are volunteer registration, the documentation of volunteer hours, the issuance of recognised certificates, access to training programmes, a mutual evaluation system, and the generation of data and reports to inform policymakers. It will also maintain a national database to support planning and measure social impact.

The initiative ties into the priorities of Qatar National Vision (QNV) 2030 and the Third National Development Strategy – particularly the Fourth National Outcome, which calls for a cohesive and responsible society.

Speaking at the launch, HE the Minister of Social Development and Family Buthaina bint Ali al-Jabr al-Nuaimi described volunteering as more than a moral duty, calling it a pillar of national identity and a driver of solidarity and social cohesion. She said the platform marked a "qualitative leap" – moving the sector from a patchwork of individual initiatives to a structured national system combining organisation, motivation, digitalisation and capacity building.

HE al-Nuaimi credited the achievement to a long institutional partnership between government bodies, civil society and the private sector, all of which helped shape the policies, guidelines and regulatory frameworks underpinning the platform. **To Page 6**

Qatar signals resilience amid regional strains

Project Qatar 2026 opens in June with big sector backing

Project Qatar 2026, the country's flagship construction exhibition, returns to the Doha Exhibition and Convention Centre (DECC) from June 9-11, drawing strategic backing from Ashghal, Qatar Chamber and Qatar Development Bank as organisers position the event as proof of the country's ability to sustain business momentum and international partnerships despite mounting regional pressures.

Now in its 22nd edition and themed Manufacture, Build, Innovate, the three-day exhibition will bring public and private sector stakeholders together to showcase the latest construction technologies, machinery and smart systems, with a dedicated B2B matchmaking platform, an Excellence in Industry and Innovation Awards programme, and a Startup Stage for SMEs and entrepreneurs.

Hayat Bayan, Commercial and Operations director at organiser IFP Qatar, told a news conference yesterday that the exhibition "delivers a positive message to local, regional, and international markets, reaffirming Qatar's ability to turn challenges into opportunities while maintaining business momentum and strategic partnerships despite the geopolitical developments across the region."

Bayan said the theme reflects a focus on supporting the industrial sector, advancing construction, and encouraging the adoption of innovative technologies. The exhibition, she added, "serves as a professional platform bringing together public and private sector stakeholders under one roof, while creating direct channels of communication between companies, suppliers, contractors, and investors to support the creation of new business opportunities and partnerships through the showcasing of the latest products, machinery, construction solutions, smart systems, and advanced technologies." **To Page 7**



The 22nd edition of Project Qatar, which will kick off on June 9 at the Doha Exhibition and Convention Centre, is expected to boost networking and business opportunities, according to event organiser IFP Qatar.



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Al-Marri meets German ambassador



HE the Minister of Labour Dr Ali bin Smaikh al-Marri met yesterday with the ambassador of the Federal Republic of Germany to the State of Qatar, Oliver Owczka. The meeting discussed ways to strengthen and further develop bilateral co-operation, particularly in the fields of labour and employment. (QNA)

Al-Subaie meets Tajikistan ambassador



HE the Minister of Environment and Climate Change Dr Abdullah bin Abdulaziz bin Turki al-Subaie met yesterday with the ambassador of the Republic of Tajikistan to the State of Qatar Nurmurod Mahmadi. During the meeting, they discussed bilateral relations and prospects for co-operation, and ways to enhance them as well as several topics of mutual interest. (QNA)

Prime Minister sends congratulations to Hungarian, Bulgarian counterparts

HE the Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman bin Jassim al-Thani sent yesterday a cable of congratulations to Peter Magyar on the occasion of his swearing-in as Prime Minister of Hungary.

● HE the Prime Minister sent yesterday a cable of congratulations to Rumen Radev, on the occasion of his swearing-in as Prime Minister of the Republic of Bulgaria. (QNA)

Qatar partakes in Arab League's session on Sudan

The State of Qatar participated in the extraordinary session of the Council of the Arab League at the level of permanent representatives, concerning Sudan. HE the am-

bassador of the State of Qatar to the Arab Republic of Egypt and its Permanent Representative to the Arab League, Sheikh Jassim bin Abdulrahman al-Thani chaired Qatar's delegation at the session, which took place at the League's General Secretariat, yesterday. Convened at the request of the Government of the Republic of the Sudan, the emergency meeting was held for



the permanent representatives of member states to discuss the recent attacks that took place in Sudan. (QNA)

Minister chairs Qatar Private Sector Nationalisation Award's Board meeting

HE the Minister of Labour and Chairman of the Board of Trustees of the Qatar Private Sector Nationalisation Award, Dr Ali bin Smaikh al-Marri, chaired the award's regular Board meeting yesterday, convened shortly after the close of the application period for the current edition of the award on Saturday. The Board discussed key participation metrics across both sectoral and thematic categories, providing a comprehensive overview of the engagement attained during this cycle.

During the meeting, the Chairman and members of the board said that the volume of participation recorded in the current edition reflects the growing national and private sector interest in advancing nationalisation objectives.

Members expressed appreciation for the positive engagement demonstrated by private sector entities and individuals, underscoring the increasing alignment with the award's strategic goals. The Board further observed that the forthcoming phase is expect-



ed to yield qualitative outcomes that will reinforce the impact of the award in supporting national talent development.

The Board also discussed key operational frameworks and the approved evaluation criteria applicable to both individuals and entities. These deliberations were situated within the broader objectives of the nationalisation agenda "Empowering Qatar", which seeks to strengthen the participation of national talent in the private sector, encourage sustainable em-

ployment pathways, and enhance the role of qualified Qatari human capital in national development.

In this context, emphasis was placed on further consolidating robust governance mechanisms and merit-based evaluation standards, ensuring fairness, transparency, and institutional integrity across all assessment and adjudication processes. The Award continues to serve as a national platform for recognising excellence, highlighting leading entity-level models, and promot-

ing best practices in workforce nationalisation, in alignment with the National Development Strategy 2024-2030 for an effective and highly productive workforce.

The Qatar Private Sector Nationalisation Award was established under Amiri Decision No. 27 of 2025, issued on Sept. 1, 2025, with the aim of promoting constructive competition among private sector entities in achieving nationalisation objectives, recognising entities that demonstrate measurable progress, and honouring outstanding national talent and innovative contributors within the private sector ecosystem.

In this regard, the Amiri Decision also provided for the establishment of a dedicated committee within the Ministry of Labour, titled the "Board of Trustees of the Qatar Private Sector Nationalisation Award", mandated with overseeing the governance of the Award, defining its standards and regulatory framework, determining its categories and levels, and approving its operational procedures and implementation mechanisms. (QNA)

Nations condemn targeting of commercial ship in Qatari waters

The Arab Parliament has condemned the targeting of a commercial cargo ship in Qatar's territorial waters by a drone, stressing that targeting commercial ships represents a flagrant violation of international law, threatens regional and international security and stability, and strikes at the heart of the global economy.

In a statement issued yesterday, Speaker of the Arab Parliament Mohammed bin Ahmed al-Yamahi affirmed full solidarity with Qatar and the Arab Parliament's support for all measures that Qatar may take to protect its security and preserve its sovereignty, stressing that Qatar's national security is an integral part of Arab national security. He also stressed that any threat to the security of international navigation does not only affect the countries of the region, but extends to the stability of global supply and trade chains, which necessitates a deterrent international stance against these attacks.

Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, Egypt, Bahrain, and Jordan also issued similar statements in solidarity with Qatar. (QNA)

GCC secretary-general condemns Iranian attacks on UAE, Kuwait

Secretary-General of the Gulf Co-operation Council (GCC), Jassem Mohamed Al-Budaiwi condemned in the strongest possible terms the Iranian attacks that targeted the United Arab Emirates (UAE) and the State of Kuwait. Iran's approach systematically seeks to destabilise the Middle East and undermine regional security, in a flagrant violation of the principles of international law, the United Nations (UN) Charter, and the principles of good neighbourliness, said Al-Budaiwi in a statement yesterday. The GCC secretary-general underlined council member states' full support for the UAE and Kuwait in all measures they undertake to maintain their security and stability, as well as the safety of their citizens and residents. (QNA)

Public Prosecution organises course on parallel financial investigation

Represented by the Criminal Studies Institute in co-operation with the Public Prosecution and Anti-Money Laundering and Counter-Terrorism Financing Unit of the Arab Republic of Egypt, the Public Prosecution organised a specialised training course on parallel financial investigation and crimes of money laundering and terrorism financing, with broad participation from members of several law enforcement agencies in the country, including the Public Prosecution, the Supreme Judicial Council and the Ministry of Interior.

The four-day training course covers several topics including international and national frameworks for combating money laundering and terrorist financing, the methodology of the Public Prosecution's investigation, mechanisms for recovering smuggled assets and property, and an analysis of traditional and non-traditional financial crime patterns such as shell companies and cryptocurrencies.

The course also focuses on parallel financial investigations in theory and practice, cooperation between investigation authorities and the banking sector, digital evidence, formal and informal international cooperation in in-



formation exchange, and money tracking techniques using artificial intelligence, including open source investigations (OSINT) to support investigations.

At the outset of the training course, the experts in charge said that parallel financial investigation represents a qualitative leap in methods of combating financial crime, as it enables legal and regulatory authorities to track the paths of illicit funds, uncover criminal networks, and recover criminal proceeds without being limited to the original crime.

They also pointed out the importance of employing modern

technologies such as open-source investigations and AI, while taking into account the legal controls for the evidence derived from them.

According to the Public Prosecution, this course comes within the framework of ongoing cooperation between the public prosecution and anti-money laundering units regionally and internationally, with the aim of building specialised national capabilities capable of confronting the renewed challenges in the field of organising financial crimes, ensuring the protection of public funds, and enhancing the security and stability of society. (QNA)

SJC holds workshops aiming to enhance judicial competence

By Ayman Adly
Staff Reporter

The Supreme Judiciary Council (SJC) has concluded a series of professional workshops aimed at strengthening judicial competence and enhancing the quality of court rulings and legal procedures.

Titled "Controls and Defects in the Reasoning of Civil Judgments", the workshops were organised by the Training and Judicial Research Section at the Judicial Inspection Department at SJC for the judges of the Family Court.

Held from April 15-May 6 at the Family Court premises, the programme formed part of the judiciary's broader strategy to promote excellence in legal interpretation, judicial reasoning, and procedural integrity within Qatar's justice system.

The workshops were presented by Judge Mohamed Ismail, who delivered in-depth lectures and practical discussions on a range of legal and judicial topics related to the reasoning of civil judgments.

The key themes included the legal definition and principles of judicial reasoning, the distinction between "cause" in legal

The initiative reflects SJC's continued commitment to judicial development, institutional excellence, and the advancement of legal expertise in support of an efficient and highly qualified judiciary in the country

terminology and in Islamic jurisprudence, the legal basis and obligation for reasoning in judicial decisions, common defects and shortcomings in judicial reasoning, and the practical applications that support sound judicial performance and legal analysis. Further, the sessions explored broader legal and judicial subjects to reinforce professional judicial practice and elevate the standard of legal decision-making.

The programme saw strong engagement from the participating judges through specialised legal discussions, interactive dialogue, and the exchange of professional experiences. The participants examined practical challenges in applying laws and judicial procedures, contributing to a deeper understanding of effective judgment drafting and legal interpretation.

At the conclusion of the programme, the Training and Judicial Research Department honoured

the participating judges for their commitment, active participation, and valuable contributions to the scientific and legal discussions throughout the workshop series.

The initiative reflects the Supreme Judiciary Council's continued commitment to judicial development, institutional excellence, and the advancement of legal expertise in support of an efficient and highly qualified judiciary in the country.

The Family Court plays a key role in safeguarding social stability and ensuring justice in matters that directly affect family cohesion and individual rights. Accordingly, it is vital to issue precise and well-reasoned judicial decisions in family-related disputes, where rulings often carry significant social and emotional implications, as these cases involve issues such as marriage, divorce, child custody, alimony, guardianship, and other key family matters.



MoCI announces recall of Lexus RC-F 2015-2020, GS-F 2016-2019 models

The Ministry of Commerce and Industry (MoCI), in co-operation with Al Abdulghani Motors, Qatar's Lexus dealership, has announced the recall of Lexus RC-F 2015 -2020 and GS-F 2016 - 2019 models. The recall is due to a possible defect in the low-pressure fuel pump, which may result in the illumination of the check engine and master warning indicators, engine no-start, and/or vehicle stalling.

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 coordinate 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).

Qatar participates in COP31 preparatory meeting in Antakya



The State of Qatar participated in the preparatory meeting for the 31st Conference of the Parties (COP31) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, held in Antakya, Hatay, Türkiye, in preparation for the main conference to be held in Antalya next November.

Assistant Undersecretary for Climate Change Affairs in the Ministry of Environment and Climate Change, Engineer Ahmad Mohammed al-Sada, led the State of Qatar's delegation, with the participation of representatives from several countries and international organisations, within the framework of the meeting held under the theme "resilient and sustainable cities."

The conference included specialised panel discussions focused on climate action in urban environments, including enhancing the resilience of cities to the effects of climate change, the energy transition, and low-carbon development pathways.

Al-Sada also participated in a high-level roundtable in which participants reviewed their countries' efforts in building capacity to address climate change, stressing the active role that Qatar plays at the international climate level in the preparation phase for COP31. (QNA)

Qatar News Agency launches training course on media editing and monitoring

Qatar News Agency (QNA) launched yesterday a training course on media editing and monitoring, as part of QNA Training Center's 2026 training plan.

Represented by Monitoring and Editing Expert at the agency Ricardo Youakim, the four-day course aims to develop participants' skills in professional media monitoring and content editing across various formats, while also enhancing their ability to transform monitoring outputs into professional media analyses that support decision-making.

The course covers several key topics, including the concept of media monitoring and content types, as well as various monitoring sources, including TV monitoring and social media platform monitoring. It also covers trend tracking and hashtag analysis, in addition to the use of artificial intelligence (AI) technologies for data gathering, summarisation, and analysis, along with the preparation of specialised reports tailored for decision-makers.

The course comes as part of QNA's efforts, through



the "QNA Training Center", to develop national media competencies and keep pace with rapid developments in monitoring, analysis, and media content production, thereby enhancing the quality of media output.

In March 2023, QNA inaugurated the 'QNA Training Halls', outfitted with state-of-the-art training facilities, in line with its vision of bolstering the capabilities media professionals and empowering them to keep up with the evolving media landscape. (QNA)

Minister meets German chancellor's adviser

HE the Minister of State at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Dr Mohammed bin Abdulaziz bin Saleh al-Khulaifi met yesterday with Dr Gunter Sautter, political and security adviser to the German chancellor, who is currently visiting the country. During the meeting, the two sides discussed bilateral co-operation relations and ways to enhance and develop them.

They also discussed regional developments, particularly those related to the ceasefire between the United States and Iran, as well as efforts aimed at de-escalation to strengthen security and stability in the region. (QNA)



MoEHE launches National Scientific Research and Innovation Exhibition

The Ministry of Education and Higher Education (MoEHE) announced the launch of the 18th National Scientific Research and Innovation Exhibition 2026, in partnership with the Qatar Research, Development and Innovation Council. The exhibition is scheduled to take place from May 12-14 at the Qatar National Convention Centre, under the theme "Promising Researchers for Qatar".

In a statement, the ministry explained that this year's exhibi-

tion will witness the participation of more than 2,900 students from 249 public and private schools, along with more than 650 teachers, showcasing over 2,000 research and innovation projects across diverse scientific fields.

The ministry noted that the exhibition's activities will include presentations of participating projects to judging panels, specialised training workshops, the Academic FameLab competition, and an awards ceremony honouring the

winners of various competitions.

The exhibition serves as a national platform to support a culture of scientific research and innovation among students, showcasing their scientific projects and ideas, contributing to the development of critical thinking, analysis, and discovery skills, while enhancing students' abilities to apply knowledge in addressing real-world challenges and proposing innovative solutions. The exhibition is organised as part of MoEHE's efforts to foster



a culture of research and innovation within the educational environment, preparing a generation capable of competing and producing knowledge, in line with the goals of Qatar National Vision 2030 to build a knowledge-based economy and develop human capital. (QNA)

QNA launches news services in 3 new languages using AI

Qatar News Agency (QNA) launched yesterday its news services in three new languages - Russian, Hindi, and Urdu - using artificial intelligence (AI), as part of a development plan that the agency began years ago, bringing the total number of languages in which QNA provides its news services to 8 languages.

QNA currently provides its news services in five living languages: Arabic, English, French, German and Spanish.

HE the Director-General of Qatar News Agency (QNA) Ahmed bin Saad al-Rumaihi said that the launch of QNA's news services in three new languages comes within the framework of its keenness to

convey the voice of the State of Qatar to the world, and to promote the country as an important tourist, economic and sports destination, in addition to highlighting all the activities the country is witnessing on various political, economic, social, cultural and sports aspects; as well as keeping pace with developments in regional and international events.

Al-Rumaihi added that providing news services in new languages using AI represents a new step in QNA's journey to keep pace with technology and make the most of it, as QNA has been keen for some time to use the latest technologies in the field of AI to deliver its media message.



In this context, he pointed out that QNA had won the 'Innovation in the Use of Artificial Intelligence in News' award on the sidelines of the Google Cloud Summit Doha 2025, in recognition of its pioneering efforts in employing artificial intelligence technologies within its news system. (QNA)

Research regulations set to enhance ethics, safety of Qatar's health practices

By **Ayman Adly**
Staff Reporter

Detailed health research regulations in Qatar have been introduced to maintain high ethical standards in the field, ensuring the safety and strict legal compliance of the overall process.

The Cabinet Resolution No 12 of 2026 issuing the executive regulations of Law No 6 of 2025 on the regulation of health research was recently published at the seventh issue of the Official Gazette for 2026.

The new legal and regulatory framework governing health research has established detailed rules regulating all forms of health research conducted in the country, including clinical trials, laboratory and biomedical research, genomic and genetic studies, collaborative international research, research involving human biological samples,

and the operation of biobanks.

The regulations introduce standardised legal and scientific definitions for terms, such as human health research, human biological samples, serious adverse reactions, and unexpected serious adverse reactions, aligning Qatar's health research governance with the related international ethical and scientific standards.

The regulations require all institutions aiming to conduct health research to obtain official licenses before starting operations. Applications must include detailed information on the institution's legal status, research activities, staffing structures, appointed research directors, laboratory capabilities, biosafety measures, technical infrastructure, and compliance systems. Licenses are valid for two years and may be renewed subject to regulatory review and payment of prescribed

fees, while authorities retain the power to amend, suspend, or revoke licenses for non-compliance.

In the meantime, the regulation imposes strict ethical review requirements, mandating that every research proposal undergo scientific and ethical evaluation before approval. Researchers must submit extensive documentation, including study objectives, scientific rationale, methodologies, statistical plans, informed consent forms, conflict-of-interest disclosures, researcher qualifications, training records, risk management procedures, and participant protection measures. Additional safeguards apply to vulnerable groups, such as pregnant women and fetuses, while exporting biological samples outside Qatar for research purposes requires separate approval from the concerned authorities.

In addition, the National Com-

mittee for Ethics of Health Research was introduced according to Cabinet Decision No 13 of 2026 to oversee ethical governance and national coordination of health research activities. The committee is chaired by the Ministry of Public Health and includes representatives from several major national institutions, including Hamad Medical Corporation, Qatar University, Sidra Medicine, the Primary Health Care Corporation, the National Cyber Security Agency, the National Human Rights Committee, the Qatar Research, Development and Innovation Council, and other governmental and research bodies.

The committee is tasked with setting ethical standards, reviewing governance mechanisms, monitoring compliance, and issuing recommendations related to health research practices in Qatar. Further, Cabinet Decision

No 14 of 2026 established a Health Research Monitoring Committee responsible for supervising approved studies, monitoring institutional compliance, reviewing violations and incidents, and recommending corrective actions.

In the meantime, regulations have introduced extensive reporting and safety obligations designed to strengthen participant protection and research accountability. Institutions are required to immediately report serious adverse events, unexpected side effects, research-related injuries, safety breaches, and corrective measures taken during studies, in addition to submitting annual reports on research progress and biobank operations. Accordingly, the authorities concerned have the empower to conduct inspections, request additional documentation, intervene in ongoing research activities, and impose urgent measures where the

participant safety or ethical standards are at risk.

According to the new executive regulations, there is a strict compliance regime targeting unethical practices and scientific misconduct. Violations include conducting research without a license, beginning studies without ethical approval, failing to obtain informed consent, concealing adverse events, exporting biological samples without authorisation, breaching confidentiality or biosafety rules, providing false or misleading research data, and failing to disclose conflicts of interest. Institutions and researchers found in violation may face suspension or cancellation of licenses, termination of research projects, administrative investigations, restrictions on future research activities, mandatory corrective actions, and referral to the competent legal authorities under the Health Research Law.

Online applications for QU undergraduate programmes for Fall 2026 semester open

Qatar University (QU) announced the opening of online applications for undergraduate programmes in the Fall 2026 semester.

Applications are open for transfer students and second bachelor's degree students, in addition to new students, visiting students, and non-degree course students, the university pointed out.

Applications for transfer students and second bachelor's degree students will remain open until May 20, while applications for new and visiting students will continue until June 24, 2026, said QU, giving students sufficient time to prepare their applications and gather the required documents within a clear timeline.

In this context, Director of Admissions at QU, Fatima al-Kawari said that the university has significantly simplified application procedures as to facilitate the process for students.

She noted that students from Qatari public secondary schools will not be required to submit their certificates thanks to an electronic integration system that exists between the Ministry of Education and Higher Education and QU, enabling the latter to receive students' results automatically, thus, saving time and reducing procedures for students.

The director of Admissions at QU underscored, however, that students from international and private schools in Qatar are required to submit original certified certificates within the deadlines specified on QU's website. She emphasised that all requirements related to international certificates are clearly available on the university's official website,



enabling students to review them in advance and ensure their documents are ready before applying.

Students can track the status of their applications electronically and stay informed of any updates or comments in real time, said al-Kawari, not to mention the dedicated communication channels available to respond to students' inquiries during the application period, something that reflects QU's commitment to ensuring that the process of applying to the university is clear and smooth throughout.

Applications are submitted through (apply.qu.edu.qa) with required documents uploaded electronically. She added that original documents must then be submitted at the Student Affairs Building during official working hours.

Al-Kawari said that adhering to deadlines and fully submitting the required documents is an essential condition for an application to be considered, with missing documents and deadlines leading to disqualification.

She further highlighted that QU offers academically outstanding students a variety of scholarships, providing them with a real opportunity to continue their education in a supportive and motivating environment.

Students can apply for scholarships simultaneously with their online admission application, without the need for additional procedures, thereby increasing their chances of benefiting from these scholarships right from the very beginning of their university journey, al-Kawari noted. (QNA)

مؤسسة قطر
Qatar Foundation

INVITATION TO TENDER

Tender Reference	Description	Tender Fee (QAR)	Tender Bond Value (QAR)	Bid Closing Date
QF-RFQ-1291	Website Service Provider (WSP) to QF on Call off basis for 3 years with an option to extend up to 1 year	1,000.00	100,000.00	17 th June 2026, 02:00 PM
QNL-RFQ-60	Provision for Communication Services to Qatar Foundation- Qatar National Library on call off basis for 3 years with option to extend for 1 more year	1,000.00	100,000.00	18 th June 2026, 02:00 PM
CO-RFQ-474	Supply, Delivery and Installation of EC Fans with Control Panels for AHUs	500.00	N/A	11 th June 2026, 02:00 PM

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

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

Tender Fee: Interested bidders can sign in by visiting this link <https://suppliers.qf.org.qa/abstract> and pay the respective non-refundable and non-transferable tender fee online.

All Tender Fees are to be paid using credit cards only.

Tender Fee Payment Dates: Payment of Tender Fee online will be from **11th May until 17th May 2026**.
- All bidders, who are registered and have paid the required tender fees online to QF, will then be granted access to download the Tender Document.
- Technical and commercial bids need to be submitted and attached online in QF Supplier Portal as per instructions provided in the "Supplier Portal" work instruction.
 - The commercial bid must be valid for 180 days from Bid Closing Date.
 - The commercial bid must be accompanied by a bank guarantee (tender bond) issued by a local bank in Qatar and should be valid for 180 days from the bid closing date (where applicable as per the Tender documents).
 - The successful tenderer will be required to submit a performance bond as prescribed in each of the above tender documents.
 - Qatar Foundation special qualifications, terms and conditions shall apply as stipulated in the tender document.

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

EAA accorded Colombia's highest honour

The Education Above All (EAA) Foundation announced that it has been awarded the Simon Bolivar Order of Democracy by the Congress of the Republic of Colombia, one of the highest honours in the country. This recognition comes in appreciation of the Foundation's contribution to supporting efforts to strengthen the protection of education from attacks and to expand educational opportunities for the most vulnerable children throughout the country.

The honour reflects the EAA Foundation's sustained collaboration with Colombian institutions and partners to support the right to education, particularly in communities affected by conflict, displacement, and poverty. The award ceremony took place on 6 May 2026, as part of an official mission, followed by field visits to EAA Foundation education projects in several areas supporting out-of-school children and at risk of dropping out.

Over the past two years, the EAA Foundation, through its Protect Education in Insecurity and Conflict (PEIC) programme, has

provided technical support to national stakeholders to strengthen their understanding of attacks on education and approaches to accountability. This includes collaboration with Colombia's Special Jurisdiction for Peace and contributions to a proposed draft law that aims to strengthen accountability for attacks on education, including the recruitment of children and the targeting of teachers and schools.

The proposed legislation, currently under consideration in Congress, represents an important step in reinforcing national efforts to address the long-term impact of attacks on education and ensure that children, teachers, and schools are better protected. It reflects Colombia's broader commitment to strengthening justice and safeguarding the right to education as part of its ongoing transition towards sustainable peace.

Alongside this work on protection and accountability, the EAA Foundation has also supported efforts to expand access to quality primary education for marginalised children in Colombia



through its Educate A Child (EAC) programme. With the support of its strategic partner, the Qatar Fund for Development (QFFD), in partnership with Fundación Pies Descalzados, the Foundation has

enabled thousands of marginalised children to realise their right to education by addressing multiple dimensions of educational inequality in prioritised regions across the country, including bor-

der territories with Venezuela.

To date, these efforts have supported the enrolment of more than 42,400 out of school children and also benefited a further 26,700 at-risk children to ensure their continued participation in school.

A second phase of the project aims to reach 42,320 out of school children and help retain 32,160 at-risk students, with a continued focus on strengthening local education systems in areas most affected by exclusion, including Barranquilla, Cartagena, Medellin, Choco, and border regions impacted by migration. This approach supports more consistent identification, enrolment, and retention of children within the education system.

Colombia continues to face challenges related to education access and protection. More than 250,000 children have been affected by attacks on education in Colombia since the signing of the Peace Agreement in 2016. At the same time, many children remain out of school or at risk of dropping out, reinforcing the need for coordinated approaches that protect education and support children

to access and remain in education.

"Education is not only a right, it is a foundation for stability, resilience, and lasting peace. In Colombia, we have seen how strengthening the protection of education alongside expanding access to and supporting the continuity of education can help ensure that children can go to school, are supported to remain there and continue their education, even in challenging contexts. This recognition reflects the collective efforts of national institutions, partners, and communities working together to support the right to education and build stronger, more inclusive systems for the future," CEO of Education Above All Foundation, Mohammed al-Kubaisi said.

As countries around the world continue to address the impact of conflict and crisis on education, Colombia's experience offers important lessons on how coordinated efforts can help strengthen education systems, protect learning environments, and support children to access and remain in education. (QNA)

Qatar Charity's 'Alaqraboon' Center launches Dhul-Hijjah campaign in Qatar

Qatar Charity (QC)'s "Alaqraboon" Center has launched its Dhul-Hijjah 1447 AH campaign in Qatar as part of its seasonal programmes aimed at promoting the values of compassion and social solidarity and expanding community support during the blessed days of Dhul-Hijjah to meet the needs of beneficiaries across the country.

In a statement issued on Sunday, the Center stated that the campaign is expected to benefit approximately 24,200 people through the support of donors. It added that the campaign includes a package of projects designed to support families and vulnerable groups within Qatar.

The Center highlighted support for needy and low-income families, widows and divorcees, families of prisoners, and persons with disabilities through the Udhhiyah project during Eid al-Adha. The project targets nearly 20,000 beneficiaries and will this year utilise an upgraded smart coupon mechanism through "Alaqraboon" application, facilitating collection procedures, ensuring equitable access, and preserving beneficiaries' privacy.

As part of the support for children, the campaign will implement the Eid Gift Project for orphans and children from low-income families to help them meet their needs ahead of Eid, alongside "Eid Joy" festival aimed at bringing happiness to orphans and strengthening their sense of community care during the blessed occasion. The two initiatives are expected to benefit around 1,700 children.

The campaign also includes a dedicated track for urgent humanitarian cases, providing support in healthcare services, including treatment and medication, rehabilitation and support for persons with disabilities, educational assistance, and aid for needy and low-income families, elderly people, widows, divorcees, debtors,

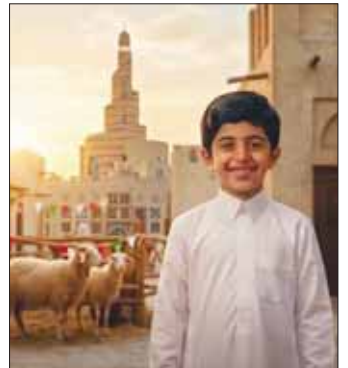


prisoners and their families, in addition to meeting the needs of sponsored individuals. The programme aims to support approximately 2,500 urgent humanitarian cases, reflecting the Center's commitment to alleviating hardship for beneficiaries and their families during times of need and maximising humanitarian impact during the blessed days.

Chairman of "Alaqraboon" Center Faisal Rashid al-Fehaida said the days of Dhul-Hijjah embody the values of mercy and solidarity within society and reaffirm that charitable work is a year-round responsibility. He added that the campaign builds on ongoing efforts to serve the community in Qatar, reach those most in need, and bring happiness to beneficiaries.

Al-Fahida noted that the campaign aims to raise QR30mn and reach approximately 24,200 beneficiaries across Qatar, adding that these efforts reflect the trust of the community and the continued support of generous donors.

He called on donors and members of the community in Qatar to support the campaign and contribute to bringing joy, alleviating suffering, and ensuring assistance reaches those who deserve it, stressing the importance of making the most of charitable seasons in ways that strengthen social solidarity across the country. He also expressed hope that the campaign would make a tangible difference in the lives of beneficiaries during the blessed days. (QNA)



QC launches Dhul-Hijjah Campaign 1447 AH - 2026

Qatar Charity has launched its Dhul-Hijjah Campaign for the 1447 AH - 2026 season, under the slogan 'The Most Blessed Days'.

Driven by the generosity of donors in Qatar, the campaign seeks to mobilise support for the implementation of various humanitarian and development projects worldwide, and the distribution of sacrificial meat in 43 countries, including Qatar. The campaign also includes Eid clothing and Eid gifts, marking the spiritual significance of the first ten days of Dhul Hijjah.

Through the campaign, Qatar Charity aims to promote solidarity, bring joy to vulnerable families during Eid al-Adha, address growing humanitarian needs in several regions, and broaden its humanitarian reach to benefit millions of people.

As part of the campaign, Qatar Charity plans to distribute the meat from 42,650 sacrificial animals, at a total estimated cost of approximately QR28mn, reaching an expected 838,000 beneficiaries within Qatar and abroad.

Outside of Qatar, the organisation, through the support of donors, will distribute meat from 40,900 sacrifices across 42 countries worldwide. With a budget exceeding QR26.5mn, the initiative is expected to benefit approximately 818,000 people.

The project will be implemented in Niger, Indonesia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Philippines, Pakistan, Tanzania, The Gambia, South Africa, Rwanda, Sri Lanka, Ghana, Palestine (Ramallah and the Gaza Strip), Ivory Coast, Kosovo, Lebanon, Malaysia, Nepal, Nigeria, Ethiopia, Morocco, Benin, Burundi, Togo, Mali, Syria, Albania, Jordan, India, Yemen, Burkina Faso, Turkey, Chad, Tunisia, Djibouti, Kyrgyzstan, Kenya, Egypt, Mauritania, Somalia, Bangladesh, Senegal, and Sudan.

In its international Udhhiyah operations, Qatar Charity focuses on countries and regions most affected by protracted crises and disasters, with priority given to Palestine, including the Gaza Strip, Somalia, Syria, Kenya, and Sudan.

The campaign also includes the implementation of the Eid Clothing Project for orphans in Türkiye, Jordan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Sudan, Somalia, Niger, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Burkina Faso, Tanza-



nia, Tunisia, Djibouti, Sri Lanka, Ghana, Palestine (Gaza Strip and West Bank), Kosovo, Kenya, Mali, Mauritania, Nigeria, and Côte d'Ivoire.

The project targets thousands of orphans sponsored by donors through Qatar Charity, with a total cost of approximately QR2.5mn to benefit around 8,200 children by providing them with Eid essentials, contributing to bringing joy to their hearts during this special occasion.

Within Qatar, the 'Alaqraboon' Centre of Qatar Charity will implement the Udhhiyah project, targeting the distribution of the meat from 1,750 sacrificial animals at a cost of approximately QR1.5mn, benefiting nearly 20,000 people. Beneficiaries will include low-income households, orphan families, families of prisoners, and other vulnerable groups.

To spread joy during Eid, the centre will also implement the 'Eidi' Project, targeting 1,500 children from orphan families and low

income households. In addition, it will organise the 'Eid Joy Festival', which will target hundreds of orphans and their families. The campaign will further include support for 2,500 urgent humanitarian cases inside Qatar.

The campaign will go beyond Udhhiyah and Eid clothing to mobilise support for an integrated package of food security and water projects outside Qatar. These will include food baskets, hot meals, support for community kitchens and bakeries, as well as interventions to address malnutrition in countries most affected by hunger. It will also mobilise support for clean water projects, like drilling wells, to help communities facing severe drought and water shortages.

A key component of the campaign is the '10x10 Initiative', which features 10 high-impact projects during the first 10 days of Dhul-Hijjah, focusing on food security and economic empowerment, such as feeding pro-

grammes, income-generating projects, and support for vulnerable families - offering donors multiple opportunities to maximise the impact of their contributions.

Abdulaziz Jassim Hejji, executive director of Communications and Community Impact Qatar Charity, stated: "The 'Most Blessed Days' campaign comes at a time when humanitarian needs are rising in several regions around the world. Qatar Charity is committed to directing its interventions toward those most in need, in accordance with the highest professional standards."

Supporters can contribute through www.qcharity.org and via the mobile application at www.qch.qa/app. Donations may also be made through the Home Collector Service available on the mobile app, by contacting 44290000, or by donating directly at Qatar Charity branches and through authorised collectors in shopping malls.

QF's Academic Bridge Programme celebrates Class of '26

The Academic Bridge Program (ABP), part of Qatar Foundation (QF)'s Pre-University Education (PUE), celebrated the graduation of the Class of 2026 under the theme "A Pathway to Excellence".

The Class of 2026 included 163 graduates across three academic tracks: Social Sciences, Humanities and Visual Arts, and Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM), reflecting the academic diversity offered by the Academic Bridge Program.

On this occasion, Dr Suhaim Khalaf al-Tamimi, ABP Director,

said: "Today, we celebrate an important milestone in our graduate's journey, one that marks the beginning of a new chapter filled with ambition and future opportunities. This occasion also reflects the ABP's 25-year journey of supporting and empowering students academically and personally as they prepare for university and beyond."

Dr al-Tamimi highlighted that 68% of the Class of 2026 have so far received admission offers from universities within Education City, the highest percentage in the programme's history, reflecting

the students' readiness to thrive in world-class academic environments and the programme's role in preparing graduates capable of contributing to a knowledge-based economy.

"What our graduates achieve today is not only a personal accomplishment, but also a reflection of continued investment in education and human potential, and a belief in the ability of young people to contribute to building a more prosperous and sustainable future," he stressed.

"We look forward to seeing our graduates continue their journeys

with confidence and ambition, using the knowledge, skills, and values they have gained to serve their communities and contribute to a nation that continues to invest in its people and empower them to lead across different fields," Dr al-Tamimi said.

For many graduates, the Academic Bridge Program represented more than a pathway to university, it was also a transformative personal experience.

Abdulrahman Mohammed al-Sulaiti, one of the graduates, said the programme helped him discover his potential while

strengthening both his academic and personal skills, adding: "Through the programme, I learned how to become more independent, develop my way of thinking, and adapt to the demands of university life."

After receiving three admission offers from Education City universities, al-Sulaiti chose to pursue Information Systems at QF's Carnegie Mellon University in Qatar. Reflecting on his journey, he said: "The experience and skills he gained through ABP provided a strong foundation for this next chapter."

Similarly, Fatima Abdulrahman Qutba described the programme as a supportive environment that helped ease her transition from high school to university life. She explained: "The STEM track strengthened my academic and scientific skills and helped pave the way toward achieving my goal of gaining admission to QF's Weill Cornell Medicine-Qatar."

Qutba added that one of the most valuable aspects of her experience at ABP was the confidence and sense of preparedness it gave her as she looks ahead to pursuing her future ambitions. (QNA)



QRCS project providing clean drinking water to Gaza's IDPs

QNA
Doha

As part of its ongoing efforts to ease the severe humanitarian crisis in Gaza, Qatar Red Crescent Society (QRCS) has launched a project to distribute potable water to internally displaced people (IDPs) across the blockade. Implemented in co-operation with the Coastal Municipali-

ties Water Utility (CMWU), the USD600,000 project is aimed at helping meet everyday life needs and prevent water-borne diseases at IDP camps and shelters. According to head of QRCS representation office in Gaza, Dr Akram Nassar, the project involves the distribution of 30mm litres of water in total.

"CMWU water tanker trucks are deployed on a daily basis to distribute water to the most affected areas in North Gaza, Gaza, Deir Al-Balah,

and South Gaza Governorates, ensuring that IDPs have access to clean water for drinking and personal use," he explained.

Dr Nassar added, "The provision of potable water is not only a basic service, but also an urgent humanitarian necessity to protect thousands of lives, especially children. Displaced families have difficulty getting clean drinking water, amid overcrowded shelters and damaged water supply networks".

This emergency intervention comes at a time when the water and sanitation infrastructure in Gaza is critically failing. According to official reports, more than 85% of the water and sanitation infrastructure has been destroyed, rendering most water wells and water purification plants out of service. In many areas, groundwater is contaminated with wastewater, putting the two-million population at risk of water scarcity. QRCS pays special attention to

supporting the water and sanitation sector in Gaza. Currently, there are plans to launch a set of water and sanitation projects, to be implemented throughout the year. These include the rehabilitation of water wells, installation of solar-powered pumps, construction of water purification plants equipped with solar panels, construction of water tanks and toilets, rehabilitation of sewage networks, and provision of makeshift mobile toilets.

Qatar condemns drone attack

From Page 1

The statement further reiterated Qatar's firm position that the security of maritime navigation and freedom of passage in international waterways are a fundamental pillar of security and stability, and they must not be compromised under any circumstances. Earlier, the Ministry of Defence announced that a commercial cargo vessel in the country's territorial waters - northeast of Mesaieed Port - coming from Abu Dhabi, was targeted by a drone yesterday morning.

The incident resulted in a limited fire onboard the vessel, with no reported injuries, the ministry said in a statement on X. The vessel continued its journey toward Mesaieed Port after the fire was brought under control, the ministry said, stressing that the necessary measures were taken, and co-ordination was carried out with the relevant authorities.

PHCC launches Ophthalmology Clinic at Al Waab Health Centre

19 health centres now offering ophthalmology services

Primary Health Care Corporation (PHCC) has announced the launch of Ophthalmology Services at Al Waab Health Centre, effective May 6, as part of its ongoing efforts to expand specialised clinic services available to patients across the country.

With the addition of the Ophthalmology Clinic at Al Waab Health Centre, the number of health centres providing ophthalmology services has increased to 19 centres distributed across various regions in Qatar, helping improve patients' access to essential eye care services without the need



Al Waab Health Centre.

to visit specialised hospitals.

The health centres currently offering ophthalmology services include: Leabaib, Al Sadd, Al Thu-

mama, Al Mashaf, Gharrafat Al Rayyan, Al Khor, Muaither, Al Ruwais, Umm Al Seneem, Al Rayyan, West Bay, Umm Slal, Al Wajbah, Mesaieer, Qatar University, Al Wakra, Airport, Rawdat Al Khail, in addition to Al Waab.

This expansion reflects PHCC's commitment to strengthening primary healthcare services through supporting the early diagnosis of eye diseases, providing timely and appropriate care, and facilitating referral procedures for cases requiring advanced specialised treatment, ultimately enhancing the quality of healthcare services delivered to the community.



Vodafone Qatar signs agreement with Al Jazeera Media Institute

Vodafone Qatar announced the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Al Jazeera Media Institute to deliver specialised training programmes covering media and administrative courses and diplomas, in line with the latest professional standards and practices.

The MoU was signed by Abdullah Ali al-Misnad, Chief Administrative Officer at Vodafone Qatar, and Eman al-Ameri, director of Al Jazeera Media Institute, in the presence of representatives from both organisations.

The agreement includes organising seminars, conferences, and specialised workshops in areas of shared interest, as well as



developing customised training programmes tailored to Vodafone Qatar's requirements, supporting professional development and strengthening media and communication skills.

Al-Ameri stated: "Our partnership with Vodafone Qatar reflects the Institute's firm belief that investing in people is the most essential gateway to building more professional work environments.

Through specialised training programmes in communication and content creation, we extend our expertise to various work sectors, in order to enhance team efficiency and provide them with communication tools that responsibly and professionally express their institutions' identity and core values."

Abdulhadi al-Sahli, head of Media Relations and CSR at Vodafone Qatar, said: "This partnership reflects Vodafone Qatar's focus on investing in people and strengthening communication capabilities across the business. Through our collaboration with the Al Jazeera Media Institute, we aim to deliver high-quality training that supports professional development."

The mobile library visits Doha British School in DIBF promotional campaign

The Ministry of Culture's mobile library provided a unique cultural and interactive experience for students at the Doha British School as part of the promotional campaign accompanying the 35th Doha International Book Fair (DIBF).

The aim was to promote a culture of reading and strengthen children's and young people's connection to books and knowledge.

The events held at the school saw enthusiastic student participation in the cultural and recreational activities offered by the mobile library. The children explored a diverse collection of children's stories and educational books and participated in interactive activities that combined fun and learning, instilling a love of reading from a young age.

This initiative is part of the Ministry of Culture's extensive preparations for the DIBF, taking place from May 14-23 at the Doha Exhibition and Convention Centre (DECC).

The mobile library buses have been touring various areas of the country, bringing the atmosphere of the fair to the heart of the community and reaching the public



Children visiting the mobile library.

where they are, with a particular focus on schools and public parks.

The mobile library offers a comprehensive learning experience, with its shelves housing a rich collection of stories and educational books suitable for all ages. The campaign also includes in-bus visual presentations showcasing highlights from previous editions of the DIBF, as well as the distribution of gifts and brochures for children and informational materials for parents.

The mobile library's field visits include 12 schools and 16 public

parks, in addition to being present at several key locations throughout the country. This initiative reflects the Ministry of Culture's commitment to expanding access to knowledge and making reading a daily practice accessible to all members of society.

The mobile library continues its tours in conjunction with the upcoming DIBF, reaffirming the role of culture in shaping future generations and fostering awareness through interactive initiatives that integrate books into the daily lives of children and families.

Fahad al-Baker's workshop on acting reaches final stage

By Tawfik Lamari
Staff Reporter

The acting workshop launched by Fahad al-Baker through Al-Joud Art Production Company has entered its final stage, with participants preparing a closing performance to be presented to the public as the programme's culmination.

Trainees are currently applying the skills and experience they acquired during the training programme through short scenes and performances that reflect their artistic development and the extent of their benefit from the programme.

This stage follows a training journey that began on April 18th and continued for a full month, amid remarkable engagement from the participants, who are now preparing to present a theatrical performance that represents the final outcome of the training experience.

Al-Baker confirmed that the workshop achieved exceptional engagement from its inception, noting that the participants' enthusiasm and commitment were



Fahd al-Baker directing the actors.

crucial to the experience's success.

He said that what pleased him most was the harmony that developed among the young people in the workshop and their genuine desire to learn and gain serious theatrical experience. He added that the progress shown by a number of participants in such a short period reflects the presence of promising talents that simply need support and proper guidance.

He pointed out that the current phase is the most important, as it moves the trainees from exercises and training to actual work, a step that gives any actor a true sense of the stage.

Over the past few weeks, the

workshop has included several stages of theoretical and practical training, focusing on the fundamentals of theatrical performance, physical expression, character development, and stagecraft, along with intensive exercises aimed at developing the participants' skills and refining their artistic outfits in an atmosphere that simulates a real theatrical work environment.

This workshop is part of efforts to support young talents and those interested in the theatrical arts by providing a practical training space that combines academic learning with real-world application.

ANNOUNCEMENT

I, AGNES ANYAA

holder of

GHANA Passport No. G4999074
QID No. 29428801337

hereby change my name

from

AGNES ANYAA

to

AGNES ENNYAN

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

ANNOUNCEMENT

I, YULIA KUFENINA

holder of

RUSSIA Passport No. 764913281
QID No. 29464300136

hereby change my name

from

YULIA KUFENINA

to

YULIA BELKINA

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

A unified digital platform for volunteer work

From Page 1

The launch, she stressed, was a starting point rather than a destination, and sustained co-operation would be essential to embed volunteering as a lasting national practice.

Director of the Community Development Department at the MSDF, Nasser al-Mughaisib,

presented an overview of the platform's development, describing it as the product of extensive consultations and studies with partners.

He said the work had produced a comprehensive regulatory framework - backed by legislation and procedural guidelines - for which the platform now serves as the opera-

tional arm, unifying opportunities, building organisational capacity and enabling impact measurement. He added that the next phase would focus on consolidating a sustainable volunteering ecosystem, deepening community participation and reinforcing the role of volunteer work in Qatar's wider development drive.



Arkansas State University celebrates the academic achievements of its 2026 graduating students and highlights its continued commitment to excellence in higher education in Qatar.
PICTURE: Shajai Kayamkulam



Amal Dib

Arkansas State University Qatar hosts Class of 2026 graduation

By Shaima Sherif
Doha

Graduates of Arkansas State University Qatar are entering the next stage of life equipped with technical expertise, leadership skills, and resilience developed through internships, mentorship, and experiences that extend far beyond the classroom. "This is our second batch," said executive director Murat Unal, reflecting on the university's graduating cohort. The batch includes students from the Bachelor of Science programmes in Digital Design and Technology and Engineering Management Systems, as well as 22 graduates from the Master of Science in Education Leadership programme.



Murat Unal

According to Unal, the institution's focus is closely aligned with Qatar's evolving economic and technological priorities. "They learn a lot about technologies that

are currently in huge need for Qatar as a whole, for its national vision," he said, pointing to areas such as artificial intelligence, cloud technologies and educational leadership.

For undergraduate students, internships have become central to that preparation. "This year we have started pushing very strongly internships, meaning securing in-

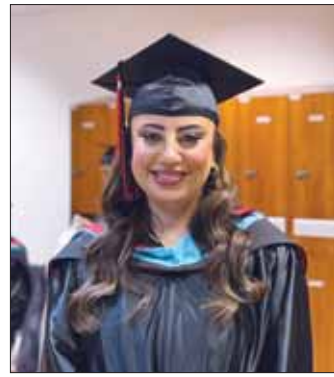
ternships ahead of graduation," Unal explained. "It's very important to have the foot in the door."

Some students completed AI-related internships with organisations such as Qatar Insurance Company, allowing them to apply classroom knowledge before entering the job market full-time.

Beyond academics, university leaders say student growth is equally measured by confidence, resilience and personal transformation.

Dean of Student Success Amal Dib described student development as a continuous process that begins on the first day on campus. "They're not the same people who joined on the first day," she said. "We build them from day one in terms of their skills, their academics, to get them ready for the market and to be professionals on the right track."

Dib emphasised the importance of a close-knit support system, particularly within a smaller uni-



Zaina Rihani

versity community. Academic support sessions, teaching assistants, mentorship programmes, counselling services and scholarships were all part of the ecosystem designed to help students navigate academic, personal and financial challenges.

"We know our students, we know the hardships they go through, and that's why we're always beside them," she said.

For many students, the transformation was deeply personal.

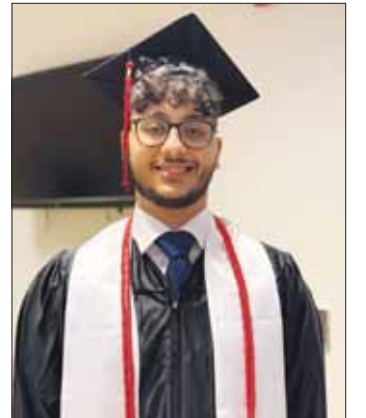
Engineering Management graduate Mohammed Ouda described his university years as "an amazing ride" filled with "ups and downs and a lot of unexpected moments".

"I joined the university as a kid," he said. "Now I've grown into a man."

Ouda believes the university experience taught him discipline, time management and responsibility. "I think before doing any decision now," he reflected, crediting volunteering opportunities, internships and faculty mentorship for shaping his growth.

Meanwhile, Master's graduate Zaina Rihani, who completed her degree in Educational Leadership, described the experience as emotionally and intellectually transformative.

"It wasn't an easy journey, but it was worth the work," she said, noting the value of receiving an American education while remaining in



Mohammed Ouda

Qatar and the wider Arab region. Recalling her first class, Rihani said that students entered as strangers but quickly became part of a supportive community through discussion and collaboration. "We still have that perfect world inside our classroom," she said.

Her message to future students was one grounded in honesty and perseverance. "You're going to doubt yourselves," she admitted. "But by the end of the journey, you will understand why you took that step. It's worth every sleepless night."

For Unal, that journey ultimately extends beyond degrees and titles. His message to graduates reflected the university's broader philosophy: "Never limit your challenges, but challenge your limits."

Top 10 must-visit beaches in Qatar this summer

As summer sets in, Qatar's coastline offers a refreshing way to experience the country, where tranquil northern shores, vibrant city beaches and dramatic desert landscapes come together along the Arabian Gulf. Whether it is a quiet morning by the water, a family day out or an active beach escape, each destination offers a distinct experience shaped by its surroundings.



The country offers a diverse mix of public and private beaches, catering to a wide range of preferences, from open-access natural shores to curated beachfront destinations. Nami Beach, the latest addition to Qatar's coastline located in the heart of Doha, offers a curated beachfront experience with cabanas, landscaped areas and dining options. It also features a dedicated ladies-only zone, providing a more private and comfortable setting for visitors. Located near Stadium 974, 974 Beach combines leisure with a lively atmosphere. With water sports, including jet skiing and kayaking, as well as beach volleyball, football and dedicated activity zones, it offers a dynamic and interactive seaside experience. Positioned in central Doha, West Bay Beach offers a convenient escape with views of the city skyline. As one of the few dog-friendly beaches, it is ideal for relaxed walks, swimming and casual time by the sea. Situated in Mesaieed, Sealine Beach is a long-standing favourite, cherished by generations for its unique blend of desert and sea. Visitors can enjoy dune bashing

and swimming in a dynamic, all-day beach and desert setting. The Inland Sea, or Khor Al Adaid, features a rare landscape where desert dunes meet the sea. Recognised as a Unesco-listed natural reserve, visitors can experience desert adventure and swimming, making it one of Qatar's most immersive desert-to-sea adventure destinations. Located along Qatar's northeast coast, Fuwairit Beach is known for its soft white sand and shallow, crystal-clear waters. Home to the purpose-built Fuwairit Kite Beach, Tapestry Collection by Hilton, it offers world-class kitesurfing, water sports and beachfront leisure facilities, making it a key destination for active coastal experiences. Al Maroona Beach is known for its golden sands and shallow waters. Its untouched setting makes it ideal for swimming, picnics, camping and spotting marine life such as starfish and crabs along the shore. Located north of Doha, Simaisma Beach is a family-friendly destination known for its calm, shallow waters. With shaded picnic areas, playgrounds, barbecue spots and open spaces for beach games, it offers a complete setting for

relaxed family outings. Located on Qatar's west coast, Zekreet Beach is known for its dramatic limestone rock formations and remote desert setting. Popular for camping, windsurfing, it offers a secluded, off-the-grid coastal experience surrounded by nature and wildlife. Located on Qatar's west coast, Dukhan Beach is known for its wide shoreline and calm, clear waters. Visitors can enjoy swimming, snorkelling along reef areas, fishing and camping, making it ideal for group outings and outdoor seaside experiences. Together, these beaches reflect the diversity of Qatar's coastline, offering experiences that range from natural settings to well-developed urban destinations. Whether seeking relaxation, adventure or family-friendly outings, Qatar's beaches continue to position the country as an accessible and compelling summer destination. Beyond its coastline, Qatar offers an exceptional summer season filled with activities, events, attractions, offers and promotions under the Hala Summer programme and Kids Go Free offer. For more information, visit <https://visitqatar.com/intl-en/events-calendar/summer>

UDST ranks 9th among top 10 best workplaces in Qatar for 2026

Earns Great Place to Work Certification for the fourth year

The University of Doha for Science and Technology (UDST) has achieved a significant milestone, ranking 9th among the Top 10 Best Workplaces in Qatar 2026 (Large Category) and earning the Great Place to Work certification for the fourth consecutive year.

This recognition follows a rigorous and independent evaluation conducted by Great Place to Work Middle East.

This achievement reflects the strength of UDST's workplace culture, shaped by trust, engagement, and a shared commitment to excellence. The recognition is based primarily on employee feedback gathered through confidential surveys, alongside a detailed assessment of the University's workplace practices, ensuring that the results authentically represent employee experience.

Dr Salem Al-Naemi, president of UDST, said: "This recognition highlights our ongoing focus on creating a workplace where people feel valued, supported, and empowered, where they can contribute meaningfully to advancing applied education, research, and innovation. Our people remain at the heart of everything we do, and we will continue



to support their professional growth and well-being."

UDST's workplace environment is characterised by a strong culture of collaboration, transparency, and inclusivity. Employees are encouraged to contribute ideas, engage in open dialogue, and take an active role in shaping the University's future. This culture is supported by leadership practices that prioritise communication, recognition, and continuous improvement.

The University places strong emphasis on professional growth and lifelong learning. Through structured initiatives such as Professional Development Days, specialised training programmes, and participation in international conferences, employees are provided with opportunities to en-

hance their skills and remain at the forefront of their fields.

In parallel, UDST continues to invest in employee well-being, recognising its critical role in sustaining performance and engagement. As a recipient of the FISU Healthy Campus Platinum Label, the University offers a wide range of wellness programmes and facilities that promote a balanced and healthy lifestyle.

As Qatar's national applied university, UDST aligns its workplace culture with its broader mission of delivering high-quality, industry-relevant education. This recognition reinforces the University's position as a leading institution that not only prepares students for the future but also leverages an environment where its people can thrive.

Qatar signals resilience amid regional strains

From Page 1

Hussain Youssef al-Abdulghani, director of the Administrative and Financial Affairs Department at Qatar Chamber, described Project Qatar 2026 as one of the region's leading specialised platforms in the construction sector. "Project Qatar is playing a vital role in strengthening business partnerships, fostering collaboration between local and international companies, and providing a valuable platform for knowledge exchange and showcasing the latest technologies and innovations," he said. He added: "Qatar Chamber is participating in the event as the Business Community Partner, in line with its continued support for impactful initiatives that reinforce Qatar's position as a regional hub for business and specialised exhibitions, while contributing to sustainable economic development." The Public Works Authority (Ashghal) is participating as a Strategic Partner. Abdulla Saad al-Saad, manager of the Public Relations and Communications Department at Ashghal, said the authority's involvement reflects its role in supporting Qatar's urban development and advancing infrastructure across the country. He said Ashghal's pavilion will showcase flagship projects alongside the latest technologies and innovative solutions used in project delivery, with a focus on innovation, sustainability, and delivery efficiency. Al-Saad noted that the participation also provides an

opportunity to strengthen collaboration with contractors, suppliers, and consultants, and to facilitate the exchange of expertise in support of Qatar National Vision 2030. Qatar Development Bank (QDB) senior director of Marketing and Communications Ahmed Hassan al-Mahasna said the bank's participation embodies its national role in supporting the private sector, empowering Qatar-based companies, and connecting them with commercial and contractual opportunities. He emphasised that this strengthens the role of Qatari companies in the construction sector's supply chains, noting that the QDB pavilion will host 18 Qatari companies this year to showcase their products and services that meet the needs of construction and infrastructure development projects in the country. As part of QDB's efforts to localise business, al-Mahasna said that the bank facilitated more than 440 contractual opportunities last year between private sector companies and various national entities, with a total value exceeding QR2bn. Bayan noted that the exhibition will feature a dedicated B2B matchmaking platform to facilitate targeted meetings between buyers, suppliers, contractors, government entities, and international investors. The event will also host the Excellence in Industry and Innovation Awards, recognising achievements and sustainability leadership across the construction sector, as well as a Startup Stage for entrepreneurs and small- and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) to present their solutions to investors and major companies.

QM invites the public behind the scenes of its archaeological discoveries

QNA
Doha

Qatar Museums is inviting the public behind the scenes of its archaeological work at the second edition of Orientation Day 2026, taking place on May 14, 2026, at the National Museum of Qatar (NMQ) Auditorium.

Qatar Museums invites the public, students, researchers, and heritage enthusiasts to attend, engage with specialists, and gain a deeper understanding of the work shaping the preservation of Qatar's past.

Organised by Qatar Museums' Archaeology Department, the event offers a rare opportunity to hear directly from the experts uncovering and preserving Qatar's heritage, with first-hand insights into the latest discoveries, ongoing research, and future projects shaping the country's archaeological landscape.

Commenting on the occasion, Director of Qatar Museums' Archaeology Department, Faisal Abdulla al-Naimi said, "Orientation Day offers an important opportunity to showcase our work to the public and share the depth and diversity of Qatar's archaeological landscape. Through excavation, research, conservation, and outreach, we are working to protect and better understand Qatar's rich heritage while



making it more accessible for future generations."

The programme will cover a wide range of topics, including marine archaeological surveys along the coast of Al Ruwais and the new excavation season of Landscapes of Faith. It will also explore findings from the 2002-2005 excavations at the Freiha Archaeological Site, as well as preventive surveys carried out at Jubajib ahead of the Dukhan solar power project.

Lectures will highlight key research themes such as the Al Jassasiya rock art and the documentation of the Islamic cemetery at Fahd bin Ali Palace, alongside ongoing work supporting the Al Zubarah Unesco World Heritage Site. Visitors will also gain insights into the day-to-day responsibilities of archaeology rangers and the processes behind excavation and site management.

Melody Memory: A modern twist to Qatari heritage

The Music Affairs Centre at the Ministry of Culture organised the “Melody Memory” concert, bringing together patriotic songs, maritime heritage and works rooted in Qatari and Gulf musical memory.

The evening featured performances by the centre’s orchestra, the “Awtar Al Watan” choir, the “Little Nahham” team and the Sidra Children’s Choir in a programme that blended traditional and contemporary musical expressions.

The event was held in the presence of Mubarak bin Abdullah al-Khalifa, Assistant Undersecretary for Cultural Affairs, and Abdulrahman bin Abdullah al-Dulaimi, director of the Culture Department.

The concert opened with a heartfelt introduction exploring the deep connection between people, music and heritage: “On an afternoon when memory returns to sing, we gather today at ‘Melody Memory’ – not merely to listen to music, but to reconnect with voices that travelled through time, carrying with them echoes of the sea, the people and the places that still live within us,” the opening remarks stated.

The introduction also highlighted one of the evening’s surprises – the “Little Nahham” group – described as an artistic initiative to introduce traditional sea music to a new generation.

The concert also featured performances by the Sidra Children’s Choir and the “Awtar Al Watan”



choir, accompanied by the Music Affairs Centre orchestra under the direction of maestro Kamel al-Balushi.

The programme moved through a range of traditional and patriotic works, beginning with Om Al Hanaya, Senyar Safar and Fan Al Sout, reviving old Qatari songs, sea chants and rhythms associated with pearl diving, travel and nostalgia.

The orchestra also performed several patriotic songs, including Allah Ya Omri Qatar, Gharbi Hawakom, and Love and Peace, presented in contemporary musical arrangements that preserved the spirit of the original works while adapting them to the evening’s artistic concept, centred

on reviving musical memory.

The event also featured a special video presentation about the Music Affairs Centre, showcasing its major artistic and cultural projects, its role in preserving Qatari musical heritage, and initiatives launched to support emerging talents and voices.

Music Affairs Center manager Khalid al-Salem said the idea behind the concert was to reintroduce traditional and patriotic songs in a modern form that connects Qatar’s musical memory with new voices.

“We seek to create a musical atmosphere that combines heritage with artistic development. That is why we brought together the centre’s orchestra, Awtar Al Watan choir, Sidra Choir and the

Little Nahham team, transforming the song into a space where different generations meet on stage,” he said.

Al-Salem added that the centre is currently working on several future projects, including the “Maqam” choir, which will specialise in Arabic classical songs and present traditional tarab music through a modern group performance style.

For his part, Kamel al-Balushi said preparations for the concert continued over an extended period through musical rehearsals and group training sessions involving the orchestra, Awtar Al Watan choir, Sidra Choir and the Little Nahham team.

“The concert relied on musical diversity between heritage and patriotic works while preserving the spirit of the original songs and presenting them with a modern musical vision,” he said.

Al-Balushi noted that the participation of the Sidra Children’s Choir in Ya Qatar Enta Al Hayah, followed by the finale, Nedai Lej Ya Doha, gave the evening a collective and humanitarian spirit that reflected the concert’s core message.

One of the concert’s standout moments was the appearance of the “Little Nahham” team, whose young members performed maritime chants inspired by the traditional nahma art form to preserve this heritage linked to Qatar and the Gulf’s seafaring history.

Ali al-Haddad said the project



Khalid al-Salem



Kamel al-Balushi



Cyrine Abdullah, coach of ‘Al Sidra’ choir team.



Ali al-Haddad

aims to familiarise children with traditional sea arts and present them in a way that resonates with today’s generation.

“When children perform this art, they are not merely singing words – they carry with them a memory tied to the lives of sailors and the sea. That is what we are trying to preserve,” he said.

Meanwhile, Serene Abdullah stressed the importance of involving children in such musical initiatives, noting their role in nurturing

artistic awareness, building confidence and strengthening ties to cultural heritage.

The concert concluded with a collective performance of Nedai Lej Ya Doha, bringing together all participants on stage after the performance of Ya Qatar Enta Al Hayah by the Sidra Children’s Choir.

The Little Nahham team then joined the final tableau, blending children’s voices with patriotic songs and maritime heritage amid strong audience interaction.

Aspetar to provide medical support to Qatar national team at FIFA World Cup 2026

Aspetar, Orthopaedic and Sports Medicine Hospital has announced its comprehensive medical support for the Qatar national football team as it prepares to compete in the FIFA World Cup 2026, to be held from June 11 to July 19 across the United States, Mexico, and Canada.

Acting Director General of Aspetar, Khalid Ali Al Mawlawi emphasised that supporting the national team is a core part of an integrated performance-focused approach, extending beyond treatment alone. He said: “At Aspetar, we are committed to helping our athletes achieve peak physical and mental readiness through precise scientific approaches and advanced rehabilitation programmes tailored to the demands of elite international competition. We work closely with both technical and medical teams to support timely, well-informed decisions that balance high performance with long-term sustainability. Our support for the national team at the FIFA World Cup 2026 reflects our dedication to international best practices and our commitment to strengthening Qatar’s presence on the global stage.”

As the Qatar national team prepares for its second appearance at a FIFA World Cup, Aspetar continues to play a vital role in supporting the squad by delivering world-class medical and performance services to ensure its readiness.

The National Team Sports Medicine Unit, established at Aspetar under the National Sports Medicine Program (NSMP), provides specialised, comprehensive medical support tailored to the demands of international competition. The unit brings together a multidisciplinary team of physicians, physiotherapists, massage therapists, pitch-side rehabilitation specialists, and performance experts, all working in full coordi-



nation to safeguard players’ health and enhance performance levels.

Operating within a structured and evidence-based framework, the medical team delivers services spanning injury prevention, diagnosis, treatment, and rehabilitation, supported by Aspetar’s state-of-the-art medical facilities.

Throughout the qualification stages and in the lead-up to the tournament, Aspetar has maintained a continuous and proactive role in supporting the national team, ensuring the highest standards of medical care and rapid response to all health-related needs.

Director of the National Team Sports Medicine Unit at Aspetar, Riadh Miladi, said the unit is designed to provide dedicated medical care and full coverage to the national team, particularly during major tournaments.

“Aspetar’s extensive experience in elite athlete care, supported by advanced facilities and leading scientific research, enables us to manage a wide range of medical cases, from prevention to rehabilitation, ensuring that Qatar’s players are ready at all times,” he said.

During the World Cup participating teams, including Qatar, are expected to face varied environmental conditions such as climate differences, frequent travel, and

altitude changes. Aspetar’s medical team has developed tailored programmes to address these challenges, focusing on hydration strategies, heat management, post-travel recovery, and mental wellbeing to support rapid adaptation and sustained performance. Aspetar will provide integrated medical services in close coordination with its surgery, radiology, and rehabilitation departments.

Asked about Aspetar, Medical Director of the Qatar national team, Dr Ian McGuinness, said: “We fully endorse and embraces Aspetar’s mission of assisting athletes in achieving their maximum performance and full potential. This is the crux of our role, which all National Team Medical Staff from Aspetar are completely committed to. Aspetar will provide essential back-up to us during the tournament in North America, in particular through liaison and problem-solving of complex cases with our surgical, radiology, and rehabilitation colleagues.”

He added: “This support from Aspetar will enhance our performance and contribute to the success of the team. Aspetar has been with our National Team every step of the way during this historic campaign and is a vital part of our success story.” (QNA)

Qatar hosts 2026 Arab Conference on environmental sustainability

QNA
Doha

The State of Qatar hosted the Arab Conference on Promoting Environmental Sustainability in Societies 2026, organised by the Regional Network for Social Responsibility under the patronage of the Ministry of Environment and Climate Change.

The conference witnessed the participation of Doha University of Science and Technology (UDST), the Qatar Chamber of Commerce and Industry, the United Nations Industrial Development Organisation (UNIDO), the Union of Arab Chambers, and the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA).

The event aimed to consolidate the concepts of environmental sustainability in the Arab region, support impactful initiatives contributing to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), provide a platform for exchanging expertise and developing environmental policies among Arab countries, promote innovation in sustainability fields, and build effective



partnerships capable of creating long-term impact in Arab societies.

The conference discussed four main themes covering the theoretical and practical dimensions of environmental sustainability. The first theme addressed the theoretical framework of environmental sustainability, including its concepts and importance, the relationship between economic development and environmental protection, and the role of Gulf countries in achieving the SDGs.

The second theme focused on

corporate policies and environmental management, highlighting the integration of sustainability into corporate strategies, environmental governance practices, environmental risk management, and environmental, social, and governance (ESG) disclosure standards.

The third theme reviewed innovation practices and green technologies, including the application of artificial intelligence in environmental solutions, renewable energy applications, and circular economy models in Arab countries.

The fourth theme addressed environmental corporate social responsibility and partnerships, showcasing community initiatives, strengthening public-private sector cooperation, and highlighting the role of civil society organisations in supporting environmental sustainability.

The conference also included a specialised international workshop titled “Strategies for Enhancing Environmental Sustainability in the Arab Region”, with the participation of international experts, aiming to provide practical tools and applicable models across the Arab world.



National Volunteer Platform set to invigorate voluntary work in Qatar: experts

By Ayman Adly
Doha

The launch of the National Volunteer Platform serves as a transformative step towards restructuring and modernising the volunteer sector in Qatar, according to experts and specialists in the domain of institutional development and volunteer work.

The initiative would help shift volunteer work from scattered individual efforts into a more organised and impactful institutional framework, according to experts.

Experts told the *Gulf Times* that they believe the success of any national volunteer platform depends mainly on building an integrated ecosystem based on training, role organisation, and stronger partnerships among institutions.

They stressed that the next phase should focus on transform-

ing volunteerism into a structured developmental and professional pathway, supported by clear mechanisms to measure impact and aligned with the digital transformation of volunteer work.

Dr Sultan al-Hajri, researcher and lecturer in management, institutional performance, and self-development, described the platform as a major step towards enhancing the efficiency and professionalism of volunteer work. He stressed that training is the real turning point in a volunteer’s journey, enabling individuals to create tangible impact rather than relying solely on enthusiasm.

He noted that the institutions that invest in volunteer training achieve more stable and effective outcomes, as trained volunteers become active contributors within clear organisational systems.

Self-development trainer Jawaher al-Marri highlighted the grow-

ing recognition of volunteer work as a genuine professional pathway in the country and across the Gulf region. She said volunteerism has become an important gateway to employment, with many institutions recruiting outstanding volunteers due to the practical experience they gain.

Al-Marri added that volunteering also creates opportunities for professional networking, discovering career passions, and even launching social entrepreneurship initiatives, whether profit-based or non-profit.

Fatima al-Atoum, an expert in institutional and self-development, said that humanitarian and value-driven motivations among volunteers must be guided by proper training and qualifications. She stressed that training is the foundation for quality performance and sustainable impact. Al-Atoum noted that organised vol-

unteer work can become a genuine career path for young people by providing practical experience and opportunities to build professional networks that may later open doors to employment or leadership positions.

Yousef al-Muftah, a pioneer in humanitarian and volunteer work, described young people as the backbone of the volunteer sector because of their energy and willingness to contribute. He pointed out that many national programs rely heavily on volunteers to implement community, humanitarian, and charitable initiatives. He noted that weak follow-up and communication with volunteers after temporary programmes end are major challenges, as a lack of continued engagement often leads to volunteers losing interest in future participation. He noted that Qatar is witnessing a growing trend towards organising volun-

teer efforts through civil society institutions rather than individual initiatives, helping to unify efforts and maximise impact.

Khalid al-Shuaibi, head of the Volunteer Committee for Employment of People with Disabilities, said volunteer work in the disability sector has strengthened social solidarity, reduced unemployment among persons with disabilities, and enhanced their productivity. He explained that the initiative has successfully built bridges between institutions, companies, and people with disabilities, creating real employment opportunities across multiple sectors in the country.

He pointed out that partnerships with entities such as the Ministry of Interior, the Ministry of Commerce and Industry, the Qatar Chamber, and the Qatar Olympic Committee have significantly raised awareness of the capabilities of persons with disabili-

ties and promoted their integration into the workforce. He noted that limited awareness among some institutions regarding the abilities of persons with disabilities remains one of the sector’s key challenges.

Dr Hamza al-Dosari, administrative consultant and development expert, described volunteer work as a practical pathway that enables young people to develop professional experience, strengthen communication skills, and expand their networks.

He said volunteerism is increasingly becoming a true career pathway, especially with the rise of social entrepreneurship concepts. Al-Dosari stressed that training is the bridge between the desire to give and the quality of performance. He explained that preparing volunteers properly transforms individual efforts into organised institutional contributions capable of creating real value.

QU concludes graduation ceremonies for Class of '26

Qatar University (QU) has organised a series of graduation ceremonies for the Class of 2026, which included the College of Engineering, College of Shariah and Islamic Studies, College of Law, College of Education, College of Business and Economics, and the College of Arts and Sciences.

The 49th batch of female students was honoured at the QU Sports and Events Complex in six separate ceremonies.

This year's 49th cohort includes 3,122 female graduates from various academic disciplines at the bachelor's, master's, and doctoral levels.

During the graduation ceremony for the College of Engineering, around 383 graduates were honoured in the presence of their peers and families.

The chairperson of the board of directors of the Qatar Society of Engineers, Amna Mohammed al-Naama, was present as the guest of honour.

In her speech, al-Naama, who was also a graduate of QU's College of Engineering, described graduation as the beginning of a journey of impact and responsibility, encouraging graduates to help shape Qatar's future through engineering and contribute to the country's development and sustainability goals.

In the presence of the guest of honour, HE Saeed bin Abdullah bin Saeed al-Suwaidi, the under-secretary of the Ministry of Justice, the QU's College of Shariah and Islamic Studies celebrated the graduation of 105 female students alongside 172 female graduates from the College of Law.

In his address, HE al-Suwaidi congratulated the graduates, em-



Graduates line up during the ceremony.

phasising that law and sharia are the two pillars of justice, and that graduates now carry the responsibility of upholding this principle in their future careers.

In the presence of Maha Zayed Qaqaa al-Ruwaili, the assistant undersecretary for Educational Affairs at the Ministry of Education and Higher Education (MoEHE), the QU's College of Education celebrated the graduation of 563 female graduates.

In her address to students, al-Ruwaili emphasised that education is a mission centred on shaping minds, building values, and creating lasting impact in society.

Al-Ruwaili also highlighted the strategic partnership between the MoEHE and the College of Education in preparing qualified educators and advancing the quality of education in the country.

The QU's College of Business and Economics celebrated the

graduation of 652 female graduates in the presence of the guest of honour, Qatar Tourism chairman Saad bin Ali al-Kharji, who was also a graduate of the college.

In his speech, al-Kharji encouraged graduates to contribute to Qatar's economic growth and national development.

He also highlighted the growing role of Qatari women in leadership and professional fields.

Al Jazeera Media Institute direc-

tor Eman al-Amri was the guest of honour for the QU's College of Arts and Sciences, celebrating 450 female students during the first morning ceremony.

The graduates represented various disciplines within the college, including history, mass communications, psychology, social work, sociology, applied geography and geographic information systems programs, as well as the first cohort of graduates

from the Fine Arts Programme. Her speech praised the fresh graduates for overcoming challenges with determination and perseverance.

Al-Amri also encouraged them to view learning as a lifelong journey and to continue pursuing growth with confidence and passion.

In the presence of Dr Hamda bint Hassan al-Sulaiti, the Deputy Speaker of the Shura Council, the QU's College of Arts and Sciences celebrated the graduation of 485 female students during the evening ceremony.

The graduates represented various academic disciplines within the college, including graduate studies in biology and environmental sciences, statistics, chemistry, sports science, mathematics, Arabic language, English literature, linguistics, international affairs, policy, planning, and development.

QU alumna Dr al-Sulaiti reflected on her own academic and professional journey, emphasising in her speech the transformative role of education, perseverance, and the continuous support provided to Qatari women under the country's leadership.

She encouraged graduates to view graduation as the beginning of a lifelong journey of learning and responsibility, urging them to pursue excellence, embrace challenges, and contribute actively to Qatar's progress and future development.

The QU Health Sector ceremony honoured 349 graduates from the College of Health Sciences, College of Pharmacy, College of Nursing, College of Medicine, and College of Dental Medicine at the ceremony.

Ashghal celebrates fourth batch of programme graduates

By Joey Aguilar
Doha

The Public Works Authority "Ashghal" honoured 161 employees who completed accredited training programmes in project management, graduate development and administrative support at a special ceremony yesterday (May 10) as part of its continued investment in human capital development.

The event, held at Rosewood Doha Hotel, was attended by HE Eng Mohammed bin Abdulaziz al-Meer, president of Ashghal, along with several senior officials.

The ceremony marked the graduation of engineers and employees who successfully completed specialised programmes supervised by the authority's Human Resources Department, reflecting Ashghal's ongoing efforts to strengthen national competencies and enhance professional readiness.

According to Ashghal, the programmes included the Project Management Development Programme, which is designed to qualify newly graduated Qatari engineers and develop their professional capabilities; the Graduate Development Programme, aimed at equipping newly graduated non-engineers with the skills required to perform their professional roles efficiently; and the Administrative Development



Ashghal employees honoured at the ceremony held at Rosewood Doha. PICTURE: Shemeer Rasheed

Programme, which focuses on developing employees holding secondary school and diploma qualifications in administrative support fields.

At the ceremony, Ashghal highlighted its commitment to providing an integrated system of training programmes that support sustainable professional development. The programmes, which range from 12 to 36 months, are designed to keep pace with workplace requirements while enhancing employees' technical, administrative and behavioural skills.

Rashid Saeed al-Hajri, Human Resources manager at Ashghal, stressed that the authority's commitment to creating a continuous

and sustainable learning environment that supports lifelong professional development through specialised training programmes and projects tailored to employees' needs.

He said the programmes contribute to building clear career paths, supporting the development of human capital, and aligning workforce capabilities with operational requirements, while also advancing the goals of Qatar National Vision 2030.

Ghanem Abdulla al-Kaabi, head of the Training and Organisational Development Section at Ashghal, said the authority's programmes were developed using modern methodologies

that account for evolving workplace requirements and focus on strengthening applied skills and practical experience among employees.

He added that Ashghal continuously updates the content of its training programmes in line with best practices to maximise employee benefit and improve efficiency across various specialisations.

During the ceremony, Eng al-Meer also honoured partner entities and internal trainers for their contributions to developing and supporting the programmes, and recognised employees who received the Employee of the Year Award for 2025.

How GU-Q is shaping a new generation of diplomats

In the corridors of Qatar's Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MoFA), inside the legal departments of national institutions, and across the meeting rooms where international partnerships take shape, a pattern is beginning to take hold. These leaders and future leaders share a common trait: a degree from Georgetown University in Qatar (GU-Q).

This year, 27 Qatari nationals graduated from the Executive Master's in Diplomacy and International Affairs (EMDIA) programme, bringing its alumni community to nearly 100. They include ministers, diplomats, legal professionals, and policy architects, connected not only by a credential but also by a shared analytical framework and a network spanning some of the country's most influential institutions. Two members of this year's class, Abdulla al-Sowaidi and Muneera Almuhanadi, offer a closer look at how that training plays out in practice as Qatar navigates an increasingly complex global landscape.

Al-Sowaidi, a first secretary in the Office of the Secretary-General at MoFA, entered the programme while already working within Qatar's diplomatic sphere. The courses focused on how smaller states exert influence in a system often shaped by larger powers proved especially relevant. Influence, he said, is not built through scale, but through credibility, dialogue, mediation, and strategic partnerships.

"Qatar's diplomacy reflects this clearly," al-Sowaidi said. "It

shows how small states can build influence by sustaining dialogue, creating space for mediation, and working through coalitions."

"It required us to balance academic commitments with growing professional responsibilities while remaining mindful of the circumstances around us," he said. "At the same time, it allowed us to reflect on real-time situations as they were unfolding and connect them to our classroom discussions."

Almuhanadi as head of the Legal Studies Unit at the Qatar Olympic Committee works at the intersection of law, governance, and international engagement. She entered the programme with a strong interest in regional tensions and global political dynamics. The skill she values the most is the ability to analyse state behaviour at a higher level, understanding not just what states do, but why they do it. Beyond the curriculum, she said, the cohort itself became one of the most valuable parts of the experience.

"My colleagues in the programme are highly accomplished individuals holding strong positions across various sectors in Qatar," Almuhanadi said. "The connections formed are both valuable and lasting."

Taken together, their experiences point to a broader shift. As Qatar continues to expand its diplomatic reach, more of the people shaping that work share a common training, one that blends theory with real-time application and builds networks across institutions.

QU concludes Al Fikra National Entrepreneurship Competition

QNA
Doha

Qatar University (QU), through the Center for Entrepreneurship at the College of Business and Economics, concluded the "Al Fikra" National Competition for Higher Education 2026, a leading national initiative that brings together university students from across Qatar to showcase innovative ideas and entrepreneurial solutions that address real-world challenges.

In its latest edition, Al Fikra further strengthened its position as a national platform that nurtures entrepreneurial talent, fosters creativity and promotes interdisciplinary collaboration.

This year's competition engaged nearly 750 students from 14 universities across the country, reflecting a shared commitment to supporting a knowledge-based economy and contributing to a sustainable future in alignment

with Qatar National Vision 2030, particularly the pillars of Human Development, Economic Development, Social Development, and Environmental Development.

The competition was organised in collaboration with key strategic partners, including Qatar International Islamic Bank (QIIB), the Ministry of Communications and Information Technology (MCIT) - Digital Incubation Center (DIC), Qatar Science and Technology Park (QSTP), Hult Prize Foundation, and A-typical Ventures.

Commenting on the initiative, Director of the Center for Entrepreneurship at the College of Business and Economics at QU, Dr. Khalid Al Hashimi said, "Al Fikra National Competition for Higher Education 2026 reflects our strong belief in the transformative role of education in driving progress and inspiring meaningful change. We are proud to provide a national platform that empowers students to challenge conventional thinking, develop innovative solutions,



Winners of Al Fikra National Entrepreneurship Competition 2026.

and contribute to building a future grounded in innovation, resilience, and sustainable development."

For his part Al Fikra Manager and Senior Pre-Incubation Specialist at the QU Center for Entrepreneurship, Juha Peralampi said: "Al Fikra represents more than a

competition; it is a comprehensive platform that supports student entrepreneurs throughout the innovation lifecycle, from idea generation to implementation."

"Through this experience, students develop the entrepreneurial mindset, practical skills, resil-

ience, and confidence needed to succeed in today's rapidly evolving global economy," he added with great optimism.

He further noted: "By connecting emerging innovators with industry leaders, investors, mentors, and ecosystem partners, we not only support promising ventures but also create pathways for student startups to access regional and international opportunities, including global entrepreneurship competitions and incubation programs. Through Al Fikra, we contribute to shaping the next generation of entrepreneurs capable of creating meaningful economic and social impact in Qatar and beyond."

Participants progressed through a comprehensive entrepreneurial journey that included ideation workshops, mentorship sessions, capacity-building activities, and final presentations evaluated by a panel of experts from academia and industry.

The competition focused on

developing impactful solutions aligned with national priorities and global sustainability goals, further reinforcing QU's role in advancing innovation-driven education and community impact.

The competition concluded with the recognition of outstanding student teams. Team "HERO" from Weill Cornell Medicine - Qatar (WCM-Q) secured first place and received a cash prize of QR 20,000, followed by Team "VORA" from Qatar University in second place with a prize of QR 15,000, and Team "TAWAZUN" from Qatar University too in third place with a prize of QR 10,000.

The Al Fikra National Competition for Higher Education 2026 reflects QU's continued commitment to experiential learning, innovation, and entrepreneurship, further strengthening its role as the leading national institution which contributes to sustainable development, knowledge creation, and human capacity building in the country.



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
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GULF TIMES

Hantavirus scare revives Covid-era conspiracy theories

An outbreak of the deadly hantavirus on a Dutch-flagged cruise ship is reviving conspiracy theories about vaccines, alleged depopulation campaigns and miracle cures that flourished during the coronavirus (Covid-19) pandemic.

The multilingual misinformation, which dominated online discourse and disrupted public health responses to the coronavirus, resurfaced even as the World Health Organisation (WHO) insisted this week that there remained minimal risk to the general public from passengers of the MV Hondius.

“LOCKDOWN ALERT: Globalists Launch Covid 2.0 As Hantavirus Spreads Worldwide,” InfoWars founder Alex Jones said on X. “Just Like A Light Switch.”

A flurry of similar posts declared the outbreak a “pandemic” – borrowing from the title of a widely discredited pseudo-documentary from 2020 that pushed falsehoods about Covid-19.

A passenger is believed to have contracted the rare respiratory disease before boarding the ship in Argentina and infecting others on board.

Yet, an AFP analysis found widespread claims alleging a sinister plot to force vaccines on the masses, coerce people into lockdown, or sway America’s November elections by justifying expanded use of mail-in ballots – voting method that election deniers have insisted without evidence is rife with fraud.

“The almost-immediate resurrection of Covid-19 era conspiracy theories is a reminder that misinformation doesn’t simply disappear once the crisis that yielded them is over,” said Yotam Ophir, head of the University at Buffalo’s Media Effects, Misinformation and Extremism lab.

During the pandemic, health misinformation became entwined with political identity

released to reduce the population or make money for vaccine manufacturers.

Some further claimed the hantavirus was a side effect of Pfizer’s Covid-19 vaccines, misrepresenting a document that showed only that it was one of many “adverse events of special interest” subjected to monitoring, not something caused by the shot.

Ophir said many of the conspiracy theories now resurfacing have a long history, tracing to centuries-old fears that diseases were manufactured by elites.

However, they spread faster now, boosted by social media algorithms and sometimes entertained by anti-vaccine voices installed in high-ranking offices by President Donald Trump.

There are no approved vaccines or known cures for the hantavirus, which is usually spread from infected rodents and can cause respiratory and cardiac distress as well as haemorrhagic fever.

However, online, anti-establishment physicians and some politicians immediately touted the anti-parasitic drug ivermectin and other medications as cures.

Former US representative Marjorie Taylor Greene – who posted that the virus was a “bioweapon” unleashed so pharmaceutical companies could profit off “poison” vaccines – amplified ivermectin claims from Texas otolaryngologist Mary Talley Bowden, whom AFP has fact-checked for spreading misinformation.

Bowden later posted an offer to sell ivermectin, while Florida Governor Ron DeSantis repped support for failed legislation aimed at making ivermectin available without prescription.

“There is extreme misinformation about ivermectin,” John Lednicki, a virologist at the University of Florida College of Public Health and Health Professions, told AFP. “Outside of laboratory tests, ivermectin has not proven effective in treating infections.”

Ophir, from Buffalo, said the promotion of Covid-era conspiracy theories could be an effort to curry political favour – and may also be financially motivated.

Amid anxiety and confusion over the outbreak, he told AFP that “online influencers, social media groups, or AI-operated users, may seize the chance to make some money?” – AFP

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Above and beyond



This picture taken last week shows a Qantas Boeing 737 departing Melbourne's Tullamarine Airport. – AFP

Education system building the nation and shaping the future

QNA
Doha

Higher education in Qatar is a cornerstone of human development and the knowledge-based economy, as it aims to prepare national cadres with the required skills, promote scientific research, and meet labour market needs.

It also fosters cultural diversity and international exchange through scholarships and by attracting international universities and students, thereby providing a global educational experience.

Qatar and its leadership’s growing attention to higher education and the continuous development of its quality reflect the country’s strong commitment to human development.

By recognising education as a key driver of economic and social progress, Qatar has established numerous universities, colleges, research and training centres, while attracting international schools and universities, fostering successful global partnerships, and encouraging private educational institutions through continuous support.

The establishment of the College of Education for male and female teachers in 1973, in co-operation with the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (Unesco), marked the foundation of the country’s first national university, Qatar University (QU), which was officially established in 1977.

Today, the country’s higher education landscape includes a diverse range of universities, colleges, and institutes totaling around 27 entities, including eight public institutions and 19 private ones.

The latest university was established this year.

The Tamim Bin Hamad University for Military and Technology Sciences serves as an advanced academic umbrella integrating the expertise of military colleges while combining field professionalism with advanced technological knowledge.

In the same context, His Highness the Amir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani issued Amiri Decision No. 51 of 2022 establishing and regularising the Police Academy.

The academy aims to train security personnel according to international standards, consolidate training and academic units under one umbrella, and integrate the Police College into its structure to advance legal and police training.

The expansion of higher education institutions in Qatar coincides with the continued increase of academic programmes, reaching nearly 350 accredited programmes covering diploma, bachelor’s, master’s, and doctoral degrees.

According to data from the Higher Education Affairs Sector at the Ministry of Education and Higher Education (MoEHE), Qatar’s higher education institutions currently accommodate 52,564 students, including 47,326 undergraduate students and 5,238 postgraduate students.

In remarks to the Qatar News Agency (QNA), Assistant Undersecretary for Higher Education Affairs at the MoEHE Dr Hareb Mohamed al-Jabri said that the rapid development of Qatar’s higher education system aligns with Qatar National Vision

2030, supporting the pillars of a comprehensive national development.

He stressed that higher education contributes directly to human development, community development, environmental sustainability, and economic diversification, in addition to diversifying scientific research outputs into startups and projects incubated within Qatar’s entrepreneurial ecosystem, thereby supporting the national economy.

Dr al-Jabri added that higher education forms the foundation for preparing qualified national cadres capable of meeting labour market demands in terms of both specialisations and skills.

Meanwhile, graduation ceremonies are currently being held throughout May, marking the end of the academic year, celebrating student achievements, and preparing graduates for a new chapter, the beginning of their professional careers.

In this context, Qatar University celebrated the graduation of its 49th cohort, comprising 4,024 students, including 3,122 female students and 902 male students.

In similar remarks to the QNA, QU Vice-President for Student Affairs Dr Mohammed Diab said this year’s graduation ceremony carried a significant milestone with the graduation of the first cohort from the College of Nursing, reflecting the evolution of academic programmes and their responsiveness to national priorities, particularly in the healthcare sector.

He added that the large number of graduates this year reflects the scale of the QU’s impact on society, noting that more than 2,500 graduates are Qatari nationals, underscoring the university’s central role in preparing national competencies, alongside nearly 1,500 non-Qatari graduates, which further enhances academic and cultural diversity within the university.

In a related context, the eight partner and local universities of Education City celebrated the graduation of the Class of 2026, the largest in its history, with 1,100 graduates from the various universities that make up the institution’s system, including 444 Qatari graduates representing 40% of the total number of graduates, and 660 graduates from 78 countries.

Education City was officially inaugurated on October 13, 2003, under the supervision and initiative of the Qatar Foundation for Education, Science and Community Development (QF), which was established in 1995, to become a global centre for higher education.

It now includes eight prestigious international partner and local universities, including



Dr. Hareb Mohamed Aljabri

the HBKU.

All of these universities offer diverse and specialised academic programmes in various fields of knowledge, which has provided ample opportunities for Qatari students and other resident

and international students to pursue their higher education in universities that are among the best of their kind in the world.

The president of Higher Education and education adviser at the QF, Francisco Marmolejo, explained in a statement to the QNA the role that QF plays in supporting graduates after graduation, noting that each university within the system, along with the QF, works through specialised teams to follow up with them and support them in their career path.

Marmolejo noted that a survey conducted during the Education



Dr. Mohammed Diab

City Job Fair 2026 showed that about 70% of graduates feel highly confident in their readiness to enter the labour market in Qatar, while employer surveys indicated that QF graduates have a high level of competence, particularly in communication

skills, professional conduct and leadership.

Regarding the sectors that attract the most graduates in Education City universities, he explained that artificial intelligence (AI) fields are witnessing increasing demand at the present time, as the QF is working in co-operation with its various universities to provide diverse educational opportunities in this field and others.

He pointed out that Carnegie Mellon University in Qatar will offer an advanced AI programme ranked among



Francisco Marmolejo

the best in the world during the next academic year, and Virginia Commonwealth University in Qatar will offer a new programme in motion photography, while the Media and AI major at Northwestern University in Qatar

is one of the most popular majors among students.

Amid the momentum that Qatar is witnessing these days with the graduation of new batches of graduates, University of Doha for Science and Technology (UDST), which replaced what was known as the College of the North Atlantic in 2022, to be the first national university specialising in applied and technical education in the State of Qatar, will celebrate on the graduation of more than 1,200 students on May 19 in various technical and professional disciplines.

In a similar statement to the QNA, UDST President Dr Salem bin Nasser al-Nuaimi pointed out that the university currently has more than 9,000 students in various programmes belonging to more than 86 nationalities, which reflects a

diverse international educational environment.

He noted that Qatari students constitute 25% of the total university student body, a figure that is an essential part of the student community, in support of national talent.

Dr al-Nuaimi pointed out that this cultural diversity reflects the richness of the educational experience and enhances the exchange of experiences among students.

Lusail University, the first private national university in Qatar, will also celebrate the graduation of its third batch of students on May 18-19.

All who gave statements to the QNA emphasised the successful and well-thought-out expansion of higher education institutions in Qatar, and the flexibility, opportunities, and academic and professional options it has provided for students, enhancing their motivation to learn.

This results in continuous growth in qualified national cadres, in line with the state’s strategy aimed at supplying the labour market with specialised competencies.

Considering the development of Qatar’s higher education system and its remarkable local and international scientific achievements, the nation occupies advanced positions in the Education Quality Index issued by the World Economic Forum (WEF) in Davos, as well as in other competitive indicators and prestigious Arab and international rankings.

In this regard, the QU has maintained its position as one of the best universities in the region and the world, according to the 2026 QS World University Rankings, rising to 112th globally and second in the Arab world.

This ranking brings Qatar University much closer to joining the ranks of the top 100 universities in the world, especially considering its jump of 61 places compared to the 2024 ranking, in which it held the 173rd position globally.

According to this ranking, some universities within Education City, such as the Hamad Bin Khalifa University and Weill Cornell Medicine-Qatar, were also among the top institutions.

Furthermore, scholarships play a pivotal and strategic role in strengthening the higher education system in Qatar.

They are key tools for developing national talent and building a knowledge-based economy, in line with Qatar National Vision 2030 and national development strategies, while also meeting the needs of the Qatari labour market.

In this context, the MoEHE announced on April 21 the government scholarship plan for the 2026-27 academic year.

This plan is based on four overarching strategic objectives: economic growth, equal opportunities, diversity and inclusion, and talent development, in alignment with the country’s national vision and the Third National Development Strategy.

The plan marks a significant shift in the country’s strategy for building national competencies, introducing new features, most notably the Disability Track, which guarantees the right to higher education globally for this group through scholarships to universities that provide accessible environments and specialised programmes that support their independence and academic excellence.

Evacuation flights leave Tenerife after cruise ship outbreak

Reuters
Tenerife/Madrid

Groups of passengers and crew disembarked from a cruise ship hit by a deadly hantavirus outbreak yesterday to be evacuated to their home countries where they will isolate according to national protocols to prevent further spread of the disease.

Government planes carrying Spanish and French nationals landed in Madrid and Paris yesterday afternoon, where the passengers were transported to hospital, according to the two countries' governments.

One of the five French passengers showed symptoms during the repatriation flight, French Prime Minister Sebastien Lecornu said on X.

Planes to Canada, the Netherlands, Turkiye, the UK, Ireland, and the US were due to depart by 2030 local time (1830 GMT) yes-

terday, with the final flights departing today by 1900 local time.

The passengers will be tested upon arrival and then either taken to local hospitals or quarantine facilities or transported home for isolation.

The World Health Organisation has recommended a 42-day quarantine for all passengers from the boat from yesterday, its director of epidemic and pandemic management Maria Van Kerkhove said in a briefing.

The Spanish passengers will be kept in hospital for the full 42 days, while French passengers will be hospitalised for 72 hours then allowed home to self-isolate for a further 45 days, according to the respective governments.

"Our recommendation is daily health checks, at home or in a specialised facility. It's up to countries to develop their policies but our recommendations are very clear," Van Kerkhove said, highlighting that the incubation period for the virus was up to six weeks.



A passenger of the cruise ship MV Hondius, which was affected by a hantavirus outbreak, gets disinfected on the tarmac at Tenerife Sud airport, Canary Islands, yesterday. (Reuters)

The virus, usually spread by rodents but also transmittable person-to-person in rare cases of close contact, was first detected by health officials in Johannesburg on May 2, treating a British man who fell ill and was taken into intensive care, 21 days after another passenger had died. The man's health has since im-

proved, a WHO official said yesterday.

The WHO said the first passenger who died on the ship may have been infected before boarding, possibly during travel in Argentina and Chile.

Eight people no longer on the ship have fallen ill, according to a

WHO tally from Friday, of which six are confirmed to have contracted the virus. Three have died – a Dutch couple and a German national.

Four remain hospitalised in South Africa, the Netherlands and Switzerland. On the remote island of Tristan da Cunha, a British overseas territory, a suspected case is being treated by a team of medical specialists parachuted in by the UK military.

Still, health officials urged calm, reminding a public scarred from the experience of the Covid-19 pandemic that this virus was far less contagious and posed little risk to the general population.

A woman in Spain who was tested for the virus after sharing a flight with one of the victims tested negative.

"This is not Covid and we don't want to treat it like Covid," acting US CDC Director Jay Bhattacharya said in an interview with CNN yesterday, adding the 17 US passengers from the ship would be given the choice of isolating at home or

at a facility in Nebraska.

Spain's health ministry also downplayed the risk to the broader population. It added that rodents had not been detected aboard the ship.

The luxury cruise ship left for Spain on Wednesday from the coast of Cape Verde after the WHO and European Union asked the country to manage the evacuation of passengers after the outbreak was detected.

Passengers were taken from the ship to shore in small boats and transported to Tenerife airport in military buses, without coming into contact with the public.

Thirty crew members will remain on board and sail to the Netherlands today evening where the ship will be disinfected.

"Thank God we are all fine... I hope we'll get through the quarantine process smoothly and be able to see family and friends again," Turkish birdwatcher Emin Yagurtcuoglu, a passenger on the ship, wrote in a public post on Instagram.

Trump calls Iran's response to US peace proposal 'unacceptable'

Reuters
Dubai/Washington

President Donald Trump yesterday rejected Iran's response to a US proposal for peace talks to end the war, as two ships were allowed to pass through the blockaded Strait of Hormuz.

"I have just read the response from Iran's so-called 'Representatives.' I don't like it – TOTALLY UNACCEPTABLE," Trump posted on Truth Social, without giving further detail.

Iranian state media said the response focused on ending the war on all fronts, especially Lebanon, and on the safety of shipping through the strait, Iranian state TV said, without indicating how or when the vital waterway might reopen.

It followed a US proposal to end fighting before starting talks on more contentious issues, including Iran's nuclear programme.

Iran's semi-official Tasnim news agency said Tehran's proposal included an immediate end to the war on all fronts, a halt to the US naval blockade, guarantees of no further attacks on Iran and the lifting of sanctions on Iran, including a US ban on Iranian oil sales.

The Wall Street Journal quoted unnamed sources saying Iran proposed diluting some of its highly enriched uranium and transferring the remainder to a third country.

Pakistan, which has been mediating talks over the war, forwarded the Iranian response to the US, a Pakistani official said. There was no immediate US comment.

Despite a month-old ceasefire in the conflict and after some 48 hours of relative calm, hostile drones were detected over several Gulf countries yesterday, underlining the threat still facing the region.

Still, the QatarEnergy-operated carrier Al Kharaitiyat passed safely through the strait and was heading for Pakistan's Port Qasim, according to data from shipping analytics firm Kpler. It was the first Qatari vessel carrying liquefied natural gas to cross the strait since the US and Israel started the war on February 28. Sources said earlier the transfer, which offered a modicum of relief to Pakistan after a wave of power blackouts caused by a halt to gas imports, had been approved by Iran to build confidence with Pakistan and with Qatar, another mediator.

In addition, a Panama-flagged bulk carrier bound for Brazil that had previously attempted to transit the strait on May 4 passed

"I have just read the response from Iran's so-called 'Representatives.' I don't like it – TOTALLY UNACCEPTABLE"

through, using a route designated by Iran's armed forces, Tasnim reported yesterday.

With Trump due to visit China this week, there has been mounting pressure to draw a line under the war, which has ignited a global energy crisis and poses a growing threat to the world economy.

Tehran has largely blocked non-Iranian shipping through the narrow Strait of Hormuz, which before the war carried one-fifth of the world's oil supply and has emerged as one of the central pressure points in the war.

Addressing whether combat operations against Iran were over, Trump said in remarks aired yesterday: "They are defeated, but that doesn't mean they're done."

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said the war was not over because there was "more work to be done" to remove enriched uranium from Iran, dismantle enrichment sites and address Iran's

proxies and ballistic missile capabilities.

The best way to remove the enriched uranium would be through diplomacy, Netanyahu said in an interview with CBS News' 60 Minutes, without ruling out removing it by force.

Iran's President Masoud Pezeshkian said in a social media post that Iran would "never bow down to the enemy" and would "defend national interests with strength".

Despite diplomatic efforts to break a deadlock, the threat to shipping lanes and the economies of the region remained high.

Yesterday, the United Arab Emirates said it intercepted two drones coming from Iran, while

Qatar condemned a drone attack that hit a cargo ship coming from Abu Dhabi in its waters. Kuwait said its air defences had dealt with hostile drones that entered its airspace. Recent days have seen the biggest flare-ups in fighting in and around the strait since a ceasefire began: the UAE came under renewed attack on Friday and sporadic clashes were reported between Iranian forces and US vessels in the strait.

Clashes have also continued in southern Lebanon between Israel and Iran-backed militant group Hezbollah, despite a US-brokered ceasefire announced on April 16. Hostilities between Israel and Hezbollah reignited on March 2 when the Lebanese group opened fire after Tehran came under US-Israeli attack. The latest talks between Israel and Lebanon are due to start in Washington on May 14.

Though Washington imposed its own blockade on Iranian ves-

sels last month, Tehran has taken its time before responding to calls to end a war that surveys show is unpopular with US voters facing ever-higher gasoline prices.

With the Trump administration facing US voter discontent less than six months before congressional elections, US Energy Secretary Chris Wright told NBC's Meet the Press that the Trump administration was "constantly looking for different ideas" to lower gasoline prices. The US has found little international support, with Nato allies refusing calls to send ships to open the Strait of Hormuz without a full peace deal and an internationally mandated mission. Domestically, Trump has had to fend off attempts by congressional Democrats to force an end to the war through War Powers Act legislation. "This is a situation that has been made much worse by the actions of Donald Trump, and now he's floundering around trying to figure out a way to get out of it," US Senator Jack Reed, the senior Democrat on the Senate Armed Services Committee, told Fox News' Sunday Morning Futures show.

Britain, which has been working with France on a proposal to ensure safe transit through the strait once the situation stabilises, said on Saturday it was deploying a warship to the Middle East in preparation for such a mission, following a similar move by France.

Iran's Deputy Foreign Minister Kazem Gharibabadi said on social media that any stationing of British, French or other warships around the Strait of Hormuz under the pretext of "protecting shipping" would be an escalation and would be met by force.

In response, French President Emmanuel Macron said France was standing ready to help the international mission, but "we have never envisaged a military deployment to re-open Hormuz."

Starmer says his govt is a 10-year project

Reuters
London

British Prime Minister Keir Starmer vowed to fight on, describing his government as a "10-year project" despite mounting calls for him to quit after his party's drubbing in local elections earlier this week.

Starmer's Labour Party suffered the worst local election losses for a governing party in more than three decades, while the populist Reform UK party made significant gains – prompting a growing number of Labour lawmakers to call for his removal.

A former minister in Starmer's government, Catherine West, threatened to seek the backing of lawmakers to trigger a leadership contest unless his cabinet took steps to remove him by today.

Under party rules, it would take 20% of the parliamentary party, or 81 lawmakers, to trigger a leadership challenge. About 30 members of parliament have so far publicly voiced opposition to his leadership.

Asked by the Observer newspaper in an interview published yesterday whether he would lead Labour into the next general election and serve a full second term, Starmer replied: "Yes, I will."

He added: "I'm not going to walk away from the job I was elected to do in July 2024. I'm not going to plunge the country into chaos."

If Starmer were removed in the coming weeks, Britain would end up with its seventh prime minister in the past decade.

So far, Starmer's cabinet has stayed loyal, despite Thursday's losses.

Education minister Bridget Phillipson said she was confident he could turn things around, telling Sky News yesterday that Starmer would set out a "fresh direction" for Britain in a speech today.

"We got a real kicking from the voters, there's no escaping that," she said. "We have to reflect seriously on that."

West, who served as a junior foreign minister until Starmer sacked her last year, said she would listen to Starmer's speech today before making a final decision about whether to launch a leadership challenge.

Asked whether she could secure the numbers, West told the BBC: "We will find out."

However, some left-wing Labour MPs – often critical of Starmer – urged colleagues not to back her plan.

John McDonnell, a Labour lawmaker who was the party's finance chief under former leader Jeremy Corbyn, suggested that people in the "shadows" were trying to exploit West's concerns to force an early contest. Another lawmaker, Ian Byrne, warned against a rushed leadership bid, saying it could be "manipulated into a coronation by a party clique."

S Korea says 'unidentified aircraft' hit cargo ship in Strait of Hormuz

AFP
Seoul

A South Korean cargo ship hit in the Strait of Hormuz six days ago was struck by unidentified aircraft, the foreign ministry in Seoul said yesterday, days after the fire-damaged HMM Namu arrived in Dubai.

US President Donald Trump has claimed that Iran had "taken some shots" at the Panama-flagged vessel and urged South Korea to join American operations aimed at restoring normal shipping through the strait.

The vital waterway has been virtually closed since the US and Israel launched a war against Iran on February 28, with Tehran responding with attacks across the Middle East and imposing a chokehold on the strait that has rattled global energy markets.

"... two unidentified aircraft struck the outer plate of the port-side ballast tank at the stern of the HMM Namu at roughly one-minute intervals, causing flames and smoke," foreign ministry spokesman Park Il told a news briefing about Monday's attack.

He did not specify what kind of aircraft were involved, saying



A damaged part of the South Korean cargo ship HMM Namu docked at a port in Dubai. (AFP)

they "were captured on CCTV footage, but there are limitations in identifying the exact type, launch origin and physical size of the objects".

Tehran has denied responsibility for the attack, with its embassy in Seoul posting a statement on its website saying that it "firmly rejects and categorically denies any allegations regarding the involvement" of its forces.

Iran's ambassador to South Korea was summoned to the foreign

ministry to explain Tehran's position regarding the findings, Park said.

He declined to speculate about how the government might respond if Iran was found to be responsible for the attack.

The damage to the ship, which had 24 crew members on board, spanned about 45m (16.5 feet) wide and extended roughly 7m (23 feet) into the hull" on the port-side stern, Park said.

"The engine room fire is be-

lieved to have been ignited by the first strike, with the second strike appearing to have caused the blaze to spread rapidly," he said.

Park said further analysis will be conducted on "engine debris and other fragments".

A photo released by the foreign ministry shows the ship's engine room heavily burned.

Another photo shows a large breach in the outer hull near the stern, with twisted metal and internal frames visible around the impact area.

South Korea was reviewing participation in US-led initiatives related to freedom of navigation, including the US-led Maritime Freedom Construct, or "Project Freedom", Park said.

Asia's fourth-largest economy relies heavily on Middle Eastern fuel imports, most of which transited through the Strait of Hormuz before it was effectively closed.

South Korea, a major petrochemicals producer and refiner, has since imposed a fuel price cap for the first time in nearly 30 years.

It has also sought to diversify its fuel supply, securing more than 270mm barrels of crude – sufficient for more than three months of its oil needs – via routes unaffected by the blockade.

Indian film star sworn in as chief minister

Indian film star C Joseph Vijay was sworn in as chief minister of Tamil Nadu state yesterday after his new party brokered a coalition in the southern industrial hub. The swearing-in ceremony followed days of high drama in the state capital Chennai, where Vijay's fledgling Tamilaga Vettri Kazhagam (TVK) party initially struggled to secure support from smaller parties after state elections.

Vijay's TVK, founded only two years ago, emerged as the single largest party after the vote with 108 seats in Tamil Nadu's 234-member legislative assembly, short of a simple majority.

However, it won support from other parties, including the opposition Congress, to take its number of seats to 120, making it possible for Vijay to claim the top job.

Thousands of supporters gathered in Chennai's Jawaharlal Nehru Stadium yesterday, chanting "Mudhalvar", or "chief minister" in Tamil, to watch Vijay take his oath of office.

"I am not from a royal political background, just a common man," the 51-year-old told the crowd.

"My primary focus will be on basic issues such as education, ration supplies, healthcare, drinking water, roads and bus facilities," he said. Vijay's first set of policies included measures to ease electricity prices and improve women's safety. Prime Minister Narendra Modi congratulated Vijay, saying the central government would work with his administration to "improve the lives of people".

Vijay, born to a Christian father and a Hindu mother, began his career as a child actor in 1984 in a movie directed by his filmmaker father. Known for his charismatic screen presence and mass appeal, his fans dubbed him "Thalapathy", or "leader" in Tamil.

His blockbuster hits blended action, social messaging and populist themes, burnishing his reputation as a voice for the common man. He cultivated his public image over the years by taking on roles that touched on subjects ranging from farmers' issues to electoral manipulation.

He launched the TVK in 2024 with a promise to end corruption and strengthen social justice. Tamil Nadu is one of India's most significant economic engines, with its industrial sector producing everything from automobiles to electronics. The state is also India's smartphone manufacturing hub, including for Apple iPhones. (AFP)



Tamil Nadu Chief Minister C Joseph Vijay (left) holds the hand of Congress leader Rahul Gandhi during a swearing-in ceremony as Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu yesterday. (Reuters)



Amir hosts luncheon for 2026 Amir Cup champs, runners-up

His Highness the Amir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani hosted a luncheon at Lusail Palace yesterday to honour players, coaches and management staff of Al Gharafa Sports Club, the 2026 Amir Cup champions, and runners-up Al Sadd SC, along with a lineup of sports and media personalities and representatives of the tournament's sponsors. His Highness Personal Representative of the Amir, Sheikh Jassim bin Hamad al-Thani; His Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Khalifa al-Thani; and HE the President of the Qatar Olympic Committee and the Olympic Council of Asia, Sheikh Joana bin Hamad al-Thani attended the luncheon. - **QNA**



Digital platform documents history of football in Qatar



HE the Minister of Sports and Youth Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa bin Ahmed al-Thani inaugurated the official digital platform for the project documenting the history of Qatari football (1948-present), marking the launch of a landmark national initiative aimed at preserving the legacy of football in Qatar through a modern institutional framework that combines scientific methodology with digital innovation.



The project reflects a firm belief that football in Qatar has long served as a social and cultural pillar that contributed to shaping public consciousness and mirrored the transformations of Qatari society across different historical periods. In this context, the initiative seeks to transform decades of sporting heritage, milestones, and iconic moments into a credible national archive that preserves the past while ensuring its continuity for future generations. Speaking during the launch ceremony, the chairman of the Committee for the Documentation and Archiving of Qatari Football History, Ali Dawood, said that the achievement was the result of sustained institutional work that began in August 2020, driven by the conviction that documenting the history of Qatari football is a national responsibility equal in importance to the achievements themselves, as it preserves and sustains them. He said that the committee focused on collecting, verifying, and archiving a vast body of historical material, including documents, photographs, oral testimonies, and

rare footage, all reviewed according to rigorous scientific standards. Dawood added that documentation, research, and technical teams succeeded in building a comprehensive knowledge base that has been organised, indexed, and digitised to serve as a reliable national reference for researchers, media professionals, and future generations. He stressed that the accomplishment was the product of integrated teamwork carried out in accordance with the highest standards of quality and governance. He noted that the committee's attainment of ISO 9001:2015 certification within a record period for a documentation project reflects its commitment to institutional excellence and sustainable professional practices. The committee adopted a com-



prehensive organisational structure comprising specialised teams in historical documentation, oral history, archiving, digitisation, verification, and review to ensure accuracy, governance, and quality outputs. Its work began with the collection of rare documents, photographs, and video materials, alongside recording testimonies of pioneers and key figures in Qatari football, followed by cross-referenced historical verification, digitisation of content, and the development of an interactive database based on the latest international standards. The committee stated that the project has reached an advanced

stage, noting that the digital platform currently contains nearly 15 terabytes of historical data and content and continues to undergo expansion and updates. The volume of content is expected to nearly double during upcoming phases as part of a phased strategy designed to ensure the project's comprehensiveness, sustainability, and status as a living national reference for the history of Qatari football. The committee also announced the publication of several specialised documentary books as part of the archiving project, covering pivotal milestones in Qatar's football journey. These include publications on

the early beginnings of football in Qatar, the national team's participation in the Gulf Cup, and Qatar's journey in FIFA World Cup tournaments, within a vision aimed at delivering verified knowledge content that combines historical narrative with scientific methodology. Among the publications is *The Story of the Beginning*, which documents the formative years of football in Qatar, tracing its emergence within early labour communities before spreading across Doha neighbourhoods and evolving into clubs, teams, and stadiums. Another publication, *Qatar in the Gulf Cup: Legacy and Impact*, chronicles Qatar's participation

in the Arabian Gulf Cup since the tournament's inception, highlighting the technical, organisational, and fan-related transformations that accompanied its football journey within the broader Gulf sporting landscape. The book *Qatar in the World Cup: Journey and Milestones* documents the evolution of Qatari football from its early qualification attempts to the historic hosting of the FIFA World Cup Qatar 2022 and the national team's qualification for the 2026 FIFA World Cup. The publication offers both historical and analytical perspectives on a long journey marked by ambition, challenges, and achievement. - **QNA**

QF partner Texas A&M at Qatar graduates 154 engineers

More than 150 Texas A&M University at Qatar (Tamuq) engineering students have earned their diplomas, marking a new generation of engineering leaders prepared to contribute to Qatar's knowledge economy and communities around the world. The Class of 2026 includes graduates with bachelor's degrees in chemical engineering, electrical engineering, mechanical engineering and petroleum engineering, as well as students who earned master's degrees in chemical engineering. This year's graduating class comprises 56% Qatari students and 45% female graduates. Overall, the class represents 22 nationalities. Among the 86 Qatari graduates, 59% are women. Thirteen students graduated with their master's degrees.



With this year's graduating class, Texas A&M at Qatar has now awarded more than 1,980 engineering degrees, further contributing to Qatar's human capital development and the global engineering community. Nahin Kabir, president of the Student Government Association, reflected on the journey of the graduating class and the relationships built along the way. "The Class of 2026 has worked incredibly hard to reach this milestone," he said. "Beyond the academics, we built friendships, supported one another through challenges, and created memories that will stay with us long after graduation," Kabir added. "Being part of the Qatar Foundation ecosystem also gave us opportunities to work on meaningful research, collaborate across disciplines and showcase our work on international platforms, which broadened our perspective as engineers and future leaders." "Through internships, student organisations and hands-on learning experiences, we developed the confidence to adapt, lead and contribute in fast-changing industries," he continued. "We are deeply grateful to our professors, mentors and families for their constant encouragement and belief in us throughout this journey." "This is only the beginning, and I am excited to see how the Class of 2026 will continue to lead, innovate and make a difference wherever life takes us," Kabir stated. AlReem AlBaker, an electrical and computer engineering graduate, said that her experience at Tamuq strength-



Texas A&M University at Qatar's Class of 2026 includes graduates with bachelor's degrees in chemical engineering, electrical engineering, mechanical engineering and petroleum engineering, as well as students who earned master's degrees in chemical engineering.



ened her confidence and prepared her for the challenges ahead. "Our time at Texas A&M at Qatar pushed us beyond our comfort zones and taught us how to think critically, solve complex problems and work with people from different backgrounds," she said. "The friendships we built, along with the continuous support and encouragement from faculty and staff, became an important part of our journey and made the experience even more meaningful," AlBaker continued. "The experiences we gained inside and outside the classroom prepared us to take on new challenges with confidence." "As an Aggie engineer, and especially as a Qatari woman entering the field, I am proud to build on the legacy created by the generations of alumni before us, and I look forward to applying what we have learned to create meaningful impact in Qatar and beyond," she said. Tamuq dean Dr César Octavio Malavé lauded the graduates for their perseverance, growth and achievements during their time at the university. "Your university career within Qatar Foundation's Education City has prepared you to meet the future and its challenges," he said. "Let your experiences and your knowledge inspire you to continue learning, to help your communities flourish, and to fulfill your destiny as engineering leaders in Qatar and beyond."

"As you leave this university, remember that you are Aggie engineers," Malavé said. "The world-class engineering education you have earned at Texas A&M has instilled in you the same core values that are instilled in every Aggie: respect, excellence, leadership, loyalty, integrity, and selfless service. These core values will serve you well in your future endeavors." The Texas A&M at Qatar graduates are among the more than 13,000 Texas A&M University students graduating this month. They join the university's global alumni network of more than 500,000 Aggies worldwide. The Qatar campus's commencement ceremony is expected to take place at a later date.

