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Financial Results (Q1 2026)

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

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SCAN TO SHOP

Qatar, Turkiye warn against any return to military action

Both sides pledge full backing for Pakistan-led mediation

By Ayman Adly
Staff Reporter

Qatar and Turkiye have warned that any return to military operations in the region would carry grave consequences for global security, energy markets, and the world economy, and have jointly pledged their full backing to Pakistan's mediation aimed at securing a ceasefire and reopening the Strait of Hormuz.

The warning came at a joint press conference in Doha between HE the Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman bin Jassim al-Thani and the Foreign Minister of Turkiye, Hakan Fidan.

The prime minister described the regional situation as "delicate and critical," citing the ongoing war involving Iran and the escalating tensions around the Strait of Hormuz, where disruptions have affected freedom of navigation and global trade routes. He said Qatar and Turkiye jointly support Pakistan's diplomatic initiative to restore calm "as quickly as possible" including reopening the Strait and ensuring the free flow of international maritime traffic.

Discussions with Fidan, he said, focused heavily on the economic and security implications of the crisis for the Gulf, particularly the impact on global energy markets and regional stability.

The talks also covered the worsening humanitarian crisis in the Gaza Strip, continued Israeli bombardment, allegations of forced displacement policies in the occupied territories, and delays in implementing agreements on the unconditional delivery of humanitarian aid. The PM also pointed to ongoing Israeli strikes

on residential areas in Lebanon and repeated threats to evacuate civilians, stressing that rapidly evolving developments demand close co-ordination among allied and friendly nations, particularly Turkiye.

He said Qatar was continuing to co-ordinate with GCC partners and regional states to formulate diplomatic solutions capable of restoring stability, especially concerning future engagement with Iran, underlining that many unresolved regional issues would require sustained diplomatic dialogue in the coming phase rather than military confrontation.

Describing relations between Qatar and Turkiye as "strong and strategic," he noted that co-operation has expanded significantly in politics, trade, energy, and military affairs under the leadership of both nations.

Fidan said he had conveyed greetings from Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan to His Highness the Amir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani during a meeting the previous day, where both sides exchanged views on regional developments.

He stressed that current events demand "greater consultation and solidarity" among regional countries, reaffirming Ankara's full backing for Pakistan's mediation and its readiness to provide all possible support to prevent another outbreak of military operations. War, he warned, would destabilise the Middle East and trigger widespread global instability and destruction.

Any closure of the Strait of Hormuz, Fidan added, would threaten global energy security, international trade routes, and broader political and economic stability.

To Page 6



HE the Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman bin Jassim al-Thani and Turkish Foreign Minister Hakan Fidan at the press conference yesterday.

PM reviews situation with Saudi, Jordan counterparts

HE the Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman bin Jassim al-Thani received a phone call from Saudi Minister of Foreign Affairs Prince Faisal bin Farhan bin Abdullah al-Saud. They discussed bilateral relations and ways to support and enhance them, developments in the region, particularly those related to the ceasefire between the US and Iran, and efforts aimed at de-escalation in a way that contributes to strengthening security and stability in the region.

The PM also stressed the need for all parties to respond to ongoing mediation efforts in a way that opens the door to addressing the root causes of the crisis through peaceful means and dialogue, and leads to reaching a sustainable agreement that prevents the recurrence of escalation. The prime minister also received a phone call from Jordanian Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs and Expatriates Ayman Safadi.

They discussed bilateral relations and ways to support and strengthen them, along with regional developments, particularly the ceasefire between the US and Iran, and ongoing efforts aimed at de-escalation to enhance regional security and stability. The PM stressed the importance of all parties responding to ongoing mediation efforts, paving the way to address the root causes of the crisis through peaceful means and dialogue, and to reach a sustainable agreement that prevents renewed escalation. **(QNA)**

Qatar Airways to reopen Helsinki, Haneda routes

By A Staff Reporter
Doha

Qatar Airways will resume flight operations to Helsinki, Finland, and Tokyo Haneda, Japan from July 15 as part of a wider push to expand services across international markets, the airline announced yesterday.

The carrier will operate four weekly flights to Helsinki from July 15, scaling up to a daily service from August 1. Travellers from Australia, Kenya, and Southeast Asia will benefit from the airline's extensive global network, it said. Complementing its existing service to Tokyo Narita (NRT), Qatar Airways will return to Tokyo Haneda (HND) with four weekly

flights from July 15, rising to seven weekly flights from August 1. The Haneda route will facilitate onward transfers in Japan for travellers from Europe and the Middle East. Qatar Airways said it is furthering global connectivity by rebuilding its network to cover more than 160 destinations across six continents this summer.

Amir, Turkish FM discuss developments



His Highness the Amir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani met yesterday in his office at Lusail Palace with Turkish Minister Hakan Fidan. They reviewed the strategic co-operation relations between the two sisterly countries and ways to support and strengthen them. They also discussed developments in the region, particularly those related to the ceasefire between the US and Iran, and the efforts to de-escalate tensions and consolidate a pathway for a diplomatic solution to enhance international security and stability. **(QNA)**

Kuwait foils IRGC infiltration on Bubiyan Island, summons envoy

Kuwait announced yesterday that four men detained earlier this month while attempting to slip into the country by sea have confessed to being officers of Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps, prompting Kuwait City to summon Tehran's ambassador and lodge a formal protest.

The interior ministry, in a statement carried by the state news agency Kuna, identified the four detainees as IRGC officers — two navy colonels, a captain and a first lieutenant — who admitted under questioning that they had been tasked with infiltrating Bubiyan Island, Kuwait's largest island, located in the northwest of the Gulf close to the Iranian coast.

The group attempted to land on May 1 aboard a fishing boat specifically chartered to carry out hostile acts against Kuwait, the ministry said. The infiltrators opened fire on Kuwaiti troops stationed on the island, wounding one serviceman, while two of the Iranian operatives were injured in the exchange.

Qatar condemns infiltration → Page 2

Environment ministry rolls out 86 e-services to ease licensing, permits

By A Staff Reporter
Doha

The Ministry of Environment and Climate Change has introduced a fresh batch of electronic services in the first quarter of this year, comprising 29 services on its website and 57 on its mobile application Bee'ah. The move is designed to streamline procedures, lift the quality of services offered to individuals, companies and beneficiaries, and speed up transactions through digital channels.

The rollout forms part of the ministry's broader push to deepen digital transformation across its operations, in keeping with a strategy built around government service excellence, innovation, a better user experience and the development of digital systems that deliver efficient and flexible service.

In a statement issued yesterday, the ministry said the new offering covers 40 electronic services in radiation protection. These handle the issuance, re-

newal, amendment and cancellation of personal licences for work in radiation-related fields, licences for possessing radioactive materials and radiation devices, licences for importing and exporting radioactive materials, and licences for vehicles transporting such materials.

A further 12 services relate to hazardous waste, among them the renewal of permits for disposing of hazardous healthcare waste, the issuance of maritime transit permits for hazardous waste shipments, and extensions of those transit permits.

The package also features 16 electronic services tied to the Wildlife Development Department, including permits for quarry operations, the issuance and renewal of permits for installing mobile crushers, permits to visit Fuwairit Beach, and permits to begin project work in areas of wild vegetation, alongside other services.

Eighteen additional services cover the Natural Reserves Sector and are available on both the ministry's website and the app. **To Page 6**

Qatar opens Games with 10 medals

By A Sport Reporter
Doha

Hosts Qatar finished the opening day of the 4th GCC Games Doha 2026 with 10 medals after an impressive start in the regional multi-sport event. Qatar's athletes collected three gold, four silver and three bronze medals following a day of intense competition among the participating Gulf nations.

Qatar's swimmers led the charge with three gold and two silver at the Hamad Aquatic Centre. Saadeddin Saadeddin claimed Qatar's first gold after winning the men's 800m freestyle in a Games record time of 7:57.54. Mohamed Mahmoud added another gold for the hosts by topping the men's 200m individual medley in 2:03.02, also setting a Games record. Qatar's third gold came through Emile Fouzai, who won the men's



Qatar's swimmers Mohamed Mahmoud (left), Saadeddin Saadeddin (centre) and Emile Fouzai celebrate with their gold medals at the 4th GCC Games Doha 2026 yesterday. **Sport Page 1**

200m butterfly in 2:02.20. In the men's 50m freestyle, Ali Tamer Hassan settled for silver after clocking 22.69 seconds, while Abdalla Elghamry secured another silver in the men's 100m backstroke in 58.32 seconds. Qatar's taekwondo team also made a strong start, securing

three medals on the opening day. Maram Fatnasi claimed silver in the women's under-67kg category, while Hassan al-Nuaimi earned bronze in the men's under-58kg division. Shaalan Mohammed added another bronze in the men's under-80kg category.



PM launches Ministry of Endowments and Islamic Affairs' 2025-30 Strategy

HE the Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman bin Jassim al-Thani launched yesterday the Ministry of Endowments and Islamic Affairs (Awqaf) 2025-30 Strategy. The ceremony was attended by a number of ministers, senior officials, and representatives of government entities in the country. The strategy, titled *Embedding the Message of Islam in Thought, Worship, and Conduct, and Building Modern Societies Rooted in Harmony, Solidarity, and Sustainability*, is based on a system of institutional values that includes moderation, exemplary conduct, leadership, excellence, partnership, and sustainability as guiding ethical and behavioral principles for institutional performance. The launch ceremony included a visual presentation outlining the strategy's key pillars, core objectives, phased goals, and flagship initiatives. - **QNA**



Minister meets top Spanish official

HE the Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Sultan bin Saad al-Muraikhi met yesterday with Spain's State Secretary for Foreign and Global Affairs Diego Martinez Belio, who is currently visiting the country. They reviewed co-operation, relations between the two countries and ways to support and develop them. The two sides also discussed developments in the region. - **QNA**

Qatar condemns infiltration of Bubiyan Island

Qatar has condemned the infiltration of an armed group affiliated with Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) into Bubiyan Island to carry out hostile acts against Kuwait, following clashes with Kuwaiti armed forces before being arrested. In a statement issued yesterday, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MoFA) said the incident is a blatant violation of Kuwait's sovereignty and a dangerous escalation threatening the security and stability of the region. The ministry reaffirmed Qatar's full support for Kuwait and all measures taken to safeguard its sovereignty, territorial integrity, security, and stability. - **QNA**

MoEHE launches 18th National Research and Innovation Fair

The Ministry of Education and Higher Education (MoEHE) has launched the 18th National Scientific Research and Innovation Exhibition 2026, in partnership with the Qatar Research, Development and Innovation (QRDI) Council, under the theme *Promising Researchers for Qatar*.

The event runs until May 14 at the Qatar National Convention Centre (QNCC), bringing together students from across the country to showcase scientific research and innovation projects.

The opening ceremony was attended by senior officials, including HE the Deputy Prime Minister

and Minister of State for Defence Affairs Sheikh Saud bin Abdulrahman bin Hassan al-Thani, HE the Minister of Education and Higher Education Lolwah bint Rashid al-Khater, HE the Minister of State and President of Qatar National Library Dr Hamad bin Abdulaziz al-Kawari, and Qatari Businessmen Association chairman Sheikh Faisal bin Qassim al-Thani, along with other officials and education leaders.

According to organisers, this year's edition features 2,971 students from 249 public and private schools, presenting 1,467 research and innovation projects across a range of scientific fields.

During a tour of the exhibition, officials were briefed on student projects and innovations.

HE the Undersecretary of the Ministry of Education and Higher Education Dr Ibrahim al-Nuaimi said that research and innovation are central pillars in building Qatar's knowledge-based economy, in line with Qatar National Vision 2030.

He said that the sustained success of the fair over 18 years reflects growing efforts to embed research culture in schools, adding that education has shifted from traditional rote learning towards a more integrated system of knowledge production.



HE Dr al-Nuaimi also called for greater efforts to transform student research into practical applications that support national development priorities.

QRDI secretary-general Omar al-Ansari said that the council has been working since 2006 to develop national talent, noting that 891 scientific papers were submitted this year, with 165 projects selected for the final exhibition.

He highlighted international achievements by Qatari students, who have won 48 medals and nine awards at global competitions, in-

cluding the International Science and Engineering Fair and ITEX International Engineering Fair.

Al-Ansari said these achievements go beyond awards, contributing to shaping students' personalities and ambitions.

Senior ministry official Sarah al-Sharim said that student participation has increased by 25% compared with last year, while private school participation rose by more than 128%.

She also noted a rise in teacher-led action research, with 616 studies submitted, alongside increased

participation from Qatari educators and early-grade students, with 357 pupils from grades three and four taking part.

The fair includes specialised training programmes aimed at developing research skills and promoting the use of modern technologies and artificial intelligence (AI).

It further supports the formation of student research teams in areas such as food safety and astronomy, in collaboration with national institutions, universities and research centres. - **QNA**



هيئة الأشغال العامة
Public Works Authority



STATE OF QATAR
Public Works Authority

REQUEST FOR PREQUALIFICATION DESIGN OF CENTRALIZED SEWAGE SLUDGE SOLID TREATMENT & MANAGEMENT FACILITY

REQUEST FOR PREQUALIFICATION

The Public Works Authority (Ashghal) is undertaking the Centralized Sewage Sludge Solid Treatment & Management Facility Project as a strategic national infrastructure initiative to provide an integrated and sustainable solution for the treatment and management of sewage sludge and associated solids generated from wastewater treatment facilities across the State of Qatar. This PreQualification (PQ) document invites experienced consultancy firms to demonstrate their capability and relevant experience in order to be shortlisted for the subsequent tendering process.

The Centralized Sewage Solids Treatment & Management Facility Project is a strategic initiative of Ashghal, aligned with national wastewater and sludge management planning objectives, including the Qatar Integrated Drainage Master Plan (QIDMP 2013). The Project aims to establish an integrated, resilient and sustainable solution for the handling and treatment of sewage sludge and associated solids generated from Ashghal sewage treatment works across the State of Qatar.

Ashghal intends to appoint a qualified Design Consultant to provide pre-contract professional consultancy services for the development of a Centralized Sewage Solids Treatment & Management Facility in the Qatar South area.

The Project is planned to be located within the land allocated adjacent to the Al Wakra & Al Wukair STW facilities and will comprise key sewage solids management infrastructure, including a new engineered landfill and a dedicated sewage sludge incineration facility (with associated utility, environmental and interfacing requirements).

The purpose of this Request for PreQualification is to invite competent Qatari, regional and international companies and consortia, capable of delivering the Project, to participate in the tender process.

SCOPE OF SERVICES:

The scope of services for the Project will include but not be limited to:

- Review of existing project information, site constraints and available studies/data.
- Undertake site surveys, investigations and specialist assessments as required to close data gaps, including geotechnical, hydrogeological and environmental investigations.
- Undertake environmental assessments and support Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) requirements and related permitting obligations.
- Develop design deliverables across schematic/concept/ detailed design stages, including multi-disciplinary MEICA works, specifications and Employer's Requirements as applicable.
- Carry out design risk assessment and constructability considerations to support deliverability within programme and budget constraints.
- Coordinate with Ashghal departments and external stakeholders and authorities to facilitate approvals and obtain required NOCs and permits.
- Prepare complete tender documentation (drawings, specifications, schedules and bills of quantities as applicable) to enable competitive procurement for the works.
- Provide tender-stage support including clarification responses and participation in technical and commercial evaluation as required, culminating in tender evaluation reporting and recommendation for award.

PREQUALIFICATION DOCUMENT

Interested companies are invited to visit the PWA website:

<https://www.ashghal.gov.qa/en/Tenders/pages/ListPrequalificationsPage.aspx>

to view and download the PreQualification document which includes the information required from interested parties with a track-record of extensive and relevant experience in the design of similar projects.

During the PreQualification period, interested companies shall visit Ashghal's website and the E-tendering system frequently for PreQualification updates, circulars and/or addenda, if any.

SUBMISSION OF PREQUALIFICATION

All documents, along with a valid Commercial Registration, are to be returned by Sunday 31st May 2026 at 1:00 pm (local Doha time, GMT +3:00) in Ashghal's E-Tendering system.

All submissions shall be addressed to:

PUBLIC WORKS AUTHORITY

ENGINEERING SERVICES DEPARTMENT MANAGER
ASHGHAL Tower (3) – Ground Floor
P.O. BOX : 22188
Doha, State of Qatar

All enquiries are to be directed to :
Engineering Services Department Manager
E-mail: eo@ashghal.gov.qa

29 PHCC health centres renew GSAS certification

The Primary Health Care Corporation (PHCC) has announced that 29 of its health centres have renewed their certification for sustainable operations under the Global Sustainability Assessment System (GSAS) developed by the Gulf Organisation for Research and Development (GORD).

The PHCC said that a number of several facilities achieved high performance ratings, including platinum and gold classifications, reflecting standards in operational sustainability, resource efficiency and indoor environmental quality.

The achievement marks a significant milestone for the organisation, which said it had become the first government entity in Qatar to renew GSAS Operations certifications for a second cycle.

The certification renewal process is required every four years to maintain compliance with approved sustainability standards.

GORD chairman Dr Yousef Alhorh described the renewed certification as an important environmental and institutional accomplishment.

"The Primary Health Care Corporation's centres receiving GSAS Operations certification for the second consecutive time represents a distinguished environmental and institutional achievement that reflects a commitment to making sustainability an integral part of the healthcare system in Qatar," he said.

Musallam Mubarak al-Nabet, the PHCC's assistant managing director for Administrative Affairs and Shared Services, said that the recertification demonstrated the organisation's commitment to delivering sustainable healthcare services.

The GSAS Operations certification provides a data-driven framework aimed at reducing the carbon footprint of existing buildings while enhancing indoor environmental quality for occupants. - **QNA**

QU, PHCC launch vaccination campaign against shingles

In co-operation with the Primary Health Care Corporation (PHCC), Qatar University (QU) launched a public awareness campaign aimed at encouraging vaccination against shingles, promoting prevention and protecting the health of senior citizens (the elderly) in the country.

The QU said in a statement yesterday that the campaign is entitled "Protect the Ones Who Protected You", which carries a

powerful message to community members, especially young people, calling on students and youth to play an active role in encouraging their parents and relatives aged 50 and above, to receive the vaccine against shingles.

The shingles vaccine is safe, effective, and recommended for adults aged 50 years and above. The vaccination consists of two doses and is now available at all PHCC health centres. - **QNA**

Judicial auctions generate QR36.49m

The recent online auctions conducted by the Supreme Judiciary Council (SJC)'s Department of Judicial Evictions and Auctions, on May 10, generated total proceeds of QR36,493,367.

The revenues were allocated for the settlement of 855 legal cases, while the auctions received 7,357 bids throughout the process. The real estate auction offered 40 units, but only two were sold, for a total price of QR25,872,567, which was used to settle two related cases. The vehicle auction offered 30 vehicles, with 28 of them sold for a total price of QR659,500, used for the benefit of 61 related cases. The equipment auction offered 79 pieces, with 73 of them sold for a total price of QR9,958,300, used for the benefit of 787 related cases, while the scrap auction offered 50 damaged vehicles, with six of them sold for a total of QR3,000, used for the benefit of five related cases.

Qatar Calendar House predicts Eid al-Adha to begin on May 27

Qatar Calendar House has announced that May 18 is expected to mark the beginning of Dhu al-Hijjah 1447 AH, according to astronomical calculations, with Eid al-Adha forecast to begin May 27.

Dhu al-Hijjah is the twelfth and final month of the Islamic lunar calendar and is one of the holiest periods in Islam.

It is the month during which Muslims perform the annual Hajj pilgrimage, while Eid al-Adha – the "Festival of Sacrifice" – is observed by Muslims worldwide to commemorate the willingness of Prophet Ibrahim, known as Abraham in Christianity and Judaism, to sacrifice his son in obedience to God.

The announcement was made yesterday by Qatar Calendar House executive director Dr Faisal al-Ansari, who said that the specialists at the organisation had conducted precise astronomical calculations to determine the dates.

He explained that the crescent moon marking the start of Dhu al-Hijjah would be born late on Saturday evening at 11.02pm Doha time (8.02pm GMT).

He added that sighting the crescent on Saturday evening would be "impossible" in Qatar and across the Arab and Islamic world because the moon would not yet have been born at the time of sunset.

Under the Islamic lunar calendar, the beginning and end of Hijri months are determined by the moon's movement around the Earth, while the Gregorian calendar is based on the Earth's orbit around the Sun.

The announcement provides an early astronomical indication of the timing of Eid al-Adha, although official confirmation of the start of Dhu al-Hijjah and Eid dates is typically made by religious authorities following the moon-sighting process. - **QNA**

Qatar, Turkiye discuss security and co-operation

HE the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of State for Defence Affairs Sheikh Saud bin Abdulrahman bin Hassan al-Thani met yesterday with Turkiye's Minister of Foreign Affairs Hakan Fidan and his accompanying delegation. The meeting, held as part of Fidan's visit to Qatar, focused on the latest regional security developments and broader issues affecting stability in the region. Both sides also discussed aspects of bilateral co-operation and co-ordination amid current regional circumstances. The talks were attended by senior officers and officials from both countries. - **QNA**



Defence minister attends multinational mission conference on Strait of Hormuz

HE the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of State for Defence Affairs Sheikh Saud bin Abdulrahman bin Hassan al-Thani participated in the Multinational Military Mission meeting in the Strait of Hormuz, to which he was invited by the UK's Secretary of State for Defence John Healey and French Minister of the Armed Forces and Veterans Affairs Catherine Vautrin, via video conferencing. The meeting aims to discuss ways to facilitate freedom of navigation and maritime flows in the Strait of Hormuz, following the agreement reached on the current crisis. - **QNA**



AlRayan Bank and The Group officials at the launch ceremony of Sahl Plus.

AlRayan Bank, The Group launch Sahl Plus service

AlRayan Bank and The Group have launched Sahl Plus, a new service that allows AlRayan Bank customers to link their bank and investment accounts seamlessly.

The service enables customers to trade on the Qatar Stock Exchange and transfer funds easily through the bank's digital banking channels.

Through a direct electronic link, Sahl Plus simplifies the process and allows fund transfers to be completed within minutes.

Customers can easily activate Sahl Plus through the AlRayan Bank mobile application by logging into the bank's digital services.

They then select The Group service, completing the required information, accepting the terms and conditions, and confirming activation.

"The launch of Sahl Plus reflects AlRayan Bank's commitment to providing practical, secure and innovative digital solutions that meet the evolving needs of our customers," said AlRayan Bank general manager (Wholesale Banking) Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulaziz al-Thani.

"Through our collaboration with The Group, we are offering customers a seamless and reliable way to link their bank accounts with their investment accounts, supporting their participation in Qatar's financial market with greater efficiency and flexibility," he said.

"At AlRayan Bank, we continue to invest in enhancing our digital channels and expanding our service offering in line with customer expectations and the ongoing digital transformation of the banking and financial sectors," he highlighted.

"We also remain committed to ensuring that our services are built on the highest standards of security and reliability, delivering a convenient and advanced banking experience," Sheikh Mohammed added.

"We are pleased with this fruitful collaboration with AlRayan Bank, which reflects our commitment to developing digital solutions that enable investors to access capital markets in a simpler and more seamless way, by integrating our services with the Bank's advanced digital banking channels," said The Group chairman Hamad al-Moudadi.

"Sahl Plus represents a key step towards simplifying trading and fund transfer processes, saving customers time and effort while supporting their investment activity on the Qatar Stock Exchange," he stressed.

"We look forward to continuing our collaboration with AlRayan Bank to introduce further joint solutions that keep pace with the rapid transformation taking place across the financial and technology sectors," al-Moudadi added.

MoECC conducts more than 1,700 inspections in Q1 2026

The Ministry of Environment and Climate Change (MoECC) has said that it carried out over 1,700 field inspections during the first quarter (Q1) of 2026 as part of a wider effort to strengthen environmental monitoring and enforcement across the country.

According to figures released in a report by the ministry, its environmental sector conducted 1,713 inspection visits between January and March.

These were 509 environmental monitoring and inspection visits, 100 radiation protection inspections, 840 visits related to chemicals and hazardous waste, and 264 inspections concerning environmental assessment and permits.

The MoECC said that the operations resulted in 83 reported violations and the issuance of 350 warnings.

Officials described the figures as proof of intensified regulatory and technical activity aimed at improving environmental governance and sustainability standards in line with Qatar National Vision 2030.

The report also highlighted a broad range of administrative and technical work undertaken during the period.

A total of 603 meetings were held, alongside 18 public awareness events focused on environmental issues.

Meanwhile, the authorities issued 3,376 per-



Environmental monitoring and inspection accounted for 92 permits, with a further 369 issued through environmental assessment and permitting services.

The ministry added that it completed 4,295 customs inspections and cleared 4,210 customs declarations during the period.

In addition, officials reviewed 933 environmental and technical studies and reports.

Laboratory and monitoring work also formed a significant part of the ministry's activities.

The authorities analysed 2,828 samples, including seawater, wastewater discharge, sediment and emergency water samples.

The ministry said this included 490 seawater samples, 570 samples under Qatar's marine environmental monitoring programme, and 875 samples linked to water discharge outlets.

A further 259 emergency samples involving water and sediment were tested.

Radiation-related analysis included 21 concentration measurements and 416 radiological readings, while specialists also examined 197 samples of recycled base oils and cosmetic creams.

The MoECC said the measures reflect its continued commitment to enhancing environmental oversight, improving monitoring systems and supporting sustainable development objectives across Qatar. - **QNA**

Snoonu launches in Kuwait

Snoonu has officially launched its operations in Kuwait, marking a major milestone in the company's regional expansion strategy and reinforcing its position as one of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC)'s fastest-growing technology platforms.

As part of its phased launch in Kuwait, Snoonu is introducing four core services to the market:

- Groceries: Fast and reliable delivery of everyday essentials.

- Snoosend: An on-demand courier solution enabling users to send and receive items quickly and conveniently.

- Flowers & Gifts: Curated gifting solutions for various occasions.

- Services: On-demand access to trusted home service professionals, including electricians, plumbers, maintenance specialists, and more.

Additional verticals and services are expected to be introduced progressively over the coming months as the platform expands its footprint across Kuwait.

"Kuwait represents a defining milestone in Snoonu's regional



growth journey," said Hamad al-Hajri, founder of Snoonu and chief executive of International Markets at Jahez International. "We are committed to building a platform that delivers real value through speed, operational excellence, and a world-class customer experience."

"Our priority in Kuwait is to build a platform that genuinely understands the local market and evolves alongside the needs of its community," said Snoonu Kuwait chief executive Bader al-Ajeel.

Founded in 2019, Snoonu has grown into one of the GCC's leading technology companies.

The Kuwait launch forms part of the company's broader regional expansion roadmap following Jahez International's majority acquisition of the company last year.

Snoonu is now available for download on the App Store and Google Play.

Shell Qatar, MoI hold awareness event to mark International Workers' Day 2026

Shell Qatar, in collaboration with the Ministry of Interior (MoI), represented by the North Security Department, recently organised an awareness event for workers as part of the International Workers' Day 2026 celebrations.

The event witnessed the participation of more than 470 workers representing 14 of the largest companies working in the Northern region of Qatar.

The event in Al Khor, with the participation of various MoI departments and the private sector, presented lectures on pedestrian traffic safety, drug prevention, the importance of enhancing workers' mental and psychological well-being, and cultural integration by introducing Qatari customs and traditions to workers.

In addition, the ministry's Human Rights Department delivered a presentation on workers' rights and responsibilities, and on ways to promote and strengthen human rights principles among workers.

The programme included a cultural, safety, and security awareness competition that saw high participation, concluding with an awards ceremony to honour the winners.

"Organising this event reflects the integration between security and community aspects," said Colonel Ahmed Saad al-Muhammadi from the North Security Department. "It contributes to enhancing



Ministry of Interior and Shell Qatar officials with workers who took part in the event in Al Khor.

worker awareness, developing a sense of security, and preventing crime."

On behalf of Shell Qatar, Eng. Husain al-Hajji, general manager of Public

Relations, said that the "Bedar" community awareness events reflect Shell Qatar's commitment to empowering communities and raising worker awareness.

The "Bedar" initiative is one of the key community programmes led by Shell Qatar in collaboration with the MoI, and it aims to enhance workers' awareness and inte-

grate them into national and community events, contributing to improving their quality of life and supporting social sustainability in Qatar.

QPC, Jusoor explore media partnership

The Qatar Press Centre (QPC) welcomed a delegation from the Jusoor Global Institute for Strategic Studies, a member of Hamad Bin Khalifa University (HBKU), to discuss ways to develop professional partnerships and strengthen areas of joint co-operation and media co-ordination in support of the knowledge, research, and media objectives of both institutions.

The delegation, headed by the institute's executive director Dr Mohammed Ali al-Shehhi, met with QPC director-general Sadiq Mohammed al-Amari where they reviewed opportunities for co-operation in organising specialised events and seminars, and launching joint initiatives aimed at enriching public discussion on media, intellectual, and strategic issues.

They also discussed mechanisms to benefit from Jusoor's research expertise to support credible media content and enhance the presence of specialised studies and analyses within the journalism and media environment.



Dr al-Shehhi said that the institute maintains relations and co-operation agreements with several institutions inside and outside Qatar, in addition to its communication with ambassadors from various Arab countries.

He noted that the institute organises internal seminars, hosting ambassadors to discuss their diplomatic experiences

and impressions of working in Qatar.

He affirmed the institute's readiness to co-operate with the QPC in areas of mutual interest, including organising seminars and intellectual and research meetings, exchanging expertise, and developing initiatives that strengthen the presence of specialised knowledge in the media field.

Dr al-Shehhi stressed the importance of co-operation between research and media institutions in producing knowledge that can reach the public clearly and responsibly, explaining that the impact of research and analysis cannot be fully realised without conscious media channels that transform knowledge into constructive public discussion serving both decision-makers and society.

Al-Amari emphasised the centre's commitment to building quality partnerships with institutions in the country, based on its belief that professional media is inseparable from knowledge and in-depth analysis.

The official said that co-operation with the institute represents an important opportunity to strengthen bridges between journalism and scientific research, and to open new horizons for media professionals to benefit from specialised studies and analyses in understanding regional and international issues, positively reflecting on the quality of media content and the depth of journalistic coverage.

They also discussed developing ideas and initiatives that could be translated into practical programmes in the coming period, enhancing integration between media and research work, expanding horizons for professional and knowledge co-ordination, and supporting the role of national institutions in serving knowledge, development, and professional dialogue.

The meeting, which was also attended by Jusoor public relations director Abdullah al-Nuaimi, concluded with both sides emphasising the importance of continued communication and the QPC's readiness to co-operate with Jusoor in areas of shared interest.

The institute is an independent multi-disciplinary research and think tank based in Doha.

It supports policymaking by producing evidence-based research, studies, and strategic analyses that contribute to understanding regional and international transformations and to anticipating future developments.



QNA director-general meets counterpart at CMG Regional Office

Qatar News Agency (QNA) director-general Ahmed bin Saeed al-Rumaihi met yesterday with the director-general of the China Media Group (CMG) Regional Office in the Middle East, Mu Li.

They discussed aspects of co-operation in the media field and ways to enhance and develop them, in addition to opportunities for exchanging experiences between the two sides.

Li visited the QNA Training Centre and was briefed on the specialised training programmes it offers, as well as its role in training media professionals and graduates of journalism and media departments in the country.

- QNA



MEEZA boosts business continuity and disaster recovery ecosystem

MEEZA has announced multiple strategic partnerships with globally recognised data centre and telecommunications service providers, primarily across Europe and Asia.

These partnerships reinforce MEEZA's commitment to delivering robust disaster recovery (DR) and business continuity (BC) solutions, ensuring uninterrupted operations, enhanced data resilience, and international reach for its enterprise clients across Qatar.

Through these agreements, MEEZA is significantly enhancing its ability to provide mission-critical services designed to safeguard businesses against disruptions.

The expanded enterprise service portfolio includes cloud backup and DR services with advanced failover and rapid recovery capabilities, data centre co-location and hosting services utilising globally-recognised tier-certified facilities, advanced network solutions and telecommunications services ensuring high availability and low latency connectivity, and comprehensive cybersecurity services to protect data, systems, and infrastructure.

A key outcome of these partnerships is the development of an internationally interconnected ecosystem for MEEZA's data centres, enabling seamless integration with global infrastructure.

This ecosystem enhances geographic redundancy, cross-border data replication, and multi-site resilience - critical components for effective disaster recovery and sustained business continuity.

By leveraging this interconnected framework, MEEZA can offer clients enhanced protection against service interruptions, natural disasters, and cyber threats, while ensuring compliance with international standards and best practices.

"Our focus on disaster recovery and business continuity has never been more critical," said MEEZA chief executive Mohammed Ali al-Ghaithani.

"These strategic agreements enable us to build a globally connected infrastructure ecosystem, strengthening our ability to deliver resilient, secure, and always-on services," he said. "Entities and businesses across Qatar can now operate with greater confidence, knowing their data and operations are protected by world-class DR and BC capabilities."

The services enabled through these partnerships on top of existing MEEZA leading DR and BC in-country services allow organisations across sectors, including government, energy, financial services, healthcare, and large enterprises, to enhance their resilience strategies without delay.

The initiative supports Qatar's ongoing digital transformation and aligns with MEEZA's vision to deliver secure, scalable, and future-ready information technology (IT) solutions that underpin national growth and innovation.

Qatar slams hijacking of oil tanker in Yemeni waters

Qatar has condemned the hijacking of an oil tanker carrying Egyptian sailors in Yemeni territorial waters, and its diversion toward Somali territorial waters near Puntland region, describing it as a blatant violation of international law and a serious threat to maritime navigation security and international trade routes.

In a statement issued yesterday, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MoFA) affirmed Qatar's full solidarity with Egypt and with the families of the sailors, and emphasised the importance of ensuring their safety and security and accelerating the process of their release.

The ministry also called for concerted international efforts to ensure the security of maritime navigation and freedom of passage in international waterways, considering it a fundamental pillar of regional and global security and stability. - QNA

Engineering clinic launched



The Engineers Without Borders - Qatar programme of the Qatar Society of Engineers (QSE) has launched the Engineering Clinic.

QSE board member and director of the Engineers Without Borders programme, Eng. Khalid Abdulrahim al-Sayed, said that the Engineering Clinic is not merely a traditional consulting office, but a professional volunteer platform that aims to provide assistance to citizens who are about to build their homes, help them resolve disputes, and provide technical support to those who face problems or delays with contacting companies.

He added that the clinic also aims to reduce costs and create quick engineering solutions at the lowest possible cost to alleviate the financial burden on families.

Al-Sayed said that the Engineers Without Borders - Qatar programme, which launched its website in December 2025, now boasts a constellation of engineers in all engineering disciplines. - QNA

VEHICLE RECALL

وزارة التجارة والصناعة
Ministry of Commerce and Industry
دولة قطر - State of Qatar

CHEVROLET TAHOE, SUBURBAN

Year of Production: 2022

DEFECT

A transmission control valve in some of the affected vehicles may be susceptible to excess wear over time, resulting in a gradual loss of pressure within the valve that can cause harsh shifting. In rare cases, the rear wheels may experience a momentary lock up or may remain locked. If the rear wheels lock up while driving, there is an increased risk of a crash.

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JAIDAH MOTORS & TRADING Co.
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TOD becomes TOD by beIN ahead of FIFA World Cup 2026

Streaming platform TOD will now operate as TOD by beIN, beIN Media Group has announced, marking a major milestone in the group's digital evolution.

The announcement comes as TOD by beIN prepares to serve as the official streaming platform for the FIFA World Cup 2026 across the Middle East and North Africa (Mena).

"The evolution to TOD by beIN marks an important milestone in our digital growth at a defining moment for sport and entertainment in our region," said beIN Mena chief executive Mohammad al-Subaie. "This unifies beIN's digital streaming proposition under the globally recognised and trusted beIN brand ahead of the FIFA World Cup 2026, while reinforcing our commitment to innovation and a world-class viewing experience for our audiences."

"TOD has rapidly established itself as one of Mena's leading streaming platforms - following its launch at the FIFA World Cup



Qatar 2022 - reaching 24 countries, supported by more than 50 strategic distribution and commercial partners, and available across all major smart TV platforms," said TOD Mena managing director Peter Mrkic. "With TOD by beIN we are creating a powerful, seamless destination for sport and entertainment where fans can enjoy sport anywhere, anytime, and on any device."

As TOD evolves into TOD by beIN, digital-first fans will benefit from a more accessible and immersive streaming experience, featuring 4K/HDR live streams, best-in-class and first-of-its-kind streaming technologies, and advanced features including interactive timelines, automatic highlights, MultiView, and real-time

experiences such as FanZone.

Alongside its premium sports offering, TOD by beIN continues to strengthen its investment in entertainment and locally relevant storytelling through TOD Studios.

During and beyond the FIFA World Cup 2026, the platform will continue to expand its offerings across Arabic, Turkish, international, blockbuster, and children's programming, as well as original productions and content from leading global studios, creating a comprehensive streaming destination for audiences across the region.

The TOD by beIN branding and user experience will roll out across platforms in the coming days.

Almana Exchange inaugurates new branch at City Centre Mall

New outlet reinforces the Group's commitment to accessible, world-class financial services across Qatar



Almana Exchange Company, the foreign exchange and remittance arm of Almana Group, one of Qatar's foremost private conglomerates, officially inaugurated its fifth branch at City Centre Mall.

The branch was inaugurated by the managing director, Tariq Omer Almana and assistant general manager Rohan Valearian D'souza, as well as senior management, valued customers, and dedicated staff, in a celebration marking another significant chapter in the brand's nationwide expansion.

Strategically located within one of Doha's most prominent retail and lifestyle destinations, the City Centre Mall branch was chosen to ensure maximum convenience for residents, professionals, and visitors across the Greater Doha area. The new outlet offers the full suite of Almana Exchange Company services, including competitive currency exchange rates, international money transfers, and personalised financial assistance delivered through a modern, customer-first environment.

"The inauguration of our Almana

Exchange Company City Centre Mall branch reflects our unwavering commitment to bringing excellence closer to our customers. At Almana Exchange Company, we believe financial services should be seamless, accessible, and trustworthy, and this new location is a direct expression of that belief," al-Mana said.

The inauguration was met with an enthusiastic response from the attending guests and the wider Doha community. The event served not only as a launch ceremony but as a testament to the strength of relationships Almana Exchange Company has built with its clientele over the years. Management extended its sincere appreciation to all who attended, contributed to, and supported the occasion.

With this latest addition to its growing branch network, Almana Exchange Company continues to strengthen its position as a leading provider of foreign exchange and remittance services in Qatar. The City Centre Mall branch joins an expanding portfolio of conveniently located outlets designed to cater to the diverse and dynamic needs of Qatar's cosmopolitan population.



Tariq Omer Almana leads the ribbon-cutting ceremony inaugurating Almana Exchange Company's fifth branch at City Centre Mall.

Almana Exchange Company looks forward to welcoming customers at the City Centre Mall branch and to delivering the same standard of excellence, efficiency, and warmth that has defined the

brand across all its locations.

Almana Exchange Company is part of Almana Group, a diversified conglomerate whose growth has evolved alongside Qatar's own economic rise. From

its origins as a trading house, the Group has grown into a broad enterprise spanning contracting, technology, offshore services, automotive, and more — guided by a culture of integrity

and a results-driven approach. Almana Exchange Company reflects that same commitment, delivering reliable and customer-first foreign exchange and remittance services across Qatar.

MoCI recalls Kia K3 Hatchback 2024 models; Chevrolet Tahoe and Suburban 2022 models

The Ministry of Commerce and Industry (MoCI), in co-operation with Al-Attiya Motors & Trading Co, Qatar's Kia dealership, has announced the recall of Kia K3 Hatchback 2024 models. The recall is due to a possible fault in the rear centre seat belt buckle, which may prevent it from latching properly due to a manufacturing error and affect proper occupant restraint.

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 ve-

hicle defects and repairs.

The ministry in co-operation with Jaidah Motors & Trading Co, Qatar's Chevrolet dealership, has announced the recall of Chevrolet Tahoe and Suburban 2022 models. The recall is due to a transmission control valve in some affected vehicles being susceptible to excessive wear over time, resulting in a gradual loss of pressure within the valve that may cause harsh shifting. In rare cases, the rear wheels may momentarily lock up or remain locked, increasing the risk of a crash.

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).

Ministry distributes over 14,000 waste sorting bins across Al Rayyan Municipality

The Ministry of Municipality's General Cleanliness Department continues to expand its national waste-sorting initiative by implementing the National Waste Segregation at Source programme.

In April, the department distributed 1,268 blue bins for recyclable waste and an equal number of grey containers for organic waste across several ar-

reas in Al Rayyan Municipality.

The initiative aims to encourage households and communities to separate waste before disposal, improving recycling efficiency and reducing the volume of waste sent to landfills. Additionally, distribution operations are ongoing throughout May to complete coverage of all targeted areas within Al Rayyan Municipality.

According to the ministry, the

total number of blue recycling containers distributed so far under the programme in Al Rayyan has reached 14,156 bins. The waste sorting initiative is considered a key component of the country's broader sustainability programmes, designed to promote environmental awareness, support recycling infrastructure, and advance responsible waste management practices among the residents.

QC provides assistance to displaced families in Sudan

Qatar Charity (QC) has implemented a new humanitarian intervention for internally displaced persons (IDPs) from El Fasher and Greater Darfur in Sudan's Khartoum State. Supported by a Qatari donor, the organisation's field teams in Omdurman delivered food, shelter, and non-food items (NFI) to hundreds of families.

Wada'a al-Amin, representative of the Khartoum State Commission for Voluntary and Humanitarian Work (CVHW), acknowledged QC's significant support for those fleeing the conflict. He noted that the aid distribution targeted around 400 displaced families from El Fasher, under the supervision of CVHW to ensure that aid reached those most in need.

Displaced individuals from El Fasher lauded QC and the Qatar donors for their ongoing efforts to ease the humanitarian crisis. Essential aid, including food, blankets, medicines, and hygiene kits, was distributed to IDPs fleeing to Khartoum State.

Al-Wafid al-Sir, representative of the Darfur IDP Committee in Khartoum State, thanked QC for providing humanitarian assistance to families displaced from various Darfur states. He noted that over 22,000 displaced persons from Darfur have been registered in Khartoum, all of whom require further humanitarian aid to overcome this ordeal.

He voiced his hope for the cessation of the causes of displacement and for the safe return of all IDPs to their original homes. Tariq Mohieddin, acting



Major Tenders and Auctions Committee Public Auction Announcement

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

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

Auction Location:

Animal Production Research Station at Al Sheehaniya (Building No. 2335, Street No. 373, Zone 80)

Auction Date and Time: Saturday, May 16, 2026, at 7:00 AM

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

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

Conditions of the Public Auction

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

Qatar participates in high-level int'l meeting for Return of Ukrainian Children

The State of Qatar participated in the high-level meeting of the International Coalition for the Return of Ukrainian Children, held in Brussels on Monday.

HE the Minister of State for International Cooperation Dr Maryam bint Ali bin Nasser al-Misnad represented the State of Qatar at the meeting.

In her speech during the event, HE al-Misnad said: "Today's meeting reflects collective responsibility to protect civilians affected by conflict, especially children, whose safety, dignity, and future must remain at the core of all international efforts."

In response to the conflict's humanitarian dimensions and following the State of Qatar's high-level discussions with both Ukraine and the Russian Federation during 2023, Qatar undertook humanitarian mediation efforts aimed at facilitating the return of Ukrainian children separated from their families, al-Misnad pointed out.

At the request of the Ukrainian side, Qatar carried out a number of humanitarian missions and

hosted consultations with both parties in pursuit of this humanitarian objective, she said.

Qatari mediation efforts succeeded in reuniting 87 Ukrainian children with their families, through more than fourteen humanitarian operations conducted in co-ordination with the International Committee of the Red Cross, HE the Minister of State for International Co-operation noted.

Al-Misnad affirmed that these efforts stemmed from a humanitarian approach that places children's safety, dignity, and care as the highest priority, in line with international humanitarian principles.

The State of Qatar hosted a number of Ukrainian families who were reunited in Doha, via dedicated recovery and rehabilitation programs aimed at supporting their physical and psychological well-being, she pointed out.

In addition to its mediation efforts, Qatar has maintained sustainable humanitarian support for the Ukrainian people, as His Highness the Amir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani gave directives in 2023 to allocate US-

D100mn to support humanitarian response efforts in Ukraine, al-Misnad highlighted, adding that Qatar also contributed to the "Grain from Ukraine" initiative with USD20mn, in support of international efforts to strengthen global food security.

The minister further said that the State of Qatar supported educational initiatives and child protection projects, including providing university scholarships to Ukrainian students, in addition to a USD3.5mn initiative to establish and equip shelters in schools and kindergartens, benefiting thousands of children.

In co-operation with the Olena Zelenska Foundation, Qatar supported efforts to rehabilitate and rebuild vital healthcare facilities in Ukraine, including specialised medical facilities dedicated to child care, she also noted.

Al-Misnad stressed that protecting children in armed conflicts must remain a shared international priority that transcends political considerations and geopolitical divisions.

She delivered two practical messages to participants: the first being that mediation alone with-

out sustained practical follow-up is not enough, noting that the State of Qatar is ready to share its experience in reuniting children with their families, numbering 115 children, with any country seeking to achieve the same outcome.

As for her second practical message, it was that every child still separated from their family is waiting for help, adding that time is not on those children's side, as words alone cannot restore a stolen childhood.

She added that behind every number mentioned today - 87, 28, 115 - is a child asking themselves every night about the moment they will feel safe again.

Although certainty cannot be promised, yet doing everything possible to help them is, HE al-Misnad said.

HE the Minister of State for International Co-operation concluded by reaffirming the State of Qatar's commitment to continuing its steadfast approach based on diplomacy and mediation to achieve international peace and security, offering its expertise, networks of relations, and belief in genuine humanitarian action. (QNA)

Al-Misnad meets Ukrainian FM



HE the Minister of State for International Co-operation Dr Maryam bint Ali bin Nasser al-Misnad met yesterday with the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Ukraine Andrii Sybiha in Brussels. During the meeting, they reviewed bilateral co-operation and ways to enhance and develop it, as well as Qatar's latest efforts in reuniting Ukrainian children with their families, as part of its ongoing mediation efforts aimed at reuniting families separated by the Russian-Ukrainian crisis. The Ukrainian FM also expressed his country's gratitude for Qatar's continued reunification efforts, commending Qatar's diplomatic endeavours aimed at promoting international peace and security. (QNA)

Minister flags off events of International Nurses Day



HE the Minister of Public Health Mansour bin Ebrahim al-Mahmoud inaugurated yesterday the event marking the International Nurses Day.

The event was organised by the Ministry of Public Health (MoPH) to celebrate the nursing staff and to emphasise their essential role in the healthcare sector and in serving the community.

HE al-Mahmoud took a tour visiting the distinctive booths of several healthcare institutions in the country.

The MoPH and healthcare institutions are participating in the celebration of International Nurses Day, which falls on Tuesday 12 May, and represents an occasion to highlight the valuable contribution of nurses in providing healthcare and to celebrate their hard work, dedication, and commitment to improving the health of individuals and communities worldwide.

This year's celebration theme is "Our Nurses, Our Future... Empowered Nurses Save Lives", emphasising the importance of strengthening investment in nursing, improving working conditions, and highlighting the vital role of nursing in global healthcare.

The MoPH is undertaking various significant projects and initiatives aimed at bolstering the role of nursing staff in the State of Qatar, which includes establishing regulations and laws that oversee nursing practice to enhance quality. It is also expanding nursing services to enrich the patient experience, fostering better awareness and professional dialogue with nursing staff, formulating policies and procedures concerning their roles, and optimising the efficiency of the licensing and



evaluation processes for nurses.

The number of licensed nurses in the State of Qatar has reached 28,732, representing more than 48 percent of the country's healthcare workforce.

"Nursing is a fundamental pillar of the healthcare system in the State of Qatar and a key partner in achieving the strategic objectives of the Ministry of Public Health, foremost among them the provision of safe and high-quality healthcare services," said Head of Registration Section, Department of Healthcare Professions at the MoPH Jawaher al-Ali. She emphasised that the integration of roles among healthcare professionals, especially nursing staff, is what has led to the development seen in the healthcare industry.

She affirmed the MoPH's continuous commitment to supporting and empowering nursing competencies, through developing policies and procedures, enhancing the working environment, and adopting qualitative initiatives that keep pace with best global practices. She praised the efforts of nurses who continue to perform their humanitarian mission with sincerity and dedication, contributing day by day to the advancement

of the health of Qatari society.

Marking the occasion, Chief Nursing Officer at Hamad Medical Corporation (HMC) Maryam al-Mutawa said: "The HMC's participation in the celebration of International Nurses Day comes in recognition of the exceptional commitment, humanity, and professionalism demonstrated by nursing and midwifery staff at Hamad Medical Corporation and in the healthcare sector in the State of Qatar."

"Nursing and midwifery professionals play a vital role in delivering safe, high-quality care and in supporting patients, their families, and the wider community throughout all stages of life. The expertise, dedication, and tireless efforts of nursing and midwifery professionals represent a fundamental pillar in strengthening the healthcare system and improving patient outcomes," she added.

International Nurses Day is observed worldwide, focusing on determining the future direction of the nursing profession in addressing emerging healthcare needs, while supporting the Sustainable Development Goals, Universal Health Coverage, and Health for All. (QNA)

Yasser al-Hozimey inspires Education City audience with lessons on self-mastery

Leading self-development, human relations, and communication expert Yasser al-Hozimey shared his insights on how self-awareness can light the path to growth, success, and fulfilment as he took the stage at Qatar Foundation's Education City Speaker Series.

In front of an audience of over 2,000 people at Qatar National Convention Centre, al-Hozimey delivered an inspiring talk on the theme of "Self-Mastery", drawing on more than two decades of experience as a lecturer and trainer. Having delivered hundreds of training programmes and consultancy services around the world, he emphasised that reflecting on ourselves, connecting with others, and accepting both our shortcomings and what we can change in our lives are key to harmony and accomplishment.

The event - moderated by Mohammed Ahmed al-Shaabi, principal of Academyati, QF's first progressive school - saw al-Hozimey tell the Education City Speaker Series audience that the foundation of self-change begins with small changes.

"You cannot change what you do not know and what you do not admit," he said. "Justification is the enemy of change. A person who justifies himself too much does not change."

"Justification is like a preservative for wrong behaviour. Only

"Justification is the enemy of change. A person who justifies himself too much does not change"

those who admit to themselves are the ones who want to change themselves. Knowledge comes through seeking advice from others."

Al-Hozimey described criticism - "even if it comes in a poor manner" - as being "like medicine: bitter, but beneficial". And he told the event: "Advice is like an alarm: it may annoy us, but it is useful. Do not lose such people in your life."

"Change begins with admis-

sion, then you decide, then you repeat the action. From here, the birth of a new personality begins. Purifying the self means cleansing it from sins and flaws.

"A person must admit the deficiency they were born with, because deficiency is part of the completeness of human personality. We must know our mistakes, admit them, and decide to change them. Say to yourself: 'I will start here, I will stop here, and I will continue.'"

In 2024, a podcast episode focusing on human relationships, which featured al-Hozimey, set a new Guinness World Record by earning over 110mn views on YouTube, the highest viewership figure any podcast episode had ever recorded on the platform.



Environment ministry rolls out 86 e-services to ease licensing, permits

From Page 1

They include environmental permits for temporary activities, land lease contracts for service activities, land lease contracts for motorcycle rental activities, permits to visit natural reserves, filming permits within reserves, and permits to visit whale shark and dugong aggregations.

Speaking on the launch, Yousef Ibrahim al-Hamar, Assistant Undersecretary for Environmental Affairs at the ministry, said the new package is part of efforts to develop the environmental services system and ease procedures for individuals, companies and beneficiaries, consistent with the country's drive towards digital transformation and more efficient government services.

He said the services help structure how applica-

tions are submitted and tracked electronically and make it easier to complete transactions, particularly those involving technical and environmental licences and permits.

The ministry, he added, is working to convert services of a technical and regulatory nature into clear, user-friendly digital offerings that save beneficiaries time and effort and cut down on in-person visits, without diluting the accuracy of procedures or the requirements approved for each service.

Al-Hamar also noted that the expansion of electronic services reflects the ministry's commitment to sharpening its digital tools and providing easier and more effective services, reinforcing its work to protect the environment and uphold the highest levels of compliance with approved standards.

ANNOUNCEMENT

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NATIONALITY AFFAIRS
within 15 days from the publication of this notice.

Qatar, Turkiye warn against any return to military action

From Page 1

"The world is looking toward an agreement that guarantees freedom of navigation and reopens the Strait," he said.

He urged the international community not to overlook developments in Gaza, accusing Israel of continuing what he termed "genocidal policies" in Gaza, the West Bank, Lebanon, and Syria, and arguing that Israeli expansionist policies have driven significant civilian casualties, displacement, and ongoing refugee crises across the region.

Global criticism of Israel, he said, has been growing steadily, including sanctions and punitive measures introduced by several European countries, and he predicted that international public opinion would become increasingly critical of Israeli policies in the coming months.

Qatar fully supports Pakistan's efforts to reach a political settlement and believes all issues related to Iran's nuclear programme should be resolved through diplomacy rather than confrontation, the PM said

Both officials repeated their warning against renewed escalation and insisted that the Strait of Hormuz must never be used as a political pressure tool, stressing that the waterway is an international maritime corridor whose security and freedom of navigation must be protected by the international community.

Responding to questions, the PM said Qatar fully supports Pakistan's efforts to reach a political settlement and believes all issues related to Iran's nuclear programme should be resolved through diplomacy rather than confrontation. The main challenges, he pointed out, lie in setting priorities and formulating understandings

that can serve as a foundation for a comprehensive agreement. A return to war, he warned, would only lead to further destruction.

His recent visit to the US, he said, focused primarily on emphasising support for Pakistan's diplomatic initiative and encouraging all parties to engage constructively to secure a rapid resolution, while also providing an opportunity to discuss with US officials the repercussions of the war on the region and the world. He praised Pakistan's role as "significant and important" in efforts to secure a ceasefire, noting that Gulf states, including Qatar, are among those most directly affected by the conflict's consequences.

Fidan described Pakistan's role as "critical and decisive" for both the region and the wider world, given the implications for global energy supplies and maritime security. He reaffirmed continued Qatari-Turkish coordination to support mediation and stabilise a ceasefire as quickly as possible, noting that both countries enjoy exceptionally strong relations across all fields and have overcome every challenge involved.

Fidan reiterated Turkiye's rejection of any attempt to use the Strait of Hormuz as a pressure tool against Gulf states, stressing that any future threat to maritime navigation in the Strait should be met with a "firm international response." Israel, he said, seeks to address crises through violence and expansion - a policy that is no longer merely a regional problem but one that has become an issue for global security.

GCC, Arab League condemn infiltration attempt into Bubiyan

GT Report
Doha

Kuwait's announced yesterday that four infiltrators arrested earlier this month while attempting to set their moorings at Bubiyan Island aboard a fishing boat have confessed their allegiance to Iran's Revolutionary Guards.

This act has been widely condemned in the Arab world, where several countries including Qatar,

Saudi Arabia, Oman, United Arab Emirates, Bahrain, Kuwait and Iraq have found themselves engulfed in 'crossfire' of US-Israel war against Iran. The announcement of foiled attempt of infiltrators to enter the country through the sea had been first made by Kuwaiti state news agency.

From its perch in Cairo, Arab League strongly condemned the illegal and hostile infiltration, which resulted in the injury of a serviceman belonging to Kuwaiti forces. In a statement yesterday,

Secretary-General Ahmed Aboul Gheit said the incident represents a dangerous precedent and a clear attempt to destabilise regional security at a highly sensitive time, stressing that it is a blatant violation of international law, the UN Charter, and UN Security Council Resolution 2817 (2026).

He reaffirmed full Arab solidarity with Kuwait and its right to self-defence, stressing that the country's security is an integral part of Arab national security.

Secretary-General of Gulf Co-

operation Council Jassem Mohammed Al-Budaiwi strongly condemned the infiltration and alleged plans to carry out hostile acts. In a statement, the GCC Secretary-General said the incident reflects hostile Iranian policies that pose a direct threat to regional security and stability. He accused Iran for its systematic attempt to undermine regional peace. He reaffirmed the full support of GCC states for Kuwait in all measures taken to protect its security, stability, and the safety of its citizens and residents.

In the wake of confessions of infiltrators, Kuwait's Ministry of Foreign Affairs yesterday summoned the Iranian ambassador Mohammad Totonji and delivered a formal protest note. Kuwait's Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs Hamad Suleiman Al Mashaan condemned the incident as a hostile act, demanding that Iran immediately and unconditionally halt such actions and hold it fully responsible for the blatant violation of the State's sovereignty. (With inputs from agencies)

'Israel sent Iron Dome batteries, personnel to UAE'

Israel sent Iron Dome air defence batteries and personnel to operate them in the United Arab Emirates during the war with Iran, the US ambassador to Israel Mike Huckabee said during a conference yesterday, applauding UAE for being an ally of Israel.

"They were the first Abraham Accords member but look at the benefits that they have had as a result. Israel just sent them Iron Dome batteries and personnel to help operate them," Huckabee said during a conference at Tel Aviv University. (AFP)

Iran war cost US \$29bn: Pentagon

AFP
Washington

The Pentagon said yesterday the cost of the war with Iran had climbed to nearly \$29bn, as President Donald Trump faced mounting scrutiny over the conflict and its impact on military readiness.

The new figure, revealed by the Defence Department during a budget hearing in Capitol Hill, is about \$4bn higher than the estimate offered by Defence Secretary Pete Hegseth two weeks ago.

Hegseth and General Dan Caine, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, were testifying on a \$1.5tn budget request for 2027 alongside Pentagon finance chief Jules Hurst III when they were asked for an update on the war's price tag.

"At the time of testimony... it was \$25bn," Hurst told lawmakers, referring to Hegseth's April 29 estimate.

"But the joint staff team and the comptroller team are constantly looking at that estimate, and so now we think it's closer to 29," he said — citing updated "repair and replacement of equipment costs" and broader operational expenses.

Pressed on when Congress would receive a fuller accounting of the war's costs, Hegseth said the administration would request "whatever we think we need" separately from the main Pentagon budget, but did not say when



Jules Hurst, Pete Hegseth and Dan Caine testify before the Senate Appropriations Committee on the FY2027 budget request in the Dirksen Senate Office Building on Capitol Hill yesterday. (AFP)

that supplemental request would arrive. The testimony came as a fragile US-Iran ceasefire appeared increasingly shaky, with Trump warning Monday that the truce was on "life support" after rejecting Tehran's latest peace proposal.

Democrats used the hearing to hammer the administration over both the ballooning cost of the war and what they described as a lack of transparency about US objectives. "The question must be answered at the end: what have

we accomplished and at what cost?" asked Rosa DeLauro, the top Democrat on the House Appropriations Committee.

Fellow Democrat Betty McCollum accused the Pentagon of a "consistent lack of transparency" and demanded more clarity about the administration's long-term strategy before Congress approves additional funding.

The war has intensified concerns over rapidly depleting US weapons stockpiles after months

of heavy missile and air-defense operations in the Middle East.

Hegseth dismissed warnings that the conflict had dangerously drained American munitions reserves. "The munitions issue has been foolishly and unhelpfully overstated," he said. "We know exactly what we have. We have plenty of what we need."

Democratic Senator Mark Kelly warned over the weekend that inventories of Tomahawk missiles, Patriot interceptors and other ad-

vanced systems had been severely drawn down and could take years to replenish, potentially weakening US readiness in any future confrontation with China.

The hearings marked Hegseth's first appearance on Capitol Hill since the White House formally notified Congress that hostilities launched by the US and Israel against Iran on February 28 had "terminated."

Democrats have repeatedly been blocked by the Republicans as they have introduced measures to rein in Trump's Iran war powers, accusing the president of waging war without proper congressional authorization.

Hegseth and Caine faced a second round of questioning before a Senate panel after their House appearance, and there were protesters at both hearings.

In the Senate, an Iranian-American activist interrupted Hegseth's opening statement to call out: "If you approve this budget, you will be complicit in the war crimes of this administration."

Senators raised questions about the Trump administration's plan to withdraw 5,000 troops from Germany, which has faced bipartisan pushback.

Hegseth did not comment directly on Washington's relations with Berlin, but said: "It's not the troops. It's the capitals of those militaries that limit what they're able to do, where they're able to go, who they're able to fight, that create limits on our own."

6 killed, 7 injured in Israeli attacks on southern Lebanon

The Lebanese National News Agency (NNA) said Tuesday that six people were killed and seven others injured as Israeli attacks on southern Lebanon continued. It said that Israel launched an airstrike on an inhabited house in Kfar Dounine in southern Lebanon, killing six people and injuring seven others, in addition to carrying out two more strikes on the town of Srifa. The agency added that Israeli artillery shelling targeted the outskirts of the towns of Al Mansouri and Majdal Zoun. Warplanes also carried out a series of airstrikes on towns. (QNA)

IMF's agreement on disbursing \$375 mn to Tanzania

The International Monetary Fund (IMF) said yesterday that it had reached a staff-level agreement with the government of Tanzania to unlock \$375.5 mn in financing, with the east African country feeling the fallout from the war on Iran. In a statement, the IMF said the broad objectives of its program in the east African country had been met. "Growth remains strong, inflation is low and stable, international reserves coverage is adequate, public spending on education and health has ticked up, and climate resilience has strengthened," the statement said. (AFP)

UAE sees rapidly growing trade with Syria as ties warm

Reuters
Dubai

Trade between the United Arab Emirates and Syria more than doubled in 2025 and has further to grow, a UAE minister said yesterday, addressing a Damascus investment forum that signalled rapidly warming ties between the states.

UAE Minister of State for Foreign Trade Thani Al Zeyoudi told the first Syrian-Emirati Investment Forum that non-oil trade between the United Arab Emirates and Syria reached a record \$1.4 bn in 2025, up 132% from the previous year. He said the increase opens prospects for expanding bilateral trade.

The Syrian and Emirati sides reached a series of preliminary agreements on dozens of investment projects in the tourism, construction, infrastructure, agriculture, aviation and logistics sectors during the two-day event.

The UAE has moved more slowly than Saudi Arabia and Qatar in expanding ties with the new Syrian government led by President Ahmed al-Sharaa, a former Al Qaeda commander.



Ministers from UAE and Syria seated alongside Syrian President Ahmed al-Sharaa during the first Syrian-Emirati (United Arab Emirates) Investment Forum in Damascus. (AFP)

But a gradual improvement in ties has accelerated since the start of the Iran war, as the UAE came under Iranian attack and Sharaa repeatedly expressed solidarity with Abu Dhabi.

Anwar Gargash, top diplomatic adviser to the UAE president, said in April Syria was among the most prominent Arab countries that "held a positive stance towards the UAE".

The investment forum was held at the Presidential Palace in Damascus and attended by Sharaa,

ministers and senior officials from both countries.

Mohamed Alabbar, founder of Emirati real estate development giant Emaar, said the company was studying projects in Damascus worth up to \$12 billion, and projects on Syria's coast worth up to \$7 bn.

Syrian Economy and Industry Minister Nidal Shaar said the two sides had agreed to form a Syrian technical delegation to visit the UAE in the coming period to develop a comprehensive plan and

implementation roadmap for the recent agreements.

Syria has been seeking to attract foreign investment to support an economy devastated by more than a decade of war and Western sanctions, most of which were lifted at the end of last year.

Over the past year, Damascus has signed several billion-dollar memoranda of understanding with Gulf investors, including companies from Saudi Arabia and Qatar, while also securing deals with US companies.

Bahrain sentences three to life on terror charges

Bahrain sentenced yesterday three people to life on charges of collaborating with Iran's Revolutionary Guards, amid a crackdown on pro-Iran sentiment and networks since the Middle East war. Over 20 others were sentenced to up to 10 years in prison by a court in Bahrain, which was hard-hit by Iranian attacks during the war.

A woman "accused of... collaborating with the Iranian Revolutionary Guards with the intention of carrying out hostile terrorist acts" was sentenced to life imprisonment, the public prosecution said in a statement.

Two other people, one of whom fled to Iran, also received life sentences and a 10,000 dinar fine (\$26,487) on similar charges, it added. In a separate case, "the court sentenced 10 defendants to prison terms of up to 10 years", with three of them to be deported after serving their sentences.

They were convicted for supporting Iran, filming in prohibited locations and disseminating banned statements.

Another 11 people were sen-

tenced to up to five years in jail and a fine for "violence and sabotage committed during the Iranian attacks on the Kingdom of Bahrain last March", the prosecution said.

The sentences come as Gulf countries are on high alert, with Qatar, Kuwait and the United Arab Emirates also cracking down on Iran-linked networks.

Bahraini authorities have arrested more than 300 mostly Shia Muslims since the war began, according to Bahraini activists, some of them accused of espionage or ties to the Revolutionary Guards.

Bahrain has denied cracking down on citizens based on their religious identity. On May 9, Bahrain's interior ministry said security services had dismantled an organisation accused of links to Iran's Guards and arrested 41 of its suspected members.

On May 7, Bahrain's parliament expelled three MPs who opposed a royal decree abolishing the right of appeal against government decisions on nationality, after 69 people were stripped of citizenship for supporting Iran during the war. (AFP)

Saudi Arabia launched covert attacks on Iran as regional war widened

Reuters
Riyadh/Dubai

Saudi Arabia launched numerous, unpublicised strikes on Iran in retaliation for attacks carried out in the kingdom during the Middle East war, two Western officials briefed on the matter and two Iranian officials said.

The Saudi attacks, not previously reported, mark the first time that the kingdom is known to have directly carried out military action on Iranian soil and show it is becoming much bolder in defending itself against its main regional rival. The attacks, launched by the Saudi Air Force, were assessed to have been carried out in late March, the two Western officials said. One said only that they were "tit-for-tat strikes in retaliation for when Saudi (Arabia) was hit."

The United Arab Emirates also carried out military strikes on Iran, the *Wall Street Journal* reported on Monday. Together, the Saudi and Emirati actions reveal a conflict whose true shape has remained largely hidden — one in which Gulf monarchies battered by Iranian attacks began hitting back.

But their approach has not been identical. The UAE has taken a more hawkish stance, seeking to extract a cost from Iran and engaging only rarely in public diplomacy with Tehran. Saudi Arabia has meanwhile sought to prevent the conflict from escalating and has stayed in regular contact with Iran, including via Tehran's ambassador in Riyadh. He did not respond to a request for comment.

The senior Saudi foreign ministry official did not directly address whether a de-escalation agreement had been struck with Iran,



F-15SA fighter jets as seen in Riyadh. (Reuters/File Photo)

but said: "We reaffirm Saudi Arabia's consistent position advocating de-escalation, self-restraint and the reduction of tensions in pursuit of the stability, security and prosperity of the region and its people."

The Iranian and Western officials said Saudi Arabia made Iran

aware of the strikes and this was followed by intensive diplomatic engagement and Saudi threats to retaliate further, which led to an understanding between the two countries to de-escalate.

Ali Vaez, the Iran Project Director at the International Crisis Group, said retaliatory Saudi

strikes on Iran, followed by an understanding to de-escalate, would "show pragmatic recognition on both sides that uncontrolled escalation carries unacceptable costs."

Such a sequence of events would show "not trust, but a shared interest in imposing limits on confrontation before it spiraled into a wider regional conflict."

The informal de-escalation took effect in the week before Washington and Tehran agreed to a ceasefire in their broader conflict on April 7. The White House did not respond to a request for comment.

One of the Iranian officials confirmed that Tehran and Riyadh had agreed to de-escalate, saying the move aimed to "cease hostilities, safeguard mutual interests, and prevent the escalation of tensions."

Long at odds, Iran and Saudi Arabia — the two leading Shia and Sunni Muslim powers in the Mid-

dle East — have backed opposing groups in conflicts across the region.

A China-brokered détente in 2023 saw them resume ties, including a ceasefire between the Iran-backed Houthis in Yemen and Saudi Arabia that has since held.

With the Red Sea remaining open to shipping, Saudi Arabia has been able to continue exporting oil throughout the conflict, unlike most Gulf states, and so has managed to remain relatively insulated.

In an op-ed in Saudi-owned *Arab News* over the weekend, former Saudi intelligence chief Prince Turki al-Faisal captured the kingdom's calculus, writing that "when Iran and others tried to drag the kingdom into the furnace of destruction, our leadership chose to endure the pains caused by a neighbour in order to protect the lives and property of its citizens."



China's underlying concerns at Xi-Trump talks

AFP
Beijing

When US President Donald Trump meets Chinese counterpart Xi Jinping in Beijing this week, the shadow of the Iran conflict casts over the summit might appear to give China's leader a clear advantage.

Beijing has been relatively shielded from the effects of the conflict thanks to its oil reserves and diverse energy sources. Meanwhile, its dominance of the rare earths industry gives it a key bargaining chip in extracting concessions from Washington.

But Xi will still go into this week's talks worried about a persistent domestic slowdown, an uncertain trade truce, and long-term damage from a prolonged Middle East conflict, analysts say.

"China enters this summit with genuine leverage but also genuine urgency," Han Lin, China country

director at Washington-based consultancy The Asia Group, told AFP.

Middle East war

While China has been relatively cushioned from the energy crisis gripping Asia, domestic gas prices surged in April and manufacturers have sounded the alarm over the rising cost of plastic production, which uses oil.

A prolonged US-Israel conflict with Iran could also hit Chinese exports in the long run, despite better-than-expected trade growth last month.

"If oil prices rise enough to significantly dent global goods demand, that would drag on China's activity," Leah Fahy of Capital Economics wrote in a note last week.

China's close ties with Iran are also a potential source of tension during talks, where Trump is expected to press Xi to use his relationship with Tehran to help end the war.

"Wielding that influence burns goodwill China has carefully cultivated," Lin told AFP.

Tariff impact

The two leaders' last meeting produced a tentative trade truce after a frenzy of tit-for-tat tariffs in 2025.

China has also turned to alternative trading partners to fend off the worst short-term impacts of Trump's trade war.

Still, officials are uneasy about longer-term damage to the country's appeal as a manufacturing destination.

Beijing issued new regulations in April aimed at stopping companies from removing China from their supply chains, as Western governments spooked by trade tensions have increasingly looked into reducing their reliance on Chinese factories.

Vice-Premier He Lifeng last month voiced "solemn concern" over US trade measures against China.

Tech restrictions

Washington's moves to constrain China's tech sector are an-

other longstanding concern for Beijing, as the two countries race to dominate the global artificial intelligence market.

Chinese tech firms are barred from purchasing California-based Nvidia's most cutting-edge AI chips, under US export rules that Washington says are to protect national security.

Beijing has been forced to accelerate development of its own advanced semiconductors and wean its tech sector off reliance on US hardware.

This month it hit out at a US regulatory proposal that could bar Chinese labs from testing electronic devices for sale in the United States.

Beijing may be hoping to use its control over rare earths as leverage, in hopes the US could "offer partial tariff relief or pauses on certain export controls", Nomura Chief China Economist Ting Lu wrote in a recent note.

Domestic slowdown

The Xi-Trump talks will be held



US President Donald Trump with Chinese President Xi Jinping. (Reuters/File photo)

against the backdrop of China's sluggish domestic demand and investment.

The Asian giant has struggled to mount a robust comeback since the end of the Covid-19 pandemic, with a protracted debt crisis in the once-booming property sector and tepid consumption weighing on activity.

"The property sector crisis has hollowed out household wealth,

(and) youth unemployment remains stubbornly elevated," The Asia Group's Lin said.

China's top leaders recently acknowledged that the domestic economy "faces certain difficulties and challenges," and called for greater self-reliance in tech and industrial chains.

"Beijing isn't walking in without anxiety," Lin said of the talks.

China's He Lifeng arrives in South Korea for US trade talks

Reuters
Incheon

Chinese Vice-Premier He Lifeng arrived in South Korea yesterday to hold trade talks with a US delegation ahead of a summit this week between the leaders of the world's biggest economies, according to a Reuters witness at Incheon airport.

China's Vice-Commerce Minister Li Chenggang, China's lead trade negotiator, was also among the officials accompanying He.

He Lifeng is due to meet US Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent on Wednesday for talks ahead of the meeting between US President Donald Trump and Chinese President Xi Jinping in Beijing, scheduled to run from Thursday-Friday.

Bessent is expected to arrive in South Korea on Wednesday morning to meet with He before heading to China in the afternoon, South Korean Finance Minister Koo Yun-cheol told a press briefing.

There is no meeting scheduled

between Koo and either Bessent or He, Seoul's Finance Ministry said.

Later yesterday, South Korea's presidential Blue House said South Korean President Lee Jae Myung is scheduled to meet Bessent and China's He.

The talks between Bessent and He are due to take place in a reception room at Incheon airport, News1 reported, citing an airport official.

A representative from Incheon International Airport Corp declined to comment on the report.

South Korea official floats AI profit social tax as tech giants boom

AFP
Seoul

A top South Korean official has proposed a tax on AI profits to be redistributed among society as a semiconductor boom drives massive earnings for tech giants Samsung Electronics and SK hynix.

The two South Korean firms have emerged as key suppliers of high-performance chips powering AI infrastructure globally, posting record first-quarter earnings as global demand surges.

South Korea's benchmark Kospi has rallied over the past month, repeatedly hitting record highs and also briefly coming within a whisker of the key 8,000-point mark yesterday.

South Korea was no longer operating as a traditional export economy and could be shifting towards a "technology monopoly economy" driven by scarcity of chips and sustained excess profits, Kim Yong-beom, senior presidential secretary for policy, said in a Facebook post late Monday.

While the shift towards a technology-dominant economy rep-

The tech tax could be used, for example, to provide startup support for young people, basic income programmes for rural and fishing communities, support for artists and stronger pensions for the elderly

resented "the core essence of the possibilities currently open before Korea", Kim warned it could also deepen polarisation of society.

Kim proposed what he tentatively called a "national dividend" for socially redistributing excess corporate profits from AI technology.

The tech tax could be used, for example, to provide startup support for young people, basic income programmes for rural and fishing communities, support for artists and stronger pensions for the elderly, he said.

"Using a portion of excess profits to ensure social stability for the current generation and mitigate transition costs is not merely redistribution, but also a type of system maintenance cost."

The presidential Blue House said Kim's post reflected "his

personal opinion".

The post was "unrelated to any internal discussions or review within the Blue House", it said in a statement sent to AFP.

A global frenzy to build AI data centres has sent orders for advanced, high-bandwidth memory microchips soaring.

South Korea has said it will triple spending on artificial intelligence this year, aiming to join the United States and China as one of the top three AI powers.

Kim's remarks came as Samsung Electronics' labour union demanded the removal of caps on performance bonuses and called for a system allocating 15 percent of operating profit to bonuses.

The union is scheduled to hold post-mediation talks with management on Tuesday.

Calls within the country's ruling Democratic Party to redistribute gains from the semiconductor boom have also emerged publicly.

Lawmaker Moon Geum-ju said last month that the semiconductor boom was built partly on "the sacrifice and patience of farmers and fishermen" and argued that part of the profits should be returned to rural communities.

Rodrigo Duterte's drug war enforcer urges Philippine president to block ICC arrest

AFP
Manila

Former Philippine leader Rodrigo Duterte's top drug war enforcer said yesterday he would never surrender to an international court, while pleading for current President Ferdinand Marcos to intervene on his behalf.

Ronald Dela Rosa, a sitting senator and former police chief, has taken refuge in the Senate since narrowly escaping government agents attempting to serve him an International Criminal Court (ICC) warrant tied to his role in the bloody drug crackdown during Duterte's presidency.

In a copy of the warrant issued in November but made public only late Monday, Dela Rosa, better known by his nickname "Bato", is accused of the crime against humanity of murder along with Duterte and other co-perpetrators.

"I wish (Marcos) would not send me to The Hague" but to "any court in the Philippines", Dela Rosa told reporters yesterday as more than 100 riot police stood guard outside the Senate building.

"If I have committed something, I will answer for it here, not in a foreign country. That's my appeal to him."

Dela Rosa's former boss, who was president from 2016 to 2022, was arrested in Manila in March last year and flown to the Netherlands that same night. Duterte has been held at the ICC's deten-



Philippines Senator Ronald Dela Rosa talks to the media during a doorstep interview at the Senate of the Philippines in Pasay, Metro Manila, yesterday. (AFP)

tion unit at Scheveningen Prison awaiting trial.

Since then, Dela Rosa has frequently condemned the arrest and rendition while stating he believed he was next.

Duterte faces three counts of crimes against humanity, with prosecutors alleging his involvement in at least 76 murders between 2013 and 2018.

The true number of killings during his campaign in the Philippines is thought to be in the thousands, and lawyers for the victims have argued that a full trial could encourage more families to come forward.

In a statement yesterday, a Marcos spokeswoman said the president would "not interfere in the decisions of the Senate", while declining to discuss the details of the warrant against Dela Rosa.

"Everything that happens in the Senate is within their power,"

Claire Castro said.

Dela Rosa's defence team, meanwhile, has filed an injunction with the country's Supreme Court, seeking judicial protection from what they called a "coordinated" enforcement strategy against him.

The senator had not been seen publicly since November before emerging on Monday to take part in an unexpected vote that helped Duterte loyalists capture control of the Senate.

Video released by the legislative body showed Dela Rosa being chased through the halls of the upper chamber by National Bureau of Investigation (NBI) officers.

Yesterday, NBI director Melvin Matibag told reporters Dela Rosa had travelled to the Senate in the car of a fellow lawmaker, then bolted when approached by two agents attempting to serve a warrant.

He also denied that Dela Rosa had been "tackled and wrestled", saying the senator had tripped on the stairs while being pursued.

"He was literally avoiding arrest," Matibag said. "I was asked why there was a chase. I said he ran, that's why we chased him."

Newly elected Senate President Alan Peter Cayetano told reporters on Monday that Dela Rosa was under the Senate's protection.

"We will allow an arrest under the condition that it is a Philippine court," Cayetano said.

Asked yesterday if he would submit to an arrest warrant by a local court, Dela Rosa said: "We will cross the bridge when we get there."

Misinformation entrenched amid Indonesia measles surge

AFP
Jakarta

A surge in measles cases in Indonesia has made stay-at-home mother Fitri Fransiskha uneasy - but not enough to vaccinate her four children against the highly contagious and deadly virus.

The 40-year-old is one of a growing number of parents in the world's fourth most populous country to spurn infant inoculations, even as the government rushes to quell a public health crisis.

Fitri's fears - sparked when her first-born contracted a fever after receiving the tuberculosis jab as a baby - were fuelled by misinformation circulating on social media about vaccines causing paralysis, behavioural problems, or worse.

"Posts like that worried me, and it made me think my decision not to vaccinate my children was

probably the right one," she told AFP by phone from Java island's westernmost province of Banten.

The phenomenon has become an issue as the number of measles cases in Indonesia has soared, becoming the second-highest in the world behind only war-torn Yemen, according to the Indonesian Paediatrics Association.

More than 8,000 suspected cases and 10 deaths were recorded in the first three months of 2026, according to official data.

Cases more than doubled from 2024 to over 63,000 last year, resulting in 69 deaths.

Once nearing elimination globally, measles "has returned as a significant public health threat" in the country, according to a paper published in the Indonesian Journal of Internal Medicine in January.

"As a mother, of course I'm nervous. But I try to keep (my children) healthy by giving them nutritious food and vitamins," Fitri said.



Mothers and their children waiting their turn to receive the measles-rubella vaccine as part of the governments health programme to combat childhood diseases in Surabaya. (AFP)

"A lot of anti-vaccine sentiment... emerged in urban areas" due to disinformation, legislator Puteh Sari warned last month, cautioning parliament to be "mindful".

Anti-vaccine rhetoric was

found on almost all of the country's main social media platforms according to a study last month by Indonesian data firm Drone Emprit, with the number of people exposed "quite large", the firm's

founder Ismail Fahmi said.

"Anti-vaxxers, though smaller in number, are usually... more outspoken than those who are pro-vaccine," he said, adding many influencers used their platforms to sell unproven herbal remedies as alternatives.

AFP's fact-checking team in March debunked harmful claims spreading online in Indonesia that getting sick with measles confers better protection than vaccines.

The result of the misinformation has been that "our herd immunity has been compromised", said Riris Andono Ahmad, an epidemiologist from Gadjah Mada University in Yogyakarta.

Herd immunity is achieved when enough people in a given population have been vaccinated against an infectious disease to prevent its easy spread.

With a target to eradicate measles and rubella this year, the Indonesian government in March

launched an emergency mass vaccination campaign in around 100 of the country's more than 500 regencies and cities.

This includes measles and rubella (MR) booster shots for more than 220,000 health workers.

The government is working with religious organisations to encourage people to inoculate their offspring, director of immunisation Indri Yogyaswari told reporters.

Measles spread "has dropped a lot" as a result of the campaign, she said.

But last year, Indonesia saw a 10 percentage point drop in the number of infants receiving a first dose of the MR vaccine from 2024, according to the health ministry.

But the goal of eradication appears out of reach with just over three-quarters of children receiving both doses of the MR vaccine, according to Riris - a far cry from the 95% required to achieve herd immunity.

Starmer stays defiant as calls for him to quit grow

AFP
London

UK Prime Minister Keir Starmer told his top team yesterday that he was getting on with governing the country, defying mounting calls from ministers and MPs to step down.

The Labour premier dared any leadership hopefuls to challenge him, but his position looked precarious after two junior ministers resigned from his government, which could trigger a domino effect.

"The Labour Party has a process for challenging a leader and that has not been triggered," Starmer told ministers during crunch talks over his future, as no one person has stepped forward to challenge him yet.

"The country expects us to get on with governing. That is what I am doing and what we must do as a cabinet," he added, on what has become the most crucial day yet of his almost two-year-old premiership.

At least 80 of Labour's 403 members of parliament have now called for Starmer to quit immediately, or to set out a timetable for his resignation.

Starmer's vow Monday to fight on and prove his doubters wrong did little to calm clamour for his removal.

Miatta Fahneh yesterday became the first junior minister to do resign, calling on Starmer "to do the right thing for the country and



British Health Secretary Wes Streeting walks out of No. 10 Downing Street after attending a cabinet meeting, the day before the State Opening of Parliament, in London, yesterday. (Reuters)

the party and set a timetable for an orderly transition."

Jess Phillips then quit as safeguarding minister, telling Starmer in a letter that she was not seeing the change "I, and the country expect".

Interior minister Shabana Mahmood late Monday became the most senior government figure to advise Starmer to consider his position, UK media reported.

Newspapers reported that other senior ministers, including deputy prime minister David Lammy and Yvette Cooper had spoken to Starmer about his position.

Pressure on Starmer has been soaring since Labour suffered disastrous local election results last week, losing hundreds of coun-

cillors to the hard-right Reform UK party and left-wing populist Greens.

Labour also lost its century-old dominance in Wales and were hammered by the Scottish National Party in the devolved parliament in Edinburgh.

Starmer has also failed to spur promised economic growth to help British citizens suffering with the cost of living.

On Monday, Starmer pledged that Labour would be "better" and bolder to assuage disgruntled voters impatient for change.

But dozens of Labour MPs later urged him to step down, including four government aides who resigned their positions. Several cabinet ministers backed

Starmer after the meeting, including Defence Secretary John Healey who warned that "more instability is not in Britain's interest".

Technology Secretary Liz Kendall said he had her "full support" while Business and Trade Secretary Peter Kyle said Starmer was "showing really steadfast leadership".

Housing minister Steve Reed also noted that a leadership challenge had not been triggered, "so we all intend to get on with our jobs".

Under party rules, any challenger would need the support of 81 Labour MPs - 20% of the party in parliament - to trigger a leadership contest.

Starmer has vowed to contest any challenge.

A contest would likely spark damaging infighting, with MPs from the left and right of the party battling to position their preferred candidate or shore up Starmer.

It has long been rumoured that Health Secretary Wes Streeting and former deputy prime minister Angela Rayner could try to oust Starmer.

But neither is universally popular within Labour.

Another much-touted contender, Andy Burnham, the mayor of Greater Manchester, is unable to stand as he does not have a seat in parliament.

Some of his supporters want Starmer to set a date for his departure that allows their man time to become an MP first.

Indigenous Australians awarded major compensation in dispute

AFP
Sydney

An Australian court ordered iron ore giant Fortescue yesterday to pay Indigenous people more than Aus\$150mn (\$108mn) in compensation for mining on their traditional lands.

It was reportedly the largest compensation order in Australian history under laws giving Indigenous people land rights, known as native title.

Federal Court judge Stephen Burley described how four large open-pit mines, a railway, tailings dam, waste dumps and a stockpile were strewn across the lands of the Yindjibarndi people in Western Australia's Pilbara region.

More than 135 square kilometres (52 square miles) had been fenced off for the so-called Solomon mining hub, barring everyone including the traditional owners from entry because of the danger.

Of 240 designated Indigenous "heritage sites", 124 were "completely destroyed" by mining operations and some others dug up, put under roads or drowned by the tailings dam, the judge said in a written summary of his findings.

Burley awarded a "relatively low" financial compensation of about Aus\$100,000, based on the freehold value of the land.

But he ordered that compensation for the cultural loss, which must be assessed separately, would be Aus\$150mn.

The award was far below the Yindjibarndi Ngurrá Aboriginal Corporation's demand for more than Aus\$800mn in compensation for economic losses and Aus\$1bn in cultural losses.

Fortescue, chaired by billionaire Andrew Forrest, had argued for cultural compensation of no more than Aus\$8mn.

"Andrew Forrest and Fortescue care deeply about all First Nations people, including the Yindjibarndi community," a Fortescue spokesperson said.

"Fortescue accepts that the Yindjibarndi People are entitled to compensation."

The mining company said it had strong relationships with Indigenous peoples in the Pilbara region and that it worked hand in hand with them to manage their cultural heritage "sustainably and responsibly".

The peak body representing traditional owners of land across Australia said the case illustrated how much compensation was still owed to them.

"The Yindjibarndi People's perseverance is

an inspiration to other Traditional Owners who continue to fight for what they are owed," said Jamie Lowe, chief executive of the National Native Title Council.

Their native title over the land had been recognised for more than two decades, but they had to spend four years in the courts for compensation, Lowe said.

"Hundreds of Traditional Owner organisations nationwide are owed compensation for past and continuing acts," he said.

"Unpaid monies represent lost economic development and investment opportunities for First Nations communities."

Indigenous peoples, whose ancestors have lived on the continent for more than 60,000 years, are far more likely to be incarcerated or die in custody than other Australians and have lifespans about eight years shorter than the rest of the population.

In his Federal Court finding, the judge quoted one Yindjibarndi witness, Middleton Cheedy, as saying: "I have been traumatised throughout my life by racism, deaths in my family, alcohol coming into our community, watching the old people try to save the Harding river but the mine is like a death for me."

"It has killed all the things that are important to the Yindjibarndi people."

Singaporean, Indian firms face charges over bridge crash

AFP
Washington

A Singapore-based company and another in India have been indicted on multiple criminal charges over a 2024 ship crash that destroyed a bridge in the US state of Maryland and left six people dead, officials said yesterday.

Synergy Marine, based in Singapore, and Synergy Maritime, based in Chennai, India, are accused of conspiracy to defraud, making false statements to the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) and other charges.

An Indian national, Radhakrishnan Karthik Nair, 47, who worked for both companies as technical superintendent for the ship, the M/V Dali, is also named in the indictment unsealed yesterday.

US Attorney Kelly Hayes said Nair is not in custody and is believed to be in India.

The Dali, a 984-foot container ship, suffered a series of electrical



In this aerial image, the steel frame of the Francis Scott Key Bridge sits on top of a container ship after the bridge collapsed, Baltimore, Maryland. (AFP/File Photo)

problems in the early morning of March 26, 2024, and crashed into the Francis Scott Key Bridge over the Patapsco River, which collapsed like a house of cards, blocking the busy shipping channel for the port of Baltimore.

Six construction workers on the bridge, all Latin American immigrants, fell to their deaths.

The NTSB found that the probable cause of the disaster was a loss of electrical power due to a loose wire connection in a high-voltage

switchboard, resulting in the vessel losing propulsion and steering as it approached the bridge.

"The collapse of the Francis Scott Key Bridge was a preventable tragedy of enormous consequence," acting Attorney General Todd Blanche said in a statement. "This indictment is a critical step toward holding accountable those whose reckless disregard for maritime safety regulations caused this disaster."

FBI special agent Jimmy Paul

said the indictment "reveals a pattern of deception and egregious violations that led to the unsafe operation of the Dali which recklessly endangered the public and resulted in the ship striking the bridge."

"Synergy and Radhakrishnan Karthik Nair repeatedly failed to document, investigate and report significant safety risks and hazards aboard the Dali," Paul said. "They forged safety inspections and certifications."

"They falsely claimed the ship was in good working order and then lied to investigators about their actions when they were questioned."

The US Justice Department announced in October 2024 that it had reached a \$100mn settlement with Singapore's Synergy Marine and another company, Grace Ocean, to recover costs incurred in responding to the disaster and for removing tonnes of bridge debris from the channel leading to the port of Baltimore.

Maryland authorities have said it will cost more than \$5.2bn to rebuild the bridge with completion envisioned in 2030.

India, Russia in advanced talks on critical minerals pact: sources

Reuters
New Delhi

India and Russia are in advanced talks to sign a preliminary agreement on critical minerals covering exploration, processing and technological collaboration, two sources familiar with the matter said.

The deal is expected to focus on lithium and rare earths, with the two governments also set to facilitate corporate investments, the sources said, declining to be iden-

tified as the deliberations were not public.

The agreement could be signed within two months, they added.

"We have shared a draft of the proposed agreement with our Russian counterparts," one of the sources said.

The Ministry of Mines, which is leading discussions with Russia, did not respond to a Reuters e-mail seeking comment. Russia's Ministry of Industry and Trade and the office of First Deputy Prime Minister Denis Manturov also did not respond

to requests for comment.

India is keen to cut its dependence on China, which dominates global supplies of several key minerals and has advanced mining and processing technology, and secure new overseas supplies to support its energy transition and infrastructure development.

New Delhi has signed critical minerals agreements with Argentina, Australia and Japan, and is in talks with Peru and Chile on broader bilateral agreements that also include critical minerals.

However, India has had lim-

ited success in securing overseas critical minerals assets and has so far signed only a single lithium exploration and mining project agreement, covering five blocks in Argentina in 2024.

India could also revisit Russian state nuclear corporation Rosatom's lithium exploration project in Mali if the political situation in the West African nation stabilised, one of the sources said. Earlier this year, Reuters reported that India withdrew from the Mali lithium project because of security concerns.

Third Everest death takes May toll of climbers to five

Reuters
Kathmandu

A Nepali Sherpa guide fell into a crevasse and died on Mount Everest for the third death in two weeks on the world's highest mountain, as climbers are undeterred by travel disruptions from the Middle East conflict, officials said yesterday.

Seasoned climbers from the Expedition Operators' Association of Nepal are expected to fix ropes on the route to the summit by the weekend, allowing climbers to start moving up if weather conditions are good, hiking officials said.

"Despite the Middle East conflict, which has affected travel, tourism and trekking, Everest continues to lure an increased number of climbers," said Himal Gautam, an official of Nepal's tourism department.

Nepal has opened more than 400 Himalayan peaks to climbers but the most popular number just over two dozen, including Everest, which is 8,849m (29,032ft) tall.

Authorities have issued 492 permits at a cost of \$15,000 each this climbing season from April to May for Everest, Gautam added, an increase from 478 in 2023, which in turn exceeded

the figures of the two subsequent years.

The latest death took to five the season's tally among Himalayan climbers in the cash-strapped South Asian nation dependent on aid, remittances and tourism, where climbing is a key source of income and employment.

Phura Gyaljen Sherpa, 21, died after slipping on the snow and falling into a crevasse near Camp III on Everest, located at about 7,200m (23,620ft), said Nisha Thapa Rawat, another tourism department official.

Another Nepali climber, Bijay Ghimire Bishwakarma, 35, died during an acclimatisation exercise at the mountain's Khumbu icefall, while 51-year-old Lakpa Dendi Sherpa died on his way to base camp early this month, hiking officials said.

In the last week American Johannesen Shelley, 53, died on Mount Makalu, the world's fifth tallest peak, at 8,463m (27,765ft), while David Ronbinek of the Czech Republic died on near-by Makalu II, which is 7,678m (25,190ft) high, officials said.

They gave no details. In April a towering block of ice, among smaller chunks, delayed by nearly two weeks the opening of the route to Everest's summit, stranding hundreds of climbers at base camp.

Sri Lanka ex-president grilled over Airbus bribery claims

AFP
Colombo

Anti-corruption investigators questioned Sri Lanka's former president Mahinda Rajapaksa (pictured) yesterday over allegations that he received kickbacks linked to an Airbus plane deal.

Rajapaksa, 80, faced questions for more than two hours from the Bribery Commission in Colombo, where thousands of supporters gathered outside the premises.

The probe centres on claims that funds from a multi-million-dollar deal involving European aircraft manufacturer Airbus were channelled to senior Sri Lankan officials.

A spokesman for Rajapaksa denied the allegations and the former leader has repeatedly dismissed corruption claims against him as politically motivated.

The former chief executive of SriLankan Airlines, Kapila Chandrasena, told investigators in March that he handed nearly half a million dollars in kickbacks to Rajapaksa, according to officials.

He was found dead at a relative's home on Friday, shortly before he was due to be re-arrested. The cause of his death has not yet been established.

Chandrasena, 61, was arrested in March and had been released on bail last week. His wife, who is also a co-ac-



used in the case, has reportedly fled the country.

A joint investigation by US, British and French authorities previously found Airbus had agreed to pay about \$16mn in bribes in Sri Lanka, with \$1.7mn routed to Chandrasena before the scandal was uncovered.

The payments were linked to a \$2.3bn deal for SriLankan Airlines to purchase 10 Airbus aircraft that required cabinet approval during Rajapaksa's presidency from 2005 to 2015.

According to submissions made in court, Chandrasena initially told investigators he had paid Rajapaksa 60mn rupees (\$461,000 at the time) in three instalments in 2013. He later retracted the statement, claiming it had been made under pressure.

SriLankan Airlines, once a flagship state carrier, has accumulated losses estimated at 596bn rupees, and repeated attempts to privatise the debt-laden airline have failed.

Protests erupt in India after key college test cancelled

Dozens of members of the student wing of India's opposition Congress party protested in New Delhi yesterday against the cancellation of a key undergraduate college entrance test after authorities discovered its questions had been leaked.

Here are some details. About 2.3mn students across India took the National Eligibility cum Entrance Test (NEET) on May 3 for admission to undergraduate medical programmes. The federal National Testing Agency scrapped the test yesterday, saying the process

could not be allowed to stand and a new date would be set. Visuals from news agency ANI showed dozens of protesters from the National Students' Union of India (NSUI) chanting slogans, with some also trying to jump police barricades. NSUI President Vinod Jakhar demanded "strictest possible action" against those involved in leaking the questions, and the resignation of Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan, saying protesters had no faith in the government. NEET questions had been similarly leaked in some parts of India in 2024, but the test was not re-run. (Reuters)



Police officers detain members of the Students' Federation of India, a student union, during a protest against the cancellation of National Eligibility cum Entrance Test, in New Delhi, yesterday. (Reuters)



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GULF TIMES

Investors say they want Trump and Xi to stay out of AI's way

Investors expect US President Donald Trump and his Chinese counterpart to keep trade tensions on the backburner when they meet in Beijing and say they are focused on the booming AI sector and whether the US will relax chip export restrictions.

This is in stark contrast with years of Chinese asset prices swinging wildly on trade and tariff headlines and is reflected most clearly in the yuan, which has been steadily rising for a year to reach a three-year peak. While thorny subjects like the US-Israeli war on Iran, Taiwan, rare earths and nuclear weapons may be discussed and major disagreements could dent market confidence, investors are presently betting on China's technology drive.

China's benchmark Shanghai Composite is trading at an 11-year high and export growth is powering ahead on a wave of AI-driven orders. Even a widening trade surplus does not make fund managers nervous about a fresh round of US tariffs and they have swung their portfolios behind China's artificial intelligence self-sufficiency drive.

"The tables have turned. There's little China is eager to discuss with Trump," said Yang Tingwu, vice general manager of Tongheng Investment, adding that Trump's unresolved war with Iran has weakened his hand. Yang has invested in China Mobile and China Telecom for exposure to their data-centre businesses.

The shift in market focus, with Trump due today for his first visit to China in nearly nine years, reflects the diminished brinkmanship in the US-China relationship since Trump and President Xi Jinping pressed pause on their trade war six months ago.

US courts have struck down much of Trump's initial tariff barriers. Trade data suggests Chinese goods are reaching the US anyway via Southeast Asia.

One of the key issues that will be closely watched is whether the US will relax chip export restrictions

And as the fallout from the Iran war strengthens China's push to shore up its supply chains, investors have also priced in US-China tension and bet on it spurring China's technology development.

"China has made great strides in technology, grown the new economy, expanded its global clout and increased its leverage in the global power rivalry," said Wen Xunneng, founder and CEO of Zhu Liu Asset Management.

He has been investing in AI infrastructure and expects

US-China relations to be stable at least until Xi makes an expected reciprocal visit to the US. "After Xi's visit to the US, the two countries may enter the next stage of rivalry, but now it's a relatively peaceful time," he said.

During Trump's first term and at the outset of his second, the yuan traded as a barometer of the bilateral relationship. Since the tariff storm was unleashed in April 2025, however, the yuan has been guided higher by booming exports and a belief in the market that authorities are comfortable with a stronger currency that is in contrast with a volatile dollar.

"The summit could be a tactical catalyst for CNY strength and an important marker in stabilising trade relations," Goldman Sachs analysts said in a note.

"(But) we think the case for a stronger CNY is more fundamental and longer-lasting beyond this week's events," they said, as China's external surplus drives the currency to a 12-month forecast of 6.5 to the dollar.

The expected attendance of top US business leaders at the summit has also raised hopes for deals spanning finance, agriculture, energy and aeroplanes, while some investors see an opportunity for China to push for peace in the Middle East.

"I'm hoping that maybe Trump can get Xi to put pressure on Iran to get the Strait of Hormuz open again and the oil flowing," said Jack Ablin, chief investment strategist at Cresset Wealth Advisors. But with expectations for a big announcement low, the fallback for most traders is to watch what has been moving markets and that has been the global AI boom.

Zeng Wanping, fund manager of Beijing Monolith Fund Management, said he is interested mainly in whether the US will allow more advanced Nvidia chips to be sold in China, which will pressure local producers. "The only thing worth monitoring is development around AI," he said. "This is the market's top focus, no other." — Reuters



Stung by Iran war, Trump looks to China visit in need of wins

By Mei Mei Chu, Antoni Słodkowski and Trevor Hunnicutt
Reuters

A year ago, US President Donald Trump predicted that towering trade tariffs would bring America's main economic rival to heel. He is headed to China this week with that ambition blunted by court rulings, narrowing his goals to a few deals on beans, beef and Boeing jets, and enlisting China's help to resolve his unpopular Iran war, political analysts say.

The modest expectations for Trump's May 14-15 meetings with Xi Jinping — the first since they paused a bruising trade war in October — underscore how Trump's bombastic approach has failed to deliver an advantage ahead of the talks, according to analysts.

Trump "kind of needs China more than China needs him," said Alejandro Reyes, a professor specialising in Chinese foreign policy at the University of Hong Kong.

"He needs a kind of foreign policy victory: a victory that shows that he is looking to ensure stability in the world and that he's not just disrupting global politics," Reyes added.

Since their last brief meeting at an airbase in South Korea where Trump suspended triple-digit tariffs on Chinese goods and Xi backed away from choking global supplies of rare earths, China has quietly sharpened its economic pressure toolkit aimed at Washington.

Trump, meanwhile, has been preoccupied fighting US court rulings against his tariffs and a war with Iran that has sapped his approval ratings ahead of November's midterm elections. This week's meeting in the Chinese capital will be a grander occasion, with the leaders set to hold a summit at the Great Hall of the People, tour Unesco-heritage site Temple of Heaven, dine at a state banquet and take tea and lunch together.

But the anticipated economic deliverables amount to a handful of deals and mechanisms to manage future trade, while

Trump and Xi will hold talks on May 14-15; Leaders seek to extend fragile trade truce; Trump wants Xi's help to end unpopular Iran war; Low expectations reflect Trump's struggles, analysts say



US President Donald Trump speaks to the press before walking to board Marine One as he departs from the South Lawn of the White House in Washington, DC, yesterday. President Trump said he was ready to discuss US arms sales to Taiwan during his visit this week to Beijing, as he suggested his personal chemistry with counterpart Xi Jinping would prevent a Chinese invasion of the island. Trump will bring along top US executives for a trip expected to focus heavily on the US president's hopes to ramp up trade. (PICTURES: AFP)

it remains unclear whether the leaders will even agree to extend their trade truce, officials involved in the planning said.

Trump will be joined by CEOs including Tesla's Elon Musk and Apple's Tim Cook, though the business delegation is smaller than when he last visited Beijing in 2017. Aside from trade, Trump said on Monday he will discuss arms sales to Taiwan and the case of jailed media tycoon Jimmy Lai with Xi. Families of two Americans imprisoned in China for more than a decade are also urging Trump to seek their release.

"We used to be taken advantage of for years with our previous presidents, and now we're doing great with China," Trump said. "I respect him (Xi) a lot, and hopefully he respects me."

ONE BATTLE AFTER ANOTHER

The mood music has changed dramatically since Trump declared in a Truth Social post in April 2025 that his tariffs would make China realise that the "days of ripping off" the United States

were over.

Those levies prompted Beijing to restrict exports of rare earths, brutally exposing the West's dependency on elements vital to the manufacturing of everything from electric cars to weapons, and eventually led to Trump and Xi's fragile truce.

Since then, Trump has faced countless other battles: capturing Venezuela's leader, threatening to annex fellow Nato member Greenland and waging a war on Iran that has plunged the Middle East into chaos and stoked a global energy crisis.

More than 60% of Americans disapprove of his Iran war, according to a Reuters/Ipsos survey last month. Now, Trump wants China to convince Tehran to make a deal with Washington to end the conflict. China maintains ties with Iran and remains a major consumer of its oil exports.

Matt Pottinger, who served as deputy national security advisor during Trump's first term, told a forum in Taipei last week that while China would like to see an outcome that weakens American

power it is not immune to the economic cost of a protracted conflict.

But Beijing will want something in return, and top of Xi's agenda is Taiwan, the democratically governed island claimed by China. While some fear a bargain that could embolden China to take Taiwan by force, even a nuanced change in Washington's wording would raise anxiety about the commitment of Taipei's most important backer that would reverberate across other US allies in Asia.

Wu Xinbo, a professor at Fudan University in Shanghai who serves on the policy advisory board of China's foreign ministry, said Trump should make clear that he "won't support independence or take actions that encourage a separatist political agenda".

'SUPERFICIAL CEASEFIRE'

China also wants the Trump administration to commit to not taking future retaliatory trade action such as technology export controls, and to roll back existing controls on chipmaking equipment and advanced memory chips, people briefed on the talks said.

And since last October, Beijing has been expanding its own economic leverage, such as enacting laws to punish foreign entities that shift supply chains away from China and tightening its rare earth licensing regime.

A majority of Americans (53%) now say the United States should undertake friendly co-operation and engagement with China, up from 40% in 2024, according to a survey by the Chicago Council on Global Affairs published in October.

So just keeping relations on an even keel and extending the trade war truce could be enough for Trump to claim a win. That leaves the main outcome likely to be "a superficial ceasefire that is largely to China's advantage," said Scott Kennedy of the Center for Strategic and International Studies think tank in Washington.



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EU takes aim at TikTok, Meta's 'addictive designs' for teens

Reuters
Brussels

The head of the European Commission yesterday called for more protections for children against the "addictive designs" of social media platforms like TikTok, Meta and X, raising the possibility of an age limit on teens accessing them. Europe is hardening its stance against social media, with nations from Norway and France to Turkey and Britain debating or rolling out legislation to ban or limit teenage social media use, looking to Australia's early move for inspiration.

"The question is not whether young people should have access to social media, the question is whether social media should have access to young people," Ursula von der Leyen, president of the EU's executive Commission, said in Copenhagen.

"Sleep deprivation, depression, anxiety, self-harm, addictive behaviour, cyberbullying, grooming, exploitation, suicide. Risks are multiplying fast." Von der Leyen said the Commission would target "addictive and harmful design practices" in its Digital Fairness Act (DFA), to be proposed towards the end of the year, while an expert panel was preparing advice on how to proceed.

"Without pre-empting the panel's findings, I believe we must



TikTok, Meta's apps are seen in the illustration. (Reuters/ File Photo)

consider a social media delay. Depending on the results, we could

The DFA would ban manipulative practices, addictive features and misleading influencer marketing on digital platforms.

Digital world risks are "the result of business models that treat our children's attention as a commodity," von der Leyen said, calling for strict limits on AI use in social media. "We are taking action against TikTok and its addictive design, endless scrolling, autoplay and push notifications," she said, adding: "The same applies to Meta, because we believe Instagram and Facebook are failing to enforce their own minimum age of 13."

Spokespeople at TikTok, Meta and X did not immediately re-

spond to requests for comment.

The new regulation will strengthen and expand the EU's Digital Services Act (DSA), which requires large platforms to do more to tackle illegal harmful content, von der Leyen said.

Under the DSA rules, the Commission is already investigating TikTok, X and Meta Platforms' Instagram and Facebook. It has been investigating X over possible risks from deploying Grok in the EU, including the spread of manipulated sexualised images. Yesterday, Europe's top court sided with Italy's telecoms watchdog against Meta saying it should compensate publishers for using snippets of their articles.



Russian President Vladimir Putin attends a meeting with Commander of the Russian Strategic Missile Forces Colonel General Sergei Karakayev via video link at the Kremlin in Moscow yesterday. (Reuters)

Kallas says weakened Putin gives 'opportunity' to end Ukraine war

AFP
Brussels

EU foreign policy chief Kaja Kallas yesterday said signs that Russian President Vladimir Putin's position is weakening could open a window to ending the war in Ukraine.

Putin over the weekend suggested that the war in Ukraine was "heading to an end" after more than four years of bloodshed. "What his statement really shows is that he's not in a strong position," Kallas said after a meeting with EU defence ministers.

"So I think there's an opportunity for ending this war"

Western and Ukrainian officials say that after a dire outlook last year, the tables in the conflict appear to be turning, with Moscow sustaining record casualties and Kyiv launching strikes on Russian oil facilities.

Kallas - a hawkish former prime minister of Estonia - has previously insisted that Putin does not seem interested in ending the war, and has been stringing US President Donald Trump along in his efforts to end fighting.

A US push to stop the conflict has largely fizzled in recent weeks,

as Washington has focused on its war with Iran.

Russia convinced Ukraine to join a three-day truce in recent days over Moscow's major holiday to mark victory during the World War II.

The move - and a decision to scale back a Red Square parade - appeared an admission from the Kremlin that it was scared of potential Ukrainian strikes.

Putin has also floated his long-time ally, former German chancellor Gerhard Schroeder, as a potential mediator between Russia and Europe over the Ukraine war.

But Kallas and other EU officials have rejected that suggestion.

Kremlin says no 'specifics' on ending Ukraine conflict

AFP
Moscow

The Kremlin said yesterday there was no concrete plan to end the Ukraine war, days after Russian leader Vladimir Putin suggested Europe's worst conflict since WWII could be winding down.

Moscow and Kyiv resumed attacks overnight after the end of a three-day ceasefire proclaimed by US President Donald Trump, which each side accused the other of violating.

After slamming Nato and wishing his forces a swift advance, Putin at the weekend said that he believed the war was "heading to an end", without elaborating.

Trump echoed this yesterday, saying the end of the war was "getting closer" and that he could potentially visit Russia this year.

Putin's words spurred confusion, with talks to end Moscow's offensive so far leading nowhere and the Russian leader showing no sign of backing down over his maximalist demands in Ukraine.

The Kremlin clarified there were "no specifics" about Putin's statement. "The president said that Russia remains open to contact and that work has been done in a trilateral format," Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov said.

"The accumulated groundwork in terms of the peace process allows us to say that the end is drawing near... But in this context, it is not possible at the moment to speak about any specifics," Peskov said.

Putin would only agree to meet Ukraine's President Volodymyr Zelensky outside of Russia if it were to sign a final peace deal, Peskov added.

The Russian leader made the remarks after a scaled-back Victory Day in Moscow - where nerves were high over the risk of a Ukrainian drone attack - and with Russians increasingly showing signs of war fatigue, hitting Putin's domestic approval ratings.

Ukraine said Russia ended the three-day ceasefire by launching more than 200 attack drones that damaged energy facilities and apartment buildings, killing at least four people across the country. One Russian strike on a residential building killed two people and seriously wounded a baby, who lost a leg, in Kryvyi Rig, Zelensky's home city, local authorities said. "After the end of the three-day partial ceasefire, Russia continues to kill and maim Ukrainians," said Zelensky, calling the strike on Kryvyi Rig "cynical".

Moscow's army announced Kyiv had also restarted its retaliatory strikes on Russia, saying its

air defence units had downed 71 Ukrainian drones after the ceasefire expired.

Ukrainian drones hit a train station in Russia's western Bryansk region, wounding two railway workers, regional governor Alexander Bogomaz said.

Local officials in the Ukrainian region of Dnipropetrovsk ordered the partial evacuation of families with children from parts of the frontline city of Nikopol.

"Russia must end this war, and it is Russia that must take the step toward a real, lasting ceasefire," Zelensky added.

The Kremlin, meanwhile, said it was Kyiv that must give in.

As is usual during the short-term truces throughout the four-year war, both sides accused each other of mass violations.

Negotiations on ending the war have so far led nowhere, largely sidelined by the Iran conflict.

Trump's ceasefire announcement however had raised some hope that US-led talks could be resumed. Russia's war against Ukraine has led to the deaths of hundreds of thousands of people and forced millions to flee their homes. Russia has repeatedly urged Ukraine to pull out of areas in the eastern Donbas region it still controls as a prerequisite of any peace deal.

Kyiv has rejected the demand.

Russia successfully tests new long-range missile

AFP
Moscow

Russia yesterday tested a new long-range missile capable of carrying nuclear warheads, months after the last treaty with the US limiting their atomic arsenals lapsed.

The ending of the New START agreement in February formally released the world's two largest nuclear powers from a raft of restrictions.

"This is the most powerful missile system in the world," claimed Russian President Vladimir Putin after receiving a report of a successful launch of Sarmat - an intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM).

He said the missile could carry a warhead more than four times more powerful than anything Western militaries possessed, adding that Sarmat would be on "combat duty" by the end of this year. Putin had repeatedly said the missile would be deployed by the end of the year since its first test in 2022, but those plans had yet to materialise.

Pavel Podvig, a senior researcher at the UN Institute for Disarmament Research, said the deployment of Russia's "largest missile" this year was realistic, but added it will not lead to a "significant change in the deterrent potential of Russia's

"This is the most powerful missile system in the world," claimed Russian President Vladimir Putin

strategic forces." The Kremlin said it had notified the US of the launch, the state news agency TASS reported.

Even though Moscow and Washington agreed to reestablish high-level military dialogue shortly after New START expired, there were no immediate signs of renewing or prolonging it. US President Donald Trump, who will be in Beijing today, has repeatedly pressed for a new treaty to include China, whose arsenal is growing but still significantly smaller than those of Russia or the US, but the Chinese government has publicly rejected the pressure.

Trump had been mostly silent on Russian calls to extend New START, which was signed in 2010 and imposed the last restrictions on Moscow and Washington after decades of agreements dating from the Cold War.

Both countries have repeatedly accused each other of failing to adhere to the agreement.

Sarmat, referred to as "Satan II" in Nato designation, is the first ICBM produced in post-Soviet Russia to be classed as "super heavy".

Putin said it was capable of travelling 35,000 kilometres (22,000 miles).

First Serbian joint military exercise with Nato

The first joint Nato-Serbia military exercises are under way in the Balkan country, the defence ministry said yesterday, marking a significant cooperation with a country the Alliance once bombed. Around 600 troops from Serbia, Italy, Romania and Turkey are taking part in the "NATO-Serbia" exercise, alongside military planners and observers from several Alliance countries, the ministry said in a statement.

It is the first military exercise conducted directly with Nato, which remains a sensitive subject in Serbia following the Alliance's 1999 air campaign against Yugoslavia during the Kosovo war.

Photographs released yesterday showed Serbian and Nato soldiers now standing side by side at a military training ground near Bujanovac in southern Serbia, alongside armoured vehicles from both forces.

The tactical exercise will run until May 23 under Nato's Partnership for Peace programme, which Belgrade said "respects Serbia's military neutrality".

"The cooperation is aimed at preserving peace and stability in the region," the ministry said. Serbia is one of the few Balkan countries not in the Alliance, with Belgrade insisting on a long-held policy of neutrality while enjoying close ties with both Nato and Russia. (AFP)

Cannes Film Festival opens, grappling with AI and Hollywood

AFP
Paris

Celebs and cinema A-listers landed in Cannes yesterday for the opening of the annual French festival where the dizzying speed of AI disruption and the absence of major Hollywood studios were top talking-points.

In the main Cannes competition, a total of 22 films are vying for the prestigious Palme d'Or prize for best film, which was won last year by the highly political Iranian movie "It Was Just an Accident" by Jafar Panahi.

The competition features a handful of historical dramas pondering the impact of authoritarianism and fascism, as well as others from arthouse heavy-hitters such as Spain's Pedro Almodovar, Japan's Hirokazu Kore-eda or Romania's Cristian Mungiu.

But as usual in the build up to the world's biggest festival, off-screen events have dominated the conversation, most notably the impact of artificial intelligence on jobs, Hollywood's decision to ghost the

event, and the under-representation of women.

Irish-Scottish screenwriter Paul Laverty, one of the nine-person Palme d'Or jury, took a clear shot at Hollywood in a press conference just hours before the screening of the opening film, French drama "The Electric Kiss". "Isn't it fascinating to see Susan Sarandon, Javier Bardem and Mark Ruffalo blacklisted because of their views in opposing the murder of women and children in Gaza?" Laverty said in regards to the stars who have publicly opposed Israel's war in Gaza. "Shame on Hollywood, people who do that," the Scottish-born writer, who was arrested last year at a pro-Palestine protest, added as fellow jury members Demi Moore and "Black Panther" star Isiah De Bankole looked on.

For years, activists have pushed European festivals to condemn Israel's war in Gaza, which left tens of thousands dead and devastated the territory - calls which have been resisted by organisers.

Cannes director Thierry Fremaux again declined to be drawn



People walking by a Yves Saint Laurent shop during the official ceremony of the Cannes Film Festival yesterday. (AFP)

into the debate in his opening remarks on Monday, insisting that neither he nor the festival should take political positions, while artists were free to express themselves. Fremaux came out strongly against AI and its effect on the industry, however, where job losses are mounting.

"What is certain... is that here in Cannes, we stand with the artists, we stand with the screenwrit-

ers and we stand with everyone in these professions, with actors and voice actors alike," he told reporters on Monday. Nonetheless, the festival said Monday that it had signed a multi-year sponsorship deal with social media giant and AI technology investor Meta.

Mark Zuckerbergs group is at the heart of a brewing controversy about the latest film from Oscar-winning "Traffic" director Steven

Soderbergh, which will premiere in Cannes.

Soderbergh partnered with Meta to obtain AI-generated video of late Beatles songwriter John Lennon and his wife Yoko Ono for his documentary "John Lennon: The Last Interview".

Thousands of French actors and filmmakers warned in an open letter in February that AI tools were "plundering" talent across the industry, comparing them to a "devouring hydra".

"There is nothing to fear (about AI) because one can never replace what true art comes from, because it comes from the soul," Moore, who attended Cannes in 2024 for "The Substance", told reporters.

Soderbergh is a rare Hollywood directing heavyweight in Cannes this year, with others such as Steven Spielberg and Christopher Nolan - hoped for by organisers - failing to appear on the programme.

The world's biggest film festival typically spotlights independent, arthouse cinema while relying on Hollywood to provide a dose of mass-market entertainment.

But no major US studio agreed

to launch a blockbuster this year, or at the Berlin International Film Festival in February, raising questions about why giants such as Universal, Disney or Warner are dodging European events.

"I really hope that the studios come back," Cannes director Fremaux said Monday, attributing their absence to scheduling issues and industry turmoil.

He stressed that American cinema was well represented, with "Paper Tiger" by James Gray starring Adam Driver, as well as "The Man I Love" by Ira Sachs featuring Rami Malek, in the main competition. And there will be no shortage of A-listers on the red carpets.

A late addition to the programme includes a cast reunion to mark the 25th anniversary of "The Fast and the Furious", with Vin Diesel, Michelle Rodriguez and Jordana Brewster set to appear on Wednesday.

Plane-mad legend John Travolta will bring some stardust when he unveils his directorial debut, "Propeller One-Way Night Coach", about a young boy's journey in the "golden age of aviation".

Cultural leaders to discuss art, heritage and identity at QM's podcast series

By Joey Aguilar
Doha

Qatar Museums (QM) will bring together leading voices from the country's art, museum, and heritage sectors for the "Evolution Nation Voices" podcast series, from May 16 to 18 at M7, featuring discussions on Qatar's evolving cultural identity and creative future.

The live podcast conversations, taking place at M7's Creative Hub, will feature representatives from Fire Station, the Museum of Islamic Art and QM's Cultural Heritage Protection department.

According to QM, the series will open on May 16 with "A Decade of Artistic Experimentation and Exchange," a conversation between Wael Shawky and Mikey Muhanna

marking Fire Station's 10-year milestone. The session will reflect on artistic experimentation, mentorship and institution-building in Qatar, while exploring how Fire Station has supported artists over the past decade.

The discussion will also examine the growing role of research-led artistic practice and the significance of international platforms such as Art Basel Qatar for artists working in the Arab region.

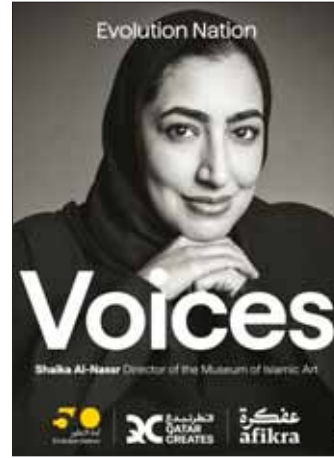
On May 17, Shaika al-Nassr and Dr Mounia Chekhab-Abudaya will lead a session titled "The Role of Museums in Shaping Cultural Identity."

QM noted that the conversation will focus on how museums influence the understanding and interpretation of culture through exhibitions, collections and curatorial decisions. It will also provide

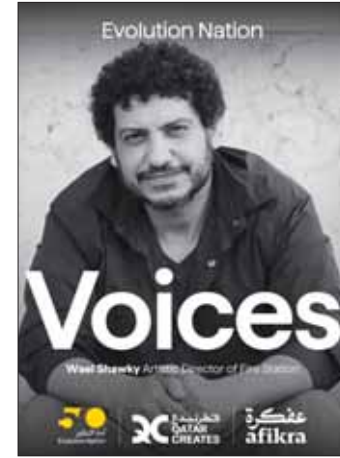


insight into how the Museum of Islamic Art balances scholarship, storytelling, accessibility and global relevance in its work.

The series will conclude on May



18 with "Preserving Heritage in a Rapidly Changing Nation," featuring Abdullatif Mohammed Al-Jasmi. Drawing on more than two decades of experience in heritage



protection and policy, al-Jasmi will discuss how institutions determine what heritage should be preserved and the methods used to safeguard it.

The session will address topics including legislation, adaptive reuse, international heritage frameworks and emergency planning, highlighting the challenges of sustaining heritage in a rapidly developing environment.

The podcast series forms part of Evolution Nation, QM's flagship cultural campaign celebrating major milestones in the country's cultural development, including the 50th anniversary of the National Museum of Qatar, the 20th anniversary of QM and the 15th anniversary of the Doha Film Institute.

Curated by Qatar Creates, the campaign reflects on Qatar's cultural journey over the past five decades, highlighting the institutions, artists and initiatives that have helped position the country as a regional and global hub for art, culture and creativity.



DIBF's 35th edition to feature 1.85mn books

By Tawfik Lamari
Staff Reporter

The 35th Doha International Book Fair (DIBF), organised by the Ministry of Culture, is set to kick off tomorrow (May 14) at the Doha Exhibition and Convention Centre (DECC), featuring broad participation from Arab and international publishing houses and a diverse cultural programme.

This year's fair will showcase over 1.85mn books, including 231,000 titles, with 520 publishing houses representing 37 countries participating. A total of 919 booths will be dedicated to exhibitors.

The event will also include the launch of 143 new books, 46 panel discussions, 69 workshops, and 46 seminars held on the main stage. The exhibition places great emphasis on children and young adults, dedicating five interactive zones to them. These zones include studios and educational and recreational activities. A mobile book bus will also be launched, visiting 12 schools to promote a culture of reading among students and encourage them to ex-

ploration and acquire knowledge.

A series of diverse cultural and intellectual events will be held alongside the exhibition, including seminars, lectures, and specialised workshops in various fields. These events will feature a distinguished group of intellectuals, writers, and academics from both within Qatar and abroad.

Among the highlights of this year's edition is the continuation of the DIBF Award for Qatari and international publishers and authors. Furthermore, there is broad participation from embassies, ministries, and Arab and international cultural institutions, reflecting the exhibition's prominent cultural standing at both the regional and international levels.

Fadaat Media Group is preparing to participate in the 35th DIBF with a distinctive pavilion that brings together Al-Araby2 TV, Al-Araby Al-Jadeed newspaper, and the Al-Araby Plus app. The pavilion will be open at the DECC from May 14 to 23.

The joint pavilion will offer a comprehensive interactive experience, allowing visitors to learn about the organisation's various

media platforms through visual content and digital experiences that reflect the evolution of modern media work. This will enhance the visitors' experience and bring them closer to the nature and conditions of media work. Content and materials produced by Al-Araby2 TV and Al-Araby Al-Jadeed newspaper will also be showcased, highlighting prominent coverage and distinguished field reports.

The pavilion will also introduce the organisation's platforms and give the public the opportunity to learn about modern media practices. The exhibition will feature a special live broadcast of the programme *Dhafaf* on Al-Araby2 channel, highlighting the exhibition, the most prominent participating publishing houses, and including interviews with participants and visitors. These events reflect Fadaat Media's commitment to enhancing direct interaction with the public and transforming the pavilion into a vibrant space that blends modern media with digital platforms, aligning with the DIBF's nature as a platform that unites knowledge and creativity.

Al Faisal Global Foundation to launch *Banu Tamim in Al-Andalus* at book fair

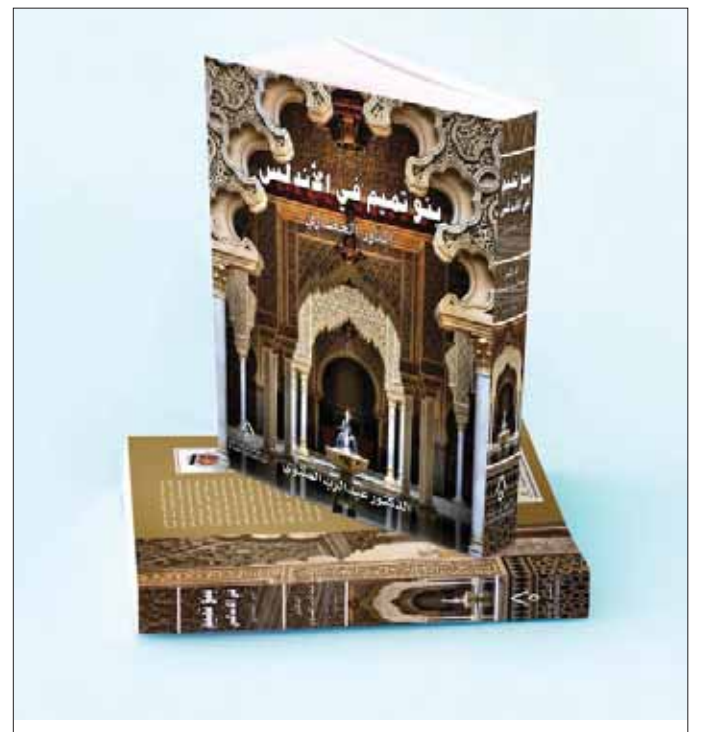
Al Faisal Global Foundation for Culture and Knowledge, in collaboration with Al Faisal Publishing House, will launch its latest publication, titled *Banu Tamim in Al-Andalus: The Civilisational Role*, at the Doha International Book Fair, (DIBF) scheduled from May 14 to 23.

The 662-page book is based on an academic study that utilises historical sources and references to document the arrival of the Banu Tamim tribe in Al-Andalus, their settlements, and their civilisational contributions to Qur'anic sciences, Hadith, and Jurisprudence (Fiqh). It also highlights the names of Banu Tamim scholars in Al-Andalus and their contributions to linguistics, grammar, literature, history, administration, governance, Shura (consultation), the judiciary, and other fields.

In his foreword to the book, HE Sheikh Faisal bin Qassim al-Thani, chairman of Al Faisal Global Foundation for Culture and Knowledge, stated: "In this valuable book, *Banu Tamim in Al-Andalus: The Civilisational Role*, I found an objective scientific study stemming from a civilisational vision far removed from boastfulness or tribalism. It aims to document the contribution of Arab tribes – including Tamim – in shaping the scientific and humanitarian landscape of Al-Andalus."

He added: "The book traces the significant role played by Banu Tamim in Andalusian civilisation in terms of knowledge, thought, administration, and culture, presenting names and evidence of their contributions across numerous sciences."

HE Sheikh Faisal emphasised that this book is not merely a historical narrative, but a call to



Banu Tamim in Al-Andalus: The Civilisational Role book.

draw inspiration from the values of knowledge and work upheld by our ancestors, to elevate our present and future. He expressed his hope that this work would serve as a qualitative addition to studies preserving the heritage of the Arab and Islamic nations and their role in the journey of human civilisation.

For his part, the author, Dr Abdul-Rab al-Sanawi, associate professor of History and Civilisation at Hodeidah University in Yemen, noted that the idea for this study began years ago when he sought to conduct limited research on a specific figure or family from the Banu Tamim groups in Al-Andalus. This was prompted by the frequent men-

tion of many prominent Andalusian figures and noble families tracing their lineage to this great Arab tribe, renowned for its deep-rooted history and significant historical events.

He added that, based on the data from the reviewed sources, it was concluded that the noble Arab tribe of Tamim deserved a dedicated volume to document the contributions of its figures across various fields throughout the stages of Andalusian history. He emphasised that it is a history rich in civilisational achievements that we take pride in as a nation, serving as a vital lesson for the nation today to learn what best serves its present and the future of its generations.

Qatar Museums to present art, heritage publications at DIBF

QNA
Doha

Qatar Museums (QM) has announced it will present a curated collection of new releases during the 35th Doha International Book Fair (DIBF).

The fair will take place from May 14 to 23, 2026 at the Doha Exhibition and Convention Centre, commonly known as DECC.

A Qatar Museums statement said the organisation's participation would give visitors the opportunity to explore a broad range of publications produced by the institution over the years, reflecting its efforts to document and share cultural narratives from Qatar, the wider region and beyond.

It added that it would showcase award-winning publications and exhibition catalogues that highlight the role of books in connecting audiences with art, culture and heritage.

The collection spans subjects including art, design, architecture, archaeology, sport, photography and children's literature.

Alongside newly released works, the Qatar Museums booth will also feature publications linked to some of the institution's most prominent exhibitions and initiatives, underscoring its continued investment

in research, storytelling and cultural exchange through publishing.

Visitors will also be able to explore bilingual and multilingual editions intended to make art and heritage more accessible to diverse audiences.

Mai al-Nesf, Head of Publications Shared Services and a published Qatari author, said the institution aimed to encourage learning and dialogue through its publications.

"Through our participation in the Doha International Book Fair, we are pleased to present publications that open new windows onto art and culture, providing the public with opportunities for learning, dialogue, and discovery," she said.

Among the titles being show-

cased are *Nested in Modernity: Moments from the History of Doha's Old Palace*, *A Seat at the Table: Food and Feasting in the Islamic World* and *Seeing Is Believing: The Art and Influence of Jean-Léon Gerome*.

The display will also include Splendours of the *Atlas: A Voyage through Morocco's Heritage*, *Manzar: Art and Architecture from Pakistan, 1940s to Today* and *Al Journal – Volume One*.

Since its establishment, Qatar Museums has developed an extensive archive of exhibition catalogues, scholarly works, research publications and children's books as part of its broader mission to make culture, creativity and knowledge accessible to local, regional and international audiences.



QNA
Doha

Qatar National Library (QNL) will take part in the 35th Doha International Book Fair (DIBF) with an interactive booth designed to offer visitors an engaging experience combining technology, storytelling and cultural heritage.

The fair will be held from May 14 to 23, 2026 at the Doha Exhibition and Convention Centre (DECC).

This year, the library will introduce its "Library4You" campaign, an extension of its existing "QNL4ALL" identity, aimed at highlighting how its services, programmes, spaces and experiences are tailored to meet the needs of a diverse public.

The booth will feature a range of interactive and technology-driven activities, including an

AI-powered experience called "Literary Twin" which analyses participants' reading preferences and storytelling styles before matching them with an author whose literary voice aligns with their personality. The experience concludes with an introduction to the library's "Book Match" service.

Visitors will also be able to take part in a "Free Knowledge Shopping Spree", a digital interactive activity allowing users to explore library services and build a personalised selection of resources while learning about free membership benefits.

For younger audiences, the "Dream Big: The Hero is You" activity will allow children to create personalised stories featuring their own names and photos, as part of the library's "Ready for School" initiative.

Alongside these experiences, the booth will highlight aspects

of Qatar and Arab cultural heritage, including a "Did You Know" history wall and a feature on the journeys of the Arab explorer Ibn Battuta. It will also showcase the library's Aerial Photography Collection, which contains high-resolution images captured during 55 flights between 1944 and 1983.

The exhibition will further present the library's wider offerings, including multilingual resources, heritage archives, children's programmes, learning initiatives, and dedicated facilities for people with special needs, such as a sensory room.

The library's mascot, Ramilly, will also make scheduled appearances throughout the event to add a family-friendly element.

QNL said it is inviting visitors to explore its booth, register for free membership, and download its mobile app for updates during the book fair.

