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## 6th Qatar-US Strategic Dialogue marks new milestones in ties

**QNA**  
Washington

The text of the following statement was released by the Governments of the State of Qatar and the US of America on the occasion of the 6th Qatar-US Strategic Dialogue.

The joint statement reads as follows: HE the Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Mohamed bin Abdulrahman bin Jassim al-Thani and Secretary of State of the US of America Antony Blinken led the 6th Qatar-US Strategic Dialogue on March 5, 2024, in Washington, DC.

The topics at this year's Dialogue highlighted the breadth and depth of the 50-year Qatar-US relationship, from economic and security co-operation to emerging technology and fostering connections among cities and communities between both countries.

Qatar and the US announced several new milestones, includ-



HE the Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Mohamed bin Abdulrahman bin Jassim al-Thani and US Secretary of State Antony Blinken led the dialogue on March 5, in Washington, DC.

ing an amendment to the bilateral Defence Co-operation Agreement, a Memorandum of Co-operation on biometric data-

sharing to enhance law enforcement and counterterrorism co-operation, and a Memorandum of Understanding to open the first "American Corner" in Qatar since 2014.

A special session dedicated to the FIFA Men's World Cup centred on event organisation, legacy, and security at the 2022 tournament in Doha - marking the passing of the baton from Qatar to North America ahead of the 2026 World Cup.

**Global Co-operation**

Qatar and US officials discussed key priorities, including Venezuela, Gaza, Afghanistan, global humanitarian assistance and development, the Horn of Africa, Yemen, and Ukraine.

Secretary Blinken expressed his deep appreciation for Qatar's continued leadership in the region, including important mediation efforts to facilitate humanitarian assistance to civilians in Gaza and secure the release of hostages, including US citizens, held by Hamas.

US and Qatari officials also discussed challenges in Afghanistan

and the extraordinary teamwork between the two countries on the relocation to the US, through Qatar, of thousands of eligible individuals from Afghanistan.

A new US-Qatar Agreement in Temporary Hosting of Individuals at Risk Due to the Situation in Afghanistan, announced during the Dialogue, is already enhancing America's ability to process Afghanistan relocations through Qatar. The US expressed gratitude for Qatar's continued support on the protection of US interests in Afghanistan.

Qatar and the US shared concerns about instability in the Horn of Africa and the worsening humanitarian situation and continued fighting in Sudan. Both sides underscored their commitment to promoting a negotiated political settlement to the Yemen conflict, while condemning unlawful and destabilising attacks on commercial shipping in the Red Sea. On Lebanon, the two sides underscored the need to press Lebanon's leaders to end the presidential impasse and implement economic reforms. **To Page 12**

## PM, UK FM discuss Gaza truce



HE the Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Mohamed bin Abdulrahman bin Jassim al-Thani met in London yesterday with UK Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs David Cameron. The meeting discussed the two countries' co-operation relations and ways to support and develop them. They also discussed the latest developments in the Gaza Strip and the occupied Palestinian territories; the efforts for reaching an immediate ceasefire; protecting civilians; and ensuring continued and unhindered flow of humanitarian aid to those trapped in Gaza. **(QNA)**

## Noted Kuwaiti entrepreneur and author Mohamed al-Sharekh passes away

Renowned Kuwaiti entrepreneur and author Mohamed al-Sharekh passed away yesterday. He was 82. Al-Sharekh, a multi-talented personality, had made various key achievements throughout his career, in particular in technology and computer software. He excelled in more than one area, showcasing a diverse range of abilities. He was a visionary whose innovative ideas and dedication inspired many.

Al-Sharekh was the founder and chairman of the board of directors of Sakhr Software Company (established 1982), which was the first to introduce the Arabic language Operating System into computers. It was accompanied by a suite of translation programmes, including the Holy Qur'an and Hadith books, translated into English. The company developed a new generation of Arabic Natural Language Processing (NLP) techniques that were used in the development of automated morphology and automatic Diacritizer which took over 10 years for completion. Further, the company obtained three patents from the United States Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO) in the field of Arabic language for automatic pronunciation and automatic translation. Besides, Al-Sharekh established the "Book in Newspaper" project in 1997 in collaboration with Unesco. He was one of the contributors to the "Center for Arab Unity Studies"



Mohamed al-Sharekh

and the "Arab Organisation for Translation." He was also one of the contributors to the establishment of the "Arab World Institute" in Paris. In 2016, he started his major project "Al-Sharekh Archive" for Arabic literary and cultural magazines, making them available on the Internet. Al-Sharekh served as a Deputy Director General for the Kuwait Fund for Arab Economic Development from 1969 to 1973, and as representative of Kuwait and Arab Group of the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (I.B.R.D), Washington, DC from 1973 to 1975 and co-founded and chaired the Board of Directors of the Industrial Bank of Kuwait, among other key positions. In 1968, Al-Sharekh published his first story titled *Qais and Layla*. He also has three published collections of short stories, and a novel titled *The Family*, published in 2018, among other works.

## Trump, Biden head towards rematch



This combination of pictures shows Trump and Biden.

Donald Trump and President Joe Biden finally kicked off their bitter White House rematch yesterday as the Republican's final rival Nikki Haley threw in the towel after a crushing defeat in the "Super Tuesday" primaries. Within seconds of Haley's withdrawal Biden, 81, and former president Trump, 77, began competing for her moderate supporters in a contest between two elderly men that many American voters say they don't want.

Declining to endorse Trump, who faces multiple criminal indictments and a scandal over his attempt to overthrow the 2020 election, Haley said he would have to earn the support of her followers.

"I congratulate him and wish him well," Haley, 52, said of Trump in her home state of South Carolina, adding however that the United States "must turn away from the darkness of hatred and division." Haley's withdrawal clears the stage for a one-of-a-kind election on November 5 where the stakes for a turbulent global order could not be higher - but whose key players have failed to enthrone many Americans.

Biden swept his Democratic "Super Tuesday" primaries but must now gear up for Thursday's State of the Union address, a defining moment as the unpopular 81-year-old seeks to allay voter concerns over his age, the economy and the war in Gaza. Trump proclaimed that he had "TRUNCED" Haley, and invited her supporters to "join the greatest movement in the history of our nation." Biden hailed her courage for telling the "truth about Trump" and said there was a place for her voters in his campaign.

"You don't have to agree with me on everything to know MAGA extremism is a threat to this country," Biden said on X. **Page 11**

## Gaza ceasefire talks deadlocked

**Reuters**  
Cairo/Rafah

Talks on a ceasefire and hostage exchange between Israel and the Palestinian resistance movement Hamas were deadlocked yesterday, as the humanitarian crisis in Gaza prompted growing Western concern and a Houthi attack on a ship in the Gulf of Aden killed at least two people.

Negotiators from the Palestinian group, Qatar and Egypt - but not Israel - are trying to secure a 40-day ceasefire in time for the Muslim fasting month of Ramadan, which begins early next week.

The United States is worried that the Gaza conflict could spread in the Middle East, especially after a series of attacks on vessels in the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden by Iran-aligned Houthi forces acting in solidarity with the Palestinians.

In the latest attack, at least two sailors were killed in a Houthi attack on a freighter, the first deaths reported since the Yemeni group began the strikes against shipping in one of the world's busiest sea lanes.



A Palestinian street vendor sells traditional "fanous" lanterns, in Rafah town.

Health officials in Gaza said the number of people confirmed killed in Israel's offensive had now passed 30,700.

Hamas pledged to continue to take part in the Cairo talks, but officials in the group said a ceasefire must be in place before hostages are freed, Israeli forces must leave Gaza and all Gazans must be able to return to homes they have fled.

## Dimdex 2024 concludes on a high note

Chairman of the Organising Committee of the Doha International Maritime Defence Exhibition and Conference (Dimdex 2024), Staff Brigadier (Sea) Abdulbaqi Saleh al-Ansari emphasised that the 8th edition of Dimdex 2024 was the most successful since its inception in 2008 at all levels, in terms of the number of signed deals, visiting delegations, space and the number of visitors and exhibitors.

Following the conclusion of Dimdex 2024 held at the Qatar National Convention Centre, al-Ansari said that the three-day exhibition garnered a substantial number of visitors, high-level delegations, high-ranking officials, and culminated in the signing of deals, whether they were contracts, agreements, or memorandums of understanding.

Over 90% of the exhibitors showed interest in participating in the upcoming 9th edition of Dimdex, underscoring the superb organisational attitude, the quality of offered services and facilities, al-Ansari highlighted. He pointed out that this milestone

## Defence minister meets UAE Chief of Staff



HE the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of State for Defence Affairs Dr Khalid bin Mohamed al-Attiyah met with Chief of Staff of the Armed Forces in the United Arab Emirates, Lieutenant General Issa bin Ablan al-Mazrouei, and his accompanying delegation, during his participation in the 8th edition Dimdex 2024. They discussed ways to strengthen co-operation. Several high-ranking officials from the two sides attended the meeting. **(QNA)**

was a motivation to exert further efforts to cover other aspects that concern exhibitors. He said that they will be announced once the international agenda of similar exhibitions is carefully reviewed to avoid overlapping, affirming that the coming events will be diverse and include other branches to ensure maintaining the identity

of Dimdex as an event exclusively related to maritime security.

Several companies signed contracts for their participation in the 2026 edition to ensure that they had reserved their designated spaces, after all spaces in the 2024 edition were reserved a month before

its launch, prompting an exponential number of participating firms this year to reserve their spaces and pavilions, al-Ansari confirmed.

He pointed out that there is an intention to increase the number of firms by considering the available spaces and the centre's capacity, adding that the organising

committee was committed to increasing the number of exhibitors to figure out the negative points or feedback to be avoided in the future, but all companies underscored the high organisational skills, he underlined.

The Chairman of the Organising Committee stressed that the event is one of the most professional exhibitions in the world, in terms of the organisational level and services afforded to exhibitors, pointing out that the organising committee had launched an electronic application on cell phones that included details that broadly benefited the visitors, delegations and firms through which appointment requests could be handled between company officials, visitors and delegations.

He noted that during the first three days of the event, the application, in question, was downloaded more than 1,000 times, as the exhibition had been keen to be electronic, specially that it is specialised in military technology and must keep up with the breakthroughs and sustainability, the mantra it advocates for.

# Cabinet okays new draft law for persons with special needs

HE the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of State for Defence Affairs Dr Khalid bin Mohamed al-Attiyah chaired the Cabinet's weekly meeting held at the Amiri Diwan on Wednesday.

After the meeting, HE the Minister of Justice and Minister of State for Cabinet Affairs Ibrahim bin Ali al-Mohannadi issued the following statement: The Cabinet considered the topics on its agenda as follows: First, the Cabinet approved a draft law on people with disabilities, and decided to refer it to the Shura Council.

The draft law is prepared to replace Law No 2 of 2004 on people with special needs.

Objectives of the draft law include ensuring full and effective participation of persons with disabilities in the society, enabling them to exercise all human rights and fundamental freedoms on an equal basis with others, prohibiting discrimination on the basis of or because of disability, achieving equal opportunities between persons with disabilities and others, ensuring their inclusion in the society and in various areas of life,

## The draft law is prepared to replace Law No 2 of 2004 for people with disabilities

ensuring the promotion of dignity and autonomy of persons with disabilities; and ensuring and respecting the rights of children with disabilities, preserving their identity, developing their capabilities and skills, and enhancing their integration and participation in society.

Second, the Cabinet approved the Makkah Al-Mukarramah Convention of Member States of the Organisation of Islamic Co-operation on Anti-Corruption Law Enforcement Co-operation.

Third, the Cabinet approved: 1- Draft agreement for co-operation in the field of emergency situations between the governments of Qatar and Armenia.

2- Draft memorandum of understanding (MoU) on co-operation in the field of veterinary quarantine, and the import and export of live animals and birds free of epidemic and infectious diseases between the Ministry of Municipality of the State of Qatar

and the National Sanitary Veterinary and Food Safety Authority in Romania.

Fourth, the Cabinet reviewed the following topics and took appropriate decisions thereon: 1- Annual report on the results of the work of the Permanent Population Committee for 2023.

2- Report (57) on the results of the work of the National Committee for the Prohibition of Weapons during the period from 1/9 to 31/12/2023.

3- Report on the results of the participation Qatar's delegation, headed by HE the Minister of Commerce and Industry, in the activities of the Qatar-Kazakhstan Business Roundtable.

4- Report on the results of the participation of Qatar's delegation, headed by HE the Minister of Municipality, in the Global Forum for Food and Agriculture, and the 16th Conference of Agriculture Ministers. (QNA)

## Deputy PM in Dimdex meetings



HE the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of State for Defence Affairs Dr Khalid bin Mohamed al-Attiyah met separately with Chairman of Italy's Iveco Defence Vehicles Alessandro Nasi, CEO of Kongsberg Group Geir Haoy, President of Chinese company Cpmiec Li Jinan, CEO of SpinLaunch Jonathan Yani, President of Tubitak Bilgem Ali Gorcin, President and Chief Executive Officer of Italy's Fincantieri Marine Group Dario Deste, CEO and COO of Elettronica S.p.A. Domitilla Benign, during their participation in the activities of the 8th Doha International Maritime Defence Exhibition and Conference (Dimdex 2024). The meetings discussed matters of mutual interest and ways to enhance and develop co-operation.

HE the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of State for Defence Affairs Dr Khalid bin Mohamed al-Attiyah met with Commander of the Royal Brunei Armed Forces Major General Dato Paduka Seri Haji Mohamed and his accompanying delegation. The meeting discussed topics of mutual interest as well as co-operation relations between the two countries and ways to strengthen and develop them. President of the International Military Co-operation Authority Brigadier-General Abdulaziz Saleh al-Sulaiti and a number of senior officials from both sides attended the meeting. (QNA)



Dr Yousef Alhorr (right) briefs about Gord 3D at Dimdex 2024.

## Gord unveils cutting-edge additive manufacturing centre at Dimdex

The Gulf Organisation for Research and Development (Gord) has launched its new Centre of Excellence, Gord 3D at the Doha International Maritime Defence Exhibition and Conference (Dimdex) 2024, which concluded yesterday.

With this launch, Gord 3D has emerged among the region's leading additive manufacturing facilities, equipped with highly sophisticated prototyping and 3D printing technologies, a statement said.

During the three-day event, experts representing Gord 3D presented a range of printers equipped with advanced 3D printing tech-

nologies, capable of working with various materials such as metal, polymers, and composites.

The team also showcased a collection of 3D printed objects, offering visitors an opportunity to explore and observe the final products, catering to the needs of diverse sectors including oil and gas, aerospace, medical, construction, military and defence, automotive and food production, etc.

Dr Yousef Alhorr, founding chairman of Gord, said: "Additive manufacturing through 3D printing has the power to transform industries, and our presence at Dimdex 2024 highlights Gord 3D's

forward-looking solutions that can help various industries in embracing a climate-resilient future. By creating 3D printed prototypes and critical spare parts catering to the needs of diverse sectors, including military and defence, we can help organisations not only reduce waste but also revolutionise their production processes." Gord 3D's suite of services encompasses 3D scanning, reverse engineering, CAD modelling, 3D metals, polymers and composites printing, and digital inventory, all underpinned by rigorous quality control measures. Gord 3D fabricates high-fidelity prototypes with unparalleled precision with

advanced additive manufacturing technologies such as bound metal deposition, metal powder bed fusion, selective laser sintering, filament fabrication, fused deposition modelling and extrusion deposition modelling 3D printing technology using large format robotic arm.

Gord 3D is poised to play a crucial role in promoting eco-friendly manufacturing practices. "Our vision is to lead the way in sustainable manufacturing," said Dr Alhorr. "Through continuous innovation and collaboration, we aim to create a more resilient and environmentally friendly manufacturing ecosystem."

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## Qatar Airways showcases world's first AI virtual digital human cabin crew at ITB Berlin 2024

Qatar Airways has broken new ground at ITB Berlin 2024 with the successful launch of its holographic virtual cabin crew - 'Sama 2.0'.

Qatar's national carrier is the world's first airline to develop the Artificial Intelligence powered digital human cabin crew to assist its passengers in designing curated travel experiences.

Sama, meaning 'sky' in Arabic, has taken centre stage at the new Qatar Airways stand during ITB Berlin. The biggest travel and tourism trade event saw the revolutionary showcase of Sama, who continues to interact with both visitors and media alike.

Enabled by industry-leading conversational AI, she will continue to learn and develop over time to improve responses through passenger interactions.

Sama 2.0 is ready to answer questions in real time such as Qatar Airways FAQs, destinations, support tips and more, and will be accessible through QVerse, Qatar Airways' immersive digital platform, as well as through the Qatar Airways app.

Sama is developed by Qatar Airways in partnership with UneeQ, a leader in AI digital human technology. This collaboration between Qatar Airways and UneeQ harnesses UneeQ's innova-



tive platform to enhance the digital travel experience and sets new standards in the aviation industry.

The one-of-a-kind cabin crew is also poised to create benchmarks for personalised and functional service interactions in air travel.

Qatar Airways vice-president (Marketing) Babar Rahman said: "Sama 2.0 represents our relentless pursuit of innovation, and embodies Qatar Airways' values of exceptional service and hospitality. This is a monumental point in spearheading the successful synergy between technology and human connection - not only for Qatar Airways, but also for the industry at large. Qatar Airways affirms its commitment to leading and collaborating with innovation experts to create pioneering products and services for its customers."

UneeQ chief executive officer Danny Tomsett said: "Sama embodies UneeQ's commitment to blending technology with empathy and personalisation, providing an innovative solution that aligns with Qatar Airways' reputation for world-class service. She's a testament to the endless possibilities of AI, capable of delivering personalised and engaging interactions that mirror human conversation."

Qatar Airways recently unveiled its Generative AI experience for hassle-free and personalised travel planning at the Web Summit Qatar.

The experience utilises comprehensive visual interactions and an interactive 3D map to understand customers' travel preferences, thereby eliminating the need for manual searches.

### Awareness exhibition to mark GCC Traffic Week

The Ministry of Interior (MoI), represented by the General Directorate of Traffic (GDT), inaugurated the awareness exhibition organised to mark the 36th GCC Traffic Week under the theme: "No Phone While Driving".

Opened by Director General of Traffic Maj Gen Abdulaziz bin Jassim al-Thani, in the presence of a host of directors and officers of MoI departments and the Internal Security Force (Lekhwiya), the four-day exhibition primarily aims to promote the awareness of all community segments, especially young individuals. To mark this occasion, Maj Gen Abdulaziz bin Jassim al-Thani underscored the significance of the Gulf traffic week in engaging with all road users with the aim of increasing their awareness on the importance of safe driving.

He pointed out that the traffic week will spotlight the dangers from using mobile phone while driving,



stressing that this erratic traffic behaviour is one of the major causes of traffic accidents that beset traffic systems not only in the region, but in the entire world. (QNA)



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## PHCC Wellness Centre launches Ramadan health awareness drive

The Wellness Centre at Rawdat Al Khail Health Centre has conducted an awareness event for gym instructors and health coaches to provide guidance on identifying possible ways of continuing their usual exercise programme, healthy eating, sleep, and self-care during Ramadan.

Dr Sarah Rashid Musa, wellness in-charge at Rawdat Al Khail Health Centre and consultant community medicine, stated: "Fasting can have effect on different variables including nutrition, hydration, and sleep patterns. It also reduces alertness, motivation, physical and psychomotor performance, therefore it is important to plan a holistic approach to meet the need for each individual including biological, psychological, cognitive and behavioural and not be "one-size-fits-it".

Patients were made aware of the importance of maintaining their physical activity during Ramadan to enhance their weight control, physical and muscular fitness, mental health, help to control medical conditions and increase energy level. Gym instructors explained the precautions to be taken while practicing physical activities during the month of Ramadan.



Dr Sarah Rashid Musa

"One of the biggest challenges of fasting is staying hydrated," Dr Sarah added. "It is essential to drink plenty of water before sunrise and keep your body hydrated, avoid sugary drinks like sodas and energy drinks. Getting enough sleep is also essential to help the body recharge and recover aiming for 7-8 hours of sleep per night and try to go to bed early to maintain the sleep cycle."

"To help improve quality of sleep, avoid caffeine and other stimulants before bedtime. Also to consider naps and schedule times to rest to avoid fatigue."

## Awareness lecture on community policing



The Community Police Department at the Ministry of Interior (MoI) yesterday organised an awareness lecture on the concept of community policing. The department director Brig Dr Ibrahim Mohamed al-Sameeh covered a number of topics at the event attended by members of the Airport Passports Department, Airport Security Department and Public Transportation Security Department. The topics included the concept of community policing, the systems of community policing in Islamic civilisation, the strategy of the Community Police Department and its objectives and implementation requirements. The lecture emphasised on the role of community policing in serving the community, enhancing relationships with individuals and institutions and promoting a culture of crime prevention, reducing its spread and raising the level of public security and tranquillity. The lecture also reviewed the responsibilities of the Community Police Department, in addition to providing various tips and guidance on etiquette and skills for professional interaction with the public.

# HIBA, HMC honour 93 organ donors, families

QNA  
Doha

The Qatar Organ Donation Center (HIBA) and Hamad Medical Corp (HMC) honoured 93 organ donors and their families, in the presence of HE the Minister of Public Health (MoPH) Dr Hanan Mohamed al-Kuwari.

During the ceremony, which marked another successful year for Qatar's Organ Transplant and Organ Donation Programmes, 52 living kidney donors, 2 liver donors, and 17 bone marrow donors were honoured. The event also honoured the families of 22 deceased donors whose selfless donations were able to support 42 transplant operations, including 30 kidneys, nine liver and three lung transplants, HMC said in a statement yesterday.

At the event, the Medal of Altruism was presented to living donors and the families of deceased donors. The event also saw acknowledgement of Qatari kidney transplant recipients who chose to have their transplant surgery in Qatar rather than going abroad for treatment. To mark this occasion, HMC's Chief Medical Officer Dr Abdalla al-Ansari said the organisation has worked tirelessly with the Qatar Center for Organ Transplantation to implement the tenets of the Doha Donation Accord, pointing out that the people of Qatar, both citizens and residents, continue to show their support for Qatar's unique, world-class, and equitable organ donation and transplant programmes.

Al-Ansari thanked them for their unwavering support, adding that he was proud of this tremendous accomplishment. He thanked all colleagues at HMC and cadres in all transplant and organ donation programmes for their tireless efforts and dedication to their ongoing work. For his part, Director, Qatar Organ Donation Center, and member of the World Health Organisation Expert Group Dr Riyadh Fadhil said the nation's organ donor registry surpassed 530,000



During the ceremony, 52 living kidney donors, 2 liver donors, and 17 bone marrow donors were felicitated.



registered donors, representing around 25% of Qatar's adult population.

There are more than 131 nationalities represented in the registry that reflected positively on the rate of organ donation among all nationalities, which is a unique achievement especially considering the registry was only established 10 years ago," added Dr Fadhil.

He added that respect for human rights, autonomy and equity made Qatar a model of ethical and best clinical practice that is much-admired by the international transplant community. Deputy Chief Medical Officer for Clinical Affairs and Director of Qatar Center for Organ Transplantation Dr Yousuf al-Maslama emphasised that Qatar's organ transplant programme offers kidney, liver and

lung transplant surgeries making HMC one of the most comprehensive transplant centres in the region.

"Since the start of our transplant programme in 1986, we have worked hard and strengthened the exceptional care we provide to our patients. We have in place a multidisciplinary team with some leading international experts that enabled us to deliver the highest levels of care to our patients who need these procedures" said Dr al-Maslama.

An organ transplant can be a life-saving procedure. It can also significantly improve the quality of life for someone with chronic organ failure. A deceased organ donor can save up to eight lives. It is also possible to donate a kidney or part of the liver while alive. (QNA)

## Shura Council participates in PUIC Conference in Abidjan


The Shura Council participated in the meetings of the 18th session of the Conference of the Parliamentary Union of the OIC Member States (PUIC) and its associated meetings, which concluded on Tuesday in Abidjan, Cote d'Ivoire. Council members Saad bin Ahmed al-Mesned and Khalid bin Abas Kamal al-Emadi represented Qatar at the four-day event themed 'The OIC role in combating global climate change'. The deliberations focused on several topics related to environment and sustainable development, and ways to enhance co-operation and co-ordination between the parliaments of the OIC member states to achieve development goals. Also on the agenda were ways to battle desertification, especially in the Sahel Region, boost co-operation to preserve water resources, protect the environment and combat climate change, and the pan-OIC scientific and technical co-operation. (QNA)



## Labour Ministry organises dialogue sessions with private sector firms

The Ministry of Labour, represented by the National Manpower Affairs Sector in the private sector, organised a series of dialogue sessions with all sectors in the private sector. The sessions aimed at discussing the affairs of the national workforce in the private sector and finding appropriate mechanisms to overcome the challenges and obstacles facing plans to increase the participation rates of the national workforce in private sector institutions. Led by Shaikha Abdulrahman al-Badi, Assistant Undersecretary for National Manpower Affairs in the Private Sector, the meetings took place over several days, involving human resources heads from nine diverse areas including real estate, contracting, hospitality, health, associations, clubs, education, services, transportation, finance, insurance, industry, energy, and communication and information technology. These sessions focused on tackling challenges and finding effective methods to support national workforce integration in private sector institutions.

The dialogue sessions are part of the Ministry of Labour's initiative to address the needs of the national workforce in the private sector. These efforts focus on developing suitable strategies for training and qualifying personnel through collaborative training programmes. These programmes aim to prepare a skilled national workforce that can adapt to evolving market trends. (QNA)




**TENDER ANNOUNCEMENT**

Tender No.	Subject	Tender Fee	Closing Date
AT/C/1069/24	Leasing of 18 <sup>th</sup> Floor Salon on Rental for 3 Years at The Torch Doha	300.00	21.03.2024

The tender documents are available for collection from the Finance Department (Tel.: 44465612) of The Torch Doha upon presentation of a formal letter of authorization on Company letterhead and copy of the Commercial Registration.

The closing time will be at 12.00 noon on the closing date mentioned above, any offer arriving thereafter will not be considered.

Tenders (Technical and Commercial envelope separately) are to be submitted in a sealed envelope addressed to The Chairman, General Tender Committee, The Torch Doha and deposit in the tender box available at The Torch Doha Purchasing Office.



**QATAR FERTILISER COMPANY**  
INVITATION TO TENDER

**QAFCO ANNOUNCES THE FOLLOWING TENDER**


TENDER NO.	DESCRIPTION OF WORKS	TENDER FEE (QAR)	TENDER BOND (QAR)	TENDER FEE RECEIPT SUBMISSION DATES	TENDER CLOSING DATE
RFQ-600000049	DESIGN, ENGINEERING, PROCUREMENT, SUPPLY, AND INSTALLATION OF ELECTROCHLORINATION Q1-3	500/- (Non-refundable)	1,135,000/- One Million One Hundred and Thirty-Five Thousand Only	07.03.2024 10.03.2024 11.03.2024 12.03.2024 13.03.2024 14.03.2024 17.03.2024	18.04.2024

**GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS**

- During the period this tender is offered, the interested bidders shall first deposit appropriate Tender Fee amount in cash (Cheque will not be accepted) into Company's following Account at any QNB branch:
  - Account Name : QATAR FERTILISER COMPANY (QAFCO)
  - Account Number : 0013-025828-058
  - IBAN : QA51QNB00000000013025828058
  - Bank Name : QATAR NATIONAL BANK
- The interested Bidders shall mention their company's name and Tender Number on the payment receipt provided by the bank and submit it as Tender Fee receipt.
- Besides the Tender fee receipt (which should have the Tender Number and bidder's name clearly mentioned on it), interested bidders shall also submit a copy of the valid Commercial Registration, an authorization letter from their company with the name, telephone, fax and e-mail ID of the focal point for this tender (**Very Important**), during the submission of Tender Fee Receipt for ensuring electronic receipt of the Tender Document.
- Tender Fee Receipt along with the specified documents shall be submitted to [purchase@qafco.com.qa](mailto:purchase@qafco.com.qa) on the dates indicated above, after payment of Tender Fee (nonrefundable).
- After submission of the above documents to the above email, Tender Document will be provided through an electronic platform separately after the last date of Tender Fee Receipt Submission Date.
- For any queries related to non-receipt of the tender documents after the last date of Tender Fee Receipt Submission Date, you may contact at 'purchase@qafco.com.qa' or on 4422797
- Technical & Commercial details and Submission Procedures will be specified in the Tender Documents.
- The Company will not consider any offer without the enclosure of the Tender Bond.
- Bids shall be submitted at QAFCO Tender Office, between 0930 – 1100 hours during the Holy month of Ramadan and 0930 – 1130 hours and 1230 – 1400 hours, of any working day of the Company, on/before the "Tender Closing Date".


## OBITUARY

The Management, Principal and staff of



**PODAR PEARL SCHOOL**  
مدرسه بيرل بودار

extend their heartfelt condolences to the family of



**JANNAH JAMELAH VALIYA PARAMBIL**  
Class 2, Podar Pearl School, Al Meshaf Campus  
**on her sad demise.**

May almighty God rest the departed soul in peace and give fortitude to the bereaved family members to bear this great loss

**CONDOLENCES**

President, Board of Directors, Principal and staff of



**PODAR PEARL SCHOOL**  
**مدرسه بيرل بودار**

extend their heartfelt condolences to the family of

**Mr. C Muhamed Nizar**  
(Director - Podar Pearl School)

On the sad demise of his beloved mother



**AYSHAKKUTTY K H**

(w/o Late Mr. MOHAMMADALI C)

and to the family of

**Ms. Mizna Nizar Director, Podar Pearl School**

**Mr. Fayez Nizar, Director, Podar Pearl School**

**Mr. Aazif Ali Nizar, Director, Podar Pearl School**

May Allah rest the departed soul in peace and give fortitude to the bereaved family to bear this great loss.

**CONDOLENCES**

The Management and staff of



**QATAR MULTITECH**  
TRADING & CONTRACTING W.L.L



**Solutions**  
For Control and Automation W.L.L.

extend their heartfelt condolences to the family of

**Mr. C Muhamed Nizar**

(Managing Director )

On the sad demise of his beloved mother



**AYSHAKKUTTY K H**

(w/o Late Mr. MOHAMMADALI C)

May Allah rest the departed soul in peace and give fortitude to the bereaved family to bear this great loss.

## Latin America, Caribbean ambassadors join Qatar's greening drive



The Ministry of Municipality, represented by the Public Parks Department, organised a tree planting event at Expo 2023 Doha for the ambassadors of the Group of Latin American and Caribbean Countries (GRULAC), a statement from the Peru embassy said. The ministry's gardens section head Mohamed Abdullah Mohamed, who is also the head of the Qatar Pavilion, was present at the event attended by the envoys of Peru, Argentina, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Guyana, Haiti, Uruguay, Venezuela, and the chargés d'affaires of Costa Rica, Mexico and Panama. As part of the Ten Million Trees Initiative, the diplomats planted a sapling of Sidra, the iconic symbol of Qatar's heritage. "With this act, the GRULAC demonstrate their firm commitment to the Sustainable Development Goals and the development and preservation of the environment, a fundamental pillar of the Qatar National Vision 2030," the statement added.

## RACA holds seminar on environmental sustainability in charitable work

QNA  
Doha

In co-operation with the Ministry of Environment and Climate Change (MoECC), the Regulatory Authority for Charitable Activities (RACA) organised a seminar on environmental sustainability in the fields of charitable and volunteer work.

The seminar saw the participation of the director of the Green Development and Environmental Sustainability Department at the MoECC Dr Saud bin Khalifa al-Thani, Director of Relief and International Development Division at Qatar Red Crescent Society (QRCS) Dr Mohamed Salah Ibrahim, environmental expert in the Green Development and Environmental Sustainability Department at the MoECC Dr Abdallah al-Tamimi, and development projects expert at the RACA Hussam Abdullah al-Tarawneh.

During the symposium moderated by communications and public relations expert at the RACA Ahmed Saleh al-Ali, Dr Saud bin



Khalifa al-Thani pointed out Qatar's commitment to global efforts to confront climate change, and the integration between environmental sustainability and charitable initiatives in the country, which contributes to achieving a tangible impact on society.

During his speech at the seminar, he stressed the importance of integrating the principles of environmental sustainability into the charitable sector's strategies and projects, applying the environmental sustainability strategy in various charitable projects,

and facing challenges related to financing and awareness to ensure the implementation of those strategies in an effective manner that contributes to protecting the environment and achieving sustainability.

Director of Relief and International Development Division at QRCS, Dr Mohamed Salah Ibrahim, reviewed the QRCS's strategy (2021-2024), which focused on climate change as one of its axes, pointing to the success of the environmental sustainability practices that the QRCS applied in many of its projects.

## MoPH launches 5 e-services for food safety system "Watheq"

The Ministry of Public Health (MoPH) announced that it has added five new electronic services in addition to the available services in the electronic food safety system, "Watheq", bringing the number of services provided within the system to 19. New services include Inspection service of food consignment for export, Inspection service of food consignment for re-export, Request for Food Export Certificate, Request for a Food Re-export Certificate, and Request for Certificate verification, MoPH reported yesterday. Director of the Food Safety Department at MoPH, Wassan Abdullah al-Baker, said: "The new e-services that have been launched are part of the continuous efforts aimed to developing the electronic food safety system, implementing automation plans for all services related to food safety and linking them electronically to facilitate the procedures for

all stakeholders such as importers, suppliers, and regulatory authorities." The new services that have been launched contribute to facilitating and accelerating the procedures for inspecting food consignments at ports and electronic verification of health certificates for exported or re-exported food, al-Baker added. It is noteworthy that 6,253 food establishments were registered, 57,288 food products were approved, and 55,782 electronic transactions were done in the system since its launch in September 2022. The number of shipments inspected since the launch of the system reached 305,857 food consignments, as well as 5,926 local food establishments, in addition to the withdrawal of 19,251 samples at the ports and 37,851 samples during local inspection that were examined in food laboratories. (QNA)

## Kahramaa, Chubu renew agreement in renewable energy sector

The Qatar General Electricity and Water Corporation (Kahramaa) and Chubu Electric Power Company yesterday signed a renewal of the MoU 'the Partnership Project'.

The aim is to extend collaboration between the Qatari and Japanese parties for the upcoming years in the sector of renewable energy, training, and development, a Kahramaa statement said.

Engineer Dr Abdullah al-Wahedi, director of Shared Services in Kahramaa and Hiroki Sato, senior managing executive officer, division CEO of Chubu Electric Power, signed the agreement. Through the renewal of this agreement, Chubu and Kahramaa will continue their technical co-operation.

In 2007, Chubu and Kahramaa signed an agreement aiming at establishing a strong relationship between the two companies.

Since the collaboration, Chubu has been implementing technical co-operation regarding the power system with Kahramaa and accepting trainees which enabled a prosperous future for the ben-



efit of both sides. Chubu Electric Power is the first LNG launching buyer from Qatar, in 1997.

Kahramaa and Chubu will further strengthen their mutual technical co-operation in the field of smart grid, development of human resources, and green transformation.

Upon the agreement, visits to Japan in April 2024 will be organized. The visit will cover several centres including the technical and management training centre, leadership development centre and capacity measurement and staff competencies centre as well as the electrical distribution control centre to review the systems and procedures in the renewable energy field.

Kahramaa president engineer Essa bin Hilal al-Kuwari praised the continued efforts of both sides stating that the renewal of the Partnership Project between Kahramaa and Chubu comes as a successful result of the last 17 years of collaboration between the two companies.

"Kahramaa's aim in this renewal is to build a connection, collaborate, and exchange expertise in the field of renewable energy and implement the latest technologies in the electricity sector in Qatar and to look for mutual exchange of human resources development in line with Qatar National Vision 2030 and the Third National Development Strategy," al-Kuwari said.

## Doha Chapter of ICAI conducts session on Equity Investing Opportunities for NRIs

The Doha Chapter of the Institute of Chartered Accountants of India (ICAI) hosted a groundbreaking session titled "WESCO: The Rise of New Elite" on 21st February 2024 at the Pullman Doha, West Bay. The event showcased a convergence of esteemed dignitaries and industry experts offering profound insights into the dynamics of WESCO and its role in shaping future wealth opportunities. The attendees included members of the Doha Chapter, IBPC and associated organization members, and finance professionals from leading organizations in Qatar.

The Chapter Secretary, CA Arun Somanath, graciously extended a warm welcome to the esteemed Chief Guest, distinguished speakers, and all the dedicated members present, creating an atmosphere of collaboration and enrichment.

Chapter Chairperson, CA Kamlesh Tibrewal, expressed heartfelt gratitude to the Chief



Guest, HE Shri Vipul, for graciously accepting the invitation to attend the event and for his unwavering support towards the chapter's activities. Additionally, he conveyed sincere thanks to the speakers for generously sharing their invaluable insights and knowledge.

Chief Guest His Excellency Shri Vipul, Ambassador of India to the State of Qatar, in his address illuminated the growing India-Qatar relations, strengthened by the recent visit of Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi. HE Shri Vipul emphasized the vital role of Chartered Accountants as partners in nation-building, underscoring their significance as key stakeholders in India's ongoing journey of progress.

Saurabh Mukherjee, CIO of Marcellus Investment Advisory, a distinguished keynote speaker and renowned expert in the field, provided invaluable insights into WESCO's pivotal role in the rise of the new elite. His discourse delved into the wealth opportunities that WESCO is poised to provide in the years to come, offering strategic perspectives for investors and industry enthusiasts.

The event culminated with a cake cutting ceremony to commemorate the Best Chapter Overseas Award 2023 - securing the prestigious 3rd position in Category II.

Chapter Vice Chairperson CA Kishore Alex proposed the vote of thanks expressing gratitude to the Chief guest, speakers, members, all sponsors and partners for their active support to the chapter.

Members of the Institute of Chartered Accountants of India residing in Qatar and aspiring to join the Doha Chapter can contact Chairperson CA Kamlesh Tibrewal at 55928942 or Vice Chairperson CA Kishore Alex at 55046010 for further information.

## Layali Katara Ramadan Tent at The Chedi Katara Hotel & Resort

The Chedi Katara Hotel & Resort has announced that it will open the Layali Katara Ramadan Tent, immersed in the rich tapestry of the Middle Eastern folklore and featuring a harmonious blend of tradition and modernity.

"Amidst the panoramic backdrop of the Arabian Gulf and the mesmerising Doha skyline indulge your senses in an opulent buffet spread, a symphony of flavours that pays homage to the authentic essence of Arabic cuisine while embracing international culinary delights," a statement said.

Nestled in the heart of Katara - Cultural Village, The Chedi Katara Hotel & Resort is an architectural landmark that seamlessly weaves the most exquisite elements of the Mughal and Ottoman cultures, while providing unparalleled privacy and a memorable stay, it was explained.

The Chedi Katara offers 91 keys, comprising 59 luxurious rooms and suites overlooking the serene seascape and 32 state-of-the-art private villas with a private pool and a lavish garden. The Iftar buffet is available from sunset to 8pm at QR295 per person and the Suhoor buffet from 9pm to 2am at QR295 per person. Iftar on the go is available for QR350 for two persons, the statement added.



## Earthna discusses sustainable urban design, development

Earthna Centre for a Sustainable Future - a member of Qatar Foundation - curated a programme of discussions, workshops, and networking sessions for international thought leaders and local stakeholders this week. Held in Doha from March 3-6, activities included a Speaker Series hosted by Earthna in collaboration with Qatar Museums, sessions held at VCUarts Qatar's Tasmeem Doha 2024, and an opening keynote at the International Association of Horticultural Producers' Green City Conference at Expo 2023, all focused on a multi-faceted approach to sustainability in hot and arid cities. Dr Gonzalo Castro de la Mata, executive director at Earthna, said: "Tailored local initiatives and solutions are imperative to address global issues and be effective and impactful." Sebastien Turbot, director of Content Development at Earthna and moderator of the Speaker Series, noted: "One of the tools that we can leverage in seeking and implementing solutions is urban design, to create resilient and vibrant spaces." The Earthna Speaker Series event, titled 'Arid Cities, Sustainability, and Placemaking' featured distinguished speakers including Ethan Kent, executive director of Placemaking X; Dr Lobna Mostafa, co-founder of Amaken Placemaking; Prof David Simon of Royal Holloway, University of London; and Dr Nourhan Bassam, principal owner of GamingX.



## ANNOUNCEMENT

I, MUHAMMAD BILAL JAVAID  
MIRZA JAVAID

holder of

Pakistan Passport No. AW0917162  
QID No. 29158601449

hereby change my name

from

MUHAMMAD BILAL JAVAID  
MIRZA JAVAID

to

MOHAMMAD BILAL JAVAID MIRZA

Any objection, please contact  
THE PERMANENT COMMITTEE FOR  
NATIONALITY AFFAIRS  
within 15 days from the publication of this notice.

# Culture minister honours Qatari poet al-Naama

By Tawfik Lamari  
Staff Reporter

**H**E the Minister of Culture Sheikh Abdulrahman bin Hamad al-Thani, opened the 3rd Seminar Season by honouring the Qatari poet and diplomat Dr Hassan al-Naama, in recognition of his contribution to literature and poetry, and to consolidate the value of intellectuals in building the nation's cultural identity.

Dr al-Naama read his most recent poem, which was followed by a Nabati poetry evening in which the Qatari poet Saleh al-Nashira and the Kuwaiti poet Mazyad al-Wasmi were presented by journalist Ahmad al-Abdullah.

The activities of the Seminar Season started yesterday evening at the Sheraton Hotel. It is being organised by the Ministry of



HE the Minister of Culture Sheikh Abdulrahman bin Hamad al-Thani honours Dr Hassan al-Naama. **PICTURES:** Thajudheen

Culture from March 6 to 9, with the participation of intellectuals, creators, thinkers, poets and media professionals from inside and outside Qatar.

The season aims to enrich the cultural scene, to encourage creators, intellectuals and poets. In addition, it provides an incubating environment that embodies the



Dignitaries at the opening of the Seminar Season.

cultural movement and expands the circle of comprehensive culture. The academic and novelist Dr Ahmed Abdelmalik attributed the importance of the Seminar Season to the fact that it creates an environment suitable for a culture of dialogue and reception.

On the sidelines of the poetic evening, Dr al-Naama told *Gulf*

*Times* that he was happy to be honoured. On the publication of his poetry collection, he said that he has already published the first instalment at the opening of the Katara Publishing House. He pointed out that "it is very big because I started writing poems about the Qatari history and events from the 1950s up to date. I wrote many poems, so

it takes time to edit them prior to their publication, but a selection of poems was already published in one volume."

With regard to the young generation of poets, Dr al-Naama said: "They have to work hard in order to be distinguished. Literature is very important, so you have to give people food for their brain."

## Qumra Master Egoyan appeals for genuine narratives in filmmaking



Qumra Master Atom Egoyan attends the Masterclass on day six of Qumra 2024.

The 10th edition of Qumra concluded with a masterclass by Qumra Master Atom Egoyan (*Exotica, The Sweet Hereafter, Seven Veils*) who urged emerging filmmakers to be brave, rigorous about production schedules, and explore the tensions within to find their original cinematic voice. "Independent cinema gives you the freedom to explore, to choose what moments you shot are magical and gives you the gifts you weren't expecting," said Egoyan, who noted that it was important to have a purpose of the frames one was composing and to discipline their

schedules with carefully timetabled shots. The writer, director and producer, who has supported the journey of many first and second-time filmmakers himself, has a distinguished oeuvre of films, many of them centred around the themes of identity, memory and trauma, and inspired in part by his own Armenian roots and the Armenian Genocide. Egoyan said that as storytellers, what is most important is for filmmakers "to make available genuine narratives to others and not be swayed by the narratives that have an agenda. "We must find our natural voice and speak the truth because even neutrality has an agenda very often. Histories and stories are not communicated through slogans - but through one-on-one conversations between people." He said he is inspired to be in Doha and to explore the architecture of the museums. "I have seen the Doha Film Institute label on many films that I have admired over the years, and being here, I understand why; DFI is such a remarkable organisation."

## Maison Chaumet collaborates with M7 for new Arabic logo

**M**7, Qatar's epicentre for innovation and entrepreneurship in fashion, design and technology, has announced its collaboration with Parisian High Jewellery Maison Chaumet, in identifying a designer from Qatar for the new Arabic logo.

This collaboration signifies a prominent milestone in bridging local talent with global brands, further positioning Qatar as a leader in the international fashion and design landscape, a statement said.

Chaumet CEO Charles Leung, said: "I am proud to see our new Arabic logo coming to life in the region as a result of a strong collaboration with M7 and its creative minds in Doha."

In forming the partnership, Chaumet worked closely with M7 to select a local graphic designer to create the new Arabic logo.

M7 director Maha Ghanim al-Sulaiti, said: "At the heart of M7's mission lies a commitment to nurturing Qatar's creative circular ecosystem by providing invaluable professional opportu-



Zainab AlShibani's completed logo design evokes a sense of harmony and balance, symbolising the fusion of tradition and innovation, as well as capturing the essence of Chaumet's elegance and sophistication. **Right:** Zainab AlShibani



Arabic calligraphy, "Helyah", is a term used to describe the decorative part attached to the beginning of letters, translating to "earring" or "ornamentation".

Drawing inspiration from this and fusing it with the intricate interplay of Latin and Arabic letterforms, AlShibani's completed logo design evokes a sense of harmony and balance, symbolising the fusion of tradition and innovation, as well as capturing the essence of Chaumet's elegance and sophistication.

Chaumet (est. 1780), the Parisian Maison located at the heart of the city's iconic Place Vendome, is synonymous for its creative excellence and true inspirations. It is renowned for its exquisite tiaras, High Jewellery pieces, and unique timepieces.

It has a network of 80 flagship stores worldwide, including prominent locations in Tokyo, Hong Kong, London and the Middle East. The logo will gradually be integrated into Chaumet's brand identity and eventually installed on flagship stores in Qatar, Kuwait, the UAE and Saudi Arabia.

# Regency Group marks a decade of excellence with grand opening of Izghawa branch



**R**egency Group celebrates a noteworthy achievement with the inauguration of its newest branch in Izghawa, Qatar. Since its inception in 2010, the company has thrived in the dynamic retail industry, cultivating a devoted customer base and adapting to evolving consumer needs. The esteemed leadership of Chairman Mr. Ali Ahmed A A Ali Kuwari, a respected national figure, has propelled the business to a reputation for excellence.

Under the visionary guidance of Managing Director Mr. Ameerudheen Kunhammed, Regency Group has emerged as a market leader, consistently upgrading services to meet customer expectations. With eight locations now spanning Abu Hamour, Umm Salal Ali, Al Wakra, Ain Khalid, Gold Plaza, Umm Al Amad, Al Gharrafa, and the recently opened Izghawa branch, the company celebrates a decade of unwavering dedication to delivering top-notch retail services in Qatar.

This expansion marks a significant milestone, reflecting Regency Group's commitment to customer satisfaction, innovation, and a deep understanding of marketing trends. The company's current operations showcase a seamless blend of these elements, solidifying its position as a leader in the Qatari retail sector.



## LuLu Hypermarket extends financial support to QSRSN

LuLu Hypermarket extended a significant financial contribution to the Qatar Society for Rehabilitation of Special Needs (QSRSN) yesterday as part of its Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) framework, a statement said.

In a ceremony at LuLu Hypermarket's regional headquarters along D-Ring Road, LuLu Group Qatar regional manager Shanavas Padiyath led the official handover of a cheque worth QR100,000 to QSRSN public relations co-ordinator Dheyaa Khaled Alshmare.

By aligning with QSRSN's noble vision, LuLu Hypermarket aims to illuminate the lives of individuals with special needs, assuaging their insecurities and integrating them into the societal fabric, thereby enabling them to avail their rightful entitlements, it was explained.

QSRSN, a charitable society

under the aegis of the Department of Social Affairs at the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, facilitates holistic rehabilitation encompassing social, psychological, educational and physical facets for individuals with special needs. Central to the ethos of QSRSN is its unwavering commitment to aligning its endeavours with Islamic principles while respecting the rich cultural heritage and unique societal nuances of Qatar.

In its relentless pursuit of innovation, the Society continually evolves its services and programmes to keep pace with the dynamic urban and humanitarian landscape of Qatari society. LuLu Hypermarket's benevolent gesture underscores the symbiotic relationship between corporate entities and social institutions, wherein mutual collaboration fosters sus-



LuLu Group Qatar regional manager Shanavas Padiyath led the official handover of a cheque worth QR100,000 to QSRSN Public Relations co-ordinator Dheyaa Khaled Alshmare.

tainable development and societal progress. By extending a helping hand to QSRSN, LuLu Hypermarket not only fulfils its corporate obligations but also

epitomises the spirit of empathy and compassion that transcends business imperatives.

Moreover, LuLu Hypermarket's CSR initiatives resonate deeply

with its stakeholders, engendering a sense of pride and loyalty among employees, customers and partners. Through strategic philanthropy and community engagement, LuLu Hy-

permarket reinforces its position as a socially responsible corporate entity, contributing meaningfully to the welfare of society, the statement added.

## QRCS, OCHA reach out to vulnerable people in Yemen



Qatar Red Crescent Society (QRCS) has launched a project to meet the emergency and permanent needs of 60,572 displaced and war-affected people in remote and inaccessible areas of Yemen's Qa'atabah district in Dhale governorate.

With \$649,981 in funding from the United Nations Office for the Co-ordination of Humanitarian Affairs' (OCHA) Yemen Humanitarian Fund (YHF), the new project is aimed at maintaining 500 shelters at camps for internally displaced people (IDP) and for improved access to primary, emergency and comprehensive healthcare services.

QRCS has already commenced the initial shelter beneficiary selection survey at 12 camps; reopening of target health facilities; procurement of medical supplies, medications, laboratory solutions, consumables and operational expenses; hiring of specialised medical professionals; and payment of staff remuneration. At the same time, mobile clinics are making field visits to the camps, to provide primary



healthcare for IDPs. The patients with critical health conditions are referred to the health facilities the project covers.

As a result, there was a signifi-

cant improvement in the performance and turnout of these health facilities. As shown by indicators, the number of beneficiaries during the first two months was 13,211.

## HBKU launches its Qatari faculty development fellowship programme

Hamad Bin Khalifa University's (HBKU) Office of the Provost has announced the launch of the Qatari Faculty Development Fellowship Programme (QDFDP), an initiative to develop talented Qatari nationals and offer them the opportunity to join the university's faculty.

The QDFDP initiative is open to Qataris who have either been admitted to or graduated from PhD degree programmes recognised by the Ministry of Education and Higher Education in Qatar. It will provide support in the form of sponsorships to eligible individuals on two tracks: the Professional Development track, and the Sponsorship Award track.

The Professional Development track will help Qatari PhD holders pursue a postdoctoral assignment at an esteemed institution outside Qatar approved by HBKU. The Sponsorship Award track will provide assistance to Qatari master's degree holders admitted to an appropriate PhD programme outside of Qatar or exceptional bachelor's degree holders who aim to pursue a PhD programme. In all cases, the field of study would need to fit and be approved by the university.

Throughout the course of their graduate studies or postdoctoral assignments, participants will be affiliated with a designated college or research institute depending upon their specialisation.



QDFDP is an initiative to develop talented Qatari nationals.

Upon completion of their chosen tracks, and subject to the satisfaction of pre-employment criteria, participants will then be offered a faculty appointment at one of HBKU's six colleges or three research institutes.

The QDFDP will be offered on an annual basis beginning in 2024. Dr Michael J Benedik, provost, HBKU said: "Through this initiative, we are looking to tap into the Qatari community's vast potential and to support its citizens in pursuing fulfilling careers in academics or research. The QDFDP also supports HBKU's mission to build capacity in Qatar in support of an inclusive, high-quality research and education ecosystem in the country."



## Culture ministry marks International Women's Day

The Ministry of Culture held a panel discussion on Tuesday under the theme of women and culture, Qatari women leadership in culture and arts.

The panel discussion was held to mark the International Women's Day which is celebrated on March 8 each year.

The discussion featured the engagement of writer, consultant and expert in the affairs of persons with disabilities Dr Hala al-Saeed, and Dr Fatima al-Maadheed, and it was moderated by media professional Hessa al-Suwaidi.

Director of the Department of Culture and Arts at the Min-

istry of Culture Maryam Yassin al-Hammadi said Qatar marks this day through empowerment and privacy set by the state, that strikes a balance between women's role and for them to secure the supportive environment that helps them perform their familial roles in the community. (QNA)

## Karwa, Al-Ijarah driving academies in training pact

Karwa Academy, a Mowasalat entity, yesterday signed an agreement with Al-Ijarah Driving Academy as part of extending its first 'Train the Trainers' programme to the latter's driving instructors on customer service and care, defensive driving techniques, road safety, traffic regulations as well as vehicle maintenance and inspection.

Over the past years, Karwa Academy has amassed a wealth of experience in the field as the main training institution to 'Train the Trainers' for all drivers at diverse mega events such as the FIFA World Cup Qatar 2022, including VIP, media and fan transportation, based on best international standards, a statement said.

During the signing of the agreement, Karwa Academy director Faisal al-Nuaimi noted that the agreement breaks ground for a new collaborative spirit among



driving academies for safe streets in Qatar and ideal conditions for trainees.

"We are very happy about our first co-operation with Al-Ijarah Driving Academy and look forward to a dynamic and beneficial growth for all parties based on best practices," he said.

"In view of the country steering towards environmental-friendly transportation, we are proud to

also share our expertise in the handling and maintenance of electric vehicles due to our recent IMI certification," he added.

Ibrahim Youssef Lafi, director of the Driver Training Academy, said the agreement aims to enhance the training process and raise the professional competence level to achieve the highest level of service in training, growth and performance development.

## QMC holds media writing workshop



The Ministry of Culture's Qatari Media Center (QMC) held a training workshop on media writing, yesterday. It was presented by certified trainer and journalist Sumaya Tisha. The two-day event is set to discuss the key techniques and rules for writing for the print and audio-visual media outlets, and for the social media. QMC Director Iman al-Kaabi said the workshop covered the major aspects of the needs of both on-the-job and aspiring media professionals as well as social media content creators. (QNA)





# Auto Class Cars open new showroom in Lusail

Auto Class Cars, the authorised general distributor for MG in Qatar, has announced the opening of its new showroom in Lusail, a statement said.

Concurrently, Auto Class Cars unveiled the MG Whale, its latest SUV coupé model. The launch event was graced by MG Motors Middle East operations managing director Tom Lee, Auto Class Cars general manager Frank Zauner, general sales manager Zaher Janbani and marketing manager Ahmad Firoozi and guests.

Zauner said the new showroom opening and the launch of MG Whale aligns with Auto Class Cars' ambitious objectives for growth and expansion, designed to cater to the customers' needs and reach a wider audience seamlessly and efficiently.

Lee stated that Qatar is a dynamic market that is ever evolving in a unique pace. "We have witnessed remarkable shifts in consumer preferences. We have,



alongside our partner Auto Class Cars, adapted perfectly to the market as we aim to provide the best cars, best customer experience and competitive prices for our customers. Our success in Qatar is clearly shown by our sales which went up by 29% in 2023 compared to the year before, which is very impressive."

Firoozi, said: "At Auto Class Cars and MG Qatar, our dedica-

tion lies in consistently exceeding customer expectations and ensuring their utmost satisfaction. Our ongoing commitment to expansion aligns with the growing needs of our clientele, evident in our new showroom and frequent new car launches. We reaffirm our pledge to uphold the core values of our brand by delivering unparalleled products and services."

The futuristic design and the



daring coupe-like silhouette of the MG Whale embody the youthful and progressive spirit of the people who live and work in the vibrant cities of the region. The Whale-inspired details like its signature front grille and Baleen daytime running lamps help convey the playfulness, intelligence, and grace of its namesake. Other marine-related cues include Whale-fin door mirrors and a

Whale-tail spoiler and gearshift.

Additionally, traits like the two-tone glossy black roof, matte gold bumper accents, chrome dual exhaust pipes, and silver decoration add to the visual appeal of the SUV Coupé. The car also rides on stylish 19-inch alloy wheels. The well-laid-out, premium quality cabin that will ensure daily commutes and long journeys are quiet, hassle-free, and comfortable

thanks to features like electric seat adjustments with memory seats, dual-zone air conditioning, and a power-operated panoramic sunroof.

The other salient features include a 9-speaker BOSE sound system, 256-colour ambient lighting setup, integrated dual 12.3-inch Curved Panoramic Screen, an HD 360°surround view system and a host of active and passive safety features, a chassis rated for high levels of torsional stiffness, which will provide maximum protection and a dynamic advantage.

The sleek SUV Coupé is driven by a 2L turbocharged engine producing 231hp and 370Nm torque coupled to an 8-speed automatic gearbox that helps minimise fuel consumption.

The MG Whale and the full line up of MG models are available at Auto Class Cars showroom on Salwa Road and Lusail. All the cars will benefit from the brand's six-year/200,000km warranty, the statement added.

# WCM-Q pre-med students present research posters

First-year pre-medical students of Weill Cornell Medicine-Qatar (WCM-Q) rounded off the work of two semesters by presenting their findings at an open poster session, a statement said yesterday.

A total of 56 students, working in groups of two and three, executed independent research projects from beginning to end, from carrying out a literature review and formulating a question and a hypothesis, to conducting experiments in the laboratory, gathering and analysing the data, writing up the results and finally presenting their findings to fellow students and WCM-Q faculty.

The projects investigated the antimicrobial effects of a variety of herbs, spices and other natural products traditionally used to prevent or treat infections.

To do this, the students cultivated several different species of bacteria in nutrient agar in petri dishes and introduced the natural remedy, observing how far each was able to inhibit the bacteria's growth.

The students presented a total of 19 posters investigating the anti-microbial effects of the following natural remedies: Nigella sativa oil, lemon juice, thyme oil, olive oil, cajuput oil, fennel oil, neem oil, the traditional Sudanese fermented drink abreh, cardamom,



Some of the students with their poster presentation.

cinnamon, turmeric, ivy extract, saffron, clove oil, shilajit, sumac, wax apple peel extract, onion, rose extract, Japanese matcha, black tea, and propolis oil, a resin-like material made by bees from the buds of cone-bearing trees.

The students worked on their projects in biology classes over the course of 16 weeks during the fall and spring semesters.

Dr Kuei-Chiu Chen, professor of biology, said: "This course presents the first opportunity for students on the Six-Year Medical Programme to come up with a research question and then design an experiment to test their hypothesis. They showed a very good understanding of the process and brought many new and unique ideas to their projects, and they did a great job of interpreting their data, presenting their work, and

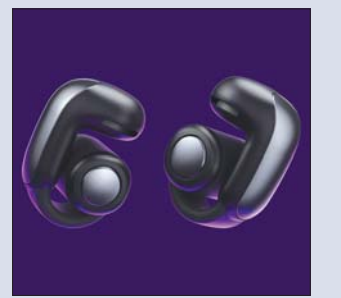
speaking confidently about their findings. The beauty of this course is that it gives the students a keen understanding of how a research project is conducted from beginning to end, which is a key part of their development as physician-scientists."

Students Mohamed Abdullah Chattha, Mustafa Ahmad Ghuman and Abdulla Fakhroo presented a poster about their research investigating the anti-bacterial properties of oil extracts of neem trees and fennel seeds, both of which are commonly used in traditional medicine approaches.

Chattha said: "Through our experiments we found out that the antimicrobial effect of neem oil and fennel oil are far stronger when they are used in combination than when they are used separately."

# Modern Home launches new Bose Ultra Open Earbuds in Qatar

Modern Home announced the launch of the new Bose Ultra Open Earbuds, featuring an innovative cuff-shaped design and offering 'amazing comfort for all-day wear.' The Bose Ultra Open Earbuds will be available in Qatar from March 10 exclusively at the Bose store in Lagoona Mall and Fnac store in Lagoona Mall, Doha Festival City and Place Vendôme for QR1,199.



"The buds feature a stunning design with polished, soft edges and a brushed metallic finish to make them appear more like a fashion accessory than a traditional audio wearable," a statement explained.

"They are also engineered for comfort and stability – a special flex arm coated in super-soft silicone connects the speaker to the battery barrel, so it rests gently on the skin for hours, while providing a light-as-air grip to keep the earbuds secure on almost any ear.

"The Ultra Open Earbuds provide high-quality audio using Bose proprietary OpenAudio technology. This feat of engineering combines a powerful transducer with a tightly controlled acoustic structure to precisely deliver clear sound to the ear with almost no sound leaks.

"Powered by proprietary Bose digital signal processing software and an onboard IMU (Inertial Measurement Unit), Ultra Open Earbuds also feature Bose Immersive Audio with two options: 'Still' or 'Motion.' The 'Still' mode is best when you're not moving

because the audio stays in place – perfect for when you're sitting down and want to feel as if the sound is fixed in a specific position. "Motion" allows the audio to move with you, so it's always out in front of you – great for staying immersed on the go.

"The Bose Ultra Open Earbuds come in Black and White Smoke and feature an easy-to-use physical button on the top of the barrel that rests behind the ear, providing simple access to play, pause, skip, adjust volume, and more. They also include an option – available through the Bose Music app – to enable Auto Volume.

"This feature intelligently adjusts the volume of your audio based on the sound level of your surroundings, so your music stays at the right level as you move from place to place. And they're built to last with an IPX4 rating for water and sweat resistance.

"They provide up to 7.5 hours of battery life on a single charge when Bose Immersive Audio is turned off (up to 4.5 hours when Immersive Audio is turned on) or up to 48 hours of standby

time so you can leave them on all day and stay connected even when you're not using them.

"The charging case also provides up to 19.5 additional hours (or up to 12 hours of Immersive Audio), and the buds take one hour to fully charge while a 10-minute quick-charge provides two hours of playtime. "The earbuds feature Snapdragon Sound™ Technology Suite, including the latest Qualcomm® aptX™ Adaptive codec for audio streaming – for lossless and low latency capabilities – and providing more seamless, robust connectivity with premium Android devices. They also offer Google Fast Pair for added ease-of-use when pairing Android devices and are Bluetooth® 5.3 compatible.

"Bose Ultra Open Earbuds also work with Bose SimpleSync technology, allowing you to pair them with select Bose smart soundbars and speakers for a personal listening experience. Independent volume controls allow you to lower or mute the soundbar while keeping the earbuds as loud as necessary."

# Municipality ministry takes part in Bahrain Smart Cities Summit

The Ministry of Municipality took part in the Bahrain Smart Cities Summit 2024, which concluded in Manama yesterday. Assistant Undersecretary for Urban planning Eng. Fahad Mohamed al-Qatani headed Qatar's delegation. The two-day summit discussed models of sustainable smart government projects, the national afforestation plan, the use of artificial intelligence and the Internet of Things in urban infrastructure, the smart electricity grid, the use of artificial intelligence for security and safety in smart

cities, and combating electronic fraud. The delegation of the Ministry of Municipality participated in the meeting held with Bahraini Deputy Prime Minister Sheikh Khalid bin Abdullah al-Khalifah. The delegation presented Qatar's major achievements in smart, environmentally-friendly and sustainable cities, such as the cities of Msheireb and the Pearl. The Ministry of Municipality's efforts in urban planning were introduced. Representatives of the Ministry also participated in the workshops accompanying the summit. (QNA)

# Ashghal receives Oman delegation

The Public Works Authority (Ashghal) president Dr Eng Saad bin Ahmed al-Mohannadi, and a number of officials welcomed the delegation of the General Secretariat of the Tender Board of Oman. An Ashghal post on X said the delegation was led by engineer Bader bin Salim al-Maamari, secretary-general of the Tender Board of Oman

and included several members from the board to discuss project management and means of joint co-operation between both parties in the field. During the meeting, a presentation was given on the efficiency of government spending. Ashghal's implemented and future projects were showcased and a field visit to the project sites was organised.



# UDST receives 'Great Place to Work' recognition for second consecutive year

The University of Doha for Science and Technology has been certified as a Great Place to Work for the second consecutive year after a thorough and independent analysis conducted by Great Place to Work Middle East.

The certification recognises employers who create an outstanding employee experience. It is attained by completing a two-step evaluation process which includes an anonymous employee survey and a thorough questionnaire about the workforce.

The survey, which was completed by UDST employees, measures the respondent's attitudes towards various aspects of the work culture such as respect, communication and leadership behaviour.

The organisation's score is determined by the employees' feedback and independent analysis; hence the certification helps job seekers identify which institutions genuinely have a great culture. It also gives employers a recruiting advantage by providing a globally recognised and research-backed verification of great employee experience.

UDST was recognised as a choice workplace due to its continuous efforts in availing opportunities for professional and personal development to its staff. The leading institution believes that continuous learning and growth are essential for its em-



ployees to excel and reach their full potential. This includes access to valuable resources, training, conferences as well as dedicated Professional Development days organised twice a year by the university.

These prospects enable staff and faculty to expand their knowledge, gain exposure to cutting-edge practices, and broaden their horizons, thereby contributing to their career advancement.

Dr Salem Al-Naemi, President of UDST, expressed his profound gratitude for receiving the recognition for the second time, saying: "Our exceptional team is the cornerstone of our success. From our esteemed faculty and committed staff to our ambitious interns, each member contributes to the vibrant work culture that

defines UDST. Together, we are unwaveringly committed to advancing our vision of leading excellence in applied education and research."

The university's open-door policies and the active encouragement of cross-functional collaborations are intrinsic to its work environment. UDST values transparency and open communication while policies ensure that employees can easily approach leadership to share their ideas, seek advice, or voice their opinions.

The university firmly believes that open channels of communication foster trust and inclusivity. Moreover, interdepartmental collaborations are highly encouraged, recognising that the melding of diverse perspectives and the synergy of teamwork are

critical drivers of innovation.

For personal well-being, UDST provides a campus environment that has been acknowledged with the FISU Healthy Campus Platinum Label. Employees have access to state-of-the-art sport and wellness facilities and programmes, helping them make time for their health and well-being.

Nasser al-Hajri, Human Capital Director at UDST, highlighted the exceptional work environment, noting: "Our policies and initiatives are crafted to empower our employees, offering opportunities for both professional and personal growth. From professional training, conferences, and keynote speaker series to top-notch wellness facilities, we prioritise fostering a healthy work-life balance for our team." (QNA)



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**GULF TIMES**

# Strong US economy sends dollar bears into hibernation

A stronger-than-expected US economy is buoying the dollar, frustrating investors who had bet the currency would wilt under a barrage of interest rate cuts that have yet to materialise.

The dollar index, which measures the buck against a basket of its peers, is up 2.4% year-to-date. Net bets on the dollar in futures markets swung positive last month for the first time since late November, Commodity Futures Trading Commission data showed.

Driving the US currency's stubborn strength is a robust US economy that has made the Fed hesitant to ease monetary policy too quickly and risk an inflationary rebound.

US gross domestic product grew at a 3.2% annualised rate in the fourth quarter. By contrast, the eurozone's economy stagnated last year, China faces a deepening property crisis, and Japan unexpectedly slipped into recession at the end of 2023.

While the US economy has remained resilient, "there is no significant evidence Europe and China are picking up," said Thierry Wizman, global FX and rates strategist at Macquarie, who has become more neutral on the dollar after his bearish outlook last year. "That's the reason people have had this change of heart" on the dollar, he said.

The dollar's strength was tested this week as investors braced for Fed Chairman Jerome Powell to testify before lawmakers on Wednesday and today and await US employment data at the end of the week. Signs that the Fed is sticking with its "higher for longer" messaging on rate cuts or that the US economy continues to stay strong could support the dollar's rally.

Investors are pricing in some 85 basis points of rate cuts for 2024, compared to more than 150 basis points they had factored in early January, futures tied to the Fed's policy rate showed.

## "The amount of scepticism on the part of traders is high"

Among the dollar bulls is Ugo Lancioni, head of currency at Neuberger Berman, who is betting on the greenback to continue rising thanks to US outperformance even though he believes it has grown expensive relative to other currencies.

"Our call right now is purely a relative growth type of call," he said.

Getting the dollar's trajectory right is important for investors, given the currency's central role in global finance.

A strong dollar could weigh on the outlook for US multinationals as it makes it more expensive to convert their foreign profits into dollars, while also making exporters' products less competitive abroad. About a quarter of S&P 500 companies generate more than 50% of revenues outside the US, FactSet data showed.

Dollar strength could also complicate other central banks' efforts to fight inflation as it makes their currencies cheaper. The European Central Bank, which concludes its monetary policy meeting on Thursday, has also pushed back against rate cut talk due to sticky inflation. Signs that the euro zone's policymakers might further delay easing could boost the euro at the dollar's expense.

Strategists are still broadly bearish on the dollar, though the dollar's persistent strength is testing their outlook. While the median forecast among currency strategists is for the dollar to weaken over the rest of the year, some 80% believed there was a risk of the dollar exceeding their target, a Reuters poll showed in February.

Paul Mielczarski, head of macro strategy at Brandywine Global, sees the dollar's recent rebound as more of a "tactical rally as opposed to a change in the underlying trend overall."

Mielczarski is encouraged by nascent signs of improving growth outside the US, including strength in the global semiconductor cycle, which benefits currencies like the Korean won.

Others, however, see more reasons for dollar strength — especially if former US president Donald Trump gains the upper hand in a presidential reelection race that has been deadlocked for months.

Analysts at Capital Economics wrote that Trump's proposed tariff increases could shift the Fed back to a tightening bias on monetary policy and set off a wider trade war that spurs safe haven demand for the US currency. The dollar initially rallied after Trump won the 2016 election but fell 10.5% during his term.

While that may be far off, investors will still likely be hesitant to renew bearish bets against the greenback, Macquarie's Wizman said. "I think it's a 'show me' story," he said. "The amount of scepticism on the part of traders is high." — Reuters

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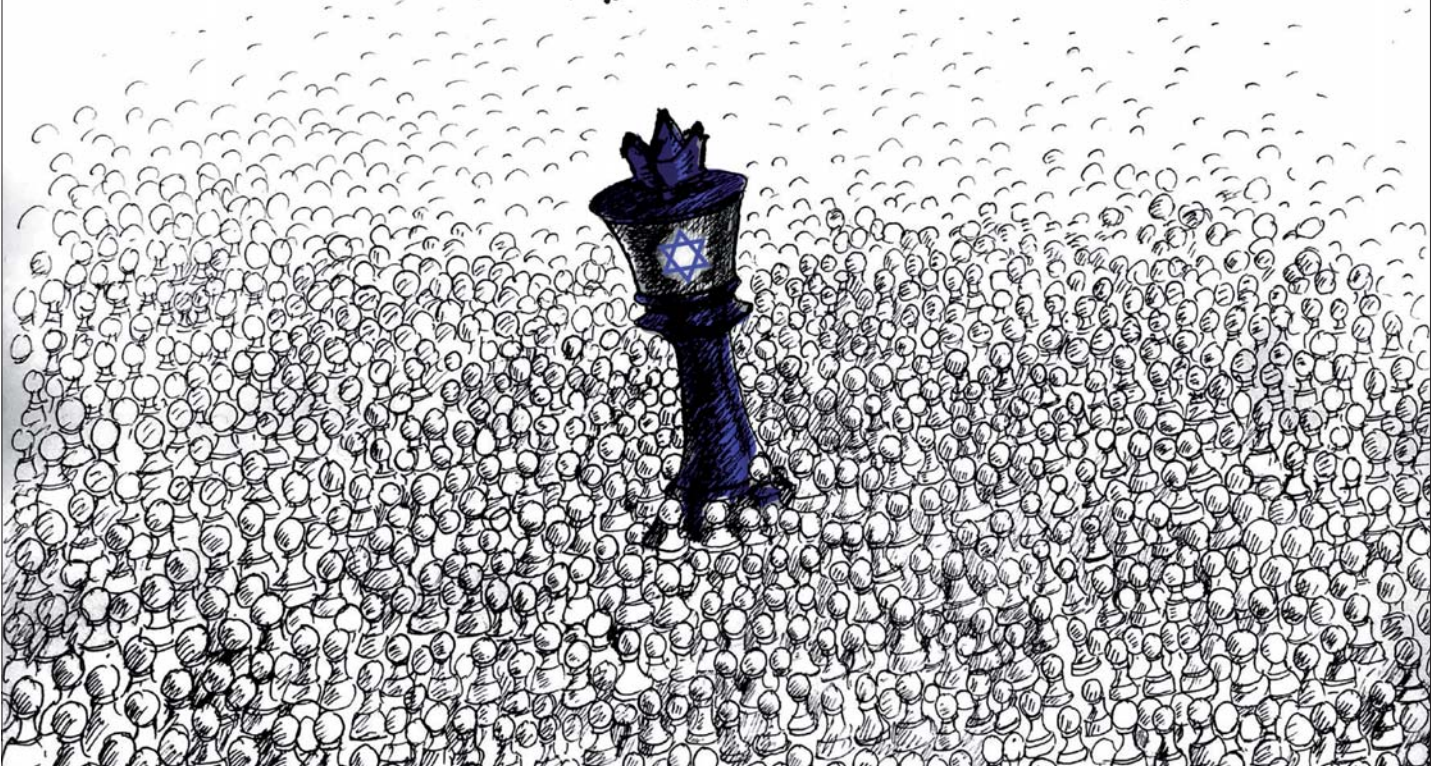
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Many a fake makes a 'Deepfake'



# MWC24 and future prospects

By Kamran Rehmat  
Barcelona

The Mobile World Congress and Barcelona have virtually become synonymous and the festive air at the 2024 edition was no different. Sunshine and clouds played hide and seek outside the world's largest and most influential connectivity event, but inside we were all warming up to the breathtaking technology and innovations taking place across the world — on display on a single stage.

In all, four days of vibrant discussion and networking saw industry leaders and attendees from across the mobile ecosystem making the most of the opportunity.

**Mobile Economy Report 2024**

To mark the opening of MWC Barcelona, the GSMA launched its annual Mobile Economy Report, spotlighting the latest trends shaping the global mobile ecosystem with recommended areas of investment to help the industry expand mobile access and improve service quality.

**The key findings include:**

- By 2029, 5G is projected to represent over half (51%) of all mobile connections, with its adoption rate increasing to 56% by the decade's end.

- At the close of 2023, 58% of the global population, or 4.7bn individuals, were accessing the Internet via mobile devices, marking a rise of 2.1bn users since 2015.

- Despite having access to mobile broadband networks, 3bn people do not use mobile internet, highlighting the critical 'Usage Gap'. This emphasises the need to tackle adoption barriers, such as the cost of mobile devices and the lack of literacy/digital skills, as pointed out by the GSMA's 'Breaking Barriers' initiative.

- In 2023, mobile technologies and services contributed to 5.4% of the worldwide GDP, translating to an economic value of \$5.7tn.

- The global economy is poised to gain over \$930bn from 5G by 2030, with the manufacturing sector (36%), public administration (15%), and services industry (10%) standing to benefit the most.

**Commercial 5G services: the future**

- By January 2024, 261 operators across 101 nations had initiated commercial 5G services, with over 90 operators from 64 markets pledging to future rollouts. Among these services, 47 operate on 5G Standalone (SA) networks, and there are 89 upcoming deployments that will leverage advancements such as network slicing, ultra-reliable low-latency communications, and the streamlined architecture of 5G SA networks.

- The expansion of 5G SA networks, alongside enhanced capabilities for private and dedicated networks, is set to significantly increase the number of connected devices, pushing forward the global vision for the Internet of Things (IoT) in the enterprise sector.

- According to GSMA



**INTERACTION:** An attendee banter with a prototype robot at the MWC24 in Barcelona. (GSMA photo)

Intelligence, the enterprise segment currently boasts 10.7bn IoT connections, surpassing the consumer segment's 10.5bn. This trend is anticipated to surge, with enterprise connections expected to more than double to 38.5bn by 2030. Smart buildings and smart manufacturing are projected to constitute 34% and 16% of these enterprise connections, respectively.

- The introduction of 5G-Advanced, following the 3GPP Release 18, marks another pivotal milestone in IoT development. This advancement is set to trigger new 5G investments from 2024 into 2025. Reports indicate that over half of the operators plan to start deploying 5G-Advanced solutions within a year of their availability, focusing on essential use cases like 5G multicast services and affordable IoT support.

- There are also forecasts for a fourfold increase in mobile data traffic from now until 2030, highlighting the crucial role of expanding 5G coverage and capacity and underscoring the necessity for ongoing investments in infrastructure. Expectedly, the average monthly global mobile data traffic per connection will rise from 12.8GB in 2023 to 47.9GB by 2030.

- The surge in Generative AI (GenAI) utilisation — currently being tested by 56% of operators — will likely contribute significantly to this data traffic increase. This growth will be fuelled by various applications, such as the deployment of GenAI-

powered chatbots for customer service and the expanding production of AI-generated video and music content.

**GSMA Open Gateway: Unlocking 5G potential**

The Global System for Mobile Communications Association (GSMA) has highlighted the strides taken by the sector and its allies towards realising the vast capabilities of 5G and making network Application Programming Interfaces (APIs) commercially available via the GSMA Open Gateway project.

Unveiled at the MWC Barcelona event in 2023, the Open Gateway aims to boost the development of digital services and applications by granting developers worldwide access to telecommunication operators' networks. In the past year, this initiative has garnered the support of 47 mobile operator groups, which account for 239 mobile networks and 65% of worldwide connections. Collaborating with tech giants such as AWS, Infobip, Microsoft, Nokia, and Vonage, the initiative has successfully launched 94 APIs for enterprise developers in 21 markets spanning Africa, Asia-Pacific, Europe, the Middle East, and the Americas. These APIs have been developed for various applications, including fraud prevention and identity verification.

**Talent Arena**

The Mobile World Capital Barcelona successfully conducted the first-ever Talent Arena

hackathon at MWC Barcelona 2024, a newly introduced zone focusing on digital expertise. Over the course of two days, 48 tech experts took on the challenge to innovate and shape the future of telecommunications through their projects.

The Talent Arena, with its primary goal of fostering connections between digital professionals of varied disciplines and leading Barcelona-based companies, served as a hub for discovering emerging trends and career possibilities within the digital domain.

The hackathon, lasting 48 hours, resulted in three standout projects. The first-place project introduced a collaborative system for reporting issues to public administrations and confirming their locations. The second-place project was a streaming platform designed to enhance live video viewing experiences for users. The third-place project proposed a solution to improve healthcare for individuals in foreign countries who face language barriers.

In conclusion, Mats Granryd, Director General, GSMA noted: "Hearing truly compelling industry insights from the conference programme, and experiencing the innovation, ingenuity and optimism from the show floor, is why we meet in Barcelona every year. This event is about providing a glimpse into the future and demonstrating how AI, 5G and APIs are unlocking new possibilities, thanks to collaborative initiatives like GSMA Open Gateway."

## THE MWC24 IN NUMBERS

- Over 101,000 unique in-person attendees from 205 countries and territories
- Over 59% of attendees representing industries adjacent to the core mobile ecosystem
- Over 2,700 exhibitors, sponsors and partners
- Over 1,100 speakers and thought leaders, including over 40% female speakers
- 51% of attendees at director level and above, of which 21% were C-Suite
- 26% female attendees
- Over 2,600 journalists and industry analysts from around the world
- The GSMA Ministerial Programme convened over 180 delegations from 140 countries, including two heads of state, over 70 ministers, nearly



120 heads of regulatory authorities and over 40 intergovernmental organisations

- 4YFN, which this year celebrated its 10th anniversary edition, welcomed 930 exhibitors, 450 speakers and over 1,000 investors with collective funds totalling €50bn
- MWC Barcelona has been certified as carbon neutral for 10 years. And this year, use of the complimentary public transport

pass given to all MWC attendees increased by 42% compared to last year. With the GSMA's Environmental Programme, the aim is to minimise the environment footprint of MWC

- At the time of writing this, over 400,000 unique viewers of the keynotes and live sessions on the MWC Barcelona website, Mobile World Live and media partners platforms and media outlets

# Haley quits, paving way for Trump-Biden rematch

Reuters  
Charleston

Nikki Haley ended her long-shot challenge to Republican presidential front-runner Donald Trump yesterday, ensuring the former president will be the party's candidate in a rematch with Democratic President Joe Biden in November's election.

Haley, the former South Carolina governor and Trump's ambassador to the United Nations, bowed out a day after Super Tuesday, when Trump beat her soundly in 14 of 15 Republican nominating contests.

"The time has now come to suspend my campaign," Haley told supporters during a speech in Charleston. "I have no regrets." She said it was likely Trump — who repeatedly belittled her candidacy — would be the Republican nominee but did not endorse him.

"It is now up to Donald Trump to earn the votes of those in our party and beyond it who did not support him," she said. "And I hope he does that."

Drawing on her foreign policy experience at the UN, Haley said it was important to continue US global leadership. Throughout her campaign, Haley said the United

States must help Ukraine defend itself against Russian aggression, a position at odds with Trump.

"If we retreat further, there will be more war, not less," she said.

Trump did capture the endorsement yesterday of Mitch McConnell, the longtime Senate Republican leader who some party hardliners considered insufficiently allied with the former president.

"It should come as no surprise that as nominee, he will have my support," said McConnell, who is stepping down as leader.

There was no indication Trump would moderate his message.

Just as Haley was conceding the race, he criticised her before inviting her supporters to join him. "Nikki Haley got TROUNCED last night, in record setting fashion," Trump wrote on the Truth Social media platform.

In contrast, Biden praised Haley for daring to "speak the truth" about Trump and extended his own invitation to her supporters.

"Donald Trump made it clear he doesn't want Nikki Haley's supporters. I want to be clear: There is a place for them in my campaign," Biden said in a statement.

Haley lasted longer than any other Republican challenger to Trump but never posed a serious



**EXIT:** Republican presidential candidate Nikki Haley announces the suspension of her presidential campaign at her campaign headquarters in Daniel Island, South Carolina, yesterday. (AFP)

threat to the former president, whose iron grip on the party's base remains firm despite multiple criminal indictments.

The rematch between Trump, 77, and Biden, 81 — the first repeat US presidential contest since 1956 — is one that few Americans want. Opinion polls show both Biden and Trump have low approval ratings among voters.

The election promises to be deeply divisive in a country already riven by political polarisation. Biden has cast Trump as an existential danger to demo-

cratic principles, while Trump has sought to re-litigate his false claims that he won in 2020.

Haley, 52, drew support from deep-pocketed donors intent on stopping Trump from winning a third consecutive Republican presidential nomination, particularly after she notched a series of strong performances at debates that Trump opted to skip.

She ultimately failed to pry loose enough conservative voters.

But her stronger showing among moderate Republicans and independents highlighted how

Trump's scorched-earth style of politics could make him vulnerable in the November 5 election against Biden.

As in 2020, the race is likely to come down to a handful of swing states, thanks to the winner-take-all, state-by-state Electoral College system that determines the presidential election. Arizona, Georgia, Michigan, Nevada, North Carolina, Pennsylvania and Wisconsin are all expected to be closely contested in November.

The central issues of the campaign have already come into focus. Despite low unemployment, a red-hot stock market and easing inflation, voters experiencing post-pandemic inflation have voiced dissatisfaction with Biden on the economy.

Biden's other major weakness is the state of the US-Mexico border, where a surge of migrants overwhelmed the system after Biden eased some Trump-era policies. Trump's hawkish stance on immigration — including a promise to initiate the largest deportation effort in history — is at the core of his campaign, just as it was in 2016.

Voters expect Trump would do a better job on both the economy and immigration, according to opinion polls.

Trump may be dogged by criminal charges throughout the year. The federal case charging him with trying to overturn the 2020 election, perhaps the weightiest he faces, has been paused while Trump pursues a long-shot argument that he is immune from prosecution.

Biden has said Trump poses a threat to democracy, citing the January 6, 2021, attack on the US Capitol by a mob of Trump supporters seeking to reverse Biden's 2020 victory.

Haley had been among the first Republican contenders to enter the race in February 2023, but she only garnered attention after her standout debate performances later in the year.

Through it all, she was reluctant to completely disavow her former boss. Trump showed no such reticence, frequently insulting her intelligence and Indian heritage.

Only in the last months of her campaign did Haley begin to forcefully hit back at Trump, questioning his mental acuity, calling him a liar and saying he was too afraid to debate her.

Still, she said that as president she would pardon Trump if he were convicted in any of the criminal cases he faces, a position she never abandoned.

## Man vaccinated for Covid 217 times reports no side effects: scientists

A German man who deliberately got vaccinated for Covid-19 a whopping 217 times did not report any side effects from his many jabs, according to researchers studying possibly the "most vaccinated person in history".

The immune system of the 62-year-old man from the central German city of Magdeburg — who has not been named — is still firing on all cylinders, the researchers said in *The Lancet Infectious Diseases* journal. They said the man voluntarily received so many shots against all medical advice, and warned against jumping to far-reaching conclusions from this single case.

The man first came to the attention of the German-led researchers due to news reports in 2022, when he had only received 90 jabs.

Media reports at the time said the man was suspected of getting so many doses to collect the completed vaccination cards, which could then be forged and sold to people who did not want to be vaccinated. A public prosecutor in Magdeburg opened an investigation into allegations of fraud over the case but no criminal charges were filed, according to the scientific paper published earlier this week. The prosecutor collected

evidence of 130 vaccinations over nine months, it added. But the man claims to have received 217 vaccine doses of eight different Covid vaccines — including all mRNA versions — over 29 months. Kilian Schober, a virologist at Germany's University of Erlangen-Nuremberg and study co-author, said in a statement that when they contacted the man, he was "very interested" in undergoing a range of tests to examine the effect of so many vaccinations.

The case allowed the researchers an extremely rare chance to study what is known as "hyper-vaccination".

Some scientists have theorised that after being hit by so many vaccinations, a body's immune cells would become less effective as they became accustomed to the antigens. But that was not the case for the German man, the researchers found.

In fact, he had "considerably higher concentrations" of immune cells and antibodies for the Covid virus than a control group of three people who received the recommended three vaccinations, the study said.

His body also showed no sign of fatigue from all those vaccinations — his 217th jab still boosted his number of

antibodies against Covid, the researchers found.

The man reported that he never had any vaccine-related side effects from any of the 217 jabs. He also never tested positive for Covid and showed no signs of past infection, the researchers said.

But they warned against taking away any wider lessons from the man's experience.

"It should go without saying that we do not endorse hypervaccination," Schober wrote on X.

Caitjan Gainty, an expert in the history of vaccines at King's College London not involved in the study, told AFP she had "never come across a historical discussion of someone who received more vaccinations than this".

It is "relatively unlikely" that anyone has ever had more vaccinations than the man, she added.

Spyros Lytras, a virologist at the University of Tokyo, said it was a "comically large number of vaccinations".

"Whether this is the most vaccinated person in history, I cannot know, but they are certainly the most vaccinated person reported to date" by some margin, he told AFP. "And I doubt that we're going to see another such report any time soon."

## India opens new naval base near Maldives amid tensions

India yesterday opened a new naval base on its Indian Ocean island close to the Maldives, as ties with Male remain tense and New Delhi jostles anew with China for influence in the region.

INS Jatayu, the new base on Minicoy Island, on India's Lakshadweep archipelago, had been under construction for years, and is India's most distant base on its western coast. The navy has had a small presence on the island for decades.

The opening comes just as the Maldives pushes India to start withdrawing its nearly 80 troops who have been stationed there to provide technical and medical assistance on three aircraft given to its southern neighbour nation by India earlier.

The Maldives, which have traditionally had close ties to India, is pivoting towards Beijing since new President Mohamed Muizzu was elected in October on a promise to end the country's pro-India stance.

India's new base on Minicoy is around 78 miles from the Maldives. The region is important for New Delhi for securing the passage of maritime traffic through the Indian Ocean, and the new base will help in its surveillance efforts in the region.

The Indian Navy said in a statement yesterday that the base will strengthen its "foothold in the Lakshadweep island while extending capacity building, operational reach and sustenance in the region."

The navy also commissioned a new squadron of American MH-60R "Seahawk" choppers in Kochi, also on its western coast. The squadron, it said, will "augment our maritime surveillance and anti-submarine warfare capabilities".

Male has signed a new agreement on receiving military assistance from Beijing, "fostering strong bilateral ties", its defence ministry announced on social media platform X on Monday.

Muizzu has made an issue of the presence of the Indian troops in his country, and New Delhi has agreed to replace them after bilateral consultations.

Colonel Ahmed Mujthaba Mohamed, principal director of plans, policy and resources management for the Maldives National Defence Force, said yesterday that 26 Indian civilians had arrived to take over the control of aircraft from Indian military personnel.

"The plan to remove all Indian military personnel by May 10 is on track," he said, adding that the Indian civilian operations on aircraft platforms will be under the MNDF's command and control.

## Bhutto, hanged 44 years ago, didn't get a fair trial, SC rules



**RAW DEAL:** Zulfikar Ali Bhutto

Reuters  
Islamabad

Pakistan's Supreme Court ruled yesterday that former prime minister Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, who was hanged 44 years ago after being convicted of murder, didn't get a fair trial.

Bhutto, the founder of the Pakistan People's Party (PPP) now run by his grandson and former foreign minister Bilawal Bhutto Zardari, was hanged in 1979 after a trial under the military regime of late General Zia-ul-Haq.

"We didn't find that the fair trial and due process requirements were met," said Chief Justice Qazi Faez Isa in remarks telecast live of the ruling that he said was a unanimous decision by a nine-member bench headed by him.

Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif

hailed the ruling. "It is a positive development that a wrong done by a court has been corrected by a court," he said in a statement from his office.

The ruling came in response to a judicial reference filed by Bilawal's father, Asif Ali Zardari, during his tenure as president in 2011. It sought an opinion by the top court on revisiting the death sentence awarded to the PPP founder.

"Our family waited 3 generations to hear these words," Bilawal said later in a post on X.

The court will issue a detailed order later.

"It is an admission of colossal miscarriage of justice under Zia's martial law regime," said Yousef Nazir, London-based political commentator and a close aide of the late Benazir Bhutto, Zulfikar Ali Bhutto's daughter and also a former prime minister. She was assassinated in 2007.

Rights groups say Haq's 11 years of dictatorship were marked by an assault on democracy, persecution and jailing of PPP workers and public flogging of opponents and critics. Nazir said the regime also pushed the nation into extremism and militancy by propping up and backing militant groups to fight a US proxy war against the then Soviet Union in Afghanistan.

"It led to an unprecedented level of support for and patronage of religious extremists at the state level," he said.

## Russia hits Ukraine port as Zelensky, Greek PM visit

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky and Greek Prime Minister Kyriakos Mitsotakis were visiting the Black Sea port of Odesa yesterday when a Russian missile hit the infrastructure, close enough for leaders to see the strike. "It seems to me that we have not only heard, we have seen this strike today," Zelensky told a joint press conference.

The attack occurred at an estimated 500 to 800 metre distance from the delegations, sources said.

"You see who we're dealing with, they don't care where to hit."

The Ukrainian air force announced a ballistic missile threat in the region this morning but there were no official reports up until the press conference after leaders inspected the port and Ukraine's humanitarian corridor for maritime exports.

The strike killed five people, a Ukrainian navy spokesperson said. Mitsotakis, who was on his first visit to the country since Russia's invasion in February 2022, said that during the tour the delegation heard sirens and a big explosion as they headed towards their cars.

"I believe that this is for us the most vivid reminder that there is a real war waging here," Mitsotakis said, urging other European leaders to visit Ukraine to get a first-hand sense of the war's impact on civilians.

The Russian Defence Ministry said its troops attacked a hangar housing Ukrainian naval drones in the port, adding that "the goal has been achieved". Ukraine's Black Sea port infrastructure has been a constant target for Russian attacks, which have stepped up since mid-July when Moscow quit a UN-brokered deal that allowed safe passage of Ukrainian grain shipments and Kyiv established its own export corridor.

Russia has launched over 880 attack drones and over 170 missiles on Odesa region port infrastructure since, a Ukrainian navy commander said during the tour.

"No-one is intimidated by this new attempt at terror — certainly not the two leaders on the ground nor the brave people of Ukraine," European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen said on X, commenting on the attack. Greece, a Nato member and a traditional ally to Ukraine's bid to join the military alliance and the European Union, has offered military help to the country.

## 2023 was deadliest year for migrants in a decade: UN

AFP  
Geneva

At least 8,565 people died on migration routes worldwide in 2023, making it the deadliest year since records began a decade ago, the United Nations said yesterday.

"The 2023 death toll represents a tragic increase of 20% compared to 2022, highlighting the urgent need for action to prevent further loss of life," the UN's International Organisation for Migration said in a statement.

The IOM said last year's total surpassed the previous record reached in 2016, when 8,084 people died during migration. So far this year, 512 deaths have already been recorded.

The IOM said that because safe and regular migration pathways remain limited, hundreds of thousands of people attempt to migrate every year via irregular routes in unsafe conditions.

The Mediterranean Sea, where many migrants try to reach southern Europe from northern Africa, continues to be the deadliest route for migrants, with at least 3,129 deaths and disappearances registered last year.

It is the highest number of deaths on the Mediterranean migration routes since 2017.

In one incident alone an overcrowded trawler, the *Adriana*, sank

off the coast of Greece in on June 14 last year, with the loss of more than 600 lives.

Unprecedented numbers of migrant deaths were recorded last year across Africa (1,866) and Asia (2,138). In Africa, most of the deaths occurred in the Sahara Desert and the sea route to Spain's Canary Islands. In Asia, hundreds of deaths of Afghan and Rohingya refugees were recorded last year.

Slightly more than half of the total migrant deaths in 2023 came as a result of drowning, with 9% caused by vehicle accidents, and 7% in violence. "As we mark the Missing Migrants Project's 10 years, we first remember all these lives lost," said



People gather outside the Roosevelt Hotel, which serves as an intake centre for arriving migrants in the Midtown area of New York City on Tuesday. (Reuters)

# Alfardan Sports Motors, Touring Superleggera create new era of craftsmanship

Alfardan Sports Motors officially introduced the iconic Touring Superleggera brand to Qatar, marking a significant milestone in the luxury automotive landscape, in a landmark event at The Engine Room, St Regis Doha.

Alfardan Sports Motors, a beacon of luxury and excellence in the sports and luxury automotive industry, is renowned for bringing the most prestigious Italian car brands to Qatar's discerning clientele, a statement said.

Touring Superleggera, with its storied history of crafting custom, hand-built masterpieces since 1926, represents the pinnacle of Italian automotive artisanship and innovation.

The grand reveal, attended by the creme de la creme of Qatari society, showcased not only Touring Superleggera's entrance into the Qatari market but also the unveiling of an automotive masterpiece that transcends traditional boundaries of performance and aesthetics.

The unveiled Touring Superleggera "Vento D'Oro" model, distinguished by its unique golden leaf application on both the exterior and interior, serves as an example of the bespoke luxury that Touring Superleggera will offer to the Qatari market.

Present at the launch were dignitaries such as Omar Alfardan, president and CEO of Alfardan Group; Italian ambassador Paolo Toschi; Dr Ma'n Alhamawi, Chief Operations Officer at Alfardan Automotive Group; Husain Omar Alfardan, general manager - Business & Network Development at Alfardan Automotive Group; Fahad Hussain Alfardan, president Alfardan Exchange; Ali Alfardan, vice-chairman of the Alfardan Group and president of Alfardan Jewellery; Fardan Fahad Alfardan, founder and general manager of Alfardan Group's 'Safwa'; Charly Dagher, general manager at Alfardan Sports Motors, Touring Superleggera Qatar; Markus Tellenbach, CEO at Superleggera; and Matteo Gentile, head of Design at Superleggera, among other guests.

Commenting about this partnership, Omar Alfardan said: "Today's introduction of Touring Superleggera to the Qatari market underlines Alfardan Group's strategic vision of offering unparalleled luxury and bespoke craftsmanship. Superleggera, with its storied heritage of Italian design and innovation, perfectly embodies the ethos of excellence and exclusivity we strive for across all our ventures."



"This partnership is more than an addition to our portfolio; it is a testament to our commitment to curating exceptional experiences that resonate with the sophisticated preferences of our clientele. Together, Alfardan Group and Touring Superleggera are setting new benchmarks in the luxury and customised automotive sector, fostering a legacy of excellence that will continue to inspire and elevate the standards of luxury living in our beloved country."

Tellenbach shared his vision, saying: "As Touring Superleggera steps into the vibrant landscape of Qatar, we do so with a profound sense of pride and anticipation, partnering with Alfardan Group. Our brand's heritage, rooted in nearly a century of Italian craftsmanship, innovation and bespoke automotive artistry, resonates with the values of exclusivity and luxury that Alfardan Group embodies and specifically Alfardan Sports Motors."

"This collaboration is a confluence of legacies, where Touring Superleggera's storied history of creating automotive masterpieces meets Alfardan's unparalleled expertise in catering to the discerning tastes of the Qatari ultra-luxury market," he said.

"We are honoured that Alfardan Sports Motors will be the custodian of our brand in Qatar, bringing Touring Superleggera's tradition of excellence and bespoke luxury to the

esteemed clientele who appreciate the fine art of automotive design and craftsmanship."

Dagher, commenting on the significance of this launch, added: "The introduction of Touring Superleggera to Qatar through Alfardan Sports Motors heralds not just a new era of automotive luxury and bespoke design, but also an unparalleled ownership experience that sets a new benchmark in the realm of ultra-luxury automobiles."

"We are beyond delighted to showcase this extraordinary vehicle, which serves as a mere glimpse into the world of exclusivity and personalised luxury that awaits Touring Superleggera's esteemed clientele under the meticulous care of Alfardan Sports Motors. "Our commitment extends beyond the exquisite craftsmanship of these vehicles; we are dedicated to offering an ownership journey that is as unique and distinguished as each Touring Superleggera car itself. This includes bespoke services that cater to the individual desires and expectations of our clients, ensuring that every aspect of their experience is nothing short of extraordinary," Dagher said.

Alfardan Sports Motors announced that the newly unveiled masterpiece, will be featured for private preview during the holy month of Ramadan, offering an exclusive glimpse into the future of luxury automotive experiences in Qatar.

## New milestones in Qatar-US ties

From Page 1

On Ukraine, the US expressed deep appreciation for Qatar's pledge of \$100mn in humanitarian aid, as well as Qatar's recent success in brokering a deal to reunite with their families 11 Ukrainian children — the third and largest group of children reunited, thanks to Qatari diplomacy.

### Trade and Investment

Qatar and the US highlighted the strong economic and commercial relations between the two countries and discussed trade and two-way investment, as well as advancing co-operation in the fields of innovation, critical minerals, technology, secure information communications technology, and clean energy.

### Counterterrorism, Security

Qatar and the US highlighted their strong bilateral security partnership, expressing a desire to build greater collaboration and capacity in aviation and border security, information sharing, countering violent extremism and combating terrorism and the financing of terrorism. The US expressed its appreciation for robust ongoing counterterrorism co-ordination between the two countries.

### Defence Co-operation

The two governments further strengthened their co-operation and close security partnership under the existing Qatar-US Defence Co-operation Agreement and reaffirmed their commitment to promote peace and stability, counterterrorism, and grow the enduring Qatar-US defence partnership. In this context, the two sides emphasised the strategic significance of Al Udeid Air Base in Qatar for promoting regional peace and stability. They also discussed future upgrades to the base to increase efficiency and sustainability. The delegations also discussed the latest progress in military co-operation.

### Education and Cultural Ties

The US underscored the importance of deepening people-to-people ties to promote diversity, inclusion, and institutional excellence. US and Qatari officials also discussed additional areas of collaboration, including increasing professional and research-led academic exchanges. The two governments signed an MoU to

open the first "American Corner" in Qatar since 2014 at the Community College of Qatar.

In January 2024, the Qatari Ministry of Education and Higher Education announced plans to boost Qatari student enrolment in American higher education institutions in both Qatar and the US. Building on the existing US Fulbright Scholars programme, Qatar revived the Fulbright Visiting Scholar Program, and a Qatari Fulbright scholar will travel to the US in academic year 2024-2025.

### Labour, Human Rights Issues

Qatar and the US discussed joint efforts to combat human trafficking and advance labour rights. The two governments noted the importance of advancing co-operation to strengthen labour protection, including access to justice, as outlined in the November 2022 Letter of Intent signed by Secretary Blinken and Sheikh Mohamed bin Abdulrahman bin Jassim al-Thani. They expressed a shared desire to deepen protections for trafficking victims through screening and victim referral procedures. Both sides discussed how to address rising antisemitism and Islamophobia around the world.

### Emerging Technology

Qatar and the US held high-level interagency consultations on emerging technology — the first ever such session in a strategic dialogue with a regional partner. Both sides discussed the risks and benefits of Artificial Intelligence (AI). They decided to explore ways to deepen co-operation on emerging technologies to advance global health, food security, education, energy, and the fight against climate change.

### FIFA Men's World Cup 2026

Following the Letter of Intent on building strong World Cup legacies signed by HE Sheikh Mohamed and Blinken in 2022, the two sides convened a special strategic dialogue session devoted to World Cup "lessons learned" and knowledge transfer from the 2022 tournament in Doha on topics ranging from cybersecurity to major event organisation. Officials from the Governments of Canada and Mexico, co-hosts along with the US of the 2026 World Cup, also participated in the discussion — along with representatives from US municipalities hosting games in 2026.

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