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Financial Results (Q1 2026)

Gross Written Premiums (GWP)

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QAR 3.2B

Net Profit

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Investment Income:

10% ▲

QAR 238M

Insurance Service Results:

70% ▲

QAR 130M

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SCAN TO SHOP

Deputy Prime Minister visits DIBF



HE the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of State for Defence Affairs Sheikh Saud bin Abdulrahman bin Hassan al-Thani interacting with participants at the ongoing Doha International Book Fair (DIBF) yesterday. **Page 12**

PM leads Qatar at first Europe-Gulf summit in Athens

Talks held with Finnish president, Kuwaiti PM

HE the Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman bin Jassim al-Thani participated yesterday in the inaugural summit of the Alliance for Europe-Gulf Geopolitical and Investments Summit, held in Athens, Greece.



The summit aims to expand co-operation in political, economic, investment and development affairs, and to strengthen partnerships between the Gulf Co-operation Council (GCC) states and the European Union.

US and Iran, and efforts aimed at reducing escalation to contribute to enhancing security and stability in the region.

On the sidelines of the summit, Finnish President Alexander Stubb met the Prime Minister.

HE the Sheikh Mohammed also met on the sidelines of the summit Kuwaiti Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmed Abdullah al-Ahmed al-Sabah. They discussed the bilateral co-operation and ways to support and strengthen it. They also discussed developments in the region, particularly those related to the ceasefire between the US and Iran, and efforts aimed at de-escalation to contribute to enhancing security and stability in the region.

At the outset of the meeting, HE the Prime Minister conveyed the greetings of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani to the Finnish president, wishing him good health and happiness, and the Finnish people continued progress and prosperity.

Sheikh Mohammed stressed the need for all parties to respond positively to the ongoing mediation efforts, which would pave the way for addressing the root causes of the crisis through peaceful means and dialogue, leading to a sustainable agreement that prevents renewed escalation.

The president entrusted Sheikh Mohammed with his greetings to the Amir, wishing His Highness good health and happiness, and the Qatari people continued progress and development.

During the meeting, they discussed co-operation and ways to support and strengthen it. They also discussed developments in the region, particularly those related to the ceasefire between the

Qatar eyes 20 climatetech unicorns by 2040

From niche sustainability drive to strategic diversification anchor

By Santhosh V Perumal
Business Reporter

Qatar's climatetech sector has steadily evolved from a niche sustainability drive into a strategic pillar of diversification and national resilience; even as the Iran war may appear to slow climate investment, but in reality its adoption is slated to accelerate.

Qatar's market scale, private-sector maturity and oil and gas dependence are challenges; thanks to institutional support and state-backed innovation programmes, climate innovation in Qatar, which abinitio focused on energy efficiency in the hydrocarbons sector, has now expanded into broader sustainability applications, including renewable energy integration, smart grids, carbon capture, desalination efficiency, biotechnology, and circular economy solutions.

Facing acute environmental pressures including extreme heat, water scarcity, and rising cooling demand, Qatar offers rising opportunities for innovation in district cooling, energy-efficient buildings, desalination, and AI (artificial intelligence)-driven energy management.

Emerging research also indicates growing potential for geothermal and automation-enabled clean energy systems adapted to the Gulf conditions.

International collaboration has played a decisive role in accelerating the growth of climatetech in Qatar, whose environmental conditions are a natural testing ground for green-tech solutions, and will continue to be central to the country's climatetech strategy.

Qatar Foundation-Rolls-Royce pact is a



Top 5 Global Clean Energy R&D

Qatar is positioning itself to be among the top five nations globally for clean energy research and development spend per GDP.



National Security Through Water Resilience

Threats to utilities have made sustainable desalination and water conservation technologies an urgent strategic priority.



AI-Driven Energy and Circular Solutions

Innovation is focusing on smart grids, industrial decarbonisation, and biotechnology to reduce reliance on hydrocarbon assets.



Launching the Climatetech Venture Fund

The QRDI Council and CACE are linking researchers and investors to accelerate the low-carbon transition.

• GT GRAPHICS

pointer to investing, developing, and scaling-up climatetech businesses, with a target to grow 20 unicorns by 2040, positioning Qatar among the top 5 countries globally investing in clean energy R&D or research and development (in terms of spend per gross domestic product).

Qatar Science and Technology Park (QSTP) has emerged as the central incubator for sustainability-focused entrepreneurship, offering accelerator programmes, venture funding, and industry partnerships.

It is in line with Qatar's vision to further promote the state's economic diversification, including legislative and commercial incentives to develop projects that preserve the environment and counter climate change.

Transnational giants as Shell, TotalEnergies, and Iberdrola Innovation Middle East have worked closely with Qatar-based entities to support startup accelerators, pilot projects, and research programs focused on sustainability.

QRDI (Qatar Research, Development and Innovation) Council has funded the Climate Action Center of Excellence (CACE) to launch Qatar's first dedicated Climatetech Venture Capital Investment Fund, linking entrepreneurs, researchers, and investors to advance sustainable technologies and drive Qatar's low-carbon transition.

Initiatives like the Shell.ai Futures Pitch Qatar Edition and the QSTP X TotalEnergies WaterTech Accelerator demonstrate the country's intent to attract local and international startups working on AI-enabled energy systems, water conservation technologies, and industrial decarbonisation solutions. **To Page 2**

Record 18th Jordan title for Nasser

Qatari driver Nasser Saleh al-Attiyah claimed victory in the 43rd Jordan International Rally, the third round of the 2026 Middle East Rally Championship (MERC), held in the Dead Sea region.



Al-Attiyah dominated the rally from start to finish, winning all 12 special stages across the Dead Sea and Jordan Valley areas to repeat the clean sweep he last achieved in 2016.

The victory marked al-Attiyah's second consecutive Jordan International Rally title and his record-extending 18th triumph in the event from 23 career appearances. It was also the 92nd MERC victory

of al-Attiyah's career as the Qatari star targets a record 21st Middle East Rally Championship title since first winning the championship in 2003, further cementing his status as the most successful driver in the history of the series. **Sport Page 4**

Summer diving season brings adventure, ocean awareness

Diving ambassador urges preparation as Qatar's summer sea activities expand

By Joey Aguilar
Staff Reporter

As temperatures climb across Qatar and the Gulf region, the country's marine season is returning with renewed energy, drawing divers, swimmers and beachgoers back to the sea for a summer of exploration, recreation and underwater adventure.

But alongside the excitement, diving professionals are also stressing the importance of preparation, safety and environmental responsibility before heading into the water.

Professional Association of

Diving Instructors (Padi) master instructor and diving ambassador Khaled Zaki told the *Gulf Times* that scuba diving in Qatar has evolved into more than just a recreational activity. It has become a lifestyle that combines sport, social connection and appreciation for the marine environment.

"Diving allows people to disconnect from daily stress and reconnect with nature," says Zaki, noting that the summer season offers ideal opportunities to discover marine life and enjoy outdoor activities with family and friends.

He pointed out that proper preparation is one of the most im-



Khaled Zaki says proper preparation is one of the most important factors for a safe and enjoyable diving season.



portant factors for a safe and enjoyable diving season, particularly during summer. Divers are advised

to inspect all equipment carefully before entering the water, including regulators, buoyancy control

devices (BCDs), tanks and other essential gear.

He adds that boats and vehicles used for beach trips or diving expeditions should also be serviced and checked thoroughly to avoid breakdowns during long journeys.

Physical fitness also plays a major role in underwater safety, says Zaki. Maintaining good sleep habits, staying hydrated and engaging in regular cardio exercises such as swimming, walking or treadmill workouts can significantly improve stamina and reduce fatigue while diving.

"In the Gulf's summer conditions, divers can become tired quickly because of the heat and humidity, but good preparation and physical readiness make the experience safer and much more enjoyable," he added. **To Page 2**

Qatar reiterates firm support for Palestinians in Taawon meeting

QNA
Doha

Qatar participated in the annual General Assembly meeting of the Taawon Welfare Association yesterday via videoconferencing. HE 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 at the meeting, HE al-Misnad referred to the directive issued in 2023 by His Highness the Amir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani to provide medical treatment for 1,500 wounded Palestinians and sponsor 3,000 orphans from the Palestinian people in the Gaza Strip.

The Minister of State for International Cooperation expressed her pleasure to be participating in the annual General Assembly meeting of the Taawon Welfare Association alongside this distinguished lineup of Palestinian national figures from Palestine and the diaspora, who have supported and led the association over the

past 42 years. She praised their role in carrying out the association's mission and advancing the capabilities of the Palestinian people, preserving their heritage and identity, supporting their vibrant culture, and building civil society to strengthen Palestinians' resilience on their land, all while upholding institutional values such as national commitment, independence, and professionalism.

She renewed Qatar's firm stance regarding the Palestinian cause being the Arab and Islamic worlds' central issue and that achieving a just and comprehensive peace begins with the two-state solution and the establishment of an independent Palestinian state along the June 4, 1967 borders, with East Jerusalem as its capital, while guaranteeing the right of return for refugees in accordance with international law and international legitimacy resolutions.

Through its institutions and international forum presence, Qatar continues to support the brotherly Palestinian people, strengthen their resilience, and preserve their national unity, HE the Minister of State for International Cooperation said. Despite the ongoing aggression and



HE Dr Maryam bint Ali bin Nasser al-Misnad

displacement endured by the Palestinian people in the Gaza Strip and the practices taking place in Jerusalem and the West Bank aimed at altering the situation on the ground and imposing a fait accompli that undermines peaceful solutions, HE the Minister said, Qatar's position remains steadfast in supporting the le-

gitimate rights of the Palestinian people, foremost among them their right to self-determination and the establishment of their independent state.

The Minister of State for International Cooperation also affirmed that Qatar will continue to support the Palestinian people, especially the most affected groups: children, women, the sick, the elderly, and persons with disabilities. In this regard, she highlighted the contribution of Qatari institutions, particularly the Qatar Fund for Development in establishing cooperation and strategic partnerships with the Taawon Welfare Association since 2015, especially in the field of social care for orphans.

Concluding her remarks, HE al-Misnad said the Taawon Welfare Association is an outstanding example of a national institution that safeguards the interests of the homeland through the expertise and dedication of its members, undergoing constant revival and development to ensure continuity and sustainability in support of the Palestinian people, while not compromising their principles and core values.

Qatar eyes 20 climatetech unicorns by 2040

From Page 1

The Qatar Edition of Shell.ai Futures Pitch 2025 competition, held for the first time in Doha through a strategic partnership between QSTP and Qatar Shell Research and Technology Centre has recognised three pioneering startups for their innovative digital energy solutions. Qatar, which can leverage its expertise in energy systems, offers immense potential to be regional leader in climatetech innovation, on growing global demand for decarbonisation technologies, sustainable infrastructure, and climate adaptation solutions.

The sector's prominence has risen more than ever, especially after threats to water desalination plants that many regional governments now view climatetech as part of the national security and economic resilience than simply environmental policy.

The Middle East crisis has rather exposed the vulnerabilities, posing short-term operational and investment-related hurdles; even as it reinforces the importance of decentralised renewable energy systems, water security technologies, and climate-resilient infrastructure.

Investments in renewable energy, battery storage, smart grids, water security technologies, carbon capture, and AI-enabled infrastructure management are slated to accelerate as they have not only become urgent strategic priorities but also the region seek to reduce dependence on vulnerable hydrocarbon assets.

The conflict has underscored risks to desalination facilities and critical utilities, creating strong demand for sustainable water technologies and resilient urban infrastructure across the Gulf. In the short-term, supply chain disruptions remain a concern as many climatetech firms depend on imported components like solar panels, batteries, semiconductors, and advanced industrial equipment. Geopolitical tensions, shipping delays, and rising logistics costs have temporarily increased project expenses and slowed down implementation timelines across the region.

Long-term potential far outweighs short-term woes; Qatar's future climatetech success will likely depend on its ability to commercialise research, scale startups regionally, and balance energy leadership with sustainability commitments in an increasingly carbon-conscious world. Qatar has all the ingredients – capital, infrastructure and strategy – to become an international laboratory for climate resilience innovation.

Summer diving season brings adventure, ocean awareness

From Page 1

Zaki highlighted seasonal hazards that beachgoers and divers should be aware of, including jellyfish, which can appear unexpectedly in Gulf waters during the hotter months. Wearing rash guards or lycra suits can help protect the skin while increasing comfort in the water, he said, adding that carrying jellyfish sting cream or vinegar is a practical precaution during beach outings, he added.

The Padi master instructor also stressed the importance of walking carefully barefoot on the sand, noting that rocks and hidden objects on crowded beaches could cause injuries. Communication and teamwork underwater remain equally important, according to Zaki. Divers are encouraged to conduct buddy checks before every dive,



attend proper dive briefings and maintain contact with dive partners and groups before and after entering the water. "Good communication underwater increases both safety and confidence. Divers should never rush or overexert themselves, especially during summer dives," says Zaki.



Checking weather forecasts and tidal conditions before planning beach or diving trips is another key safety measure. With weather conditions changing quickly during summer, Zaki recommends using mobile applications to monitor tides and sea conditions to avoid unexpected currents or unsafe situations.

Hydration is also essential in Qatar's extreme temperatures. Zaki advises divers and beach visitors to drink enough water and fresh juices throughout the day and to carry sunscreen, particularly for children spending long hours outdoors. It is learnt that the growing popularity of underwater photography is also changing the diving experience. Affordable, high-resolution underwater cameras are allowing divers to document marine life and share their experiences with others, helping promote appreciation for Qatar's coastal environment. For non-divers and families visiting beaches, many of the same safety rules apply. Zaki warned parents to remain cautious of rip currents, especially when children are using inflatable toys in open water. Strong currents can pull

inflatables away from shore within seconds if left unattended. Beach visitors driving on sand dunes or remote coastal areas should also understand basic four-wheel-drive techniques, including reducing tyre pressure before driving on soft sand. Without proper preparation, vehicles can easily become stuck, turning a relaxing outing into a stressful experience. Zaki also underlined the importance of protecting Qatar's beaches and marine ecosystems during the busy summer season. He encouraged visitors to collect their waste, use trash bags, and dispose of litter properly in the designated bins available along many beaches. "Keeping the beaches clean protects the environment and ensures everyone can continue enjoying these places in the future," he says.

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Naseem Medical Centre Al Khor Redefines Family Healthcare with "All Day, Every Day" Multi-Specialty Access



Naseem Healthcare has announced a major expansion of services at Naseem Medical Centre Al Khor, introducing comprehensive specialty, super specialty, and aesthetic healthcare services under a new "All Day, Every Day" operational model.

Strategically located in one of Qatar's fastest-growing family communities, the centre aims to serve residents across Al Khor, Al Thakheira, Simaisma, Ras Laffan, and the Al Bayt Stadium area with uninterrupted access to quality healthcare. The model was officially announced by Mr. Abdulaziz Ahmed Al-Sayed, Director of Municipal Control Department and Mr. Saeed Hamad Al-Hajri, Director of Technical Affairs Department on behalf of Mr. Abdullah Ibrahim Al-Sada, General Manager of Al-Khor and Al-Thakheira Municipality and Mr. Abdullah Muqallad Al-Muraikhi, General Manager of Al-Khor Club and Member of the Municipal Council for the Al-Khor District.

The event was presided over by Mr. Babu Shanavas, GM Operations and HR and Dr. Munir Ali Ibrahim, GM Corporate Relations of Naseem Healthcare.

With extended accessibility including Friday operations, Naseem Medical Centre Al Khor is positioning itself as one of the most preferred healthcare destinations in North Qatar for families, working professionals, industrial employees, and residents seeking reliable medical care close to home.

The expansion brings together a wide range of specialties and super specialties under one roof, enabling guests to access consultations, diagnostics, preventive care, chronic disease management, pediatrics, gynecology, orthopedics, dermatology, internal medicine, dental care, ENT, gastroenterology,

cardiology, pulmonology and advanced specialist treatments in dentistry, ophthalmology, and physiotherapy with greater convenience and reduced waiting time. The centre's strengthened aesthetic services division further enhances its holistic healthcare approach by offering modern cosmetic and wellness solutions including skin treatments, laser procedures, anti-aging solutions, and advanced aesthetic consultations delivered by experienced professionals in a safe clinical environment. To better meet the communication and cultural needs of the growing community in Al Khor, the centre has also expanded its medical team with more doctors from Arabic and Asian communities across most departments, ensuring greater comfort, convenience, and personalized care for guests from diverse backgrounds.

"Healthcare needs do not follow schedules. Families today seek dependable access, convenience, and continuity of care. With all specialties and super specialties now available all day, every day, including Fridays, Naseem Medical Centre Al Khor is evolving into a complete healthcare destination for the Al Khor community. As demand continues to grow for family healthcare in Al Khor, the centre's enhanced operational model is expected to significantly benefit residents across the region", said Mohammed Miandad VP, CMD 33 Holdings and MD Naseem Healthcare.

Known for its guest-centric care, advanced medical infrastructure, and multidisciplinary expertise, Naseem Medical Centre Al Khor continues to strengthen its role in supporting Qatar's growing healthcare landscape while making quality medical services more accessible than ever before.

Season's agriculture yield 'the best in years' thanks to government support

By Ayman Adly
Staff Reporter

The 2025-26 agricultural season is considered the strongest over recent years due to the improved government support programmes, stronger marketing channels, and higher production levels in spite of the weather-related challenges, according to local farm managers and owners.

They noted that the agricultural coupon support system helped reduce nearly 40% of the production costs by allowing growers to freely choose seeds, fertilisers, and pesticides from the suppliers that best suited their quality requirements. Some local farm representatives expressed their appreciation for the role of the central market and Mahaseel in supporting local produce, noting that purchases of local vegetables increased by 30% compared to the previous seasons.

However, they said heavy rains and weather changes in March caused significant damage to some greenhouses, prompting calls for additional support to the affected farms.

Local farm owners urged the authorities to expand agricultural support for the next season to include water desalination supplies, technical production materials, and additional agricultural ploughs, while stressing the need to distribute seeds well before the start of the planting season.

Farm owner Nasser Ali al-Kuwari said Qatar's agricultural sector has witnessed remarkable development in the recent years thanks to government backing.

He noted that the current season delivered positive production and marketing results despite climate-related challenges and the storms that caused some damage to the greenhouses.

Al-Kuwari highlighted the flexibility offered by the coupon system and called for broader support covering water desalination and other technical agricultural needs.

He added that local agricultural output in some crop categories has

increased by 50-60%, reflecting the sector's rapid growth.

Farm manager Eng. Saber al-Dahmani said the season saw several positive developments in agricultural support and production supplies, although challenges remain, particularly the supply quota system imposed by Mahaseel.

He said that while the coupon system provided ongoing support throughout the season, many farms still had to purchase 60-70% of their production inputs independently due to the insufficient quantities and the high cost of fertilisers.

Another farm owner, Ali Nouh al-Mutawa, stressed the importance of supporting greenhouse maintenance, describing it as one of farmers' priorities for the next season.

He said maintenance costs for fans, pumps, cooling panels, and plastic covers have become a major financial burden, with repair expenses sometimes reaching half the value of the greenhouse itself after three years.

Al-Mutawa called for earlier seed distribution and faster access to agricultural plows to help farm-



ers better prepare for the season.

Farm supervisor Eng. Mohamed Mousa said that the 2025-26 season recorded around 20% growth in production compared to last year, making it the best season in terms of support programmes.

He confirmed that the coupon system significantly reduced op-

erational expenses and praised the availability of seeds and fertilisers.

Mousa also commended the role of the central market and Mahaseel in absorbing larger quantities of local vegetables, while urging an increase in procurement quotas next season to match the growing production capacity of local farms.



Qatar's summer calendar turns the season into vibrant hub of activity

By Shaima Sheriff
Staff Reporter

Despite rising temperatures, Qatar's summer is unfolding as a vibrant season of events, with national campaigns and curated experiences creating a safe, engaging environment for families, residents, and visitors.

Qatar is redefining the summer experience, with an expanding calendar of events and initiatives positioning the country as a dynamic seasonal destination despite the region's rising temperatures.

Driven by co-ordinated efforts from government entities, Visit Qatar, and the wider hospitality sector, the country has introduced a diverse programme designed

to enhance public engagement while prioritising safety, comfort and accessibility.

At the centre of this seasonal push is Visit Qatar's

"Hala Summer" campaign, running from April to September, complemented by the "Summer is Free" initiative, which offers a range of family-friendly incentives and experiences aimed at making summer more accessible and engaging.

Together, these campaigns reflect a strategic effort to transform the traditionally quieter season into a period of sustained activity.

According to Qatar Calendar, May marks the beginning of a packed programme that reinforces Qatar's positioning as a leading summer destination.

From major cultural events, such as the

Doha International Book Fair 2026 (DIBF 2026) to high-profile sporting fixtures, including the Amir Cup Final, the calendar reflects a deliberate effort to cater to varied audiences.

Family-focused entertainment remains a key pillar of the programme.

Events such as Fontana Circus at Hyatt Plaza, Eid al-Adha activations across multiple venues, and themed experiences like "Summer Splash" at Meryal Waterpark Beach featuring popular global characters highlight a strong emphasis on engaging younger audiences and families.

At the same time, cultural and artistic offerings continue to shape the season.

Exhibitions across Qatar Museums (QM), alongside concerts, theatre productions and educational workshops, provide

diverse opportunities for engagement.

Seasonal markets, such as Torba Market at The Pearl Island further contribute to a community-focused atmosphere.

Amid ongoing regional uncertainty, the scale and consistency of these initiatives underscore a broader commitment to maintaining stability and ensuring a safe and welcoming environment.

Event planning and public messaging continue to prioritise visitor comfort, accessibility and crowd management.

As the country moves into the peak summer period and the Eid holidays, the breadth of programming signals a shift in how the season is experienced.

Rather than slowing down, Qatar's summer is evolving into a time defined by connectivity, curated experiences and



According to Qatar Calendar, May marks the beginning of a packed programme that reinforces Qatar's positioning as a leading summer destination.

PICTURE: Shaima Sheriff

community engagement, reinforcing its appeal as an active and resilient destination in the region.

DFI launches Atlas of Cinematic Affinities

The Doha Film Institute (DFI) has launched its new publication, *Atlas of Cinematic Affinities: 15 Years of Doha Film Institute*, a book documenting the collective cinematic journeys of independent filmmakers from the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region and beyond.

The title reflects the essence of the publication, with the atlas mapping relationships and distances, while cinematic affinities highlights the shared influences, recurring motifs, and creative connections linking filmmakers across languages, geographies, and generations.

The publication traces these connections through a constellation of storytelling that transcends borders.

The book features two key design elements: a fully bilingual Arabic-English format in which language itself becomes a visual and structural component, and a design inspired by the rhythm of moving images, giving the publication a distinctly cinematic character beyond the printed page.

DFI chief executive Fatma Hassan al-Remaihi stated that the publication represents a living record of a generation of filmmakers and the journeys that shaped their creative voices.

She added that the book documents the creative process in an honest and spontaneous way, preserving not only the films themselves but also the ideas, influences, and emotions behind them.

Al-Remaihi noted that the publication was developed during a period marked by major regional and



global transformations and reflects a generation of filmmakers shaped by complex histories and lived experiences.

She said that alongside Qatar's wider investment in culture, education, and innovation, the DFI has continued supporting filmmakers exploring themes of identity, memory, resistance, and future possibilities, contributing to a cinematic legacy engaged with both personal and collective narratives.

Editor Zaina Bseiso said the concept behind the *Atlas of Cinematic Affinities* emerged from a desire to highlight the often-overlooked moments within a filmmaker's creative journey.

She said that while completed films are celebrated publicly, the questions, inspirations, challenges, experiments, and research that shape the final work are the focus of the publication.

Bseiso added that the book was designed as an immersive experience driven by emotional resonance, bringing together interconnected visual and conceptual elements to create what she described as a collective cinematic moment.

The publication received more than 8,000 pages of submissions from filmmakers associated with DFI-supported projects across more than 80 countries.

According to the DFI, the result is both a curated archive and a design object reflecting a wide range of cinematic voices, themes, and approaches, while preserving the emotional depth behind the stories featured in the book. - QNA

Qatar Rail, PHCC to host awareness event

Qatar Railways Company (Qatar Rail), in collaboration with the Primary Health Care Corporation (PHCC), is organising the third edition of the "Journey Toward Health" awareness event at Al Sadd Station at the Doha Metro on May 18-19, coinciding with "World Family Doctor Day".

The event is part of Qatar Rail's corporate social responsibility (CSR) strategy, which aims to deliver a range of community initiatives that strengthen engagement with the public across the Doha Metro network.

From time to time, Qatar Rail hosts a variety of public activities as part of its "Metro Events" series, held across Doha Metro stations throughout the year, within its ongoing efforts to turn metro stations into attraction points and destinations for different segments of the community.

The "Journey Toward Health"




A file picture of a previous 'Journey Toward Health' awareness event.

event, hosted at Al Sadd Station on the Gold Line of the Doha Metro, will offer the public free medical consultations and check-ups, in addition to activities and the distribution of gifts and awareness

booklets to encourage customers to adopt a healthy lifestyle.

For the first time since its launch, this year's edition will also offer medical consultations on mental health.



Al Jazeera Exchange Company

According to Qatar Central Bank regulations, Al Jazeera Exchange Company would like to inform its valued clients listed below that their remittances remain unclaimed by the beneficiaries till date. Therefore, kindly visit the company's main office located on Al Sadd Street within one month to claim the respective amounts.

Please note that after this notice period, any unclaimed amounts will be transferred to the account of M/s General Authority of Minor Affairs as per Qatar Central Bank instructions. Al Jazeera Exchange cannot be held responsible thereafter.

Contact No: 44492888 / M:77525287

Date	Ref. No.	Remitter's Name	Date	Ref. No.	Remitter's Name
2015-08-11	0041081500174	SHAMOL CHANDRA DAS K CHANDRA DAS	2016-02-26	00126021600050	AKILA SAMPATH S SURIYA
2015-08-15	002150815000501	MOHAMMAD SHAH EMRAN	2016-02-27	004270216000525	MOHAMED YOUSUF M RIVAS
2015-08-27	002270815000418	ABU BAKKAR SIDDIK MD SAMAD	2016-02-27	004270216000563	ASLEEN MOHAMED THAMBY
2015-09-03	004030915001024	SHAMOL CHANDRA DAS K CHANDRA DAS	2016-03-01	00501031600164	MIRIAM FABRE MANALO
2015-12-03	004031215000001	MD BELAYET HOSSAIN	2016-03-02	00402031601005	AL ESTUABA TRADE COMTCO
2015-12-16	00161215000375	MAY ANN ZABALA MARAMBA	2016-03-03	00503031600220	ROMULO PRADO FERRER
2015-12-16	005161215001001	VENUS CHARENE PENASO	2016-03-03	00503031600255	NELSON REDULLA EMPERADOR
2015-12-17	004171215000213	NORHANE GABRIEL RADTO	2016-03-04	00204031600155	VJAYAKUMAR SYLVESTER
2015-12-19	00419121500578	ALI SALAH ANWAD ABOUHAMED	2016-03-04	00204031600039	BISHUN CHAUHAN
2015-12-19	00519121500206	JERBY FABIE CUNTAPAY	2016-03-05	00405031600463	MUTAHER ALI ROMU ALI
2015-12-19	004191215000348	KHALED ALKHALAF	2016-03-05	00405031600194	ALLA OSMAN ABDALGADER ALI
2015-12-20	001201215002930	AMADO JR EUGENIO	2016-03-06	00506031600017	MUHAMMAD FAZIL MUGHAL
2015-12-22	005221215000033	SOLIMAN SELMY	2016-03-08	00208031600046	JUVIE MISTA CAPONES
2015-12-23	00523121500294	CZARINA AMOROSO MIRANDA	2016-03-15	00415031600309	AHMED ALI H S SAAD
2015-12-27	0052121500146	RICKY DELVINO BORRE	2016-03-15	00215031600054	JIMBOY TOLENTINO DARADAR
2015-12-29	002291215000404	PARANTHAMAN PONNATHURAI	2016-03-16	00416031600179	SEYED ABBAS ALI AJMAL KHAN
2016-01-02	00302016000169	THASSANAI SRINAM	2016-03-17	004170316000371	MOBARAK HAZI ANOWAR HOSSAIN
2016-01-02	00302016000170	THASSANAI SRINAM	2016-03-21	002210316000516	MOHAMED ELSHAHAT ALSAYED
2016-01-04	00204016000293	MD SHAHID HUSAIN	2016-03-30	002030316000417	ABDULLAH HEAL MAMUN
2016-01-08	00208016000805	PAPPU YADAV	2016-04-02	00402041601040	GOSANDUN JAYAWARDENA
2016-01-09	00409016000103	VITTYATIL MADAVAN BABU	2016-04-02	00102041600491	ADEL RAJA MOSTAFA
2016-01-09	00209016000957	ROMMEL TEFORA SANTOS	2016-04-02	00402041600339	DANDEY CANTAGO HEYRANA
2016-01-10	0010016000314	HAFEZ ABDUL RASHEED M Y	2016-04-04	00404041600080	ALI ERKKARA
2016-01-12	00112016000087	SUKHVEER SINGH DARSHANSINGH	2016-04-04	00104041600197	REEM ABDEL HADI SAED A AL HAJRI
2016-01-15	00215016000598	SURENDRAN KRISHNAN	2016-04-05	00305041600273	THASSANAI SRINAM
2016-01-17	00217016000400	MANOJ VERMAN RAM	2016-04-06	00606041600264	ARIJUN KUMAR SINGH
2016-01-17	00317016000096	THASSANAI SRINAM	2016-04-06	00606041600277	RASANA YAKAM KANAPATHI RASATHURAI
2016-01-20	00220016000320	UMAR ALI ALLAHBAKSHI	2016-04-06	004060416001030	RAMY MAHMOUD RASHAD MOHAMED ISMAIL
2016-01-21	00421016000430	MOHAMMAD MOHAMMED HASSAN			
2016-01-27	00527016000032	MELJOHN LENTEJAS	2016-04-08	00508041600115	ANGELINA CAMACHO SANGCAP
2016-01-28	00428016000343	TAJ AUDDIEN	2016-04-08	00508041600410	QATAR FUEL COMPANY
2016-01-29	00429016000327	SREEDHARAN CHATHOTH KANDY	2016-04-09	00409041600278	SEYED ABBAS ALI AJMAL KHAN
2016-01-29	00529016000123	MARIEL CANARES	2016-04-15	00515041600111	PHILIP JOHN
2016-01-31	00431016000579	MAHA RASHID M A AL MARRI	2016-04-15	00415041600184	MODERN MANPOWER RECRUITMENT/ NINEVEH SABAYO DEL VALLE
2016-02-04	00404021600296	MD SUHEL AHMED			
2016-02-05	00405021600195	KODOR ALI BAHAR ALI	2016-04-18	00118041600090	ASHISH KUMAR PATEL
2016-02-06	00106021600380	GREMHEL TABBILAS RAMIREZ	2016-04-20	004200416000474	MARLY PORAS QUITORIO
2016-02-06	004060216000961	GUNNAYA MEESALA	2016-04-21	00121041600016	JOANN FUENTES NAZARENO
2016-02-09	00309021600222	SHEGU PACKER ABDUL KADER	2016-04-23	004230416000491	RASHID SAEED H A AL SHAHWANI
2016-02-11	00110216000104	DHARMENDRA KUMAR CHANDRA DEV SINGH	2016-04-25	002250416000397	JEEVANANDA JAVASINGHE ARACHCHIGE
2016-02-11	00310216001888	BAWAGANI HASAN MOHAMMED	2016-04-25	002250416000036	SHRAWAN KUMAR BANDIT
2016-02-12	00411021600183	HEBA AHMED HAMED SHAKER AHMED	2016-04-26	00226041600295	REDA ABDELWAHEH SALEEM
2016-02-12	00512021600033	MARC YVESON BONSOLO VILLANUEVA	2016-04-27	00427041600259	MOHAMMED IQBAL PODUVATH
2016-02-17	00417021600054	ABDUL SAMAD	2016-04-28	00328041600207	KUNARASA KRISHNAPILLE
2016-02-21	004210216000558	ASLEEN MOHAMED THAMBY	2016-04-28	00128041600232	DAPHYA FACUN RAJAVEL

Israel hits south Lebanon after ceasefire extension

AFP
Beirut

Israel launched a massive series of airstrikes on southern Lebanon yesterday, despite an extension of the truce between the two countries.

Israel says it is targeting Hezbollah but the strikes were preceded by an evacuation warning covering nine villages.

And the continuing bombardment has only increased scepticism about the truce among the Lebanese driven from their homes in the south.

Lebanon's state-run National News Agency (NNA) reported strikes on more than two dozen villages yesterday, including one over 50km from the border.

It also reported a new exodus of residents towards the southern city of Sidon and the capital Beirut.

On Friday, the two countries agreed to extend a ceasefire, which began on April 17, by another 45 days.

UN chief Antonio Guterres said yesterday that he "welcomes" the extension and "urges all actors to fully respect the cessation of hostilities".

Despite the ceasefire, Israel continues to conduct strikes in Lebanon, and its forces are occupying territory near the border.

Hezbollah, meanwhile, regularly claims attacks on northern Israel and against the Israeli military in southern Lebanon.

Israeli attacks since the start of the war have killed more than 2,900 people in Lebanon, including more than 400 since the truce took effect, according to Lebanese authorities.

Israel has also reported the deaths of 19 soldiers in southern Lebanon since fighting with Hezbollah erupted.

The latest strikes come after envoys from Israel and Lebanon held negotiations in Washington, following the first direct talks in decades last month between the two countries, which do not have diplomatic relations.

They agreed to extend the ceasefire.

Iran-backed Hezbollah opposes the negotiations and claimed an attack yesterday against Israeli troops in the Lebanese town of Khiam.

The group justified their action by accusing Israel of ceasefire violations and

"attacks that targeted villages in southern Lebanon".

Residents from southern Lebanon say the truce is not being implemented.

"This is not a truce as long as Israeli attacks continue against the south and its people, with deaths, injuries and destruction," said Ali Salameh, 60, from a school in Beirut where he has been displaced since the start of the war.

"What kind of truce is this when they have just threatened villages and people are being displaced? Where is the state? We stand only with the resistance," said Nawal Mezhr, also displaced from the south.

Lebanon was dragged into the Middle East war on March 2 when Hezbollah fired rockets at Israel in retaliation for the killing of Iran's supreme leader Ali Khamenei.

On Friday, Israel struck the southern city of Tyre.

"They destroyed the entire neighbourhood," said Ibrahim Kahwaji, a tailor who was wounded in the leg. "They are emptying the south of its population... It's a real occupation. We want a solution."

QFFD, QRCS provide humanitarian relief in support of Syria

As part of Qatar's consistent humanitarian efforts to support displaced and affected people in Syria, the Qatar Fund for Development (QFFD) and Qatar Red Crescent Society (QRCS) are working together to provide multi-sector relief aid, such as fuel, food and medical supplies, and hygiene kits, amid the challenges facing the country.

This activity falls under a larger scheme of projects aimed at ensuring the continuity of vital services for the target populations.

First, health facilities are receiving fuel to run power generators, with 414,000 litres of fuel delivered so far, out of 453,500 litres to be distributed to numerous hospitals, which serve approximately 85,000 vulnerable people in 11 governorates, including



internally displaced people (IDPs), returnees, female breadwinners, and families with children and older persons.

There are further procurements in progress to supply the hospitals with essential medications, medical consumables, and laboratory equipment that would cover their operational needs for two months.

The programme also involves a set of relief interventions to alleviate the suffering of affected families.

In terms of food security, food parcels will be distributed to 7,380 families, or 37,000 people, to meet their basic food needs for a full month.

Other distributions include 7,380 hygiene kits, containing standard supplies to promote cleanliness and reduce morbidity rates, particularly in underserved regions.

These efforts demonstrate the humanitarian role played by Qatar's humanitarian organisations in solidarity with the Syrian people and in response to the critical humanitarian situation in Syria. - QNA

Lebanon 'has had enough reckless wars for foreign interests': Salam

Lebanese Prime Minister Nawaf Salam has said his country has had enough "reckless" wars for foreign interests, calling for Arab and international support in Beirut's negotiations with Israel.

Speaking at a non-governmental organisation (NGO) dinner on Friday, Salam said that he hoped to "mobilise all Arab and international support to bolster our position in the negotiations" with Israel, shortly after the last round of talks ended and extended the ongoing truce for 45 days.

In an implicit rebuke to Hezbollah, which joined the Middle East war in support of Iran on March 2, Salam said the country had "enough of these reckless adventures serving foreign projects or interests, the latest being a war we did not choose but was forced upon us, which led to Israel occupying 68 towns and villages".

"And after all this, with all the killing, destruction, displacement, and tragedies (the war) brought, someone comes along trying to insult our intelligence and calls it a victory," he added, also hinting at Hezbollah. "Enough with the incitement and accusations of treason; this will not and cannot intimidate us." - AFP

Israel military strike kills Hamas armed wing leader

An Israeli airstrike on Gaza killed the chief of Hamas's military wing, the most senior official from the Palestinian group killed by Israel since an October US-backed ceasefire agreement.

The Israeli military said yesterday that Izz al-Din al-Haddad was killed in what it described as a precise strike on Gaza City on Friday.

Israel has repeatedly carried out strikes on Gaza since the ceasefire started.

Hamas confirmed that Haddad, who was born in 1970, was killed along with his wife and daughter.

At Al Aqsa Martyrs Mosque in central Gaza, a joint funeral was held yesterday for Haddad, his wife and their 19-year-old daughter.

Israel carried out at least two attacks on Gaza on Friday, killing seven, including three women and one child, according to local media.

A Palestinian source said Haddad was killed in a strike on an apartment building.

In a joint statement with his defence minister on Friday, announcing that the military had targeted Haddad, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said Haddad was an architect of the events of October 7, 2023 that precipitated Israel's assault on Gaza.

The military also said that Haddad was involved in holding Israeli hostages.

Haddad had previously survived six assassination attempts, the source said. - Reuters/AFP

ARPM Tender Committee announces the following Tender

Tender No.	(Tender Title) Scope of work	Tender Fee	Tender Bond	Opening Date	Closing Date
ARPM/257/2026/TEN/DOH	Tender for LPG Tank Replacement at Banana Island Resort Doha	1000	10,000	17-May-26	07-Jun-26
ARPM/258/2026/TEN/DOH	Tender for Civil Defence Compliance Maintenance Works at AL Bidla Park	1000	10,000	17-May-26	07-Jun-26
ARPM/259/2026/TEN/DOH	Tender for Provision of Waste Management Services for ARPM Group - 2 Year Term	1000	10,000	17-May-26	07-Jun-26
ARPM/260/2026/TEN/DOH	Tender for Comprehensive Maintenance Services for Banana Island Adventure Park	1000	10,000	17-May-26	07-Jun-26

1. Interested parties can collect copies of the tender documents from ARPM Purchasing Department, via email to m.aseef@arpm.com.qa and j.castillo@arpm.com.qa during working hours 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. (Fri & Sat Closed)

2. A payment of a non-refundable document's fees should be deposited in cash to:

- Beneficiary Name: Al-Rayyan Projects Management (ARPM)
- Account No. 0013-022375-004 (Qatar National Bank)
- IBAN No. QA86QNBAA00000000013022375004

And the original deposit receipt should be submitted upon receiving of the terms and conditions.

3. A tender bond (as stated above), issued by a bank operating in the State of Qatar and valid for 180 days from the closing date should accompany tenders. **The executed tender bond should be included with the technical offer.**

4. All tenderers MUST collect their original bonds from ARPM - Purchasing department upon expiry of the Tender Bond, unless alternative instructions are issued by ARPM.

5. Proposal to be submitted in sealed envelopes as per the RFP requirements in both HARD COPY & SOFT COPY on CD or USB.

6. Copies of valid **Company Commercial Registration, Computer Card & Authorization Letter** must be submitted in order to collect the tender documents.

7. The successful tenderer is required to submit a performance bond issued by a bank operating in the State of Qatar equivalent to 10% of the total contract sum and shall be valid for a period expiring 180 days after contract expiry.

8. Offers should be valid for 180 days commencing from the closing date (as stated above).

9. ARPM has the right to increase or decrease the scope of services by 20% with the same terms and conditions.

10. ARPM is not bound to accept the lowest tender or any other tender and is under no obligation to show any reasons thereof.

11. Bids should be submitted not later than 12:00 noon on the closing date and must be deposited into the Box, provided in the ARPM Purchasing office, located at the 9th Floor, ARPM, Head office and should be in sealed envelopes addressed to the Chairman - Tenders Committee, quoting the Tender Number and Subject.

12. Deadline for accepting requests and inquiries, 7 days prior to closing date.

13. Offers arriving thereafter may not be considered.

CHAIRMAN - TENDER COMMITTEE
TEL: 40341804

Auction Announcement

ARPM Tender and Auction Committee announce the following Auction:

Auction Subject		Sale of Used Boat		
Launching Date	Closing Date	Auction Bond QR.	Auctions Documents Price QR.	Auction Method
17/05/2026	14/06/2026	10,000 (Qatari Riyals Ten Thousand) (refundable subject to conditions)	200 (Qatari Riyals Two Hundred only)	One Closed Envelope

Auction purpose is for the following:

Sale of Used Boat

The awarding will be made to the highest bid among the applicants.

General Conditions:

1. Auction Documents / Conditions shall be obtained from Procurement Department, ARPM Co., located on the 9th Floor, Al Rayyan Building, Old Salata, Zone 18, Al Muthaf Street, Next to Al Bustan Hotel during working hours 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. (Fri. & Sat. Closed).

2. Auction Documents Fee (QR 200 - Qatari Riyals Two Hundred only) - non-refundable, will be paid in cash in ARPM Co. Headquarter.

3. Site visit for the Used Boat and its Location shall be according to the Auction Conditions and the attendance of the visit shall be limited to those who obtain the Auction documents and pay the prescribed fees as per Item 2 above.

4. To obtain Auction documents, the following documents are required:

Authorization letter from the bidding company in English & Arabic signed by the officially authorized manager and stamped with the company's seal - Copy of the establishment card - ID of the authorized person to receive the documents - Copy of the valid company's commercial registration - Company's classification certificate (if any).

5. The Bid must be submitted according to the Conditions stated in the bidding documents. The Bid shall be enclosed with an Auction Bond in the name of Al Rayyan Project Management Company (to be placed in separate envelope inside the Bid envelope) in the form of a payable cheque certified by one of the banks operating in the State of Qatar of only 10,000 (Qatari Riyals Ten Thousand), and it will be returned back within 120 days from the closing date subject to the Terms & Conditions, noting that no bid shall be accepted unless it has been enclosed with Auction Bond document.

6. The bid (Price of the Sale of Used Boat) shall be submitted in local currency (Qatari Riyal) and shall be valid for 120 days from the closing date of the bid and cannot be revoked within that period.

7. Deadline for accepting bids is 12:00 pm of the closing date (Sunday 14/06/2026).

8. All forms attached to the Auction documents including the form of undertaking, shall be filled, completed and authorized as stated therein and returned with the other documents.

9. All necessary data for the company (contacts & follow-up) must be attached: Mobile - Phone - Fax - E-mail - company address of where the correspondence to be sent, clarifying the tasks of each individual (when purchasing Auction documents) and within the company bid.

10. For any queries related to documents and bidding, contact Al Rayyan Project Management Co. -

Tel: 40341865 - 40341804 - email: m.aseef@arpm.com.qa; j.castillo@arpm.com.qa

11. Deadline for accepting inquiries and requests 07/06/2026.

**Tenders and Auctions Committee
ARPM**

QATAR FERTILISER COMPANY INVITATION TO TENDER

QAFCO ANNOUNCES THE FOLLOWING TENDER

TENDER NO.	DESCRIPTION OF WORKS	TENDER FEE (QAR)	TENDER BOND (QAR)	TENDER FEE RECEIPT SUBMISSION DATES	TENDER CLOSING DATE
RFQ-6000005332	SUPPLY AND INSTALLATION OF MANAGER'S AND MEETING ROOM OFFICE FURNITURE'S ON A 2-YEAR CALL-OFF CONTRACT	500/- (Non-refundable)	49,000/- (forty-nine thousand Qatari Riyals)	17/5/2026 18/5/2026 19/5/2026 20/5/2026 21/5/2026 24/5/2026 25/5/2026	4/6/2026

GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS

During the period this tender is offered, the interested bidders shall first deposit appropriate Tender Fee amount in cash (Cheque will not be accepted) into Company's following Account at any QNB branch:

- Account Name : QATAR FERTILISER COMPANY (QAFCO)
- Account Number : 0013-025828-058
- IBAN : QA51QNBAA00000000013025828058
- Bank Name : QATAR NATIONAL BANK

The interested Bidders shall mention their company's name and Tender Number on the payment receipt provided by the bank and submit it as Tender Fee receipt.

Besides the Tender fee receipt (which should have the Tender Number and bidder's name clearly mentioned on it), interested bidders shall also submit a copy of the valid Commercial Registration, an authorization letter from their company with the name, telephone, fax and e-mail ID of the focal point for this tender (**Very Important**) during the submission of Tender Fee Receipt for ensuring electronic receipt of the Tender Document.

Tender Fee Receipt along with the specified documents shall be submitted to purchase@qafco.com.qa and jsaade@qafco.com.qa, on the dates indicated above, after payment of Tender Fee (nonrefundable).

After submission of the above documents to the above email, Tender Document will be provided through an electronic platform separately.

For any queries related to non-receipt of the tender documents after the submission of Tender Fee receipt, you may contact at purchase@qafco.com.qa or on 44227792.

Technical & Commercial details and Submission Procedures will be specified in the Tender Documents.

The Company will not consider any offer without the enclosure of the Tender Bond.

The Tender shall be strictly submitted using the QAFCO's Supply Chain Portal - SAP Ariba, on or before the "Tender Closing Date". Tenderers who fail to adhere to this requirement will result in the disqualification of their Tender.



QatarEnergy LNG Tender Invitation

No.	TENDER NUMBER / DESCRIPTION	TENDER ISSUE PERIOD	TENDER FEE (QAR)	TENDER BOND (QAR)	TENDER CLOSING DATE
1	SUP/C/EDU/7677/26 PROVISION OF RECRUITMENT SERVICE FOR AL-KHOR INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL (AKIS) ON CALL-OFF BASIS	13/05/2026 to 24/05/2026	0	0	02/06/2026

Scope of Work:

Al Khor International School (AKIS) is a co-educational and non-selective international school and caters primarily for the children of QatarEnergy LNG employees. AKIS is licensed by the State of Qatar's Ministry of Education and Higher Education to run a British Curriculum School and Indian CBSE Curriculum School. Objective of this Contract is to avail the services of a competent recruitment agency to recruit both teaching and non-teaching staff in a cost effective and timely manner on call-off basis for Al Khor International School (AKIS). The details of the requirement are defined in the SCOPE OF WORK / SERVICES.

Bid Validity: Bid Offer should be valid for 180 calendar days from the Tender Closing Date.

Place for Tender Collection and Bid Submission:

ITT document for this tender will be available in QatarEnergy LNG website under Suppliers tab >Current Open Tenders. The bids shall be submitted through the QatarEnergy LNG online platform (SMART by GEP).

Note: Local Companies (established under the Laws of State of Qatar with local Commercial Registration) are advised to refer to the tender documentation and In-Country Value (ICV) Digital Portal: - <https://icv.qa/en-US/> for details of ICV compliance that may be applicable.

'No vaccine for latest Ebola outbreak'

An Ebola outbreak in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DR Congo) that has caused at least 80 deaths has a "very high lethality rate" and no vaccine or specific treatment, the country's health minister warned yesterday.

Nearly 250 suspected cases of the highly contagious haemorrhagic fever have been recorded in DR Congo, according to the health ministry, with one death reported in neighbouring Uganda.

Medical aid group Doctors Without Borders (Medecins Sans Frontieres, MSF) said it was preparing a "large-scale response", calling the rapid spread of the outbreak "extremely concerning".

"The Bundibugyo strain has no vaccine, no specific treatment," DR Congo's Health Minister Samuel-Roger Kamba said yesterday. "This strain has a very high lethality rate which can reach 50%."

Earlier yesterday ministry officials announced that the death toll had reached

80, up from 65 the previous day. The strain has also claimed one life in neighbouring Uganda, officials said, that of a Congolese national.

That correlated with an announcement late on Friday by Uganda's health ministry, which said a 59-year-old man from the DR Congo had died in Kampala after being admitted earlier in the week.

His body was repatriated the same day. Tests showed the victim in Uganda was infected with the Bundibugyo strain of Ebola, first identified in 2007.

Vaccines are only available for the Zaire strain, which was identified in 1976 and has a higher fatality rate of 60-90%.

Health officials had confirmed the latest outbreak on Friday in Ituri province in northeastern DR Congo, bordering Uganda and South Sudan, according to the Africa Centres for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC Africa).

Adding to concerns of spread are sig-

nificant cross-border population movements in the region affected.

According to Kamba, patient zero was a nurse who reported to a health facility in provincial capital Bunia on April 24, with symptoms suggesting Ebola.

Symptoms of the disease include fever, haemorrhaging and vomiting.

MSF said it is mobilising medical, logistical and support staff to help with the outbreak response.

"The number of cases and deaths we are seeing in such a short timeframe, combined with the spread across several health zones and now across the border, is extremely concerning," says MSF emergency programme manager Trish Newport.

It is the 17th Ebola outbreak to hit the DR Congo, and officials warned of a high risk of spread.

The country's health ministry said that overnight the number of fatalities had

risen to "246 suspected cases notified and 80 deaths".

"It is a large outbreak," said Jay Bhattacharya, acting director of the US Centres for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) on Friday.

The previous outbreak of Ebola, which has killed some 15,000 people in Africa over the past 50 years, despite advances in vaccines and treatment, was last August in the central region.

That episode killed at least 34 people, before being declared eradicated in December.

Nearly 2,300 people died in the deadliest outbreak in the DR Congo between 2018 and 2020.

Ebola, believed to have originated in bats, is a viral disease spread through direct contact with bodily fluids. It can cause severe bleeding and organ failure.

According to the World Health Organisation (WHO), outbreaks over the

past half century have seen a mortality rate among those affected of between 25-90%.

The virus spreads from person to person through bodily fluids or exposure to the blood of infected persons, who become contagious only once they display symptoms.

The incubation period can last up to 21 days.

"Given the uncertainties and severity of the illness, there is concern about the scale of transmission in affected communities," the WHO said on Friday as it prepared to airlift five tonnes of material including infection prevention gear from Kinshasa.

Large-scale transport of medical equipment is a challenge in DR Congo, a country of more than 100mn people which is four times the size of France but has poor communications infrastructure. - AFP

Trump, Nigeria claim killing of senior IS leader

Nigerian lawmaker confirms kidnapping of 42 schoolchildren

A lawmaker from a restive Nigerian northeastern region has confirmed the kidnapping by suspected militants of dozens of children, putting the number of those snatched at 42.

Africa's most populous country is battling a 17-year insurgency by religious militant groups, which have made such abductions a key tactic - including an infamous 2014 kidnapping of hundreds of schoolgirls in the town of Chibok.

Local residents and parents in Mussa village told AFP on Friday that religious militants raided a school and seized between 35-43 children.

Mohammed Ali Ndume, a senator in northeastern Borno state, the epicentre of Nigeria's religious militant insurgency, told AFP that according to a tally by the local Mussa village officials, 42 were taken.

The community held a meeting yesterday and "we realised that 48 children were abducted", villager Bukar Buba, told AFP.

The Friday morning attack came shortly after Nigerian troops had left the area, said Buba, whose daughter and niece were among those kidnapped.

Though violence has waned from the peak of Nigeria's religious militant insurgency, kicked off by Boko Haram's 2009 uprising, analysts have warned of an increase in attacks since 2025.

No group has claimed the kidnapping, but Boko Haram and its rival, the Islamic State West Africa Province (ISWAP) are active in the area.

Borno South senatorial district is where Boko Haram kidnapped more than 270 girls in the town of Chibok in 2014, drawing outrage around the world.

The state had not witnessed another school kidnapping since.

Most school kidnappings have taken place in the northwest of the country. - AFP/Reuters

AFP/Reuters
Lagos

A senior Islamic State (IS) group leader, described as "the most active terrorist in the world", has been killed in a joint operation by US and Nigerian forces in the west African country, the two countries' presidents said.

Under US sanctions since 2023, Abu-Bilal al-Minuki was the second-in-command of IS worldwide, according to US President Donald Trump and the two militaries.

The killing comes as IS activity is increasingly concentrated in Africa, hitting a record high of 86% in the first quarter of 2026, up from 49% in all of 2024, according to global conflict monitor ACLED report released this week.

Trump said in a post on Truth Social announcing the killing, that "at my direction, brave American forces and the Armed Forces of Nigeria flawlessly executed a meticulously planned and very complex mission to eliminate the most active terrorist in the world from the battlefield".

The Nigerian defence forces said that al-Minuki was a "senior ISIS leader and one of the world's most active terrorists", using another name for the religious militant group.

Trump, who has previously accused Nigeria of failing to protect Christians from Islamist militants, thanked the Nigerian government for its partnership in the operation.

Nigeria denies discriminating against any religion, saying that its security forces target armed groups that attack both Christians and Muslims.

As director of global operations for the IS, al-Minuki provided strategic guidance on media and financial operations and "the development and manufacturing of weapons, explosives and drones", according to the Nigerian military and US Africa Command (AFRICOM).

"Al-Minuki was the most active terrorist in the world and has a significant history of involvement in planning attacks and directing hostage taking," said AFRICOM.

"Nigerian Armed Forces, working closely with the Armed Forces of the United States, conducted a daring joint operation that dealt a heavy blow to the ranks of the Islamic State," Nigeria's President Bola Tinubu said, confirming the killing.

Tinubu said in his statement that al-Minuki, also known as Abu-Mainok, was slain along



President Bola Tinubu

with his lieutenants, "on his compound in the Lake Chad Basin", a restive region straddling Nigeria, Niger, Chad and Cameroon.

The operation was "a meticulously planned and highly complex precision air-land operation" carried out yesterday from just after midnight through 4am (2300 and 0300 GMT), the Nigerian army said.

Nigerian military spokesman Sani Uba said that al-Minuki had established a "concealed and fortified enclave" at a remote village in the Borno State in the northeast.

Borno has endured an insurgency waged by Boko Haram and its splinter group Islamic State West Africa Province (ISWAP) for 17 years that has killed thousands and displaced 2mn people.

The Nigerian military sees al-Minuki's death as removing a "critical node through which ISIS co-ordinated and directed operations across different regions of the world".

Nigeria has long been battling religious militant insurgents, including Boko Haram and regional offshoots of the IS organisation, primarily the ISWAP.

Since late 2025, Nigeria has been under pressure from the US, which has accused it of not doing enough to combat the Islamist militant threat.

On Christmas Day, the United States, in collaboration with Nigerian authorities, carried out airstrikes in northwestern Sokoto State targeting fighters from the IS in the Sahel group, usually active in neighbouring Niger.

Tinubu thanked Trump for his "leadership and unwavering support in this effort", and that he looked "forward to more decisive strikes against all terrorist enclaves across the nation".

Local media had previously reported that al-Minuki had been killed in 2024.

However, Vincent Foucher, a specialist on Nigerian conflicts with France's National Centre for Scientific Research, told AFP that the latest claim is "more plausible" because the US is "quite precise".

Nigeria police reveal 17 officers died in last week's militant raid

Nigeria's police said yesterday that religious militants killed 17 officers last week in a raid at a special training centre in the country's northeast, the heartland of a long-running Islamist insurgency.

Since 2009, the west African country has been battling Boko Haram and its splinter faction the Islamic State West Africa Province (ISWAP), which both seek to establish an Islamist caliphate in the region.

"The Nigeria Police Force regrettably announces the tragic loss of seventeen (17) police officers who paid the supreme price... following a terrorist attack on the Nigerian Army Special Forces School" on May 8 said a statement from the force.

"The officers, who were undergoing specialised operational training at the institution, lost their lives when terrorists launched a co-ordinated attack on the facility from multiple directions at about 0115hrs (0015 GMT)," it said of the attack in northeastern Yobe state.

The Nigerian military said a day after the attack that it had killed at least 50 militants during clashes at the base, mentioning the death of two soldiers.

The military said the militants were killed as forces fought off a co-ordinated ISWAP assault on the headquarters of its brigade in the town of Buni Gari, as well as a nearby checkpoint in Yobe state.

An intelligence source confirmed the attack and the army's counter-offensive to AFP, but said the military had "grossly under-declared its casualties and bloated the losses suffered by the terrorists", without giving exact figures. - AFP

Tunisians protest over arrests and economic strain

Hundreds of Tunisians protested in the capital Tunis yesterday against President Kais Saied, accusing him of undermining freedoms and presiding over a worsening economic and social crisis. The protest was held under the slogan: "The people are hungry and prisons are full." Tunisia is facing acute economic strain, with sluggish growth, soaring prices, shortages of medicines and some food, financing pressures, and deteriorating public services. Saied dissolved parliament and began ruling by decree in 2022. - Reuters



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Al Dafna - Amwal Tower - First Floor
P.O. 24646 Doha / Qatar - Tel. 44847111 - Fax 44847695
Website: www.qchem.com.qa

ANNOUNCEMENT FOR TENDERS

No.	Document No.	Description	Tender Bond	Bid Closing Date
1.	QC/TC/FM/109/26	Roof Leak Repair, Water Proofing Works and Maintenance for Q-Chem, Q-Chem II & RLOC on Call-Off Basis	QAR 318,500/-	15:00 hrs. on 22nd July 2026
Brief Scope: Bidders are invited to submit proposals for Roof Leak Repair, Water Proofing Works and Maintenance to Q-Chem, Q-Chem II Plant in Mesaieed Industrial City and RLOC Plant in Ras Laffan Industrial City for a duration of five years.				

Tender Documents for the above description can be obtained as follows:

- A. Pay to Bank and send the original receipt with authorization letter via email.**
For each tender pay a non-refundable document fee of QAR 1,000/- Payable to Q-Chem, Bank Account (Contract Services - Tender) - Account Number 001-242007-003 with HSBC Bank) and submit the original receipt with an Authorization letter on Tenderer Company Letterhead with ID copy of the Tenderer representative **via email to tadvertising@qchem.com.qa** In the authorization letter Tenderer shall nominate a single focal point with contact mobile number, **official email address**, office number, fax number for the communications related to this tender for the transfer and receipt of the tender documents. **The Bank receipt must indicate the tender number and the tenderer name (company name).**
- B. Date and Time of Tender documents Issuance via email**
Tender documents issuance from 17th May 2026 to 21st May 2026, 8am-12noon.
- C. Proposal details**
Proposals should be valid for 240 days from the tender closing date.
- D. Submission of Proposals**
Guidelines for Electronic Bids Submission is attached in the Tender documents.



Qatar Red Crescent - Medical Affairs Division

Tenders Announcement: -

Sr. #	Tender No.	Description	Temporary Tender Bond	Documents Fees (Non-Refundable)	Closing Date
1	QRC/WHC/08-2026	Trend Micro Renewal & Upgrade for Medical Affairs Division	25,000 Q.R	500 Q.R	09/06/2026

The documents can be collected from Medical Affairs Division, Ain Khalid Area, Sunday to Thursday from 09:00 am to 02:00 pm till the closing date or by sending email along with the requested documents below.

Required Documents:

- Authorization letter to receive tender documents + ID copy of the person will be receiving the documents.
- Company's Commercial registration copy with the business activity clearly specified therein.
- Bank deposit voucher with the value of documents not refunded & account details:
 - Account Name: Qatar Red Crescent.
 - Bank: Al Rayan.
 - Account Number: 0011199970200
 - IBAN Number: QA83MAFR000000000011199970200

For more information: please call: (50044554), or Email whc.tenders@qrcs.org.qa

Golden Business Opportunity INDUSTRIAL COMPANY FOR SALE

A company specializing in the production of prefabricated houses, strategically located in the small and medium industries zone on an area of 7448 m².

The land is leased from Manateq Company under a new 3-year contract and has valid commercial registrations and all municipal, industrial, and environmental licenses.

For viewing and inquiries: **Please call: 50009702**

Announcement of Completion of Liquidation

Announces **The Liquidator, Sarath Kumar**

announces the completion of the liquidation proceedings for

Galleria Digital (W.L.L.), Commercial Registration No. (59446)

In accordance with the provisions of the law, he releases himself from any liability for the company, which was removed from Commercial Registration No. (59446) on **January 26, 2026.**



Alberta's separatists hit by legal setback as PM Carney seeks unity

Reuters
Ottawa

Alberta separatists have been dealt their first major setback in their campaign for a referendum on seceding from Canada, after a provincial court ruled this week in favor of a First Nations bid to halt the referendum petition.

The ruling, which the oil-rich province's populist leader has promised to appeal, further complicates the uphill campaign for an independent Alberta that separatists have hoped will go before voters in an October referendum.

But reactions so far from separatist leaders and Alberta's conservative premier, Danielle Smith, indicate the campaign will remain a major challenge for Prime Minister Mark Carney, who hopes for a united Canadian front as he grapples with US tariffs and diplomatic tensions.

Carney, who signed an energy agreement with Smith in Alberta on Friday, is treading carefully.

"I think what is crucial is that all rights are respected through this process... the right to privacy, Indigenous rights, clarity of the question, and a full understanding of the federation," Carney said. Alberta separatists have aimed to tap into long-running resentment toward successive Liberal governments in Ottawa, which they believe have undermined the province's oil and gas industry with onerous environmental regulations. Polling has consistently shown, however, that separation is supported by only about one-third of the province's voters.

Justice Shaina Leonard ruled on Wednesday that the province's chief electoral officer was wrong to allow separatists to collect signatures requesting a referendum, because the process should have triggered a consultation with Indigenous peoples whose rights



Canadian Prime Minister Mark Carney arrives on Parliament Hill in Ottawa. (AFP)

might be violated by Alberta's separation from Canada.

"Alberta independence would fundamentally contravene" the land treaties Indigenous peoples signed with Canada, Leonard said. Smith, who pushed through several legislative changes last year making it easier for separatists to trigger a referendum, said the court decision was "incorrect in law."

Smith has stopped short of publicly supporting independence, but some factions of the movement back her leadership. She said that her government would appeal against Leonard's ruling. Earlier this month, the separatist group Stay Free Alberta said it delivered a petition to Elections Alberta with more than 300,000 signatures, which have yet to be validated but would be more than enough to trigger a referendum. The separatist campaign has also had to grapple in recent weeks with a data breach and a backlash over meetings with

the US Trump administration.

Elections Alberta said it was investigating the unauthorised use of a list of voters by the Centurion Project, a separatist group that received a database with personal information on hundreds of voters. That database had been legally provided to the Republican Party of Alberta, another separatist group.

Both the Republican Party of Alberta and the Centurion Project have denied any wrongdoing. The movement also gained international attention when the US State Department confirmed in February that staff-level meetings were held with members of Alberta's separatist movement. While the department said there would be no future meetings, Leonard's ruling this week noted a significant risk of foreign interference in the matter.

Grace Skogstad, a professor emerita of political science at the University of Toronto, said the Alberta data breach and claims of foreign interference were "a very

bad look" and might hurt the separatists' cause. "People aren't going to like that voter lists are being mishandled," she said.

Adrienne Davidson, a political science professor at McMaster University in Ontario, added that, while Alberta intends to appeal Wednesday's decision to a higher court, the First Nations' argument against the referendum might legally block separation altogether. "The treaties in question actually predate the creation of Alberta as a province," she said.

"Our treaties are embedded into the constitution and we as First Nations people are always going to be recognised," Chief Allan Adam of the Athabasca Chipewyan First Nation said. "The land belongs to us," he added.

Carney, who spent much of his childhood in Edmonton, said he was working to make Alberta and all of Canada stronger. "I view that very much the best place for Alberta is in Canada."

Sentence of former elections clerk accused of tampering voting machines commuted

Reuters
Denver

Colorado's governor granted clemency to former county elections clerk Tina Peters, who was convicted of illegally tampering with voting machines in pursuit of false claims the 2020 White House race was stolen from President Donald Trump.

Governor Jared Polis, a Democrat, effectively commuted Peters' nine-year jail and prison term to time already served and ordered her released on parole effective June 1, writing in his clemency letter that he found her original sentence to be unjustly harsh.

"The crimes you were convicted of are very serious and you deserve to spend time in prison for these offenses," Polis wrote. "However, this is an extremely unusual and lengthy sentence for a first time offender who committed nonviolent crimes."

Polis said he agreed with the reasoning of a Colorado appeals court decision last month overturning Peters' original sentence but keeping her conviction intact.

In that ruling the appeals court held that the trial judge had imposed an excessive punishment based on Peters' protected speech — namely her expressed claims of election fraud — rather than considering her criminal conduct alone. The three-judge appeals court panel had ordered the trial judge to re-sentence Peters, but Polis acted first.

In a CBS News interview, Polis said two co-conspirators in the case had received far more lenient sentences.

The Colorado County Clerks Association immediately denounced Polis' commutation, saying it undermined the rule of law.

"We are furious, disgusted, and deeply disappointed," the group's

executive director, Matt Crane, said in a statement on behalf of the association.

Colorado Attorney General Phil Weiser, a fellow Democrat running to succeed the term-limited governor, likewise decried Peters' clemency as "mind-boggling and wrong."

Had she lost her bid for clemency, Peters, 70, would not have been eligible for release until November 2028.

Peters, a Republican, was an outspoken supporter of Trump's baseless claims that he lost his bid for a second term in the 2020 presidential election to Democrat Joe Biden because of widespread voter fraud.

Peters was clerk of Mesa County when she was indicted in 2022 following a security breach at her office that led to voting equipment passwords getting posted on a right-wing blog. She denied wrongdoing but was convicted in 2024 on seven charges, including three counts of attempting to influence a public servant. The case drew national attention and raised her profile as one of the nation's most prominent 2020 election deniers. Polis, in his clemency letter, embraced the Colorado appeals court's ruling that the trial judge had imposed a gratuitously stiff sentence because Peters refused to disavow her claims of a stolen 2020 election.

In ordering Peters to be re-sentenced, the appeals court panel cited the trial judge's comments referring to her as a "charlatan" who continued to peddle "snake oil that's been proven to be junk time and time again."

Polis said he agreed with the appeals court that those remarks demonstrated the judge was unfairly holding Peters' views against her in deciding her punishment, in violation of her constitutional rights to free expression.



People walk around the Long Island Rail Road at Penn Station on the first day of the LIRR strike in New York City. (Reuters)

Long Island rail strike halts busiest commuter line in US

Reuters
New York

About 3,500 workers at New York's Long Island Rail Road (LIRR) went on strike on Saturday after failing to reach a wage agreement, halting the busiest commuter rail system in the United States, according to a union statement.

The Long Island Rail Road serves nearly 300,000 passengers daily and is owned and operated by the state's Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA).

The International Brotherhood of Teamsters union said in a statement that the strike, the first in 32 years, was launched by a group of five unions. It said the workers had gone three years without raises during the bargaining process.

"This strike would not have happened if the MTA and LIRR offered our members the reasonable terms the government recommended multiple times," Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers and Trainmen President Mark Wallace said.

"We hope LIRR gets serious soon to avoid further unnecessary disruptions for hundreds of thousands of New Yorkers. They know where to find us when they're ready: on the streets."

President Donald Trump had signed an executive order in January to appoint a second emergency board to conduct mediation to avert a work stoppage at the Long Island Rail Road, after the unions asked him to intervene.

Trump had initially named a board in September last year to head off the labor dispute.

Imprisoned Maduro fades from Venezuelan life

AFP
Caracas

Nicolas Maduro's face used to be ubiquitous in Venezuela, from television broadcasts and street murals to construction signs and even toys.

But just months after his capture in a stunning raid by US special forces, the interim government is gradually erasing Maduro's visage from public life.

Maduro was taken into custody along with his wife Cilia Flores in a January 3 lightning raid in Caracas and flown to New York to face drug trafficking charges.

And despite an initial backlash among Venezuelans, fervor for the former leader of the leftist political movement known as Chavismo has died down.

As much can be seen in the slogan chosen by interim president Delcy Rodriguez's government to mark her first 100 days in office: "The beginning of a new chapter."

Under heavy pressure from Washington, and even the threat of more US military intervention if she does cooperate, Rodriguez has focused on pushing through hydrocarbon and mining reforms that are favorable to US interests, as well as granting amnesty to political prisoners and releasing them. Maduro's ties to the Venezuelan government are also weakening, as Rodriguez has dismissed several of the ministers he had appointed.

"We have seen how the figure of former president Nicolas Maduro has been gradually retired



A man walks in front of a mural depicting ousted Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro in Caracas. (AFP)

from public spaces," said Eduardo Valero Castro, a political science professor at the Central University of Venezuela.

He added that there is "a new intentionality in Venezuelan politics in line with the alliance schemes that exist on the geopolitical level between Venezuela and the US."

Rodriguez insists that she was loyal to Maduro "until the last second." It is her way of responding publicly to critics who accuse her of betraying her former boss and aligning with Washington.

"Those who, out of pettiness, out of irrationality, say what they say about me, I'm going to tell them something: It's irrelevant compared to what it means to defend Venezuela," Rodriguez said at an event in April.

Former figures in the Chavismo

movement, however, have expressed misgivings with the reforms pushed by Rodriguez, all the while US President Donald Trump boasts about his relationship with Caracas.

"I communicated this internally, that we have become a lowly protectorate of the US," wrote former pro-Maduro lawmaker Mario Silva.

"No pressure can justify collaborating with an aggressor," Silva wrote in an open letter addressed to Diosdado Cabello, Venezuela's powerful interior minister and a close ally of Maduro.

Cabello was recently confronted by a guest on his weekly television show over the "weak campaign" for Maduro. "Our goal from the very beginning, our main objective, is for Cilia and Nicolas to come back," Cabello replied.

Silva's critiques were met with strong reactions from his fellow Chavismo members, who considered them inappropriate, highlighting the internal fractures within the party.

"We want people to talk about him more, because that is not happening, he is not being taken into account," Ana Maria Pinto, 64, told AFP during a march calling for an end to US sanctions on Venezuela.

Alquimedes Rios, a member of a community council affiliated with Chavismo, believes that there has been a "fight" to demand the return of Maduro, who is imprisoned in New York.

"Our interim president Delcy Rodriguez continues negotiating, continues talking in order for our president Nicolas Maduro to return," he told AFP.

"Have they not done enough? That could be, but we have been fighting to make that possible," he continued. For Juan Garcia, a 21-year-old fisherman from the coastal state of Sucre, Rodriguez faces a "very complex situation."

"They're acting through diplomacy, because we're not going to bring him back through force," he said. According to political scientist Jesus Castillo-Molleda, Maduro does not represent stability for Chavismo.

The movement "is forced to accept this reality" of working with Washington in order to survive, he said, adding: "if the economy improves under Delcy Rodriguez, Maduro will be forgotten more quickly."

Announcement

Voluntary Liquidation Ended

I, Mr. Naresh Dasari,
a liquidator for

SAINT GOBAIN PAM AND MANNAI L.L.C.
Commercial Registration No. 75596

announce the end of
Liquidation process in accordance
with Qatar Commercial Companies

**Law No. 11 Of 2015 as amended by
Law No. 8 of 2021.**

The company's commercial registration was
duly canceled after the completion of
liquidation process.

Announcement

Voluntary Liquidation Ended

I, Mr. Naresh Dasari,
a liquidator for

WARRINGTON FIRE DOHA L.L.C.
Commercial Registration No. 65294

announce the end of
Liquidation process in accordance
with Qatar Commercial Companies

**Law No. 11 Of 2015 as amended by
Law No. 8 of 2021.**

The company's commercial registration was
duly canceled after the completion of
liquidation process.

Mexican teachers threaten World Cup protests over salary proposal

Mexican public school teachers rallied on Friday to demand a hefty pay rise, threatening mass protests at the start of the football World Cup on June 11 if their demands are not met.

Around 3,000 members of the National Education Workers union marched in Mexico City on Teacher's Day and were met by a wall of police to prevent them reaching the education ministry.

"Education isn't a priority, but the million-dollar business

of the World Cup is," one banner held by a protester read. Another protester bounced a soccer ball between his feet as he marched.

The government and official leadership of the teacher's union have agreed to a nine percent raise, but the union is divided. A dissident wing is calling for a 100 percent raise. The monthly starting gross wage for Mexican public school teachers is the equivalent of US\$967.

"We demand the fulfilment of our demands," one protesting teacher, Filiberto Fraustro Oro-

zco, from the northern state of Zacatecas, told AFP, adding that union members have agreed to stage intense protests during the World Cup.

Past industrial action by teachers has managed to shut down much of Mexico City for days at a time by blocking key roads, including access to the international airport.

Mexico expects around five million tourists to arrive for the World Cup that will be jointly hosted with the United States and Canada. (AFP)

Canada deepens Arctic defence ties

Allies of Sinaloa governor in US custody

Reuters
Cambridge Bay, Nunavut

Since US President Donald Trump's barrage of threats to seize Greenland, authorities on the frozen island have been seeking help from a northern ally: Canada. A reserve unit of the Canadian armed forces called the Rangers has long maintained a year-round presence in mostly inaccessible Arctic communities. For three years, authorities in Greenland and Denmark have consulted with Canadian officials on how to set up their own version of the Rangers — conversations that grew more urgent with Trump's threats and growing fears of Russian hostility in the Arctic.

"The rhetoric coming out of the White House has sped up efforts to rebuff the idea that Arctic communities need the US to come in and save them," said Whitney Lackenbauer, an honorary lieutenant-colonel Canadian Ranger involved in the talks, who spoke with Reuters during a recent 5,000-kilometer Arctic snowmobile trek by the Rangers.

As Canada attempts to pivot away from relying on the US to protect its vast Arctic, Prime Minister Mark Carney is strengthening ties and exchanging security tips with the Nordic countries, which he describes as trusted



Members of 41 Canadian Brigade Group in Yellowknife, Northwest Territories. (Reuters/File Photo)

partners. Canada's increased defense collaboration with the Nordics is part of Carney's effort to strengthen alliances between what he calls "middle powers" in a world where the US is considered a less reliable partner.

The White House said Trump's leadership has prompted allies "to recognise the need to meaningfully contribute to their own defence" and that the Arctic is a critical region for US national security and the economy.

"The administration is participating in diplomatic high-level technical talks with the governments of Greenland and Denmark to address the United States' national security interests in Greenland," a White House spokesper-

son said in an email.

Alliances are shifting in the Arctic as climate change makes it more accessible. Russia has far more military bases than any other nation there and in recent years China has started to increase its presence in the mineral-rich area, mostly in partnership with Russia. While Carney says Canada will no longer rely on any other nation to protect its own territory, he says the Arctic's greatest threat is from Russia — and the Nordics have been boosting their own defences since Russia invaded Ukraine.

In March, Canada and the five Nordic countries — Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden — agreed to deepen their cooperation in military procure-



A Canadian Ranger from 1st Canadian Ranger Patrol Group rides across the sea ice. (Reuters/File Photo)

ment and ramp up defence production to deal with security threat. A plan for how Greenland might adapt the Canadian Rangers is expected by the end of this year, according to government policy documents.

Lackenbauer, the honorary Canadian Ranger lieutenant-colonel, is also an Arctic expert at Trent University in Peterborough, Ontario. He said Canada should overhaul its approach to Arctic security just as Nordic countries did after Russian troops marched into Ukraine in 2022.

"The more we can go and help Canada's allies in northern Europe, the more hostile nations will get the message that they do not get a free pass in the Arctic," he said. Among the eight countries that share the Arctic, Canada's investment in defending the territory has consistently been near

the bottom, trailing Russia, the US, Norway, Sweden, Denmark and Finland, according to the Arctic Business Index, a network of far north research institutions and analysts. Along with Greenland, Canada has historically spent the least. Last year, Canada hit the Nato target of spending 2% of its GDP on defense, around CA\$63 bn, after repeated complaints from Trump. That compared to a low point of just 1% in 2014.

Neil O'Rourke, Director General at Canada's Coast Guard for Fleet and Maritime Services, said he and a Danish defence colleague realised years ago that if either country had a serious incident in the Arctic, their first phone call should be to each other. "Up north, we're just across the water and it makes much more sense to share resources than to get help from down south," he said.

US authorities have detained two former high-ranking officials from Mexico's Sinaloa state over alleged ties to the powerful Sinaloa cartel, court records and sources said.

They were charged last month along with Sinaloa Governor Ruben Rocha, who has not yet been detained, in what marks a significant escalation in tensions between the US and Mexico over the fight against the drug cartels.

Gerardo Merida Sanchez, who served as public security secretary in Rocha's government from September 2023 through December 2024, was arrested in Arizona on Monday and appeared in Manhattan federal court on Friday, court records showed.

Separately, former Sinaloa finance minister Enrique Diaz surrendered to US authorities on Friday, according to a person familiar with the matter. A Sinaloa government source also confirmed he was in US custody. Reuters could not immediately reach Diaz or his representatives for comment. Both former officials were charged in an indictment unsealed in court on April 29 with conspiring with leaders of the Sinaloa Cartel to import massive quantities of narcotics into the US in exchange for political support and bribes.

The indictment signaled that the US fight against the cartels was expanding beyond investigations into criminal groups to include politicians. Rocha, a member of Mexican President Claudia Sheinbaum's Morena party, denied the charges and said they were an attack against Mexico's governing political movement. He stepped aside temporarily on May 2, saying he did so with a "clean conscience." Sheinbaum said on April 30 that she would not protect anyone who has committed a crime but added, "If there isn't clear evidence, it is obvious that the objective of these indictments by the Department of Justice is political."

Sheinbaum's office declined to comment on both former Sinaloa officials. A Justice Department spokesman declined to comment on Merida's case, and the department did not immediately respond to a request for comment on Diaz. (Reuters)

Havana quietly advises Cubans on how to survive 'enemy attacks'

Cuba has posted a "family guide" on provincial websites on how to survive "potential enemy attacks," as the communist-run island reels from US pressure and energy shortages.

The release of the document — which has not been reported by state media at the national level — comes days after the head of the CIA visited Cuba, an extraordinary step in contact between Washington and Havana. President Donald Trump has mused openly about toppling the communist government in Cuba.

Titled "Protect, Resist, Survive, and Win," the guide advises on how to "protect life in the face of



A car passes by images of Fidel Castro, Cuba's former President Raul Castro and Cuba's President Miguel Diaz-Canel in Havana. (Reuters)

possible enemy attacks," according to a statement Friday on the Havana province website.

The radio station in Santi Spiritus, a province in central Cuba, posted the information on its website on Saturday, offering the document for download.

The guide outlines recommendations ranging from preparing a "family emergency kit containing drinking water, food (...) medicine, and hygiene supplies" to paying attention to air raid warnings. It urges people to learn first aid and reminds them to pay attention to information from civil defense authorities. On Thursday, CIA Director John Ratcliffe made a

highly unusual public visit to Havana and met with officials governing an island that endures constant power outages prompted by a fuel blockade ordered by Trump.

One of Cuba's last economic lifelines was cut in January when US forces toppled the strongman leader of oil-rich Venezuela, then blocked all fuel deliveries to Cuba, asserting that the island 150 km (93 miles) off its coast poses a major threat to US national security.

The low-key release of the document comes as the island of 9.6 mn inhabitants is rocked by an unprecedented socio-economic crisis, with many Cubans lacking access to basic necessities.

GWM Unveils Next-Generation GWM ONE S (Gui Yuan) Platform, 4.0T V8 Engine and more at Auto China 2026

GWM (Great Wall Motor) has officially revealed its most ambitious technology and product lineup at Auto China 2026 in Beijing, anchored by the global debut of the GWM ONE S platform, the world's first premium all-powertrain platform with native AI integration. For the Middle East market, the spotlight falls firmly on two standout brands leading GWM's regional growth story, Haval and Tank, with the Ora & Wey brand soon to debut in the region as the next chapter of GWM's expansion.

The Technology Behind the Story: GWM ONE S Platform

Haval, Tank, and the future Wey & Ora lineup are all supported by the broader GWM ONE S (Gui Yuan) platform ecosystem, launched in January 2026 as the most advanced evolution of GWM's modular architecture. The core philosophy behind the GWM ONE platform's "One Vehicle, Multiple Powertrains" philosophy is a flexible, intelligent approach that GWM believes is the optimal solution



shifting, supports multiple hybrid configurations, and performs reliably under frequent start-stop conditions.

The 4.0T V8 Engine: The engine uses a traditional 90° V-angle design for natural balance, smoother motion, and significantly reduced vibration. Twin turbochargers and a front-mounted water-cooled intercooler are integrated within the V-angle for a highly compact layout, with cross-bank pressure pipes ensuring strong and stable power delivery. Space at the front of the V-angle is reserved for a generator, enhancing water- and mud-wading capability, while a front-mounted water pump supports an optional silicone oil fan for improved off-road performance. It inherits proven V6 technologies, including a 350-bar high-pressure + 5.5-bar PFI dual injection system, full-map oil pump, and Miller cycle, improving efficiency, cold starts, and durability. The rare dual-injection system reduces carbon buildup, while the full-map oil pump lowers mechanical losses. A silicone oil damper replaces traditional rubber pulleys to reduce vibration, and extensive tuning delivers a rich, distinctive V8 exhaust note.

An Intelligent Ecosystem: AI, Safety, and Connectivity

Beyond powertrains, GWM's Auto China 2026 stand showcases the depth of its proprietary technology ecosystem, including the 9DCT transmission, self-developed battery cells across ternary, LFP, and semi-solid-state chemistries, a 100 kW hydrogen fuel cell system achieving 61% efficiency, and a 2.0T high-efficiency dedicated hybrid engine.

On the intelligence front, Coffee Pilot 3 driving assistance and the Coffee OS 3 cockpit system bring scenario-based autonomous driving and an immersive connected experience into models destined for global markets, including those relevant to the Middle East. Visitors could also experience GWM's 110-metre extreme off-road course and view exhibits from Asia's largest multi-angle crash lab, underscoring the brand's commitment to safety and durability under real-world conditions.

Global Strategy, Regional Commitment

GWM now serves over 16 million customers worldwide, backed by a 1,500+ strong overseas sales network and total overseas sales exceeding 2 million units. The Middle East remains one of GWM's priority markets, with Haval, Tank & POER leading current momentum and Wey & Ora poised to add a fresh, lifestyle-driven dimension to the brand portfolio.

Wei Jianjun (Jack Wey), Chairman of GWM, has reiterated the company's philosophy of delivering trust through quality, communicating trust through compliance, and building trust through action. For Middle East customers, Auto China 2026 is a clear signal that GWM's best technology, design, and global strategy are being brought closer to home through Haval, Tank, POER and soon, Wey & Ora.



for Chinese automotive brands to succeed on the global stage as no single powertrain can perfectly suit every situation.

Built on three foundational innovations (Atomised Hardware, Tagged Software, and an AI-native architecture), the platform supports five powertrain types from a single base: plug-in hybrid, battery electric, hydrogen, and internal combustion.

Key performance highlights include 0 to 100 km/h acceleration in 4 seconds on the PHEV variant with a combined range of 1,377 km. The BEV variant via a 900V architecture achieves 80% charge in just 10 minutes and offers a range of over 660km. These breakthroughs directly benefit the Middle East lineup, enabling longer range, faster charging, and greater reliability under extreme heat conditions.

A Defining Moment for GWM Middle East

Commenting on the significance of Auto China 2026, Sunny Bhat, Sales & Marketing Director, GWM Middle East, said:

"What we are presenting in Beijing is the future of mobility for the Middle East. The new model launches, combined with breakthrough technologies like the GWM ONE S platform and our Hi4-T and Hi4-Z intelligent hybrid four-wheel-drive systems, directly address what our regional customers value most: performance, durability, efficiency, and intelligence. Each vehicle unveiled at Auto China 2026 has been engineered with global ambition but with the versatility to perform in our unique environment. We see this as a defining moment that will shape GWM's growth trajectory across the Middle East over the coming years."

Furthermore, Mr. Mohamed Khalifa Bin Abdulrahman Al Mannai, Managing Director of Teyseer Motors, the official dealer of GWM in the State of Qatar, expressed his optimism regarding the next phase of the brand's growth in the Qatari market, emphasizing that the innovations unveiled by GWM during the 2026 Beijing International Automotive Exhibition reflect a forward-looking vision that aligns with the aspirations of customers across the region.

The Managing Director of Teyseer Motors added:

"At Teyseer Motors, we look forward to introducing these advanced technologies and new models to our customers in the State of Qatar. What we are witnessing today in the evolution of GWM's ecosystem — whether in artificial intelligence, powertrain technologies, safety stan-

dards, or luxury features — reflects the brand's commitment to delivering a comprehensive driving experience that meets the needs of regional markets. We are confident that the coming phase will bring further success and growth for GWM in the Qatari market."

9DCT

The 9DCT is a compact 9-speed transmission with one reverse gear and a 400 Nm torque capacity, designed for high efficiency and performance. Its space-saving integration includes an electronic module that reduces external parts, a fully functional hydraulic module that is 40 mm thinner, a new high-load synchronizer with longer lifespan, and a small-displacement mechanical pump that cuts torque loss and boosts efficiency by 2%. The system delivers fast, smooth





'Samsung Electronics, S Korea union to resume pay talks on Monday'

Reuters
Seoul

Samsung Electronics and its South Korean labour union will resume pay talks on Monday with a government mediator, the union said, in a move that could ease concerns over a potentially disruptive strike at the tech giant.

The union said in a statement yesterday that Samsung Electronics had replaced the company's representative for the negotiations, while the two sides would have a separate meeting later yesterday.

The union did not elaborate yesterday's agenda. Samsung Electronics declined to comment on either meeting. The announcement came shortly after Samsung Electronics Chairman Jay Y Lee apologised to customers and the public over the labour dispute in his first public comments on the issue.

"I sincerely apologise to customers around the world for causing anxiety and concern due to issues within our company," Lee said in his first public remarks on the dispute, adding that he also "deeply bows in apology to the public".

The union leader said the new company negotiator apologised for a breakdown in trust and pledged to engage sincerely in negotiations. He added that he conveyed his frustrations and would make every effort if Monday's talks prove constructive.

After pay negotiations broke down this week, the labour minister met Samsung Electronics manage-



Samsung Electronics Chairman Jay Y Lee reads a statement as he apologises over Samsung's labour dispute in his first public comments on the issue, in Seoul. (Reuters)

ment on Saturday and urged the company to take an active role in resolving the dispute through dialogue.

South Korean government officials, including the prime minister and finance minister, have voiced concerns that a strike at Samsung should be avoided at all costs, warning it could pose significant risks to economic growth, exports and financial markets.

The collapse of the government-mediated negotiations heightened concerns about a strike at the world's biggest memory chipmaker, whose customers include Nvidia, AMD and Google.

The union said on Friday it remained committed to a planned strike starting next week.

Indonesian president recognises 'problems' with free meal scheme

AFP
Jakarta

Indonesian President Prabowo Subianto acknowledged yesterday that the government's programme to provide free meals to combat malnutrition, his signature project, "comes with many problems".

Thousands of people have fallen ill since the much-hyped billion-dollar scheme was launched in January 2025, with critics calling for its suspension over hygiene concerns and accusations of corruption.

"It's true that there are many problems and challenges. Free nutritious meals comes with many problems, we must put things in order," Prabowo said in a speech in East Java posted to his official YouTube channel yesterday.

The scheme, which is said to have provided meals to more

than 61mn people by March, was also among the first to be cut back as Jakarta seeks to counter the economic impact of the Middle East war.

Indonesia cut the programme from six days a week to five in March to save up to 40tn rupiah (\$2.3bn).

Prabowo said that the scheme still has public support despite the list of problems.

"Free nutritious meals are so important for our nation. Everywhere I go, I meet ordinary people, farmers, saying, 'sir, please don't stop the free nutritious meals programme, this really helps my grandchildren to be able to eat,'" he said.

The scheme was Prabowo's flagship policy in the 2024 presidential election campaign.

Anti-graft watchdog Indonesia Corruption Watch (ICW) filed a complaint last week against Dadan Hindayana, the head of the National Nutrition Agency

with distributing the free meals, local media reported.

ICW claimed in its submission to the Corruption Eradication Commission that there were discrepancies of nearly \$50mn in the halal certification procurement budget.

Prabowo said he would take swift action against anyone "who violates the rules".

"My government has no hesitation: anyone who violates the rules, who strays, who abuses their authority, will be disciplined, we will clean them up, we will remove them from their position," he said.

More than 20% of children in Indonesia are affected by stunting caused by severe malnutrition.

The government hoped the scheme would provide meals for at least 82.9mn people, or about one-third of the country's population, in its bid to combat food insecurity.

Taiwan says is an 'independent' nation, after Trump's warning

AFP
Taipei

Taiwan said yesterday it is an "independent" nation, hours after US President Donald Trump warned the democratic island against declaring formal independence.

Trump wrapped up a state visit to Beijing on Friday where Chinese President Xi Jinping had pressed him not to support Taiwan, which China claims is part of its territory.

Taiwan depends heavily on US security backing to deter China from carrying out its threat to annex the island by force.

Taiwan "is a sovereign and independent democratic nation, and is not subordinate to the People's Republic of China", Taiwan's foreign ministry said in a statement.

The ministry also insisted that US arms sales were part of Washington's security commitment to Taiwan, after Trump said it "depends on China" and was a "very good negotiating chip for us".

Taiwan's statements came after Trump issued a warning to the island against making a declaration of independence.

"I'm not looking to have somebody go independent. And, you know, we're supposed to travel 9,500 miles to fight a war. I'm not looking for that," he told Fox News' "Special Report with Bret Baier".

"I want them to cool down. I want



A television screen shows a live broadcast of a meeting between US President Donald Trump and Chinese President Xi Jinping, at a hair salon in Taipei, Taiwan. (Reuters)

China to cool down," Trump said.

"We're not looking to have wars, and if you kept it the way it is, I think China's going to be OK with that."

But Trump added that "nothing's changed" on US policy towards Taiwan.

The US recognises only Beijing and does not support formal independence by Taiwan, but historically has stopped short of explicitly saying it opposes independence.

Under US law, the US is required to provide weapons to Taiwan for its defence, but it has been ambiguous on whether US forces would come to the island's aid.

Xi had begun the summit with a warning on Taiwan, whose President Lai Ching-te considers the island already independent, making a declaration unnecessary.

The Chinese leader told Trump that missteps on the sensitive issue could cause "conflict".

Taiwan's Presidential Office noted yesterday the "multiple reaffirmations from the US side, including President Trump and Secretary of State Marco Rubio, that the consistent US policy and position towards Taiwan remain unchanged".

"Taiwan looks forward to continuing to work with the US under the firm commitments of the Taiwan Relations Act," spokeswoman Karen Kuo said in a statement.

US weapon sales Ahead of the summit, Trump had said he would speak to Xi about US arms sales to Taiwan, a departure from Washington's previous insistence that it would not consult Beijing on the matter.

Taiwan's parliament recently approved a \$25bn defence spend-

ing bill that will be used for US weapons.

Lawmakers have said the funds will cover nearly \$9bn of the \$11.1bn arms package announced by Washington in December and a second phase of arms sales — not yet approved by the US — worth more than \$15 bn.

Speaking to reporters on Friday en route to Washington, Trump said on arms sales: "I'll make a determination over the next fairly short period of time."

Taiwan's foreign ministry said arms were "not only a US security commitment to Taiwan clearly stipulated in the Taiwan Relations Act, but also a form of joint deterrence against regional threats".

Tzeng Wei-feng of the National Chengchi University's Institute of International Relations in Taipei said the Trump administration was "leaning to China's position" on Taiwan in order to have better relations with Beijing and could "change the arms sale package a little bit to show their goodwill".

Trump "overtly stating that arms are a bargaining chip is exactly what Taiwan didn't want to hear," Lev Nachman, a political science professor at National Taiwan University, told AFP.

"The hope is that arm sales were non-negotiable, because it's part of the six assurances, and what Donald Trump is essentially saying is that one of those assurances no longer matters."

China says Trump visit deals are 'preliminary'

Reuters
Beijing

China's commerce ministry yesterday described as "preliminary" the tariff, agricultural and aircraft deals agreed during this week's visit by US President Donald Trump.

Trump left Beijing on Friday after two days of talks with President Xi Jinping that featured pageantry and warm rhetoric but limited detail on concrete outcomes across trade and investment.

In a statement on its website, the ministry said the two sides had agreed to establish an investment board and a trade board to negotiate reciprocal, product-specific tariff reductions, as well as broader cuts on unspecified goods including agricultural products.

Also on agriculture, Beijing said both sides would work to resolve non-tariff barriers and market access issues.

"The US side will actively promote the resolution of China's long-standing concerns regarding the automatic detention of dairy products and aquatic products, exports of bonsai in growing media to the US, and recognising Shandong province as an area free of avian influenza," the ministry said.

"The Chinese side will also actively promote the resolution of US concerns regarding registration of beef facilities and exports of poultry meat from some US



US and China's national flags flatter next to the Tiananmen Gate featuring a portrait of China's late Chairman Mao Zedong, during US President Donald Trump's visit to China, in Beijing, China. (Reuters)

states to China," it added.

The ministry did not identify companies or provide details on volumes, values or timelines.

Saturday's statement marked China's first public characterisation of the outcomes of trade talks held this week in Beijing and Seoul, and comes amid questions over what Trump's first state visit to China in nearly a decade has delivered.

Trump has said China agreed to buy 200 Boeing aircraft, but analysts have questioned the lack of a timeline.

The commerce ministry confirmed arrangements on "Chinese purchases of US aircraft and US assurances on the supply of aircraft engines and parts to China", without elaborating.

It said discussions on the details were continuing and that the agreements would be "finalised as soon as possible".

Train-bus collision kills at least 8 in Bangkok: police

A collision between a freight train and a bus killed at least eight people and injured more than 30 in the Thai capital Bangkok on Saturday, police said.

Firefighters and rescue workers cordoned off the collision site, with investigators seen peering into the burnt-out shell of the bus.

Pedestrians were ushered away from the busy downtown intersection, which is used by tens of thousands of vehicles each day.

"Eight people have died and 35

others were injured," Bangkok police chief Urumporn Koondejsumrit told AFP, updating the number of injured from previous reports.

The collision happened early in the afternoon, with images on social media showing the train approaching a level crossing at a moderate speed before colliding with the bus, which instantly burst into flames.

"The fire is now out and we are trying to recover the bodies," Urumporn said.

The flames appeared to spread

quickly. "I didn't dare look back to see if there were any victims," a witness who was near the intersection with her daughter told public broadcaster Thai PBS.

Thai Prime Minister Anutin Charnvirakul has ordered an investigation into the incident, according to a statement from his office.

Deadly transport accidents are common in Thailand, which regularly tops lists of the world's most lethal roads, with speeding, drunk driving and weak law enforcement

all contributing factors.

The collapse of a crane onto a passenger train killed 32 people and injured dozens in Thailand's northeast in January.

A collision between a freight train and a bus carrying passengers to a religious ceremony killed 18 people in 2020.

Three years later, eight people were killed in a collision between a freight train and a pickup truck crossing a railway line in the east of the country. (AFP)

Man dies after shark bite off Western Australia coast

A man attacked by a shark off Western Australia's coast yesterday died of his injuries, police said, in what is the second fatal shark attack in Australia so far this year. The 38-year-old victim, yet to be identified, was bitten on Saturday morning at Horseshoe Reef near Rottnest Island, about 31 km (19.2 miles) west of state capital Perth, police said in a statement. The man was taken to shore but could not be revived, police said, adding that a report would be prepared for the coroner.

State authorities advised people to take extra caution in the water at Rottnest Island, a popular tourist destination. Aerial footage from the Australian Broadcasting Corporation showed a police boat, police officers, and a rescue helicopter with a stretcher at the scene. Most shark attacks occur along the east and southeast seaboard of Australia. (Reuters)

Scientists dig up Southeast Asia's largest dinosaur in Thailand

By Will Dunham
Reuters

Along a meandering river in a warm and arid region that is now Thailand roughly 113mn years ago, a plant-eating behemoth almost 90 feet (27m) long browsed on the treetops without much fear of predators due to its sheer size. This was Nagatitan chaiyaphumensis, the largest-known dinosaur from Southeast Asia.

Researchers have unearthed skeletal remains of Nagatitan, a member of the dinosaur lineage called sauropods known for having a long neck, long tail, small head and four columnar legs.

The fossils of this Cretaceous Period dinosaur were first spotted by a villager in Thailand's northeastern province of Chaiyaphum. Scientists over a period of years then dug up spine, rib, pelvis and leg bones including a front leg bone — the humerus — measuring 5.8 feet (1.78m) long.

Based on the dimensions of its humerus and femur, the corresponding hind leg bone, the researchers estimated Nagatitan's body mass at 25-28 tonnes. Its head and teeth were not among the fossils recovered, but the researchers have a good idea of its feeding preferences based on other sauropods.

"Nogatitan was probably a bulk browser that focused on consuming high volumes of vegetation that required little to no chewing such as conifers and possibly seed ferns," said Thitiwoot Sethapanichsakul, a University College London doctoral student in palaeontology and lead author of the research published on Thursday in the journal Scientific Reports.

The climate was probably subtropical, with some forests, but also savanna-like and shrubland habitats. Nagatitan lived alongside various other dinosaurs as well as flying reptiles called pterosaurs. The rivers were teeming with crocodiles and fish including freshwater sharks.

The ecosystem's largest predator was a relative of the giant African meat-eating dinosaur *Carcharodontosaurus*, probably about 26 feet (8m) long and around 3.5 tonnes.

"At that size, it was dwarfed by Nagatitan. At full size, Nagatitan likely had very little to fear in terms of predation," Sethapanichsakul said.

Predators probably avoided attacking healthy adults of any large sauropod species because of the danger of being squashed. But they may have targeted old or sick adults or vulnerable babies.

"Indeed, sauropods are known to have grown very quickly after hatching, and this probably relates to the dangers of predation. The sooner sauropods could become large, the safer they were because they would have been more difficult to tackle," University College London palaeontologist and study co-author Paul Upchurch said.

Sauropods included the largest land animals in Earth's history. Na-

gatitan was huge by any standard, but not on the scale of some South American sauropods such as *Argentinosaurus* and *Patagotitan* that topped 100 feet (30m) long.

Nogatitan's name references Naga, a serpent-like being in some Asian religious traditions that is prominently depicted in various Thai temples. In all, there are 14 named dinosaurs known from Thailand.

The names of several large sauropods include the word titan. Sethapanichsakul said it might be appropriate to call Nagatitan Southeast Asia's last "titan" because the region became a shallow sea later in the Cretaceous, meaning no more sauropods would live there.

Nogatitan provides insight into sauropod diversity in the region. Not many sauropods are known from Southeast Asia, and Nagatitan is the largest and the geologically youngest of them. Nagatitan belonged to a subgroup of sauropods that possessed bones with

lots of internal air sacs and thin walls, traits that lightened their skeletons.

This group originated around 140mn years ago, achieved a global distribution and, around 90mn years ago, became the only sauropods left worldwide, thriving until the dinosaur age ended 66mn years ago with an asteroid impact.

Nogatitan lived at a time when Earth's atmospheric carbon dioxide levels were climbing, corresponding to high global temperatures.

"Sauropods seem to have become particularly large at this time, with gigantic forms living in South America, China, probably North Africa, and now with Nagatitan a fairly large one in Southeast Asia," Upchurch said.

"This possible relationship between large body size and high climatic temperatures is not fully understood, but it's likely that the high temperatures had an impact on the plant fodder that was important to sauropods, which were



Researcher Thitiwoot Sethapanichsakul poses with a front leg bone, or humerus, of the Cretaceous Period sauropod dinosaur Nagatitan chaiyaphumensis at the Sirindhorn Museum in Kalasin Province, Thailand, in 2024, in a photograph released on May 14, 2026. (Reuters)

very large-bodied herbivores. Nagatitan gives a glimpse of the period leading up to the eventual peak in body size and temperatures about 10-15mn years later," Upchurch said.

Tens of thousands turn out for UK far-right rally, counter demo

AFP
London

Thousands of people began rallying in London yesterday at a march organised by far-right activist Tommy Robinson and a counter-demonstration fused with a pro-Palestinian protest, amid a huge police presence.

London's Metropolitan Police said ahead of the duelling events that it would mount one of its largest operations in recent years, as the British capital also hosts the FA Cup Final.

The force was set to deploy 4,000 officers – alongside horses, dogs, drones and helicopters – to manage Robinson's so-called "Unite the Kingdom" march and the rival rally marking Nakba Day. Nakba commemorates the 1948 displacement of Palestinians during the creation of Israel. It will combine with an anti-fascism march organised by the Stand Up to Racism group.

The Met police estimated 30,000 people would attend that event, setting off from west London, while 50,000 would be at the "Unite the Kingdom" march starting from Holborn in the heart of the capital. Natasha, 44, was among those

who had travelled in for Robinson's rally, wearing a bucket hat in the colours of Britain's Union Jack and draped in the flag.

"It's nice to be around my own culture," she told AFP near its start-point, calling the event "patriotic" and insisting "there's nothing racist about it".

Union Jack-wielding Justin, 56, from Essex, who declined to give his last name, echoed the sentiment. He said attendees were protesting "a whole load of stuff".

"Obviously immigration is a big part of it," he noted.

Across London, Simon Ralls, 62, from Nottingham in central England, had turned out for the combined pro-Palestine and Stand Up to Racism event.

"The right (wing) are emboldened – we're here to try and counter that, make sure people aren't ignorant," he told AFP ahead of marching into the city centre.

Last September, Robinson drew up to 150,000 people into central London for a similarly themed rally proclaiming "national unity, free speech and Christian values" – an unprecedented turnout for an event organised by a far-right figure.

He has tapped into growing public anger over tens of thousands



Supporters of British far-right activist Tommy Robinson, real name Stephen Yaxley-Lennon, wait for the start of a march in central London, yesterday. (AFP)

of migrants crossing the English Channel each year in small boats, wider immigration policies, alleged free speech curbs and other issues.

X owner Elon Musk addressed that gathering via video-link. The rally shocked mainstream Britain for its scale and raw messaging, as well as clashes between some participants and police which injured dozens of officers.

The Met has imposed various conditions yesterday's two rallies, over their routes and timings, in a bid to keep rival attendees apart. The force, which estimates

the operation will cost £4.5mn (\$6mn), warned it would adopt "a zero-tolerance approach".

That includes for the first time making organisers legally responsible for ensuring invited speakers do not break hate speech laws.

Officers arrested two men yesterday morning arriving for the Robinson rally who were wanted on suspicion of grievous bodily harm following an incident in Birmingham, central England, when "a man was run over". No further details were provided. Prime Minister Keir Starmer



People hold signs and flags as demonstrators from the Palestine Solidarity Campaign hold a march to mark the 78th anniversary of the Nakba in London, yesterday. (Reuters)

warned on Friday that "anyone who sets out to wreak havoc on our streets, to intimidate or threaten anyone... can expect to face the full force of the law".

He accused the organisers of Robinson's rally of "peddling hatred and division".

Robinson has urged his attendees not to wear masks or drink excessive alcohol, and to be "peaceful and courteous".

Police have voiced fears about football hooligan groups which have previously supported Robinson showing up.

Meanwhile the FA Cup Final between Chelsea and Manchester City kicking off at 4pm (1500 GMT) could strain the policing operation.

The Met has said live facial recognition would be used for the first time to police a protest.

Meanwhile, the government blocked 11 "foreign far-right agitators" from entering Britain for Robinson's rally. They include US-based "extremist" Valentina Gomez, who the government said is "known for using inflammatory and dehumanising rhetoric about Muslim communities".

UK's ex-health minister says will run to replace Starmer

AFP
London

Wes Streeting, who resigned as UK health secretary this week, announced yesterday he will run to replace Keir Starmer as Labour leader and prime minister, after the party suffered disastrous local election results.

Streeting quit the government on Thursday with a withering assessment of Starmer's leadership, but no other senior minister followed suit and the 43-year-old MP did not immediately trigger a leadership contest.

Later that day, Greater Manchester mayor Andy Burnham unveiled a bid to become an MP which, if successful, would allow the 56-year-old from the left of the party to stand in that contest.

While still not announcing he has kickstarted the formal leadership challenge process, Streeting confirmed yesterday he will vie to replace Starmer and become the centre-left Labour's new leader.

Whoever leads the ruling party, which has a big majority in Britain's parliament, will by default become prime minister.

"We need a proper contest with the best candidates on the field, and I'll be standing," Streeting

said in a speech and question-and-answer session at a think tank event in London.

Explaining the lack of a formal contest launch, Streeting – from Labour's right-wing and long thought to covet the premiership – said he wanted "all of the candidates... on the pitch".

"If we had rushed ahead without giving Andy a chance to stand, the new leader, whether it was me or anyone else, would lack the legitimacy."

A Labour party leadership contest can be triggered if 81 of its MPs – 20% of the party in parliament – formally back a candidate to challenge Starmer and submit the necessary paperwork.

Starmer, as current leader, would automatically be on the ballot if he wants to defend the challenge.

Labour members and affiliates then get to vote, not just MPs. They rank candidates in order of preference and a contender needs 50% to win.

Labour's National Executive Committee (NEC) – which selects the party's candidates in parliamentary seat elections – said on Friday it had permitted Burnham "to stand in the candidate selection process" in the by-election in Makerfield, northwest England.

That contest is expected in



Keir Starmer and Wes Streeting. (AFP/File photo)

mid-June at the earliest, meaning any formal leadership challenge is likely to be triggered afterwards.

The political jockeying follows dismal results for Labour in local and regional elections held last week, which have prompted several junior ministers and dozens of the party's MPs to demand Starmer to step down.

But the beleaguered 63-year-old UK leader appears to have been granted a stay of execution, of sorts, while Burnham's fate is decided in the Makerfield by-election.

Burnham told British me-

dia Saturday he was prepared to "fight to the highest level".

Meanwhile it appears Streeting, who delivered a wide-ranging speech at the think tank event, has kicked off a leadership campaign in all but name.

Setting out a fledgling policy platform, he said Brexit was "a catastrophic mistake" and that Britain must pursue a "new special relationship" with the European Union.

He signalled he wanted to see the country rejoin the trade bloc in the future.

Maldives rescue diver dies in search for missing Italians

AFP
Malé

A rescue diver in the Maldives searching for the bodies of four Italians, who drowned in the deadliest diving disaster in the Indian Ocean tourist destination, has also died, authorities said yesterday.

Teams from the Maldivian National Defence Force (MNDF) were searching for a third day for the Italians who failed to return after a dive on Thursday, officials said.

One body from the group of five was recovered the same day.

Search operations are being carried out despite bad weather. "Staff Sergeant Mohamed Mahudhy was taken to hospital in critical condition after surfacing during the search operation, but later passed away while receiving treatment," the MNDF said in a statement. Earlier on Saturday, the Mal-

dives suspended the operating licence of a luxury vessel from which the Italians had been diving from.

The University of Genoa said the victims included a marine biology professor, her daughter and two young researchers.

Chief government spokesman Mohamed Hussain Shareef said an investigation had been launched into why the group went below the officially permitted depth of 30 metres (98 feet).

The body of one diver, yet to be publicly named, was found in a cave at a depth of 60m (196 feet).

Suspended operating licence

"The Ministry of Tourism and Civil Aviation has suspended the operating licence of the liveaboard vessel MV Duke of York indefinitely, pending the outcome of an investigation into the diving incident that occurred in Vaavu Atoll on May 14," the ministry said.

The Duke of York is a 36-metre luxury boat that can accommodate 25 guests.

Sri Lanka raises tax on imported cars as Middle East crisis bites

AFP
Colombo

Sri Lanka slapped a 50% surcharge on customs duties on vehicles yesterday in a bid to discourage imports and ease currency pressure stemming from the Middle East conflict.

The increase in taxes comes as the local rupee has sharply depreciated since the start of US and Israeli attacks on Iran, which prompted retaliation by Tehran.

"Given the current pressure on foreign exchange, we want people to delay their imports (of vehicles) by three months," Junior Finance Minister Anil Jayantha Fernando told reporters in Colombo.

Vehicle were charged a customs duty of 30% but several other taxes make the effective import

tax on a car more than 100%.

Sri Lanka has increased energy prices by more than a third since the start of the Middle East war and has rationed diesel and petrol in a bid to reduce the import bill.

Official figures show that Sri Lanka's rupee has depreciated by 4.5% against the dollar so far this year.

Central Bank Governor Nandanal Weerasinghe told a parliamentary panel last week that the rupee would continue to slide unless global oil prices fell or Sri Lanka slashed energy imports.

Sri Lanka is emerging from its worst economic meltdown in 2022, when it ran out of foreign exchange to finance even the most essential imports such as food, fuel and medicines.

Since then, the country has been under a \$2.9bn IMF bailout programme.

Bangladesh arrests ex-soldier after attack plot threat

Bangladesh anti-terrorism police are questioning an ex-soldier, arrested after a manhunt that began last month following warnings of attacks targeting airports, parliament and places of worship, police said yesterday.

The suspect, named as 23-year-old Mohammad Rahed Hossain

Mahed, "had taken refuge in a hideout near the Indian border," said Md Moniruzzaman, head of the police station at Moulvibazar, a northeastern district.

Counter-terrorism officers were questioning Mahed.

"The arrested individual is a dismissed army personnel mem-

ber and was inspired by the ideology of the banned outfit Dawlatul Islam Neo-JMB," a police statement late Friday said.

In late April, police tightened airport security after they warned of a possible attack, and a manhunt had been ongoing since then. Police said the suspects could

launch attacks on key installations, including airports, parliament and places of worship, using "sharp weapons, firearms or explosive devices".

Bangladesh has periodically been targeted by homegrown militant groups inspired by Al Qaeda and the Islamic State group. (AFP)

Indian police seize 227kg of captagon in first big haul

Indian police have seized 227kg (500 pounds) of the powerful synthetic stimulant captagon worth nearly \$19mn, the country's first seizure of the drug, the interior minister said yesterday.

Anti-narcotics officers also arrested a Syrian national, who the ministry said was a member of an "international drug syndicate".

Captagon is little known in India, and the ministry said the drugs had been smuggled into the country in a container from Syria "with sheep wool as a declared consignment", a statement said.

Preliminary investigation has revealed that the seized consignment was intended for transshipment to the Gulf region, particularly Saudi Arabia and neighbouring Middle Eastern countries," it said.

The drug became Syria's largest export during the civil war that erupted in 2011, with its trade serving as a key funding source for the government of ousted president Bashar al-Assad.

Syrian authorities have reported numerous major seizures of captagon since Assad's fall.

Neighbouring countries also continue to report the interception of large shipments.

"Our agencies have achieved the first-ever seizure of captagon," Home Minister Amit Shah said in a statement posted on social media.

"We will clamp down on every gram of drugs entering India or leaving the country using our territory as the transit route," he said.

Officers first seized 31.5kg of captagon tablets after searching a house in the capital New Delhi on May 11.

It said the tablets had been "carefully concealed in a commercial chapati (flat bread) cutting machine which preliminary investigation suggests was intended for export to Jeddah, Saudi Arabia".

After questioning the Syrian national, anti-narcotics agents then raided a container at Mundra port in the western state of Gujarat, seizing a further 196kg of captagon.

"This operation... exposes attempts by international syndicates to use India as a transit hub," the ministry said. (AFP)

Modi oversees semiconductor deal on Dutch trip

AFP
The Hague

Dutch tech giant ASML signed a deal with Tata Electronics yesterday to help build and scale up a semi-conductor plant in India, overseen by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on his tour of the Netherlands.

ASML, which makes cutting-edge machines to manufacture semi-conductors, said it would "enable the establishment and ramp-up" of the Dholera plant in Modi's home state of Gujarat in western India.

The Dutch firm would deploy its advanced lithography tools in the plant, which allow for the rapid mass production of high-tech microchips, found in everything from cars to mobile phones.

The deal came as the Netherlands and India were set to strike an economic partnership accord, following on from a free-trade agreement between India and the European Union that Modi dubbed "the mother of all deals".

ASML, Europe's biggest tech firm by market value, said it saw "many compelling opportunities" in the Indian semiconductor sector.

"We are committed to establishing long-term partnerships in the region," said ASML's chief executive officer Christophe Fouquet in a statement.

Tata Electronics' plant, with a planned in-



Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi (3rd left) and Netherlands Prime Minister Rob Jetten (3rd right) take part in a CEO roundtable on Economic Ties with India's National Security Adviser Ajit Doval, India's Minister of External Affairs Subrahmanyam Jaishankar and Dutch Minister of Foreign Trade and Development Co-operation Sjoerd Sjoerdsma in The Hague yesterday. (AFP)

vestment of \$11bn, will make semiconductor chips for the AI sector, as well as the car industry and other economic segments.

New Delhi sees the European bloc as an important source of much-needed technology and investment to rapidly upscale its infrastructure and create millions of new jobs.

On the other side, the EU has eyed India – the world's most populous nation and a fast-growing economy – as an important market for the future.

Modi's trip to the Netherlands was his second since 2017, as the two countries seek to boost bilateral trade from the \$27.8bn (23.7bn euros) last year.

Earlier Saturday, Modi also addressed a large crowd of Indian ex-pats and visited Dutch King Willem Alexander.

During his trip, he will also inspect the centuries-old Chola Plates, rings with engraved copper plates, that are being returned to India by Leiden University.



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GULF TIMES

Fatima Sana's world record caps journey of courage, poise

On Friday, Pakistan's 24-year-old captain Fatima Sana created a new world record for the fastest T20I fifty in the women's game against Zimbabwe.

The record was no fluke. Walking in at No. 6 with Pakistan 152 for 4, Fatima reached 50 in 15 balls — eclipsing the 18-ball mark jointly held by Sophie Devine, Phoebe Litchfield and Richa Ghosh — and finished unbeaten on 62 off 19, with 10 fours and two sixes.

Fatima has already lived through the kind of emotional highs and personal devastation that shape sporting legends.

To Pakistan cricket followers, she is the pace-bowling all-rounder who rose from Karachi's narrow streets to captain the national women's side.

But behind the headlines lies a story of sacrifice, grief, stubborn resilience and a father's unwavering belief in a daughter who refused to surrender to circumstance.

Born in Karachi, Fatima did not emerge from Pakistan's traditional elite cricketing pipeline. She came from a modest household where dreams were often larger than means. Cricket itself was not initially seen as a straightforward path for girls, especially in conservative social settings where sporting careers for women still carry social pressures. Yet her father became the central force behind her journey.

Little-known among casual fans is how personally invested he was in her cricketing ambitions. He would accompany her to training sessions, encourage her when others questioned the practicality of women's cricket, and shield her from the discouragement that many aspiring female athletes in South Asia encounter.

Off the field, however, Fatima remains strikingly grounded. She avoids excessive celebrity culture and speaks modestly about achievements

Those close to Fatima have often described her father not merely as a parent but as the emotional architect of her career.

She began by playing street cricket with boys in Karachi, where toughness mattered more than reputation. Competing against boys sharpened her competitive edge and aggressive bowling temperament.

Coaches quickly noticed her natural seam movement and ability to bowl with surprising

pace. What made her stand out even more was her temperament: calm under pressure, fiercely disciplined and emotionally mature beyond her years.

Her rise was remarkably swift. By her late teens, she had entered Pakistan's domestic structure. Then came international recognition. In 2021, she was named the ICC Women's Emerging Cricketer of the Year — a major breakthrough for Pakistan women's cricket and a symbolic moment for a player who had climbed from obscurity without glamour or privilege.

Yet the defining chapter of her life was not written in triumph, but in tragedy.

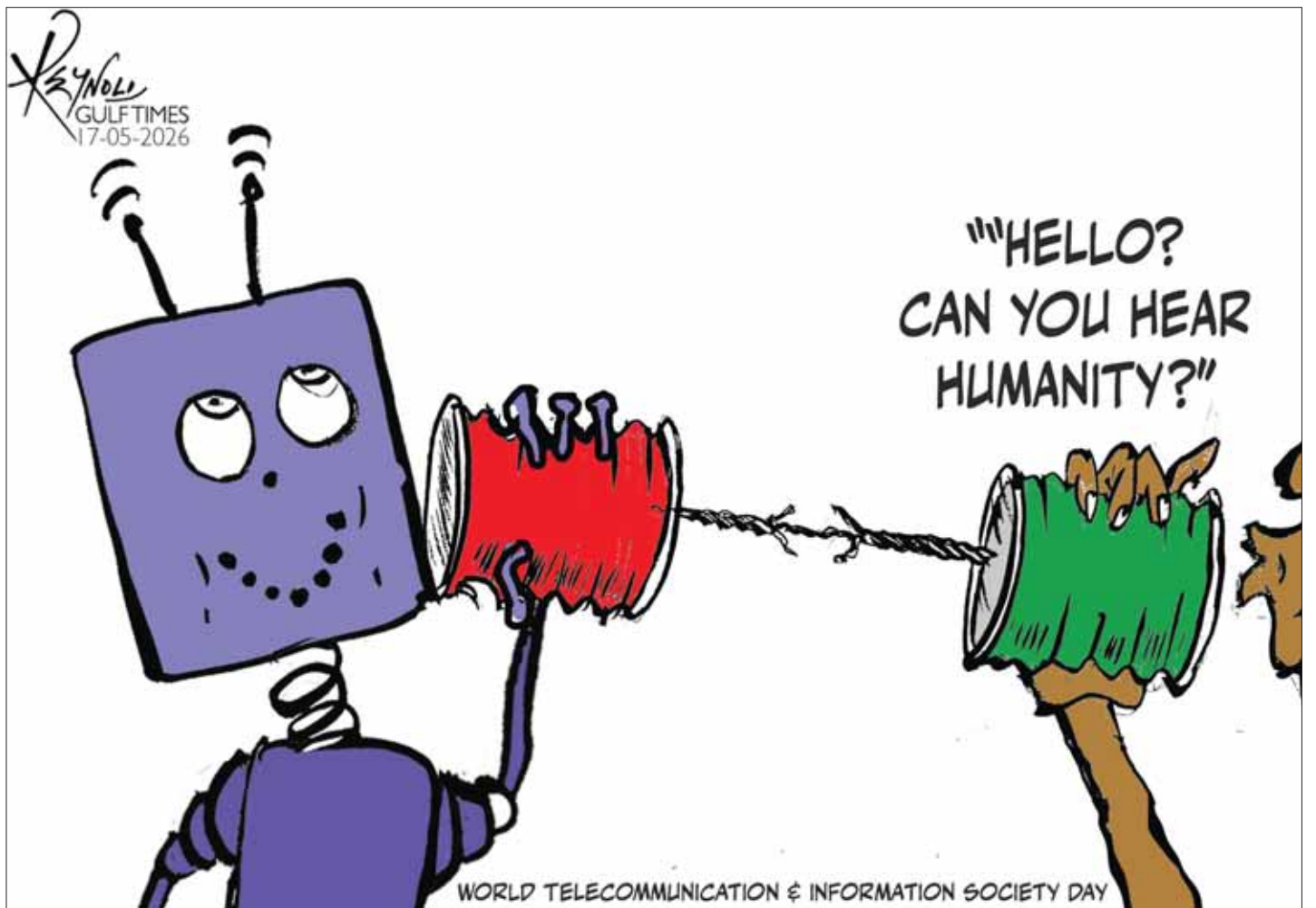
During the 2024 ICC Women's T20 World Cup campaign, Fatima received news that shattered her world: her father had passed away back home in Karachi. Pakistan's captain immediately left the tournament in the UAE to attend his funeral. The image of a grieving young captain walking away from the biggest stage in women's cricket became one of the tournament's most emotional moments.

What many admired was not only her grief, but her sense of duty. Despite unimaginable emotional pain, she later returned to rejoin the Pakistan squad during the tournament. That decision transformed public perception of her. She was no longer merely a promising cricketer; she became a symbol of emotional endurance.

Teammates and observers noted how deeply attached she had been to her father. In many ways, every milestone in her cricket career carried his fingerprints. His death was not simply a personal loss; it was the loss of the person who had believed in her before selectors, headlines and awards ever did.

On the field, Fatima combines sharp seam bowling with lower-order hitting ability, making her one of Pakistan's most valuable multi-dimensional players. Off the field, however, she remains strikingly grounded. She avoids excessive celebrity culture, speaks modestly about achievements and frequently credits family support for her journey. Her leadership style also reflects her background. Unlike louder, more flamboyant captains, Fatima's authority comes through composure and example-setting. Many younger players reportedly see her as approachable precisely because she understands struggle firsthand.

In a cricket ecosystem where Pakistan women's cricket still fights for visibility and institutional support compared to the men's game, Fatima Sana's story resonates beyond statistics. It is the story of a daughter carrying forward her father's dream, a young woman from humble origins breaking barriers through discipline, and an athlete who continued standing even after life delivered its cruelest blow.



Qatar at the forefront of world's most digitally advanced nations

On World Telecommunication and Information Society Day, Qatar continues its digital leadership amid global challenges in technology access

QNA
Doha

Global disparities in internet access are presenting an escalating challenge to international efforts aimed at promoting equality and achieving the Sustainable Development Goals, as gaps in digital accessibility persist across different social demographics and nations.

The issue takes center stage on World Telecommunication and Information Society Day, observed annually on May 17. The 2026 theme, 'Digital Lifelines: Strengthening Resilience in a Connected World,' underscores the critical role of digital infrastructure as a foundational pillar supporting vital services and bolstering societal resilience in an increasingly connected world.

Against this backdrop, the international observance serves as a reminder of the urgent need to protect the digital technologies that underpin essential societal functions and critical infrastructure. Experts note this can be achieved through a comprehensive framework agreed upon by all United Nations member states. Such a framework would define common parameters for digital trust and security within a shared vision for digital co-operation rooted in universal values.

Within this framework, international organizations and telecommunications experts are calling for the reinforcement of digital lifelines to ensure a more interconnected and resilient world. As reliance on secure communication networks grows, these lifelines — comprising terrestrial networks, submarine cables, satellites, and data systems — now form the core infrastructure of modern societies and economies.

Conversely, despite the benefits of digital technologies, the potential for misuse remains high. Rogue actors can bypass laws and violate human rights through unauthorized access to personal data and the deployment of surveillance technologies. This risk has prompted widespread calls to place human rights at the center of regulatory frameworks and legislation.

"Digital technology is shaping history," United Nations Secretary-



Web Summit Qatar is a meeting point for tech enthusiasts from around the world.

General Antonio Guterres said in a statement marking World Telecommunication and Information Society Day. "But it also raises profound questions about the human future, human rights, equality, and security in our societies."

Guterres added that addressing these challenges depends on the ability of diverse stakeholders to work collectively to maximize the benefits of technology while mitigating its risks and negative applications. On a national level, the Ministry of Communications and Information Technology continues to advance a strategic vision aimed at positioning the country as a global leader in digital transformation.

Through a series of initiatives, Qatar has established itself among the world's most digitally advanced nations. The country's strategy relies on a robust infrastructure integrated with cutting-edge technologies, including artificial intelligence and blockchain.

Furthermore, the ministry also focuses on digital literacy and cybersecurity, aiming to ensure that all members of society can engage safely across digital platforms, fostering a secure and inclusive digital environment. Speaking on the importance of the digital sector and the practical implications of its deployment, Director of the Digital Innovation Department at the Ministry of Communications and Information Technology (MCIT), Eman al-Kuwari, said digital innovation constitutes a central pillar in the country's efforts to develop a knowledge-based digital economy, in line with the foundations of the Digital Agenda 2030, which aims to contribute QR40bn to the non-oil economy and generate

26,000 jobs.

In remarks to the Qatar News Agency (QNA), al-Kuwari said the ministry is implementing this transformation through integrated pillars: advancing the performance of vital sectors by expanding the use of artificial intelligence, and enabling a nationally connected innovation ecosystem linked to global markets and systems.

Al-Kuwari added that the ministry has strengthened strategic partnerships with major technology companies, including Microsoft, Google Cloud, Oracle and Scale AI, while also deepening co-operation with the private and academic sectors through digital transformation offices across several key industries.

Al-Kuwari noted that one of the most significant achievements in entrepreneurship has been the inclusion of more than 521 startups in the Digital Incubation Center, with those companies securing more than QR 747mn in funding.

She added that startups from 78 countries have also been attracted to Qatar, generating revenues exceeding QR 670mn. She said the 2030 Digital Agenda had received recognition from the United Nations as one of the leading international practices in digital transformation.

For her part, Director of the Digital Society and Digital Competencies Department at MCIT, Duha al-Buhendi, said the ministry is committed to fostering a more digitally prepared society through investment in digital skills development and strengthening national capabilities to meet the demands of the digital future.

Al-Buhendi told QNA that the ministry is developing initiatives and programs targeting various segments of society to enhance digital readiness and align skills with labor market needs. She said one of the ministry's most

prominent initiatives is the Qatar Digital Academy, which delivered more than 330 training programs last year, benefiting over 5,700 employees from more than 90 entities, in partnership with 17 global technology providers.

She added that initiatives such as Studio 5 and the digital safety project Safe Space have contributed to promoting digital awareness and fostering a culture of innovation and online safety among children, youth, parents and teachers.

Qatar ranks first globally in the Digital Accessibility Rights Evaluation (DARE) Index for 2020, issued by the Global Initiative for Inclusive ICTs, known as G3ict, which tracks countries' progress in making information and communications technology accessible to all, in line with Article 9 of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

Qatar also ranked first globally in internet penetration, with a rate of 99% in 2021, according to the 'Digital 2021: Global Overview Report,' issued by Hootsuite, which covered more than 230 countries and territories. In addition, the country ranked third in the Arab world in the 2023 Government Electronic and Mobile Services Maturity Index (GEMS).

In the same context, Qatar placed third among Arab countries in the 2023 ICT Development Index, which covered 169 countries and is based on 10 indicators measuring universal and meaningful connectivity as well as the quality of internet access.

In terms of achievements, Qatar received the World Summit Award for Arabic digital content through the government portal Hukoomi in the category of e-government and open data in 2011 and 2013. The Ministry of Communications and Information Technology also received ISO/IEC 27001 certification in 2018 following an assessment of information security systems in shared government services.

In 2020, the ministry received the "Champion" award from the World Summit on the Information Society for the Safe Space platform in the category of "Building Confidence and Security in the Use of ICTs."

In 2021, the TASMU platform won a World Summit Awards award in the category of "Government and Citizen Engagement," selected among 40 winners from nearly 800 nominations representing more than 100 countries.



On a national level, Qatar's Ministry of Communications and Information Technology (MCIT) continues to advance a strategic vision aimed at positioning the country as a global leader in digital transformation.

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Qatar's Haj Mission arrives in Holy Lands

QNA
Makkah Al Mukarramah

The Qatar's official Haj mission delegation has arrived in the Holy Lands as part of the extensive preparations by the Qatari Ministry of Endowments (Awqaf) and Islamic Affairs to finalise all services and ensure appropriate conditions ahead of pilgrims' departure.

These services are intended to facilitate a experience in which pilgrims will enjoy a secure and integrated atmosphere. The mission's supportive units are continuing their field operations round the clock alongside units that had already departed to Saudi Arabia days ago.

These operations are underway as part of an integrated plan aimed at full readiness ahead of the arrival of the first groups of pilgrims on the fourth of Dhu al-Hijjah, and to provide top-notch services that meet the needs of Qatar's pilgrims in terms of comfort and safety throughout their religious journey.

A variety of supportive units are continuing their missions based on operational plans in tandem with the competent authorities in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, the mission highlighted, emphasising that these plans ensure smooth procedures and swift response to all requirements related to serving pilgrims.

Operating in Al Naseem District in Makkah Al Mukarramah,

the mission embarks on an overall plan to provide specialised and integrated services in co-ordination between Qatari Haj operatives and Saudi authorities to ensure top-notch services for pilgrims throughout the various stages of this religious journey.

The mission consists of specialised field units operating within an integrated system to ensure that Qatar's pilgrims enjoy comfort based on the top-tier services provided by the Saudi Ministry of Haj and Umrah.

The mission further pointed out that these supportive units are set to resume direct supervision of Qatar operators' performance to ensure compliance with Saudi requirements and standards, especially regarding accommodation,

amenities, and health care, thereby ensuring the highest levels of security and safety and integrated services.

The liaison and support unit continues to perform its duties round the clock as a direct link between pilgrims, pilgrimage operators, and service units, receiving inquiries and feedback and addressing them in religious, medical, organisational, and technical aspects, thereby enhancing response speed and raising pilgrim satisfaction.

The mission further outlined that close co-ordination among supportive units and Qatar's pilgrimage operators represents a core element of a successful season. It confirmed that work is underway within a unified



system aimed at achieving the highest levels of organisation and competency, while providing maximum security, safety, and comfort for pilgrims of Qatar.

These endeavours are part of Qatar's Awqaf Strategy 2025-2030, which prioritizes Haj under the theme of maximizing Islamic rites and rituals and streamlining their performance in accordance with the system prepared by the competent authorities in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

This system has had a clear impact in upgrading the Haj pilgrimage framework in a way that best suits pilgrims. Qatar's Awqaf asserted that all efforts undertaken by the mission demonstrate the nation's commitment to providing a facilitated and secure pilgrimage experience through harnessing human, regulatory, and technological capabilities, which ultimately help pilgrims perform rites in a tranquil and faithful atmosphere that best suits this blessed Islamic ritual.



People stand close to a stranded humpback whale in the Wismarer Bucht bay of Baltic Sea. (AFP/File Photo)

Rescued whale 'Timmy' found dead in Denmark

AFP
Copenhagen

A humpback whale that underwent a rescue operation in Germany two weeks ago after beaching itself there has been found dead near a Danish island, officials said yesterday.

"It can now be confirmed that the stranded humpback whale near Anholt is the same whale that was previously stranded in Germany and was the subject of rescue attempts," Jane Hansen, division head at the Danish Environmental Protection Agency, said in a statement to AFP.

The whale, dubbed "Timmy" in Germany's media, was initially spotted stuck on sandbank on March 23. After various failed attempts it was finally put in a barge and released into the North Sea off Denmark on May 2.

The whale carcass was first spotted off the coast of the Danish

island Anholt in the Kattegatt sea between Sweden and Denmark on Thursday but authorities were at first not able to confirm it was the same whale.

"Conditions today made it possible for a local employee from the Danish Nature Agency to locate and retrieve an attached tracking device that was still fastened to the whale's back. The position and appearance of the device confirm that this is the same whale that had previously been observed and handled in German waters," Hansen said, adding that "at this time, there are no concrete plans to remove the whale from the area or to perform a necropsy, and it is not currently considered to pose a problem in the area."

The Danish Environmental Protection Agency said that while it understood "the considerable public interest in this particular whale," it stressed that people should keep a safe distance and refrain from approaching the whale.

"This is because the whale may carry diseases that can also be transmitted to humans, and there may also be a risk of explosion," as decomposition creates large volumes of gases, it said.

In Germany, the whale was first seen on the sandbank near the city of Luebeck, on Germany's Baltic Sea coast, before freeing itself but then becoming stuck again several times. Various attempts to save it failed, and authorities had announced they were giving up. But then two wealthy entrepreneurs, Karin Walter-Mommert and Walter Gunz, stepped in to finance the rescue, whose cost was estimated at 1.5 mn euros (\$1.7 mn).

They came up with what many saw as a long-shot plan: coax the whale into the water-filled hold of a special barge and tow it back to its natural habitat.

Some experts at the time criticised the privately financed rescue plan, saying it would only cause the animal more distress.

Kulbergs tapped to form interim govt in Latvia

AFP
Riga

Latvia's president yesterday appointed an opposition lawmaker, Andris Kulbergs, to form an interim government following the collapse of the ruling coalition in a row over stray Ukrainian drones.

Kulbergs, a 46-year-old former businessman considered "pragmatic" by local media, said he hoped to create an "enlarged coalition" to administer the Baltic country until parliamentary elections are held October 3.

"The president has given me 10 days," he told reporters.

Latvia's prime minister Evika Silina resigned on Thursday af-

ter a key party in her coalition withdrew support because Silina sacked her defence minister, a member of that party.

She fired the minister after saying Latvia's anti-drone defences had not deployed fast enough to parry two wayward Ukraine attack drones likely knocked off course by Russian jamming.

President Edgars Rinkevics settled on Kulbergs after meeting representatives from all the parties in parliament. He told reporters on Saturday that he had invited Kulbergs to form a government.

Should Kulbergs succeed, the cabinet line-up would still need to be approved by the parliament.

Several Russian and Ukrainian drones have crashed in Latvia over the course of Moscow's invasion of Ukraine, stirring public disquiet in the small former Soviet republic that is now a member of Nato and the EU.

On May 7, two Ukrainian drones flew over from Russia, with one of them crashing into a petrol depot in the east of Latvia, causing a fire that was quickly contained.

On March 25, another stray Ukrainian drone crashed in Latvia. Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky said after speaking with Rinkevics at a summit in Romania on Wednesday that he would send Ukrainian experts to Latvia to help it boost its air defences.



Latvian President Edgars Rinkevics attends a press conference with opposition lawmaker Andris Kulbergs, who he proposed as the next prime minister after Evika Silina resigned, at the Riga Castle, in Riga yesterday. (Reuters)

Six arrested for flying Palestinian flag on Eiffel Tower

French authorities have arrested six people suspected of flying a Palestinian flag from the Eiffel Tower without permission, a police source informed the AFP yesterday.

Climate activist group Extinction Rebellion France claimed the responsibility for draping the large flag from the tower's first floor on Friday afternoon.

A representative said it was sending a "message of support" to Palestinians, accusing Israel of carrying out "massacres" in Gaza, as well as "ecocide crimes" including uprooting olive trees on the occupied Palestinian land. It was set to coincide with the Nakba Day - commemorating the 1948 displacement of Palestinians during the creation of Israel.

The flags of both Israel and Palestine, as well as peace images of a dove and olive branch, were in September projected onto the Eiffel Tower in Paris, ahead of France's announcement of recognising the Palestinian state. (AFP)



Activists unfurl a large Palestinian flag from the Eiffel Tower in Paris, France. (Reuters)

Pakistan minister in Tehran to 'facilitate' US-Iran peace talks

Pakistan's interior minister was in Tehran yesterday "to facilitate" the peace talks between Iran and the US that have stalled despite a fragile ceasefire, Iranian media reported. "Mohsin Naqvi arrived today in the Islamic Republic of Iran on an official two-day visit as part of Pakistan's ongoing efforts to facilitate talks and promote regional peace," the Tasnim news agency reported. Iranian Interior Minister Eskandar Momeni received Naqvi, whose visit to Tehran comes days after that of Pakistan's influential army chief, Field Marshal Asim Munir.

Islamabad has been actively mediating in the peace talks between Iran and the US and last month hosted a high stakes meeting between delegations from both sides. A ceasefire announced on April 9 has largely halted the fighting that erupted

when US and Israeli forces attacked Iran on February 28.

Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi said on Friday that Tehran had received messages from Washington indicating that President Donald Trump's administration's willingness to continue negotiations. Iran's chief negotiator and speaker of parliament, Mohammad Bagher Ghalibaf said on Tuesday that Washington should accept Tehran's proposal for peace or face "failure" after Trump rejected Iran's counteroffer and warned the ceasefire was on "life support".

"There is no alternative but to accept the rights of the Iranian people as laid out in the 14-point proposal. Any other approach will be completely inconclusive; nothing but one failure after another," Ghalibaf said, in a post. (AFP)

CROSSFIRE

Romania finds unexploded projectile near Ukraine border

An unexploded projectile was discovered on a property in southeastern Romania near the European Union and Nato member's border with Ukraine yesterday, its defence ministry said. Romania shares a 650-km (400-mile) land border with Ukraine. Russian drones attacking Ukraine's ports on the Danube river have repeatedly breached its airspace and fragments have sometimes fallen on its territory as Ukrainian forces shoot them down. What the ministry described as an unguided reactive projectile was found in the yard of an uninhabited house in the village of Pardina in Romania's Tulcea county. (Reuters)

ASSAULT

Ukraine drone attack kills 1 in Russian border region

A Ukrainian drone attack yesterday left a man dead in the Russian border region of Belgorod, local authorities said. The attack hit a vehicle in the town of Krasnaya Yaruga and killed a "civilian", according to a statement from the regional authorities. Ukraine and Russia have begun trading attacks after a three-day truce to mark the anniversary of victory in the Second World War, brokered by the US, expired overnight from Monday to Tuesday. Since sending troops into Ukraine in February 2022, Russia has frequently bombarded Ukraine's territory, targeting its essential infrastructure. (AFP)

BIKER GANG

Norway arrests 27 at Oslo biker gang gathering

Norwegian police said yesterday that they had arrested 27 people at a gathering organised by a criminal biker gang in Oslo. Police said in a statement that the arrests were made at an event organised by the group Comanches MC at a marina. The suspects were men, police said, ranging from their early 20s up to their 50s, and all were suspected of violating section 199 of Norway's penal code, which relates to participation in a criminal association. Police said they would "assess whether any of the suspects should be brought before the court to be remanded in custody", but that this would not happen before Monday. (AFP)

ROAD RAGE

Seven injured as driver in Modena runs over pedestrians

A driver injured seven people, two of them badly, when he drove on a sidewalk in the northern Italian city of Modena yesterday and then got out possibly holding a knife, the mayor said. Early eyewitness accounts said the driver, aged in his 30s apparently "aimed for the sidewalk, hitting a bike, then crashed while slamming head-on into a woman, badly hurt with both legs crushed", mayor Massimo Mezzetti said adding, "He was seen with a knife in his hand, but he didn't manage to stab anyone." He said that the circumstances of the incident were still unclear. "We need to understand what's behind this act," Mezzetti said. (AFP)



Alqantara publishing inaugurated at DIBF

The Doha International Book Fair saw the inauguration of Alqantara publishing and distribution, in the presence of HE the Minister of Culture Sheikh Abdulrahman bin Hamad al-Thani.

Attended by a group of intellectuals, writers, and those interested in the publishing industry, the launch comes as a reflection of the growing cultural movement in the State of Qatar and the increasing role of cultural industries in supporting knowledge-based development, with publishing being at the fore.

On the occasion, founder and director of Alqantara publishing and distribution, Jassim Salman said that the establishment of the publishing house stems from a belief in the importance of books in human building and awareness enhancing.

The publishing house aims to serve as a cultural and intellectual bridge connecting thought, creativity, and humanity, offering writers and creators a new space



HE Sheikh Abdulrahman bin Hamad al-Thani

for expression and production, Salman noted.

Inaugurating Alqantara publishing and distribution at the Doha International Book Fair carries important cultural significance, given the book fair's role as a leading platform for intellectual dialogue and cultural exchange, he added.

Salman noted that the publishing house will produce a variety of publications covering literature,

thought, humanities, children's books, and translated works, with a focus on high-quality content and works that promote knowledge, openness, and dialogue.

Following its launch, Alqantara publishing and distribution's first participation in the book fair is featuring a range of intellectual, literary, and translated works, with a special focus on Qatari works connected to identity and local memory. (QNA)

Defence minister tours Doha book fair

HE the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of State for Defence Affairs Sheikh Saud bin Abdulrahman bin Hassan al-Thani toured the 35th Doha International Book Fair (DIBF) yesterday at the Doha Exhibition and Convention Center (DECC). Accompanied by HE the Minister of Culture Sheikh Abdulrahman bin Hamad al-Thani, HE Sheikh Saud toured the venue, checking out several pavilions and meeting with organisers and visitors.



'Rich programme' attracts huge turnout at book fair

By Tawfik Lamari
Staff Reporter

The 35th edition of the Doha International Book Fair (DIBF) witnessed a large turnout yesterday, attracting a wide audience of readers, intellectuals, and young people who cling to books at the height of the acquisition of social media and digital technology.

Books still can build bridges of dialogue and knowledge for the youth for whom reading is a passion, renewed by the fair in the face of the digital age. During the fair, there was a remarkable turnout of young people who filled the halls, showcasing diverse intellectual and cultural interests. This affirmed that books still hold their place in a world rapidly transformed by digital advancements.

Their participation was not limited to browsing the pavilions and purchasing books, but extended to engaging in intellectual and cultural discussions about novels, Islamic thought, politics, psychology, and self-development. This scene reflected the fair's transformation into a space for dialogue, interaction, and the exchange of ideas, in addition to its role as a platform for displaying new publications.

Several young people pointed out that reading has become an



Experts during a panel discussion titled 'The State Appreciation Award: Paths of Culture and Heritage'.

important means of coping with the pressures of daily life and escaping digital distractions. The remarkable youth presence at the DIBF confirms that reading retains its appeal for new generations, and that books remain capable of building bridges of dialogue and knowledge, and fostering awareness and intellectual openness in the face of the challenges of the digital age.

Economic writer Ahmed Atef launched his book "Economics Made Simple", telling the media that his participation in the fair was "a significant milestone." He noted that the fair is one of the most important, largest, and oldest book fairs in the Gulf region, attracting a wide audience of publishers and writers from around the world.

Atef stated that his book aims to simplify economic concepts in accessible language, explaining that economics "is not an elitist science, but an integral part of everyday life."

He noted that the book explains

fundamental concepts, such as inflation, recession, interest rates, financial markets, gold, and currency, aiming to make these terms clearer and more accessible to the non-specialist reader.

He further explained that the motivation behind the book stemmed from the numerous questions people have daily about the economy, such as the direction of gold and dollar prices, and decisions regarding saving and investment.

He said: "I wanted to provide the reader with a simple introduction to understanding what's happening around them, without unnecessary complexity."

At the same time, visitors passionate about culture found the panel discussion titled 'The State Appreciation Award: Paths of Culture and Heritage' to be very enriching. Several recipients of the State Appreciation Award affirmed that preserving cultural and heritage identity is achieved by transforming heritage into living projects capable of addressing new generations in a



Writer Ahmed Atef

contemporary language.

Visual artist Yousef Ahmed spoke about his extensive experience working with Qatari palm fronds, considering their material that embodies "the essence and local spirit of Qatar," in addition to being an environmentally-friendly endeavour. Engineer Ibrahim al-Jaidah stressed that the State Appreciation Award represents "a crowning achievement"; as it culminates a journey of hard work and dedication, noting that the recognition places a doubled responsibility on creators towards future generations.

For his part, heritage researcher Ali bin Abdullah al-Fayyad addressed the importance of documenting heritage in both its tangible and intangible aspects, emphasising that oral traditions, folklore, poetry, and ancient tales constitute an integral part of the collective memory of Qatari society.

Doha-based author unveils latest novel *Made in Iraq*

By Ayman Adly
Staff Reporter

Iraqi author Maysaloom Fakher recently launched her latest novel *Made in Iraq*, written in Arabic, at the 35th edition of the Doha International Book Fair.

Fakher is a documentaries producer and has published four novels before her latest work, all in Arabic, and they mainly deal with issues such as the search for identity, nostalgia, alienation, and the struggle to keep up with the new realities of the new home away from the mother homeland Iraq.

She addresses the struggle of the venerable and goes with her stories around several generations of the same family across too and forth between the past, present and future to explore how her characters overcome their vulnerability and adopt the new realities.

In *Made in Iraq*, she takes the story of four generations through the life of her main character Noor, who lives in Sweden, and accordingly address intricate topics, such as war, struggle with oppression, internal conflict with living in a new culture and adopting a new way of life in a foreign land, and the memories that trouble the characters.

She said this novel explores the Iraqi identity through the perspective of the women of four generations of the same family, where their fears, memories, and ideas explore the history of the country through the eyes of the vulnerable focusing on day-to-day struggles to cope with the unpredictability of events.

Fakher has been living and



Maysaloom Fakher

working in Qatar since 2004, and sees that the culture scene in Qatar has been flourishing over the years with the Doha International Book Fair becoming a landmark event, much awaited by books and culture enthusiasts every year.

She expressed her appreciation for the great diversity and organisation of the event as it reflects all culture trends and gives space for more creativity and innovation. In particular, it hosts a considerably large number of renowned publishers from the Arab world, and the region alongside some key international publishers, giving the visitors a rich experience and a unique opportunity to explore different worlds of culture and knowledge.

She described the event as a key celebration of culture and knowledge, which acts as an interactive platform for authors, publishers, and readers, in addition to the various featured culture forms and lectures that accompany the event.

Made in Iraq is published by Al Jamal Publishing House (Manshurat Al-Jamal), which is considered among the prominent Arab publishing houses. It was founded in 1983.

Qatar Charity is participating in the 35th Doha International Book Fair (DIBF), running until May 23 at the Doha Exhibition and Convention Centre (DECC), as part of a major cultural event that brings together hundreds of publishers, institutions, and literary figures from around the world.

Qatar Charity's participation this year centres on its flagship national initiative, 'Future Writers', a pioneering programme dedicated to discovering and nurturing literary talent among children and youth across Qatar, while enhancing their creative writing skills.

Qatar Charity showcases 'Future Writers'

At its pavilion (H2-37), Qatar Charity offers visitors an in depth look at the evolution and achievements of the 'Future Writers' programme. The pavilion features a comprehensive display of student works from the programme's first through seventh editions, enabling visitors to explore published stories authored by winning students.

Visitors can also purchase signed copies of these works, meet the young authors in person, and learn about their expe-

riences in the programme.

As part of its participation, Qatar Charity hosted a panel discussion at the Cultural Salon yesterday, discussing nurturing youth talent for cultural development, institutional integration to support young writers, and transitioning from learning to actual publishing.

The panel featured programme judges, trainers, and past student winners who shared their success stories as a practical example of investing in youth capabilities.

Abdulaziz Jassim Hejji, executive director of Communications and Community Impact, Qatar Charity, emphasised that the programme is one of the organisation's flagship initiatives, designed to fill a significant gap in nurturing literary talent among younger generations.

He called on families, schools, universities, and aspiring young writers, particularly those with creative abilities, to visit Qatar Charity's pavilion to learn more

about the program, explore participation opportunities in future editions, and witness firsthand its positive impact on participants and on Qatar's cultural scene.

Since its launch in 2017, the 'Future Writers' programme has provided a comprehensive and competitive training environment for students from primary school through university level, including persons with disabilities. It enables participants to express themselves, discover their talents, and refine their writing skills.

Over successive editions, the programme has reached more

than 11,000 students across over 1,100 schools and universities, identified around 150 promising young writers, delivered dozens of specialised training workshops, and produced published story collections showcased at major cultural platforms, such as the Doha International Book Fair.

The programme is implemented in partnership with key national institutions, including the Ministry of Education and Higher Education, the Ministry of Culture, Qatar University, and the Qatari Forum for Authors, with sponsorship from Dukhan Bank.

Panel at DIBF highlights Qatar's educational journey rooted in national vision

HE former education minister, Abdulaziz bin Turki al-Subaie, said Qatar's educational journey was founded on a national vision that viewed knowledge as the cornerstone of progress and development.

His remarks came during a panel discussion held as part of the 35th edition of the Doha International Book Fair (DIBF), currently taking place at the Doha Exhibition and Convention Center, in the presence of HE the Minister of Culture, Abdulrahman bin Hamad al-Thani; HE the Minister of Social Development and Family, Buthaina bint Ali al-Jabr al-Nuaimi; HE the Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Dr Abdullah bin Abdulaziz bin Turki al-Subaie; and Syria's Minister of Culture, Mohammed Yassin Saleh.

During the session, which focused on his new book, *Masirah wa A'mal Munjazah (A Journey and Accomplished Works)*, Abdulaziz al-Subaie reviewed the early beginnings of formal education in Qatar and the challenges that accompanied the establishment of modern schools. He also discussed the transformations the country

has undergone since the 1950s, from the founding of Qatar University to the present-day expansion of the education sector.

Al-Subaie addressed several issues related to culture, education and school curricula in Qatar, noting that before the emergence of formal schools, education was limited to kuttab religious schools and traditional home-based instruction. He said the transition toward modern education began during the reign of Sheikh Ali bin Abdullah al-Thani, who adopted a vision for modern education aligned with the requirements of state-building.

He said Qatar's first education committee, composed of prominent national figures at the time, laid the foundations for formal education, leading to the opening of the country's first modern school in the early 1950s. The country faced major challenges during that period, including limited services and difficulties attracting Arab teachers, prompting authorities to raise salaries to encourage them to remain.

Al-Subaie said the support of the political leadership for education was a decisive factor in the



success of the experiment, noting that the former ruler of Qatar, Sheikh Ali bin Abdullah al-Thani, strongly backed the education sector and sought to provide incentives for students and teachers while expanding schools across cities and villages.

He also discussed the beginnings of girls' education in Qatar, saying the opening of the first girls' school in 1955 initially faced broad social opposition. Nevertheless, the leadership insisted on moving forward with the project, with support from scholars and religious leaders who emphasised the importance of women's edu-

cation and its role in advancing society.

He added that the initiative later proved successful, with the education of Qatari girls becoming a central pillar of social and economic development and helping expand opportunities for women in the workforce.

Speaking about the evolution of educational administration, al-Subaie said Qatar moved early to prepare national cadres, with Qatari graduates assuming leadership positions within the Ministry of Education. He also highlighted the development of adult education and literacy programs

through a system of "educational circles," which accelerated efforts to eradicate illiteracy.

He said financial incentives offered to newly literate citizens played a major role in encouraging participation in educational programmes, describing the initiative as one of the pioneering experiences in the region.

In another part of the discussion, the former education minister stressed the importance of preserving national identity and the Arabic language amid globalisation and the expansion of diverse educational systems. He warned against "complete dissolution" into foreign educational models at the expense of cultural identity, citing the Arabic Language Protection Law issued by His Highness the Amir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani.

He said openness to global experiences is important but should not come at the expense of the Arabic language and national values, calling for the development of a distinctly Qatari educational model that balances modernity with cultural specificity.

Al-Subaie also reviewed the

founding of Qatar University, saying the project initially faced scepticism from foreign reports questioning Qatar's ability to establish a national university. He said the Qatari leadership nevertheless pressed ahead, launching the institution in 1973 with the College of Education housed temporarily in converted school buildings before it expanded into one of the leading universities in the region. He added that the university's graduates had demonstrated their competence across state institutions.

He also discussed the experience of "model schools," which empowered Qatari women professionally and achieved advanced educational outcomes, with the initiative later expanding to dozens of schools and thousands of female students and teachers.

At the conclusion of the session, Abdulaziz bin Turki al-Subaie praised the substantial support provided to the education, culture and charitable sectors in Qatar over the past decades, saying that investment in people and knowledge has long remained the cornerstone of the country's national development.