



GULF TIMES



MONDAY Vol. XXXXVI No. 13786

June 29 2026
Muharram 14, 1448 AH

www.gulf-times.com 2 Riyals

Published in QATAR since 1978

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Qatari martyred, resident hurt in maritime incident

The Ministry of Interior (MoI) announced the demise of a Qatari citizen and the injury of a resident, in a maritime incident, as a result of their being hit by shrapnel from military operations in the region. In a statement yesterday, MoI said that as part of routine monitoring and verification procedures for maritime vessels conducted by General Directorate of Coasts and Borders Security, it was noted that a vessel with two individuals on board had failed

to return at its scheduled time. Maritime patrols immediately initiated search operations on Saturday evening. MoI indicated that in the early hours of yesterday, June 28, the Maritime Search and Rescue Team of the General Directorate of Coasts and Borders Security located the missing vessel. Search operations confirmed that a Qatari citizen lost his life after sustaining injuries from shrapnel resulting from the military operations in the area. An Arab resident was

also injured and has been transferred to hospital for medical treatment. He is in stable condition. MoI extends its sincere condolences and deepest sympathy to the family of the martyr, wishing him mercy and a speedy recovery for the injured individual. The ministry confirms that investigations and procedures regarding the incident will continue in accordance with established legal frameworks. (QNA)

Qatar anticipates surge in summer tourism

Qatar is bracing for a fresh wave of visitors in the second half of 2026, with a packed calendar of offers, programmes and entertainment events rolled out to pull in travellers from home and abroad – even as soaring airfares and regional tensions keep a growing number of families holidaying on home turf.

The country drew 1.13mn visitors in the first quarter of 2026, according to Qatar Tourism figures – 646,000 in January, 423,000 in February and 63,000 in March.

Industry experts expect arrivals to climb sharply in the coming months as the summer holidays begin, buoyed by a broad line-up of events and activities. Qatar, they note, has established itself in recent years as a leading destination and a favourite among travellers chasing experiences that fuse the country's heritage with its modern edge.

Speaking to Qatar News Agency (QNA), the experts said the sector is set for a strong rebound in inbound travel through the second half of the year. While some residents are still planning trips overseas, others are turning inward – to beaches, resorts, nature reserves and historic forts – to spend the summer with their families. High airfares and hotel rates abroad, compounded by regional tensions, have prompted many to rethink their plans in favour of



what Qatar offers closer to home.

Tourism expert Ahmed Hussein forecasts a robust recovery in the second half of 2026, pointing to signs of easing regional tensions and Qatar Tourism's steady push to diversify the country's offerings. This summer, he said, is unlike those before it: steep airfares and geopolitical headwinds have nudged citizens and residents alike towards domestic travel – which can cost more than 50% less than a holiday abroad, while serving up a full menu of family and child-friendly entertainment.

In April, Visit Qatar launched its annual summer campaign under the banner "Hello Summer", promising a season of leisure and entertainment running from May to the end of September. The campaign showcases a sweep of world-class events pitched at families, friends and adventure-seekers.

The Summer 2026 programme packs in entertainment, cultural and sporting fixtures – among them the Qatar Toy Festival, major music concerts and a string of activities across the country's flagship malls. To Page 2

US, Iran agree to halt strikes, meet in Doha for talks: Axios

Monitoring Report
Doha

The US and Iran have agreed to stop attacking each other and will meet in Doha tomorrow to work out their dispute over the Strait of Hormuz, a senior US official has said, in a bid to shore up a ceasefire that is barely 11 days old and already fraying.

"We decided to stop all the kinetic activity," the senior official told news outlet Axios, using the military's term for strikes and other attacks. A second US official said both sides would stand down "for now" and that "vessels can move freely" while technical talks continue. Both officials, and a third source with knowledge of the arrangements, confirmed tomorrow's planned meeting.

The truce had come under severe strain in recent days, with renewed strikes by both sides and a threat from President Donald Trump to restart the war and "complete the job". The renewed fighting was sparked by competing interpretations of the memorandum of understanding (MoU) to end the war – especially its terms on the strait.

Under the MoU, Iran committed to make its best efforts to allow the safe passage of commercial vessels through the Strait of Hormuz; in return, the US lifted its blockade of Iranian ports. During negotiations in Switzerland last week, the US delegation – headed by Vice-President JD Vance – agreed with Iran to establish a "hotline" between the US military and the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC), Iran's military command, to co-ordinate traffic through the waterway.

As of Saturday, however, the hotline was still not operational, even as Iran again began asserting that ships needed to co-ordinate their passage.



Qatar slams attacks on Bahrain, Kuwait

Qatar has strongly condemned repeated Iranian attacks on Bahrain and Kuwait with a number of missiles and drones, calling them a blatant violation of the two countries' sovereignty and a flagrant breach of international law.

In a statement issued yesterday, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs stressed the need to spare the region the consequences of unjustified attacks, to stay on the path of dialogue and diplomacy, to reduce escalation, and to build on the gains achieved under the memorandum of understanding, in a way that helps consolidate security and stability at the regional and international levels.

Tomorrow's talks were originally to be held in Switzerland and focused on Iran's nuclear programme, a source with knowledge of the discussions said. The escalation shifted them to a different venue and refocused them on the Strait of Hormuz.

Nick Stewart, who heads the US technical team, is expected to take part, according to a US official and a source with knowledge of the talks.

Earlier, Reuters reported that Iran had pulled out of technical talks scheduled for yesterday with the US, blaming recent attacks on the country and what it said were unmet conditions of the MoU.

An eye on the art of the letter

Abdullah al-Fakhro's reinvention of Arabic calligraphy

By Tawfik Lamari
Staff Reporter

For Qatari engineer and artist Abdullah al-Fakhro, Arabic calligraphy is not confined to ink and paper. Through sculpture, public art and hand-crafted jewellery, he has spent more than a decade transforming the Arabic letter into a contemporary artistic language that celebrates identity, heritage and innovation.

Al-Fakhro's journey began during his university years under the mentorship of renowned the late calligrapher Saeed al-Ansari (Arabic calligraphy teacher at the Ministry of Education, and founder in 2011 of the Arabic calligraphy department at the Museum of Islamic Art). While studying traditional calligraphic techniques, he became fasci-



Abdullah al-Fakhro



Midas FIFA 2022 necklace.

nated by the artistic possibilities embedded within the Arabic script itself.

Around 2013, he began experimenting with geometric Kufic forms, treating letters not merely as written symbols but as architectural structures capable of taking three-dimensional form. The exploration gradually evolved into a distinctive visual practice that bridges classical calligraphy and contemporary art.

"I work with freehand calligraphy, using my sense of letterform beauty to create art without being limited by strict classical rules," al-Fakhro says. "This direction was influenced by the artist eL Seed, whose work does not follow traditional calligraphy styles. In these paintings, I focus on the idea and its impact, creating work that fits more naturally within contemporary art."

Among the scripts that continue to inspire him is the early classical Kufic style associated with Kairouan, in Tunisia. To Page 2

14 killed in Saudi copter crash

Agencies
Riyadh

Fourteen people were killed when a helicopter belonging to Saudi oil giant Aramco crashed in Ras Tanura, on the kingdom's eastern Gulf coast, yesterday, the Saudi Press Agency (SPA) reported, adding that all those onboard died and the cause of the crash remained unknown.

An official source at the energy ministry said the aircraft came down at 6am local time. "The accident claimed the lives of all 14 passengers, all Saudi citizens," SPA said.

"The relevant authorities have launched a full investigation to determine the cause of the crash," the agency added.

The ministry offered its condolences to the bereaved families. "The energy ministry extends its deepest condolences and sincere sympathies to the families of the victims, praying that Almighty

Amir condoles with King Salman

His Highness the Amir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani sent a cable of condolences to the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques King Salman bin Abdulaziz al-Saud of Saudi Arabia on the victims of the Aramco helicopter crash in eastern Saudi Arabia. (QNA)

Allah grants them mercy and forgiveness and accepts them among the martyrs," SPA said.

Aramco operates more than 60 aircraft, including helicopters serving over 300 heliports across Saudi Arabia – one of the largest corporate fleets in the region. The company did not respond immediately to an e-mailed request for comment.

Ras Tanura is home to one of the largest refineries in the Middle East, with a capacity of 550,000 barrels per day (bpd), and is criti-

cal to the kingdom's energy sector. Aramco resumed crude oil loadings at its Ras Tanura terminal on Friday, after they had been halted for nearly four months.

The crash comes as oil-rich Gulf states race to move cargoes and ramp up output following Iranian attacks and the closure of the Strait of Hormuz, a vital waterway for oil and gas exports, ahead of an interim deal to halt the war between the US and Iran.

Riyadh gave no indication that the incident was connected to any hostile attack. During the conflict, Iranian strikes had targeted energy facilities across the Gulf, and the Ras Tanura refinery was hit several times – notably by a drone attack at the start of the war that caused a fire and forced a partial shutdown. Riyadh said in April that the weeks-long assault had disrupted operations at key facilities, including refineries at Ras Tanura, Jubail, Yanbu and Riyadh.

Saudi Arabia, the world's leading crude exporter, produces a little over 10mn bpd.

Minister bids farewell to ambassadors of Russia, Malta



HE the Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Sultan bin Saad al-Muraikhi met separately yesterday with ambassadors Dmitry Nikolayevich Dogadkin (Russia) and Simon Polichino (Malta), on the occasion of the end of their tenures. The minister thanked the envoys for their efforts in supporting and strengthening bilateral relations, wishing them success in their new duties. - QNA

Minister meets Turin mayor

HE the Minister of Municipality Abdullah bin Hamad bin Abdullah al-Attiyah met yesterday with the mayor of Turin, Italy, Stefano Lo Russo. They reviewed cooperation in areas of mutual interest, particularly in the municipal sector, as well as ways to enhance collaboration in modern agriculture and agricultural innovation. - QNA



Qatar takes part in WCO Council meetings

Qatar participated in the proceedings of the 64th meeting of Directors-General of Customs in the North Africa, Near East and Middle East region and the proceedings of the 147th and 148th sessions of the Customs Cooperation Council of the World Customs Organisation (WCO), which was held at the WCO headquarters in Brussels. HE the General Authority of Customs (GAC) Chairman Ahmed bin Abdullah al-Jamal, along with a number of the authority's officials, represented Qatar at the meetings. The 64th Meeting of Directors-General of Customs discussed several agenda items, including the outcomes and work of the Policy Commission, as well as matters of mutual interest related to the development of customs

work at the regional level. The 147th and 148th sessions of the WCO Customs Cooperation Council reviewed several strategic, technical and financial matters relevant to customs work. The discussions included the Secretary-General's report on the implementation of the WCO's strategic plan for the period 2025-26, updates on capacity-building programmes, reports from the technical committees concerned with customs policies and standards, as well as the latest developments in the fields of enforcement, facilitation and modern technologies, in addition to elections relating to regional representation in a number of the organisation's subsidiary bodies. - QNA

Qatar attends FATF meeting in Paris

Qatar, represented by the National Anti-Money Laundering and Terrorism Financing Committee (NAMLC) and the Financial Information Unit, participated in the work of the sixth plenary meeting of the 35th session of the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) and the working group meetings, which were held in Paris.

Qatar's delegation included Financial Information Unit head and NAMLC member Sheikh Abdullah bin Hamad bin Mubarak al-Thani

and NAMLC Secretary-General Mohammed Saree Rashid al-Kaabbi.

The meeting discussed topics related to the development of international policies and standards in the areas of combating money laundering, terrorist financing and the financing of arms proliferation.

It also included updates on the new round of mutual assessments, as well as a discussion of emerging risks and trends, most notably virtual assets, decentralized finance, and terrorist financing via social

media and messaging applications.

The meeting also saw an update to the list of countries under enhanced monitoring (the grey list), along with the adoption of the priorities of the upcoming FATF presidency.

During the meeting, the FATF also held a number of working group and specialised technical group meetings to consider future work priorities and ways to enhance the effectiveness of implementing international standards. - QNA

Qatar takes part in IMO NCSR 13

Qatar, represented by the Qatar Mission to the International Maritime Organisation (IMO), attended the 13th Session of the IMO's Sub-Committee on Navigation, Communications and Search and Rescue (NCSR 13), held at the IMO headquarters in London from June 22-26.



The NCSR 13 advanced maritime safety by updating digital navigation standards, revising performance requirements for S&R (search and rescue) equipment, and integrating modernised communications into global shipping. The Qatari team underlined the importance of cementing international cooperation in navigation and S&R. - QNA

Qatar takes part in joint meeting of GCC panels

Qatar participated yesterday in the extraordinary joint meeting of the Commercial Cooperation Committee and the Industrial Cooperation Committee of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), which was held via videoconference.

HE the Minister of Commerce and Industry Sheikh Faisal bin Thani bin Faisal al-Thani chaired Qatar's delegation at the meeting. - QNA

QFIU signs MoU with Canada's FINTRAC



The Qatar Financial Information Unit (QFIU) signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with Canada's Financial Transactions and Reports Analysis Centre (FINTRAC), on the sidelines of the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) Plenary and Working Group Meetings held in Paris.

The MoU aims to strengthen cooperation and facilitate the exchange of financial intelligence and information in accordance with the respective legal frameworks of both parties, thereby supporting efforts to combat money laundering, terrorist financing, and related predicate offences. - QNA

Qatar Scientific Club launches Summer Camp 2026 featuring STEM, AI, robotics

The Qatar Scientific Club (QSC), affiliated with the Ministry of Sports and Youth, launched its annual Summer Camp 2026 yesterday under the theme *Pioneers of Science and Technology*.

The programme, which runs through August 19, is designed to enhance young people's scientific and technical skills while fostering a culture of innovation and creativity through a diverse range of educational programmes and hands-on workshops during the summer vacation.

This year's programme features a broad range of scientific and hands-on activities spanning science, technology, engineering, and innovation.

In partnership with the Public Works Authority (Ashghal), the QSC will continue to deliver the fifth edition of the "Future Engineer" programme, introducing participants to the engineering

profession and its various disciplines while fostering engineering thinking and problem-solving skills through practical training and field visits.

In partnership with the Qatar Society of Engineers, the QSC will also offer the STEM 26 Summer Programme, designed to enhance participants' innovation, critical-thinking, and teamwork skills through interactive projects and hands-on STEM (science, technology, engineering and mathematics) learning.

In the field of emerging technologies, the QSC's Oasis of Manufacturers and Innovators will offer specialised workshops for young men and women aged 15-29, covering digital fabrication through 3D printing, ESP32-based Internet of Things (IoT) applications, artificial intelligence (AI) applications using Raspberry Pi, and CNC (computer numerical control) machining.

Meanwhile, the QSC's Automotive Mechanics Department will offer hands-on workshops for participants aged 16-26, including dedicated sessions for young women following the success of previous editions.

Participants will receive hands-on training in vehicle diagnostics, basic repairs, engine timing systems, cylinder head assembly and disassembly, and braking and steering systems.

As part of its efforts to nurture young talent and foster innovation, the QSC's Promising Innovator Department will offer a range of scientific programmes, including Smart Crime Investigator, robotics programming and fabrication workshops, the Space Pioneers programme, the Creative Minds Challenge in partnership with MasterMind Qatar, and Mind Sports programme in collaboration with MaxMind Centre. - QNA

Gulf Creativity Forum kicks off in Doha

The Gulf Creativity Forum kicked off at Ali Bin Hamad Al Attiyah Arena at Al Sadd Sports Club in Doha yesterday.

The event, organised by Doha Girls Centre in collaboration with the Youth Organ of Al Sadd Sports Club, is held under the mantra of Gulf energies and creative prospects, in pursuit of promoting the spirit of joint Gulf belonging.

Participating in this forum are young men and women from the Gulf Co-operation Council (GCC) states, aiming to strengthen innovation and highlight the role of Gulf youth as powerful partners in societal development.

Doha Girls Centre director Sheikha Hussein said that this forum represents a platform that assembles Gulf young energies in a shared creative space that demonstrates the spirit of collaboration among the peoples of GCC nations.

The centre, she added, acknowledges that true investment starts from people, as young people are the core pillar of development who chart the future.

The forum stands as a space for conversation to showcase young initiatives as an opportunity for sharing successful expertise, Hussein noted, emphasising that it would foster the shared Gulf identity, as well as values of cooperation, giving, and societal responsibility.

She thanked the Ministry of Youth and Sports for its unwavering support of youth initiatives and programmes.

Speaking to the Qatar News Agency (QNA), Head of Al Sadd Sports Club's Youth Organ Maryam al-Yousef said this hosting is intended to support youth initiatives, foster youth projects, as well as consolidate communication and the sharing of expertise among innovators from GCC nations.

The forum, she added, has been a rich platform to showcase inspiring youth experiences, including six initiatives and six projects from GCC nations, which together demonstrate promising young energies and



creative perspectives capable of making a positive impact on Gulf societies.

Al-Yousef further noted that the Youth Department at Al Sadd Club is set to launch its summer programme from July 4 until mid-August, within a vision aimed at delivering high-quality programmes that combine knowledge, skills, and meaningful recreation.

She highlighted that the programme primarily targets the 15-39 age group, with several activities also dedicated to younger age categories.

The forum featured a theatrical performance titled *When Dreams Spoke*, which addressed youth and community issues in a creative format, reflecting the forum's message and objectives of enhancing awareness and strengthening community engagement.

The forum also featured a dialogue session on "How Do We Create a Shared Gulf Impact?", featuring Qimam Initiative chief executive and founding member Maha al-Jassim and Al-Shayma al-Awadi, vice-president of the Bunyan Social Service Club.

The forum also dedicated a "For a Sustainable Gulf" pavilion, featuring environmental initiatives and practical workshops on recycling, aimed at strengthening environmental awareness and embedding sustainability concepts among young people. - QNA

Qatar anticipates surge in summer tourism

From Page 1

Luxury hotels and resorts are laying on exclusive summer experiences, alongside theme parks and water attractions for all ages.

Hussein also expects visitors to make the most of the country's coastline.

Qatar boasts a diverse spread of public and private beaches; with more than 10 beaches, each offering its own flavour of recreation.

For his part, tourism expert Ayman al-Qudwa said Doha had cemented its standing as the Gulf's tourism capital this year, emerging as the destination of choice for citizens, residents and international.

He put this down to an ecosystem that pairs ease of access with a varied offering and advanced infrastructure, with domestic tourism the biggest winner of 2026.

Summer holidays, he added,

give families a chance to relax, unwind and recharge away from the grind of work and study.

While some are preparing to travel abroad - funded through savings or loans - others are choosing to stay put, drawn by lower costs, varied attractions and a deep bench of facilities.

Qatar's success, al-Qudwa told the QNA, rests on what he called the "tourism square", beginning with Hamad International Airport, which links Doha to more than 190 global destinations.

He also flagged the pivotal role of Qatar Airways, whose network of more than 160 destinations and over 140 daily flights continues to feed visitor arrivals.

The result, he said, is an integrated model blending entertainment, hospitality and economic value - one that makes domestic tourism the most cost-effective and family-friendly option going, and underpins expectations

of a strong second-half recovery.

Qatar Tourism has lately opened up new destinations beyond Doha for visitors seeking calm and quiet alongside a full slate of activities - among them nature reserves, historic forts, international resorts and hotels, public parks, recreational facilities, celebrated restaurants, traditional markets and major malls.

National Planning Council data for 2023 recorded 167 cinema screens with a combined 38,210 seats, screening more than 5,497 films - 4,926 foreign and 571 Arabic.

Museums and exhibitions drew some 1.09mn visitors over the same year.

The council's figures also showed 189 hotels and hotel apartments in 2023, offering 46,806 rooms and 68,495 beds.

The hospitality sector logged 6.67mn guests and 15.68mn room nights across the year. - QNA

MoECC concludes workshop on biodiversity

The Ministry of Environment and Climate Change (MoECC), represented by the Wildlife Development Department, held the final workshop on "Early Action Support for Biodiversity".

The event was convened in collaboration with the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and the Global Environment Facility (GEF), with the participation of representatives of relevant national

entities, alongside several experts and specialists. Convened under the theme of accelerating national action for biodiversity: from GEF-7 outcomes to the GEF-8 phase, the workshop was part of MoECC's combined efforts to strengthen the execution of the national strategy for biodiversity.

The event was structured around a series of panel discussions presented by MoECC experts. - QNA

An eye on the art of the letter

From Page 1

"It is characterised by balance, dignity and strong horizontal flow", he says. "My interest in this script lies in its historical depth and its ability to connect heritage with modern artistic expression."

By 2016, his artistic experiments had found one of their most compelling expressions in jewellery.

Drawing on Arabic script and Islamic aesthetics, al-Fakhro began creating handcrafted pieces that transformed letters and words into wearable works of art.

"Jewellery is more than decoration," he explains. "It can express identity, values and a connection to culture. Arabic calligraphy allows people to wear a piece of art that carries meaning."

Crafted primarily from 18-karat gold and produced in collaboration with skilled artisans in Qatar and abroad, the pieces quickly gained recognition for combining cultural symbolism with contemporary design.

In 2020, he launched Midad, a brand inspired by the traditional ink associated with Quranic calligraphy.

Through the venture, he produces limited-edition jewellery and artistic objects rooted in Arabic script and Islamic visual heritage.

His artistic practice extends well

beyond jewellery. Al Fakhro has created sculptures, furniture pieces and public installations inspired by Arabic letters, participating in numerous cultural initiatives across Qatar.

In 2016, he contributed to the "Katara Murals by Artists' Brushes" project alongside calligrapher Issa al-Fakhro, helping create large-scale public artworks that enriched Qatar's visual landscape.

He later participated in the "Qatar's Iconic Limousine" competition with a work inspired by the beloved national song *Allah Ya Omri Qatar* by Mohammed al-Saei.

In 2022, he collaborated with the Museum of Islamic Art shop on a collection inspired by the celebrated Blue Qur'an, featuring the saying attributed to Ali ibn Abi Talib: "You think you are a small entity, yet within you the greater world unfolds"; rendered in Qur'anic Kufic script through a contemporary visual interpretation.

Most recently, al-Fakhro participated in the Msheireb Design District competition with three sculptural works inspired by Arabic calligraphy and centred on universal human values.

"I chose values that resonate with the atmosphere of Msheireb, a district that blends Arab and Islamic identity with a global outlook," he says. "I selected 'mercy,'



Abdullah al-Fakhro at work

'blessing' and 'kindness' because we all need mercy and blessings, and kindness can create a positive impact on visitors."

Drawing inspiration from Qatari and Gulf heritage, his works frequently incorporate Mashrabiya (Arabesque sculpture) motifs alongside colours and materials associated with Islamic art, including turquoise and lazord stone.

Yet for al-Fakhro, the true value of art lies not in precious metals or materials, but in the idea behind them.

"The artist is the creator of the concept and the design," he says. "That creative vision is what gives a work its greatest value."

Through gold, sculpture and the enduring beauty of Arabic script, Abdullah al-Fakhro continues to redefine the possibilities of calligraphy, transforming letters into objects of beauty, cultural memory and artistic expression.

HMC, Boehringer Ingelheim sign MoU to advance healthcare innovation in Qatar

Hamad Medical Corporation (HMC) has signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with Boehringer Ingelheim, one of the world's leading biopharmaceutical companies, to collaborate on initiatives to strengthen clinical research, advance healthcare innovation, build workforce capabilities, and enhance patient outcomes in Qatar.

The MoU reflects a shared commitment to collaborate across several strategic areas, including strengthening HMC's Clinical Trials Unit, enhancing research expertise, and exploring initiatives to support the continued development of healthcare capabilities in Qatar.

By strengthening clinical trial infrastructure and research capabilities, the collaboration will help attract future international clinical trials to Qatar, increase

participation in global studies, and provide local researchers with greater opportunities to contribute to medical innovation and scientific discovery.

The collaboration will also enable HMC researchers to gain greater visibility of emerging therapies, technologies, and research developments. This will help identify future areas of innovation, inform research priorities, and align clinical research activities with evolving healthcare needs.

In addition, the partnership will focus on supporting Health Technology Assessment (HTA) at HMC, including capacity building and infrastructure development, to help healthcare professionals evaluate the clinical, economic, humanistic, and societal impacts of emerging healthcare interventions, such as medicines, medi-



cal devices, and digital health technologies. Strengthening HTA expertise will support evidence-based decision-making and help ensure the effective and efficient use of healthcare resources.

Ali al-Janahi, assistant managing director of HMC, stated: "This collaboration represents an important step in strengthening Qatar's clinical research ecosystem and supporting our ambition

to deliver world-class healthcare through innovation, evidence-based practice, value-based healthcare, and international collaboration. By expanding opportunities for clinical trials, enhancing research capabilities, and strengthening expertise, we are creating new opportunities to advance patient care and improve health outcomes for the people of Qatar, as well as having a sus-

tainable health system."

Dr Anas Ahmad Hamad, deputy chief, Drug Supply in HMC and lead of National HTA & Innovation Regulation Programme in the National Health Strategy 2024-2030, added: "This collaboration marks an important step in advancing Qatar's HTA ecosystem by strengthening local capacity, enhancing technical expertise, and supporting the development of sustainable

HTA infrastructure within HMC and the wider healthcare system. Through strategic partnerships with industry, like this one, we are building the capabilities needed to ensure evidence-based decision-making, accelerate responsible access to innovation, and ultimately improve health outcomes in alignment with the National Health Strategy 2024-2030."

Derek O'Leary, regional manag-

ing director, India, Middle East, Türkiye and Africa at Boehringer Ingelheim, said: "At Boehringer Ingelheim, we believe the future of healthcare is shaped by the strength of partnerships that turn ambition into meaningful impact. Real progress goes beyond individual innovation; it depends on how effectively we come together to build strong ecosystems that accelerate discovery and translate science into better patient outcomes. Across our region, we are seeing growing recognition that stronger ecosystems, deeper collaboration and evidence generation are essential to improving health outcomes at scale. Our collaboration with HMC reflects a shared commitment to co-create advanced research capabilities, unlock scientific potential, and support the continued advancement of healthcare in Qatar."

Ashghal continues Phase 3 of North Doha area project

The Public Works Authority (Ashghal) continues the implementation of Phase 3 of the Flood Prevention Program in North Doha areas, as part of the Remaining Roads and Infrastructure Project in North Doha.

The project is part of Ashghal's ongoing efforts to develop the infrastructure and enhance the readiness of rainwater drainage networks, contributing to improved quality of life and more efficient services for residents.

Engineer Abdullah Shams, Project Engineer at the Drainage Networks Projects Department, stated that the project aims to provide sustainable solutions to reduce rainwater accumulation and enhance readiness for the rainy season in North Doha areas. The project covers approximately 51 rainwater accumulation spots across the municipalities of Doha, Al Daayen and Al Rayyan, serving several areas including Al Gharrafa, Onaiza, Al Tarfa, Old Al Rayyan, Al Dafna, Bin Omran and Al Kheesa.

Abdullah added that the project includes the construction of 50km of rainwater drainage networks that will serve 51 identified accumulation spots, in addition to the development of a new pumping station in Onaiza and Al Tarfa. The works will provide a practical solution to flooding issues on roads and



in residential areas, while maintaining smooth traffic flow and ensuring the continuity of services during rainfall events.

The project also includes several road and infrastructure improvement works, including the development of around 3km of roads, installation of 100 street lighting poles, provision of 383 parking spaces, and construction of 1.5km of treated sewage effluent (TSE) networks. These works will serve 1,555 residential and commercial units within the project areas.

Construction works are currently underway on the main pumping station in Onaiza and Al Tarfa, alongside the implementation of rainwater collection and drainage networks.

It is worth noting that local materials and manufacturers are being utilised in most of the project works, with the local content percentage targeted to reach 85% of the total materials used in the project. (QNA)

MoPH organises awareness workshop on heat stress

The Ministry of Public Health (MoPH) recently organised an awareness workshop on heat stress, with the participation of around 160 occupational health and safety officials from companies.

The workshop aimed to raise awareness among occupational health and safety officials and employers of the risks of heat stress, and to enhance knowledge of effective preventive measures, contributing to protecting workers' health and reducing heat-related injuries, particularly in outdoor work environments during the summer season.

Director of the Health Promotion Department at the Ministry of Public Health, Dr Salah Abdulla al-Yafei, affirmed that the workshop was organised as part of the ministry's efforts to build a

safer, healthier work environment that is more capable of addressing the challenges resulting from high temperatures. He noted the importance of joint awareness campaigns between the Ministries of Public Health and Labour, which target workers in the private sector to enhance health awareness and protect the health and safety of the workforce.

Head of the Occupational Health Section at the Ministry of Public Health, Dr Mohammed Ali al-Hajjaj, explained that the workshop addressed a number of key topics, including the definition of heat stress, its associated risk factors, its symptoms and methods of prevention. He added that the workshop discussed best practices in work environments for monitoring heat stress and heat indicators, in a manner that

enhances workers' safety and reduces health risks associated with heat exposure.

The workshop presenters from the Emergency Department at Hamad Medical Corporation discussed the first aid that must be provided at worksites when a worker suffers from heat stress. They also presented statistics on heat stress-related cases that presented to emergency departments during 2025, which showed a decrease in the number of cases compared with previous years, while emphasising the need to exercise caution, particularly during August each year.

Specialists from the Occupational Health and Safety Department at the Ministry of Labour highlighted the most prominent approved controls and requirements for protecting workers, in-

cluding the ban on work in open outdoor areas from 10:00am-3:30pm during the period from June 1-September 15 each year, in addition to providing sufficient drinking water and shaded rest areas at worksites.

The method of measuring temperature and humidity in work environments using various devices was also explained, and the early warning signs of heat-related illnesses were reviewed, along with effective prevention methods such as gradual acclimatisation to heat, adherence to drinking fluids, organisation of work and rest periods, and the use of appropriate personal protective equipment, in addition to presenting printed and electronic awareness materials containing information on the symptoms of heat stress and methods of preventing it. (QNA)



Al Mashaf Health Centre organises awareness event to mark World Blood Donor Day

Al Mashaf Health Centre, under the Primary Health Care Corporation (PHCC), organised an awareness event to mark World Blood Donor Day and raise awareness about high blood pressure, in collaboration with the Blood Donation Team at Hamad Medical Corporation (HMC). The initiative aimed to enhance community awareness of the importance of blood donation and its life-saving impact, while also promoting health education on the prevention and management of high blood pressure and its complications. The event was held at Al Mashaf Health Centre under the supervision of the centre manager, Dr Sarah Ahmad Bakhamis, and was coordinated by the Social Work, Laboratory, and Health Education departments. It



attracted wide participation from patients, staff, and visitors. The event featured a variety of educational booths for both adults and children, providing health information and guidance on the importance of regular blood

donation, ways to maintain healthy blood pressure levels, the risk factors associated with hypertension, and methods of prevention. The event also welcomed individuals interested in donating blood, with volunteers receiving the necessary guidance and support from the Blood Donation Team. This initiative helped strengthen the strategic blood supply while promoting a culture of social responsibility within the community. Dr Bakhamis emphasised that organising this event reflects PHCC's commitment to promoting health awareness among community members and encouraging positive health behaviours. She noted that blood donation is a noble humanitarian act that plays a vital role in saving the lives of patients in need.

QRCS, JHCO distribute vegetable parcels to displaced families in Gaza

A new relief project has been launched by Qatar Red Crescent Society (QRCS), in collaboration with the Jordan Hashemite Charity Organisation (JHCO), to enhance food security in Gaza, where the latest war has left hundreds of thousands of displaced families struggling to find food and meet other everyday needs.

In a press statement, Dr Akram Nassar, head of QRCS' representation office in Gaza, said: "This food aid is part of a project co-implemented by QRCS and JHCO to distribute vegetable parcels and hygiene kits in Gaza. The current distributions include a total of 11,942 food parcels for the benefit of 71,652 internally displaced people (IDPs) in Gaza and Khan Yunis Governorates, with a special focus on women, children, patients, and older persons.

"Regarding the other component of the project, coordination is in progress to get the hygiene items into the blockade. Our aim is to reduce the health risks resulting from the lack of hygiene supplies, thus helping protect displaced families and prevent communicable diseases inside the overcrowd-



ed IDP camps and shelters". According to Dr Nassar, QRCS will continue to work closely with partners to reach out to the most vulnerable people in Gaza and meet their basic food, shelter, and health care needs, towards the ultimate goal of enabling them to rebuild their lives and develop their potential.

Valued at \$1,111,000 in total, the project is a new episode of QRCS' ongoing efforts to improve living conditions and secure essential services for Gaza's population of more than 2mn.

Over the coming months, QRCS will launch additional humanitarian projects to provide vital food parcels, hot meals, infant formula,

therapeutic food, and bread for over 500,000 beneficiaries, at a total cost of more than QR20mn.

These ambitious plans can become a reality only with generous contributions by the benevolent people of Qatar, who can donate via QRCS's website (www.qrcs.org.qa), mobile app (QRCS), donor service (66666364), home donation collection (33998898), or donation desks/agents at malls and shopping centres.

QRCS reaffirms its commitment to delivering life-saving humanitarian aid to the most vulnerable families and strengthening the resilience of affected communities in the face of a persisting humanitarian crisis.

talabat reinforces rider welfare with 'Summer Together' campaign in Mena

As temperatures across the Mena region continue to rise, talabat, the leading everyday app in Mena, announced yesterday the launch of its regional "Summer Together" campaign - a comprehensive rider support initiative designed to prioritise rider well-being, safety, and comfort throughout the summer months.

As part of the campaign, talabat is launching a comprehensive programme of rider-focused support across the region - from dedicated cooling and hydration stations to rider support kits and community-led appreciation drives - designed to protect and uplift riders both on and off the road.

In Qatar, this commitment comes to life through on-ground and digital initiatives running from June 1st to September 15th. Central to the campaign is the deployment of air-conditioned rider rest stops, specialised mobile summer buses, and rider containers across Doha, giving riders dedicated, cooled environments to rest and recharge during their shifts. To further support fleet comfort and well-being, talabat is partnering with major brands like Rawa, Baladna, KDD, Gatorade and talabat mart to provide essential beverages and hydration products.

Mariam Hammad, director of Logistics at talabat Qatar, states: "At talabat, riders are at the heart of everything we do, and we recognise the unique challenges that come with working outdoors during Qatar's summer months. This summer, we have activated dedicated rest areas, branded summer



buses, and rider containers across key locations to provide cooling, refreshments, and comfortable spaces for rest.

"We are grateful to our valued partners for helping us provide these essential hydration products, ensuring our riders have the resources they need to perform their work safely and comfortably."

This year's campaign also introduces several community-driven initiatives across the region designed to encourage customers, employees, and partners to actively contribute to rider support throughout the summer season.

The "Summer Together" campaign reflects talabat's continued commitment to rider welfare and its broader mission of creating meaningful impact across the communities it serves.

QC, IRC strengthen partnership in Bangladesh

In a significant step toward advancing humanitarian and development efforts in Bangladesh, Qatar Charity (QC) and the International Rescue Committee (IRC) have formalised a strategic partnership through the signing of a memorandum of understanding (MoU), aimed at expanding support for Rohingya refugees and vulnerable communities across the country.

The agreement was signed in Dhaka by Zakarya al-Motair, Country Director of Qatar Charity's Bangladesh Branch, and Hasina Rahman, Country Director of IRC Bangladesh. The signing reaffirms both organisations' shared commitment to improving the lives of communities affected by displacement, poverty, and complex humanitarian challenges.

In a statement yesterday, QC said that the MoU establishes a collaborative framework to enhance humanitarian and development interventions, with a particular focus on Rohingya refugees and host communities. It also opens new avenues for cooperation in program implementation, resource mobilisation, and the development of innovative initiatives to address urgent and evolving needs on the ground.

Speaking at the signing ceremony, Hasina Rahman emphasised the importance of partnerships in responding to increasing humanitarian demands, adding, "This partnership will enable us to work more

closely in addressing humanitarian needs and exploring opportunities for greater resource mobilisation."

Echoing this commitment, Zakarya al-Motair highlighted the broader humanitarian vision behind the agreement, adding, "Together, we are committed to strengthening our efforts to support Rohingya refugees and vulnerable communities throughout Bangladesh."

Both organisations underscored that the MoU goes beyond formal collaboration, reflecting a shared vision grounded in trust, partnership, and a common humanitarian purpose. Through this alliance, Qatar Charity and IRC aim to enhance service delivery, maximise collective impact, and strengthen their ability to respond effectively to ongoing humanitarian challenges.

The partnership is also expected to facilitate the development of strategic project concepts and proposals to mobilise additional funding, enabling both organisations to expand life-saving and resilience-building support for communities most in need.

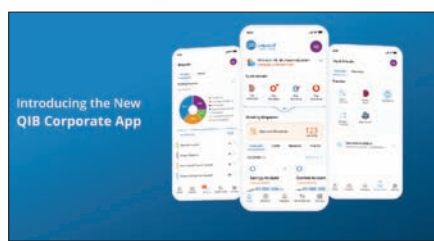
This partnership comes at a crucial time as Bangladesh continues to host one of the world's largest refugee populations, while simultaneously facing multiple humanitarian and climate-related challenges. Initiatives like this highlight the importance of coordinated international efforts to promote dignity, strengthen resilience, and restore hope among vulnerable communities. (QNA)

QIB launches enhanced Corporate App for smarter digital banking experience

Qatar Islamic Bank (QIB) has launched the new version of its Corporate App, introducing a new user experience and enhanced functionality to help Corporate and SME customers manage their banking needs more efficiently. The launch reflects QIB's ongoing commitment to investing in innovative digital solutions that simplify banking for businesses while providing greater convenience, accessibility, and control.

The enhanced Corporate App features a completely new user interface, making navigation more intuitive and enabling users to access key banking services faster and more efficiently. The new version is available in Arabic and English, allowing customers to conduct their banking activities in their preferred language and further enhancing accessibility for businesses across Qatar. Designed around customer feedback and evolving business needs, the new app streamlines access to a wide range of banking services and provides an improved digital experience for authorised users responsible for initiating, reviewing, and approving transactions. Through the QIB Corporate App, customers can manage accounts, finance and cards, perform local and international transfers, make payments, approve transactions, monitor corporate deposits, access account information, and submit service requests anytime and from anywhere.

Tarek Fawzi, QIB general manager - Wholesale Banking Group, said: "The launch of the



enhanced QIB Corporate App represents another important milestone in our digital banking journey. Businesses today expect banking services that are not only secure and reliable, but also intuitive and efficient. "The new app has been designed to help our Corporate and SME customers manage their banking activities with greater ease, while maintaining the robust controls and security standards required by modern businesses." He added: "As Qatar's leading digital bank, we remain committed to continuously enhancing our digital channels and delivering innovative solutions that support our customers' growth and evolving banking needs. The new Corporate App reinforces our vision of providing an easy banking experience across every customer touchpoint."

The QIB Corporate App is available on App Store and Google Play to customers registered for QIB Corporate Internet Banking and can be accessed using existing login credentials. For further information, visit www.qib.com.qa

Sidra Medicine expands medical education pathways

Sidra Medicine, a member of Qatar Foundation, is expanding its investment in healthcare workforce development by introducing its Medical Observership Programme and building on the continued success of the Future Doctor Programme.

Both programmes have been developed to create educational pathways for medical education opportunities for both secondary school students and established healthcare professionals.

Prof Ibrahim Janahi, chief medical officer and chair of Medical Education at Sidra Medicine, said: "At Sidra Medicine, education is a cornerstone of our mission and a critical investment in the future of healthcare. By creating meaningful opportunities for students, trainees, and healthcare professionals to learn from experienced clinicians and multidisciplinary teams, we are helping develop the knowledge, skills, and confidence needed to meet the evolving healthcare needs of our communities."

"These programmes reflect our commitment to fostering talent, advancing medical education, and inspiring the next generation of healthcare professionals."

The newly introduced Medical Observership Programme offers healthcare professionals, medical students, trainees, and academic visitors the opportunity to gain structured observational learning experiences.

Dr Murtada Hammad, director of Medical Education Operations at Sidra Medicine, said: "The Medical Observership Programme provides participants with valuable insight into the delivery of specialised healthcare within a world-class academic medical centre. By ob-



erving multidisciplinary teams in action and gaining exposure to clinical and operational best practices, participants can broaden their professional perspectives and enhance their understanding of modern healthcare systems."

The programme provides supervised exposure to clinical workflows, multidisciplinary models of care, patient safety practices, and operational standards across a specialised healthcare environment. Observerships are non-clinical and do not involve direct patient care or participation in clinical activities.

Available opportunities may include Paediatrics, Paediatric Subspecialties, Women's Services, Obstetrics and Gynaecology, Neonatology, Surgery, and Diagnostic and Support Services, subject to departmental availability and institutional approval. The programme is open to physicians, specialists, residents, fellows, medical students, nurses, allied health professionals, and selected high school students. International applicants may also be considered, subject to institutional requirements and approvals.

Sidra Medicine's Future Doctor Programme, an immersive educational ini-

tiative, is designed to inspire secondary school students who aspire to pursue careers in medicine and healthcare.

Hosted at Sidra Medicine's state-of-the-art Simulation Centre, the five-day programme provides students aged 15 to 18 with early exposure to healthcare careers through simulation-based learning, mentorship, clinical department visits, and interactive educational experiences.

Participants gain practical knowledge and valuable insights into patient care, while also developing essential healthcare skills through training in first aid, emergency response, and Basic Life Support. The programme includes certification opportunities accredited by the American Heart Association, further enriching students' learning experiences.

"Early exposure to healthcare environments can play a transformative role in shaping career aspirations," added Dr Hammad. "The Future Doctor Programme enables students to engage with healthcare professionals, experience medical learning in a highly interactive environment, and gain a deeper appreciation for the dedication and expertise required in healthcare."

QMC nurtures next generation of talent through summer training programme

By Tawfik Lamari
Staff Reporter

As part of its commitment to fostering media awareness and investing in young talent, the Qatar Media Corporation (QMC) launched the second edition of its annual summer training programme yesterday for the children of its employees.

The initiative is designed to introduce participants to the fundamentals of media production while equipping them with practical skills through direct engagement with leading national media platforms.

The programme reflects QMC's broader vision of encouraging creativity among young people and making productive use of the summer break by providing an immersive educational experience that blends theoretical knowledge with hands-on practice inside a professional media environment.

Mariam Suwailam, head of Training at the Human Resources Department of QMC, said the initiative aims to enrich participants' understanding of the media industry and help them develop essential communication and presen-



Group photo of officials and participating children in the programme.

tation skills. She noted that exposing young people to real newsrooms and broadcasting environments allows them to gain first-hand experience of the profession and inspires them to explore future careers in the media sector.

Targeting boys and girls aged 13 to 16, the five-day programme offers practical training across several of QMC's media outlets. Participants rotate through Qatar TV, QBC Economic Channel, Al Kass Sports Channels, and Sawt Al Khaleej Radio, where they are introduced to the different stages of media production, from content creation and news preparation to television and radio broadcasting techniques.

Throughout the programme, trainees work alongside experienced media

professionals who provide guidance on presentation skills, newsroom operations, television production, and radio programming. This interactive approach enables participants to experience the pace and demands of professional media work while developing confidence, teamwork, and creative thinking.

By continuing this initiative for a second consecutive year, QMC reaffirms its dedication to investing in youth development and strengthening media literacy among the younger generation. The programme also reflects the Corporation's commitment to cultivating future media professionals who can contribute to Qatar's evolving media landscape through innovation, knowledge, and professional excellence.

QNA launches PR skills training course

Qatar News Agency (QNA) launched yesterday a three-day training course titled "Advanced Public Relations Skills" as part of the 2026 training plan of the QNA Training Center, with the participation of trainees from the agency and several government entities.

The course seeks to advance participants' expertise in public relations and corporate communications by introducing them to the latest concepts, strategies, and industry best practices. It also aims to enhance their ability to plan, implement, and manage strategic communication initiatives in line with internationally recognised standards. Delivered by public relations expert Aisha al-Essa, the course features a range of specialised topics, including contemporary public relations concepts, strategic planning, corporate identity and reputation management, digital communications, and stakeholder engagement, with a focus on strengthening institutional communication and enhancing professional performance.

The programme also examines best practices in crafting effective communication messages, engaging with diverse stakeholder groups, and utilising digital platforms to support communication initiatives and reinforce institutional presence. Participants will present and discuss the outcomes of these projects at the conclusion of the training programme.

Liquidation Announcement (First)

Based on the Extraordinary General Assembly Resolution

to Liquidate

Umm Laqhab LPG Shipping Company W.L.L.
(Voluntary Liquidation)

The Liquidator – Rami Mohammad Ali Qudah
Deloitte & Touche – Qatar Branch

Announce the commencement of the liquidation of

Umm Laqhab LPG Shipping Company W.L.L.
Commercial Registration No. (39259)

Any party that has any claims with this Company should send a registered letter, including all supporting documents to
P.O.Box: 431, Doha – Qatar
within 45 days from the date of this publication.

Liquidation Announcement (First)

Based on the Extraordinary General Assembly Resolution

to Liquidate

Lubara LPG Shipping Company W.L.L.
(Voluntary Liquidation)

The Liquidator – Rami Mohammad Ali Qudah
Deloitte & Touche – Qatar Branch

Announce the commencement of the liquidation of

Lubara LPG Shipping Company W.L.L.
Commercial Registration No. (39258)

Any party that has any claims with this Company should send a registered letter, including all supporting documents to
P.O.Box: 431, Doha – Qatar
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مواصلات
mowasalat

The Transport Company
MOWASALAT (KARWA)

Mowasalat (Karwa) announces the following tender:

Tender Ref. No.	Tender Title	Tender Fee	Electronic Tender Fee Payment Dates	Tender Bond	Bid Closing Date
TC-020-ITC-2026	Renewal of Dynatrace Application Performance Management (APM) license with Technical Support	QAR 800	29 June to 6 July 2026	QAR 21,000	26 July 2026
TC-018-FIN-2026	Provision of Insurance coverage for Directors and Officers (D&O) Liability Insurance	QAR 500		QAR 17,520	

CONDITIONS:

- Interested bidder shall pay the tender fee to Mowasalat Bank Account details as shown:
- Bidder must submit proof of tender fee payment (Bank Deposit Slip + a Signed & Stamped Expression of Interest (indicating Tender Ref. No. and Title / Company Name and details of nominated contact person i.e., Tel. No., Fax No., and Email address) + Copy of valid Commercial Registration to Mowasalat Secretary - Tender Committee at email: tenders@mowasalat.com
- Tender documents will be released via email on the next working day after the tender fee payment date to all bidders who have submitted the bank deposit slip and other documents requested (7 July 2026).
- Bonds: Tender Bond & Performance Bond:** Bids must be accompanied by Bonds issued by a local bank operating in the State of Qatar as per the Qatar Central Bank template. Further details of bonds can be found in the tender documents. *Bids without Tender Bond shall not be considered.*
- Tender validity:** Bid validity period shall be 180 days from the bid closing date.
- Tender documents submission:** Bids must be submitted in 3 separate sealed (IN RED WAX) envelopes addressed to Secretary - Tender Committee clearly highlighting the Tender Ref. No. & Tender Title:
 - Envelope 1# must** include the Technical Bid submission (1 Original + 1 non-Editable copy in a USB)
 - Envelope 2# must** include Commercial Bid submission (1 Original + 1 Editable MS Excel spreadsheet copied in a USB)
 - Envelope 3# must** include the Tender Bond (1 Original) + 3 years Audited Financial Statements.
- Bid Closing Date:** Bid submission deadline is 12.00 noon Doha Local Time as on the Bid closing date shown above. The 3 envelopes must be handed over to the Office of The Secretary - Tender Committee, located at Mowasalat Head Office, Industrial Area. Any tender submitted after the deadline will not be considered.

Beneficiary Name	MOWASALAT-KARWA COMPANY
A/C No.	0013 - 011272 - 060
IBAN	QA07 QNBA 0000 0000 0013 0112 7206 0
Swift Code No.	QNBAAQQA
Branch Address	Corporate Branch, P.O Box 1000, Doha - Qatar
Currency	QAR
CR No.	26887

Tel.: 4458 8724 Fax: 4458 8850



Supplier Registration Mowasalat Location



A respite from summer heat

By Ayman Adly
Staff Reporter

Qatar has developed a comprehensive tourism, recreational and entertainment infrastructure, enabling year-round activities to cater to residents and visitors alike.

From public and family-friendly beaches to air-conditioned outdoor walkways, landscaped parks, and modern shopping destinations, the country has successfully created diverse attractions that combine comfort, recreation, and accessibility to emerge as the leading destination for tourism and leisure throughout the year.

One of the flagship summer initiatives is the annual "Whale Shark of Qatar" programme, which attracts nature enthusiasts and visitors interested in marine life.

The initiative showcases one of the world's largest seasonal gatherings of whale sharks in Qatari waters while raising awareness about biodiversity conservation and environmental sustainability.

A respite from the summer heat are Qatar's beaches that are thronged by families and holidaymakers seeking outdoor recreation.

Keeping this in mind, the Ministry of Municipality has developed and upgraded 28 beaches.

These include public beaches, family-des-



ignated beaches, and a dedicated women's beach, providing visitors with safe and comfortable environments for relaxation and recreation.

Popular destinations include Fuwairit, Simaisma Family Beach, Al Wakrah Family Beach, Sealine Beach, Dukhan Beach, Abu Samra Beach, and several other coastal locations spread across the country.

Several of these beaches feature modern amenities such as pedestrian walkways, restaurants and kiosks, lighting systems, prayer facilities, restrooms, shaded seating areas, landscaped spaces, children's play zones, and beach sports facilities, which make them the ultimate leisure destinations.

The country has pioneered innovative cool-

ing technologies for public spaces, allowing residents and visitors to enjoy outdoor activities even during the hottest months of the year.

A landmark example is the air-conditioned street at the Katara Cultural Village, widely recognised as the world's first air-conditioned outdoor street. Developed by the Public Works Authority (Ashghal), the project leverages cooling technologies originally utilised in stadiums during the FIFA World Cup Qatar 2022.

The concept has since expanded to several locations, such as Souq Waqif, Place Vendome Plaza, Lusail Boulevard, West Walk, Katara High Street and others.

The country has also invested in climate-adaptive public parks that support healthy lifestyles and year-round outdoor activities.

Umm Al Seneem Park, home to the world's longest air-conditioned outdoor pathway stretching 1.143m.

In addition, Al Gharrafa Central Park features another climate-controlled walkway extending 657m, while Rawdat al-Hamama Park offers additional recreational green spaces.

During summer, shopping malls remain popular destinations for outing as they serve as comprehensive entertainment and lifestyle centres.

Malls continue to invest in entertainment zones, promotional campaigns, and year-round events designed to enhance visitor experiences.

Wifaq promotes effective skills for a stable marriage

The Family Consulting Centre (Wifaq) has supported thousands of individuals through its premarital programmes, equipping them with the knowledge and skills needed to build stable, cohesive, and resilient families.

Eng Jabr Rashid al-Nuaimi, executive director of Wifaq, described premarital preparation as a strategic investment in the stability of Qatari families and the cohesion of society.

He noted that strong families are often built long before marriage begins.

He further highlighted the centre's long-standing preventive approach, which focuses on equipping young men and women with the knowledge, skills and awareness needed to navigate married life successfully before they embark on forming a family.

At the heart of these efforts is Wifaq's Premarital Preparation Programme, one of Qatar's longest-running specialised initiatives in this field.

Since its launch in 2003, the programme has benefited thousands of participants through comprehensive training needed to build resilient and harmonious

families that addresses religious, social, psychological, health and financial aspects of marriage.

The programme's impact was recently recognised with the inaugural 2026 Rawda Award for Excellence in Social Work in the non-profit category.

Al-Nuaimi stressed that marriage should be viewed as a lifelong partnership.

Accordingly, he encouraged potential couples to invest in learning, seek professional guidance and build their future relationships on dialogue, respect, understanding and genuine partnership.

He said differences between spouses are natural, but long-term success depends on how those differences are managed and transformed into sources of strength.

The centre now provides remote family counselling services and delivers awareness content through interactive digital and visual formats.

Al-Nuaimi said participants are interested in practical topics that directly affect daily married life.

By focusing on real-life concerns, the programme equips people with knowledge that helps them lay the foundations for stable and sustainable families.

'Hour by Hour' organises all-women event to promote personal care

The 'Hour and Hour' programme organised a women's awareness event that seeks to integrate education, entertainment, health, and beauty in one place.

This event, initiated by Tamani al-Yafei, CEO of the programme, aims to empower women and enhance their awareness of the fundamentals of personal care.

This is achieved by providing participants and attendees with practical skills and tips for a healthy, distinctive summer look, including hair and skin care and makeup techniques suitable for the season.

The event also aims to spread nutritional and health awareness by highlighting the importance of adopting a balanced lifestyle and introducing dietary systems appropriate for coping with the hot summer weather, thereby maintaining health and vitality.

Furthermore, the event provides a platform to showcase the latest summer products in skincare, perfume, and fashion, offering the public the opportunity to explore prominent innovations and offers that meet the season's needs.

In support of domestic tourism, the event highlights Sealine Beach Resort as an integrated tourist and entertainment destination capable of hosting major community and awareness events, thereby reinforcing its position as a prominent tourist destination in the State of Qatar.

The event combines health, beauty, awareness, and a balanced lifestyle at Sealine Beach Resort.

In a press statement, al-Yafei said: "This is within our efforts to enhance



partnership with the tourism sector and support community initiatives aimed at empowering women and improving their quality of life.

"For this reason, we have prepared an integrated programme that combines awareness, benefit, and entertainment, presented by an elite group of experts and specialists in health, nutrition, hair and skin care, and beauty."

The event also includes a set of educational segments highlighting the importance of adopting a healthy, balanced lifestyle and learning about suitable dietary practices for the summer months.

Additionally, it offers practical advice and guidance to help women care for their health, fitness, and appearance in a scientific and professional manner.

This occasion also provides an opportunity to learn about the latest products and services related to skincare, perfumes, and fashion, as well as the latest trends and innovations that meet women's needs and aspirations."

"Our goal for this event is not limited



Tamani al-Yafei

to the awareness aspect but also extends to supporting domestic tourism and introducing the distinguished tourism components of the State of Qatar, foremost of which is Sealine Beach Resort. It represents a leading destination for hosting community and entertainment events and activities, providing an integrated experience that combines benefit and enjoyment," she said.

Labour law amendments strengthen worker protections: experts

The introduction of Law No. 9 of 2026, which amends key provisions of Qatar's Labour Law No. 14 of 2004, was highly welcomed by a number of legal experts, who opined that the amendments reflect Qatar's ongoing efforts to modernise its labour legislation in line with evolving workplace realities and international best practices. They noted that the reforms seek to create a more balanced relationship between employers and employees, improve compliance mechanisms, and foster a stable and attractive business environment that supports investment and economic growth. Legal expert Dr Rashid Abu Diya highlighted that the new legislation introduces substantial reforms designed to improve labour market efficiency while safeguarding workers' rights. Among the key changes is a revised scope of application for the Labour Law and the introduction of new requirements for workers in certain technical and vocational professions. Under the amendments, employees in designated occupations must complete approved training programmes, pass competency assessments, and obtain professional certification before practising their trade. He noted these measures are expected to raise professional standards, improve workforce quality, and enhance productivity across various sectors. — By Ayman Adly

Liquidation Announcement (First)

Based on the Extraordinary General Assembly Resolution

to Liquidate

Al Wukir LPG Shipping Company W.L.L.
(Voluntary Liquidation)

The Liquidator – Rami Mohammad Ali Qudah
Deloitte & Touche – Qatar Branch

Announce the commencement of
the liquidation of

Al Wukir LPG Shipping Company W.L.L.
Commercial Registration No. (39260)

Any party that has any claims with this
Company should send a registered letter,
including all supporting documents to
P.O.Box: **431**, Doha – Qatar
within 45 days from the date of this publication.

Liquidation Announcement (First)

Based on the Extraordinary General Assembly Resolution

to Liquidate

Bu Sidra LPG Shipping Company W.L.L.
(Voluntary Liquidation)

The Liquidator – Rami Mohammad Ali Qudah
Deloitte & Touche – Qatar Branch

Announce the commencement of
the liquidation of

Bu Sidra LPG Shipping Company W.L.L.
Commercial Registration No. (38672)

Any party that has any claims with this
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including all supporting documents to
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Liquidation Announcement (First)

Based on the Extraordinary General Assembly Resolution

to Liquidate

Gulf LPG Transport Company W.L.L.
(Voluntary Liquidation)

The Liquidator – Rami Mohammad Ali Qudah
Deloitte & Touche – Qatar Branch

Announce the commencement of
the liquidation of

Gulf LPG Transport Company W.L.L.
Commercial Registration No. (38605)

Any party that has any claims with this
Company should send a registered letter,
including all supporting documents to
P.O.Box: **431**, Doha – Qatar
within 45 days from the date of this publication.



Iraq arrests 47 officials in anti-graft campaign

Reuters/AFP
Baghdad

Iraqi security forces arrested politicians and senior officials early yesterday as part of a broader anti-corruption campaign ordered by Prime Minister Ali al-Zaidi, a government spokesperson said.

Elite Counter Terrorism Service units raided homes inside Baghdad's heavily fortified Green Zone in overnight operations, detaining multiple suspects, legal and security sources said.

Iraq's state news agency INA, citing a senior official, said that 47 suspects were detained, including members of parliament and government officials.

Al-Zaidi, who recently took office with the blessing of the United States, has made two main vows: to fight corruption and to ensure a state monopoly on weapons.

Entrenched corruption remains one of Iraq's most persistent challenges despite repeated promises by successive governments to hold officials accountable.

His anti-graft raids come before an expected visit next month to Washington, where he hopes to attract US investment and is expected to renew his promise to ensure pro-Iran armed groups hand over their weapons.

Yesterday's operation was launched on his direct orders after judicial authorities issued arrest warrants targeting what the sources described as suspected corruption networks.

A senior source cited by INA said that some arrests stemmed from testimony by Adnan al-Jumaili, deputy oil minister for refining affairs, after his detention, with his statements allegedly implicating a wider circle of officials.

Government spokesperson Haider al-Aboudi said arrests were ongoing, describing them as part of a wider effort

in which "fighting corruption remained a central pillar of (the government's) efforts to strengthen state institutions and protect public funds".

Among those detained was Ali Maarij, deputy oil minister for distribution affairs, said the sources, who declined to be identified due to the sensitivity of the matter.

The US imposed sanctions on Maarij in May, accusing him of helping divert Iraqi oil to benefit Iran and Iran-backed militias and of facilitating the blending of Iranian crude with Iraqi oil for export using falsified documents.

Iraq's oil ministry denied the allegations at the time, saying that the activities described by Washington did not fall within Maarij's responsibilities.

Maarij could not be reached for comment yesterday.

The latest operation follows a series of recent arrests of senior officials on corruption charges, which triggered further warrants that were executed yesterday, according to the sources.

Most senior Iraqi government officials maintain residences or offices inside Baghdad's Green Zone, which houses parliament, foreign embassies and the prime minister's offices.

Several suspects fled before security forces arrived, prompting authorities to seal entrances to the Green Zone and launch a broader search, the sources said, adding that the campaign is expected to continue in the coming days.

Yesterday's raids also coincided with a visit to Baghdad by Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi, who promised to expand Tehran's cooperation with the new Iraqi government in all sectors, "as we did with previous governments".

Iraq has long walked a tight-rope between the competing influences of its allies, neighbouring Iran and the United States.

Hezbollah lawmaker warns of Lebanese 'internal strife'

AFP
Beirut

Hezbollah lawmaker Hassan Fadlallah warned yesterday of "internal conflict" in Lebanon over the country's agreement with Israel, which the Iran-backed group rejects, predicting that the deal would not be implemented.

The deal, which was signed in Washington on Friday after five rounds of talks and aims to pave the way to peace between the neighbours, includes plans to disarm Hezbollah.

Fadlallah spoke a day after Lebanese President Joseph Aoun told US President Donald Trump in a phone call that the Lebanese state "will assume its responsibilities" in implementing the framework agreement.

Hezbollah's leader Naim Qassem had said on Saturday that the group would treat the deal as "null and void" and described it as "a surrender of sovereignty".

Hezbollah drew Lebanon into the wider Middle East war in March with rocket fire aimed at Israel to avenge the killing of Iran's supreme leader in US-Israeli strikes, and Israel responded with heavy airstrikes and a ground invasion.

Yesterday Lebanon's state-run National News Agency reported a new attack on the country's south, saying "an Israeli warplane carried out an airstrike targeting the outskirts of the towns of Deir Seryan and Taybeh".

State media had also reported Israeli airstrikes on the south on Saturday, and the Lebanese health ministry said one person was killed in an attack on the town of Nabatieh al-Fawqa that day.

The Israeli military said it had struck Hezbollah fighters after detecting them in the area of Nabatieh, adding that its troops had also "struck and dismantled a Hezbollah rocket launcher that posed a threat to them".

Speaking at a memorial ceremony, Fadlallah said: "The agreement of humiliation and disgrace signed by the authorities will never see

the light of day and will not be implemented."

"Our finger will remain on the trigger, we will continue our path of resistance to achieve our objectives, and we will exercise our legitimate right to defend our people," he said.

He added that what "the authorities have done amounts to sedition aimed at pushing the country into chaos and shifting the conflict from one with the enemy to an internal conflict".

According to the text of the deal shared by the US State Department, Lebanon and Israel, officially at war for decades, expressed their intent to "conclusively end the conflict, address its underlying causes and to therewith formally conclude any state of war between them".

The agreement sets up a process during which Lebanon's military is due to "restore effective sovereign authority over all Lebanese territory, pending the verified disarmament of non-state armed groups".

Israel's Defence Minister Israel Katz, however, has insisted its troops would be able to stay in Lebanon so long as Hezbollah remained armed.

Uganda army chief orders leading media group shut

Reuters/AFP
Nairobi

Uganda's military chief, who is also the president's son, said yesterday that he had ordered the closure of two leading media outlets, declaring that he did "not believe in a free press".

Muhoozi Kainerugaba said the *Daily Monitor* - Uganda's largest independent daily newspaper - and NTV Uganda, one of the country's largest private broadcasters, would "not re-open without my permission".

"In Uganda, I do not believe in a free press! The press should be guided by cadres of the revolution," Kainerugaba wrote in a series of posts on the X platform.

He did not give specific reasons for closing the media outlets, both of which are owned by Nation Media Group (NMG), a media conglomerate headquartered in Kenya and listed on the Nairobi stock exchange.

The *Daily Monitor* reported yesterday that military personnel had been deployed at NMG's premises in the capital, Kampala, and that staff were being prevented from leaving or entering the premises.

"We've been shut down by the military at both NTV studios and offices... No one is allowed in or out. Those who worked last night were ordered to leave by the military," a senior NTV reporter told AFP on condition of anonymity.

NTV Uganda and other NMG TV and radio broadcasters in the country were all down as of morning yesterday.

Ugandan government spokesperson Alan Kasujja did not immediately respond to a Reuters request for comment.

Susan Nsibirwa, managing director for NMG in Uganda, said she did not have an immediate comment.

Kainerugaba had ordered police to arrest Nsibirwa "on sight", though he retracted his order soon after, saying that government spokesman Kasujja had intervened and would deal with her.

Kasujja, a former BBC journalist, could not be reached for comment by AFP.



This picture taken last month shows Kainerugaba inspecting a military parade from a vehicle during the inauguration ceremony of his father, who was re-elected as president, at the Kololo Ceremonial Grounds in Kampala. - AFP

Kainerugaba, 52, who has been touted as a possible successor to his ageing father, President Yoweri Museveni, is well known for his controversial social media posts including threats to behead the leading opposition leader Bobi Wine.

Kainerugaba accused the NMG group of a "lifetime of insults" against him, and said the shutdown had been approved by his father, who has ruled Uganda for 40 years.

Museveni, 81, won another term in January but many see his son as positioning himself to take over.

In 2013, the government of Museveni, who has ruled the country since 1986, shut down the *Daily Monitor* for 10 days over reports regarding his succession.

The Africa programme of the Committee to Protect Journalists condemned yesterday's shutdown, calling the "use of state security forces to carry out publicly announced threats against independent media... a deeply troubling escalation".

Uganda ranks a lowly 143 out of 180 countries worldwide on the media watchdog Reporters without Borders press freedom index.

Car bombs, shootings kill five Arab Israelis

Car bombs and gun attacks killed five members of Israel's Arab minority yesterday, the latest violence to hit a community that has already recorded more than 140 deaths this year.

Criminal violence has escalated among Israel's Arab minority in recent years, where gangs extort residents and business owners for protection and frequently kill those who fail to pay.

In Jaffa, part of the Tel Aviv municipal area, a car bomb killed a man in his 40s, police and emergency services said, while Israeli news reports reported that the blast left the man's six-year old son injured.

"The background is criminal," the police said.

A second car bomb struck in Holon, south of Tel Aviv, severely injuring a man who later died at hospital, the force said.

The victim had been known to police for his involvement in disputes, Tel Aviv police district commander Major-General Haim Sargarof told journalists.

A man was shot dead and another injured in the Arab-majority town of Taybeh in central Israel, in what the police described as "apparently a family dispute".

Hours later, two more men were gunned down in the nearby town of Qalansawe, emergency service Magen David Adom reported.

"A preliminary inquiry indicates that the background to the incident is apparently a family feud," police said.

Violent crime among Israel's Arab minority has reached unprecedented levels in recent years, as the community grapples with criminal gangs, easy access to firearms and what it complains is a lack of police enforcement.

Yesterday's bloodshed pushed the toll of Arab citizens killed in such violence to 142 so far this year, according to the Abraham Initiatives, an Israeli non-governmental organisation (NGO) promoting Arab minority inclusion - an 11% rise over the same period last year.

Arab Israelis, descendants of Palestinians who stayed on their land after Israel's creation in 1948, comprise around 21% of Israel's population of more than 10mn. - AFP

Naseem Healthcare continues to transform Continuing Medical Education (CME) in Qatar

Naseem Healthcare, a premier healthcare provider in Qatar, commemorates its two-decade long service, reinforcing its commitment to clinical excellence and continuous professional development. As part of this landmark celebration, Naseem Healthcare announces the robust expansion of the Naseem Centre for Learning and Development (NCLD), powered by knowledge leader 33 Holdings, formally establishing itself as a hub for advanced medical education and innovation. In the last two years alone, Naseem Healthcare has successfully conducted Continuing Medical Education (CME) program that benefitted more than 500 healthcare professionals and contributed to the advancement of clinical knowledge and professional excellence across Qatar. These initiatives transcend traditional seminars, offering interactive workshops, skills training, and evidence-based discussions contextualized to real-life clinical challenges, and provides certified CME points from the Ministry of Public Health, for enhancing the career of medical professionals. Sessions actively promote collaboration among clinicians, administrators, and medical experts, driving measurable advancements in patient care and safety.



and resilience across Qatar. As Qatar accelerates its efforts to realize Vision 2030's human development goals, Naseem's CME programs, aligned with national accreditation standards, continue to bridge skills gaps, nurture leadership qualities, and elevate healthcare system quality across the region.

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Guided by the strategic vision of Managing Director of Naseem Healthcare and CMD 33 Holdings, Mohammad Miandad VP, the group has evolved into one of Qatar's and Middle East's one of the top 100 most influential healthcare organizations, continuously advancing guest care standards and educational opportunities for practitioners. Reflecting his broader vision of "Healthcare for All," Mohammad Miandad continues to champion investments in medical education, innovation, and healthcare accessibility, with the ambition of building a globally connected healthcare ecosystem that empowers professionals and improves lives across communities worldwide.

Demonstrating a holistic commitment to community well-being, Naseem Healthcare has also empowered the public through first aid and CPR training programs. These efforts have enabled tens of thousands of residents, including school going children, to acquire vital self-management knowledge and lifesaving skills, advancing safety

Tunisia upholds sentence against jailed journalist

A Tunisian appeals court upheld the one-year prison sentence of independent journalist Zied el-Heni on Friday after he criticised judges for wrongly convicting others in his profession.

Zied el-Heni, a vocal critic of President Kais Saied, was arrested on April 24 after an investigation was opened into remarks he made earlier that month.

At the time, he had decried journalists being "unjustly" convicted by judges that he called "criminals", according to his lawyer.

Heni was prosecuted under a law that sets a penalty of up to two years in prison for "anyone who knowingly harms others or disturbs their peace through public telecommunications networks", including social media.

In 2024, he was given a suspended six-month sentence on the same charge after calling for the dismissal of a former trade minister on a radio programme. - AFP

EU condemns conviction of rights activist

The European Union has condemned the sentencing of Sihem Bensedrine, one of Tunisia's best-known opposition figures, and urged the authorities to restore pluralism in the country where the Arab Spring began.

The 75-year-old activist was sentenced to 25 years in prison on charges of abuse of office and forgery, which non-governmental organisations (NGOs) have condemned as politically motivated.

"We urge the Tunisian authorities to restore an environment conducive to pluralism and the expression of independent voices, which are essential to the country's development," EU spokesperson Anouar El Anouni said in a statement, hailing Bensedrine as an "iconic human rights defender". Many other opponents are in prison or in exile in Tunisia. - AFP

Israel army kills 'several' in south Syria

AFP
Jerusalem

The Israeli military said yesterday that it had killed several "armed terrorists" a day earlier in southern Syria.

"Yesterday (Saturday), IDF soldiers eliminated several armed terrorists in the Security Zone in southern Syria," it said in a statement.

The Israeli army has occupied what it calls a "security zone" in southern Syria since late 2024 and said it would remain in place there "in order to remove any threat to Israeli civilians and IDF soldiers".

Israeli Defence Minister Israel Katz said earlier this month that it planned to keep its troops in Syria "for an unlimited period", as well as in Lebanon and Gaza.

After the December 2024 overthrow of Syria's long-time ruler Bashar al-Assad, Israel sent troops into a UN-patrolled buffer zone that separated Israeli and Syrian forces on the Golan Heights.

Israel has also carried out repeated incursions into

Syrian territory since then, as well as bombings, and has said it wants a demilitarised zone in the country's south.

Israel captured most of the Golan Heights from Syria in the 1967 Arab-Israeli War and later annexed the areas under its control, in a move not recognised by most of the international community.

Despite tensions between the neighbours, Israel and Syria's new authorities have held several rounds of direct talks and have agreed to establish an intelligence-sharing mechanism as they edge towards a security agreement.

In his warning that Israeli forces would not leave Syria, Katz also told Iran that if the Islamic republic attacked Israel in response to its campaign in Lebanon, Israel would retaliate with "full force".

A ceasefire in the Middle East war between Tehran and Washington has been strained as the foes exchange tit-for-tat attacks, harming negotiations meant to end the war despite a memorandum of understanding reached in mid-June under Pakistan's mediation.

Migrants in US on temporary status asked to leave or seek permanent residence

Reuters
Washington

Migrants in the US on temporary protected status should seek permanent residence or leave for their home countries, US Homeland Security Secretary Markwayne Mullin said yesterday.

The remarks to CNN's "State of the Union" programme follow last week's split Supreme Court decision allowing President Donald Trump's administration to strip hundreds of thousands of Haitian

and Syrian immigrants of a humanitarian status that protects them from deportation to home countries plagued by conflict and destitution.

"Either try to fill out the paperwork and be here underneath a permanent status or we'll help you get back to your country," Mullin said. "We'll actually give you a plane ticket, plus roughly \$2,100 to help you re-establish when you get there, but temporary protective status, according to the courts and in its name itself, is not permanent status."

Federal law allows the admin-

'Either try to fill out the paperwork and be here underneath a permanent status or we'll help you get back to your country.' – US Homeland Security Secretary Markwayne Mullin

istration to grant temporary legal residency in the US to people fleeing war, disaster or other adverse conditions.

The status had previously been renewed successively and, despite the move to end these protections, the State Department currently warns against traveling to either Haiti or Syria, citing widespread violence, crime, terrorism and kidnapping.

The US first provided TPS to Haitians after a devastating earthquake in 2010, and to Syrians after their country descended into civil war in 2012.

The prospect of large-scale deportations faces opposition, even among some Republicans. Also speaking to CNN yester-

day, Ohio Governor Mike DeWine said it was not safe for Haitians to return and that the removal of diligent workers would hurt the Ohio economy and leave the healthcare industry short-staffed.

During the 2024 election campaign, Trump falsely accused Haitians living in Ohio of eating others' household pets.

The Supreme Court's conservative majority found, however, that Haitians suing the administration were unlikely to succeed in their argument that the administration's actions were racially biased.

The presence of Haitians in the state has helped spur economic revival in some of the Ohio regions that had fallen into post-industrial decline in the past.

The migrant community boosted wages and job creation, Reuters has reported.

"It's Haitians who many times are taking care of your mom or your dad who has Alzheimer's, taking care of family members who might be in a nursing home," said DeWine.

"And to say we're going to pull all those out, it's just not in our own self-interest."

Death toll in Venezuela rises to 1,500 as rescue efforts intensify

AFP
La Guaira, Venezuela

The death toll in Venezuela's twin earthquake disaster reached 1,430 on Saturday, and millions more were feared to lack sanitation and other basic needs, as the first US aid flights landed in Caracas.

Facing public outrage at the response by local officials, US-backed interim leader Delcy Rodríguez thanked the countries helping the South American nation for the outpouring of aid.

The search for survivors saw desperate attempts by local residents to claw away rubble from apartment buildings that collapsed in Wednesday's two quakes. Experts say the first 72 hours after natural disasters are the key, narrow window for finding the living.

"It's just very chaotic, hot and unorganized," said Australian firefighter Craig Demeillon, 43, who traveled alone to La Guaira from Miami to help. "Hopefully there's more people to find."

UN aid chief Tom Fletcher on Friday told AFP the death toll could continue to soar, adding that more than 50,000 people were missing.

The US said one runway at Simon Bolívar International Airport was partially functioning to receive C-17 US military planes, while a naval ship had arrived off the coast.

There was joy in the hardest-hit coastal area of La Guaira, north of Caracas, when locals pulled an infant alive out of the wreckage on Friday, some 32 hours after the



A drone view of the buildings destroyed by earthquakes, in La Guaira. (Reuters)

magnitude 7.2 and 7.5 tremors.

In one social media video, a man wailed up in tears as he held the baby in his arms.

The UN migration agency said it had examined available population and damage data and had determined that "up to 6.76mn people could be affected," and would "require emergency shelter, safe water, sanitation and hygiene services, healthcare, protection support and essential relief items."

National Assembly President

Jorge Rodríguez reported on Saturday 1,430 dead and 3,238 people injured, while the UN estimated \$6.7bn in physical damage – equivalent to 6% of Venezuela's Gross Domestic Product (GDP).

Venezuelans – already battered by years of a failing economy and the turbulence of the US intervention to topple leader Nicolas Maduro in January – were furious at the government.

Yessica Mendoza was forced to transport her own daughter to a morgue in Caracas after 25-year-

old Yesimar Rodríguez and her husband Jhomel Anaya, 26, did not survive the tumbling debris of their home in La Guaira on Wednesday.

"We were the ones who pulled them out ourselves. No help ever came," the bereaved mother, 43, told AFP, adding that the couple would be cremated without a wake due to the rapidly advancing decomposition of their bodies.

The government has restricted access to La Guaira state, deployed the military to the area and

made it obligatory for volunteers to obtain a safe-entry pass.

Anger among those impatiently waiting to volunteer surged as they waited for passes outside a concert hall in the capital.

"You need a permit to save lives – just imagine," complained Carlos Itriago, 27.

"I've been here since dawn standing in line so I can go rescue people," said Ezequiel Rivero, 53.

"Look at what time it is... how many lives have we already lost by now?"

Rodríguez said she had spoken with US President Donald Trump and Secretary of State Marco Rubio, who "reaffirmed their commitment to supporting the response efforts."

The US said earlier it was sending a disaster response team of more than 250 personnel, including three special search-and-rescue units with dogs trained to locate people trapped beneath the rubble.

Parliament chief Rodríguez said that over twenty-one countries were sending search-and-rescue teams.

Venezuela's worst earthquake in more than a century has come after the oil-rich country endured more than a decade of economic collapse. The crisis has hollowed out hospitals and public services, driving millions to leave.

The country remains in a fragile political transition six months after the US ouster of Maduro.

Those killed in Venezuela included 28 Portuguese nationals, five Spaniards, two Brazilians, seven Chinese nationals, one Chilean, one Italian-Venezuelan and one Uruguayan.

Peru to announce final election tally on July 3

AFP
Lima

Peru will reveal the final result of its razor-thin presidential runoff on July 3, election authorities announced, with current tallies giving conservative candidate Keiko Fujimori an unassailable lead.

The election has been one of the tightest Latin American contests in decades, with crime and political instability dominating a race to choose the country's ninth leader in a decade.

With 99.88% of the ballots counted, Fujimori had secured more than 44,500 votes over her

'We can now say with complete confidence that the final declaration of the runoff results will not go beyond July 3.' – Election chief Roberto Burneo

leftist rival Roberto Sanchez.

Since only 33,300 ballots remain to be tallied, it is now impossible for Sanchez to get ahead.

The winner will be recognised as the country's next leader at Lima's National Theater on July 15, Burneo said.

Fujimori's victory would mark

the return of her family name to power, more than two decades after the fall of her father, former president Alberto Fujimori.

He led Peru through the turbulent 1990s, crushing Maoist Shining Path rebels and taming hyperinflation but was later disgraced, exiled and jailed for corruption and crimes against humanity.

Sanchez has said he would not recognize a government headed by Fujimori, alleging administrative irregularities in the handling of the overseas portion of the vote.

The winner will replace interim president Jose Maria Balcázar on July 28 for a five-year term.

US seizes nearly 400 websites that were illegally streaming World Cup, DOJ says

Reuters
Washington

The US has seized nearly 400 internet domains that were being used to illegally stream the World Cup, officials said last week, describing the move as one meant to disrupt international networks profiting from the popularity of the tournament.

The US Justice Department announced that the domains were identified with the assistance of soccer governing body FIFA and others, including NBC Universal and Warner Brothers.

The domains were used to illegally offer users copyright-protected content in the form of real-time streams of the World Cup matches as they were being played and first broadcast, the department said.

"These streamers not only violate copyright laws but also expose viewers to potential threats – including malware attacks and unsecure connections that can compromise personal and financial data," Eric Weindorf, a special agent in charge at Homeland Security Investigations, said in a statement.

Servers and domains linked to

the unauthorized streaming of the tournament's matches were targeted in Peru and Bulgaria, the DOJ said, adding that additional disruptions took place in Croatia, Romania, Poland and Colombia.

The World Cup kicked off on June 11 in the US, Canada and Mexico. Games are scheduled to be played in 16 cities across the three countries through July 19.

Attendance for the matches have set an all-time record, according to FIFA. Last week's matches were some of the most watched television programmes, according to Nielsen. The United States' win over Australia topped that list.

Protest ban: 'Struggle continues' in Bolivia's Morales heartland

AFP
Lauca Ene, Bolivia

Bolivia's protest ban means nothing to coca growers loyal to former socialist president Evo Morales as they proudly defy the government measure.

Workers and Indigenous communities have spent weeks railing against Bolivia's worst economic crisis in decades, erecting roadblocks that paralysed the country and calling for US-backed President Rodrigo Paz to step down.

Attempting to quell the movement, Paz last Saturday declared a state of emergency that authorises him to outlaw protests, deploy the army and remove roadblocks that choked supplies to several cities.

But coca growers in the central Chapare region show no sign of backing down.

Supporters of ex-leader Morales – whom Paz blames for fomenting the recent unrest – line

Chapare's winding roads, ready to reinstate protest blockades at a moment's notice.

These coca growers wave signs calling for Paz to resign and are cheered on by other locals.

"The struggle continues until this damn government is gone," 39-year-old Rosalia Vilca told AFP as she sold Bolivia's traditional "salchipapa" dish in Shinahota town's main square.

"We'll rise up here to protect Evo because with him we've lived 14 years of happiness," Vilca said, adding that Paz should come to Chapare "if he's man enough."

The impoverished region's rainforests provide perfect cover for Bolivia's first-ever Indigenous president Morales, who is in hiding to escape charges of trafficking a minor.

He denies the allegations and his followers shield him from arrest, but Paz is planning on escalating efforts to capture his political foe.

Morales on Monday announced



Military personnel stand while a woman walks past following nationwide state of emergency in Cochabamba. (Reuters)

the temporary breakdown of the final roadblocks, insisting the move was "not a surrender."

In the small town of Lauca Ene, a loyal guard uses makeshift barricades, spears and shields to protect their beloved leader from arrest.

"I'm not going to give up," the ex-president told AFP in an interview Tuesday.

In office from 2006 to 2019, Morales first made his name as a union leader.

Paz has also claimed, without

evidence, that Morales profits financially from drug trafficking.

Chapare cherishes the coca plant, which grows in small rural plots and is laid out to dry under the blazing sun along stretches of road.

Used in cocaine production, over 90 percent of the region's crop does not pass through authorised markets, according to the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime.

But it doesn't all end up in drug trafficking either.

Local communities follow age-old Indigenous customs of chewing coca to ease fatigue, hunger and cold.

"In the cities they say that we people from Chapare are drug traffickers, but that's not true," said Shinahota bus terminal worker Zulma Torres, 42.

"We work, and we also suffer due to the blockades, even though they're for a just cause," she said. "We're prepared to give our lives

for Evo," Torres added.

Something else has popped up on Chapare's roadsides: stalls selling jerrycans of gasoline at exorbitant prices.

The illegal market emerged following a dire fuel shortage in the landlocked South American nation that began before the blockades.

"We're discriminated against by the central government. They don't want us at all," said driver Nicolas Garcia, 52, complaining that fuel no longer reaches the area.

Power outages have also affected Chapare in recent days, which Morales has claimed amounts to government retaliation.

"This is only going to stir up the Bolivian people even more," said Shinahota shopkeeper Mario Flores, 51.

"They blame Evo for financing the blockades, but even if we're country people who haven't studied, we know that the government is at fault."



'High-strung' camels race in Australian outback

AFP
Marree

Camels with "a bit of fire in them" raced in a remote Australian outback town this weekend at an annual event celebrating the desert beasts first imported in the mid-19th century.

Hundreds of spectators descended on Marree, which has a population of 65 and lies nearly 600km (370 miles) north of the South Australian capital Adelaide, for a 13-race spectacle on Saturday

known as the Marree Camel Cup. More than 10,000 camels were imported into Australia from 1840, many of them released into the wild with the development of railways and then the arrival of motor vehicles in the 1920s.

Now, estimates of the wild camel population range from 300,000 to a million animals.

Trainer Kyrraley Woodhouse, who started camel racing professionally in 2013, said most of her camels had been taken from the wild to run in the Marree event, which drew more than a dozen competitors.

Picking the right animal is key. "You would want a little bit of temper, a little bit of fire in them – a sort of splashy look in the eye," Woodhouse told AFP.

"They want to be wary of you a little bit but not, like, aggressive," she added.

"We want something sort of like a racehorse, a little bit high strung, a little bit forward – something that's got a heart, that's going to run."

This year's Marree Camel Cup winner was Young Gun, ridden by Patrick Dennis.

Muslim cameleers, many from

Afghanistan and other parts of Central and South Asia, were brought to Australia in the 1860s to harness the animals for transport in the arid interior, and some of their descendants remain in Marree.

Camels in the outback compete with stock for food, destroy fences, foul waterholes and damage Indigenous cultural sites, authorities say.

Without management, camel populations could double every eight years, South Australia's primary industries department says. Camel numbers are kept in check



Jockey Patrick Dennis (left) riding camel Young Gun powers to victory in the Marree Australasian Camel Cup run in the South Australian outback town of Marree on Saturday. (AFP)

by mustering, shooting and trapping at water points. Australia also exports a small

number of live camels: 68 so far in 2026 heading to Malaysia and Indonesia.

Korea, Japan reaffirm denuclearisation goal, closer defence ties

Reuters
Seoul

Republic of Korea and Japan yesterday reaffirmed their commitment to the denuclearisation of the Korean peninsula and agreed to revive joint search-and-rescue drills in a step forward for security ties between the neighbouring countries.

Meeting in Seoul, Korean Defence Minister Ahn Gyu-back and his Japanese counterpart Shinjiro Koizumi agreed to work on regional stability bilaterally, as well as through their partnerships with Washington, in the sixth round of talks between the two countries.

"Both ministers shared the view to continue cooperation for maintaining regional peace and stability amid a grave security environment," Korean defence ministry said in a statement. Republic of Korea and Japan, with US encouragement, have been working to develop closer ties since 2022 and overcome sometimes bitter historical differences, a policy continued by President Lee Jae Myung and Prime Minister Sanae Takaichi.

In 2019, Seoul moved to end the GSOMIA intelligence-sharing pact with Japan after Tokyo restricted exports of semiconductor materials and removed Korea from its preferential trade list, over lingering grievances rooted in Japan's past colonial rule of the Korean peninsula.

In 2025, Japan's then-prime



Japanese Defence Minister Shinjiro Koizumi and Korean Defence Minister Ahn Gyu-back inspect honour guards during a welcoming ceremony before their meeting at the Defence Ministry in Seoul, yesterday. (Reuters)

minister Shigeru Ishiba and President Lee agreed to closer security and economic ties, and the defence ministers committed to working with Washington against North Korea's nuclear threat and Pyongyang's growing military ties with Russia, including cooperation on AI and unmanned systems and annual trilateral drills.

Takaichi and Lee agreed in January 2026 to deepen shuttle diplomacy and in May expanded cooperation on energy. On Sunday, Ahn and Koizumi also agreed to continue fostering exchange between their air forces' respective aerobatic teams - Korea's Black Eagles and Japan's Blue Impulse - to further advance search-and-rescue exercises designed for vari-

ous maritime accident scenarios.

The two previously held talks in Japan in January and met again in May at the Shangri-La Dialogue in Singapore where they discussed a possible military-logistics support agreement covering fuel, food and ammunition. The two sides also agreed to hold a joint humanitarian search-and-rescue exercise in June, the first in almost a decade.

Tensions, however, remain, including lingering disputes over Korean women forced to work in Japanese military brothels during World War Two. In February, Seoul protested against a Japanese government event commemorating a cluster of disputed islands known as Takeshima in Japan and Dokdo in Korea, which controls the territory.

Indonesian police charge four after anti-government protest

AFP
Surabaya

Indonesian authorities charged four people after an anti-government rally in the country's second largest city, a local police official said yesterday.

Around 100 people gathered near a government building in Surabaya on Friday, AFP journalists estimated, to protest a fuel price hike and a free school meals programme which has been blighted by mass food poisonings and corruption claims.

Some demonstrators hurled objects including firecrackers and rocks, Surabaya police chief Luthfie Sulistiawan told reporters, prompting officers to take "firm actions" to disperse them.

Protests erupted in several Indonesian cities this month after the government hiked prices of non-subsidised gasoline by around 30%, seeking to alleviate budget



A student throws a fire box at riot police during anti-government protest in Surabaya on Friday. (AFP)

pressures as the Middle East war chokes global oil supplies.

Indonesia, Southeast Asia's largest economy where fuel is heavily subsidised, is an oil producer but

nevertheless a net importer.

Authorities arrested 24 people on Friday and released most of them without charge, Luthfie said yesterday.

"We had named four people as suspects for property destruction and assault against officers," he said.

Six people are still under investigation after authorities detected drugs in their systems, Luthfie added.

Thousands of students have taken to the streets in the capital Jakarta to oppose both the fuel price hikes and to demand a halt to a multi-billion-dollar free meal scheme, touted by the government as a way to tackle child malnutrition.

Critics argue that programme, which has been partly suspended, is costly, mired in accusations of corruption and linked to mass food poisonings, after tens of thousands of people fell ill since it was launched.

Australia boosts shark-spotting drone coverage at Sydney beaches

AFP
Sydney

Australia will expand shark-spotting drone coverage year-round at beaches across Sydney and beyond from July 1, authorities said Sunday, following a rise in attacks and sightings.

The New South Wales state government said it would invest an additional Aus\$34mn (\$23mn) in drones, harnessing artificial intelligence and emerging technologies in a "major scale-up" of coverage.

The decision will boost investment in "shark mitigation" in the state to Aus\$120mn over the next two years, the government said in a statement.

"While no one can ever promise no shark interactions, this investment is about putting more eyes in the sky so we can spot sharks earlier and give people a clear heads-up when they're in the water," said the state's premier, Chris Minns.

"More drones in the air means we're getting a better picture of what's happening offshore and it means we'll get better at seeing them."

The enlarged drone monitoring deployment comes after a string of incidents in the state.

A local teacher swimming at Sydney's popular Coogee beach was mauled by a shark on June 13.

She was left in intensive care in hospital where her family says she has faced multiple surgeries including the amputation of her arm.

In the past week, sightings of a great white shark at Bondi Beach led to beach closures for three days in a row.

'More drones in the air means we are getting a better picture of what's happening offshore and it means we will get better at seeing them'

A 12-year-old boy died after he was bitten by a shark while playing in Sydney Harbour in January and a bull shark killed a woman swimming at a remote beach north of Sydney in November.

In other parts of the country, three divers were fatally mauled in separate incidents between May and June this year – two in Western Australia and the third in Queensland.

Under the expanded drone watch run by the state's lifesavers, about 70 beaches in New South Wales – including 38 in Sydney – will be monitored every day.

"Surf Life Saving NSW will prioritise beaches with high numbers of swimmers, surfers

and paddlers including in Sydney and the North Coast, where shark incidents have become more frequent," the state government said.

Drone flight hours will be extended from dawn to dusk, and coverage will include popular beaches that are not patrolled by lifesavers.

Australian scientists believe rising ocean temperatures are shifting sharks' migratory patterns, which may be contributing to an uptick in attacks.

There have been nearly 1,300 shark incidents around Australia since 1791, of which more than 260 resulted in death, according to a database of shark encounters with humans.

Australia has a multi-layered approach to protection against sharks, including old-fashioned nets which have come under criticism for trapping other marine species and their questionable effectiveness.

Lifeguards and drones can also spot the marine predators and alert beachgoers to the danger, often with a siren.

In New South Wales, sharks are lured by bait to "SMART drumlines" where they are then tagged with devices that can be detected when they swim past one of dozens of listening stations along the coast.

That sets off an alarm on a SharkSmart app, giving beachgoers an instant notification on their mobiles and smart watches.

Thai family mourns teenager found dead in suitcase; Australian arrested

Reuters
Bangkok

The family of a 17-year-old Thai girl whose body was found in a suitcase in Pattaya said they were devastated by her death, for which an Australian man has been arrested and charged with murder.

Thai police said they arrested an Australian man in his 40s at Bangkok's Suvarnabhumi airport early on Saturday in connection with the killing in Pattaya, about 150km (93 miles) east of Bangkok.

The suspect, identified as Simon Peter Carman, faces charges of murder, concealment of a body, moving or destroying a body, and taking a minor for sexual purposes.

Thai police said they reviewed CCTV footage that showed Carman entering a condominium with the girl, then leaving alone hours later carrying a suitcase.

In a post on its official Facebook page, police said he loaded the suitcase onto a motorcycle and rode to a grassy area near a railway line. Police later issued an arrest warrant and arrested Carman at



Police officers pose with Simon Peter Carman, an Australian man arrested in the suspected murder of a 17-year-old Thai girl in Pattaya, at Suvarnabhumi International Airport, in Samut Prakan, Thailand, on Saturday. (Reuters)

the airport as he prepared to board a flight back to Australia.

In an investigation room at the police station, Carman issued a message to the victim's family before being transferred to the Pattaya Provincial Court.

"I feel bad for what happened to your daughter. It was out of my control," he said.

The victim's father, Thongchai Donhomla, 46, said he was struggling to come to terms with the loss. "I am deeply saddened. My

daughter had no mother, so whenever she wanted anything, she would find a way herself, and she always helped me too," he said.

Her stepmother, Oradee Bussarakum, said she wanted the suspect to face the harshest punishment.

"I told the police I want him executed. As a (step)mother, I don't know what else to say ... I just want him to face the full consequences," she said.

Police have not said when Carman will first face the court.

Indonesia rights body urges end to military training in Prabowo cooperative project

Reuters
Jakarta

Indonesia's human rights commission yesterday called on the government to end basic military training for prospective managers of President Prabowo Subianto's flagship village cooperative programme after five participants died just 10 days into the 45-day training. Launched in July last year, the "Red and White Cooperatives" programme aims to establish around 80,000 village cooperatives across Indonesia

to create jobs and meet the government's target of 8% economic growth in 2029. They are intended to sell basic goods, subsidised cooking gas and fertiliser.

The military training, which nearly 35,000 future cooperative managers must complete, started on June 14 and continues until July 31 in several regional military training units. The agency "recommends the government stop... the basic military training for the prospective managers of the cooperatives and fishing villages programmes, considering that cooperatives are economic institutions

The agency "recommends the government stop... the basic military training, considering that cooperatives are economic institutions oriented in business management, services to members, and organisational governance"

oriented in business management, services to members, and organisational governance," said Pramono Ubaid Tantowi, an official at the rights commission. The defence ministry, which is leading the training, said on Saturday that five people died between June 17 and June 26, and the deaths were the result of a variety of causes in-

cluding cardiac arrest, heat stroke, tuberculosis and pneumonia.

"The five participants have different medical conditions and received medical treatment according to the standard procedures," said Major General Ketut Gede Wetan, head of human resource development at the ministry.

Ketut said all participants had

undergone medical checks before joining the training and all were declared clear.

He said the focus of the training was not on combat skills and involved no strenuous physical activity. The defence ministry said it would conduct a "comprehensive evaluation" of the training, which would include health monitoring, early detection of participants with health risks, and an adjustment to the intensity of the activities. The health ministry would also be involved in the training, it added. Pramono said capacity-building for cooperative manag-

ers should focus on strengthening managerial competence, leadership, and financial literacy.

"Basic military training does not directly support the achievement of those competencies," he said.

The commission called for a government investigation into the deaths and urged police to immediately request forensic autopsies to get evidence regarding the cause of death as part of any criminal investigation. Prabowo, a former general who took office in 2024, has expanded military roles in civilian affairs, including to his flagship programmes.

Europe swelters as heatwave moves east, excess deaths rise

AFP
Paris

Europe's deadly heatwave pushed east yesterday with hundreds of millions still sweltering across the continent despite fleeting relief from overnight storms, notably in France and Belgium.

The heat remained intense across central and eastern Europe, with the Czech Republic, Hungary and Poland hit hard as temperatures soared and records fell. At least 191mn Europeans were expected to face temperatures above 35C during the day, according to AFP estimates.

The World Health Organisation said it had recorded more than 1,300 excess deaths in Europe since June 21. Overall, some 381mn Europeans were set to see temperatures exceed 30C, according to analysis based on forecasts from the German Meteorological Service and population data.

This heatwave is the most severe ever recorded in Europe, and would have been "virtually impossible" in June without climate change, the World Weather At-



Police use water cannon to spray people with water as they arrive at the Olympic stadium for a concert of US singer Bruno Mars yesterday, in Berlin, as the German capital is expected to reach temperatures of around 40 degrees Celsius during a heatwave in Europe. (AFP)

tribution group of scientists said. All-time temperature records have been broken in Germany, Poland and the Czech Republic, as well as for the month of June in the UK and in Switzerland.

"Right now 150mn people are living under extreme heat, hundreds have died, schools are shut, grids are buckling," WHO chief Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus said on X.

Storms brought some respite overnight, particularly in France after several days of temperatures close to 40C. But they also caused damage, as a man died near Brussels when a tree fell on his car, local media reported.

In France, the highest-level heat alerts were expected to ease yesterday evening, although millions continued to endure sweltering conditions.



People queue to fill water bottles at a water dispenser, with the Arch of Constantine in the background outside the Colosseum, during a heatwave in Rome, yesterday. (Reuters)

Still marked by the 2003 heatwave — Europe's worst in centuries, which killed around 15,000 people — French authorities feared a rising death toll.

The country's national health agency said yesterday it had tallied around 1,000 more deaths than expected from June 24, and warned the figure was likely to increase further.

Many of those fatalities are among those aged 65 and over, it said.

But Health Minister Stephanie Rist said France would "probably" avoid a repeat of the devastating death toll during the 2003 heatwave, citing better preparation in care homes for the elderly.

Interior Minister Laurent Nunez rejected criticism over the response, insisting: "This is not a fiasco — we were prepared."

Temperatures soared above 40C in several countries yesterday

day as the heatwave shattered records across central and eastern Europe.

Poland recorded a new all-time high of 40.5C in the western town of Slubice, according to the national meteorological institute.

Germany set a new national high of 41.7C at Coschen, near the Polish border, surpassing a high set just a day earlier, while the Czech Republic also broke records for a second consecutive day, with 41.1C recorded in Doksany, north of Prague.

France's National Centre for Scientific Research (CNRS) said rising temperatures were clearly affecting marine life and biodiversity.

Speaking from a beach at Wimereux in northern France, CNRS research director Gregory Beaugrand told AFP the warming of the Channel was disrupting the food chain, as "fish that like cold waters are disappearing".

French palaeoclimatologist Jean Jouzel told the *Tribune* newspaper he feared political attention would quickly shift once the heatwave ends.

Urging people to heed scientific warnings, he said: "People are closing their eyes — but it is extremely serious."

No let-up on protests in Serbia despite Vucic pledge to resign

Reuters
Kraljevo, Serbia

Thousands of protesters descended on the Serbian city of Kraljevo yesterday, a day after President Aleksandar Vucic said he would be stepping down, paving the way for early presidential and parliamentary elections.

Vucic, who has been in power as prime minister or president for 12 years, has faced months of student-led protests sparked by the collapse of a concrete awning at a railway station in the northern city of Novi Sad in late 2024 that killed 16 people.

The incident has become a symbol for what many see as government mismanagement and corruption under Vucic, and the ensuing protests have been the largest in Serbia since the overthrow of Slobodan Milosevic in 2000. Vucic denies any corruption.

"This is not just a political struggle but a fight between good and evil," said Jelena Danicic, a Serbian language professor who met friends in the city centre before the rally.

People braved the heat as they arrived in Kraljevo where hawkers sold T-shirts saying "Students are winning".

What began as demands for justice for the dead later morphed into calls for the president to step



A drone picture shows people gathering for a protest, as part of a nationwide anti-government movement triggered by the deadly collapse of the Novi Sad railway station canopy in November 2024, following Serbian President Aleksandar Vucic's resignation announcement, in Kraljevo, yesterday. (Reuters)

down and early elections.

Although many protesters feel vindicated by Vucic's announcement, they do not expect him to disappear from the political scene. Analysts say he may try to run for prime minister and install an ally in the presidency so he can continue to wield power.

"I cannot imagine that he will step down and leave power to someone else," said Marko Djokic, a 41-year-old IT expert who

returned to his home city for the protests.

Serbia, which sits on the EU's eastern doorstep, is a candidate to join the bloc, but Belgrade still has strong ties with Russia and China, a line Vucic has had to walk carefully.

Before joining the EU, Serbia must improve its rule of law, including conditions for free and fair elections, and root out corruption and organised crime. It also has to

align its foreign policies with those of the bloc and establish relations with its former province Kosovo, which declared independence in 2008.

Brussels and Moscow will be watching to see how events play out in the coming weeks. The EU has condemned the use of force against peaceful protesters. It has also raised worries about press freedom and the independence of the judiciary.



Russian President Vladimir Putin chairs a meeting on securing fuel supplies for the domestic market in Moscow, yesterday. (Reuters)

Putin vows to ensure Russia's security

AFP
Moscow

Russian President Vladimir Putin yesterday vowed to ensure security and overcome challenges as Ukraine stepped up its retaliatory strikes inside Russia amid Moscow's four-year war.

Kyiv calls the attacks fair retribution for Russia's near-daily barrages on Ukrainian civilians and energy infrastructure since its February 2022 offensive.

"Yes, we see the problems, we are aware of them and are responding to them, but we will certainly ensure the security of both the country and our citizens, as well as the inviolability of Russia's borders," Putin said at the United Russia party congress.

"We will undoubtedly overcome all the challenges facing us today, including terrorist attacks on our territory and infrastructure facilities," he added.

Putin's speech came hours after a Ukrainian drone strike killed one person in Russia's southern Krasnodar region and sparked a fire in a refinery, according to regional governor Veniamin Kondratyev.

Kyiv claimed the hit, with Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky calling it a part of the "operations that weaken Russia's ability to wage this war".

"The Slaviansk oil refinery in the Krasnodar region was hit — about 300 kilometres from the frontline. We also reached a refinery in the Yaroslavl region, approximately 700 kilometres from our border," Zelensky said on X yesterday.

Last week, another Ukrainian attack caused a major fire at a refinery in the southeast of Moscow, shrouding the capital's suburbs in plumes of thick black smoke.

Russian-annexed Crimea on Friday declared an "emergency situation" in a bid to ease the fallout from increasing Ukrainian aerial attacks on the peninsula.

Skydiving plane crash kills 11 in France

AFP
Tomblaine

A skydiving plane crashed yesterday in eastern France, killing all 11 people on board, local authorities said, in the country's deadliest ever general aviation accident.

The crash in the town of Tomblaine killed five instructors, five students and the pilot, said Yves Seguy, the prefect of the Meurthe-et-Moselle department.

The students were a group of nurses, according to a source close to the case and confirmed by the head of Meurthe-et-Moselle's nursing council, Thierry Pechey.

"They were colleagues who had decided to go on a first skydiving jump, no doubt to unwind, as we're going through a difficult time with the heatwave," he said.

Mayor of the nearby city of Nancy, Mathieu Klein, said the victims "died in full view of their loved ones, who were preparing to film the tandem skydives".

Medical and psychological support teams were caring for relatives of the victims who were present, as well as other witnesses, according to local authorities.

The incident is "the most serious general aviation accident in terms of loss of life" excluding military and commercial aviation, according to France's BEA aviation safety agency.

The aircraft, registered in Germany, crashed in a grassy area near the runway of the Nancy-Essey aerodrome, close to a residential area and two roads, an AFP journalist reported.

"It's tragic, but it could have been even worse," said Klein, noting the plane crashed "just a few

metres from homes".

Tomblaine mayor Herve Feron said the plane fell "in a completely unexplained manner... during the ascent", describing it as crashing "straight down".

The aircraft had been "chartered for the occasion, for the skydiving weekend, as is regularly done", he added.

The cause of the incident was not immediately clear and a technical investigation had been opened, said Amaury Lacote, deputy public prosecutor in the eastern city of Nancy.

Police urged people on the social media platform X to "strictly avoid" the area around the airport to allow emergency services access.

French Interior Minister Laurent Nunez and Transport Minister Philippe Tabarot are expected to visit the scene of the accident later this afternoon.

Albania protesters keep up pressure over Trump-linked tourism project

AFP
Tirana

Thousands of Albanians took to the streets of Tirana again this weekend, demanding the prime minister's resignation and an end to a tourism project linked to US President Donald Trump's family.

Since late May, protesters have gathered every evening to oppose the construction of a luxury hotel backed by Trump's daughter Ivanka and her husband Jared Kushner, planned in a nature reserve on the Balkan nation's coast.

Opposition to the development has become a flash point for frustrations over perceived corruption, with protesters calling for Prime Minister Edi Rama to step down over what they describe as a lack of transparency in the development.

The planned resort in the protected natural area of Zvernec in southwestern Albania was first unveiled in 2024, but the wave of protests was sparked after barbed-wire fencing and bulldozers appeared on its beaches in late May.

On Saturday night, protesters carried giant pink flamingos through the crowd, alongside banners reading "Resign".

"Our demands are very clear", Luciana Kokaj, one of the organisers, told AFP.



This aerial photograph shows people demonstrating in front of the prime minister's office in Tirana against a planned resort linked to US president's family. (AFP)

No official figures have been released, but AFP journalists have seen at least several thousand people gathering each night in the city centre.

Their anger stems from "a lack of transparency, a lack of accountability and arrogance", according to lawyer Irena Dule, speaking at the protest.

At least 100 protesters have been charged since early June for blocking traffic, disturbing public order and organising or taking part in unauthorised protests.

"We are here to make our voices heard against this project", Dule said, adding they also oppose a law on protected areas, which "opens the door to other projects in other protected zones".

That February 2024 law, along with legislation on strategic investments, could allow the

Trump-linked project — already clouded by land ownership disputes — to go ahead.

Zvernec is home to more than 200 bird species, said Zydjon Vorpisi of environmental NGO PPNEA.

"Among them, the threatened Dalmatian pelican and flamingos, which breed in the Narta lagoon," he said.

But the protests go beyond environmental concerns.

Demonstrators are voicing anger at the rising cost of living, the health system, pensions and limited opportunities for young people, many of whom have left Albania in recent years.

Some members of the diaspora have returned to join the rallies, including Berlin-based biologist Zyrkyu Albanian, who said he was optimistic the "resistance" would continue.



A view of the small plane that crashed in Tomblaine, France, yesterday. (Reuters)



Qatar to the fore once more as Venezuela finds a helping hand

When the ground convulsed beneath Venezuela on the night of June 24, toppling buildings across Caracas and burying the port city of La Guaira under mountains of concrete, the calls for help travelled fast and far. Among the first to respond was a small Gulf state more than 12,000km away – a country with no colonial ties to Latin America, no strategic foothold to defend, and no expectation of return. Qatar simply moved, as it has moved so many times before, on the conviction that human suffering admits no borders.

The twin earthquakes, measuring 7.2 and 7.5 in magnitude and striking less than a minute apart, were among the most violent to hit Venezuela in over a century. The toll has been staggering: more than 1400 dead, over 3,360 injured, and tens of thousands still unaccounted for beneath the rubble.

Into that catastrophe Qatar dispatched not words alone, but the full machinery of a rapid humanitarian response – and it did so with a speed

that has become its quiet signature.

The sequence speaks for itself. On Thursday, as the scale of the disaster became clear, His Highness the Amir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani and Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman bin Jassim al-Thani each placed calls to Venezuela's Acting President Delcy Rodríguez, conveying Qatar's solidarity and its readiness to help. These were not ceremonial gestures. By Friday, a Qatari air bridge was already airborne, carrying relief from the Qatar Fund for Development. By Saturday, that aid had landed – food, medicines, medical essentials and advanced shelter materials – alongside the Qatari International Search and Rescue Group of the Internal Security Force (Lekhwiya), with its certified urban search and rescue specialists, field hospitals and the heavy technical equipment needed to reach those trapped under collapsed structures.

Three days from first contact to boots on the ground

in a country halfway around the world. That is not improvisation; it is the product of long preparation and a settled national instinct.

For Qatar, this is not a departure but a continuation. From the earthquakes that ravaged Turkiye and Syria to flood-stricken Pakistan, from Gaza to the Horn of Africa, Doha has built a reputation as a first responder to the world's emergencies – pairing financial generosity with logistical reach and, crucially, with the political neutrality that allows it to operate where others cannot.

The Venezuela mission carries that hallmark. It comes at a moment of acute diplomatic sensitivity around Caracas, yet Qatar's involvement is pegged to nothing but need. The suffering of a family in La Guaira is reason enough.

That principle – that aid should follow human need rather than political calculation – is easy to declare and hard to live by. Qatar has chosen to live by it. Its

rescue teams now work shoulder to shoulder with crews from Mexico, Chile, El Salvador and the United States, part of a global mobilisation in which Doha has taken its place not as a peripheral donor but as a serious operational partner.

The presence of trained Qatari rescuers, equipped to do the painstaking work of pulling survivors from the wreckage, matters as much as the relief flights that preceded them.

There is something instructive in all of this for a fractured world. As multilateralism frays and nations turn inward, Qatar continues to insist that compassion is not a luxury to be rationed but an obligation to be honoured – promptly, practically and without precondition. In the rubble of Caracas, that conviction has once again taken tangible form.

When the earth breaks somewhere, Qatar tends to be among those who answer. Venezuela is the latest reminder of why that reputation endures.

How the China-Iran railway outflanks American sea power

By Jasim Al-Azzawi



Overview

For decades, the United States has not needed to fire a single shot to keep China economically vulnerable. It has simply needed to be present at sea. The Strait of Malacca, barely 2.8 kilometres wide at its narrowest, is the jugular vein of the Chinese economy. Roughly 80% of China's oil imports transit this corridor each year, and the US Navy, with docking rights at Singapore's Changi Naval Base since 2019, serves as a permanent reminder that this lifeline could be severed at will.

That threat is now being answered with steel and concrete. A new overland freight railway linking China to Iran via Russia and Central Asia is more than an infrastructure project. It is a trade corridor immune to naval blockades, untethered from the US dollar, and beyond the reach of American financial sanctions. As Dr Wang Yiwei, Director of the Institute of International Affairs at Renmin University, has argued, "The Belt and Road is not a charity project. It is China rewriting the rules of connectivity, replacing Western maritime dominance with a continental logic that Washington cannot easily counter."

Part I: The chokepoint that built an empire

The Strait of Malacca funnels over 94,000 vessels annually, carrying roughly one-third of global trade and more than a quarter of the world's oil supply. For China, this dependence is existential. Chinese strategists call it the "Malacca Dilemma," a term first attributed to President Hu Jintao in 2003. The arithmetic is blunt: a US naval blockade in a Taiwan conflict scenario would devastate China's industrial economy within days. RAND Corporation analysts estimated that even a one-week closure could cost China \$64mn in direct losses, with manufacturing and energy supply chains compounding that damage rapidly thereafter.

Dr Michael Beckley of Tufts University has written that Washington's "network of bases, alliances, and chokepoint access gives the United States a structural advantage over China that no amount of Chinese naval buildup can easily replicate in the short term." China has tried to address this through its "String of Pearls" port relationships across Sri Lanka, Pakistan, and Myanmar, and by investing in the Lombok and Sunda straits as alternative routes. Neither approach solves the problem. The alternative straits add 1,500 kilometers to shipping distances, pass through waters where US allies maintain a strong presence, and lack the infrastructure to handle Malacca-level traffic volumes. Iranian analyst Dr Kayhan Barzegar, Director of the Institute for Middle East Strategic Studies in Tehran, puts it plainly: "American sanctions have taught Iran and China the same lesson at different times. Financial dominance and maritime dominance are two sides of the same coin. The country that controls the sea lanes controls the invoice."

Part II: The railway that changes the equation

The new freight corridor runs approximately 10,000 kilometres through Russia, Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan, and Iran, reaching Persian Gulf terminals at Bandar Abbas and Imam Khomeini

Port. Transit time for freight is 15 days, compared with the 40-day sea voyage from Chinese ports. The implications extend far beyond speed. Consider what this route is not:

- It passes through no maritime chokepoint that Western navies can patrol or close.
- It bypasses the US dollar entirely; Chinese-Iranian trade is increasingly settled in yuan and bilateral barter arrangements designed to circumvent SWIFT.
- It is insulated from diplomatic pressure by the Iran-China 25-year Comprehensive Strategic Partnership, signed in 2021 and valued at a reported \$400bn.

A 2023 Carnegie Endowment for International Peace report warned that "the expansion of non-dollar trade corridors between sanctioned economies represents one of the most significant long-term threats to the efficacy of US sanctions policy, potentially rendering the sanctions toolkit obsolete in precisely the contexts where Washington most wishes to use it. Dr Wang Yiwei sharpens the point: China's strategy is designed not to confront American power directly but to "render it irrelevant by building a parallel system in which American rules simply do not apply."

Part III: The larger architecture

This railway anchors a planned five-nation expansion integrating Pakistan, Turkey, and Azerbaijan into a single overland network from the Pacific to the Mediterranean. The Asian Development Bank projects the International North-South Transport Corridor (INSTC) to carry up to 30mn tonnes of freight annually, cutting logistics costs by up to 30% compared with current sea routes. In parallel, the Russian-Chinese Arctic corridor could reach 80mn tonnes, offering a genuine alternative to the Suez Canal. Dr Barzegar captures the combined logic: "Each corridor alone is a vulnerability. Together, they are redundant. And redundancy is the enemy of coercion."

Part IV: What Washington is missing

American strategic commentary has focused heavily on China's military buildup, its artificial islands, and its growing navy. These are legitimate concerns. But the overland connectivity strategy may prove more consequential because it is harder to counter with the tools that American power is built to use.

You cannot blockade a railway. You cannot sanction a barter arrangement that never touches a dollar-clearing bank. You cannot project carrier-group power into the Kazakh steppe. The China-Iran railway is doing what decades of Chinese naval investment have yet to achieve: making American maritime dominance beside the point for the trade flows that choose to use it.

Dr Beckley urges caution: "These corridors face enormous implementation challenges. Financing gaps, political instability along routes, and the inherent inefficiency of rail versus sea for bulk commodities mean that maritime dominance will remain decisive for decades. But the direction of travel is worth watching."

That is fair. But the direction of travel is already clear. Steel is being laid. Agreements are being signed. A world in which geography, rather than US naval presence, determines the rules of trade is being assembled, one railway tie at a time.

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



How is British royal family financed?

Reuters
London



Britain's King Charles reads cards and messages, sent by well-wishers following his cancer diagnosis, in the 18th Century Room of the Belgian Suite in Buckingham Palace, London, Britain, in February, 2024. (Reuters file photo)

King Charles has become the first British monarch to reveal how much tax he pays, providing the most detailed insight yet into royal finances.

The system of paying for the British monarch and the royal family is complicated, and has been developed over centuries. While the Windsors have said they want it to become more transparent, much still remains private. The king receives money in a number of ways to fund his official work as head of state, his personal expenditure and to cover the royal duties of his family.

The sovereign grant

Every year the king receives the 'Sovereign Grant', paid by the government to cover the official duties of the monarch and his family, to cover the cost of the upkeep of royal palaces, other residences and historic buildings, and for travel expenses. It does not provide personal income for the royal family.

The grant is calculated based on a percentage of profits from the Crown Estate, which is made up of massive tracts of land and most of Britain's sea bed. Legally, the estate belongs to the Crown but since 1760 the monarch has sacrificed its revenues in return for an annual payment, and it is now an independently run, commercial business.

The Sovereign Grant is currently set at 12% of its profits, which have soared in recent years due to offshore windfarm licences. In 2025/26 it was £132.1mn and will be £137.9mn in the current financial year.

From 2027 to 2032, the grant will be cut to £100 million a year, partly as money will no longer be required for the £369mn refurbishment of Buckingham Palace, and because Crown Estate profits are expected to fall as revenues from offshore wind leases drop.

The Duchy of Lancaster

Since 1399, the reigning monarch has received income from the Duchy of Lancaster, an estate of 41,910 acres including commercial properties in the centre of London and other cities. Its net assets in March 2026 were valued at £687.3mn. The sitting monarch cannot use any proceeds from sales of its land, but does receive the net revenue surplus. In 2025/26, this was £25.2mn. The money he receives is used to run his private homes and for the incomes of working royals who, while they receive an official residence at no cost in exchange for carrying out duties, are not allowed outside earnings. Currently, that list includes his sister Princess Anne, his younger brother Prince Edward and his wife, the Duke and Duchess of Gloucester, the Duke of Kent and Princess Alexandra. Officials say having such private income means the monarch is not subject to any political pressures or outside influence.

Charles' younger son Prince Harry and his brother Andrew Mountbatten-Windsor, while still members of the royal family, do not receive any public money as neither are working royals who carry out official duties.

Other private income

The king also has personal undisclosed assets and investments, and receives income from his own large estates, Balmoral Castle in Scotland and Sandringham in eastern England. The income he receives from these has not been made public.

The Duchy of Cornwall

Created in 1337, the Duchy of Cornwall provides income for the heir to the throne, currently Prince William, and his wife Kate. The estate comprises 128,151 acres, spread across England and Wales, with net assets of £1.2bn at the end of March 2026. William receives the net surplus revenue, which in 2025/26 was £21.55mn.

What tax do King Charles and the royals pay?

By law, the British monarch is not obliged to pay income, capital gains or inheritance tax. In 1993 Queen Elizabeth agreed to voluntarily pay income tax at a time when the monarchy's public standing had suffered after the "annus horribilis" when Charles formally separated from his first wife, the late Princess Diana, Andrew Mountbatten-Windsor split from his wife Sarah Ferguson, and Princess Anne divorced her first husband. The amount she paid was never disclosed. As heir, Charles had also voluntarily paid an undisclosed amount of tax. Revealing these amounts for the first time on Friday, royal officials said Charles had paid £12.9mn in 2024/25, £11.7mn in 2023/24, and more than £30mn in total since becoming king. This placed him in the top 100 taxpayers in the UK, they said. However, no breakdown of the tax calculation was provided. Likewise, William's office revealed the prince had paid £7.76mn in 2024/25, and £8.34mn in 2023/24. He had paid more than £20mn in tax since becoming the heir and Prince of Wales.



Ships are seen anchored in front of a refinery on Singapore's Bukom Island. About a quarter of the world's seaborne oil trade passes through the Malacca Strait, a choke point on the route between West Asia and the energy-hungry economies of East Asia. (Reuters file photo)

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Qatar experience offers model for safeguarding women in sport

By Shaima Sheriff
Staff Reporter

Qatar's labour-dispute model can help sport create safer spaces for women and girls to report discrimination, bullying and harassment, a Qatar Financial Centre (QFC) official has said in Doha this week.

Luigia Ingianni, commissioner of the QFC Employment Standards Office, said the experience of the QFC in creating an administrative dispute resolution centre could offer useful lessons for the sporting sector as efforts grow globally to safeguard women and girls.

Speaking on the sidelines of a discussion on women, girls and sport, she said the most important step was to ensure that athletes and participants have trust-

ed spaces where they can raise concerns without fear.

"We wanted to share our experience on the importance of creating a safe space for everyone, but in particular for women and girls, and also in the sports field," Ingianni said.

She stressed that such mechanisms should allow women and girls "to report concerns, to be listened to, to be heard and also to be protected".

Ingianni said the Employment Standards Office serves as the equivalent of a labour authority for the QFC legal platform.

The office, she noted, established its administrative dispute resolution centre 11 years ago to allow people to raise concerns in cases of injustice, legal violations or breaches of workplace policies.

According to Ingianni, Qatar has played a pioneering role in this area, with the QFC

mechanism standing out in the wider region.

"Qatar has been the pioneer in this because the Employment Standards Office has been established 11 years ago and so far is the only complaint mechanism established in the entire Mena (Middle East and North Africa) region that operates under the International Labour Organisation (ILO) standards," she said.

Ingianni added that the same principle of accessible and trusted reporting channels is needed in sport, where women and girls may face barriers to speaking out.

"We want to offer our insights to create also in the sports field this mechanism to make sure that women and girls who are in the sports field, the athletes, whether or not they have won a medal, feel safe to report discrimination, any forms of injustice and feel protected," she said.

The official said that safeguarding is not only about responding to complaints, but also about encouraging women and girls to remain active in sport and pursue their ambitions with confidence.

"This is truly important to make sure that women and girls remain in sport and feel safe," she said.

Ingianni expressed optimism, noting that women are increasingly present and successful across society and the economy.

"The number of women is increasing in all fields of our society and economy, and they are leading successfully at all levels," she said.

The official also pointed to growing international commitment, referring to a United Nations Human Rights Council resolution last year that emphasised the rights of women and girls in and through sport, including safeguards against dis-



Luigia Ingianni

crimination, bullying and harassment.

"I see the future very bright because the commitment is at the international level, at the national level, and Qatar has been great over these last two decades," Ingianni said.

She added that more women and girls now feel confident to challenge discrimination, saying: "They feel now confident to come forward and say no to discrimination. This is truly remarkable, and we need to keep the momentum."

One quote, one mural, countless stories

Qatari calligraphy and calligraffiti artist Fatima Alsharshani blends Arabic script with contemporary street art to connect cultures at Montreal's Mural Festival

By Joey Aguilar
Doha

A single sentence from celebrated Canadian author Margaret Atwood became the starting point for a conversation that now stretches across continents: "In the end, we all become stories."

For Qatari calligraphy and calligraffiti artist Fatima Alsharshani, Atwood's words were more than a literary quote.

They inspired a striking public mural unveiled at Montreal's Mural Festival, where Arabic calligraphy flows across a contemporary urban canvas to explore memory, identity and the traces people leave behind.

Presented as part of the Qatar Canada and Mexico 2026 Year of Culture, the mural brought a contemporary Qatari artistic voice to one of North America's most prominent public art festivals.

Every year, Montreal's Saint-Laurent Boulevard is transformed into an open-air gallery, drawing internationally renowned artists and thousands of visitors who experience public art beyond the walls of traditional museums.

Alsharshani told *Gulf Times* that Atwood's words resonated because they express a truth shared by everyone, regardless of language or culture.

"Margaret Atwood's words resonated with me because they capture something very universal," she said. "They are sim-

ple, but they carry the weight of an entire lifetime."

Alsharshani believes every individual leaves behind traces through the choices they make, the people they meet and the impact they have on others.

The quote, she pointed out, became an invitation to think about memory, legacy and what remains after a person's lifetime.

"We all leave behind traces of ourselves through the choices we make, the people we connect with, and the impact we have on others," Alsharshani explained. "The mural became a way to invite people to pause and think about the story they are creating."

Known for blending Arabic calligraphy with contemporary street art, Alsharshani approached the project as an opportunity to merge heritage with a modern artistic expression that engages audiences in public spaces.

"Arabic calligraphy has always been a meaningful artistic language for me because it carries both beauty and depth," she said. "The letters themselves have movement, rhythm and emotion."

Rather than presenting calligraphy solely as a traditional art form, Alsharshani sought to place it within a contemporary urban environment, where it could engage viewers who might never have encountered Arabic script before.

"In this mural, I wanted to bring together the heritage of Arabic calligraphy with the openness and accessibility of contem-



Fatima Alsharshani's mural brought a contemporary Qatari artistic voice to one of North America's most prominent public art festivals.

porary street art. Public art has the ability to reach people in unexpected ways," she said.

For Alsharshani, combining these artistic traditions was about more than aesthetics: it was about building connections across cultures through ideas that resonate universally.

"The goal was to use Arabic calligraphy and this universal message to bridge between cultures," she said. "The theme of stories and legacy is something universal, and I wanted the artwork to create a connection between my cultural background and the experiences shared by people everywhere."

Representing Qatar at Montreal's Mural Festival also carried special significance.

Alsharshani views Arabic calligraphy as a living art form that continues to evolve while remaining rooted in centuries of tradition.

While Arabic calligraphy has a long and rich history, she believes it continues to find new forms of expression in today's creative landscape.

"I see my work as part of that evolution - respecting the foundations of calligraphy while exploring how it can exist in new spaces and conversations," she said.

By bringing the artwork to Montreal, Alsharshani hopes audiences will see Ara-

bic calligraphy not only as an artistic tradition but also as a vibrant contemporary practice capable of speaking across cultures.

"Art creates opportunities for connection without needing translation," she said, adding: "Through this mural, I hope people can discover something from my culture while also finding their own personal connection to the themes of memory, identity and storytelling."

Ultimately, Alsharshani hopes the mural encourages quiet reflection rather than offering definitive answers.

"I hope people take a moment to reflect on their own journey and the stories they are creating. The mural is not meant to provide one answer, it is meant to encourage a personal reflection," the artist said.

Alsharshani believes legacy is often found not only in remarkable accomplishments but also in everyday acts of kindness, relationships and the influence people have on one another.

"If someone stands in front of this artwork and begins thinking about what they want their story to represent, then the mural has achieved its purpose. It becomes not just something to look at, but something to think about," she said.

Alsharshani's participation in the festival also marks the beginning of a new artistic exchange between Qatar and Canada.

The collaboration grew from a chance meeting in Doha in December 2025, when Mural Festival founder and LNDMRK lead Nicolas Munn Rico visited Qatar during the World Wide Walls street art festival.

Conversations between the two organisations evolved into a partnership focused on artist exchange, opening opportunities for creatives from both countries to engage with new audiences and communities.

CineMoon Ensemble brings orchestral music closer to community

By Joey Aguilar
Doha

The Qatar Philharmonic Orchestra (QPO)'s CineMoon Ensemble brought its blend of cinematic and classical music closer to the community on Friday, performing for hundreds of shoppers and visitors in its first-ever concert at a major shopping mall.

Merve Kenet-Bulun, founder and artistic director of CineMoon Ensemble, told *Gulf Times* that the inspiration behind the performance at Mall of Qatar (MoQ) was rooted in accessibility and connection.

"The inspiration was to bring the orchestra to everyone, from the youngest children to the oldest generations," she said. "It was about uniting with people who had never experienced a live orchestra and offering them, for the first time, the extraordinary colours, emotions, and magic that only a live orchestral performance can bring."

CineMoon's concert is part of the QPO ensembles' concert that day, which also includes the Brass and Mosaic Ensembles.

Under the direction of conductor Giovanni Pasini, the ensemble performed a carefully curated programme of iconic film scores and beloved television drama themes.

The repertoire was brought to life through original arrangements by Julia Korodi and Ajlan Akyüz, allowing familiar melodies to feel fresh and artistically distinctive.

The audience was treated to exceptional solo performances from Joris Laenen (trumpet, and narrator), co-founder and concertmaster of CineMoon Ensemble Lorena Manescu (violin), Zehra Özcelik (vocals, oud), Dr Shabnam Shikhaliyeva



The QPO's CineMoon Ensemble performing at the MoQ.

(qanun), and Simone Zancacchi (saxophone) - each musician delivering moments of sheer artistry that held the crowd in rapt attention.

Performing in a shopping mall required careful technical and logistical preparation.

"The ensemble adapted to the venue's acoustics, sound systems, and stage environment, alongside the challenge of transporting instruments and equipment into a public commercial space," said Kenet-Bulun.

As part of the QPO's flexible ensemble structure, CineMoon continues to engage with diverse audiences across different settings.

Kenet-Bulun noted the multicultural atmosphere of the event, where audiences from various backgrounds gathered in a shared experience of live music.

She added that the experience changes how audiences perceive music in daily life.

"They will start to hear music in everything around them, even in birdsong," Kenet-Bulun said. "And when they later hear a pop song, classical music or film score playing in the background, they will recall the impact of the live experience. The

melodies will feel familiar, yet they will listen with a deeper and more conscious awareness."

The performance became more than just a concert as shoppers, families, and children clapped, sang, and swayed to the music, turning it into a spontaneous celebration.

"The most rewarding moment came after the concert, when children lined up to take photos with us, gave us hugs, and told us how much they had enjoyed the performance," Kenet-Bulun said.

"Those moments reminded us why projects like this are so important," she continued, adding: "We hope we sparked a curiosity and appreciation for orchestral music in those young minds and created a memory that will inspire them for years to come."

The QPO and the CineMoon Ensemble plan to expand their community outreach, with upcoming performances slated for schools, unique public venues, and a return to the historic atmosphere of the Museum of Islamic Art.

Furthermore, the ensemble is currently developing a new initiative focusing on audiences along the Silk Road, in collaboration with its co-founder, Lorena Manescu.

QU team secures 3rd place globally at SimUniversity Competition in France

Qatar University (QU)'s healthcare simulation team (Qatar SimTeam) achieved an international milestone by securing third place worldwide in the SimUniversity Competition, held as part of the Annual Meeting of the Society for Simulation in Europe (SESAM 2026) in Lyon, France.

The competition brought together outstanding healthcare student teams from around the world.

The QU team was the only one in the competition representing three healthcare disciplines - medicine, nursing, and pharmacy - demonstrating the value of interprofessional education in preparing students for collaborative clinical practice.

Team supervisor and section head of the Simulation Lab at the QU's Health Sector, Dr Moustafa al-Hariri, said that the six-month preparation period witnessed remarkable growth in the students' performance, transforming them from individuals with discipline-specific expertise into a fully integrated interprofessional team capable of diagnosing patients, developing comprehensive treatment plans, and implementing them with precision and coordination.

"These students are living proof that teamwork turns aspirations into reality and that investing in young talent is the most effective way to build a strong and integrated healthcare system," he said.

Team member Mohammad Abu Hweileh, a graduate of the QU's College of Medicine, said: "The intensive preparation period played a pivotal role in this achievement, as our structured teamwork significantly enhanced our readiness to manage complex clinical scenarios."

He added that the competition also enabled the team to strengthen leadership skills, improve its ability to work toward shared objectives efficiently, and exchange knowledge with students from leading academic institutions worldwide.

College of Medicine student Mohammed al-Kuwari noted that participating in the competition allowed him to conduct comprehensive clinical assessments and primary patient surveys while contributing to diagnostic discussions and therapeutic decision-making.

He said that working in a realistic clinical simulation environment strengthened his analytical thinking and medical communication skills while underscoring the importance of effective teamwork in achieving optimal patient outcomes.

Ahmed al-Shammari, a student at the QU's College of Nursing, said the competition provided an opportunity to apply nursing skills in realistic clinical simulation scenarios while strengthening teamwork and patient care.

Hamad al-Dosari, a student at the QU's College of Pharmacy, highlighted the role of pharmaceutical expertise in supporting clinical decision-making and medication safety throughout the competition.

Al-Shammari and al-Dosari expressed pride in representing their respective disciplines as the only nursing and pharmacy students among all participating teams. - QNA

Journalism Magazine marks decade of knowledge, innovation

By Tawfik Lamari
Staff Reporter

Marking the 10th anniversary of its launch, the Al Jazeera Media Institute has published the 41st issue of *Journalism Magazine*, celebrating a decade of advancing Arab media scholarship and fostering dialogue between academic research and professional practice.

Over the past 10 years, the publication has evolved into one of the Arab world's leading platforms for critical reflection on journalism, documenting the profession's rapid transformation while addressing pressing intellectual and ethical questions.

Al Jazeera Media Institute director Iman al-Ameri described the magazine as a unique model that bridges academic rigour with newsroom experience.



Cover page of the 41st Issue.

She noted that more than 1,200 writers, researchers, and media professionals from around the world have contributed to its pages, while its digital platform now reaches an audience of over half a million readers.

In an essay titled *In the Beginning Was the Question*, the magazine's

founder and director of Al Jazeera 360, Montaser Marai, reflects on the publication's origins, explaining that it was conceived to fill a longstanding gap in Arab media by creating a space where journalism could be examined not only as a profession but also as a field of knowledge.

The project, he argues, has helped transform practical newsroom expertise into an enduring intellectual resource that extends well beyond the daily news cycle.

The editorial board traces the magazine's evolution since its launch in 2016, highlighting its transformation from a publication documenting journalistic experiences into a comprehensive knowledge platform connecting newsrooms, universities, and research institutions.

Editor-in-chief Hossam Wahba emphasises that the magazine has steadily expanded its editorial vision,

moving beyond professional practice to engage with broader critical, ethical, and technological debates, reinforcing its standing as a leading Arabic reference on journalism and media studies.

The anniversary issue features a special section, "Documentary Film: A Critical Perspective", offering in-depth analyses of contemporary documentary storytelling, from questions of reality and interpretation to the rise of short-form documentaries on digital platforms and documentary drama as an alternative narrative form.

The issue also examines media coverage of wars and post-conflict recovery in Gaza, the future of newsrooms in the age of artificial intelligence (AI), career development in television journalism, and the evolving landscapes of Syrian and Moroccan journalism.

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Americana Chicken Family Nuggets 750 Gm+250gm x 1 pc



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Coca Cola 2.25 Ltr Pet x 2 pcs



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كويكر شوفان ابيض ٥٠٠ جم x ٢ حبة
Quaker White Oats 500gm x 2 pcs



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علبة حليب مجفف سينار ١.٨ كجم x ا حبة
Cinar Milk Powder Tin 1.8 kg x 1 pc



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ليبتون شاي ١٠٠ كيس x ا عبوة
Lipton Yellow Tea Bag 100's x 1 pkt



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Mom's Choice Peanut Butter Asrtd. 1 kg x 1 pc



QR 15

روبال كينج ارز بسمتي طويل الحبة ٤ كجم x ا حبة
Royal King Xxl Long Grain Basmati Rice 4 kg x 1 pc



QR 25

امبير زيت دوار الشمس ١.٥ لتر x ٢ حبة
Amber Sunflower Oil 1.5 Ltr x 2 pcs



QR 30

لوز سادة (٢٧/٣٠) ٩٠٠ جم
Almond Plain 27/30 900 gm



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جبنة رومي ٤٠٠ جم
Roumy Cheese 400 gm



QR 10

كولجيت معجون اسنان ٧٥ مل x ٤ حبة
Colgate Tooth Paste Grf 75 ml x 4 pcs



QR 10

لوكس صابون ١٢٠ جم x ٦ حبة
Lux Soap 120 gm Asrtd. x 6 pcs



QR 25

شاين ماكس مجفف الملابس ٢ متر
Shine Max Cloth Dryer 20mtr



QR 25

كينتسين ميد مقلاة غير لاصقة ٢ حبة
Kitchenmaid Nonstick Fry Pan Set 2pcs



QR 30

طقم نسائي مشكل
Ladies Cord Set Asrtd.



QR 30

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Multi Purpose Water Gun Asrtd



QR 30

مكواة بخار فينفرث ١٤٠٠ مل - ١٢٠٠ واط، طلاء سيراميك مزيج الطبقات، متعددة الألوان
Ververth Steam Iron 140ml-1200w 2 Layer Ceramic Coating Multi Color



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