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## Amir honours State Award winners

تميم بن حمد @TamimBinHamad  
"Creators and distinguished researchers play a pivotal role in the elevation of nations and the renaissance of societies, a role that Qatar values by honoring a new cohort of winners of the State Appreciation and Incentive Awards in celebration of their efforts and contributions. Congratulations to the winning men and women."



His Highness the Amir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani honoured the winners of the seventh edition of the State Appreciation Award and the State Incentive Award for outstanding achievements in science, literature and the arts during a ceremony held at the Amiri Diwan yesterday.

The winners of the State Appreciation Award were Hamad bin Mohsen al-Nuaimi in the field of poetry, Professor Dr Sheikhha Asma Ali Jassim al-Thani in biomedical sciences, and Professor Dr Mustafa Aqeel Mahmoud in history. The State Incentive Award went to Professor Dr Maryam Abdulrahman al-Nuaimi for literary criticism and rhetoric, Shamma Shaheen al-Kuwari for novel writing, Professor Dr Maryam Majid

Sultan al-Falasi for education, Dr Yousef Mohammed Yousef al-Horr for civil engineering, Dr Noura Hamad Mohsen Fetais for computer science, Professor Dr Seham Yousif al-Qaradawi for chemistry, Dr Mashaal Nidham Abdulkarim al-Shafie for biomedical sciences, Professor Dr Jassim Abdullah Abbas al-Khayyat for marine sciences, Saad Abdulwahab al-Muhannadi for caricature art, and Professor Dr Ahmed Abdulrahman

Hussein al-Emadi for physical education. HH the Amir praised the winners for their distinguished contributions in their respective fields, commending their role in supporting the nation's development journey and enriching the cultural and intellectual landscape locally and internationally. He wished them continued success and further contributions in service of the nation.

The award recipients expressed their deep appreciation to HH the Amir for the honour, affirming that the awards would serve as a strong motivation to continue contributing to the country's progress and advancement. The ceremony was attended by Chief of the Amiri Diwan Abdullah bin Mohammed al-Khulaifi and Minister of Culture Sheikh Abdulrahman bin Hamad al-Thani. **To Page 11**

### PM discusses truce with Jordan, Saudi, Turkish counterparts

HE the Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman bin Jassim al-Thani held separate telephone conversations yesterday with the Jordanian Deputy PM and Foreign Minister Ayman Safadi, Saudi Foreign Minister Prince Faisal bin Farhan bin Abdullah al-Saud, and Turkish Foreign Minister Hakan Fidan. In his call with Safadi, the two sides discussed bilateral relations and ways to support and strengthen them, along with regional developments, particularly the ceasefire between the United States and Iran, and efforts aimed at de-escalation in a way that contributes to enhancing security and stability in the region. With Prince Faisal, the PM reviewed bilateral relations and ways to support and strengthen them. **To Page 8**

### \$1mn pool on offer as Earthna Prize opens 2nd cycle

By A Staff Reporter  
Doha  
The Earthna Center for a Sustainable Future, a member of Qatar Foundation, has thrown open the second cycle of the Earthna Prize, with a \$1mn pool on the table for solutions that draw on traditional knowledge to confront some of the world's most pressing environmental challenges. Established under the leadership of HE Sheikhha Hind bint Hamad al-Thani, Vice-Chairperson of Qatar Foundation, the prize champions an idea increasingly resonant in global sustainability circles: that the wisdom of past generations holds practical answers for the crises of the present. **To Page 8**

### Qatar: 10 energy shipments held up by Hormuz closure

By Peter Alagos  
Business Editor

Ten Qatari energy shipments remain unable to transit the Strait of Hormuz, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs confirmed yesterday, as the waterway's closure continues to weigh on the country's oil and gas exports and ripple through global energy markets. HE Dr Majed bin Mohammed al-Ansari, Adviser to the Prime Minister and Official Spokesperson for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, said the suspended shipments reflect the most significant operational challenge Qatar faces from the ongoing closure even as the country's domestic

supply chains and commodity stockpiles have remained intact. "Since the beginning of the crisis, and despite the closure of the Strait of Hormuz, Qatar's supply chains, including for communities, have not faced any shortage," al-Ansari told reporters at a media briefing. He noted that Qatar had maintained strategic reserves and developed alternative supply arrangements to protect domestic needs, but acknowledged that export disruption on this scale carried broader consequences. "The biggest challenge we now face, however, concerns the export of energy-related products, such as oil and gas, and the effect this is having on energy prices worldwide. **To Page 8**

### Amir receives credentials of 3 ambassadors



His Highness the Amir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani received, at his office at the Amiri Diwan yesterday, the credentials of three new ambassadors to Qatar. His Highness received the credentials of ambassador of Kuwait Ahmad Abdulrahman al-Shuraim; ambassador of Kyrgyzstan Aibek Toktobolotov and ambassador of Portugal Ana Filomena da Costa Rocha. His Highness the Amir welcomed the new ambassa-

dors and wished them success in their missions as well as further development and growth in the relations between Qatar and their respective countries. The ambassadors conveyed to His Highness the Amir the greetings of the leaders of their countries and their wishes to the Qatari people for enduring progress and prosperity. The ambassadors were accorded official reception ceremonies upon arrival at the Amiri Diwan. **(QNA) Page 2**

## Sheikha Moza visits DIBF, attends QF schools event

Her Highness Sheikha Moza bint Nasser, Chairperson of Qatar Foundation for Education, Science and Community Development, yesterday visited the Doha International Book Fair in its 35th edition, held at the Doha Exhibition and Convention Center (DECC). Her Highness toured the fair's pavilions and reviewed the contributions of the participating government agencies, cultural institutions, and Arab and international publishing houses. Her Highness also attended the Qatar Foundation Schools Showcase at Qatar Science and Technology Park, where students presented innovative projects and ideas spanning Artificial Intelligence, sustainability, science, technology, the arts, and interdisciplinary research. **To Page 12**



HH Sheikha Moza bint Nasser at the DIBF, left, and Qatar Science and Technology Park. **PICTURES: AR Al-Baker**



Today's **GULF TIMES** includes a 4-page supplement on **RIISING STRONG**  
A Journey of Resilience

## Amir receives credentials of Kyrgyz, Portugal ambassadors



His Highness the Amir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani has received the credentials of new ambassadors to Qatar. He received the credentials of Aibek Toktobolotov (Kyrgyz Republic) and Ana Filomena da Costa Rocha (Portugal) at his office at the Amiri Diwan yesterday. His Highness the Amir welcomed the new ambassadors and wished them success in their missions, as well as further development and growth in the relations between Qatar and their respective countries. The envoys conveyed the greetings of the leaders of their countries and their wishes to the Qatari people for enduring progress and prosperity. They were accorded official reception ceremonies upon arrival at the Amiri Diwan. - QNA

## Core Family Medicine Model wins PHCC praise

The Primary Health Care Corporation (PHCC) has affirmed that the Family Medicine Model (FMM), being applied in all 31 health centres, has largely helped improve the quality of services and enhance the prevention and early detection of diseases.



The corporation stressed the critical role undertaken by family physicians as the core elements of strengthening the health of both individuals and societies.

As such, the PHCC marks the World Family Doctor Day 2026 annually on May 19, with this year's the motto of "Compassionate Care in a Digital World" spotlighting the significance of leveraging digital transformation technologies in providing primary medical care.

PHCC Assistant Director-General for Operations and Clinical Affairs Dr Samia Ahmed al-Abdullah said that family medicine is the core pillar for primary healthcare thanks to the comprehensive and combined service it offers to all family members.

This model, she said, has been operating in all centres since 2013.

Dr al-Abdullah added that the role of family physicians goes beyond diagnosing and treating diseases to encompass forging a relationship with patients and their families alike, suggesting that this kind of relation helps physicians understand more deeply the health, genetic, and social history of families.

This kind of relationship, she added, is positively reflected on the quality of provided healthcare and prompts rapid medical intervention when needed.

Dr al-Abdullah emphasised

that this model focuses on prevention before treatment through periodic medical tests, vaccinations, and early detection of chronic diseases and cancers.

She said that the model likewise strengthens health awareness as well as proper lifestyles, with family physicians persistently monitoring cases of chronic diseases such as diabetes, hypertension, and cardiovascular illnesses, adding that this modus operandi helps reduce complications and improve patients' quality of life.

The Family Medicine Model, Dr al-Abdullah continued, significantly contributes to providing medical and behavioural counseling, as well as mental health support services, and the identification of family history and hereditary disease risk, helping in the prevention of genetic and chronic diseases and the development of appropriate treatment plans.

She further noted that the model helps reduce the pressure on hospitals that are crowded with overwhelming numbers of patients, as well as unnecessary referrals, by providing combined healthcare inside clinics.

This year's World Family Doctor Day motto, Dr al-Abdullah said, underscores the PHCC's pivot toward enhancing digital health services with a particular emphasis on preserving the humanitarian aspect when it comes to the relationship between physician and patient. - QNA

### PM meets Ethiopian minister



HE the Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman bin Jassim al-Thani held a meeting in Doha yesterday with Ethiopia's State Minister for Political and Economic Diplomacy at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Hadera Abera Admassu. They discussed co-operation and relations between the countries and ways to support and strengthen them, in addition to issues of common interest. - QNA



### Amir meets Republic of Korea's outgoing envoy

His Highness the Amir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani met with the Republic of Korea's ambassador to Qatar Yun Hyun-soo, who called on His Highness to greet him on the occasion of the end of his tenure in the country. During the meeting at yesterday in His Highness the Amir's office at the Amiri Diwan, the Amir wished Yun success in his future assignments, and for the relations between the two countries further progress and prosperity. - QNA

### Shura panel discusses digital child protection



The Health, General Services and Environment Committee of the Shura Council held a meeting yesterday, chaired by HE the Speaker of the Shura Council Hassan bin Abdullah al-

Ghanem, to discuss a proposed law on digital protection of children, in light of the council's decision to refer it to the committee for study.

During the meeting, a number of observations and views related to

the proposal were discussed, in addition to legislative and regulatory aspects related to the protection of children in the digital world, as well as the mechanisms that would promote the safe and secure use of

modern technologies and digital platforms.

At the end of the meeting, the committee decided to complete its study of the topic in a future meeting. - QNA

### Shura Council Speaker meets Georgia, Finland envoys



HE the Speaker of the Shura Council Hassan bin Abdullah al-Ghanim held separate meetings yesterday with the ambassadors Varlam Avaliani (Georgia) and Juha Mustonen (Finland). During the meetings, bilateral co-operation and relations between the nations were discussed, alongside ways to support and develop them, particularly in the parliamentary field. HE al-Ghanim emphasised the importance of strengthening co-ordination and co-operation with the Georgian and Finnish parliaments, as well as activating communication between parliamentary friendship groups. - QNA



## Police Academy wraps up specialised training courses for Q2 2026

The Police Academy, represented by the Police Institute, celebrated the conclusion of a number of training and specialised courses for the second quarter (Q2) of 2026. The celebration ceremony was held in the presence of the legal adviser to HE the Minister of Interior Major-General Dr Abdullah Yusuf al-Mal, the General Supervisor of the Police Academy, along with several department directors and representatives from security and military entities. During the second quarter of 2026, the Police Institute

implemented a series of training and specialised courses involving 683 trainees from various security and military entities across the country. The training programmes included courses in several fields, including commando training, diving, rapid intervention, inspection, cybersecurity, and rapid response, in addition to promotion and specialised qualification courses, in co-operation with specialised international training entities. The ceremony featured the honouring of outstanding trainees, while

graduates staged a military parade accompanied by the musical band, in addition to presenting field demonstrations and simulations of security and protection operations that reflected advanced levels of readiness and professional competence in accordance with the latest training standards. Following the ceremony, attendees visited the accompanying exhibition dedicated to the commando course, which showcased field training methods and featured a range of equipment and tools used in training and qualification programmes. - QNA



Hamad Omar al-Mannai and Abdulla Ghanim al-Muhannadi at the signing ceremony yesterday. **PICTURES:** Shajji Kayamkulam



**QMC chief meets US diplomat**



Qatar Media Corporation (QMC) chief executive Sheikh Khalid bin Abdulaziz bin Jassim al-Thani met yesterday with US charge d'affaires Mo Barghouty. They discussed bilateral relations in the media sector and explored ways to boost them. - **QNA**

**Qatar Media Corporation, Media City Qatar sign pact**

By Ayman Adly  
Staff Reporter

Media City Qatar and the Qatar Media Corporation (QMC) signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) yesterday to enhance collaboration in content creation, digital innovation, and talent development within Qatar's media sector.

The agreement reflects a shared commitment to strengthen the country's media ecosystem and supporting national ambitions to position Qatar as a hub for media and creativity.

Accordingly, Media City Qatar and the QMC will work together to identify a collection of original projects, including television shows, reality series, feature films, documentaries, and screenplays for co-production or acquisition that will enrich programming while creating new avenues of visibility and growth opportunities for licensed companies within Media City Qatar's ecosystem.

Through Media City Qatar's Media Innovation Lab, the two entities will also launch pilot projects exploring new storytelling formats, production workflows, and digital transformation strategies.

The QMC will benefit from innovation roadmaps, proof-of-concept support, and adoption pathways designed to enhance both broadcast and digital platforms.

The partnership further advances talent development and shared infrastructure.

Building on the QMC's ongoing media training efforts, including summer programmes and academic partnerships, the parties will co-design training modules, expand internship pathways, and leverage institutional expertise to support students and early-career professionals.

They will explore structured models for mutual access to production studios, post-production facilities, and innovation labs, enabling joint use for co-productions and pilot innovations.

The QMC will also be connected to Media City Qatar's wider ecosystem of content creators, service providers, technology companies, and distribution platforms, enabling integration that fosters collaboration, innovation, and monetisation opportunities in line with national priorities.

"This agreement brings together two national organisations in media, Media City Qatar and Qatar

Media Corporation, to strengthen the pipeline from idea to screen," said Media City Qatar chief executive Hamad Omar al-Mannai. "By combining the creative capacity of Media City Qatar's ecosystem with the legacy of Qatar Media Corporation, we are building original content, accelerating digital transformation, and investing in the next generation of talent."

"These efforts are directly aligned with Qatar National Vision 2030, ensuring that our media sector continues to grow as a driver of innovation, creativity, and economic diversification," he said.

"Our collaboration with Media City Qatar opens new pathways for ambitious content and forward-looking innovation," said QMC's director of the International Co-operation and

Agreements Abdulla Ghanim al-Muhannadi. "By combining our broadcasting expertise with the creative capacity and international networks of Media City Qatar, we can elevate the quality and diversity of programming available to audiences."

"This partnership also ensures that emerging talent and creators have greater opportunities to bring their ideas to life, while we adopt new technologies that strengthen the competitiveness and sustainability of Qatar's media sector," he said.

The collaboration highlights the investment opportunities available in Qatar for studios, technology providers, and content companies seeking to develop and scale projects for regional and international audiences.

**'Seeds of Knowledge' initiative launched**

The Ministry of Culture, through the Qatari Authors Forum, officially launched the "Seeds of Knowledge" initiative on Sunday evening as part of the 35th edition of the Doha International Book Fair (DIBF), currently taking place at the Doha Exhibition and Convention Centre (DECC).

The "Seeds of Knowledge" initiative is a new knowledge-based project aimed at transforming academic research and studies into cultural products that can be published and circulated, contributing to the enrichment of Qatar's cultural movement and strengthening investment in intellectual capital.

Speaking to the Qatar News Agency (QNA) on the sidelines of the launch, director of the ministry's Department of

Culture and Arts Abdulrahman Abdul-lah al-Dulaimi, who is also the director of the Qatari Authors Forum, described the initiative as one of the promising projects that supports cultural production and enhances the role of the private sector and publishing houses in reviving academic research and converting it into books and cultural products accessible to the public.

He said the initiative seeks to invest in intellectual capital in a way that serves both the state and the cultural landscape, noting that the project focuses on cultural studies, local anthropology, language and linguistics, literature, criticism, heritage studies, and humanities, in line with the Ministry of Culture's mandate and areas of work.

Al-Dulaimi said that the initiative

targets postgraduate students at the master's and doctoral levels, as well as independent researchers with academically valuable studies.

He added that the Qatari Authors Forum will support researchers throughout the process, from the initial concept to the publication of books in a format suitable for a wider readership beyond traditional academic circles.

The official further noted that the project is based on simplifying academic language and presenting it in a more culturally engaging style while preserving the scientific value of the research.

Al-Dulaimi stressed that clear academic standards have been established for accepting submitted studies, foremost among them the quality and origi-

nality of the content.

He also revealed that the initiative has already received positive co-operation and engagement from Qatar University and the Doha Institute for Graduate Studies, with efforts underway to expand partnerships with other academic institutions to further support and develop the project's knowledge fields.

The DIBF continues until Saturday with the participation of more than 520 publishing houses from 37 countries worldwide.

The event features a rich cultural programme that includes seminars, lectures, workshops, and the "Doha Children's" activities dedicated to nurturing future generations of creators. - **QNA**



**Qatar condemns attack on Islamic centre in the US**

Qatar has condemned the attack that targeted the Islamic Centre in San Diego in the US, which resulted in fatalities.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MoFA) reiterated in a statement yesterday Qatar's firm stance against violence, terrorism, and criminal acts, regardless of the motive or reason.

The ministry expressed Qatar's condolences to the families of the victims and to the government and people of the US. - **QNA**



**Msheireb Museums brings community together for International Museum Day**

Msheireb Museums celebrated this year's International Museum Day with a special seminar titled "Museums: From Functional Role to the Social Dimension", exploring how museums today have gone beyond their traditional role as custodians of heritage to become dynamic public spaces that encourage dialogue and support community engagement.

The seminar, led by a member of the Executive Board of the International Council of Museums (ICOM) and director of the Cultural Adviser's Office at Qatar Foundation, Dr Ech Cherkh Dahmali, highlights the evolving social and cultural role of museums in shaping inclusive and connected societies.

This gathering also showed how museums can bridge different cultures, protect our shared memories, and create safe spaces where the community can meet to exchange ideas and look toward the future, as well as emphasise how working with international partners helps museums promote better understanding and community ties in our connected world.

"International Museum Day provides an important opportunity to reflect on the growing role museums play within society today," said Msheireb Museums general manager Abdulla al-Naama.

"At Msheireb Museums, we believe museums are not only spaces that preserve history, but also platforms that encourage dialogue, inspire learning, and strengthen social cohesion," he added. "Hosting this seminar aligns with our commitment to creating meaningful cultural experiences that connect communities and contribute to a more inclusive and sustainable future."

"Museums need to become more accessible and engaging for their communities, offering opportunities that truly reflect and respond to the spirit of the community," said Dr Dahmali. "Otherwise, they will become outdated institutions, disconnected from their audiences and eventually left behind."

"Today's exhibition operates in a highly competitive cultural and entertainment landscape, particularly for younger audiences," he added. "Therefore, they should focus on aligning their marketing plans with the evolving demands and expectations of the current era." - **QNA**

**Ministry launches digital Haj guide**

The Ministry of Endowments and Islamic Affairs (Awqaf) has launched its Haj 1447 AH Guide on the "Nusuk" platform via IslamWeb, creating a comprehensive digital reference that merges Islamic jurisprudence with practical guidance.

To ensure accessibility and enhance user experience, the portal introduces a dedicated sign-language video series for deaf pilgrims, an interactive route map of the holy sites, and a downloadable booklet. - **QNA**

**Forum on second semester exams**

The Evaluation Affairs Sector at the Ministry of Education and Higher Education has organised the co-ordination forum for the second semester General Secondary Education Certificate exams for the 2025-26 academic year.

The forum gathered school principals, ministry officials, exam supervisors, and local media representatives to streamline national exam readiness, unify messaging, and foster a calm environment for students. - **QNA**

**Doha Design District hosts 'We Design Msheireb' workshops**

The Doha Design District hosted hands-on workshops titled "We Design Msheireb", rooted in craftsmanship, cultural storytelling, and collaborative making.

The event featured two workshops running simultaneously, offering distinct yet complementary creative journeys.

The Textile Workshop introduced participants to traditional Palestinian embroidery and cross-stitching techniques, developed in collaboration with Palestinian women.

Participants created hand-stitched brooches using

a selection of motifs and patterns, connecting with narratives of heritage, identity, and craftsmanship.

Alongside it, the Clay Workshop provided an intimate and engaging environment for participants to explore clay painting.

The session encouraged creative expression through tactile experimentation, reinforcing the value of making as an accessible and inclusive practice.

Attracting a huge number of visitors and craft enthusiasts, the workshops underscored the role of design as a powerful tool for cultural exchange and dialogue. - **QNA**

**ANNOUNCEMENT OF PUBLIC TENDER**

Tender #	Description of Tender	Bidders Registration / Collection of Tender Documents	Deadline for Participation Confirmation
SIC-MNT/146/16-2026-2026	Cognitive AI Offering - TASMU Platform 2.0	ansajid@ooredoo.qa	4 <sup>th</sup> June 2026

**SUMMARY SOW:**

Ooredoo Qatar, as the lead contracting and delivery authority for TASMU/MCIT (Ministry of Communications and IT), invites well-established technology vendors specializing in **Cognitive AI Offerings** to participate in the pre-qualification phase for the following project:

Subject: **Cognitive AI Offering - TASMU Platform 2.0**

Reference No: **EOI-COG-AI-2025-001**

**Interested parties are requested to review the statutory submission parameters, mandatory pre-qualification criteria, and timeline constraints outlined below:**

- Vendors are invited to formally request the high-level Scope of Work (SoW) and the official EOI Submission Template by contacting Ooredoo procurement via email at: **ansajid@ooredoo.qa**.
- To establish eligibility for the subsequent Request for Proposal (RFP) phase, interested vendors must return EOI Response using the provided template, accompanied by all mandatory corporate credentials and technical supporting evidence, via email to: **ansajid@ooredoo.qa**
- The closing window for formal electronic submission is strictly set for **4<sup>th</sup> June 2026 at 15:00 (Doha Time)**. Submissions received past this timestamp will automatically fail compliance and will not be evaluated for pre-qualification.
- Only shortlisted vendors meeting the criteria will be invited to register to Ooredoo Sourcing Portal. Qualified participants advancing to the formal RFP phase will be required to submit a Tender Bond totaling **QAR 350,000**, which must remain valid for a minimum of ninety (90) days post-conclusion of the official award announcement.
- Ooredoo retains absolute discretionary authority to qualify, defer, or disqualify any applicant based on the formal audit of the submitted EOI Template and its mandatory supporting documentation.



# 25 years of excellence in empowering women

Arab International Women's Forum (AIWF) is celebrating its 25th anniversary this year, marking a significant milestone in its journey as a leading global advocate for women's economic empowerment, leadership and inclusion across the Middle East and North Africa (Mena) and beyond. In 2026, the strategic focus of AIWF is to support women navigate and succeed in the digital economy.

To mark the milestone, AIWF will host a programme of events and initiatives that bring together members, partners and supporters from across the Arab world, the United Kingdom and the wider international community. The programme will celebrate the organisation's achievements while reaffirming its commitment to empowering the next generation of women leaders.

Founded in London in 2001 by Haifa Al Kaylani OBE, AIWF was established to build bridges and strengthen business, cultural and development links between

**What began as a vision to connect women from the Arab world with their counterparts internationally has grown into a powerful global platform for women's economic empowerment and leadership."**  
— Haifa Al Kaylani OBE, president and founder of AIWF

the Arab world and the international community, with women at the core of its mission.

Since its inception, AIWF has evolved from a pioneering platform for cross-cultural dialogue into a globally recognised institution that has helped shape policy dialogue, strengthen women's leadership and drive inclusive economic growth. Working closely with governments, policymakers, the private sector, academia, and civil society, the Forum continues to champion Arab women's



Haifa Al Kaylani

entrepreneurship, education, corporate governance, and participation in emerging fields, including sustainability, STEM, the digital economy, and the future of work.

AIWF is marking its 25th anniversary by focusing on artificial intelligence (AI) as a driver of women's economic empowerment and entrepreneurship in the technology sector across the Mena region, to spotlight AI as a frontier for women's economic empowerment and equip Arab women entrepreneurs and tech leaders with the skills, networks, and policy advocacy needed to navigate future AI-driven economies.

"What began as a vision to connect women from the Arab world with their counterparts internationally has grown into a powerful global platform for women's economic empowerment and leadership," said Haifa Al Kaylani OBE, president and founder of AIWF.

One of AIWF's most impactful initiatives is the Young Arab Women Leaders programme, which has already provided mentorship, networking and leadership development opportunities to more than 3,000 young women across the Arab world.

In connecting emerging talent with established leaders through mentorship and reverse mentorship, the initiative helps prepare the next generation of women to take on influential roles in business, public life, education and innovation. AIWF is a committed advocate for removing barriers to women's economic participation and has provided a global platform for female entrepreneurs and professionals. The organisation works extensively to increase the representation of women on corporate boards and in senior leadership roles.

Through partnerships with like-minded organisations across the UAE, AIWF convenes conferences and produces reports that highlight women's leadership in STEM and climate action. Through this endeavour, the initiative advances women's roles in shaping solutions for sustainability, food and water security, clean energy, and climate resilience across the Mena region and beyond.



HE Sheikh Faisal bin Qassim al-Thani, Ahmed al-Neama, and HE Sheikh Mohammed bin Faisal al-Thani at the honouring ceremony.

## Al Faisal Holding honours Ahmed al-Neama for his distinguished career

Al Faisal Holding, one of the largest diversified private groups in Qatar and the region, held a recognition ceremony for Ahmed al-Neama in appreciation of his nearly 20-year professional career and his significant contributions throughout his tenure with the group.

During his service, he led several key functions, including human resources, procurement, and corporate relations, playing an active role in supporting the company's progress and enhancing its institutional work environment.

The ceremony was attended by HE Sheikh Faisal bin Qassim al-Thani, chairman

of Al Faisal Holding, and HE Sheikh Mohammed bin Faisal al-Thani, vice chairman, alongside a number of senior executives and employees of the group.

During the event, HE Sheikh Faisal expressed his sincere gratitude and appreciation to al-Neama for his dedication and commitment over the years, commending his role in developing several departments and strengthening the corporate culture within the group.

He also emphasised that human capital represents the cornerstone of organisational success and sustainability, and that distinguished Qatari professionals constitute

a true asset in the journey of any institution striving for growth and excellence.

For his part, HE Sheikh Mohammed expressed his appreciation for al-Neama's contributions, wishing him continued success, and noting that his professional and human impact will remain highly valued and respected by all.

The ceremony concluded with the presentation of a commemorative plaque by the chairman and vice chairman to al-Neama, in an atmosphere of appreciation and gratitude from the Al Faisal Holding team, celebrating a career marked by dedication, commitment, and excellence.

## QU, HyperThink Systems honour Qatari innovators

Qatar University (QU), through the Centre for Entrepreneurship at the College of Business and Economics, in partnership with HyperThink Systems, concluded the Qatar Entrepreneurship Awards (QEA) Award Day, recognising entrepreneurs and startups contributing to Qatar's digital economy and innovation ecosystem.

The ceremony brought together industry leaders, innovators, investors, and policymakers to celebrate achievements across key sectors, including fintech, healthtech, e-commerce, sustainability, and entrepreneurial excellence. The awards serve as a national platform to promote ICT and digital entrepreneurship, support high-potential ventures, and strengthen collaboration across the country's startup ecosystem.

The initiative aligns with Qatar National Vision 2030 by supporting human development through inspiring the next generation of entrepreneurs, economic development through innovation and startup growth, and sustainable development through solutions that address national priorities. It also reflects QU's strategic role in advancing knowledge, innovation, and entrepreneurship to support the country's transition to a knowledge-based economy.

The ceremony also provided a platform for networking, knowledge exchange, and the strengthening of connections among startups, investors, and industry stakeholders, reinforcing Qatar's position as a growing hub for entrepreneurship in the region.

Centre director Dr Khalid al-Hashimi said: "Each year, we see promising ideas and ventures that reflect the creativity, resilience, and ambition shaping Qatar's future economy. We are proud to support innovators who are developing impactful solutions and contributing to a thriving knowledge-based society."

Awdesh Chetal, CEO of HyperThink Systems, said: "As CEO of HyperThink Systems, I'm inspired by the bold talent at this year's Entrepreneurship Awards. Qatar's startups aren't just adapting to the AI era; they're shaping it."

Maisoun Sewailem, senior pre-incubation specialist at the Centre for Entrepreneurship and project lead for the Qatar Entrepreneurship Awards, said: "Young people bring boundless creativity and fresh perspectives; many of their ideas have the potential to become tomorrow's successful startups. By recognising and supporting school-aged innovators early, we support the next generation of entrepreneurs and strengthen Qatar's future as a knowledge-driven, digitally led economy. We must continue to encourage, mentor, and provide opportunities for these young talents to turn their ideas into impactful ventures."

The ceremony recognised winners



HE Fahad Bin Mohammed al-Attiyah, founder and CEO of Caravane Earth Foundation



Hamad Mubarak al-Hajri, founder and CEO of Snoonu



Ghanim al-Sulaiti, founder and CEO of Enbat Group.



Dr Ibrahim al-Sulaiti, president of the Young Entrepreneurs Club.

across multiple categories for their contributions to innovation, entrepreneurship, and digital transformation in the country. In the startup categories, Shipbee was named Delivery Startup of the Year in the E-Commerce category, while Eshfaa won HealthTech Startup of the Year. RFXAI was recognised as DeepTech Startup of the Year, Revio Technologies as Sustainability Startup of the Year, ALT DRX as FinTech Startup of the Year, and Muallem as EduTech Startup of the Year. Bevol won Social Entrepreneur of the Year, while Avey was named Startup of the Year.

In the individual awards, Mohab Mohamed Kamal, founder and CEO of ConnectED, received the Youth En-

trepreneur of the Year award. Thuraya Nasser al-Mulla, founder and CEO of Receipts, was named Woman Entrepreneur of the Year, while Ghanim al-Sulaiti, founder and CEO of Enbat Group, received the Entrepreneur of the Year award.

The Ecosystem Enablers Award recognised Marcel Dridje, Startup Ecosystem advisor at the European Business Angel Network; Michael Lints, founding partner MENA at Golden Gate Ventures; Dr Ibrahim al-Sulaiti, president of the Young Entrepreneurs Club; Hamad Mubarak al-Hajri, founder and CEO of Snoonu; and HE Fahad Bin Mohammed al-Attiyah, founder and CEO of Caravane Earth Foundation.



**QPPC invites qualified service providers to participate in the following tender:**

SI No.	Tender Reference and Description	(i) Deadline for Submission of Information & Interest for Bidding	(ii) Tender Fee	(iii) Tender Issuance	(iv) Tender Bond	Bid Closing Date
1	Tender No. : 065.2026.QPPC Phase II: Construction, completion of Factory Building (G+M), Guard Room, Substation, Generator, Stair Room of Pump Room, Car Parking, Pump Room & Fire water Tank 1+2, and Landscaping area	24 <sup>th</sup> May 2026 12:00 Noon Doha LT	QAR. 2,000 (Two Thousand)	24 <sup>th</sup> May 2026	QAR. 400,000 (Four Hundred Thousand)	11 <sup>th</sup> June 2026 12:00 Noon Doha LT

i Interested bidders to communicate their willingness to bid and contact details to the email: [procurement@qppc.net](mailto:procurement@qppc.net) indicating company name, address, telephone, official E-mail, etc. latest by the deadline for Submission of Information & Interest for Bidding indicated above. Reference Number and Description of the tender must be mentioned in the email.

Clarifications: Please send your queries with tender reference and description to email: [procurement@qppc.net](mailto:procurement@qppc.net)

ii Non-refundable tender fee indicated above is payable to QPPC through Bank Transfer or Cash only latest by the deadline indicated above. Tender link will be sent via email to the confirmed bidders.

iii **Tender Bond (Bank Guarantee):** Original tender bond must be submitted by hand to the following address latest by the Tender closing date & time. Bidder to attach copy of tender bond to the offer in the technical proposal and the original to be submitted in the commercial proposal. Offer without Tender Bond will not be considered.

**Qatar Plastic & Wooden Products Company W.L.L**  
P. O. BOX 50174  
Tel.: +974 44770819  
Attention: General Manager  
Bank Details: Doha Bank, Corporate Branch,  
(IBAN: QA25DOHB022200890830010011000)

## Ashghal holds session to promote health, safety

The Public Works Authority (Ashghal) held a dialogue session recently to raise awareness of health and safety procedures at work sites. The session, titled "Move for Your Health... Boost Your Work" and organised by the Projects Affairs Department, featured several employees who shared their personal experiences in the field of sports, along with practical advice on adopting a healthy and balanced lifestyle, and its impact on enhancing health, productivity, and quality of life.

During the session, participants emphasised the importance of consistency and discipline in building sustainable and healthy habits, the role of physical activity in promoting physical



and mental health, the possibility of starting with simple steps towards a healthier lifestyle, and the importance of choosing an enjoyable sport that suits each person's interests and life-

style. This initiative comes as part of Ashghal's commitment to promoting a culture of health and safety and raising awareness of the importance of work-life balance.

# Qatar Charity Inaugurates Central Medicine Warehouse in Somalia



A central medicine warehouse in Somalia's Banadir region has been inaugurated by H.E. Dr. Hassan Mohamed Hussein, Governor of Banadir, and Mayor of Mogadishu, alongside H.E. Dr. Abdullah bin Salem Al Nuaimi, Ambassador of the State of Qatar to Somalia. The facility, implemented by Qatar Charity (QC) with the support of donors in Qatar, marks a strategic step toward strengthening pharmaceutical supply systems and improving healthcare services across the region.

The project aims to address the absence of a central medicine storage

facility under the Directorate of Health and Human Services in the Banadir Region. The warehouse will serve more than 17 health centers across 20 districts, contributing to improved availability, stability, and efficient distribution of medicines.

### Qualitative Boost

In his remarks, H.E. Ambassador Dr. Abdullah bin Salem Al Nuaimi emphasized that the project represents a significant qualitative boost to Somalia's health sector, reflecting the strong and enduring fraternal ties between the two countries. He noted that the State of Qatar—under

the leadership of His Highness Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani, Amir of the State of Qatar—remains committed to supporting Somalia's development efforts. He also commended the contributions of

health institutions to ensure a consistent supply of medicines. He added that the facility provides a modern and secure environment for drug storage and incorporates digital management systems,

technical specifications, noting that the central warehouse has been constructed over a total area of 450 square meters, including 360 square meters dedicated to storage, in addition to administrative offices and service facilities. He added that the warehouse has been equipped with advanced ventilation and cooling systems to ensure the safe preservation of medicines, along with modern lighting, security systems, and an internal layout designed for efficient storage and quick access. These features, he said, are expected to enhance operational efficiency and ensure the sustainability of medical services.

Meanwhile, Dr. Abdirahman Ahmed Mahmoud, Director of the Directorate of Health and Human Services in the Banadir Region, highlighted the project's field-level importance, describing the warehouse as the "main backbone of medical supply" across the region's districts. He noted that it will help reduce the burden of storage and management while improving the distribution of medicines and medical supplies to health centers.

It is worth noting that Qatar Charity implemented 24 healthcare projects in Somalia over the past year, benefiting more than 143,000 people—an indication of the scale of its interventions and its continued commitment to supporting the most vulnerable communities.



Qatar's donors and the efforts of Qatar Charity, while expressing appreciation to the Banadir authorities for allocating the land for the project.

For his part, H.E. Dr. Hassan Mohamed Hussein described the inauguration as a key milestone in modernizing the health sector in Banadir. He stressed that the warehouse enhances the capacity of

expressing his gratitude to the State of Qatar, Qatar Charity, and the generous donors for their continued support of vital projects serving the Somali people.

### Main Backbone

In turn, Mr. Abdulfatah Adam, Country Director of Qatar Charity's Somalia Branch, outlined the project's



## Udhiyah (Qurbani) Projects in 37 Countries

Qatar	Rwanda	Ghana	Mali	Albania
Niger	Yemen	Ethiopia	Kyrgyzstan	Jordan
Nepal	Ivory Coast	South Africa	Indonesia	Syria
Kenya	Pakistan	Togo	Malaysia	Turkey
Tanzania	Djibouti	Benin	Lebanon	Tunisia
Sri Lanka	Nigeria	Gambia	Morocco	
Chad	Burkina Faso	Palestine	Kosovo	
Philippines	Burundi	Gaza	Bosnia	

## The Greatest Days

Dhul-Hijjah 1447 AH - 2026



# Fashion Art Toronto: A platform for Doha's designers to go global

By Joey Aguilar  
Doha

Platforms such as Fashion Art Toronto are helping reshape the perception of Gulf creatives globally by highlighting modern, personal and internationally relevant stories from the region, according to fashion designer Rayan Alami, ahead of a Qatar-backed fashion showcase in Canada later this month.

The showcase, scheduled from May 23-31, is a part of the Qatar Canada and Mexico 2026 Year of Culture programme. A delegation of emerging Qatari and Qatar-based designers from Doha's creative hub M7 will present their collections at Fashion Art Toronto, offering international audiences a closer look at the evolving fashion and design scene in Qatar and the Gulf region.

The delegation includes Noof al-Mulla, founder of LIN; Samah Sulym, founder of Jeu Due Denim; Alami, founder of Authentic Roz; and Tash and Ley, founder of Tash & Ley Collections.

Speaking ahead of the event, Alami told the *Gulf Times* that growing up in Qatar and also his Moroccan and Brazilian roots, strongly influenced his understanding of identity and storytelling through fashion.

"Being influenced by several cultures, while also growing up surrounded by people from all over the world, has played a major role in the way I understand identity," Alami said.

He noted that Qatar's multicultural environment exposed him to different perspectives, traditions



Rayan Alami

and experiences, encouraging him to reflect on ideas of belonging and cultural identity.

"This hybridity is really the essence of my work. It connects me to a broader question: what is identity, and what does it mean to be from somewhere?" he said.

Alami pointed out that every culture carries its own values, worldview and forms of expression, and that living among diverse communities in Qatar allowed him to draw inspiration from multiple influences.

His latest collection, "Third

Space," explores the emotional and personal experience of navigating different cultural identities. According to Alami, the collection reflects a broader shift among young people in the country and the Gulf, many of whom are influenced by multiple cultures simultaneously.

"I think this hybridity is becoming more visible among young people in Qatar and the Gulf, but it remains very personal for each individual," he said.

He added that identity is shaped by personal experiences, family backgrounds, values and the envi-

ronments people grow up in, making each person's journey unique.

"In a way, Third Space is my own interpretation of that feeling. It reflects the space between different cultures and identities, where you do not necessarily belong to one fixed place, but instead create your own language from everything that has shaped you," Alami said.

He also stressed the importance of international cultural initiatives in giving Gulf designers opportunities to connect with wider audiences and challenge stereotypes about the region's creativity.

Alami described the current period as "an incredible time" for the Gulf's creative sector, pointing to growing experimentation and new forms of artistic expression emerging across fashion and contemporary art.

"The Gulf has strong resources, international communities and a deeply rooted cultural identity," he said. "That creates a powerful opportunity for artists and designers to express something new."

According to Alami, initiatives such as the Qatar Canada and Mexico 2026 Year of Culture programme play a key role in promoting cultural dialogue and opening doors for meaningful international exchange.

He said platforms like Fashion Art Toronto help demonstrate the diversity and complexity of Gulf creativity to audiences abroad.

"They help change the perception that creativity from the Gulf is limited to one image or one narrative. Instead, they show that designers from the region can bring contemporary, personal and globally relevant stories to the international stage," Alami said.



## Qatar Charity empowering Mauritanian women

A sewing workshop equipped and launched by Qatar Charity (QC) a year ago in the Mauritanian capital, Nouakchott, has transformed the lives of dozens of low-income women. Funded by Qatar's donors, the project aligns with national strategies for empowerment, employment, and social protection to integrate women into the productive labour market.

Established in partnership with the Ministry of Vocational Training, Handicraft and Trades, the workshop supports 40 female graduates of vocational training schools, who now have a sustainable source of income after bouts with unemployment for years. Over its first year, the workshop produced 20,000 school uniforms for Taazur, which supports vulnerable populations. This month, a new agreement was signed to produce an additional 20,000 uniforms. Beyond production, the facility offers continuous training to upgrade the artisans' technical skills and product quality.

Fatimetou Mokhtar Salem, director of Trades Promotion, Craft Micro and Small Enterprises, and Social and Solidarity Economy at the Ministry of Vocational Training, Handicrafts and Trades, hailed the partnership as a successful model of government-humanitarian

integration. She described it as an encouraging experience that merits expansion by increasing beneficiaries and enhancing technical capacities to accelerate production.

The workshop has fostered remarkable stories of personal development. Marita Suleiman, a graduate who previously faced unemployment despite her advanced skills, called the project a turning point. "It allowed me to work in a field I love and earn a dignified income to support my family," she said, expressing gratitude to Qatar Charity for restoring the workers' confidence.

Similarly, Selma Mohamed, who commutes from the outskirts of Nouakchott, thanked the benefactors of Qatar.

Reflecting on her long search for employment, she noted that QC provided a real opportunity, allowing her and her colleagues to embark on a shared professional journey.

To ensure sustainability and scale up operations, the workers highlighted several requirements. Speaking on behalf of their peers, Marita and Selma requested additional sewing machines, an industrial electric cutter to accelerate fabric processing, specialised machinery for embroidery, and buttons so as to optimise the final product's quality.

# Qatar boosts production of honey to 21.6 tonnes annually

The Ministry of Municipality's Agricultural Affairs Department is continuing its efforts to promote sustainable agricultural development through the National Honey Bee Project in conjunction with World Bee Day, observed annually today.

Since its launch in 2013, the project has become one of the leading national initiatives in enhancing agricultural production, protecting the environment, and continuously feeding the development of Qatar's beekeeping sector.

The project is a part of initiatives aimed at increasing agricultural production and improving farm productivity. It combines economic, environmental, and educational dimensions by supporting farmers and encouraging investment in beekeeping and the production of high-quality local honey.

The project has achieved tangible results over the past few years. A total of 165 Qatari farms have benefited from it through foundational and developmental support, which has increased the number of beehives from 1,650 at the start of the project to around 3,600 currently. Local honey production is



estimated at approximately 21,600 kilograms (21.6 tonnes) annually.

The project aims to diversify farmers' income sources, improve natural pollination rates for agricultural crops, increase farm productivity, enhance biodiversity and wildlife within agricultural environments, and support the production of local honey that meets the highest quality standards. As part of efforts to develop the beekeeping sector and improve hive productivity, the Agricultural Affairs Department has, since 2015, been producing an average of 250

virgin queen bees annually to support local apiaries, improve bee strains, enhance hive efficiency, and increase production.

The project also provides continuous technical support to beneficiary farms through approximately 80 field visits per month conducted by engineers from the Agricultural Development Section. These visits include providing technical guidance on apiary management, disease prevention, and improving production practices, as well as monitoring performance to ensure the project's sustainability.



Yousef al-Khulaifi

The project places significant emphasis on awareness and education by organising guidance lectures and awareness sessions for farm owners, beekeepers, school and university students, and hobbyists. The goal is to spread the beekeeping culture and raise awareness of the importance of bees and their vital role in maintaining ecological balance and increasing agricultural production.

These activities are organised throughout the year through field visits and lectures at the educational apiary, with an average of eight major lectures annually.



As part of its integrated support system, the department also provides honey analysis services to verify compliance with quality standards. It also works to involve beneficiary farmers in agricultural exhibitions and local honey fairs, promoting Qatari honey and enhancing its competitiveness in the local market.

Yousef Khalid al-Khulaifi, director of the Agricultural Affairs Department, affirmed that the National Honey Bee Project reflects the Ministry of Municipality's commitment to supporting farmers and adopting sustainable agricultural projects that deliver both economic and environmental value. He noted that bees are essential to enhancing food security through their vital role in pollinating crops and boosting productivity.

He added that the ministry continues to develop the project and expand its benefits by providing technical and advisory support to farms and by raising public aware-

ness about the importance of protecting bees and supporting the sustainability of the agricultural environment.

Meanwhile, Ahmed al-Yafei, Head of the Agricultural Development Section at the Agricultural Affairs Department, explained that the project has succeeded in creating a positive economic and environmental impact within Qatari farms by improving agricultural production efficiency, diversifying farmers' income sources, and supporting the production of high-quality local honey trusted by consumers. He pointed out that the continued growth in the number of beehives as well as local honey production reflects the project's success and its ability to achieve sustainability. He further emphasised the department's commitment to developing the technical and marketing services provided to farmers and beekeepers in ways that strengthen the competitiveness of the local product.

# Healing art: How power of art can support mental health, build trust, resilience

Art has always been a language beyond words, but in times of emotional strain that we all experience in our lives, it can become a lifeline for children and communities.

Ameera al-Aji, Community Arts Lead at Qatar Foundation (QF) and a specialist in fine arts and art therapy, emphasises that art offers children a developmentally appropriate, emotionally safe, and non-threatening way to express feelings when verbal language is insufficient, unsafe, or unavailable.

In moments of fear, grief, anger, or confusion, art-making bypasses linguistic limitations and allows children to communicate through symbol, image, colour, texture, and movement. "The canvas or paper becomes a psychological boundary where emotions can be externalised safely, making fear drawable, anger shapeable, and confusion visible, thereby reducing emotional intensity and restoring regulation," al-Aji says.

Drawing and painting give children a simple, safe way to work through overwhelming feelings. These activities engage the sens-

es and use symbols to help them process emotions in a calm and manageable way.

According to al-Aji, children can use simple artistic actions such as drawing lines, dots, textures, patterns, choosing colours, or creating rhythms, to turn vague, overwhelming feelings into clear, visible forms. This process helps ease anxiety and refocuses their attention on the present moment.

Over time, the steady practice of making art again and again helps children bring order to confusing or fragmented experiences. As al-Aji explains: "Drawing and painting do not aim to eliminate difficult emotions, but to give children a safe, embodied, and dignified way to hold and transform them."

Teachers and caregivers can harness art as a gentle tool for resilience and hope. By inviting children to "draw how today feels" or "create a place where you feel safe", al-Aji says, they validate emotions without pressure.

Focusing on the act of creating rather than the final result helps children build confidence and a sense of control. At the same time,



Ameera al-Aji

storytelling and group murals allow them to turn challenges into shared narratives of strength.

Storytelling through art helps children regain a sense of normalcy by turning difficult experiences into manageable narratives. Instead of relying on words, they use images and symbols to take ownership of their stories, restoring coherence and stability. Imagination allows them to rehearse solutions and embody strength, while attentive listening from adults reassures them that their inner world is

**"Integrating healing art is not about teaching children how to make art - it is about using art to build trust, resilience, and relationship within the rhythm of everyday life." - Ameera al-Aji, Community Arts Lead at Qatar Foundation (QF)**

valued and connected to the wider community.

"Consistent creative rituals, such as weekly reflection journals or shared art circles, provide predictability and emotional safety," al-Aji says. "Normalcy is not about returning to what it was, but about discovering that you can still play, imagine, create, and be understood despite what has happened."

Al-Aji says that collaborative art projects extend healing to the community level. They create shared spaces of belonging where differences are held with care rather than tension. Working side by side on murals, sculptures, or performances restores trust and fosters cooperation.

Importantly, collaborative art disrupts rigid hierarchies: children

are not defined by language ability, background, or trauma history, but by creative contribution. Displaying shared artworks in schools or public spaces affirms collective pride and visibility, strengthening bonds between children, caregivers, educators, and the wider community.

"In my practice, I have seen how collaborative art does more than bring children together for an activity - it helps them feel what community is again," says al-Aji. "Not as an abstract idea, but as a shared rhythm, a shared creation, and a shared sense of 'we'."

Integrating healing art practices into daily routines does not require special materials or artistic skill, but rather intention and consistency. Parents and educators can embed small creative practices into existing routines, such as beginning the day with a color check-in or ending with a reflective drawing. Accessible art spaces - a basket of crayons, clay, or recycled materials - communicate permission for expression.

Adults support healing best when they act as attentive wit-

nesses rather than judges, simply noticing and affirming children's creative choices. Art can be woven into calming routines, from drawing to music or making big gestures on large paper, and group practices such as collaborative journals help normalise expression. What matters most is consistency: even a few minutes of regular artmaking can build resilience and emotional safety.

As al-Aji says: "Integrating healing art is not about teaching children how to make art - it is about using art to build trust, resilience, and relationship within the rhythm of everyday life."

Art, whether through personal expression, storytelling, or collective creation, becomes more than creativity - it becomes a source of healing and belonging. In times of emotional pressure, it restores a sense of control, nurtures hope, and shows children and communities that they can imagine, rebuild, and thrive together.

"Hope grows when people see themselves not only as survivors of hardship, but as active meaning makers," al-Aji says.



# UDST celebrates Class of 2026

Under the esteemed patronage of HE Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman bin Jassim al-Thani, Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs, the University of Doha for Science and Technology (UDST) celebrated the graduation of the first batch of the Class of 2026 at the Qatar National Convention Centre in Doha.

The ceremony was attended by HE Lolwah bint Rashid bin Mohammed AlKhatir, Minister of Education and Higher Education; HE Dr Abdulaziz bin Nasser bin Mubarak al-Khalifa, president of the Civil Service and Government Development Bureau and secretary general of the National Planning Council as a speaker; alongside other excellencies, ministers of state, and with the attendance of UDST Board of Trustees' chairman HE Dr Mohammed bin Saleh al-Sada and the board members; HE Dr Salem Al-Naemi, president of UDST, the university's staff and faculty, and graduates' families.

The number of graduates this year is 1,321 students from various programmes and disciplines. The graduating class includes more than 250 outstanding students. The class includes 484 graduates from the College of Business, 285 graduates from the College of Computing and Information Technology, 341 graduates from the College of Engineering and Technology, and 211 graduates from the College of Health Sciences, reflecting the diversity of the university's academic programs and the breadth of its fields of specialisation.

The Class of 2026 is distinguished by the graduation of the first cohorts from several newly introduced academic programmes. These include the Digital Communication and Media Production programme, developed in collaboration with the Qatar Media Corporation, as well as the first graduates of Construction Engineering, the Master of Science in Artificial Intelligence and Cognitive Cybersecurity, and the Master of Science in Process Safety. These

programmes reflect UDST's approach and alignment with emerging fields and national priorities.

The graduating class embodies the dynamic and future-focused nature of the university's academic offerings, spanning key fields such as artificial intelligence (AI), cybersecurity, digital technologies, engineering, health sciences, and business innovation. Through experiential learning environments, advanced laboratories, simulation technologies, and industry-driven projects, students have developed the skills and competencies needed to confidently transition into the workforce.

This occasion marks a significant milestone in the journey of UDST graduates, representing the culmination of years of dedication, hands-on training, and personal growth. It also reflects the university's commitment to applied education that places students at the centre of the learning experience and bridges theoretical knowledge with practical application to meet the evolving needs of the labour market.

Throughout their academic journey, students benefited from an applied learning model centred on innovation and problem-solving, which has contributed to the development of essential skills such as critical thinking, teamwork, adaptability, and leadership capabilities that are vital in a rapidly evolving global landscape.

Dr al-Khalifa addressed the graduates, saying: "Here in Qatar, under the wise leadership of His Highness Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani, the Amir of the State of Qatar, may Allah protect him, we are moving with steady steps towards a clear national vision and development strategies. Our goal is to uplift and empower individuals, and to build a more sustainable and prosperous future. This endeavour demands minds that are eager to learn and individuals who embrace responsibility and possess a genuine desire to make a meaningful impact on their



The ceremony was attended by HE Lolwah bint Rashid bin Mohammed AlKhatir, Minister of Education and Higher Education, HE Dr Abdulaziz bin Nasser bin Mubarak al-Khalifa, HE Dr Mohammed bin Saleh al-Sada, and HE Dr Salem Al-Naemi, along with other university staff, faculty, and graduates' families. (PICTURES: Shaji Kayamkulam)

society and nation." In his speech, al-Naemi said: "Our resilient students have persevered through a year marked by unprecedented challenges and now stand before us, alongside their professors and loved ones, as a testament to the enduring power of education. Their journey reminds us that education extends far beyond classrooms and laboratories; it is fundamentally centred on people. It thrives in a nation that embraces education, dialogue, and knowledge as the foundation for progress and societal advancement."

In alignment with the State's strategic priorities, the university has introduced four new academic programmes: Master of Science in Midwifery, the Executive Master of Health Administration, and the Bachelor's and Diploma programmes in Animal Health and Veterinary Science.

With these additions, the university now offers a total of 80 academic programmes, all developed in accordance with the highest na-



tional and international standards to address the evolving demands of both the local and global economy.

The university continues to place strong emphasis on advanced professional training and applied research in critical areas, including sustainability and renewable energy, food security, health technologies, and digital transformation.

The Class of 2026 valedictorian, Mohamad al-Qassabi said:

"During my years of study, I had the opportunity to participate in international competitions, where my project, "OPAS", an Offside and Performance Analysis System for football, received international recognition and acclaim. I was also privileged to represent the State of Qatar and various youth organisations on global platforms such as the United Nations, in addition to participating in a range of work-

shops and lectures at both the local and international levels. I was subsequently ranked among the top five inventors worldwide at the CIF Exhibition and among the top three inventors in the Arab world.

"I also extend my heartfelt appreciation to our beloved State of Qatar for its unwavering commitment to education and innovation as fundamental drivers of national development!"



## UDST Spring 2026 graduates look to industry-ready future

By Shaima Sherif  
Staff Reporter

Graduates of the University of Doha for Science and Technology (UDST) said practical education and industry-based learning played a key role in shaping their academic journeys, as the institution celebrated its Spring 2026 commencement ceremonies with a strong focus on job readiness and professional confidence.

Syeda Ruqaiya, graduating from the Applied Accounting programme, reflected on how her capstone research project reshaped her understanding of the profession.

"That was my capstone research project where I was analysing real companies, running actual regressions and presenting findings to the panel," she said. "It pushed me beyond the textbooks and



Ainur Mardia

showed me what it means to think like a professional and not just a student."

Ruqaiya added that the programme's practical approach prepared her for the realities of the labour market. "We worked with real data, real cases and real problems.



Christian Dale Zapanta

That gave me confidence that I can actually do the job and not just talk about it," she said.

For Christian Dale Zapanta, a Bachelor of Science in Respiratory Therapy graduate receiving high honours, the defining moment of his university journey came during



Syeda Ruqaiya

his first clinical shift.

"During my very first day, I had a cardiac arrest patient in the emergency department," he recalled. "With my instructor with me, she pushed me to be confident, and we were able to save the patient's life."

Zapanta described the experi-

ence as a turning point that reinforced the importance of practical medical training. "Our education actually goes beyond the classroom where we get to apply the theory," he said, encouraging future students to embrace opportunities without fear. "You should never let fear stop you from doing what can benefit you."

Another graduate, Ainur Mardia from the College of Health Sciences and Occupational Health, Safety and Environment, highlighted the value of workplace exposure during her studies.

"UDST gave us tremendous opportunities within the workforce," she said, citing placements with organisations such as Sidra Medicine and the Qatar Cancer Society. "It's not just class lectures and labs, but learning how to deal with the outside environment, communication and different people," she added.

Faculty members also empha-

sised the university's unrelenting commitment towards readiness and preparedness of graduates join the workforce and contribute to Qatar's development goals.

Dr Raja Mazur Shah, acting dean of the College of Engineering and Technology, said the institution has focused on preparing students from the moment they enter university.

"We provide a lot of experience through both academic and non-academic activities," he said. "We hope that when they graduate, they are job-ready to face the challenges of the market."

Meanwhile, Dr Vincent Mangematin, dean of the College of Business, lauded students for their perseverance throughout the academic year. "The students have done very well and remained highly committed to their studies," he said. "We are very happy to have this strong community ready to work and serve Qatar."

## Finance Minister meets French Minister of Economy, US Secretary of the Treasury



HE the Minister of Finance Ali bin Ahmed al-Kuwari met separately with Minister of Economy, Finance, Industry and Digital Sovereignty of the French Republic Roland Lescure and Secretary of the Treasury of the United State of America Scott Bessent. During the meetings, they discussed the most prominent topics of importance between the State of Qatar, and both the French Republic and the United States of America, especially in the economic and financial fields, in addition to exploring the best ways and strategies to enhance co-operation. (QNA)

### PM discusses truce with Jordan, Saudi, Turkish counterparts

From Page 1

They also discussed developments in the region, particularly those related to the US-Iran ceasefire as well as de-escalation efforts aimed at enhancing regional security and stability.

In his conversation with Fidan, the two sides reviewed co-operation and ways to support and strengthen it, and discussed the latest regional developments, particularly those related to the US-Iran ceasefire, along with efforts aimed at de-escalation to enhance regional security and stability. During the three calls, the PM 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. (QNA)

### \$1mn pool on offer as Earthna Prize opens 2nd cycle

From Page 1

Four winners will share the purse at the third global Earthna Summit in 2027, each recognised for breakthrough work in one or more of five focus areas – water systems, food systems, terrestrial ecosystems, marine and coastal ecosystems, and built environments. The prize has already proved its pull. Since its launch on April 22, 2024 – Earth Day – it has drawn more than 400 applications from over 100 countries, a response that has reinforced its founding conviction: that traditional knowledge and cultural heritage are not relics to be preserved behind glass, but living resources to be deployed against contemporary problems. “The response to the Earthna Prize highlights the scale of work already underway, much of it rooted in long-standing practices,” said Dr Gonzalo Castro de la Mata, Executive Director of Earthna. “The prize brings these efforts into focus, creating a platform for them to be recognised, understood, built upon and scaled. Each cycle also strengthens the evidence base for how traditional knowledge can address environmental challenges.” The inaugural winners and finalists, unveiled in 2025, offered a glimpse of the prize’s broad sweep – from water conservation and ancestral ecological models to traditional architecture and urbanism, and community-led fisheries management. Submissions for the second cycle are open until July 20, 2026, with non-governmental organisations, community groups and businesses all eligible to apply. Entries will be vetted by a global panel of experts, with the eventual winners chosen by a high-level jury and announced at the 2027 summit. Beyond the headline cheque, the prize continues to walk alongside its first cohort of winners – opening doors to funding, networks and visibility, and helping them scale traditional-knowledge solutions to meet the environmental tests of the age.

# Qatar Hajj medical team arrive in Makkah for health readiness

QNA  
Makkah Al Mukarramah

All members of the medical unit personnel escorting the Qatari Hajj Mission have arrived in Makkah Al Mukarramah, the Ministry of Endowments (Awqaf) and Islamic Affairs confirmed yesterday. The ministry added that the move is part of the comprehensive preparations the mission is undertaking to provide integrated health-care for the pilgrims of Qatar throughout this season, to ensure their safety and enhancement and help them perform pilgrimage rites in a secure and serene atmosphere.

The preparations are generally part of the unwavering efforts Qatar is undertaking to provide the best medical services for the pilgrims and prop up the combined efforts among the state institutions. The purpose is to unify efforts and ensure pilgrims enjoy comprehensive health-care starting from their arrival in Makkah Al Mukarramah until their safe return back home, the ministry asserted.

The mission’s medical services unit has confirmed that it is fully ready for this pilgrimage season through leveraging a system of combined efforts between Awqaf, the Ministry of Public Health (MoPH), Hamad Medical Corporation (HMC), and Primary Health Care Corporation (PHCC).

This collaboration overtly embodies the integration among the nation’s institutions and their continuous co-ordination to provide the highest standards of healthcare and medical services for pilgrims of Qatar to ensure they perform rites in a secure and healthy environment where tranquillity prevails, the ministry noted.

Dr Khalid Abdul Hadi, Head of the Medical Unit at the mission, stressed that the overriding priority entails the safety of the pilgrims, revealing that the country has leveraged all potential and



deployed qualified medical personnel to ensure the well-being of pilgrims throughout this pilgrimage journey.

The unit undertakes a national and humanitarian responsibility as the primary health defence line whose role goes beyond medical treatment to encompass prevention, monitoring, and rapid intervention, Dr Abdul Hadi noted, emphasising that the unit operates fully in unison with relevant health entities at home and in Saudi Arabia.

Abdul Hadi recalled that this year the mission is escorted by an integrated 36 medical personnel, namely physicians and specialists in the areas of family medicine, contingencies, and epidemiology, alongside all medical teams who operate 24/7 to instantly serve pilgrims in all areas where they stay.

The mission includes pharmacy officials, nursing officials, and technical staff, who arrived early in Makkah Al Mukarramah, Dr Abdul Hadi said.

He added that they are embarking on finalising the technical and technological equipment inside clinics in close co-ordination with the relevant health entities in the sisterly Kingdom of Saudi Arabia to ensure all medical services are in place ahead of pilgrims’ arrival.

Dr Hadi pointed out that the health system includes the establishment of integrated medical clinics for both men and wom-

en at the mission’s premises in Makkah Al Mukarramah, alongside other clinics in the Holy Sites in Mina and Arafat, and a chamber dedicated to medical observation and isolation for cases that require medical intervention.

A fully equipped medical team is escorting the pilgrims in Muzdalifah, he said, adding that this will ensure the continuation of healthcare in all phases of their commutation and performance of rituals.

He added that the clinics were equipped with a full range of medications, treatments, and essential medical supplies, in addition to triage and rapid assessment units, enabling medical teams to provide immediate care for various medical conditions in accordance with the highest approved medical standards.

The medical unit also provided a fully equipped ambulance operating to advanced medical specifications to accompany the mission throughout the Hajj season, supporting rapid emergency response and strengthening the healthcare safety system for pilgrims.

The mission confirmed that the unit’s operational plan isn’t confined to clinic operations or residential facilities, but also includes escorting the pilgrims throughout all stages of the Hajj rituals, including the movement from Arafat, overnight stay in Muzdalifah, and the transfer to Mina for the stoning of Jama-

rat Al Aqaba, in order to ensure rapid medical intervention and the timely delivery of emergency medical care.

As part of efforts to strengthen medical response capabilities, Dr Hadi revealed that collaboration is underway with Makkah Park Clinics in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia to provide emergency treatment services for pilgrims of Qatar and grant them treatment priority, in addition to leveraging specialised medical expertise within the unit’s medical teams.

Dr Hadi recalled the agreement forged with the Saudi German Hospital in Makkah for the observation and treatment of emergency medical cases, thereby strengthening the efficiency of healthcare services provided to pilgrims and ensuring advanced levels of medical care.

Over the past few days, the clinics of the unit at the premises of the Qatari Hajj Mission in Makkah obtained official licensing approval from the Saudi Ministry of Health following an on-site inspection conducted by the specialised delegation, which commended the clinics for meeting all required standards and operational requirements, he clarified.

He indicated that all medical personnel were also credentialed and officially licensed to practice within the Kingdom, marking the launch of operations and confirming the clinics’ readiness to receive patients and visiting pil-

grims from the State of Qatar.

Agreement with Saudi German Hospital in Makkah for observation and emergency case management, enhancing healthcare delivery and advanced care services.

The medical unit’s clinics received official licensure from the Saudi Ministry of Health following an on-site inspection confirming full compliance with regulatory standards. All medical staff were credentialed and licensed to practice in the Kingdom, ensuring full operational readiness to receive patients.

Overall, the communications and support unit of the Mission plays a pivotal role in enhancing response speed and co-ordination between pilgrimage operators and the medical unit through a 24/7 hotline, ensuring rapid medical intervention and immediate handling of medical or emergency cases, in addition to providing continuous support and follow-up for pilgrims of the State across all locations, he said.

The Mission applauded the significant efforts undertaken by the Ministry of Health in Saudi Arabia in serving pilgrims, through the development of an integrated and advanced healthcare system operating in accordance with the highest medical and regulatory standards, ensuring pilgrim safety and the provision of necessary healthcare across the holy sites.

## Kahramaa organises 2026 Planning Forum



Qatar General Electricity and Water Corporation (Kahramaa) organised its 2026 Annual Planning Forum, under the term ‘Continuity Resilience and Future Foresight’, to boost institutional integration and strategic efficiency. The forum discussed operational roadmaps for electricity, water, technical, and shared services sectors to optimise resources and ensure sustainable service delivery. Kahramaa President Engineer Abdullah bin Ali al-Thayab emphasised that the 2026 Annual Planning Forum is a vital milestone in advancing strategic, integration-driven planning. Serving as a high-level platform, the forum reviews Kahramaa’s future directives, operational budgets, and long-term strategies. It aims to align cross-sector operations with Qatar’s sustainable development goals while addressing upcoming priorities to meet community expectations and uphold corporate quality standards. (QNA)



## Qatar: 10 energy shipments held up by Hormuz closure

From Page 1

We are currently undertaking special preparations, but a prolonged closure of the Strait of Hormuz will complicate supply chains globally,” he explained.

Earlier this month, two Qatari tankers managed to pass through the strait under regional co-ordination. The LNG carrier Al Kharaitiyat departed Ras Laffan on May 10 bound for Port Qasim in Pakistan, becoming the first Qatari LNG tanker to transit the strait since the start

of the US-Israel war on Iran.

A second tanker, Mihzem, followed the next day, also heading to Pakistan, according to a Reuters report. Al-Ansari cautioned, however, that the passage of those two vessels did not signal a return to normal conditions through the strait.

Yesterday’s briefing took place against the backdrop of public remarks by US President Donald Trump, who said he had spoken with His Highness the Amir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani and other Gulf leaders

before deciding to hold off on a planned military strike against Iran.

Al-Ansari declined to comment on His Highness the Amir’s private conversations with international leaders but emphasised Qatar’s position had been clearly conveyed to its partners in the US.

“We have communicated our position to our partners in the US, emphasising the region’s desire to avoid being drawn into a war again. Our priority is to stave off any escalation that could immediately impact the people of the

region as a whole,” he stressed.

Al-Ansari also lauded Pakistan for playing an effective role as a peace broker and said Qatar’s leadership-level engagement with the mediation effort was reflected in ongoing communications with regional and international counterparts.

Speaking on the Strait of Hormuz, al-Ansari reaffirmed that any attempt to restrict freedom of navigation through the waterway would be contrary to international law and that Qatar does not support any arrangement

that would alter the strait’s current status.

Al-Ansari also addressed Qatar’s relations with Iran, saying Doha would maintain “good-neighbourly relations” while acknowledging that Iran’s conduct during the conflict had strained those ties.

“The people of Iran, like others in the region, deserve to live in peace and prosperity. They should not be affected by war and conflict, as they are closely connected to the neighbouring countries across the Gulf,” he said.



HE Dr Majed bin Mohammed al-Ansari, Adviser to the Prime Minister and Official Spokesperson for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. PICTURE: Thajudheen

# Modi vows to support end to war in Mideast, Ukraine

AFP  
Oslo

Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi yesterday vowed to work with Nordic allies to end conflicts in Ukraine and the Middle East and defend the “rules-based global order”.

Speaking at a summit in Oslo, Modi — a close ally of US President Donald Trump — said his and the Nordic leaders’ commitment to democracy and multilateralism made them “natural partners”.

Trump has spoken of efforts to end the wars but has also shown uneasiness among European allies by challenging pillars of the post-war order, notably the Nato military alliance.

He sparked uproar by threatening to take over Greenland, a Danish autonomous territory.

Denmark joined in the India-Nordic summit hosted by Norway, which also brought together the leaders from Sweden, Finland and Iceland.

“In these times of global tensions and conflict, India and Nordic countries will together continue to focus on a rules-based global order,” Modi told reporters.

“Whether it is Ukraine or West Asia (Middle East), we will continue to support an early end to



Icelandic Prime Minister Kristrun Frostadottir, Swedish Prime Minister Ulf Kristersson, Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Norwegian Prime Minister Jonas Gahr Støre, Danish Prime Minister Mette Frederiksen and Finnish Prime Minister Petteri Orpo attend a press conference after the meeting between India and the Nordic countries at the City Hall in Oslo, yesterday. (Reuters)

the conflict and efforts for peace.”

Standing alongside him, Denmark’s outgoing prime minister Mette Frederiksen warned the “rules-based world order” was under pressure.

“Unfortunately the old world order is changing rapidly and it’s not going in the right direction,” she said.

Economic ties between India and the Nordic countries have been strengthening, notably in technology exchanges.

India, the world’s most populous country, represents a big market and one hungry for investment.

Bilateral trade has nearly quadrupled over the past decade, Modi said.

“In today’s world... people need a sense of hope that unlike countries in some aspects can come together” in dialogue and trade, said Iceland’s Prime Minister Kristrun Frostadottir.

Modi also announced a “green strategic partnership” with the Nordic countries, following a similar agreement announced with Norway a day earlier.

Modi is set to conclude his tour with a visit to Italy, where he will meet with Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni today.

# At least 21 killed as heavy rains drench southern, central China

Reuters  
Hong Kong

Torrential rain continued across southern and central China yesterday with at least 21 people killed in widespread flooding that also closed schools and businesses, and disrupted transport and power supplies, authorities said.

China’s weather agency said areas of Jiangxi, Anhui, Hunan, Hubei, Guizhou, Guangxi, Guangdong and Hainan faced a high risk of rain-related disasters, including landslides, flash floods and severe urban flooding and waterlogging.

Authorities said they have allocated 150m yuan (\$22.04m) for disaster relief and launched emergency responses in several affected areas.

Many residents in Jingzhou, a city in central Hubei, were knee-deep in water and able to catch fish swimming in the streets, according to images posted on Chinese video platform Douyin. Some cars were nearly completely submerged on roads surrounded by residential and commercial buildings.

Ten people were confirmed dead after a pickup truck carrying 15 farm workers fell into a flooded river in China’s southwestern region of Guangxi amid heavy rain, state broadcaster CCTV reported.

In separate incidents, heavy rain



Cars lie partially submerged in floodwaters after heavy rainfall in Duyun, Guizhou Province, yesterday. (Reuters)

and flooding killed four people in southwestern Guizhou province, four others in southern Hunan province, and three in a low-lying village in central Hubei province, CCTV said. A number of people remain missing.

Schools, businesses and transport services have been suspended, and authorities are relocating residents in some parts of Hubei and Hunan, state media reported.

The unusually large area of intense rainfall — spanning more than 1,000km (621 miles) — was due to the convergence of abundant moisture from the Bay of Bengal, the South China Sea and the Pacific Ocean. The slow-moving nature of the weather system also led to the high cumulative rainfall, according to Chinese meteorologists.

China’s National Meteorological Centre said severe weather would gradually move east and south across China over the next two days. From today, the heaviest rainfall is expected along the middle and lower reaches of the Yangtze River.

China’s southern Hainan island issued a geological disaster warning yesterday, as a mountain-side collapsed onto a highway in Lingshui, prompting authorities to close several major roads in that area of the island. Separately, authorities in Guangxi set up temporary shelters on 99 sites for more than 4,000 residents and relocated 7,000 people after a magnitude 5.2 earthquake on Monday, which sent tremors across multiple cities in the region.

# Japan, Korea agree to boost energy supply co-operation

AFP  
Seoul

Tokyo and Seoul have agreed to strengthen co-operation on securing energy supplies, Japanese Prime Minister Sanae Takaichi said during a visit to Republic of Korea yesterday, as both nations grapple with the fallout of the Middle East war.

Takaichi said she and Republic of Korea President Lee Jae-myung outlined a framework to bolster energy stockpiles in the Asia Pacific and would work towards “enhancing energy security for both Japan and Republic of Korea”.

“Given the current international situation, co-operation between Japan and Republic of Korea on supply chains, including those for critical minerals, is important,” Takaichi told a joint news conference after meeting with Lee.

Japan depends on the Middle East for about 95 percent of its oil imports, while Republic of Korea gets about 70 of its crude from the region.

Iran’s effective closure of the vital Strait of Hormuz in retaliation for US-Israeli strikes



Japan’s Prime Minister Sanae Takaichi and Republic of Korea President Lee Jae-myung poses for a photo during their meeting in Andong, yesterday. (Reuters)

on Tehran has rattled global energy markets.

The two leaders met in Lee’s hometown of Andong four months after Takaichi hosted Lee in her own hometown of Nara in January.

Lee said they also discussed co-operation on technology related to space exploration and biohealth, among other issues.

He said he outlined Republic of Korea’s vision “of building a peaceful Korean Peninsula” as both countries face challenges from nuclear-armed North Korea.

“Going forward, the possibilities for Republic of Korea-Japan partnership are limitless,” Lee said at the news conference.

## Thailand cuts visa-free stays, citing crime by foreigners

AFP  
Bangkok

Thailand is drastically cutting the length of visa-free stays for tourists from more than 90 countries in an effort to curb crime involving foreign nationals, officials said yesterday.

Tourism is vital to the Southeast Asian nation’s economy, but foreign arrivals are yet to return to their pre-Covid highs.

A recent series of high-profile arrests of foreigners has included cases linked to drug offences, sex trafficking and foreigners operating businesses such as hotels and schools without proper permits.

Under Thailand’s current tourism scheme, travellers from more than 90 countries — including Europe’s 29-nation Schengen area, the US, Israel and several South American countries — are eligible to visit for up to 60 days without a visa.

Thailand’s cabinet approved reducing visa-free stays for travellers from those countries yesterday, Tourism Minister Surasak Phanchaoenworakul told reporters in Bangkok.

The new visa-free duration

would be decided on a country-by-country basis, with most foreign nationals granted stays of up to 30 days, while some could receive only 15 days, Surasak said.

Tourists will be able to renew visas once by visiting an immigration office, a government spokeswoman told AFP.

“The 60 days was automatic but the renewal will be decided by the officer and tourists will have to explain why they are staying longer,” she said.

Foreign Minister Sihasak Phuangketkeow said last week that the plan to reduce visa-free stays was part of a crackdown on transnational crime.

Thailand was not targeting any specific country, he said, but rather individuals abusing the visa system by committing crimes in the country.

Tourists provided “benefits, such as boosting the economy, but the current scheme has allowed some people to exploit it,” government spokesperson Rachada Dhanadirek told reporters yesterday.

The visa-free period was previously capped at 30 days but was extended to 60 in July 2024 as part of government efforts to boost tourism and the economy.

# Taiwan opposition vote to impeach president fails

AFP  
Taipei

Taiwan’s opposition lawmakers made a failed bid yesterday to impeach President Lai Ching-te, after the number of votes in favour of the motion fell well short of the minimum required.

Lai and his Democratic Progressive Party have been locked in a bitter conflict with the two opposition parties that control the parliament since he took office in May 2024.

Lawmakers from the Kuomintang (KMT) and Taiwan People’s Party (TPP) launched impeachment proceedings after Lai and his premier refused to sign off on a revenue-sharing bill passed by parliament.

Both sides have accused each other of violating the democratic island’s constitution.

Opposition legislators have described Lai as “dictatorial”. DPP lawmaker Wu Szu-yao said Monday the KMT and TPP “are co-ordinating with external hostile forces to manipulate Taiwan’s political struggles”.

Fifty-six lawmakers supported impeaching Lai and 50 were against it. The number of votes in favour was below the minimum two-thirds of the 113-seat parliament needed for the motion to succeed.

Premier Cho Jung-tai vowed yesterday to “continue to push for reconciliation and coex-



Members of Taiwan’s opposition parties ‘KMT’ and ‘Taiwan People’s Party’ vote on an impeachment motion against President Lai Ching-te at Legislative Yuan chamber in Taipei yesterday. (AFP)

istence” with the opposition parties.

But divisions remain deep. A key point of contention between Lai’s government and the opposition has been over how much to spend on defending the island against a potential attack from China.

China claims Taiwan is part of its territory and has threatened to seize it by force.

The KMT and TPP rejected the government’s proposed NT\$1.25tn in spending on critical weapons, that included US arms and domesti-

cally procured drones and other munitions.

Instead, after months of political wrangling, the opposition parties passed a budget of NT\$780bn for US arms only.

Lai, an outspoken defender of Taiwan’s sovereignty, has accused China of being the “root cause” of instability in the region. The KMT, which favours closer relations with China and whose chairperson Cheng Li-wun recently went to Beijing to meet Chinese President Xi Jinping, blames Lai for worsening cross-strait tensions.

## Vanuatu says ready to sign economic, security deal with Australia

Vanuatu will sign a major co-operation agreement with Australia after renegotiating the deal, Prime Minister Jotham Napat told the Pacific island nation’s parliament yesterday.

Australian Prime Minister Anthony Albanese travelled to Vanuatu in September in the expectation the leaders would sign the Au\$500m

(\$360m) Nakamal Agreement to strengthen security and economic ties, but a ceremony was cancelled at short notice after concerns by some Vanuatu lawmakers. Vanuatu has maintained a non-aligned foreign policy since independence from France and Britain, and fiercely protects its position of “friends to all and

enemies to none” amid jostling for influence by China, Australia and the US in the strategically located Pacific Islands. “The Council of Ministers have finally given blessing,” Napat told a livestreamed parliament session yesterday. He said the agreement with Australia was not a security pact,

but contained a security clause where Vanuatu agreed not to allow any outside force in its territory. Australia is wary of China’s police presence in the nearby Solomon Islands, and has struck a series of treaties with Tuvalu, Papua New Guinea and Nauru seeking to curb Beijing’s security inroads to the region. (AFP)

## Bodies of two Italian divers recovered in Maldives: official

AFP  
Malé

An international operation recovered the bodies of two Italian divers from a deep underwater cave yesterday, a government official said, five days after a group of five drowned in the Maldives’ worst diving disaster.

Chief government spokesman Mohamed Hussain Shareef said the two bodies were brought to the surface at Vaavu atoll, just south of the capital Male, where the group had dived on Thursday.

“The two bodies that were brought to the surface from a cave at a depth of 60 metres (195 feet) will now be transferred to Male,” Shareef told AFP.

Two more bodies are yet to be recovered from the same cave and a plan was in place to bring them to the surface today, he said.

The body of one member of the dive party was recovered on Thursday. A Maldivian National Defence Force (MNDF) rescuer also died due to decompression complications on Saturday.

Italy initiated the international recovery effort after the death of MNDF diver Staff Sergeant Mohamed Mahudhy on Saturday forced local authorities to suspend the search.

Australia and Britain have also provided assistance. The four bodies were located on Monday.

Maldivian authorities are yet to identify the Italian victims.

Italy’s University of Genoa said they included a marine biology professor, Monica Montefalcone, her daughter Giorgia, and two young researchers.

Italian daily *Corriere della Sera* quoted the university as saying that “the scuba diving activity during which the accident occurred was not part of the activities envisaged by the scientific mission, but was carried out in a personal capacity”.

It said requests submitted to the Maldivian authorities “were evidently made outside the scope of the mission authorised by the university”.

Montefalcone’s husband, Carlo Sommacal, disagreed with the university.

“The truth remains that my wife was certainly not irresponsible,” Sommacal told *La Repubblica* daily in Italy.

“And she would never have put my daughter Giorgia, whom she surely loved more than anything else, in danger. Now I’m only interested in bringing them home.”

Sommacal said there were hundreds of graduate students writing theses on the Maldives using data they collected with Montefalcone, or that Montefalcone collected herself.

The Maldives does not permit tourists to dive deeper than 30 metres.

Maldivian authorities have suspended the operating licence of the dive boat the Italian divers were using pending an investigation.

## Behind Bolivia's widening protests

Supporters of Bolivia's former leftist president Evo Morales marched through La Paz, widening unrest that has blocked roads for nearly two weeks and triggered shortages of food, fuel and medical supplies across the country. The disruptions have stranded trucks on highways and left patients unable to reach hospitals, authorities said. Argentina has sent a military aircraft with food supplies at Bolivia's request.

Demonstrations that began with strikes in early May have grown into a nationwide movement involving labour unions, miners, transport workers and rural groups. Protesters are pressing President Rodrigo Paz's government to roll back austerity measures and address rising living costs, with some calling for his resignation.

Analysts say the unrest has broadened from local grievances to wider anti-government sentiment over the country's economic direction. The protests centre on rising economic pressures. Teachers are demanding higher pay and more funding, while transport unions have launched open-ended strikes amid fuel shortages and supply concerns. Indigenous and rural groups oppose agrarian reforms they say favour larger landowners.

Despite the government repealing a controversial agrarian law this month, protests have continued.

Paz, who took office in November and inherited an economy in turmoil, has defended spending cuts and fuel subsidy reductions as necessary to stabilize public finances. He is preparing a reform package for Congress that includes gradually lifting fuel price controls and measures to boost domestic energy production and investment.

The government has sought to ease tensions through negotiations and wage increases while deploying around 3,500 security forces to clear roadblocks. Authorities said about 57 people have been arrested.

Officials have blamed the opposition and Morales allies for encouraging the blockades, which they say have contributed to at least three deaths, including patients unable to reach hospitals.

Morales, who governed Bolivia from 2006 to 2019, has backed the protests, describing them as a response to economic hardship and political persecution.

Thousands of his supporters have rallied after a judge held him in contempt earlier this month for failing to appear in court in a trafficking case. Morales denies wrongdoing.

"As long as the structural demands such as fuel, food, and inflation are not addressed, the uprising will not be halted," he wrote on X. — Reuters



By Yasim al-Azzawi

**“It was the rise of Athens and the fear that this instilled in Sparta that made war inevitable.” Two thousand five hundred years on, the trap is being set again — and this time the stakes are nuclear.**

When Xi Jinping stood on Chinese soil and asked Donald Trump whether America and China could “transcend the Thucydides Trap,” he was not extending an olive branch. He was issuing a veiled warning, the kind that comes not in thunder, but in the low, measured tremor of a man who believes the fault line has already shifted beneath his rival's feet.

**“The supreme art of war is to subdue the enemy without fighting.” — Sun Tzu, The Art of War.**

In 2014, Xi invoked the Thucydides Trap, but this time, context is everything. This time, he delivered the message on home ground, before cameras, after what observers interpret as a period of deliberate strategic positioning. To paraphrase British historian Arnold Toynbee: “civilisations do not die from assault. They succumb when they lose the will to respond to challenge.” Xi's gambit was to whisper, with exquisite courtesy, that the will may already be faltering in Washington.

Imagine Sparta, 431 BCE. The campfires burn low. Two generals crouch over a map of the Aegean. Outside, the roar of a navy being built can almost be heard across the water.

**Archidamus, King of Sparta “What are we to do with this ambitious Athenian? Their ships**

# The bell tolls in Beijing: Xi's warning and the shadow of Thucydides

**multiply. Their young men study philosophy and strategy. Do we wait and watch how things transpire — or do we strike now, before it is too late?**

**Sthenelaidas, Spartan Ephor “Athens grows toward us. She builds alliances where we slept. She made Corinth afraid. The Corinthians weep to us for action. If we do not move, our allies will find another protector, and then we shall find ourselves alone and surrounded.”**

The Athenian statesman Pericles, across the water, understood the psychology of the trapped hegemon with cold clarity. “What I fear more than the enemy's strategy,” he told the Athenian assembly, “is our own mistakes.” He urged restraint, patience, and the wearing down of a stronger but slower opponent. Harvard's Graham Allison has documented with clinical precision Athens' incredible rise. Sparta was the ruling hegemon. In Allison's landmark study of sixteen such confrontations over five centuries, twelve ended in War, a staggering 75% probability of catastrophe.

Washington, our own century. Different rooms; the same dread. **Pentagon War Room — National Security Council, circa now**

**“How do we halt China's rise? Do we keep selling them our debt and hope gratitude follows? We've already banned advanced NVIDIA chips and throttled their AI supply chain. We've sanctioned their semiconductor ambitions. But they have CATL batteries, Huawei 5G, BYD electric vehicles, undercutting Detroit. Every restriction we impose, they build around. We are Sparta demanding Athens stop building ships, while Athens is already building shipyards.”**



US President Donald Trump speaks with Chinese President Xi Jinping while leaving after a visit to the Zhongnanhai Garden in Beijing on Friday. (Reuters)

**A senior national security advisor**

**“Our long-range munitions stockpiles are not infinite. The Tomahawks that matter most in any Taiwan scenario are already committed elsewhere. Replenishment takes years. Beijing's intelligence services know our inventory better than some members of this committee.”**

Napoleon Bonaparte, who understood the arithmetic of strategic timing better than any commander since Caesar, observed: **“Never interrupt your enemy when he is making a mistake.”** Xi Jinping has read his Napoleon and Allison's masterpiece, **Destined for War**, and internalised the Thucydides Trap.

China's strategy is architectural. For two decades, Beijing has been laying the foundations for an alternative financial order: the

Belt and Road, the BRICS currency discussions, the internationalisation of the renminbi, and cross-border payment systems that bypass the SWIFT network. René Descartes wrote that one must doubt everything to discover what cannot be doubted. China has applied the Cartesian method to the dollar system: doubting each dependency, then systematically removing it. What they are constructing is an exit ramp from the world America built, so that if the confrontation comes, the economic shock of sanctions can be absorbed rather than endured.

**“China is not a problem to be managed. It is a civilisation to be reckoned with — and civilisations do not yield to pressure alone.” — Allison, Destined for War**

George C Marshall, the architect of European reconstruction after

1945, warned that **“the measure of a great power was not its capacity to destroy, but its capacity to build and to understand when the building of another was not a threat, but a fact.”** America built the post-war order. China intends to renovate it. And fear is precisely what Thucydides identified as the engine of catastrophe. Not aggression. Not ambition. Fear. Sparta did not hate Athens. Sparta feared what Athens was becoming; it feared the restless vitality of a society that could not stop growing. That fear is what made War inevitable.

Today, Xi stands in the role of Pericles: confident, patient, reading his rival's inner anxiety with a strategist's calm. America's generals and presidents are scrambling with the torment of the Spartan King Archidamus: they sense the moment is slipping, the correlation

of forces shifting, and the window for decisive action is narrowing with each passing fiscal quarter.

Julius Caesar, crossing the Rubicon, is said to have murmured: **alea iacta est — the die is cast.** No side has yet cast the die, and yet both sides, China and the US, can hear it rolling. Allison does not counsel despair. Of his sixteen historical cases, four ended without war, including the Cold War, in which two nuclear-armed superpowers circled each other for 40 years and repeatedly chose to step back from the brink. The mechanism was what strategists called Mutually Assured Destruction (MAD), and the institutional scaffolding of hotlines, treaties, and summits that kept misreading to a minimum.

Today's scaffolding is thinner, and miscalculation can spread at lightning speed. The question Xi posed to Trump was not rhetorical. It was a sharp challenge: **Do we have the wisdom that Sparta and Athens lacked? Or will the bell toll for us too?**

American writer Ernest Hemingway posed the perplexing question, “For whom the bell tolls?” In the summer of 431 BCE, it tolled for Greece, and Greece never recovered. Twenty-five centuries later, the bell hangs in Beijing, and China is waiting to see whether Washington answers with wisdom, with panic, or with the kind of silence that, in the grammar of great powers, means everything.

**“Appear weak when you are strong, and strong when you are weak.” — Sun Tzu.**

The wheel of history does not ask permission. It asks only whether those in its path have the imagination to step aside — or the courage to redirect it.

• The writer is a news anchor, programme presenter and media instructor.

## Green cover widens across Qatar's rangeland areas in past decade

The Ministry of Environment and Climate Change (MoECC) has revealed a marked improvement in vegetation density across Qatar's rangeland areas, along with a significant increase in green cover, during the period from 2014 to 2026.

In a statement, the ministry explained that this improvement was documented through aerial imagery that monitored the development of vegetation cover in a number of natural areas nationwide, demonstrating the impact of national environmental protection efforts aimed at protecting the terrestrial environment and boosting the sustainability of its natural resources.

The aerial imagery provides clear evidence of the effectiveness of protection and rehabilitation programs, field monitoring and regulatory enforcement measures, revegetation efforts, and the implementation

of hunting and grazing regulations, the statement read, alongside environmental awareness initiatives designed to strengthen public compliance with environmental requirements in natural areas.

The ministry explained that the environmental requirements include adherence to designated routes, avoiding overgrazing and vehicle intrusion into sensitive habitats, refraining from igniting open fires directly on bare soil, prohibiting firewood collection, and maintaining rangeland cleanliness.

The ministry noted that the ecological field survey conducted documented the presence of 40,761 native trees and wild plant species distributed across 1,273 meadows and sites throughout various municipalities and regions, reflecting the diversity of local vegetation cover and its distribution across multiple terrestrial habitats statewide.

According to the survey findings, the number of natural depressions (meadows) and sites documenting vegetation presence reached 1,121 locations, compared to 152 non-vegetated sites where no trees or plant species were recorded, the statement continued. It added that the survey also identified 179 unique names of meadows, indicating that some mapped locations were registered under more than one geographic range.

Assistant Undersecretary for Protection and Natural Reserves Affairs at MoECC Dr Ibrahim Abdullatif al-Maslamani emphasised that the aerial monitoring documenting the development of vegetation cover reflects the terrestrial ecosystem's natural regeneration capacity in Qatar whenever the necessary habitat protection measures are provided, alongside the implementation of plans and initiatives aimed at reducing human-induced

pressures affecting sensitive habitats and natural habitats.

This marked improvement in vegetation density and the clear increase in the number of green sites cannot be viewed merely as a seasonal landscape, but rather as evidence of the importance of the environmental protection framework through which the ministry operates, he underlined.

The framework, al-Maslamani outlined, includes monitoring terrestrial sites, tracking environmental changes, enforcement against environmental infractions and unlawful encroachments, as well as monitoring activities affecting soil integrity and native vegetation, alongside the enforcement of rehabilitation programs, native vegetation conservation initiatives, and updated hunting and grazing regulations.

Al-Maslamani further suggested that

the Protection and Natural Reserves Affairs Sector deals with the terrestrial environment as an interconnected ecosystem comprising soil systems, meadows, valleys, wildlife species, and sensitive natural sites, noting that any improvement in vegetation cover is directly reflected in ecological balance, provides better wildlife habitats, and supports sustainable biodiversity conservation in the country.

He clarified that the ministry works to protect meadows and terrestrial sites through (combined measures) that include field inspections, remediation of environmental violations, and monitoring grazing impacts, habitat trampling, tree cutting, and illegal dumping, in addition to studying natural sites and identifying their protection or rehabilitation requirements to preserve their natural regeneration capacity. (QNA)

# US, Iran exchange threats but Trump says Tehran wants deal

AFP  
Washington

President Donald Trump warned yesterday that the US may strike Iran again, a day after he said he had held off a major assault in hope of a deal to end the war – but Tehran's army threatened to open "new fronts" if he went ahead.

Trump told reporters at the White House that he had been just "an hour away" from relaunching Washington's attacks on Iran before postponing the order, after weeks of a fragile ceasefire and talks to end the war that began on February 28.

"You know how it is to negotiate with a country where you're beating them badly. They come to the table, they're begging to make a deal," he said.

"I hope we don't have to do the war, but we may have to give them another big hit. I'm not sure yet."

But Iran's army spokesman Mohammad Akraminia earlier warned the Islamic republic would "open new fronts against" the US if it restarted its attacks.

He added that Iran's military had used the ceasefire as an opportunity "to strengthen its combat capabilities".

Trump offered a deadline of several days for resuming strikes if a deal was not agreed.

"I'm saying two or three days, maybe Friday, Saturday, Sunday, something, maybe early next week, a limited period of time," he said.

Trump's new deadline came after he said on Monday that Gulf leaders had asked him to hold off on an attack at the 11th hour, which he did because "serious negotiations are taking place".

But if a deal was not agreed, he said he instructed the US military



US President Donald Trump takes questions from the press during a healthcare affordability event in the South Court Auditorium of The White House in Washington, DC, yesterday. (AFP)

to be "prepared to go forward with a full, large-scale assault of Iran, on a moment's notice."

Trump had already indefinitely extended the truce and made clear he wants to exit a war that has proven to be a political liability, with Iran's control of the Strait of Hormuz rattling the global economy and hurting Americans at the pump.

Iran's Deputy Foreign Minister Kazem Gharibabadi wrote on X that Trump's comments meant the US leader was "calling a 'threat' a 'chance for peace!'"

Since the ceasefire took hold on April 8, Tehran and Washington have held a single round of talks, which failed to culminate in a deal.

Iran has repeatedly rebuffed Trump's offers on a deal and its control over the vital Hormuz strait has sent global oil prices spiralling.

Iranian foreign ministry spokesman Esmail Baqaei confirmed exchanges with the US through mediator Pakistan and said Tehran made clear its "concerns".

The cleric-run state, whose supreme leader was killed in strikes on the first day of the war but has proven resilient, is demanding the release of Iranian assets frozen abroad and the lifting of long-standing sanctions.

After the Iranian threat of attacks on new fronts, the United Arab Emirates said a drone attack on its Barakah nuclear power plant last week originated from Iraqi territory, where Iran backs groups accused of launching attacks on Gulf nations in the war.

"As part of the ongoing investigation into the blatant attack on the Barakah Nuclear Power Plant on May 17, 2026, technical tracking and monitoring confirmed that the three drones... all originated from Iraqi territory," the Emirati defence ministry said.

A top Emirati official had already suggested Iran or one of its regional proxies was to blame.

Iran has been ramping up military pressure in the region.

The Revolutionary Guards, the ideological arm of Iran's military, threatened on Monday to put the

Internet fibre optic cables passing through the waterway under a system of permits.

Its Revolutionary Guards also said Monday that they struck groups linked to the US and Israel within the Iranian province of Kurdistan, near the border with Iraq, which it said were attempting to smuggle American weapons into Iran.

Qatari foreign ministry spokesman Majed al-Ansari told reporters that Doha, one of Iran's main targets in the war, believed "more time" was needed for the ongoing Pakistani-mediated efforts to push for Iran-US talks.

At the same time, Iran's foreign ministry said it has responded to the latest US proposal which Iranian media had described as "excessive" and offering "no tangible concessions".

On Sunday, Iran's Fars news agency said Washington had presented a five-point list, which included a demand for Iran to keep only one nuclear site in operation and transfer its stockpile of highly enriched uranium to the US.

The US had refused to release "even 25 percent" of Iran's assets frozen abroad or pay any reparations for war damage, Fars added.

The report said the US had also made clear it would only cease hostilities when Tehran engages in formal peace negotiations.

Iran however has said it insists on its own demands, including the release of the frozen assets, the lifting of long-standing sanctions on the country and war reparations.

But later, the Tasnim news agency, citing an unnamed source close to the Iranian negotiating team, said the US made one new step forward in the latest text by agreeing to waive oil sanctions while negotiations were underway.

# Amir honours State Award winners

From Page 1

The winners expressed deep pride in being honoured by HH the Amir.

They said the recognition reflects Qatar's dedication to supporting national talent, fostering creativity, and strengthening the country's cultural footprint regionally and globally.

Speaking to QNA, the laureates noted that the honour brings a profound responsibility to produce even more impactful work. They credited continuous state support for advancing Qatar's creative landscape across poetry, novel writing, visual arts, and historical research.

Poet and media personality Hamad bin Mohsen al-Naimi, winner of the State Appreciation Award in Poetry, said the recognition underscores the leadership's commitment to celebrating literary contributions. He affirmed that Qatari poetry remains deeply influential despite rapid technological shifts, recalling his long career broadcasting cultural programmes on Qatar Radio.

Qatari historian and researcher Mustafa Aqeel, winner of the State Appreciation Award in History, extended his gratitude to the Amir, noting that the award provides a powerful incentive for sustained intellectual output. He stressed that history serves as a vital anchor for national identity, forming the living memory that

connects society to its cultural and intellectual roots.

Qatari novelist Shamma Shahin al-Kuwari, winner of the State Incentive Award in the Novel category, described the recognition as a medal of honour for her literary journey. She extended her gratitude to the Amir and the Ministry of Culture for their continuous support of national writers.

Al-Kuwari said the award brings a deep sense of artistic responsibility, inspiring more mature and profound future works. Discussing Qatari literature, she highlighted how local novels have firmly established their presence on the Gulf cultural scene by evolving beyond local documentation to address broader intellectual and humanitarian themes.

Qatari cartoonist Saad al-Muhannadi, winner of the State Incentive Award in Caricature, said the encouragement received directly from the Amir serves as an immense moral boost for his artistic career. He stressed that the award celebrates the entire art form of caricature in Qatar as a powerful visual tool for expressing societal issues.

Al-Muhannadi added that despite digital transformations and the rise of artificial intelligence, caricature maintains its profound impact because it relies fundamentally on human creativity, reading reality, and delivering meaningful visual messages. (QNA)

# US police investigating deadly mosque shooting as hate crime

Reuters  
San Diego

"Anti-Islamic writings" were found in a vehicle connected to the two teenage suspects in Monday's shooting at the Islamic Center of San Diego that killed three people, according to a Department of Justice official with knowledge of the investigation.

The alleged gunmen have been identified as Caleb Vasquez, 18, and Cain Clark, 17, the official told Reuters. They were found dead in their car after the shooting, apparently from self-inflicted gunshot wounds, police said on Monday.

Their names and the contents of the writings were previously reported by local media.

Police said on Monday that the attack was being investigated as a hate crime but declined to offer further details about a possible motive.

Clark's mother is co-operating with authorities, the DOJ official added. Officers sprang into action on Monday after a call from one of the boy's mothers, who described her son as suicidal and said he had run off with three of her guns and her vehicle, according to police.

Police initially raced to a local shopping mall and the boy's school before calls came in about the shooting at the mosque.

The Islamic Center is the largest



Police outside the Islamic Centre of San Diego the morning following a shooting, in San Diego, California, yesterday. (Reuters)

mosque in San Diego County and houses the Bright Horizon Academy. All students were safe and accounted for after Monday's attack.

A fundraising effort organised by CAIR San Diego with the Islamic Center of San Diego has raised over \$1.7mn for the family of slain security guard Amin Abdullah, who authorities have credited with preventing further bloodshed.

Police converged on Monday night on a property believed to be connected to one of the suspects and sealed off the quiet residential street on which it sat. By yesterday morning, the police tape was gone and neighbours milled around.

The house was known for its Halloween decorations, they told

Reuters, but they hadn't known the family personally. There was a monster truck in the driveway but no one appeared to be home.

"We walk past this house every day, every morning. This is our neighbourhood," said Jessica Delapena, 54. "It's shocking."

Mary Ryan, 65, said she was "at a loss for words."

San Diego Mayor Todd Gloria said in an interview with CNN yesterday that security would be beefed up across the city.

"There's always a concern about other sick and twisted individuals who will take inspiration from this tragedy and try and replicate," he said. "No expense will be spared in protecting the people of this city."

# Winners of DIBF Awards honoured

QNA  
Doha

Winners of the 35th edition of the Doha International Book Fair Awards were honored yesterday at the fair's main theater, in the presence of a large gathering of cultural and media figures, in a celebration reflecting the award's status as one of the initiatives supporting the publishing industry, literary and cultural creativity, and the promotion of books.

Director of the Libraries Department at the Ministry of Culture and Director of the Doha International Book Fair, Jassim Ahmed al-Buainain, presented the awards to the winning publishers and authors.

Rosa Publishing House won the Excellence Award for Qatari Publisher, while Kuwait's Torous Center for Publishing and Distribution received the Excellence Award for International Publisher. Dar Al Watad for Books and Publications won the Outstanding Qatari Children's Book Publisher Award, while Al Hudhud Publishing and Distribution of the United Arab Emirates received the Outstanding International Children's Book Publisher Award.

The Abdul Aziz Al Buhashim Al Sayed Library for Heritage Books also won the award for

Best Pavilion at the Doha International Book Fair, in recognition of its distinctive visual and heritage-focused presentation that reflected the spirit and cultural identity of the fair. In the creative writing category, writer Rami Mohammed al-Ta'amneh won for his novel 'Birth on the Edge', published by the Arab Foundation for Studies and Publishing in Lebanon. Young Qatari writer Amna Irhama al-Buainain received the Young Qatari Writer Creativity Award for her book 'When the Sea Exhales', published by Hamad Bin Khalifa University Press.

Speaking to reporters on the sidelines of the ceremony, Jassim Ahmed al-Buainain said the award's second edition witnessed strong competition among publishing houses and participants, noting that the fair allocated seven diverse categories aimed at supporting different sectors of the book and publishing industry.

He said a large number of submissions had been evaluated by judging committees, reflecting growing interest in the award and a strong desire to win it. He added that the level of competition was a positive indicator of the vitality of the publishing and cultural sectors.

Al-Buainain said the award aims not only to honour achievement, but also to encourage pub-

lishers and writers to produce more valuable works that enrich the Arab library and serve readers. He congratulated the winners and wished success to other participants in future editions, emphasizing the importance of continuing to develop cultural and intellectual content.

The award is being organized for the second consecutive year as part of the Doha International Book Fair's broader efforts to support publishers and creators, encourage cultural and intellectual production, and honour contributions that have enriched the cultural landscape locally, regionally and internationally, whether in general publishing, children's literature, literary creativity or pavilion design.

The recognition ceremony was part of a broader program of cultural and intellectual events accompanying the Doha International Book Fair, which in its 35th edition continues to provide a platform bringing together publishers, writers, intellectuals and the public, in a scene underscoring the enduring relevance of books.

The Doha International Book Fair continues at the Doha Exhibition and Convention Center through Saturday evening, with the participation of more than 520 publishing houses representing 37 Arab and foreign countries.

# Venezuela to probe death of political prisoner

AFP  
Caracas

Venezuela's interim president Delcy Rodriguez ordered an investigation on Monday into the death of political prisoner Victor Hugo Quero Navas in state custody.

Quero's mother, Carmen Navas, 81, died on Sunday, just days after confirming her son's death, sending shockwaves across the country.

Quero, 51, was arrested in January 2025 on terrorism charges, a charge regularly used to lock up dissidents under ousted socialist president Nicolas Maduro.

Navas searched tirelessly for her son during his detention but failed to confirm his whereabouts until authorities reported his death in early May. Her loved ones said she put off dealing with her own health problems to focus on finding him.

The ministry said on May 7 that "after examining his (Quero's) file," it could confirm that he died on July 24, 2025 of "acute respiratory failure secondary to pulmonary thromboembolism" in a military hospital in Caracas.

It claimed that while in custody, Quero had given no information about family members and no relative had formally requested a visit.

Following the news of his death, Navas visited her son's grave and demanded his remains be exhumed for identification. After doing so, she held a small funeral in Caracas.

Rodriguez "ordered a thorough investigation to clarify what happened and requested the co-operation of the Ombudsman's Office and Public Prosecutor's Office," according to an official statement released on Monday.

"Once the investigation is concluded, the country will be fully informed of the results and subsequent actions," the statement added.

The prosecutor's office said on May 8 it was launching a criminal investigation into the case.

Around 20 political prisoners have died in custody in Venezuela since 2014, according to rights group Foro Penal.

Despite the adoption of an amnesty for political prisoners in February, a month after Maduro's ouster by the US, around 500 remain behind bars, rights groups say.

# Magyar visits Poland to mark Hungary's return to the EU

Hungary's Peter Magyar arrived in Poland yesterday for his first official overseas trip as prime minister, hoping to mark his country's re-alignment with the European Union after years of open conflict under his predecessor, Viktor Orban.

"I am delighted that Hungarian-Polish relations are regaining the place that they deserve," Magyar said in the southern city of Krakow, his first stop on a two-day visit also taking in the capital, Warsaw, and Gdansk, in the north.

Relations between Budapest and Warsaw have been strained since the 2023 Polish parliamentary elections, which led to the formation of a centrist, pro-European government headed by Donald Tusk, a staunch ally of Ukraine.

Magyar won a resounding victory in April, crushing Orban, a nationalist Russian ally who had been in power for 16 years, while Tusk ended eight years in power of the nationalist populists Law and Justice (PiS) party.

Piotr Buras, from the European Council on Foreign Relations think-tank, told AFP that Magyar was "in a way following the same path as Tusk", to move away from "illiberal populism" and restore trust with Brussels.

A European Commission delegation is expected in Budapest this week. Magyar is due in Brussels next week where he hopes to conclude a deal with European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen to recover billions of euros frozen over rule-of-law violations under Orban.



Hungary's Prime Minister Peter Magyar and Foreign Minister Anita Orban travel by train, during his first official visit, in Krakow, yesterday. (Reuters)

The new Hungarian leader is seeking the support of his Polish counterpart, whose chief of staff – back when Tusk was president of the European Council between 2014 and 2019 – was Piotr Serafin, who is now the EU's budget commissioner. Magyar arrived in Krakow early yesterday afternoon where he met Archbishop Grzegorz Rys and laid wreaths at the monuments to Polish pope John Paul II and the former, 16th-century king of Poland, the Hungarian Stephen Bathory. (AFP)

# Sheikha Moza visits DIBF, attends QF schools event

From Page 1

HE Sheikha Hind bint Hamad al-Thani, Vice Chairperson of Qatar Foundation (QF)'s Pre-University Education - which reflects the QF's commitment to fostering innovation-driven learning and connecting students with real-world environments where they can present their ideas and engage with industry experts, researchers, and QF alumni.

The showcase served as an interactive platform bringing students from QF schools together with partners from the academic and industry sectors, while providing them with the opportunity to present their projects to the wider community, reflecting the role of education in preparing a generation capable of transforming ideas into solutions and future-focused innovations.

The president of QF's Pre-University Education (PUE), Abeer al-Khalifa, said: "Showcases such as this demonstrate that talent

development does not begin at university or in the workplace, it starts much earlier, in our schools."

"When young people are given opportunities to apply their learning, engage with authentic challenges, and communicate their ideas with confidence, they begin to see themselves as contributors to Qatar's future from an early age," she said.

Al-Khalifa explained that creating platforms of this kind helps to position K-12 education as a key part of Qatar's long-term talent development journey.

"By connecting students with researchers, industry partners, and innovators across our multi-university ecosystem and beyond, we are intentionally strengthening the link between education and the

future economy, while reinforcing the importance of innovation, leadership, and problem-solving from the earliest stages of learning," she said.

Al-Khalifa explained that the QF's ecosystem - spanning policy and research centres, partner universities, and QF alumni - enables students to engage directly with experts from diverse fields, creating learning experiences that extend beyond the traditional classroom.

"These interactions help students strengthen their communication, teamwork, and leadership abilities, while gaining a deeper understanding of how their work can translate into meaningful impact," she said.

Al-Khalifa emphasised that providing public platforms for students to showcase their work is central to the PUE's vision of preparing future-ready learners.

"Ideas flourish when they are shared, and students who dedicate genuine effort to their work deserve opportunities to present it to the wider community and be recognised for what they have achieved," she pointed out.

Mehdi Benchaabane, vice-president of QF Schools within the PUE, said: "We intentionally chose to host the showcase at Qatar Science & Technology Park (QSTP) because we want our students to experience a real innovation ecosystem and feel that they are already part of it."

The showcase featured around 50 student projects addressing real-world challenges across artificial intelligence (AI), sustainability, health, and culture, alongside participation from industry partners within the public and private sector, as well as the QF's QSTP and Hamad Bin Khalifa University, the Qatar Research, Development and Innovation (QRDI) Council, the Qatar National Library, and QF alumni, giving students the opportunity to see the direct connection be-

tween their projects and Qatar's future priorities.

Benchaabane explained that the IB Middle Years Programme Personal Project forms the academic foundation of the showcase, encouraging students to identify real-world challenges, conduct research, and develop meaningful projects, while the showcase itself provides a platform where these ideas move beyond the classroom into real-world application.

"When a student stands before industry experts and QF alumni to present and defend their project, they are no longer simply learners in a classroom, they become innovators capable of communicating their ideas with confidence," he said.

Benchaabane emphasised that presenting projects, responding to questions, and engaging directly with audiences play a significant role in building students' confidence and personal growth.

He said that encouraging students to present in both Arabic and English through dual-language programmes strengthens their academic and professional communication skills in both languages.

Benchaabane also noted that the transformation students experience after participating in the showcase is "significant and impactful", explaining that many initially view their projects as academic requirements, but leave seeing them as ideas with real potential for future development and application.

"When a student hears from an expert or a QF alumnus that their project has real potential, it changes the way they see both themselves and their future," he added.

"Giving students the opportunity to curate their booths and present their projects to the public fosters a stronger sense of ownership and responsibility toward their ideas, while building confidence that continues to shape them long after the showcase ends," Benchaabane said. - QNA



Her Highness Sheikha Moza bint Nasser at the Doha International Book Fair (DIBF). **PICTURE:** AR Al-Baker



Right: Her Highness Sheikha Moza bint Nasser engaging students at the DIBF. **PICTURE:** AR Al-Baker



Her Highness Sheikha Moza bint Nasser at the Qatar Foundation Schools Showcase. HE Sheikha Hind bint Hamad al-Thani, Vice-Chairperson of Qatar Foundation, also attended the showcase organised by Qatar Foundation (QF)'s Pre-University Education. **PICTURE:** Aisha Al-Musallam



Right: Her Highness Sheikha Moza bint Nasser being given a demonstration by a student at the Qatar Foundation Schools Showcase. **PICTURE:** AR Al-Baker



Her Highness Sheikha Moza bint Nasser touring the Qatar Foundation Schools Showcase at the Qatar Science and Technology Park. **PICTURE:** Aisha Al-Musallam

Right: Her Highness Sheikha Moza bint Nasser being briefed by a student at the Qatar Foundation Schools Showcase. **PICTURE:** Aisha Al-Musallam



By Tawfik Lamari  
Staff Reporter

## Qatar-China ties are at their strongest in history: envoy

Qatar-China relations are at their strongest in history, with enormous potential and broad prospects for mutually beneficial co-operation between the two countries, China's ambassador to Qatar Cao Xiaolin said yesterday.

Speaking at a media briefing, the envoy noted that since the establishment of diplomatic relations in 1988, the Qatar-China strategic partnership has enjoyed 12 years of high-quality development under the strategic guidance of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani and Chinese President Xi Jinping.

Mutual trust between the two countries has continued to deepen, the ambassador noted, and Xi and His Highness the Amir have reached a series of important understandings to advance the strategic partnership, which have served as a blueprint for bilateral friendship and co-operation.

Co-operation between China and Qatar across various fields has yielded fruitful results.

Since 2020, China has remained Qatar's largest trading partner and largest export destination.

Bilateral trade volume has risen from \$10.6bn in 2014 to \$23.8bn in 2025 - a nearly 125% increase.

Turning to China's policy on the Middle East, Cao referred to the five-point initiative jointly put forward by China and Pakistan in March this year on restoring peace and stability in the Gulf and the broader region.

The initiative called for an immediate cessation of hostilities, the early launch of peace negotiations, protection of non-military targets, safeguarding the passage security of the Strait of Hormuz, and upholding the primary authority of the UN Charter.

China maintains that countries in the Gulf region and the Middle East should hold their future and destiny firmly in their own hands, he said, adding that Beijing supports regional countries in establishing a peace and security architecture based on broad participation, shared interests and common development.



On the recent summit between Xi and US President Donald Trump, the ambassador said the two leaders' in-depth discussions had produced fruitful outcomes. "The most important political understanding they reached was the agreement to build a constructive China-US relationship of strategic stability," he said.

relationship of strategic stability," he said.

Cao explained that the two presidents had agreed on a new vision providing strategic guidance for bilateral relations over the next three years and beyond.

"Both sides should maintain policy continuity and stability," the envoy said. "It is very important for both sides to honour our words and move in the same direction. A positive outlook on China-US co-operation will provide more certainty for both countries' development and for the international situation."

He stressed that the Taiwan question was an important topic at the summit.

"China's position is very clear: first, the Taiwan question is China's internal affair," the envoy stated. "Realising complete reunification is an aspiration shared by all sons and daughters of the Chinese nation."

On economic and trade outcomes, Cao said that Xi had emphasised that economic and trade ties are mutually benefi-

cial and win-win by nature.

Where disagreements and frictions exist, equal-footed consultation is the only right approach, he added, noting that the two economic and trade teams had produced generally balanced and positive outcomes.

On the Middle East situation, the ambassador said Xi had set forth China's consistent position: negotiation may not produce immediate results, but now that the door of dialogue has been opened, it should not be closed again.

He said that China encourages the US and Iran to continue settling their differences and disputes through negotiation, including on the nuclear issue.

Beijing has also called for reopening the Strait of Hormuz as soon as possible on the basis of a sustained ceasefire, and believes the fundamental solution to the stalemate lies in achieving a permanent, comprehensive ceasefire.

The envoy concluded that, as Xi had pointed out, China-US relations concern the well-being of more than 1.7bn people in both countries and affect the interests of over 8bn people worldwide.

China, Cao said, is prepared to work with the US to follow through on the important understandings reached by the two presidents in Beijing.

## DIBF spotlights precision medicine, global politics in packed sessions

By Tawfik Lamari  
Staff Reporter

The Doha International Book Fair (DIBF) drew large audiences yesterday for a range of events, including "Qatar Speaks" which showcased contributions to medical science, and the launch of the novel *The Shadow of the Tsar*.

A panel discussion on "The Journey of Innovation and Creativity", held as part of the "Qatar Speaks" platform on the exhibition's main stage, explored the transition from a traditional healthcare system to one based on precision medicine and genomics - widely regarded as the medicine of the future.

The session featured Dr Khalid Fakhro, the head of research and head of the Precision Medicine Programme at Sidra Medicine.

During the session, he highlighted Qatar's role and ongoing contributions to advancing medical sciences, noting the

### *The Shadow of the Tsar* explores role of small states amid global conflicts

country's leading position in precision medicine within the Arab world.

Dr Fakhro said this aligns with the Qatar National Vision 2030 strategy of transforming the country into a knowledge-based economy.

He further noted that the DIBF reflects the country's commitment to a knowledge-based economy and encourages the public to benefit from the books and scientific research available at the fair.

Meanwhile, at Al Jazeera Centre for Studies pavilion, international affairs expert and researcher Abdullah Rashid al-Mursel launched his new book, *The Shadow of the Tsar: Small States in the Shadow of International Conflict*.

He said that the book examines how the Russian-Ukrainian war reshaped the positions of small and marginal states within the international system, revealing new roles that emerged on the periphery of the



Part of the panel discussion.

conflict, far from the centre of direct confrontation.

Al-Mursel explained that the book's central premise is that major shifts in international politics often crystallise on the margins.

He added that the book traces the interactions of Central Asian, Balkan, Middle Eastern and African states during a period of sharp global polarisation, analysing how these countries managed their diplomatic, economic and security options.



Abdullah Rashid al-Mursel signing his book for visitors.

Al-Mursel noted that the book offers an in-depth analysis of how small states utilise opportunities arising from disruptions in the international system despite geographical and political constraints.