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Arab Cup delivers QR2.89bn bonanza to Qatar's economy

Hospitality, retail, travel sectors reap rich rewards

The FIFA Arab Cup Qatar 2025, which took place from December 1-18, 2025, generated a total of QR2.89bn of economic value for the local economy, the Local Organising Committee for Football Events (LOC) has announced.

An economic impact assessment conducted in partnership with Nielsen Sport – a leader in sports analytics, underscored the tournament's role as a primary catalyst for tourism in Qatar in 2025, contributing towards a surge in revenue across travel, hospitality, and retail sectors.

The tournament's strong global appeal attracted 305,015 fans from outside Qatar, resulting in QR288.9mn spent on flights, QR315.5mn spent on accommodation, and 1.5mn room-nights bookings during the tournament period. From these international attendees, 97% believed that the tournament had a positive impact on Qatar.

FIFA Arab Cup Qatar 2025 LOC CEO, Jassim al-Jassim, said: "Mega-sporting events such as the Arab Cup, continue to serve as key drivers for economic growth and diversification in the country, in line with the Qatar National Vision 2030. The second



edition of the competition united millions of fans from the region and beyond for a spectacular celebration of Arab culture and camaraderie, alongside top-level football, successfully cementing Qatar's position as a premier sports and tourist destination."

"We are committed towards carrying forward the Qatar 2022 legacy by hosting world-class events that will not just celebrate the rich culture and hospitality

of the nation, but that continue delivering long-term social and economic impact to support the nation's goals and vision of sustainable growth," he added.

Throughout the FIFA Arab Cup, QR246.1mn was generated from food and beverage sales as fans explored Qatar's diverse culinary offerings. This was complemented by a QR200.7mn spend on retail across prime tourist destinations in the country.

The tournament also generated local transportation expenditure of QR84.2mn, with fans utilising Qatar's modern public transport system to explore the country's compact nature and visit various tourist and cultural sites.

While the tournament leveraged the post-2022 infrastructure, utilising six world-class stadiums that previously hosted matches during the historic FIFA World Cup Qatar 2022, the LOC recorded a QR793.6mn spend on operations, promotion and logistics across the host country.

Throughout the competition, the LOC offered a comprehensive suite of media services at the Main Media Centre and a dedicated Broadcasting Hub in Souq Waqif, a gathering hotspot for fans during the tournament. This resulted in robust tournament and host country coverage, generating QR241mn in media value. In addition, social media engagement across major platforms drove QR24.6mn in economic impact.

The FIFA Arab Cup was part of a record-breaking football season in Qatar, which also saw the country host the first 48-team FIFA U-17 World Cup Qatar 2025 and the FIFA Intercontinental Cup Qatar 2025.

Qatar is now set to host the second of five consecutive editions of the FIFA U-17 World Cup from November 19 to December 13.

Draft law regulating social professions approved

By A Staff Reporter
Doha

HE the Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman bin Jassim al-Thani chaired the Cabinet's regular meeting yesterday morning at the Amiri Diwan.

Following the meeting, HE the Minister of Justice and Minister of State for Cabinet Affairs Ibrahim bin Ali al-Mohannadi said the Cabinet, at the outset of the meeting, extended its highest congratulations to His Highness the Amir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani on the imminent advent of the blessed Eid al-Adha, praying to Almighty Allah to return this blessed occasion to His Highness with the best of health and happiness, to Qatar and its people and residents with prosperity and growth under His Highness the Amir's wise leadership, and to the Arab and Islamic nations with goodness, welfare and blessings.

The Cabinet commended His Highness the Amir's honouring of the winners of the seventh edition of the State Appreciation Award and the State Incentive Award in science, arts, and literature, in recognition of their significant contributions to their respective fields and their role in supporting national development and enriching the cultural and intellectual landscape locally and globally. The Cabinet also congratulated the winners, commending their outstanding contributions and wishing them continued success in serving their country and nation.

The Cabinet then considered the topics on its agenda and approved a draft law regulating the practice of social professions. The draft law, prepared by the Ministry of Social Development and Family within the framework of implementing its strategy, is in line with the Third National Development Strategy and Qatar National Vision 2030.

It aims to establish an integrated legislative framework to regulate the practice of social professions in the country by identifying the controls, provisions and professional standards necessary for practising them. **To Page 6**

Amir appoints Aqarat president

His Highness the Amir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani issued yesterday Amiri Decision No. 25 of 2026, appointing HE Mohammed bin Hassan al-Malki as President of the Real Estate Regulatory Authority-Aqarat. The decision is effective starting from its date of issue, and is to be published in the official gazette. **(QNA)**

QatarEnergy in Uruguay stakes

GT Report
Doha

QatarEnergy has acquired participating interests in three exploration blocks offshore Uruguay from BG International Limited, a subsidiary of Shell. Under the agreements, QatarEnergy has acquired an 18% interest in block 'OFF-4', while Shell held 32%, and APA Corporation (the operator) retained the remaining 50%. QatarEnergy has also acquired a 30% interest in block 'OFF-2', which is operated by Shell with a 70% interest. In the third exploration block 'OFF-7', QatarEnergy has acquired a 30% interest, with Shell (the operator) retaining 40%, and Chevron holding the remaining 30%. **To Page 6**

GCC, Britain strike \$5bn trade deal

Reuters
London

Britain said yesterday it had secured a trade deal with the Gulf Co-operation Council worth \$5bn a year in the long run, deepening economic ties with allies in a region dealing with the fallout from the Iran war.

The deal with the GCC, which consists of Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates, comes after US-Israeli strikes against Iran in February triggering Iranian attacks on other countries in the region.



GCC Secretary-General Jassem Mohamed Albudaiwi being welcomed at Downing Street in London yesterday. **(AFP)**

putting strain on energy and food supplies.

"At a time of increased instability, today's announcement sends a clear signal of confidence – giving UK exporters the certainty they need to plan ahead, Britain's Trade Minister Peter Kyle said. The British government said the deal would be worth £3.7bn (\$4.96bn) each year in the long term, more than double a previous estimate that it would be worth £1.6bn, as the final deal went further on both trade liberalisation and service sector commitments than previously expected. **To Page 6**

Qatar unveils world's first esports lounge inside Olympic museum

By A Staff Reporter/QNA
Doha

The 3-2-1 Qatar Olympic and Sports Museum has officially launched the 321 Esports Lounge – the world's first dedicated esports space housed within an Olympic museum, marking a bold convergence of heritage and the digital frontier. Reflecting the surging global appetite for competitive gaming, the lounge cements Qatar's standing as a regional powerhouse for sport and technological innovation, weaving esports into the broader fabric of the country's sporting identity. Perched on the seventh floor of the museum, the lounge has been conceived as a permanent and inclusive hub for entertainment and development – a space

welcoming everyone from the curious first-time player to the seasoned national-level athlete. Its mandate is twofold: to unearth young talent and to nurture the skills that will define the next generation of Qatari competitors. Qatar's ascent as a global sporting destination has been nothing short of remarkable. From the dazzling spectacle of the FIFA World Cup Qatar 2022 to the AFC Asian Cup, the World Athletics Championships, the FIFA Club World Cup, MotoGP, the ATP and WTA tennis circuits, and the annual Qatar ExxonMobil Open, the country has hosted a roll-call of marquee events that few nations can rival. Underpinning these triumphs is a constellation of world-class venues – the architectural marvel of Lusail Stadium, the cooling ingenuity of Education

City Stadium, the storied Khalifa International Stadium, and the seafont elegance of Stadium 974 – alongside Aspire Zone, the Lusail Sports Arena, and a suite of training and aquatic facilities that meet the most exacting international standards. This sporting renaissance has been propelled by the patronage and vision of the wise leadership, whose strategic investment in mega-events, grassroots development, and cutting-edge infrastructure has transformed Qatar into a year-round sporting capital. The arrival of the 321 Esports Lounge slots naturally into this tapestry, extending the country's sporting reach from the turf and the track to the screen and the controller. Director of the 3-2-1 Qatar Olympic and Sports Museum, Abdulla al-Mulla, told QNA that the launch



of the 321 Esports Lounge arrives at a moment of breakneck growth in the electronic gaming sector worldwide, opening fresh avenues of investment, sporting opportunity, and cultural exchange. The sector also draws in young people and turbocharges digital innovation, dovetailing

with Qatar's vision for the advancement of modern creative and technological industries, al-Mulla noted. Esports, he added, are enjoying soaring popularity in Qatar and across the globe, emerging as a platform where innovation, technology, creativity, and competitiveness intersect.

The director said the museum will roll out the first phase of esports programmes tied to the Olympic Games, building a structured pathway for aspiring competitors. He pointed out that the International Olympic Committee has taken significant strides towards including esports in upcoming editions of the Olympic Games – a move that mirrors the sector's extraordinary global trajectory. Al-Mulla said the lounge has been purpose-built as a meeting ground for professional players and creative students to compete, collaborate, and learn – and as an incubator for the young talents who will shape the future of esports in Qatar. He voiced hope that the lounge will, in time, become a defining landmark for the sector in the country.

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

His Highness the Amir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani, His Highness the Deputy Amir Sheikh Abdullah bin Hamad al-Thani and HE the Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman

bin Jassim al-Thani sent cables of condolences to Amir of the State of Kuwait Sheikh Meshal al-Ahmad al-Jaber al-Sabah following the death of Sheikh Mohammed Faisal Mohammed Abdulaziz al-Malek al-Sabah. (QNA)

Amir sends cable of congratulations to president of Timor-Leste

His Highness the Amir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani sent a cable of congratulations to President of the Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste Dr Jose Ramos-Horta, on the occasion of his country's Independence Day. His Highness the Deputy Amir Sheikh Abdullah bin Hamad al-Thani also sent a cable of congratulations to President of the Democratic Republic of

Timor-Leste Dr Jose Ramos-Horta, on the occasion of his country's Independence Day. HE the Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman bin Jassim al-Thani sent a cable of congratulations to the Prime Minister of the Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste Xanana Gusmao, on the anniversary of his country's Independence Day. (QNA)

NHRC hosts introductory meeting on institutional sustainability study

The National Human Rights Committee (NHRC), in co-operation with the Doha Institute for Graduate Studies, organised an introductory meeting on a research project on institutional sustainability from a human rights perspective in public institutions, with the participation of several ministries, government bodies, public institutions, private

sector entities, and civil society organisations in the country. In a statement, the NHRC said the meeting is part of its mandate in conducting studies and research, promoting a culture of human rights, raising awareness, and supporting the development of institutional policies and practices aligned with human rights principles. (QNA)

Minister meets Canadian Secretary of State for Int'l Development

QNA
London

HE the Minister of State for International Co-operation, Dr Maryam bint Ali bin Nasser al-Misnad, met Secretary of State for International Development of Canada, Randeep Sarai, on the sidelines of the Global Partnerships Conference held in London.

During the meeting, they reviewed bilateral co-operation and ways to support and strengthen it, as well as co-ordination in the fields of humanitarian diplomacy and international development. They also discussed the economic implications of rising energy prices and their impact on exports and imports through the Strait of Hormuz. In addition, both parties discussed co-ordination of medical efforts to support the Gaza Strip, joint development and cultural projects aimed at rehabilitating historical sites and supporting artisans in Syria, and initiatives to support women in Sudan.



Al-Misnad meets UK Minister for International Development

QNA
London

HE the Minister of State for International Co-operation Dr Maryam bint Ali bin Nasser al-Misnad met with Minister of State for International Development at the UK Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office, Baroness Jenny Chapman, on the sidelines of the Global Partnerships Conference held in London.

During the meeting, they reviewed bilateral co-operation and ways to support and strengthen

it, as well as mechanisms for developing innovative approaches to humanitarian diplomacy and development work at both the regional and international levels.

The two sides discussed ways to unify and integrate Qatari-British efforts in directing humanitarian support and urgent relief aid to a number of regions and countries facing exceptional humanitarian challenges. They further discussed co-ordinating medical efforts to support the Gaza Strip and joint development programmes and projects in Syria, Sudan, Bangladesh, and Afghanistan.

Qatar calls for stronger civilian protection at UN

QNA
New York

The State of Qatar has renewed its call for stronger humanitarian diplomacy as a critical tool for safeguarding civilians in conflict zones during a high-level United Nations event in New York.

The event, organised on the sidelines of the Protection of Civilians Week 2026, was hosted by the State of Qatar's permanent mission to the UN in partnership with the UN Office for the Co-ordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) and several international partners, including the permanent missions of the Democratic Republic of Congo, the Kingdom of Norway, the Kingdom of Sweden, the European Union, the International Committee of the Red Cross, the Center for



Civilians in Conflict, the Qatar Red Crescent Society, the International Humanitarian Law Center, Geneva Call and Save the Children.

It brought together diplomats and humanitarian organisations to discuss ways of improving civil-

ian protection amid growing global crises.

In a recorded address, HE the Minister of State for International Co-operation Dr Maryam bint Ali bin Nasser al-Misnad said humanitarian diplomacy remained

central to Doha's foreign policy, which she said was based on dialogue, peaceful conflict resolution and respect for international law.

She described mediation as a cornerstone of Qatar's approach, highlighting what she called an "integrated model" combining mediation efforts with rapid humanitarian response to improve aid access and support protection initiatives in complex conflict environments.

Dr al-Misnad said challenges facing civilian protection were no longer purely operational, but increasingly political, particularly regarding respect for international humanitarian law and the delivery of aid to affected populations.

Opening the event, HE the Permanent Representative of the State of Qatar to the UN Sheikha Alya Ahmed bin Saif al-Thani said humanitarian assistance was often



obstructed while civilians continued to face attacks and violations of international humanitarian law.

She warned that decisions concerning humanitarian corridors and aid delivery were frequently made far from realities on the ground, stressing the need for stronger political and diplomatic engagement at the highest levels.

Sheikha Alya said humanitarian diplomacy had become an essential tool for mobilising political will and integrating humanitarian con-

cerns into political and multilateral processes.

She also reaffirmed Qatar's commitment to mediation and humanitarian efforts in several regions, including joint initiatives in Gaza and support for peace efforts in the Democratic Republic of Congo.

Tom Fletcher, the UN's Emergency Relief Co-ordinator, urged the international community to use its political influence and diplomatic leverage to protect civilians, praising the State of Qatar's partnership with OCHA.

Qatar takes part in Global Partnerships Conference

QNA
London

The State of Qatar participated in the Global Partnerships Conference, held in London and co-hosted by the United Kingdom and the Republic of South Africa.

HE the Minister of State for International Co-operation, Dr Maryam bint Ali bin Nasser al-Misnad, represented the State of Qatar at the conference.

The conference was attended by a number of senior officials, ministers, and heads of development and humanitarian organisations from around the world.

The Minister of State for International Co-operation participated as a keynote speaker in the opening panel discussion moderated by Chief Economic Adviser to the UK Prime Minister, Baroness Nemat Shafiq, pertaining to building systems to overcome challenges of the 21st century. This was addressed in two themes.

The first theme addressed the profound changes in the current political and developmental environment, revealing structural imbalances in the existing international co-operation system, which is no longer adequate to address the scale of the crises, while the second theme explored the next decade and the fundamental changes required to recalibrate the international system.

In the first session, Dr al-Misnad reviewed Qatar's pioneering experience and its globally recognised initiatives, emphasising that Qatar places supporting the least developed countries at the forefront of its foreign policy. She highlighted the significant financial contributions and donations made by Qatar, including a USD60mn grant to



support development activities and capacity-building projects in these countries.

She stated that Qatar found itself at the crossroads of three simultaneous crises within a single year. These included mediation efforts to achieve a ceasefire in Gaza and facilitate the delivery of aid to the Strip, its efforts to reunite Ukrainian children with their families, and Qatar Fund for Development's (QFFD) funding of more than 70 countries facing food, climate, and debt crises.

She pointed out that the current international system has collapsed on the premise of separating humanitarian work from development and peace, highlighting that the assumption of a monopoly on international decision-making has crumbled.

Gulf and Arab development funds, sovereign wealth funds, and regional mediators have become the cornerstones of the system's continuity, she said, noting that Qatar alone provided USD4.8bn in foreign aid to the least developed countries in 2024.

In this context, She called for the swift translation of the financial commitments made at the Second Doha World Summit for Social Development into rapid, tangible results.

Commenting on the next decade, HE the Minister of State for International Co-operation presented a practical roadmap based

on several key areas: transitioning from fragmented funding to national platforms led and owned by the recipient countries rather than the donors, enabling them to lead co-ordination, and urging the implementation of the Doha Action Plan.

She emphasised the importance of financing social protection and human capital development as essential long-term infrastructure, citing the Education Above All Foundation's experience in successfully enrolling over 16mn children in education across 60 countries. She called for the adoption of definitions that would enable these sectors to access concessional and blended financing tools, building upon the existing "From Seville to Doha" initiative in collaboration with Spain and the International Labour Organisation.

She further stressed the importance of including humanitarian mediation and ensuring humanitarian access as key enablers for the flow of development investments. Qatar's investment in solidifying its role as a trusted mediator from Gaza to Afghanistan and Colombia, and its launch of the "Humanitarian Diplomacy Initiative," are all part of Qatar's Third National Development Strategy.

She affirmed Qatar's full readiness to be an active and pivotal partner in translating these three pillars into tangible reality on the ground.

Qatar, Italy discuss regional security

QNA
Rome

The State of Qatar and the Italian Republic have held high-level talks focusing on bilateral co-operation and regional security, including efforts to maintain the ceasefire between the US and Iran and reduce tensions across the Middle East.

HE the Minister of State at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Dr Mohammed bin Abdulaziz al-Khulaifi met yesterday in Rome with senior Italian officials, including Undersecretary of State for Foreign Affairs and International Co-operation Maria Tripodi, Chairman of the Foreign Affairs and European Union Committee in the Chamber of Deputies, Giulio Tremonti, and Head of the Parliamentary Friendship Inter-group for the Gulf Countries at the Italian Parliament, Salvatore Caiata.

The meetings reviewed relations between the two countries and explored ways to strengthen co-operation across a range of areas.

Discussions also focused on developments in the region, particularly the ceasefire between



the US and the Islamic Republic of Iran, as well as diplomatic efforts aimed at de-escalation and reinforcing regional stability.

During the meetings, HE Dr al-Khulaifi reiterated the State

of Qatar's support for resolving conflicts through peaceful means and reaffirmed Doha's commitment to promoting peace and stability at both regional and international levels.

Qatar partakes in 27th GCC-EU Joint Council, Ministerial Meeting

The State of Qatar took part in the 27th GCC-EU Joint Council and Ministerial Meeting convened in Brussels, Belgium.

Participating in this event were delegations from the GCC nations and the GCC General Secretariat, alongside officials from the EU.

Director of Policy and Planning Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Dr Khalid bin Fahad al-Khater represented the State of Qatar at this meeting.

The meeting addressed the



latest developments in the Gulf region and Europe, particularly the Iranian attacks on the GCC nations, maritime security in the Strait of Hormuz and the Red Sea, as well as the situation in

Yemen, Iraq and Lebanon. Overall, the gathering shared perspectives on the situation in the Gaza Strip, the two-state solution, along with Syria and Ukraine. (QNA)

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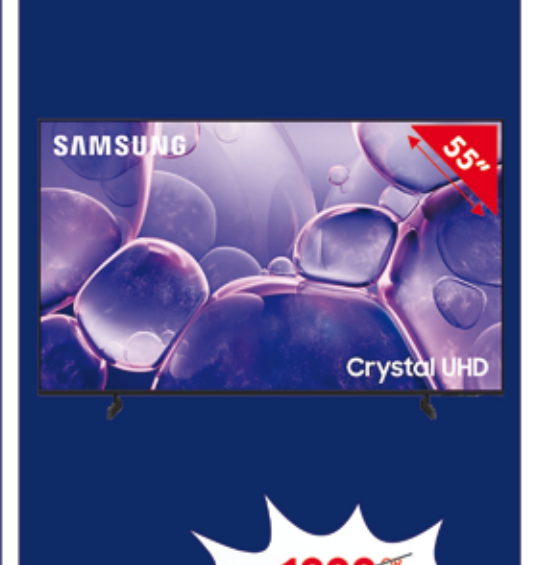
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Qatar, Azerbaijan discuss strengthening media co-operation



The State of Qatar and the Republic of Azerbaijan have discussed ways to enhance media co-operation during a meeting held in Doha yesterday. HE the Chief Executive Officer of Qatar Media Corp Sheikh Khalid bin Abdulaziz bin Jassim al-Thani met ambassador of the Republic of Azerbaijan to the State of Qatar Adish Mammadov to review avenues for closer collaboration between the two sides in the media sector. The discussions focused on strengthening media ties in a way that supports broader bilateral relations between Qatar and Azerbaijan. (QNA)

Chairman of QMC meets UK ambassador



HE the Chairman of Qatar Media Corporation (QMC) Sheikh Hamad bin Thamer al-Thani met yesterday with ambassador of the United Kingdom to the State of Qatar, Neerav Patel. During the meeting, they discussed co-operation relations between the two countries in the media fields and ways to support and develop them, in addition to several topics of mutual interest. (QNA)

QNB, Mastercard to expand cards, digital payments across Syria



QNB Group has collaborated with Mastercard to support end-to-end infrastructure readiness for comprehensive international card payment acceptance in Syria, including Point-of-Sale, e-Commerce, and SoftPOS. The landmark collaboration reinforces the bank's role as a trusted partner in driving the development of the country's financial sector, in line with the group's strategy to promote digital payments in the markets where it operates. Both parties are working together with the Central Bank of Syria, ensuring alignment with applicable regulatory, operational, and risk management requirements, and reflecting a shared commitment to strengthening the payments ecosystem in the country. Adel Ali al-Malki, senior executive vice-president of Group Retail Banking at QNB, said: "Through this partnership with Mastercard, and in co-operation with the Central Bank of Syria,

QNB Group continues to support the acceptance of international payment cards in Syria. This represents another step forward to supporting financial inclusion and enhancing the future of digital payments in the region." Adam Jones, division president, West Arabia, Mastercard, said: "Mastercard and QNB Group share a commitment to developing robust payment ecosystems and promoting financial inclusion across the region. We are excited to work together with the Central Bank of Syria to advance readiness for the first international transaction that will connect people and businesses in the country to the global payment network and open a whole new world of opportunities." The collaboration reflects the common vision of the two companies for harnessing the power of technology and innovation to support Syria's economic growth journey and contribute to building a prosperous future for the country.

AI at work: Redefining jobs, skills, human connection

Artificial Intelligence (AI) is redefining the world of work in profound ways. But when he spoke at Qatar Foundation's (QF) Education City Speaker Series, Mo Gawdat offered reassurance to those who fear a technological takeover of the workplace: "AI will reshape roles, but should not wipe out entire industries or regional economies." The former Chief Business Officer at Google X and bestselling author, insists that the narrative of AI as a destroyer of jobs is misguided. For him, the real challenge lies in inequality: "We have a shortage of workers, not jobs; the real issue is wages and income inequality." His perspective reframes the debate, suggesting that the danger is not automation itself, but how society values human labour. Dr Khaled Harras, senior associate dean for Faculty and a Teaching Professor of Computer Science at QF partner university Carnegie Mellon University in Qatar (CMU-Q), adds to this perspective. He acknowledges that some fears are valid, saying: "The reality is that some of that fear is justified because many jobs will indeed be replaced." However, he emphasises that the bigger issue is readiness. "Our current workforce isn't fully equipped to integrate this rapidly evolving AI ecosystem to become more effective," he says,



Dr Khaled Harras


"creating a contradiction where younger employees may skip foundational skills while seasoned experts resist new tools." This tension highlights the need for balanced adaptation, and efficiency gains are already visible. As Dr Harras points out: "AI provides much more effective access to distilled information and data. It creates a massive gain in efficiency for mundane human activities such as summarising e-mails, drafting slides, coding, and media production." These advances lower barriers to entry, allowing workers to accelerate through tasks that once consumed hours. But Gawdat reminds us that human qualities remain central, "Technological change can create opportunities for emotional intelligence over formal credentials. AI is not replacing human connection; it is amplifying the need for it." The World Economic Forum predicts over a billion jobs will be transformed in the coming dec-



Mo Gawdat at QF's Education City Speaker Series.

ade, and Dr Harras explains what this means. "Job transformation means the expected set of skills must evolve, and workflows will become increasingly AI-assisted," he explains. "For an expert, AI becomes a 'peer' that handles the mundane lifting, allowing the human to focus on curation, creativity, and finding that specific spin or angle." As Gawdat says: "AI isn't coming for your job, someone who knows how to use it is. The reality is that the jobs themselves will not disappear, but the way they are performed will change dramatically. "What we will see is not mass unemployment, but a filtering process where the least adaptable workers lose out, and those who embrace AI thrive in newly transformed roles." Dr Harras also raises regional concerns, noting that the Middle East has opportunities to

leapfrog legacy systems but faces risks of 'digital sovereignty' if nations rely too heavily on external AI providers. "If a nation doesn't invest in its own AI capacity, its entire functionality becomes reliant on external entities like OpenAI or Anthropic," he says. "This is a new form of economic dominance where a country's functioning could effectively be guided by an external company's decision." Ultimately, both Dr Harras and Gawdat return to the human dimension. "The future of work is not about fewer jobs, but about better jobs," Gawdat says. Dr Harras echoes the same sentiment, "We must adapt, not just in how we work, but in how we define meaning itself. We must reimagine our economies and our systems of governance, anchoring them in human connection, empathy, and our deepest values."



الهلال الأحمر القطري Qatar Red Crescent

Qatar Red Crescent – Medical Affairs Division

Tenders Announcement: -

Sr. #	Tender No.	Description	Temporary Tender Bond	Documents Fees (Non-Refundable)	Closing Date
1	QRC/EMS/05-2026	Purchase of Two Fully Equipped Four-Wheel Drive Ambulances in Accordance with the Required Specifications	50,000 Q.R	500 Q.R	17-06-2026
2	QRC/EMS/06-2026	Purchase and supply of Truck with Half Break down	9,000 Q.R	500 Q.R	17-06-2026

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

Required Documents:

- Authorization letter to receive tender documents + ID copy of the person will be receiving the documents.
- Company's Commercial registration copy with the business activity clearly specified therein.
- Bank deposit voucher with the value of documents not refunded & account details:
 - Account Name: Qatar Red Crescent.
 - Bank: Al Rayan.
 - Account Number: 0003-100689-200
 - IBAN Number: QA09MAFR000000000003100689200

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

Recall of Chevrolet Silverado

The Ministry of Commerce and Industry, in co-operation with Jaidah Motors & Trading Co, Qatar's Chevrolet dealership, has announced the recall of Chevrolet Silverado 2026 models. The recall is due to certain vehicles failing to conform to GCC Standardisation Organisation (GSO) Regulation No. 42, as the GSO fuel economy label displays an incorrect vehicle name. The Ministry said the recall campaign comes within the framework of its ongoing efforts to protect consumers and ensure that car dealers follow up on vehicle defects and repairs. The Ministry said that it will co-ordinate with the dealer to follow up on the maintenance and repair works and will communicate with customers to ensure that the necessary repairs are carried out. The Ministry urges all customers to report any violations to its Consumer Protection and Anti-Commercial Fraud Department, which processes complaints, inquiries and suggestions through the following channels: Call Centre: 16001, e-mail: info@moci.gov.qa, ministry's accounts on social media: @mociqatar, ministry's Mobile App: MOCIQATAR (available on iOS and Android devices)

Recall of Ford models

The Ministry of Commerce and Industry, in co-operation with Almana Motors Company, Qatar's Ford dealership, has announced the recall of Ford Bronco 2021-2026 and Edge 2021-2024 models. The recall is due to a potential issue where the accessory protocol interface unit may temporarily stop operating when high temperatures are detected, resulting in the rear-view camera image not being displayed while reversing. The Ministry said the recall campaign comes within the framework of its ongoing efforts to protect consumers and ensure that car dealers follow up on vehicle defects and repairs. The Ministry said that it will co-ordinate with the dealer to follow up on the maintenance and repair works and will communicate with customers to ensure that the necessary repairs are carried out. The Ministry urges all customers to report any violations to its Consumer Protection and Anti-Commercial Fraud Department, which processes complaints, inquiries and suggestions through the following channels: - Call Centre: 16001, e-mail: info@moci.gov.qa, ministry's accounts on social media: @mociqatar, ministry's Mobile App: MOCIQATAR (available on iOS and Android devices)

Recall of Harley-Davidson models

The Ministry of Commerce and Industry, in co-operation with NBK Powered Sports WLL, Qatar's Harley-Davidson dealership, has announced the recall of Harley-Davidson Touring/Softail 2024 – 2026 models. The recall is due to a potential manufacturing defect that may cause the MKE8 Airbox Baseplate Breather to become blocked. The Ministry said the recall campaign comes within the framework of its ongoing efforts to protect consumers and ensure that car dealers follow up on vehicle defects and repairs. The Ministry said that it will co-ordinate with the dealer to follow up on the maintenance and repair works and will communicate with customers to ensure that the necessary repairs are carried out. The Ministry urges all customers to report any violations to its Consumer Protection and Anti-Commercial Fraud Department, which processes complaints, inquiries and suggestions through the following channels:

Liquidation Announcement "1"

Based on the Partner's Resolution Dated 14 April 2026

To Liquidate

SONMEZ CONTRACTING L.L.C.
(Voluntary Liquidation)

Liquidator / Naresh Dasari

Announce the commencement of liquidation of

SONMEZ CONTRACTING L.L.C.
Commercial Registration No. 152551

Any party who has any claims from this Company should send a registered letter including all supporting documents to P.O. Box 30653, Doha – Qatar, within 75 days from the date of this publication.

**Email: naresh@aksaa.qa,
M: +974 6603 9427 / T: +974 4417 2674**

WCM-Q launches expanded LifeHub project in Msheireb Downtown

Weill Cornell Medicine-Qatar (WCM-Q) has launched an expanded version of the pioneering LifeHub project at a new location in Msheireb Downtown, providing a uniquely immersive educational experience that promotes Qatar's vision for a healthier, more sustainable future built on innovation and human progress.

Now located in the Z-07 Building at Msheireb Downtown, near the Msheireb metro station, LifeHub presents a bold, positive vision for the future in which a dynamic fusion of technological innovation, AI, and new developments in medical science equips future generations with a healthy, secure and sustainable world.

LifeHub, which occupies a three-storey, 1,634 sqm space, presents visitors with the chance to experience a series of themed zones, each of which uses immersive, interactive and AI-powered technologies to dramatically highlight global challenges and demonstrate the role innovation and human ingenuity can play in overcoming them.

These zones showcase the causes and effects of climate change,



Dr Javaid Sheikh, dean of WCM-Q



Eng Ali al-Kuwari, CEO of Msheireb Properties

the positive impact of sustainable practices, hi-tech ways to protect vulnerable ecosystems and wildlife, the history of medicine from the Ancient World to the present day, healthy and sustainable lifestyles, and the potential for AI and precision medicine to enhance human health for all.

LifeHub is delivered by WCM-Q, supported by its strategic partners, the Ministry of Public Health (MoPH) and the Ministry of Municipality (MoM).

Dr Javaid Sheikh, dean of WCM-Q, said: "WCM-Q is proud to have formed strategic partner-

ships with the Ministry of Public Health and the Ministry of Municipality to advance LifeHub, which is a truly exciting and momentous project aimed at harnessing public enthusiasm for the opportunities presented by cutting-edge technologies like AI, machine learning and precision medicine to help us meet global challenges, enhance human health, and embrace sustainability. We are truly honoured that LifeHub has been welcomed so warmly to its new home by Msheireb Properties, which is providing tremendous support to



An expanded version of the LifeHub project has launched in Msheireb, showcasing a host of immersive experiences that present a bold vision of a healthier future based on technological innovation, AI and sustainability.

this exciting project."

Eng Ali al-Kuwari, CEO of Msheireb Properties, said: "Msheireb Downtown Doha represents a contemporary vision for urban development that emphasises community welfare and ecological responsibility. Housing LifeHub in our district advances

our work in raising awareness about health and sustainability.

Al-Kuwari stressed: "By bringing this project to the centre of our city, we are connecting education, innovation, and urban life. This partnership directly furthers the human development aims of Qatar National Vision, promoting


greater public comprehension of health and sustainability matters."

LifeHub Msheireb builds upon the success of WCM-Q's LifeHub Pavilion at Expo Doha 2023, which welcomed more than 77,000 visitors. In its new location in Msheireb Downtown, close to Msheireb metro station and Galleria, LifeHub also benefits from nearby parking facilities for visitors, making it highly accessible to all members of the community. LifeHub is open 8am - 8pm, Saturday - Thursday; and 3pm - 10pm on Fridays.

The project offers educational experiences to raise community awareness regarding public health, sustainability, recycling, nutrition, food security, and green agriculture, focusing on school students, families, visitors of all ages and aligning with the goals of Qatar National Vision 2030.

Now that it has been launched in its new location, LifeHub will stand as a beacon of hope, an inspiring educational resource positioned at the intersection of health, technology, artificial intelligence, and sustainability - lighting the way for generations to come.





INVITATION FOR EXPRESSION OF INTEREST
GOVERNMENT OF PAKISTAN - PRIVATISATION COMMISSION

Faisalabad Electric Supply Company **FESCO**
Gujranwala Electric Power Company **GEPCO**
Islamabad Electric Supply Company **IESCO**

PRIVATISATION OF FESCO, GEPCO & IESCO
FOR ACQUISITION OF 51% TO 100% SHARE CAPITAL TOGETHER WITH MANAGEMENT CONTROL IN EACH OF FESCO, GEPCO & IESCO

ABOUT FESCO, GEPCO & IESCO

Batch -I DISCOs	Districts / Coverage	Service Area	Consumers
FESCO	Central Punjab, incl. Faisalabad, Jhang, Toba Tek Singh, Chiniot, Sargodha, Mianwali, Khushab and Bhakkar	44.3K km ²	5.7 million
GEPCO	Gujranwala, Sialkot, Narowal, Gujrat, Mandi Bahauddin and Hafiz Abad	17.2K km ²	5.1 million
IESCO	Islamabad, Rawalpindi, Jhelum, Attock, Chakwal and Azad Jammu & Kashmir (AJK)	23.2K km ²	4.1 million

TRANSACTION OVERVIEW

Interested parties that are companies, firms, body corporates or other legal entities (and not individuals, nor the Federal or Provincial Governments of Pakistan or any enterprise owned or controlled by the Federal or Provincial Governments of Pakistan) should submit a separate EOI for each DISCO they are interested in (as a single entity or as a consortium) in 6 copies (i.e., 1 original, 4 hard copies (duly marked) and 1 soft electronic copy in an uncorrupted USB), to the Privatisation Commission (PC) at the following address, together with the applicable non-refundable processing fee of USD 5,000 (United States Dollars Five Thousand only) or PKR 1,400,000 (Pakistani Rupees One Million Four Hundred Thousand only) per EOI / DISCO.

Director General (Admin), Privatisation Commission, 4th Floor, New Pak Secretariat Building, Kohsar Block, Constitution Avenue, Islamabad, Pakistan
EOI must be submitted to the above mentioned address.

Where an interested party is submitting an EOI as a consortium, the processing fee is only required to be paid by any one member of the consortium. The non-refundable processing fee can be paid in the form of bank draft / pay order, payable in favour of the "Privatisation Commission", and must be submitted with the hard copy of the EOI or through wire / electronic transfers (details of which will be available at the link <https://privatisation.gov.pk/Batch-I-DISCOs-EOI>). The EOI, along with the other documents listed below must be submitted, and the mandatory processing fee must be paid, on or before the deadlines stated below.

FESCO: 7th July 2026 (16:00 Hours PKT)
GEPCO: 6th August 2026 (16:00 Hours PKT)
IESCO: 7th September 2026 (16:00 Hours PKT)
The deadlines may, at any time in the sole and absolute discretion of the GoP / PC, be changed

EOI must contain the following information:

- i** Name of the interested party whether company, firm, body corporates or consortium comprising of the same and background information (including profile, place of incorporation, ownership details);
- ii** In case of foreign interested parties, copies of passports of Directors and Shareholders holding or controlling (by itself or in concert), directly or indirectly 20% or more voting power;
- iii** For local interested parties: CNICs of directors and shareholders holding or controlling (by itself or in concert), directly or indirectly, 20% or more of voting power;
- iv** Name, address, email address and telephone number(s) of authorized representative;
- v** Signed Confidentiality Agreement available at: <https://privatisation.gov.pk/Batch-I-DISCOs-EOI>;
- vi** Statement of Qualification (SOQ) in response to the Request for Statement of Qualifications (RSOQ) and preliminary information for each Batch-I DISCO available at <https://privatisation.gov.pk/Batch-I-DISCOs-EOI>.

Where the interested party is a consortium, each consortium member shall provide the above information. The SOQ submitted by interested parties will be used by the PC, in its sole and absolute discretion, to pre-qualify interested parties in accordance with the RSOQ. Only pre-qualified interested parties will be issued the bid documents and allowed access to the virtual data room to conduct due diligence and, subject to compliance with the bidding conditions, participate in the bidding process.

Following submission of original SOQs, consortium members may be added or changed subject to compliance with the requirements of the RSOQ and approval of the PC, in its sole and absolute discretion.
Any interested party (whether participating as a consortium or otherwise) may submit EOIs for more than one (1) Batch-I DISCOs, in line with provisions outlined in the RSOQ document.

OTHER INFORMATION

At any stage, the GoP / PC may, in its sole and absolute discretion, inter alia, alter the transaction structure, mode of privatisation, impose additional conditions or otherwise modify or amend the transaction process. Interested parties are encouraged to review information relating to submission of EOI, RSOQ and other transaction documents as made available by the PC on the following weblink: <https://privatisation.gov.pk/Batch-I-DISCOs-EOI>. GoP / PC and the Financial Advisor or any of its member thereof, reserve the right to not respond to any request for preliminary or other information and further reserve the right to accept or reject any or all EOIs and may cancel the whole privatisation process at any time. This EOI Invitation is intended only to seek expressions of interest from interested parties. The details of the transaction, information memorandum, conditions of sale, draft bidding documents and process will be advised to pre-qualified parties at the appropriate time as part of the privatisation process.

The PC reserves the right at its sole and absolute discretion to amend, supplement or otherwise modify the transaction structure, including but not limited to, by providing additional information, incentives or concessions, to pre-qualified interested parties. No interested party, whether it submits an EOI or not, shall be entitled to object to or challenge any such amendment, supplement, modification, information, incentive or concession at any stage. This advertisement and the information provided or referenced herein do not constitute, and should not be construed as: (a) an offer or invitation to acquire any securities and/or assets of any of the Batch-I DISCOs; (b) a representation or warranty, express or implied with respect to any statement made herein or in any document referenced herein; or (c) any statement of commitment, warranty or indemnity of any kind by the Government of Pakistan, the PC or any of their advisors. The PC has appointed Alvarez & Marsal Middle East Limited as Financial Advisor to conduct this transaction.


ONLINE BRIEFING

An online briefing, outlining key investment highlights, will be conducted by the Privatisation Commission and the Financial Advisor on **Wednesday 3rd June 2026 from 4 pm to 6 pm** Pakistan Standard Time. You may join the online briefing on **Zoom (www.zoom.us) meeting ID: 872 3355 2592; passcode: 749093** (you will be invited to fill a brief registration form when you join the Zoom link).

Privatisation Commission
Phone: +92 51 920 8510, +92 51 920 4593
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Financial Advisor
Phone: +92 51 231 8156, +92 51 231 8158
Email: oashfaq@alvarezandmarsal.com

Web-Link: <https://privatisation.gov.pk/Batch-I-DISCOs-EOI>



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

FREE MOTORCYCLE RECALL

HARLEY-DAVIDSON TOURING /SOFTAIL

Year of Production: **2024 - 2026**

DEFECT MKE8 Airbox Baseplate Breather may be blocked due to manufacturing defect.

PROCESS Contact the dealer for the free required repair.

CONTACT **NBK Powered Sports W.L.L**
44632428/44632429
tpulickal@nbks.com

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

Health minister meets Sudanese, Syrian, Lebanese counterparts



HE Minister of Public Health Mansoor bin Ebrahim bin Saad al-Mahmoud met separately with Federal Minister of Health of Sudan Dr Haitham Mohammed Ibrahim, Minister of Health of Syria Dr Musab Nazzal al-Ali, and Minister of Health of the Lebanese Republic Dr Rakan Nasr al-Din, on the sidelines of 79th session of the World Health Assembly meetings, held in Geneva. They discussed relations of co-operation and ways to further strengthen them in the health sector, as well as the main issues under discussion at the World Health Assembly. (QNA)

Qatar highlights ethical AI, digital innovation at World Health Assembly

Qatar is addressing global health challenges through stronger emergency preparedness, investment in primary healthcare and the ethical use of artificial intelligence and digital innovation, HE the Minister of Public Health Mansoor bin Ebrahim al-Mahmoud said at the 79th World Health Assembly in Geneva.

Leading Qatar's delegation to the assembly, which continues until May 23, al-Mahmoud said the country's health strategy is focused on three key priorities: strengthening emergency preparedness and fully implementing the International Health Regulations; investing in primary healthcare as the foundation of universal health coverage; and embracing innovation and new technologies within an ethical framework that safeguards human dignity and rights.

He stressed that healthcare innovation should support fairness and inclusion rather than deepen inequalities in access to medical services worldwide.

Al-Mahmoud noted that universal health coverage remains an unmet global goal as health systems continue to face growing pressures from emergencies, climate shocks, antimicrobial resistance and noncommunicable diseases. "As the United Nations prepares to celebrate its eightieth anniversary, we support strengthening cohesion within the international multilateral system, achieving alignment between humanitarian

response efforts and the requirements of sustainable development, and working to ensure sustainable financing that enables the World Health Organisation (WHO) and the broader UN system to deliver tangible impact and results that matter to us all," the minister said.

"There is no alternative to a strong and effective World Health Organisation. It must be efficiently managed and sustainably funded," he added.

Al-Mahmoud further stressed the importance of maintaining a strong WHO, saying: "There is no doubt that these objectives cannot be achieved without a strong and effective World Health Organisation, which must be efficiently managed and sustainably funded, whose benefits extend to the entire world and for which there is no substitute."

The World Health Assembly, the supreme decision-making body of WHO, brings together delegations from member states to determine the organisation's policies and approve its programme budget.

This year's discussions focus on several major health issues, including universal health coverage, antimicrobial resistance, preparedness and response to public health emergencies, rehabilitation within health systems, and overall health and well-being. Delegates are also discussing health conditions in the occupied Palestinian territory, including east Jerusalem, and in the occupied Syrian Golan.

Qatari Haj Mission ramps up efforts to ensure lodging readiness for pilgrims

QNA
Makkah Al Mukarramah

The Qatari Haj Mission's Surveillance and Inspection Unit is continuing to ramp up tours of the accommodation facilities of Qatar's pilgrims and pilgrimage operators as part of the comprehensive preparations to receive them starting from the 4th of Dhu al-Hijjah.

The move is intended to ensure that all accommodation facilities are fully equipped through the enforcement of the highest standards, as well as health and food requirements, to provide a secure and comfortable environment for them throughout their religious journey.

Head of the Qatari Haj Mission's Surveillance and Inspection Unit Mohammed Hassan al-Kaabi said these tours come as part of an integrated surveillance system to ensure that all pilgrimage operators adhere to the requirements for providing top-notch accommodation facilities.

The purpose is to confirm that these facilities comply with all mission-approved conditions and specifications, al-Kaabi noted, pointing out that the inspection operations include checking bedrooms and public utilities, such as prayer rooms, restaurants, and reception lobbies, to ensure enhanced sanitation levels and the readiness of these facilities based on the top-tier approved criteria.

Al-Kaabi highlighted that these tours include kitchens and food preparation settings, where



all appliances are checked to confirm their validity, in addition to the quality of food components and adherence to the enforced health requirements to ensure the safety of meals served to pilgrims.

He noted that the unit comprises health and food safety inspectors from the Ministry of Municipality, who take part in onsite inspections to ensure compliance with approved health and food safety standards. This move underscores the combined efforts of state institutions and their co-ordination in providing top-tier care services for pilgrims of Qatar, while ensuring their safety either during their stay at accommodation facilities or during commutation, Al Kaabi underlined.

He clarified that this operation started earlier ahead of the Haj preparations, with the unit conducting tours of the operators' accommodation facilities with the objective of taking notes and feedback. The aim was obviously to ensure those pilgrimage operators had been complying



with the essential requirements ahead of the pilgrims' arrival and to ensure the sites are truly ready and fully operational, followed by further visits after their arrival to conduct interviews and monitor their perspectives in terms of the quality of reception and food services to elevate their satisfaction, al-Kaabi recalled.

Al-Kaabi called on pilgrims to participate in evaluating pilgrimage operators online by filling out forms that will be texted to their smartphones. He confirmed that this move is an essential tool in promoting performance, as well as the services afforded to them. He assured that these surveillance tours will remain in effect throughout the whole Haj season to ensure a safer and more luxurious environment for pilgrims from Qatar, as all supportive units in this mission are operating in unison to care for those pilgrims.

The surveillance likewise extends to their tents in the Holy Sites in coordination with the Sites Service Unit to verify the enforcement of safety and health

requirements. Strikingly, the mission has provided a free call service for all pilgrims from Qatar, as part of its commitment to protecting them and ensuring top-notch services are in place.

Pilgrims can either dial the hotline 132 from inside Qatar, or 8003040444 inside the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia for pilgrims who hold both Qatari and Saudi SIM cards, to submit complaints and inquiries. This step will obviously ensure swift interaction with all cases and provide support instantly.

The unit broadly undertakes a pivotal role in confirming combined efforts in terms of co-ordination with all supportive units through receiving these complaints and inquiries and following up on them directly. These efforts are part of a combined system the Qatari mission is undertaking in unison with the authoritative agencies in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, with the latter undertaking a pivotal role in regulating pilgrimage affairs based on advanced operational plans.

Draft law regulating social professions approved

From Page 1

The draft law also seeks to support the participation of the private and non-profit sectors in providing these services within a legal framework that ensures governance, transparency and sustainability, and to enable the competent authorities to carry out their tasks in supervision, monitoring and follow-up. It further establishes unified mechanisms for measuring the quality of social services in a way that ensures their improvement and development. The Cabinet also approved a draft

decision of the Minister of Public Health determining the fees due for licences in the field of health research. The draft decision comes within the framework of implementing the provisions of Law No. 6 of 2025 regulating health research, with the aim of regulating the procedures related to granting licences in this field. At the end of the meeting, the Cabinet took note of the audited financial statements of the Qatar Financial Centre Regulatory Authority (QFCRA) for the financial year ended December 31, 2025, and the annual report on the QFCRA's activities for the year 2025.

QatarEnergy in Uruguay stakes

From Page 1

Commenting on the transaction, the Minister of State for Energy Affairs HE Saad Sherida al-Kaabi, who is also president and CEO of QatarEnergy, said: "We are pleased to strengthen our relations with our strategic partner Shell through these agreements, which mark our first entry into Uruguay's upstream sector while further expanding our footprint in South America."

Al-Kaabi added: "We would like to thank the Uruguayan authorities for their support, and we look forward to working with our partners on this opportunity and to achieving positive results for the benefit of all parties." Blocks OFF-2, OFF-4, and OFF-7 are located offshore Uruguay's Atlantic coast, covering areas ranging from 11,155 to 18,227sq km and water depths ranging from 40 to 4,000 metres.

GCC, Britain strike \$5bn trade deal

From Page 1

The deal will remove 93% of GCC tariffs on British goods, equivalent to the removal of £580mn worth of tariffs by the deal's tenth year, with two-thirds of the tariffs being removed as soon as the deal comes into force.

The government said that autos, aerospace, electronics and food and drink would be among the sectors to benefit, with cereals, cheddar cheese, chocolate and butter all becoming tariff-free.

In return, Britain has lowered

tariffs to the GCC, though the countries' main exports to Britain, oil and gas, are already tariff-free.

On services, Britain locked in current access to the GCC so businesses could expand without facing new barriers, while Gulf countries can also grow their own service sectors through the deal.

GCC Secretary-General Jassem Mohamed Al-Budaiwi said following the signing that the agreement had a framework designed to achieve "tangible and measurable" economic benefits for businesses, investors and citizens of

the seven signatory countries, according to a statement by the GCC.

He said the agreement spans trade in goods and services, financial services, digital trade, investment protection, telecommunications and others.

The deal doesn't change or weaken British environmental or data protection standards, and also doesn't contain any language around human rights, the UK government said. Some campaigners had warned the British government against ignoring human rights in any

deal with the GCC.

Tom Wills, director of the Trade Justice Movement said that "by failing to negotiate any enforceable human rights protections within the deal, the UK has taken a moral step backwards." The agreement does contain an investor protection chapter to extend provisions to the three GCC states that weren't previously covered by such treaties and it includes Investor-State Dispute Settlement, a mechanism that Wills also criticised for allowing Gulf investors to sue the British government.

ANNOUNCEMENT

I, ANGEL BETH SUASE MARQUESES

holder of

PHILIPPINES Passport No. P7170331C
QID No. 30760801139

hereby change my name

from

ANGEL BETH SUASE MARQUESES

to

ANGEL BETH AILERON SUASE MARQUESES

Any objection, please contact

THE PERMANENT COMMITTEE FOR
NATIONALITY AFFAIRS

within 15 days from the publication of this notice.

ANNOUNCEMENT

I, HOSSAIN AHMED SEKANDER

holder of

BANGLADESH Passport No. A20493655
QID No. 28805017932

hereby change my name

from

HOSSAIN AHMED SEKANDER

to

HOSAN AHMED MD SEKANDAR

Any objection, please contact

THE PERMANENT COMMITTEE FOR
NATIONALITY AFFAIRS

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I, SAIFUL ISLAM

holder of

BANGLADESH Passport No. EH0732419
QID No. 29205016626

hereby change my name

from

SAIFUL ISLAM

to

MD SAIFUL ISLAM JEWEL

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NATIONALITY AFFAIRS

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ANNOUNCEMENT

I, SHOBANA ARUMUGAM

holder of

INDIA Passport No. Z3642687
QID No. 29235654869

hereby change my name

from

SHOBANA ARUMUGAM

to

SHOBANA VIGNESWARAN

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within 15 days from the publication of this notice.

Biomimicry accelerating sustainable technology by learning from nature

Dr El Tayeb Bentría
Doha

Many living organisms on Earth inhabit an environment that is, in one way or another, trying to work against it: scorching heat, freezing cold, scarce water, relentless predators. Over vast stretches of time, life has been engineered to respond not with brute force but with elegant design in the shape of structures, surfaces, and processes that solve problems with remarkable efficiency and minimal waste. Biomimicry is the discipline that studies these natural strategies and asks a deceptively simple question: what if human technology did the same?

Popularised by the biologist Janine Benyus in her 1997 book *Biomimicry: Innovation Inspired by Nature*, the term describes an approach to innovation that seeks sustainable solutions by studying nature's models, structures, and processes. It is not just about copying a shape, but understanding the underlying principle that makes a biological strategy work and translating it into human design. Biomimicry sits at the intersection of biology, engineering, materials science, and architecture, and is gaining serious momentum as a research methodology for a world urgently seeking sustainable solutions.

How it works

Biomimicry operates on three distinct levels. The first is form: borrowing a shape or structure from nature to improve a product's performance. A classic example is Japan's Shinkansen bullet train which was redesigned with a nose resembling a kingfisher's beak, cutting sonic booms and improving energy efficiency. The second is process: learning how organisms manufacture or assemble objects, often at ambient temperature and



without toxic by-products. The third, and deepest, is ecosystem: designing whole systems in which waste from one process becomes input for another, mirroring the closed-loop logic by which natural ecosystems sustain themselves indefinitely.

What distinguishes biomimicry from earlier forms of bioinspiration is its explicit sustainability ethic. Biomimicry practitioners do not simply borrow a clever mechanism; they ask whether the resulting technology operates within the planet's ecological limits. Nature runs on sunlight, uses only what it needs, and recycles everything. These are precisely the principles the circular economy seeks to embed within modern society. In this sense, biomimicry is not just an innovation tool but a design philosophy aligned with the long-term health of the planet.

From laboratory to real world

Biomimicry is already delivering tangible results across diverse fields. Researchers from the National Institute of Standards and Technology and Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) have observed that dogs consistently outperform conventional explosive detectors at airports. In response, they developed a 3D-printed replica of a dog's nose which boosted the sensitivity of a commercial explosive detector sixteen-fold.

Inspired by camels' pairing of

insulating fur with an evaporative skin, MIT engineers have also built a power-free two-layer hydrogel-aerogel cooler that maintains objects more than 7°C below ambient for over eight days – five times longer than hydrogel alone. The same animal's nasal turbinates act as passive counter-current heat and water exchangers, recovering up to 60% of the moisture in its exhaled breath, a geometry now being adapted for heating, ventilation, and air conditioning, dehumidification, and atmospheric water harvesting.

In architecture, ORNILUX bird-protection glass uses a UV-reflective coating inspired by spiders that weave UV-reflective silk into their webs. The glass becomes visible to birds yet remains virtually transparent to human eyes, reducing collisions with building glass by up to ninety percent. More recent developments include Xpeng's iron humanoid robot featuring a biomimetic spine, bionic muscles, and flexible synthetic skin that enables human-like movement far beyond rigid mechanical frames. Mass production is planned for 2026.

Nature-conscious design in Qatar

Closer to home, Qatar has also embraced nature-conscious design at an ambitious scale. Inspired by the gypsum crystal better known as the desert rose, the National Museum of Qatar comprises 539 interlocking disc elements that create shaded courtyards mediating between the building and the country's intense climate. Msheireb, the world's first sustainable downtown regeneration project, draws on traditional Gulf architecture: streets oriented to capture sea breezes, thicker walls for thermal mass, and building clusters that create natural ventilation corridors, cutting energy consumption by 30%.

These achievements are significant. Yet there remains a clear opportunity to go deeper to invest in dedicated local biomimicry research that studies how the organisms and ecosystems of the Arabian Peninsula have adapted to extreme heat, coastal humidity, and salinity, and to translate those biological insights into technologies purpose-built for this region.

At the Qatar Environment and Energy Research Institute (QEERI), part of Hamad Bin Khalifa University, this work is underway. One line of research draws on the micro-textured skin of sharks whose dermal denticles naturally resist biofouling to develop coatings that improve the performance of desalination membranes. This approach is currently being advanced through QEERI's participation in the XPRIZE Water Scarcity competition, a global initiative focused on developing relevant innovative and scalable solutions. Another initiative investigates region-specific surface modifications to combat soiling on solar panels. Qatar's coastal desert, with its combination of high humidity and airborne salts, produces a soiling profile distinct from that of inland arid zones. Nature-inspired surface engineering must account for this specificity to be effective.

A framework for the future

Biomimicry is not a silver bullet for translating a biological principle into scalable technology. As a research framework, it nevertheless offers something that purely computational approaches sometimes lack: a starting point, already proven under nature's most demanding conditions. And new tools are making the framework more practical. Nano-fabrication can now replicate biological structures with increasing fidelity. Large Language Models accelerate the screening of biological data-



A dragonfly wing with water droplets on blue background.



A monochrome close-up of patterned overlapping scale.

bases for engineering-relevant analogues. At QEERI, a platform called ThinQa (thin.qa) generates three-dimensional structures from mathematical equations – many elegantly found in nature – ready for modification and direct 3D printing, reducing the journey from concept to evaluable prototype from months to hours.

For societies pursuing ambitious sustainability targets, biomimicry offers a powerful re-framing of the innovation challenge. Instead of only asking "what can we invent?" it invites us to consider "what has already been perfected in the natural world, and what can it teach us?" The answers are not exotic or dis-

tant. They are in the texture of a shark's skin, the aerodynamics of a camel's breath, and the crystalline geometry of a desert rose. Our task and our opportunity is to learn to read them.

• The writer is a Scientist within the Materials Unit at Hamad Bin Khalifa University's (HBKU) Qatar Environment and Energy Research Institute (QEERI).

(This piece has been submitted by HBKU's Communications Directorate on behalf of its author. The thoughts and views expressed are the author's own and do not necessarily reflect an official University stance).

Gulf consumers embracing bolder fashion choices, say founders of Tash and Ley

By Joey Aguilar
Doha

Consumers in Qatar and the Gulf are becoming more experimental and expressive in their fashion choices, according to the founders of Tash and Ley, as regional designers continue to gain international exposure through cultural exchange initiatives and global fashion platforms.

The designers are among a delegation of emerging Qatari and Qatar-based creatives from Doha's creative hub M7 who are travelling to Toronto as part of a creative industry delegation from May 23 to 31 as part of the Qatar Canada and Mexico 2026 Year of Culture programme.

Speaking ahead of the trip, founders Tasha and Lea said Qatar's creative scene has evolved rapidly in recent years, supported by exhibitions, cultural programmes and growing international exposure for regional talent. "Growing up here, we've witnessed firsthand how much the creative scene has evolved in such a short time," they said.

The designers credited initiatives led by Qatar Museums, including the Years of Culture programme, for helping bring regional creatives to international audiences and opening new opportunities for collaboration.

"Opportunities like exploring a whole new market in Canada through the M7 delegation and the Years of Culture initiative show how creative exchange can open conversations between cultures through fashion and design," they said.

According to the founders, the



Tash and Ley

rapid growth of the Gulf's cultural and creative industries encouraged them to see fashion and accessories as more than commercial products.

"Being based in the Gulf has pushed us to see fashion and accessories as more than just products, but as a form of self-expression and storytelling that can become part of people's everyday lives," they said. Their brand focuses on wearable art, using scarves and accessories as creative canvases that combine bold visual storytelling with regional influences and contemporary design.

Tasha and Lea noted changing attitudes among consumers in Qatar and the Gulf, particularly among younger generations who are becoming more confident in experimenting with fashion.

"We've noticed that more people in Qatar and the Gulf are using fashion and accessories as a form

of self-expression," they said.

According to the designers, consumers are increasingly mixing colours, prints and styles while searching for pieces that reflect individuality rather than simply following global trends. "Accessories especially have become a way to make a statement, whether subtle or bold."

Scarves remain central to the brand's identity, reflecting both cultural heritage and artistic experimentation. The founders described scarves as carrying timeless significance across the Middle East while also offering space for modern reinterpretation. "We see the scarf as the perfect canvas for artistic experimentation."

Because of its square format and versatility, they explained, each scarf design becomes both a visual composition and a personal statement shaped by the wearer's individual style.

The designers said they aim to balance innovation with respect for the cultural symbolism associated with scarves and textiles in the region.

"We try to balance experimentation with tradition by respecting the heritage and symbolism associated with scarves, while bringing a modern, artistic perspective through bold visuals, colours and storytelling," they said.

According to Tasha and Lea, every design carries a deeper emotional meaning beyond aesthetics, allowing fashion to serve as a bridge between tradition, identity and contemporary creativity.

Through international platforms such as Years of Culture, the designers hope to showcase a modern and evolving image of Gulf fashion to global audiences.

The View Hospital performs robotic reconstruction for complex ureteral stricture

The View Hospital, has successfully performed the first robotic proximal redo ureteroureterostomy, setting a new benchmark in complex urological reconstruction in the private sector. This advanced minimally invasive procedure offers a highly precise solution for patients with recurrent ureteral obstruction and compromised kidney function.

The procedure was performed on a young male patient who had been struggling with recurrent obstruction of the upper ureter following previous laser stone treatment and an unsuccessful laparoscopic reconstruction. Despite earlier interventions, the blockage persisted, leading to progressive deterioration of kidney function.

After a comprehensive evaluation by the urology team, a robotic-assisted reconstructive approach was selected to restore urinary flow while preserving surrounding tissues.

Robotic ureteroureterostomy offers surgeons enhanced precision and visualisation, allowing delicate reconstruction even in challenging redo cases. Compared with traditional open surgery, this minimally invasive technique reduces surgical trauma, supports faster recovery, and helps patients return to daily life sooner.

Prior to surgery, imaging and functional studies confirmed a



significant compromise of the affected kidney due to ongoing ureteral obstruction. Following thorough counselling, a decision was made to proceed with surgery. The reconstruction was completed successfully in approximately 70 minutes, overcoming significant intraoperative challenges including dense scarring around the ureter from prior surgery and the high proximal location of the stricture, both of which required meticulous dissection and precise, tension-free reconstruction under robotic magnification.

The patient was discharged in stable condition just 36 hours after surgery. A follow-up diuretic renogram at two months confirmed unobstructed urinary drainage and preserved renal function, demonstrating an excellent functional outcome.

Reflecting on the significance of this achievement, the treating surgeon, Dr Ihab Abutabaneh,

Consultant Urology, commented: "Robotic surgery has transformed how we manage complex ureteral reconstruction. It allows us to operate with exceptional precision, even in redo cases with extensive scarring. Most importantly, it enables excellent functional outcomes while offering patients a faster and smoother recovery."

From his side, Dr Fatih Mehmet Gul, Country CEO of Apex Health Qatar, added: "This procedure is a reflection of where The View Hospital is heading, building a centre of excellence where the most complex cases can be treated with the most advanced technology available. We will continue to push boundaries and raise the bar for surgical care in Qatar."

By combining experienced clinical teams with leading technology, The View Hospital continues to deliver evidence-based care focused on safety, comfort, and long-term outcomes.

Civic departments celebrate World Bee Day

The Ministry of Municipality's Agricultural Affairs Department, alongside several municipalities, marked World Bee Day, observed annually on May 20, through a series of awareness and educational events, highlighting the vital role of bees in food security, environmental sustainability, and biodiversity conservation.

The activities aimed to showcase Qatar's ongoing efforts to develop the beekeeping sector and support local honey production. Accordingly, the Agricultural Affairs Department, in collaboration with Villaggio Mall, organised an event titled "The National Bee Project... A Partnership toward Sustainable Agriculture."

The event attracted strong pub-



lic attendance and focused on introducing the National Bee Project, launched in 2013, which supports farmers and beekeepers, enhances and diversifies income sources, increases agricultural productivity, and improves the quality and market confidence of local honey

products. The event featured participation from 12 Qatari farms and apiaries, which showcased and marketed locally produced honey, reflecting growing public interest in national agricultural products and sustainable farming initiatives.

Similarly, the department conducted a workshop titled "Honey Bees and Their Importance" at Hind Bint Abi Sufyan Secondary School for Girls, attended by 50 tenth-grade students. The session highlighted the ecological and agricultural importance of bees and reviewed the department's efforts to conduct field visits to apiaries, provide technical guidance, and improve honey production practices to ensure the sustainability and development of the sector.

Besides, Umm Salal Municipality organised an interactive workshop for children at Doha Minaret English Kindergarten, aimed at raising environmental awareness among young learners and introducing them to the role of bees in



maintaining ecological balance and biodiversity through simplified educational and recreational activities.

Further, Al Khor and Al Thakira Municipality held an awareness workshop for students at Al Khor Model School for Boys. The programme sought to reinforce sustainability concepts and biodiversity conservation

by educating students about the importance of bees in ecological balance and food security. It included interactive activities such as drawing and recycling exercises, along with practical explanations of bee life cycles, the benefits of honey, and beekeeping methods, encouraging environmentally responsible behaviour among students.

Qatar's young designers open to fluid and experimental fashion

By Joey Aguilar
News Editor

Younger generations in Qatar and the Gulf are becoming more open to fluid and experimental fashion choices, according to designer Samah Sulyman, whose collection "Jeu Due Denim" blends menswear and womenswear through a shared visual language.

Sulyman is among a delegation of emerging Qatari and Qatar-based designers from Doha's creative hub M7 set to showcase their work at Fashion Art Toronto from May 23 to 31 as part of the Qatar Canada and Mexico 2026 Year of Culture programme.

The showcase will present contemporary fashion and design from Qatar to international audiences while highlighting new creative voices from the Gulf region.

Sulyman told the *Gulf Times* that younger people in the Gulf are increasingly using fashion as a form of personal expression rather than strictly following traditional categories or expectations.

"I think younger generations in the region are definitely becoming more open to experimentation, but not always in the loud or obvious way people expect," she said.

According to Sulyman, this shift is reflected subtly through styling, silhouettes, layering and the blending of influences from different cultures and identities.

"For me, the collection wasn't really about removing femininity or masculinity. It was more about creating a shared structure and visual dialogue between them," she said.

The designer added that many



Samah Sulyman

young creatives in the Gulf are becoming more confident in exploring fashion that feels adaptable, personal and less rigidly defined.

"I think the Gulf's younger creative scene is becoming much more confident in exploring fashion as a form of expression rather than something strictly defined," Sulyman said.

Her collection, "Jeu Due Denim," also explores the reinterpretation of denim in a Gulf context, where the fabric has not traditionally been associated with re-

gional fashion due to the hot climate.

Sulyman said the contrast between denim's heavy and structured image and the Gulf's environment was what initially inspired the concept.

"Denim is usually seen as heavy, structured and very connected to Western streetwear culture, so I wanted to challenge that perception within a Gulf context," she said.

Rather than treating denim as a conventional fabric, Suly-

man approached it as a "material language," using reconstruction, layering, and lighter elements to create pieces that feel more breathable and fluid for the region. She also drew inspiration from the emotional and historical associations connected to denim.

"I was interested in how denim carries memory and history. In Qatar and the Gulf, fashion is deeply connected to presentation, craftsmanship and identity," she said.

Sustainability is another major theme within Sulyman's work. She believes the Gulf fashion industry is already moving towards greater interest in recycled and experimental materials, although perceptions around sustainability still need to evolve.

"A lot of people still associate recycled materials with compromise, when in reality they can create some of the most innovative and emotional work," she said.

According to Sulyman, sustainability becomes more meaningful when presented through design, storytelling, and creativity rather than solely through responsibility. She added that consumers in the region are becoming more visually aware and curious, especially when sustainable fashion is presented in a luxurious and contemporary way.

"Once people see that sustainability can still feel luxurious, modern and desirable, the relationship with these materials changes completely," she said.

Sulyman also stressed the importance of education, support for local production, and collaboration among designers, artists, and manufacturers in advancing the regional fashion industry.



Qatar Press Centre forum explores Gulf post-war scenarios and regional shifts

The Qatar Press Centre organised a panel discussion titled "After the War: The Gulf and Regional Transformations" to examine the political, security and media changes unfolding across the Gulf. The session focused on escalating regional tensions linked to the war launched by the United States and Israel against Iran, as well as the impact of Iranian attacks on Gulf security and stability.

The event, held as part of the center's "Press Majlis" series at Abdullah bin Hussein al-Naama Hall, featured strategic affairs researcher Dr Liqaa Maki and political researcher Dr Saleh al-Mutairi. The session was moderated by Qatar TV presenter Saif al-Emadi and attended by journalists and observers of regional affairs.

Dr Maki said that understanding the region's current transformations requires examining the strategic environment prior to the recent conflict, noting that tensions had been escalating for months. He described the events of October 7, 2023 as a turning point that reshaped political and security balances in the Middle East.

He said the widening conflict in Gaza and the subsequent escalation involving Iran pushed the region into a new phase of uncertainty, warning that growing reliance on military force over diplomatic solutions makes stable political settlements increasingly difficult.

Maki stressed that Gulf countries, long viewed as an oasis of stability in a conflict-ridden region, now face mounting security challenges. While Gulf states possess vast wealth and resources, he said, stability cannot be sustained without strong defence systems and effective alliances capable of deterring threats.

He described the Gulf development model as a successful example of economic growth, social stability and technological progress that has projected a different image of the Middle East beyond war and unrest. He argued that some regional and international actors seek to undermine this model by targeting Gulf security and spreading instability.

Maki also highlighted the importance of strengthening Gulf defence capabilities, saying the recent conflict demonstrated the growing efficiency of Gulf missile



and drone defence systems. He added that Gulf security depends not only on military preparedness, but also on strategic partnerships and closer regional co-ordination.

On media and political narratives, Maki said digital platforms and social media now play a central role in shaping public opinion. Despite the Gulf's strong media and cultural capabilities, he said the region has yet to fully present its developmental achievements and crisis-management successes to international audiences. He cited Qatar's hosting of the FIFA World Cup 2022 as an example of how the Gulf successfully projected an image of openness and global engagement.

For his part, Dr Al-Mutairi said the Gulf has entered a new phase in politics and security following the war. He noted that missile and drone attacks exposed the scale of regional challenges but reflected the complexity of the Gulf's geopolitical environment rather than weakness. He said Gulf states continue to balance diplomacy with enhanced deterrence capabilities, recognising that any large-scale confrontation would have severe consequences for regional and global stability and economies.

The speakers outlined four post-war scenarios: reshaping the Middle East's political and security balances; addressing growing challenges related to energy and regional security; developing long-term Gulf strategies; and transforming current challenges into opportunities for greater cohesion and stability in the region.

They also stressed the need to strengthen Gulf integration, enhance defence capabilities, preserve diplomatic channels, build a stronger Gulf media narrative, and develop long-term strategies that balance security with economic development and stability.



Iraqi curator appointed as artistic director of Art Basel Qatar 2027

Art Basel announced the appointment of Iraqi curator Wassan al-Khudhairi as artistic director of the 2027 edition of Art Basel Qatar, presented in partnership with Qatar Sports Investments (QSI) and QC+.

Al-Khudhairi succeeds Wael Shawky, artist and director of Qatar Museums' Fire Station: Artist-in-Residence, who shaped the curatorial vision for the inaugural edition alongside Vincenzo de Bellis, Art Basel's chief artistic officer and global director of Fairs. Al-Khudhairi will develop the artistic and curatorial vision of this edition in close collaboration with de Bellis, and will guide the gallery selection process together with the fair's dedicated Selection Committee. The second edition of Art Basel Qatar will be held from January 28 to 30, 2027, with preview days on January 26 and 27. Art Basel Qatar's Premium Partner is Qatar Airways.

Al-Khudhairi brings both deep regional expertise and a globally informed curatorial practice to the role. Her longstanding connection to Qatar and the MENASA region was most formative during her tenure as founding director of Mathaf: Arab Museum of Modern Art in Qatar, where she oversaw its successful opening in 2010 and



Wassan al-Khudhairi

landmark exhibitions, including "Sajjil: A Century of Modern Art" and "Cai Guo-Qiang's Saraab".

Art Basel Qatar also announces the opening of gallery applications for its 2027 edition and reveals the curatorial

theme shaping the fair's artistic programme. Building on the momentum of its inaugural edition, Art Basel Qatar continues its long-term commitment to supporting and expanding the region's art ecosystem while cre-

ating new pathways for exchange between the Middle East, North Africa, South Asia, and the broader international art world.

The strong response to the 2026 fair from galleries, artists, collectors, institutions, and cultural leaders affirmed both the platform's global relevance and the demand for deeper engagement with artistic practices emerging from and connected to the region. The 2027 edition will continue to build on this foundation through an expanded artistic programme, new collaborations, and greater opportunities for galleries and audiences to engage with the region's evolving cultural landscape of the region.

The second edition will maintain the same curated format introduced for the inaugural fair, with gallery presentations taking the form of focused solo showcases that foreground individual artistic voices and respond directly to the fair's theme. The fair will once again be hosted across Msheireb Downtown Doha in its established venues: the Doha Design District and M7 cultural forum. The 2027 edition will significantly elevate its Special Projects sector, offering visitors expanded and unparalleled immersive experiences across multiple formats.

AFG College signs MoU with Cushman & Wakefield Qatar, TAMEER Group

AFG College, in partnership with the University of Aberdeen, has signed a strategic Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Cushman & Wakefield Qatar and TAMEER Group, establishing a collaborative framework aimed at addressing the growing demand for skilled professionals in the country's real estate sector, while advancing national development priorities in line with Qatar National Vision 2030.

To mark the signing and the introduction of the first-ever real estate degrees in Qatar, AFG College, in partnership with the University of Aberdeen, and Al Waab City, convened a panel of industry experts and thought leaders to explore the future of real estate in Qatar.

The event was attended by HE Dr Sheikhha Aisha Bint Faleh al-Thani, chairperson of Al Faleh Educational Holding; HE Sheikhha Anwar Bint Nawaf al-Thani, CEO of Al Faleh Educational Holding; HE Sheikh Jassim Bin Nawaf al-Thani, deputy CEO of Al Waab

City; Mohammed al-Ali, chairman of TAMEER Group; Khalifa J al-Majed, Group CEO of TAMEER Group; Edd Brookes, general manager of Cushman & Wakefield Qatar; alongside representatives from the Real Estate Regulatory Authority (Aqarat) and professionals from across the real estate sector.

The panel featured Sheikh Jassim; Richard Rayner, partner and head of Valuation & Advisory at Cushman & Wakefield Qatar; Alaa Mobarez, associate at Crowell & Moring; and Mairead Hughes, manager at RICS, and Sara Taher Abdelaleem Ali Sobh, head of International Sales & Business Development at TAMEER Group. Discussions focused on market trends, regulatory developments, and emerging investment opportunities shaping the sector.

As Qatar's real estate and infrastructure landscape continues to experience sustained growth, the need for a highly skilled, industry-ready workforce has become increasingly critical. This partnership aims to bridge the gap



(From left) HE Sheikh Jassim Bin Nawaf al-Thani, Mohammed Hussein al-Ali, and HE Dr Sheikhha Aisha Bint Faleh al-Thani. (Seated) Khalifa J al-Majed, HE Sheikhha Anwar Bint Nawaf al-Thani.

between academic learning and professional practice, equipping graduates with the competencies required to contribute meaningfully to the sector.

Under the terms of the MoU, Cushman & Wakefield Qatar and TAMEER Group will provide internship opportunities to students and participate in career fairs and recruitment initiatives, supporting the transition of graduates into the workforce. In parallel, AFG



(From left, standing) HE Sheikh Jassim Bin Nawaf al-Thani, HE Dr Sheikhha Aisha Bint Faleh al-Thani. (Seated) Edd Brookes and HE Sheikhha Anwar Bint Nawaf al-Thani.

College with the University of Aberdeen will support workforce development through the delivery of customised training programmes designed to enhance technical expertise, leadership capabilities, and strategic thinking within the real estate sector. The University will also provide access to its alumni network as a potential talent pipeline.

The partnership further promotes knowledge exchange through

panel discussions, guest lectures, and speaker series, enabling industry professionals to engage directly with students and academic audiences. The university will also deliver an annual seminar or workshop for Cushman & Wakefield's and TAMEER Group's leadership and management teams.

Dr Sheikhha Aisha said: "These partnerships with Cushman & Wakefield Qatar and TAMEER Group reflect our commitment to addressing this gap by aligning

panel discussions, guest lectures, and speaker series, enabling industry professionals to engage directly with students and academic audiences. The university will also deliver an annual seminar or workshop for Cushman & Wakefield's and TAMEER Group's leadership and management teams.

Dr Sheikhha Aisha said: "These partnerships with Cushman & Wakefield Qatar and TAMEER Group reflect our commitment to addressing this gap by aligning

academic delivery with industry requirements. Our aim is to contribute to the development of a knowledge-based economy and support the human capital objectives outlined in Qatar National Vision 2030."

HE Sheikhha Anwar said: "By bringing together leading industry partners and academic expertise, we are creating an ecosystem that fosters innovation, professional excellence, and sustainable sector growth, while empowering the next generation of real estate leaders in Qatar."

Rayner said: "This partnership enables us to contribute to the development of future talent while supporting the continuous growth and upskilling of our teams through academic collaboration and knowledge exchange."

Al-Ali said: "Through this MoU, TAAMEER looks forward to creating valuable opportunities for knowledge exchange, practical learning, and future talent development, while contributing to the continued growth of Qatar's real estate sector."



UDST marks the second day of the Class of 2026 graduation ceremony at QNCC. The event was attended by HE Dr Mohammed bin Saleh al-Sada, HE Dr Salem Al-Naemi, board members, university's staff and faculty, and families of graduates. The ceremony also featured a keynote address by Hamad Mubarak Alhajri. (Supplied Picture)

UDST celebrates Day 2 of Class of 2026 graduation

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 second day of the Class of 2026 graduation ceremony at the Qatar National Convention Centre.

The ceremony was attended by HE Dr Mohammed bin Saleh al-Sada, chair of the Board of Trustees of UDST, and the board members; HE Dr Salem Al-Naemi president of UDST, the university's staff and faculty, and families of graduates. The ceremony also featured a keynote address by Hamad Mubarak Alhajri, founder and CEO of Snoonu.

The number of graduates this year exceeded 1,321 students from various programmes and disciplines, including more than 250 honour graduates, reflecting the university's continued commitment to academic excellence and applied learning.

The graduating 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.

This year also reflected the success of a number of student-led projects and innovations developed throughout the academic journey, demonstrating the university's emphasis on experiential learning, entrepreneurship, and applied research.

Among these initiatives was "Be My Sense," an AI-powered platform designed to support individuals with hearing impairments



through real-time translation and smart wearable technologies.

Other projects included "OPAS," an intelligent system developed to support sports performance analysis and offside detection using artificial intelligence (AI), a sustainable life-cycle assessment project focused on blue ammonia supply chains and clean energy solutions, research exploring women's representation in the country's technology sector, and innovative engineering solutions such as a cooling system designed for firefighters' protective clothing. These initiatives reflect the creativity, innovation, and practical problem-solving skills fostered among UDST students across a wide range of disciplines.

This graduating class reflects the dynamic and future-oriented nature of the university's academ-

ic ecosystem, spanning key sectors such as artificial intelligence, cybersecurity, engineering, health sciences, business innovation, and digital technologies.

Through advanced laboratories, simulation environments, industry partnerships, and applied research opportunities, students acquired the practical competencies and leadership capabilities required to contribute effectively to the workforce.

In his speech, Dr Rachid Benlamri, vice president, Academic at UDST, said: "Through a comprehensive educational experience that combined academic knowledge with practical application, our graduates have been prepared to move forward with confidence and competence toward excellence in various fields, equipped with the skills and expertise that

enable them to contribute effectively to society and support Qatar's continued progress and development."

The guest speaker, Alhajri, addressed the graduates and said: "Do not fear the beginnings. Do not fear failure. Do not fear the roads no one has walked before you. The greatest things in history began with an idea, a dream, and one person who said: "Why not?" So dream boldly. Take the leap. And strive for a life worthy of your soul!"

The Class of 2026 Salutatorian, Walaa Hassan, expressed pride in representing fellow graduates during the ceremony and said: "As graduates, we leave today carrying not only academic knowledge, but also the confidence, resilience, and sense of responsibility that will guide us as we contribute to



PICTURES: Thajudheen



our communities and pursue our aspirations with determination and purpose."

As the graduates of the Class of 2026 embark on the next chapter of their journey, the university celebrates their accomplishments and looks forward to their con-

tinued contributions across various sectors locally and globally. Graduates carry with them the university's values of excellence, integrity, and lifelong learning, fully prepared to contribute to the advancement of their communities and industries.

Doha Festival City to mark Eid al-Adha with cultural experiences

Doha Festival City, Qatar's leading retail and lifestyle destination known for its curated mix of coveted trends, is set to mark Eid al-Adha with a programme of cultural experiences, family entertainment, and community initiatives inspired by the spirit of tradition, generosity, and togetherness.

As part of Festival Cares, Al-Futtaim Real Estate's wider social responsibility platform, Doha Festival City will host a series of CSR and community-focused activations from May 15 to 23, including the "Branches of Kindness" initiative in collaboration with Qatar Charity, inviting visitors to support charitable causes through donations and messages of kindness displayed on a symbolic installation at Center Court.

Visitors can also take part in "Your Sacrifice, Their Eid" with the Qatar Red Crescent Society, an interactive humanitarian activation that encourages donations to support families in need during Eid Al-Adha through a festive artistic installation.

The Eid al-Adha celebrations, taking place from May 20 to June 2 in the Entertainment Area on the first floor near the South Food



Court, will feature daily family-oriented activities including Arabic calligraphy, storytelling and poetry performances, henna art, face painting, colouring activities, and traditional games.

Visitors can also enjoy roaming cosplay parades, Arabic coffee hospitality, live Oud performances during Eid days, falcon photogra-



phy experiences, wonder and bubble shows on weekends, and piano performances in the luxury area.

The celebrations will also include three craftsmanship workshops focused on mud pottery, Sadu weaving for children, and Qatari Bisht sewing, led by master artisans across multiple sessions during the activation period.

The upcoming activations build on Doha Festival City's continued focus on community-led experiences, following the successful "We Are Qatar - One Community, One Spirit" initiative earlier

this year, which welcomed nearly 8,000 visitors over the course of 14 days.

The activation featured interactive experiences, including the Solidarity Wall, Letters to Qatar, Threads to Unity, and Mark of Unity, alongside workshops, performances, and cultural activities designed to celebrate unity and community spirit.

Tugrul Comert, director, Asset Management, Doha Festival City, said: "Eid Al-Adha is an important occasion centred around family, tradition, and generosity, and



at Doha Festival City, we remain committed to creating experiences that reflect these values in meaningful and engaging ways. Through cultural activities, entertainment, and partnerships, we continue to strengthen our role as a destination that celebrates connection and community during key sea-

sonal and cultural occasions." As part of its ongoing focus on experience-led activations, Doha Festival City continues to deliver programmes that combine entertainment, culture, and community engagement, reinforcing its position as one of Qatar's leading lifestyle destinations.

For Yasser Abbas, it's 'Gaza first'

The son of Palestinian president Mahmoud Abbas said Fatah would prioritise Gaza and return it "to the fold of Palestinian legitimacy", the day after being elected to the movement's top decision-making body. Fatah's first congress in a decade came as the Palestinian movement faces existential challenges in the wake of the devastating Gaza war.

Veteran Palestinian leader Mahmoud Abbas, 90, was re-elected as head of the movement, with his 64-year-old son Yasser Abbas securing a place on its central committee. In his first remarks since his election, Yasser Abbas said he would focus on "Gaza first, prisoners and the families of martyrs, and the refugee camps."

"We will work to return Gaza to the fold of Palestinian legitimacy," he told journalists in the occupied West Bank city of Ramallah. Fatah has historically been the dominant force within the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO), the sole representative of the Palestinian people in international forums. It groups most Palestinian factions but excludes movements Hamas and Islamic Jihad.

"Achieving full national unity requires agreement to all the conditions for joining the Palestine Liberation Organisation in all its provisions: one law, one state, one legitimate weapon, and recognition that the organisation is the sole legitimate representative" of

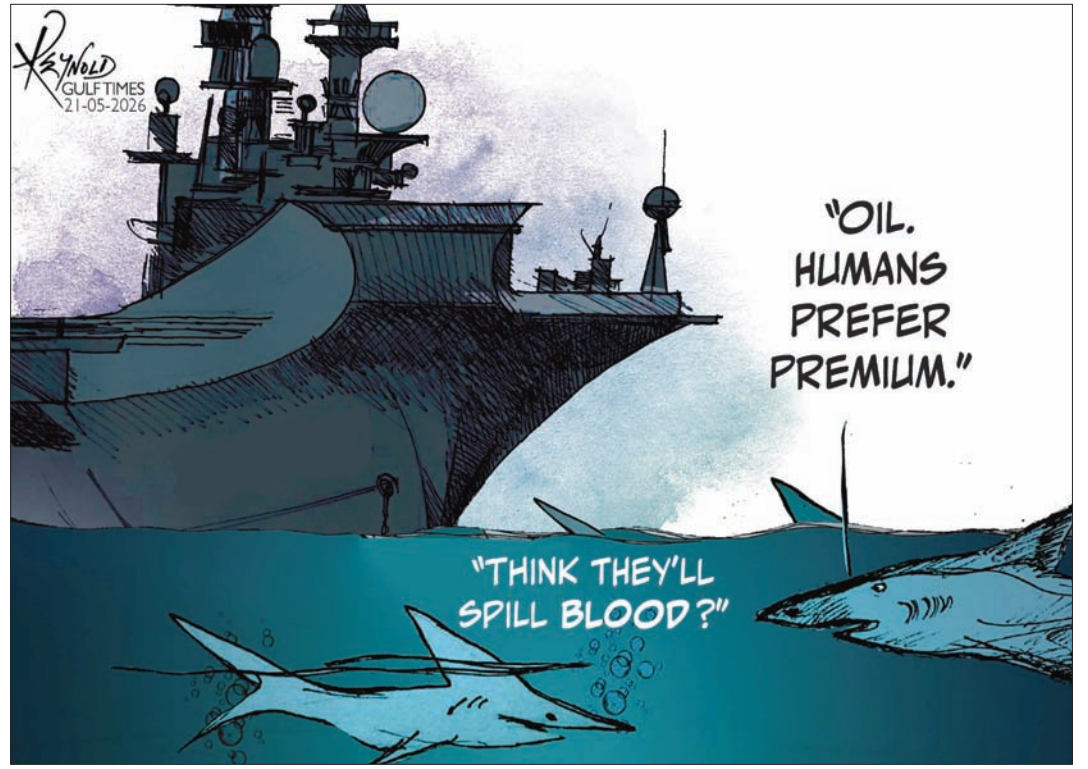
the Palestinian people, Yasser Abbas said. "Whoever accepts that is welcome."

In recent decades, Fatah's popularity and influence have dwindled amid internal divisions and growing public frustration over the stagnation of the Israeli-Palestinian peace process. The sense of disappointment led to a surge in support for rival Hamas, which won the last legislative elections held in 2006, before going on to expel Fatah from the Gaza Strip after a bout of factional fighting.

Under US President Donald Trump's Gaza peace plan, Hamas is to play no role in the future governance of the territory. It also demands sweeping reforms of the Fatah-led Palestinian Authority as a condition for it to play any meaningful role in post-war Gaza.

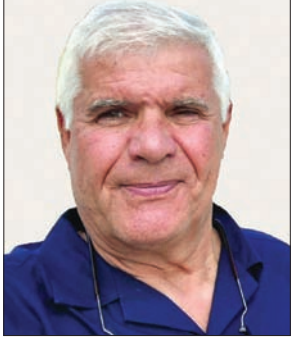
On Monday, the Fatah congress announced the official preliminary results of the elections for its central committee and the revolutionary council, the party's parliament. A closing statement read out on Monday said that: "there is no state without Gaza, and no state in Gaza."

"Any international administrative arrangement must preserve the ceasefire, end the occupation, ensure the flow of aid, and begin recovery and reconstruction, all clearly linked to the Palestinian government, which must be enabled to exercise all its responsibilities in Gaza," it added. AFP



Lebanon is asking the wrong question about its future

By Jamil Mroue



Lebanon has a talent for debating the architecture of its future while the foundations crumble beneath it. For two years, the most urgent conversation in Lebanese political circles – in Beirut salons, diaspora forums, and the offices of international mediators – has centred on a question of constitutional design: Should Lebanon restructure itself as a federal state, granting its communities formal governing sovereignty? Or should it rebuild as a reformed unitary republic, concentrating authority at the centre and delivering it, this time, with competence and accountability?

It is a genuine question. But the way it is being asked is wrong, and the frame in which it is being conducted is worse. The federal-versus-unitary debate is almost invariably a sectarian debate wearing constitutional clothes. Federalism's advocates are communities that want to govern themselves because they no longer trust the state to govern them fairly. The unitary state's defenders fear federalism as a prelude to partition, or a mechanism for rivals to entrench territorial control behind a constitutional warrant. Both sides are having a real argument. But it is the wrong argument.

The wrong argument produces the wrong diagnosis. Lebanon's crisis is not, at its root, a crisis of sectarian incompatibility. It is a crisis of institutional collapse – what Émile Durkheim called "anomie": the condition that arises when the normative frameworks holding a society together break down faster than new ones can be built. Lebanon is not a country whose communities cannot coexist. It is one whose institutions have so thoroughly failed that citizens have retreated to communal solidarity as the only available social insurance. The sect did not destroy the state. The state's failure made the sect indispensable.

This distinction matters enormously. If Lebanon's problem is sectarian incompatibility, the solutions are communal: redraw the boundaries, renegotiate power-sharing, allocate sovereignty by identity group. These are the solutions currently on offer, and they have a long record of failure. If the problem is institutional collapse, the solutions are civic and administrative: rebuild the courts, the civil service, the fiscal architecture, the rule of law. That is a harder project. It is also the right one.

Lebanon's confessional system was not an indigenous tradition; it was a French Mandate administrative tool, designed to make a diverse population legible to a colonial authority. What its founders did at independence was nationalise that tool – converting a mechanism of foreign control into the operating system of self-governance. The National Pact allocated the highest offices of the republic on a confessional basis calibrated to a 1932 census that has never been updated. The country's population has quadrupled since. Its citizens are more educated, more urbanised, and more furious at an arrangement that has delivered only economic ruin. The scaffold meant to be temporary became the building.

Into this structure came external shocks a functional state might have managed and Lebanon's dysfunctional one could not: the Palestinian presence and the wars it brought; Syrian tutelage that systematically prevented Lebanese institutions from developing autonomous capacity; Hezbollah,

which arose precisely in the space the state had vacated in the south, and which understood that schools, hospitals, and roads were the most effective instruments of political loyalty. Each exploited vacuums they did not create. The Lebanese state did – through neglect, corruption, and the chronic inability to reform an arrangement from which its political class profited.

Against this background, the case for federalism deserves a sober rather than ideological assessment. Decisions made closer to communities are more responsive to local needs; local governments are, in principle, more accountable. But federalism's benefits are conditional – they materialise only when functioning sub-national institutions exist to exercise devolved authority. In Lebanon today, constitutional federalisation would more likely entrench existing sectarian power structures behind federal sovereignty than dismantle them. The regional strongmen become governors. The patronage networks become administrative systems. The dysfunction acquires a constitution.

There is a better path that does not require resolving the federal question first. The substantive goals behind the federalism argument – local accountability, community control over services, protection from arbitrary central interference – are achievable through administrative and fiscal decentralisation within a reformed unitary framework: elected regional councils with guaranteed funding and genuine authority over service delivery; municipal governments with real budgets and direct democratic accountability; a constitutional court with the independence to protect local governance from central override. These describe the normal operation of functional states – achievable without a constitutional convention and without crystallising Lebanon's confessional map into permanent federal units.

What makes this urgent is Lebanon's human capital catastrophe. The diaspora – 15mn people, three times the resident population – is one of the developing world's most extraordinary concentrations of global talent. Diaspora Lebanese who consider returning or investing ask a single question: is there a functioning legal system? The answer depends on governance quality – not constitutional architecture – and reads the same whether the state is federal or unitary.

The October 2019 uprising offered a lesson the political class has not absorbed. For weeks, Lebanese citizens from every confessional community stood in the same squares, chanting the same slogans, demanding the same thing: a state that works. That solidarity was not an aberration. It showed what Lebanese civic identity looks like when people have an institutional space in which to express it. The uprising failed not because Lebanese citizens are incapable of transcending sectarian politics, but because no institutional mechanisms existed to convert civic energy into governing authority.

Lebanon's choice is not between a federal and a unitary state. Those are second-order questions about how authority is distributed within a functioning republic. The first-order question – the one that must be answered before any constitutional architecture makes sense – is whether Lebanon will build a real state at all: courts that enforce the law against the powerful and powerless alike; a civil service recruited on merit; a fiscal framework transparent and not subordinated to the financing needs of political patrons. A real state or a simulation of one: that is Lebanon's actual choice, and no constitutional formula can make it on Lebanon's behalf.

• Jamil K Mroue is a Lebanese writer and former editor of Al-Hayat in London and The Daily Star in Beirut.

Smart small states provide lessons for Gulf tech ambitions



By Rory Miller

In recent years, Gulf states have worked hard to turn their home region into a hub for digital innovation and investment in AI, cloud computing and clean-tech.

The region has also established itself as one of the world's fastest-growing destinations for the data centres and other types of digital infrastructure.

This has enabled both countries to extend their political, as well as economic, reach beyond existing territorial and physical limitations. In turn, this has helped them offset some of the political vulnerabilities of smallness.

But tech success also raises important challenges related to energy security, environmental management and tech geopolitics.

The energy demands of building a state-of-the-art digital infrastructure are massive. A single hyperscale facility can require the same amount of energy as a small town. Tech infrastructure also takes up large amounts of other vital resources including water. It also monopolises the use of precious space, a real concern in small states.

The energy resources and financial power of the Gulf states position them well to address the energy security and environmental challenges associated with tech-leadership.

But even in the Gulf, the building of a cutting edge digital infrastructure requires hard financial choices and the commitment of large amounts of energy. It also requires next-generation cooling systems that operate efficiently in hot weather.

On the geopolitical level, the roles of Ireland and Singapore as regional gateways for the flow of data has located both countries at the centre of US-Chinese technology rivalry. It has also entangled them in tech geopolitics and governance issues relating to the control and use of data.

The experiences of both Ireland and Singapore in becoming tech strongholds offers some guidance for other state actors, including Gulf states, on all of these issues. First, their tech journeys

are even bigger. With a total of S\$128.1bn value-added, tech accounts for 18.6% of GDP and employs 214,000 workers.

This tech success has not only increased economic competitiveness, efficiency, and resilience. It has also resulted in the routing of global flows of information as well as capital through both countries.

Singapore has more data cables landing on its territory than any other country in Southeast Asia. Three-quarters of all cables in the northern hemisphere pass through or near Irish waters, and four transatlantic cables directly connect with Ireland.

This has significant geopolitical as well as economic implications.

Not least, it makes the subsea infrastructures of Ireland and Singapore strategically important components of the international security system.

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demonstrate the importance of social and human capital, innovation, learning and adaptation for attracting high levels of inward investment and diversification into tech.

The message is clear. Even in a world of de-globalisation and resource nationalism, smaller actors that effectively use their national development plans to establish themselves as innovative 'hubs' and 'gateways' will attract significant tech opportunities.

Both cases also highlight the close connection between trans-formative tech and US-China great power competition.

Ireland and Singapore have had some success in navigating this challenge. In particular, they have presented themselves as neutral third parties that are 'neither pro-China nor pro-America', as the Singaporean government put it in 2024.

For example, Ireland has repeatedly used the courts to block US access to Irish data centres and has fined Meta over data transfers to the US. Attracted by Ireland's reputation for strict data protection laws and keen to counter claims of Chinese state surveillance, TikTok's 'Project Clover' relocated its European user data to an Irish centre.

Singapore has not only eagerly signed agreements with both the US and China on cooperation in the fields of data analytics and AI. It has also developed a legal regime for tech that takes into account Chinese protectionism and US surveillance, as a way to attract major tech firms from both countries.

Such strategies have enabled Ireland and Singapore to present themselves as tech gatekeepers as well as gateways. This adds to their influence in regional affairs and their reputation and standing on the international stage.

This could not be more relevant for smaller states in the highly contested Gulf region.

China and the US already use technology in the Gulf as a form of statecraft. It is inevitable that going forward both great powers and ambitious regional players will look to use the emerging tech eco-system to shape regional geopolitics and security in their favour.

For all these reasons, the cases of Ireland and Singapore provide valuable lessons for the Gulf states in their transition from buyers to suppliers of technology and key players in the global tech revolution.

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DR Congo Ebola risk high regionally, low worldwide: WHO

The deadly Ebola outbreak raging in central Africa probably began several months ago, the World Health Organisation said yesterday, deeming the risk high in the region but low worldwide. "Given the scale, we are thinking that it has started probably a couple of months ago," Anais Legand, WHO technical officer on viral haemorrhagic fevers,

told reporters in Geneva.

Ebola has killed more than 15,000 people in Africa in the past half-century, and the UN health agency declared the latest surge an international health emergency.

The 17th Ebola outbreak to hit the DRC is already suspected of having caused 139 deaths from around 600 probable cases.

"We expect those numbers to

keep increasing, given the amount of time the virus was circulating before the outbreak was detected," WHO chief Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus told reporters.

The WHO has highlighted the complexity of detecting and responding to the outbreak, which has been spreading in hard-to-reach areas of the DRC's conflict-torn Ituri province. Complicating

things further, the less common Bundibugyo species behind the outbreak does not show up on tests for the more common Zaire strain of Ebola.

On Sunday, Tedros declared the outbreak a so-called public health emergency of international concern – the second-highest level of alarm under the legally-binding International Health Regulations

(IHR), which triggers emergency responses in countries worldwide.

"There are several factors that warrant serious concern about the potential for further spread and further deaths," he said, adding he "determined that the situation was not a pandemic emergency," saying the agency "assesses the risk of the epidemic as high at the national and regional levels. (AFP)

Canada slams Israel's treatment of Gaza flotilla activists

Canada's foreign minister slammed Israel yesterday over "deeply troubling and absolutely unacceptable" footage of detained activists from an intercepted Gaza-bound flotilla. "I have directed my officials to summon the Israeli ambassador regarding the mistreatment of civilians aboard the flotilla. What we've seen, including the video shared by Itamar Ben Gvir, is deeply troubling and absolutely unacceptable," Canada's Foreign Minister Anita Anand said, referring to Israel's far-right national security chief. (AFP)

Israeli lawmakers advance bill to dissolve parliament

Israeli lawmakers voted on Wednesday to advance a bill submitted by the ruling coalition of Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu which would dissolve parliament and pave the way for early elections. In a preliminary reading, 110 out of 120 lawmakers voted in favour and none against, while the rest did not cast their vote. The bill will now pass to a committee before three more parliamentary readings. If the bill is ultimately approved it would automatically trigger elections to be held after 90 days. (AFP)

Ministry: Russian jets 'dangerously' intercept UK aircraft

Two Russian jets "repeatedly and dangerously" intercepted a British surveillance aircraft over the Black Sea last month, the defence ministry said in a statement yesterday. "This incident is another example of dangerous and unacceptable behaviour by Russian pilots, towards an unarmed aircraft operating in international airspace. These actions create a serious risk of accidents and potential escalation," Defence Minister John Healey said. The Russian Su-35 and Su-27 jets intercepted the Royal Air Force (RAF) Rivet Joint aircraft last month with the Su-27 at one point flying as close as six metres (19 feet). (AFP)

Putin, Xi hail 'unyielding' ties in talks

AFP
Beijing

President Xi Jinping hailed China and Russia's "unyielding" ties in talks with Vladimir Putin yesterday as the pair met to underscore their alliance days after Donald Trump's own visit to Beijing.

The two countries' ties have deepened since Moscow's 2022 invasion of Ukraine, as Russia has become increasingly dependent on China, its main oil customer.

Putin was received by Xi outside Beijing's opulent Great Hall of the People in much the same fashion as Trump last week, complete with chanting children and military fanfare.

But the language was much warmer, with Xi telling the Russian leader Beijing and Moscow have "continuously deepened our political mutual trust and strategic coordination with a resilience that remains unyielding", according to Chinese state media.

Opening talks, both were quick to laud their countries' special ties as they extended their treaty of "friendly cooperation".

Putin, quoting a Chinese phrase, told Xi: "A day apart feels like three autumns", adding that relations had reached an "unprecedentedly high level" despite "unfavourable external factors", Russian media footage showed.

In an apparent swipe at the US, Xi warned of "unilateral and hegemonic counter-currents running rampant" in the world.

In contrast to Trump's visit last week, which yielded little in the way of immediate concrete an-



Russian President Vladimir Putin and Chinese President Xi Jinping before a tea ceremony following their meeting at the Great Hall of the People in Beijing yesterday. (Reuters)

nouncements, Putin and Xi signed a slew of agreements yesterday on trade, media and energy.

The two leaders later had talks over tea, which the Kremlin had previously said would be reserved for "the most important issues" such as Ukraine, Iran and relations with the US. That session lasted around 1.5 hours before Putin headed to the airport, according to Russian media.

Beneath the camaraderie, Putin is now perceived by many to be the junior partner in the relationship. The Russian leader has

been weakened over four years of the Ukraine conflict, with his country's economy shrinking in the first quarter of the year as factors such as wartime spending, labour shortages and sanctions take their toll. Analysts believed Putin would use his visit to push for progress on the "Power of Siberia 2", a major natural gas pipeline running from Russia to China through Mongolia.

But Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov told Russian media yesterday that while the two sides had reached a "basic understanding"

– including on "the route and how it will be built" – there was no "clear timeline", and "there are still some details to be worked out".

The US-Israeli war on Iran has hampered crude and gas flows from the Middle East, giving an opportunity for Putin to offer Russian energy sources as an alternative.

"Russia and China are actively cooperating in the energy sector... We are, of course, ready to continue reliably supplying all these types of fuel to the rapidly grow-

ing Chinese market," Putin said yesterday. His priorities may differ from China's, which wants the Middle East conflict concluded as soon as possible. Underlining that, Xi emphasised in the presence of Putin yesterday that "a comprehensive ceasefire is of utmost urgency, resuming hostilities is even more inadvisable and maintaining negotiations is particularly important".

Xi has played host to a series of world leaders as an increasingly unpredictable US under Trump has pushed many to shore up alliances with Beijing.

Many have urged him to use his influence with Russia and Iran to help bring an end to the respective conflicts there. Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky had asked Trump to discuss ending the war during his meetings with Xi last week. The pair did talk about the issue, but the US president left China without a breakthrough.

Beijing has regularly called for talks to end the war in Ukraine, but has never condemned Russia for sending in troops – presenting itself instead as a neutral party.

The two leaders talked about Ukraine, Chinese state media said after the visit had ended, without giving further details.

Yesterday Putin said that Russia and China were "committed to an independent and sovereign foreign policy".

In a joint statement released by the Kremlin, Russia said it "positively assesses the objective and unbiased position of the Chinese side regarding the situation in Ukraine and welcomes China's aspiration to play a constructive role".

Ukraine discussed sanctions on Russia with Britain: Zelenskiy

President Volodymyr Zelenskiy said yesterday that Ukraine had been in contact with Britain on Wednesday, having sent signals on the "sensitive" issue of sanctions on Russia, with hopes to discuss the issue further later this week. "This issue is always very sensitive... We conveyed our signals on the matter to London," he said in his nightly video address.

"We expect that everything will be discussed this week on a bilateral level," Zelenskiy did not refer directly to Britain's decision to continue to allow imports of diesel and jet fuel refined from Russian crude in third countries, but said sanctions from its allies were the most effective means of influencing Russia. Zelenskiy later said on X that he had spoken to British Prime Minister Keir Starmer by telephone and thanked him for the support provided for Ukraine.



Pedestrians with an umbrella walk by a makeshift memorial for fallen Ukrainian and foreign soldiers in Independence Square in Kyiv yesterday. (AFP)

He said the two sides were coordinating diplomatic positions and "working to reinvent substantive diplomacy". Starmer's office said the prime minister reaffirmed Britain's

support for Ukraine. Both leaders reiterated the need to maintain pressure on Russia and welcomed the strength of the UK-Ukraine relationship. (Reuters)

US envoy calls for 'footprint' in Greenland

AFP
Nuuk

The US special envoy to Greenland, the Arctic island coveted by President Donald Trump, told AFP yesterday that Washington needs to rebuild its presence in the Danish autonomous territory.

At the height of the Cold War, Washington had 17 military facilities in Greenland, but closed them over the years and currently has just one – the Pituffik base in the north of the island. Trump has repeatedly argued the US needs to control Greenland because of national security concerns, claiming that if the US does not control it, the island risks falling into the hands of China or Russia.

Greenland is on the shortest route for missiles between Russia and the US. It is believed to have

untapped rare earth minerals and could be a vital player as the polar ice melts and new shipping routes emerge. "I think it's time for the US to put its footprint back on Greenland," US envoy Jeff Landry told AFP on his first visit to Greenland since his appointment in December 2025.

"I think that you're seeing the president talk about increasing national security operations and repopulating certain bases in Greenland," he said.

The US wants to open three new bases in the south of the territory, according to recent media reports. A 1951 defence pact, updated in 2004, already allows Washington to ramp up troop deployments and military installations on the island provided it informs Denmark and Greenland in advance.

Trump backed down from

threats to seize Greenland in January, and a US-Danish-Greenlandic working group was set up to address his concerns.

Even if a "master's" desire to "secure control of Greenland... is completely disrespectful... we are obliged to find a solution", Greenlandic Prime Minister Jens-Fredrik Nielsen told reporters on the sidelines of a Greenland economic forum on Tuesday.

US envoy Landry, who is also the Republican governor of Louisiana, arrived in the Greenland capital Nuuk on Sunday. He was not officially invited and his presence has stirred controversy on the island. Landry met with Nielsen and Greenland's Foreign Minister Mute Egede on Monday.

Nielsen said the talks were "constructive" but noted there was "no sign... that anything has changed" in the US position.

Former Cuban President Raul Castro is indicted in US

Reuters
Washington

Former Cuban President Raul Castro has been indicted in the US, a senior Trump administration official said yesterday, in a major escalation in Washington's pressure campaign against the island's communist government. The indictment comes as US President Donald Trump has pushed for a regime change in Cuba, where Castro's communists have been in charge since his late brother Fidel Castro led a revolution in 1959.

"America will not tolerate a rogue state harboring hostile foreign military, intelligence and terror operations just ninety miles from the American homeland," Trump said in a statement earlier yesterday. The indictment marks a new low in relations between the longtime Cold War rivals.

After taking power, Fidel Castro struck an alliance with the Soviet Union, then seized US-citizen owned businesses and properties. The US has since maintained an economic embargo on the nation of about 10 mn.

The two sides have talked intermittently over the years. Diplomatic relations briefly improved during former Democratic President Barack Obama's second term, but Trump, a Republican, has taken a harder line. The charges against Raul Castro, 94, are expected to be based on a 1996 incident in which Cuban jets shot down planes operated by a group of Cuban exiles, a US Justice Department official told Reuters last week on the condition of anonymity. The Justice Department was until Tuesday planning to make an announcement.

Yesterday was the anniversary of the end of a four-year US military occupation of Cuba on May 20, 1902, which itself followed centuries of Spanish colonial rule. Cuba's government does not consider the date to mark the country's independence day, arguing that it remained subservient to Washington until the 1959 revolution. In a post on X, Diaz-Canel said that in Cuban history, May 20 signified "intervention, interference, dispossession, frustration".

Under Trump, the US has effectively imposed a blockade on Cuba by threatening sanctions on countries supplying it with fuel, trig-



Cuba's former President Raul Castro at a ceremony marking the 69th anniversary of the July 26, 1953 rebel assault. (Reuters/File Photo)

gering power outages and exacerbating its worst crisis in decades.

In a video message addressed to the Cuban people yesterday morning, US Secretary of State Marco Rubio, whose parents were Cuban immigrants to the US, offered to forge a new relationship between the two countries. He said the US could provide \$100 mn in aid, and blamed Cuba's leaders for shortages of electricity, food and fuel.

In response, Cuban Foreign

Minister Bruno Rodriguez called Rubio "the mouthpiece of corrupt and vengeful interests" but did not rule out accepting the aid.

"He keeps talking about an aid package of 100 mn dollars that Cuba has not rejected, but whose cynicism is evident to anyone in light of the devastating effect of the economic blockade and the energy stranglehold," Rodriguez wrote in a post on X.

Cuba has yet to comment di-

rectly on the criminal case against Raul Castro.

Born in 1931, Raul Castro was a key figure alongside his older brother in the guerrilla war that toppled US-backed dictator Fulgencio Batista.

He helped defeat the US-organised Bay of Pigs invasion in 1961, and served as defence minister for decades. He succeeded his brother as president in 2008 and stepped down in 2018, but remains a powerful behind-the-scenes figure in Cuban politics.

He was defence minister at the time of the 1996 incident.

The two small planes that were shot down were being flown by Brothers to the Rescue, a group of Miami-based Cuban exile pilots. All four men aboard were killed.

The group said its mission was to search the Florida Straits for Cuban rafters fleeing the island, and routinely flew near the Cuban coast.

The Cuban government has argued the strike was a legitimate response to the planes intruding on Cuban airspace.

Fidel Castro said Cuba's military had acted on "standing orders" to down planes entering Cuban air-

space. He said Raul Castro did not give a specific order to shoot the planes.

The US condemned the attack and imposed sanctions, but did not pursue criminal charges against either Castro brother. The Justice Department charged three Cuban military officers in 2003 but they were never extradited.

The International Civil Aviation Organisation later concluded the shootdown took place over international waters.

The filing of the criminal case against a US adversary like Castro recalls the earlier drug-trafficking indictment of imprisoned former Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro, an ally of Havana's.

The Trump administration cited that indictment as a justification for the January 3 raid on Caracas by the US military in which Maduro was captured and brought to New York to face the charges. He has pleaded not guilty.

Trump says Cuba's communist government is corrupt, and in March threatened that Cuba "is next" after Venezuela. Diaz-Canel said on Monday that any US military action against Cuba would lead to a "bloodbath".

Falastin newspaper founded in 1911 – A milestone in Arab history of journalism

By Tawfik Lamari
Staff Reporter

The newspaper *Falastin*, founded in Jaffa in 1911 by pioneering journalist Issa al-Issa and his cousin Yusuf al-Issa, is regarded as one of the most influential publications in the history of Arab media.

Known for its professional reporting and nationalist stance, the newspaper documented major political and social transformations from the Ottoman era through the British Mandate and emerged as a leading voice against the Zionist project.

Falastin is considered a cornerstone of modern Palestinian journalism and one of the first regularly published newspapers in Jaffa, then a major cultural and journalistic centre in the Levant under Ottoman rule. Its launch marked a turning point in the development of Arab media and national political discourse in Palestine.

Issa al-Issa was born in Jaffa

in 1878 to an Orthodox Christian family engaged in the oil and soap trade. He studied in Jaffa and Lebanon before attending the American University of Beirut, where he mastered several foreign languages.

His interest in journalism appeared early when he published the magazine *Al-Nukhba* (The Elite) in 1897 while still a student. He later worked in Jerusalem, Egypt and Sudan before returning to Jaffa and briefly joining the Ottoman Bank.

On January 15, 1911, al-Issa launched *Falastin* as a twice-weekly publication describing itself as a constitutional Ottoman newspaper serving the public interest.

Over time, it evolved into a platform that advocated Arab nationalist thought and defended Arab rights in Palestine. The newspaper published political commentary, reformist editorials and local and Ottoman news while warning early on about the dangers of the Zionist movement.

According to the Institute for



Archived copy of *Falastin* newspaper.

Palestine Studies, Issa al-Issa was among the most prominent Palestinian journalists of the 20th century. *Falastin* gained recognition for its professionalism, extensive network of correspondents and accurate coverage, becoming a model

for newspapers across the Levant and a key source documenting political developments in Palestine and the wider region.

Al-Issa was also among the earliest Arab intellectuals to oppose the Zionist project. He cam-

aigned against the dominance of the Greek clergy over the Orthodox Church and supported reform movements, including the Ottoman Decentralization Party. He also backed the Arab Congress held in Paris in 1913.

The newspaper faced increasing restrictions imposed by Ottoman authorities, leading to its closure in 1913 and to al-Issa's exile to Anatolia. Following World War I, he resumed his journalistic and political activities in Damascus under the Arab administration led by Prince Faisal.

In 1921, al-Issa relaunched *Falastin*, which became a daily newspaper in 1930 and one of the Arab world's most prominent publications during the British Mandate period. It played a major role in documenting political, cultural and social life in Palestine and contributed significantly to shaping Palestinian national consciousness and defending Arab identity until 1967. Beyond politics, the newspaper focused on social reform, Orthodox revival

movements and peasant issues. It also provided detailed coverage of major historical events, including the Ottoman Constitutional Revolution, World War I and the Balfour Declaration, making it a leading Arab source of news on Palestine.

In 1929, al-Issa launched an English-language edition titled 'Rosaline' in collaboration with Rosan Akhtar and Azmi Nashashibi.

The publication once drew the attention of physicist Albert Einstein after publishing an article titled 'Relativity and Propaganda,' prompting correspondence between Einstein and the newspaper.

During the 1936 Arab strike, British Mandate authorities shut down the newspaper because of its support for the national movement, replacing it temporarily with *Al-Akhabar*. After the 1948 Nakba, *Falastin* relocated to East Jerusalem, where it continued publication until 1967, when it ceased operations permanently following its merger with the newspaper *Al-Manar*.

Egyptian ambassador: Qatar keen on building the Arab mind

By Tawfik Lamari
Staff Reporter

Walid El-Feky, the Egyptian ambassador to Doha, lauded Qatar and its leadership's interest in culture and knowledge, emphasising that the Doha International Book Fair (DIBF) reflects the country's commitment to building the Arab mind and human capital through supporting reading, education, and culture.

He stated that the fair has become one of the most prominent cultural events in the region, given the broad participation of Arab and international publishing houses, as well as the large turnout from the public and those interested in books and

knowledge. He affirmed that Egypt's participation in the 35th edition of the DIBF is of great importance, as it represents an extension of Egypt's cultural presence in the Arab world and embodies the role of Egyptian soft power in disseminating culture and knowledge.

El-Feky noted that his tour of the fair included visits to several Egyptian publishing houses, pointing out that the Egyptian pavilions witnessed significant interest and attendance from Qatari citizens and residents of Qatar.

He explained that the Egyptian embassy provided various forms of support and facilitation to participating Egyptian publishers, particularly regarding licensing procedures and co-ordination with relevant au-

thorities in Qatar. He commended the Qatari Ministry of Culture for its co-operation and responsiveness to all requests.

He also noted that the Egyptian embassy is committed to organising diverse cultural events to enhance the Egyptian cultural presence in Doha.

He explained that the recent period witnessed a celebration marking the opening of the Grand Egyptian Museum, in addition to preparations for upcoming cultural events, including the "Joint Egyptian-Greek-Qatari Cultural Year" next year.

The envoy expressed his best wishes to Qatar and the organisers of the DIBF for continued success, affirming that the fair is consolidating its position year after year as one of the most important Arab cultural events.



Egyptian ambassador Walid El-Feky (right) browsing titles at the book fair.

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