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Qatar Airways net profit hits record QR6.1bn

By Pratap John
Business Editor

Qatar Airways Group has reported the strongest financial performance in its 27-year history, announcing record profits of QR6.1bn for the 2023/24 financial year.

The national airline group earned a total revenue of QR8.1bn, representing an increase of QR4.7bn, up 6% compared to last year.

Qatar Airways Group generated a strong EBITDA margin of 24% at QR19.1bn, nearly QR1.2bn higher than the previous year, reflecting the business's continued focus on customer experience, innovation, digitalisation and sustainability, resulting in streamlined, agile and fit-for-



purpose operations across all areas.

This has created a strong platform for the future of the group's airline business, which carried more than 40mn passengers during the 2023/24 fiscal, an increase of 26% over the previous year.

As a result, passenger revenue increased by 19%, with a capacity increase of 21% driven by the airline's highest-ever load factor

of 83%, offering a sustainable upsurge in market share.

Qatar Airways Group Chairman and HE the Minister of State for Energy Affairs, Saad bin Sherida al-Kaabi said: "This latest remarkable annual performance demonstrates Qatar Airways Group's flexibility and resilience in successfully navigating a constantly evolving global travel industry, and indicates a strong and sustained rebound from the challenges faced by the sector in recent years."

Qatar Airways Group Chief Executive Officer Badr Mohamed al-Meer said: "These very strong financials are a testament to the ambition and clear direction that has informed the Qatar Airways Group's progress throughout the 2023/24 financial year. **To Page 3**

Amir to visit Kazakhstan, Poland



QNA
Doha

His Highness the Amir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani will pay a working visit to the friendly Republic of Kazakhstan today, during which His Highness the Amir will meet President Kassym-Jomart Tokayev to discuss boosting bilateral relations and several regional and international issues of common interest.

His Highness the Amir will

also participate in the Shanghai Co-operation Organisation (SCO) summit in the capital, Astana, with the participation of a number of leaders of SCO member states, heads of governments, regional and international organisations and guests of the summit.

After that, His Highness the Amir will head to the friendly Republic of Poland on an official visit during which he will meet with President Andrzej Duda and several senior Polish officials.

His Highness the Amir will be accompanied by an official delegation.

116 killed in stampede

At least 116 people, many of them women and children, were killed in a stampede at a Hindu religious gathering in northern India yesterday. The stampede happened in a village in Hathras district in Uttar Pradesh, about 200km southeast of New Delhi. The tragedy occurred when a crowd of devotees started pushing towards the stage after the event to touch the preacher, said Yogi Adityanath, CM of the state. **Page 9**

1.9mn now displaced in Gaza: UN

The UN humanitarian coordinator for Gaza said yesterday that 1.9mn people were now displaced in the territory, adding she was "deeply concerned" by reports of new evacuation orders for Khan Yunis.

The United Nations has estimated that up to 250,000 people are impacted by the Israeli military order for civilians to leave Al-

Qarara, Bani Suhaila and other localities near the territory's second city of Khan Yunis.

"Over 1 million people have been displaced once again, desperately seeking shelter and safety (and) 1.9 million people are now displaced across Gaza... I'm deeply concerned about reports of new evacuation orders issued in the area of Khan Yunis."

Sigrid Kaag told the UN Security Council.

"Palestinian civilians in Gaza have been plunged into an abyss of suffering. Their homes life shattered, their lives upended. The war has not merely created the most profound of humanitarian crises. It has unleashed a maelstrom of human misery," Kaag added. **Page 6**




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Labour minister chairs Workforce Planning Committee's first meeting



HE the Minister of Labour Dr Ali bin Smaikh al-Marri chaired yesterday the first meeting of the Workforce Planning Committee, with HE Abdulaziz bin Nasser al-Khalifa, President of the Civil Service and Government Development Bureau and Secretary-General of the National Planning Council, as vice-chairman, along with other committee members. The committee includes representatives from various government ministries and agencies, such as Defence, Interior, Finance, Commerce, Education and Higher Education, Labour, Qatar Central Bank, QatarEnergy, the National Planning Council, and Civil Service and Government Development Bureau.

During the meeting, the Workforce Planning Committee reviewed its principles and developed a work plan to ensure alignment with the Third National Development Strategy 2024-2030. This strategy focuses on enhancing labour market productivity by leveraging national talent with advanced skills, skilled expatriate workers and increasing the national workforce in the private sector. The Workforce Planning Committee was established by Cabinet Decision No 4 on March 3, 2024. According to this decision, the committee is responsible for coordinating between government entities and the private sector for effective workforce planning. Its duties include addressing challenges, setting guidelines and future goals for employment in

both sectors, evaluating educational achievements in the country, aligning them with current and future labour market needs, and examining and recommending factors that influence employment rates in government and key private sector economic fields. Qatar aims to enhance its workforce skills through recruitment policy reforms, new visas for entrepreneurs, students and elite talent, as well as encouraging the private sector to hire more Qataris in medium to high-skilled positions, launching national workforce development initiatives in partnership with private companies, and improving higher education to meet labour market demands, with the goal of achieving a 46% highly skilled workforce. (QNA)

Al-Muraikhi meets Kyrgyzstan's deputy FM

HE the Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Sultan bin Saad al-Muraikhi met yesterday with the visiting Deputy Foreign Minister of the Kyrgyz Republic Avazbek Atakhanov. Co-operation relations between the two countries and ways to support and strengthen them were discussed during the meeting. (QNA)



Doha hosts UN, Special Envoys' meetings with Afghan civil society

Doha hosted yesterday meeting of UN Under-Secretary-General for Political and Peacebuilding Affairs Rosemary DiCarlo and the Special Envoys' convening with representatives of the Afghan civil society as part of the 3rd meeting of Special Envoys on Afghanistan. DiCarlo said that she listened to valuable insights and perspectives from members of the Afghan civil society, and presented to special envoys and the United Nations, regarding the rights of women and minorities in the country, as well as girls' education, media, business and other wide-ranging issues. She added that the participants shared viewpoints on the Doha process, along with the engagement between Afghanistan and

international community in general, highlighting that the meeting was extremely critical and useful and was based on the outcomes of the previous meeting held in Doha last February. DiCarlo affirmed that the diversity of opinions heard from the participants and the talks held with the authorities underlined that Afghan civil society is not homogeneous, and there is a need to build trust and to engage in honest dialogue, based on the precepts of the United Nations Charter and various human rights treaties to which Afghanistan is a party. This process is based on the independent evaluation recognised by the United Nations' Security Council last November, which calls for more co-ordina-

tion process with unequivocal conditions and expectations of all parties, DiCarlo noted, and called for pursuing a principled step-by-step approach with a clear understanding of outcomes and commitments from all parties, where human rights, particularly the rights of women and girls, and inclusion remain integral parts of all discussions. Regarding the next phase of discussions, DiCarlo said there have been discussions on establishing smaller groups around key issues in the independent assessment. She assured that the discussions will proceed, as they are still at the beginning of the process, but said it will take time and patience, since UN's approach has one goal which is to assist all people of Afghanistan. (QNA)

Qatar participates in GCC anti-drug co-ordination meeting



Qatar participated yesterday in a virtual co-ordination meeting of the Gulf Co-operation Council (GCC) to discuss holding awareness-raising events on the dangers of using drugs. Assistant Director of the Public Relations Department, the Ministry of Interior, Colonel Dr Jabr Hamoud Jabr al-Naimi, represented Qatar at the meeting which brought together representatives of the GCC ministries of interior, the GCC Permanent Mission to the UN Office in Vienna, and the GCC Criminal Information Center to Combat Drugs. The meeting discussed a set of proposals on organising an annual event called the Gulf Anti-

Drug Week in conjunction with the International Day Against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking, which falls annually on June 26, as well as a unified exhibition for the GCC anti-drug agencies, on the sidelines of the UN Commission on Narcotic Drugs meetings at the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) headquarters in Vienna. (QNA)

Al-Muraikhi bids farewell to Nepal's envoy



HE the Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Sultan bin Saad al-Muraikhi met yesterday with Nepal's ambassador to Qatar Dr Naresh Bikram Dhakal on the occasion of the end of his tenure. HE al-Muraikhi thanked the ambassador for his efforts in enhancing and promoting bilateral relations and wished him success in his new duties. (QNA)

Polish president receives credentials of Qatar's envoy



President of Poland Andrzej Duda received the credentials of Saud bin Abdullah Zaid al-Mahmoud as ambassador extraordinary and plenipotentiary of Qatar to Poland. The ambassador conveyed His Highness the Amir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani's greetings and wishes of good health and happiness to president of Poland, and further progress and prosperity to the government and people of Poland. For his part, president of Poland entrusted the ambassador to convey his greetings to His Highness the Amir, wishing His Highness good health and happiness, and Qatar continued progress and development. (QNA)

Special envoy of FM meets Afghan caretaker government spokesman



HE the Special Envoy of the Minister of Foreign Affairs ambassador Faisal bin Abdullah al-Hanzab met with Spokesman of the caretaker government of Afghanistan Zabihullah Mujahid, on the sidelines of the 3rd UN Meeting of Special Envoys on Afghanistan, taking place in Doha. During the meeting, the latest developments in Afghanistan were reviewed, in addition to discussing the agenda of the 3rd UN Meeting of Special Envoys. (QNA)

Special envoy of FM discusses Afghan peace with officials on sidelines of UN meeting



HE the Special Envoy of the Minister of Foreign Affairs ambassador Faisal bin Abdullah al-Hanzab met separately with Special Representative of the British Prime Minister for Afghanistan Andrew McCoubrey, China's Special Envoy for Afghan Affairs Dr Yue Xiaoyong and Director of Indo-Pacific, South Asia and Afghanistan Erik Kurzwil. The meetings were held on the margin of the 3rd UN Meeting of Special Envoys on Afghanistan, in Doha. During the meetings, ways to enhance stability and peace in Afghanistan and support the aspirations of the Afghan people for a decent life were discussed. The importance of the Doha process to achieve the desired progress was also emphasised during the meetings. (QNA)



Qatar Airways records profit of QR6.1bn

From Page 1

“Our continued focus on profitability, efficiency and customer experience has been underpinned by a strategic programme of network growth and fleet expansion, resulting in the highest revenues and profit margins in the history of the airline,” al-Meer said. “We also cemented our undisputed role as a key industry leader, maintaining our position as the airline of choice for millions of passengers worldwide.”

“This incredible achievement is in no small part thanks to the collective endeavour of the entire Qatar Airways Group family, who have worked tirelessly to achieve such stellar results,” he added. “We must now use this as a foundation on which to build our continued success.”

As it celebrates its milestone 20th year of operation in 2024, Qatar Airways Cargo maintained its position as the world’s leading air cargo carrier, forging ahead with a strategic focus on digitalisation, sustainability and growth contributing towards an increase in Qatar Airways Cargo’s market share to 7.1% in 2023/24, up by 0.04% compared to the previous financial year.

Airline subsidiary Qatar Executive (QE) continued to deliver a solid business performance in a highly competitive market operating as the only business jet brand owned and fully integrated with a commercial airline.

With consistent growth over the 2023/24 fiscal year, the QE saw an increase in commercial charter revenue of more than 17%, with a rise in flying hours of over 21% illustrating its strong customer growth, particularly in Europe, the US and Asia.

“Our investment in Qatar Airways’ loyalty programme, the Privilege Club, yielded significant results during 2023/24, with membership increasing by more than 26%,” al-Meer said. “Member engagement also reached record levels with Avios collection growing at over 50%, while Avios spend has grown by 75%, in a year that witnessed the launch of key partnerships in India, Saudi Arabia and Kuwait, in addition to the exciting new products in our home market.”

Qatar Airways’ network grew to more than 170 destinations in 2023/24, adding Al Ula, Neom and Tabuk in Saudi Arabia; Lyon and Toulouse in France; Medan in Indonesia; and Trabzon in Turkey throughout the year.

This is in addition to the resumption of operations to 14 destinations: Bahrain; Birmingham in the UK; Beijing, Chengdu and Chongqing in China; Davao in the Philippines; Tokyo Haneda and Osaka in Japan; Marrakesh; Nice in France; Penang in Malaysia; Phnom Penh, Ras Al Khaimah in the UAE; and Yanbu in Saudi Arabia.

The group’s commercial team played an instrumental role in bolstering the competitive position, innovating to exceed customer demand, growing revenue and market share, and ensuring the Qatar Airways Group name is synonymous with excellence evident through airline being awarded the “Best Airline in the Middle East” at the 2023 World Airline Awards managed by Skytrax.

Environmental violations spotted in Al Khor area

The Ministry of Environment and Climate Change has spotted two violating boats in Al Khor area, the ministry posted at its official X account.

The two boats were casting fishing nets on the coral reef. Accordingly, the Marine Protection Department issued violation reports to the two boats and referred them to the concerned entities for necessary procedures against them. The department also urged the public and seagoers to keep the marine environment clean, avoid throwing garbage into the seawater, or use banned fishing tools and gear such as the fishing nets made of nylon and having multiple layers.

The department added that fishing is banned at the coral reef areas.

Arabic calligraphy contest launched at QM

HE the Minister of Endowments (Awqaf) and Islamic Affairs, Ghanem bin Shaheen al-Ghanim, yesterday inaugurated the first edition of the Qatar International Arabic Calligraphy Competition (Al-Raqeem).

Organised by the Sheikh Abdulla Bin Zaid Al Mahmoud Islamic Cultural Centre (Fanar) in collaboration with the Museum of Islamic Art (MIA), the event was launched at Qatar Museum and is considered the largest contest in the international Arabic calligraphy with its multiple types and highest value of prizes that reaches QR1mn.

General Manager of Fanar and Chairperson of the organising committee Dr Saleh bin Ali al-Marri affirmed that the contest came to enhance Qatar’s works and its civilisational role worldwide and epitomise the goals of the Qatar National Vision 2030, in entrenching its cultural role in the Middle East and the world.

Dr al-Marri added that the contest ef-



fectively promotes cultural exchange among nations in support of superb cultural initiatives which are evaluated through a whole-of-government approach in Qatar to serve the Holy Qur’an

and consolidate the significance of the Arabic language, in addition to exploring further human’s creative capabilities in Arabic calligraphy with its numerous types in appreciation of its value as effec-

tive means of sharing civilisational culture among nations.

He commended MIA’s collaboration in organizing this productive cultural and civilisational project that reinforces Qatar’s global, scientific, and cultural efforts, thus creating a bridge of beauty among nations and combining spirit with words in support of the Arabic language, nurturing the national and Arab identity, reviving Islamic culture and its arts and forging dialogue and cultural exchange among nations.

Following the inauguration ceremony, the organising committee held a press conference to declare the competition’s branches, conditions and prizes, with the chairman of the committee unveiling five branches in Arabic calligraphy, namely Thuluth Jali and Thuluth ‘Adi, Naskh script, Jali Nastaliq script, Diwani Jali script, and Kufic Mushaf script. The judging panel consists of five senior calligraphers from around the world. (QNA)

QIB offers summer rewards for MasterCard cardholders

Qatar Islamic Bank (QIB) has launched its summer spends campaign that offers MasterCard credit and debit cardholders the chance to win an electric car and a total of QR300,000 in cash prizes.

All 30 winners will be selected randomly in a draw in the presence of official representatives of the Ministry of Commerce and Industry and the QIB.

Running until September 30, the campaign will see one winner take home a brand-new BMW iX40 electric car.

Cardholders whose total spend during the campaign period reaches a total of QR50,000 will earn five chances to win the grand prize.

In addition, 30 MasterCard cardholders will receive a cash prize of QR10,000 each. Every international MasterCard credit or debit card transaction worth QR500 or more will give four chances to win, while every domestic MasterCard credit card transaction worth QR500 or more will get one chance to win.



The QIB is also extending welcome reward points to new MasterCard credit cardholders. Once they activate their card and make a

minimum purchase of QR500 within first 30 days of card issuance, they will receive guaranteed reward points based on their chosen card tier: 5,000 reward points for

MasterCard platinum and 10,000 points for MasterCard world credit card.

“We are pleased to partner with MasterCard for another exciting summer campaign, a reflection of our mutual commitment towards enhancing the customer experience and delivering innovation in the payments industry,” said QIB general manager (Personal Banking Group) D Anand. “Such campaigns create meaningful value for our customers and further develop Qatar’s banking environment.”

Erdem Cakar, MasterCard country manager (Qatar and Kuwait), said: “We believe in rewarding our cardholders and offering them exclusive offers and exciting prizes all through the summer season.”

“Keeping up with our strategic vision and dedication to customer success, this rewards campaign is yet another demonstration of our commitment to building a partnership with the QIB,” he said. “It is through similar campaigns that we enhance customer experience, and further encourage cashless payments.”

QRDI Council joins London Tech Week as global innovation partner

THE Qatar Research, Development and Innovation (QRDI) Council has participated at London Tech Week (LTW) 2024 as the global innovation partner.

Bringing together 45,000 attendees across the week, including corporates, startups, investors, and policymakers, London Tech Week was a unique opportunity to showcase Qatar’s thought leadership and value propositions in the technology and innovation space.

The QRDI Council delegation, accompanied by leaders from the Qatar Investment Authority, Invest Qatar, Qatar Development Bank, Milaha, and Qatar University, engaged in critical discussions with international counterparts, underscoring Qatar’s commitment to fostering a robust research, development, and innovation (RDI) ecosystem.

As part of the Global Leaders Innovation Summit at London Tech Week 2024, the QRDI Council led a roundtable session on Re-



sponsible & Inclusive Tech: How do we build and sustain an inclusive tech ecosystem?

The invitation-only event session involved top innovation leaders to discuss the impact of technology-driven innovations on people’s lives and work, and to address how to approach mitigating the negative impact of these

innovations without slowing their pace.

On the first day of the LTW, Dr Abdulaziz Khalid al-Ali from Qatar University spoke in the panel discussion on *The Power of AI to Transform Industries*, in which discourse revolved around the transformative power of artificial intelligence (AI) and its implica-

tions on productivity, efficiency and business success.

On the second day, the QRDI Council’s chief adviser for Innovation and Enterprise, Dr Maher Hakim, delivered two sessions.

The first one on *Technology Innovation: It Is Not All Rosy* highlighted the threats caused by technology innovation and the

need of new approaches and tools to steer collective investments in future technologies and innovations.

His second session on *Financing Your Startup: There are a lot more options than you think!* showcased the types of startups and startup stages in addition to sharing the various sources of financing available to entrepreneurs globally and in Qatar.

Milaha’s vice-president for container shipping, Peter Verheijen, spoke in the panel discussion on *Green Supply Chains - Driving Decarbonisation at Scale*, discussing key points including transport decarbonisation, lower carbon supply chains, accelerating zero-emissions transitions, and circular supply chains.

QDB senior manager of investment Mohamed al-Emadi contributed to the session on *Does Place Matter? Where To Found a Startup and How To Go Global*, discussing the various options startups should consider as they think of going global, particularly what is available in Qatar.

GU-Q students learn to tackle climate change on trip to Greece

Students from Georgetown University in Qatar (GU-Q) have reflected on a journey that had transformed their understanding of climate change.

They had spent two weeks in Greece as part of the “Greece Summer Symposium: Adaptation in a Climate Change Hotspot”, a programme jointly organised by the GU-Q and Georgetown University’s Earth Commons Institute hub in Greece to study and find solutions to environmental challenges in Greece.

The immersive trip is part of a new GU-Q environmental science course offered in the fall.

With recent wildfires and rising temperatures outpacing the global average, Greece provided a vivid context for their studies.

Fourteen GU-Q students from 12 countries crisscrossed the nation, from Athens’ historical sites and forests that faced recent catastrophic wildfires to organic farms on the islands of Andros and Paros and cutting-edge desalination plants on Syros Island.

They explored ways to save water, such as collecting rain and reusing greywater, and spoke with locals about reducing waste

and protecting marine life.

“We wanted students to grasp the bigger picture - how climate change affects water resources, food security, ecosystems, and entire communities,” said Prof Raha Hakimdavar, who designed and is teaching the course.

Throughout the symposium, students participated in workshops, field visits, and discussions led by local and regional experts, gaining insight into Greece’s unique challenges and innovative approaches to environmental management and sustainability.

This hands-on learning enhanced the students’ ability to “fully understand and explain complex environmental issues to anyone,” according to Prof Hakimdavar.

The students’ diverse experiences, like learning about farming methods that protect the environment on Andros Island and Paros, will inform future policy recommendations focused on eco-friendly tourism, water conservation, and community engagement.

By the end of the symposium, students left Greece with a



The GU-Q students spent two weeks in Greece.

stronger sense of environmental stewardship.

Reflecting on the journey, Prof Hakimdavar said: “There is no better way to learn about environmental issues than in the field with experts. Through the unique

immersive component of this course, we hope to inspire our students to lead the fight against global challenges.”

Over the next few months, students will work in groups to develop targeted solutions to the

environmental challenges observed during their trip.

The novel approaches developed through these final course projects will then be shared with the programme partners in Greece.

Fifth batch of Qatari aid arrives for drought-affected people in Namibia



A Qatar Armed Forces plane arrived Monday in Namibia, carrying 42 tonnes of food aid (the fifth batch). The food aid contains wheat produced by the Qatar Armed Forces, along with food baskets provided by the Qatar Fund for Development (QFFD). This aid comes within the framework of Qatar's support for Namibia and its people who are affected by the drought in the country. (QNA)

Al-Muraikhi receives credentials of Conakry's ambassador



HE the Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Sultan bin Saad al-Muraikhi received yesterday a copy of the credentials of the ambassador of Guinea (Conakry) to Qatar, Thierno Abdoulaye Sow. HE al-Muraikhi wished the ambassador success in his duties, and assured him of providing all support to advance bilateral relations in various fields. (QNA)

Lebanese caretaker PM meets Qatar's envoy



Prime Minister of the Lebanese caretaker government Najib Mikati met on Monday with Qatar's ambassador in Beirut Sheikh Saud bin Abdulrahman al-Thani. The meeting discussed bilateral relations. During the meeting, the prime minister expressed his country's thanks to Qatar for supporting state institutions, especially the Lebanese army. (QNA)

Kuwait FM meets Qatar's envoy



Kuwaiti Foreign Minister Abdullah al-Yahya met yesterday with Qatar's ambassador Ali bin Abdullah al-Mahmoud. The meeting discussed co-operation between the countries and ways to support and develop them. (QNA)



INVITATION TO TENDER

Tender Reference	Description	Tender Fee (QAR)	Tender Bond Value (QAR)	Bid Closing Date
HBKU-RFQ-211	Supply of Electronics Consumables for Science & Engineering Laboratory (HBKU)	500.00	NA	24-July-2024 02:00 PM
HBKU-RFQ-215	Supply of Labware Consumable to QF/HBKU and its Entities on Call-off Basis for 3 years	1000.00	100,000.00	31-July-2024 02:00 PM
QF-RFQ-545	Supply, Installation, Training, Commissioning and On-Site Support of High Performance Computing Cluster in Imputation Service Infrastructure in QPHI	1000.00	100,000.00	30-July-2024 02:00 PM

Qatar Foundation (QF) Procurement & Program Management Directorate is inviting companies to participate in the above listed public tenders. To receive the tender documents, please follow the below steps:

1) **Supplier Registration** It is mandatory to be registered as a supplier with QF in order to participate in the above tenders. Only QF registered suppliers will be allowed to pay the tender fees online. Therefore, please visit QF website at <https://www.qf.org.qa/supplier-registration> to complete the Supplier Registration process.

Tender Fee: Interested bidders can Sign in by visiting this link <https://suppliers.qf.org.qa/abstract> and pay the respective non-refundable and non-transferrable tender fee online.

All Tender Fees are to be paid using credit cards only.

Tender Fee Payment Dates: Payment of Tender Fee online will be from 3rd July until 11th July 2024.

2) All bidders, who are registered and have paid the required tender fees online to QF, will then be granted access to download the Tender Document.

3) Technical and commercial bids need to be submitted and attached online in QF Supplier Portal as per instructions provided in the "Supplier Portal" work instruction.

- The commercial bid must be valid for **180 days** from Bid Closing Date.
- The commercial bid must be accompanied by a bank guarantee (tender bond) issued by a local bank in Qatar and should be valid for **180 days** from the bid closing date (where applicable as per the Tender documents).
- The successful tenderer will be required to submit a performance bond as prescribed in each of the above tender documents.
- Qatar Foundation special qualifications, terms and conditions shall apply as stipulated in the tender document.

Note: All work instructions for Supplier registration and Supplier portal can be found in below link: <https://www.qf.org.qa/supplier-registration>

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-6000001010	DESIGN, ENGINEERING, PROCUREMENT, FABRICATION, CONSTRUCTION AND INSPECTION AND TESTING SERVICES (EPC) - TO PROVIDE BYPASS ARRANGEMENT FROM U0001 OUTLET TO U0002 OUTLET LINE TO BYPASS H2S REMOVAL UNIT IN AMMONIA 3 and 4 PLANTS	500/- (Non-refundable)	1,081,570.16/- (one million eighty-one thousand five hundred seventy riyals and sixteen dirhams only)	03.07.2024 04.07.2024 07.07.2024 08.07.2024 09.07.2024 10.07.2024	06.08.2024

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 : **QA51QNB000000000013025828058**
 - 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 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 44227797
- 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 09:30 – 11 :00 hours during the Holy month of Ramadan and 09:30 – 11:30 hours and 12:30 – 14:00 hours, of any working day of the Company, on/before the "Tender Closing Date".

AJCS releases book on Palestinian national security

The Al Jazeera Center for Studies (AJCS) released a new book on Monday titled, *Vision on Palestinian national security: concept, challenges, opportunities, and ways for improvement* authored by Palestinian researcher Alaa al-Najjar.

The book investigates various aspects pertaining to the concept of national security, with a focus on the approaches of small states towards their national securities, and then moves on and addresses Palestinian national security in depth, considering the Palestinian geopolitical reality, the unfolding of Palestinian security work, and the applicability of the concept of national security to the Palestinian reality, in light of its own particularity. It also discusses challenges relating to Israel, notably the ongoing Israeli expansion in service of security interests, resulting in control over Palestinian land as well as the tightening blockade of the Gaza Strip and Palestinian communities in the West Bank, in addition to Israeli dominance over the Palestinian economy and its dependency on Israel. Al-Najjar then goes on to discuss the impact of regional and international factors and players linked to Palestinian national security, pointing to the Palestinian people's lack of a strategic international ally against the backdrop of Israel's strategic alliance with the US. He also touches on the nature of the international world order and the composition of the UN Security Council. (QNA)

QatarEnergy LNG Tender Invitation



No.	TENDER NUMBER / DESCRIPTION	TENDER ISSUE PERIOD	TENDER FEE (QAR)	TENDER BOND (USD)	TENDER CLOSING DATE
1	LTC/C/FDE/6533/24 PROVISION OF GENERAL ENGINEERING SERVICES ON CALL-OFF BASIS	01/07/2024 to 13/07/2024	0	100,000	31/07/2024

Scope of Work:

- Provision of following services on call-off basis:
- General Engineering Services including Feasibility Studies, Concept definition development and selection, Engineering Consultancy, Pre-FEED, FEED, Detailed design, Specialized Engineering Services, OEM Engineering Coordination, Process Enhancement, Value Engineering Services, Engineering Project Management / Support Services, Engineering Standards & Specification Support and Documentation Services
 - Engineering Manpower Services and
 - Miscellaneous Engineering Services.

Mandatory requirements for this Tender are as below:

- Tenderer should have proven experience in handling similar work/services as shown above in last 5 years for Oil & Gas/Petrochemical industry
- Tenderer should have demonstrated handling minimum Five (5) LNG and / or Oil & Gas / Petrochemical Facility Greenfield / Brownfield projects
- Tenderer shall have an established Engineering Office
- Tenderer shall have current and valid ISO 9001 certification
- Tenderer shall have comprehensive Engineering Standards/Guidelines (Design Manual)

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

Place for Tender Collection and Bid Submission:

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

Note: Effective from 1st July 2023, bids received from Local Companies (established under the Laws of State of Qatar with local Commercial Registration) who are not in possession of an ICV score in the ICV portal by Bid Closing Date (or commercial bid submission date if separately mentioned/notified) will not be accepted. Local Company that has been established for less than 2 years and insurance companies are exempted from this requirement. For further details please visit ICV Digital Portal:- <https://icv.qa/US>

Amir's participation in SCO summit 'increases significance of event'

Kazakhstan's ambassador to Qatar Arman Issagaliyev has stated that the working visit of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani today to Kazakhstan comes in the context of the distinguished bilateral relations built on support and mutual respect between the two friendly countries.

In remarks to the Qatar News Agency (QNA), he said that His Highness the Amir's participation in the Shanghai Co-operation Organisation (SCO) Summit will remarkably increase the significance of this event, given Qatar's active role in mediation to resolve international conflicts and disputes, and its constructive position on a number of pressing issues of sustainable development.

Issagaliyev noted that Qatar possesses tremendous advantages and experience in various fields, including economy, politics, and energy, and expressed confidence that Qatar, as a dialogue partner state in the SCO, will make a significant contribution to finding the most acceptable solutions according to the organisation's agenda.

He said that Qatar and Kazakhstan work together in many areas, citing the two historic state visits of His Highness the Amir to Kazakhstan in 2022, and the visit of President of Kazakhstan Kassym-Jomart Tokayev to Qatar in February this year, and the number of agreements and memorandums of understanding that have been signed between the two countries in various fields.

In March this year both countries signed an agreement to establish a long-term strategic partnership for developing projects in priority sectors.

The governments of both countries are now actively working on implementing the agreements reached, including joint projects in the fields of energy, agriculture, and healthcare.

To date, companies based in Qatar have already entered the telecommunications and banking sectors in Kazakhstan, which will contribute to increasing competition and improving service quality.

As a next phase of co-operation, information technology and infrastructure projects could be among the promising areas, given Qatar's extensive positive experience in these fields.

Issagaliyev believed that the results of the upcoming meeting would provide additional momentum to the entire scope of bilateral relations as part of enhancing the strategic partnership between Kazakhstan and Qatar.

Regarding the SCO, the envoy said that the organisation is today one of the most influential in mainland Asia.

The organisation's nine member states, home to more than 3.5bn people, account for a quarter of global GDP and more than 15% of global trade.

Possessing significant political influence, significant economic opportunities and colossal human resources, the SCO is able to make a significant contribution to achieving sustainable development goals and overcoming modern challenges of humanity.

"Kazakhstan, as the presiding country in the SCO, will continue to enhance the organisation's global role, helping to strengthen friendship and good neighbourliness," Issagaliyev said. "To this end, we have identified six main priorities for our chairmanship in the organisation: ensuring security and stability in the SCO space, expanding trade and economic ties, strengthening energy co-operation, expanding co-operation in the digital sphere, strengthening interaction in the field of ecology, and developing cultural and humanitarian ties."

The envoy added that Kazakhstan intends to continue consolidating international efforts aimed at providing assistance to the Afghan people under the auspices and with the co-ordinating role of the UN.

Astana counts on the support of the SCO in the implementation of the Kazakh initiative to create a UN Regional Centre for Sustainable Development Goals for Central Asia and Afghanistan in Almaty.

To expand trade and economic relations in the SCO region, Issagaliyev said that Kazakhstan proposed to focus on creating favourable conditions for increasing mutual trade turnover, removing existing trade barriers, and launching joint ventures.

To increase the investment attractiveness of the organisation, Kazakhstan is calling for the use of the Astana International Financial Centre to stimulate direct and portfolio investments in SCO regional projects.

Issagaliyev highlighted that Kazakhstan places great importance on developing transportation and implementing regional infrastructure projects within the SCO region and has proposed creating a partnership network of major strategic ports and logistics centres.

The envoy said that at the upcoming SCO Astana Summit, the member states will agree on and adopt the SCO Energy Strategy, pointing out that an important feature of modern world development is the rapid introduction of digital technologies into all spheres of life, which form the basis of the economy of the future.

Therefore, he added, Kazakhstan aims to expand co-operation between the SCO countries in the digital sphere, both to systematically reduce the digital divide between different countries and social groups, and to provide favourable conditions for their sustainable economic development.

In this regard, Kazakhstan is offering its services as a digital hub in the SCO space. - QNA



Media City Qatar in pact with France's Cite de Memoire

Media City Qatar (MCQ) has announced the signing of a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with Cite de Memoire, a leading Paris-based organisation dedicated to using the power of digital transformation and cutting-edge media to preserve and promote various scales of media content assets including public arts, at the Arab States Broadcasting Union in Tunis.

Under the MoU, Cite de Memoire will partner and support the MCQ in a project of national importance for Qatar: the design, implementation, and subsequent operation of a new National Media Digitisation & Preservation Centre.

Under the agreement Cite de Memoire will provide training to archivists and managers, and draw on its three decades of expertise in assisting with this national mission to archive, digitise, and catalogue all formats of audio, video, films, images, documents, artefacts, and others to ensure both Qatar's heritage and its current endeavours are preserved for future generations.

"We are delighted to enter this partnership with Cite de Memoire, an organisation with extensive experience of working to conserve the cultural and historical fabric of societies in the Middle East," says Media City Qatar chairman Sheikh Dr Abdullah bin Ali al-Thani.

"This is an ambitious plan of vital national importance, which the MCQ is honoured to undertake," he said. "We are confident that through this association we can start to build a centre that will promote awareness and appreciation of the history of Qatar, and by blending tradition with innovation, making that story accessible, enjoyable, and inspiring to all." - QNA



Ministry announces cultural trip for boys to Norway

By Tawfik Lamari
Staff Reporter

The Nomas Centre, affiliated with the Ministry of Culture, is organising a trip to Norway, under the theme *Science, Literature, and the Company of Majid*, for boys aged 10-15.

During the trip participants will learn about the history and cultural heritage of Norway.

The trip, in which a group of the centre's affiliates and staff will participate, will take place from August 23-30, the Nomas Centre announced on its Instagram account.

The trip is aimed at building bridges of human and cultural communication, instill the principles of national identity, and discover the talents of young people, in addition to training young people on the importance of teamwork.



The Nomas Centre holds training courses aimed at strengthening the national identity of young people.

Outstanding Qatari students invited to apply for govt scholarship

QNA
Doha

The Ministry of Education and Higher Education (MOEHE) is inviting Qatari students who have earned their General Secondary Education Certificate and other targeted groups to benefit from opportunities and enhancements within the developed Government Scholarship Plan for 2024-2025.

This plan - comprising the Amiri Scholarship Programme, the Domestic Scholarship Programme, and the Overseas Scholarship Programme - is aimed at meeting the academic needs of Qatari students at various levels and enhancing their educational opportunities in different specialties within Qatar and abroad.

The Amiri Scholarship Programme is designed for exceptional students who have excelled in their secondary school certificates.

This programme involves studying abroad at the best universities globally, including five prestigious institutions within Education City in Doha, and offers a unique opportunity to delve into vital disciplines such as medicine and engineering.

The Domestic Scholarship Programme offers Qatari students a wide range of opportunities. It allows students to enrol in national and private universities within Qatar, catering to diverse diploma plans for students with a secondary school certificate average of 60% or above.

For those with higher averages, the programme offers pathways in science, pre-medical, and computer science assistant programmes leading to a bachelor's degree.

Exceptional students with 80% or higher averages can also pursue pathways in medicine, engineering, and computer science, ensuring that no talent is left behind.

The Domestic Scholarship Programme includes the "Tamoh" programme, which offers Qatari males, with an average of 70% or higher, who have been officially accepted into the College of Education at Qatar University, the chance to study within the country.

The programme is available for all specialisations within the College of Education, with employment offered at grade nine.

It includes a study period in service and financial privileges amounting to QR10,000 per month.

The Overseas Scholarship Programme, a gateway to global education, offers exceptional opportunities for Qatari students to enrol in top-ranked universities across various disciplines.

By requiring an average of 80% in the secondary school certificate and unconditional final acceptance from an accredited university, the programme ensures that only the best and brightest get to participate.

Its aim to diversify fields of study and increase the number of graduates in various disciplines is a testament to its broader impact on economic and social growth.

"We affirm our commitment to providing exceptional educational opportunities for Qatari students, ensuring their excellence and attainment of the highest academic standards," said Acting Assistant Undersecretary for Higher Education Affairs Dr Harib al-Jabri.

"We are confident that the developed Government Scholarship Plan will contribute to achieving this goal by offering integrated scholarship programmes that align with students' ambitions and job market requirements."

The MOEHE announced the launch of the Government Scholarship Plan for the academic year 2024-2025 in January.

This plan enhances educational opportunities in various disciplines for Qatari students and increases the number of graduates in different fields.

This initiative is part of the national plan to strengthen the workforce and support economic growth in the public and private sectors.

For more information, visit <https://scholarship.edu.gov.qa>

Qatar working on enhancing ties with Asian countries, says envoy

Qatar's ambassador to Kazakhstan Abdullah bin Hussein al-Jaber has emphasised Qatar's commitment to strengthening its relations with Asia, particularly through successful co-operation with influential organisations.

He noted that Qatar was among the first Arab countries to obtain the status of "Dialogue Partner" in the Shanghai Co-operation Organisation (SCO).

In a statement to the Qatar News Agency (QNA), the envoy said that Qatar also enhanced its position in the region through successful co-operation with the Conference on Interaction and Confidence-Building Measures in Asia (CICA), the Asian Parliamentary Assembly, and the Asia Co-operation Dialogue.

He said that in September 2022, Qatar signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) to join the SCO as a Dialogue Partner during the organisation's summit in Uzbekistan.

Al-Jaber noted that this status is a preliminary step before granting full membership.

He said that, as a Dialogue Partner, Qatar can attend open meetings of the Council of Foreign Ministers of the SCO member states and meetings of the heads of government of the member states.

However, a Dialogue Partner does not have the right to participate in preparing and signing the organisation's approved documents.

Al-Jaber said that Qatar is just getting started with the process of gaining full membership in the organisation.

The SCO's main aims, the envoy said,



are to build mutual trust, friendship, good neighbourliness, and multifaceted co-operation to maintain and strengthen regional peace, security, and stability, address emerging challenges and threats collectively, and promote effective co-operation in various fields, in addition to enhancing economic growth as well as social and cultural development.

Al-Jaber highlighted Qatar's regional and international role, saying that Qatar is a key player both regionally and internationally in mediation and goodwill efforts.

The envoy explained that Qatar's location in the Middle East, a region marked by tensions and conflicts among influential regional powers, has driven it to adopt dialogue, mediation, and preventive diplomacy as part of its foreign policy.

He added that the country has achieved significant success in finding solutions to ongoing conflicts, extending beyond the Arab region to Africa, Asia, and even Latin America, including me-

diating a prisoner exchange agreement between the US and Venezuela.

Al-Jaber emphasised that Qatar's belief in soft power, international law, and neutral policy, without personal interests, has earned it a reputable international standing and credibility.

On Qatar-Kazakhstan relations, the envoy said that official relations began in 1993 with the signing of the diplomatic relations agreement.

Since then, he said, this relationship has become a strategic partnership, reflecting the strong desire of both countries' leaderships to enhance their friendly relations, as demonstrated by numerous agreements between Doha and Astana covering politics, trade, investments, security, healthcare, energy, and food.

Al-Jaber added that there are promising prospects for joint investment projects, particularly in the gas sector, with Qatar expected to invest in building a gas processing plant and constructing a gas pipeline in Kazakhstan. - QNA

WAREHOUSE FOR RENT

- ✔ Warehouse for rent in Industrial area
- ✔ Warehouse 600 Sqm/1200 Sqm
- ✔ Municipality Approved
- ✔ Civil Defence Approved
- ✔ Secure Boundary Wall
- ✔ 24/7 Security

 6672 2989





Palestinians, who fled the eastern part of Khan Yunis after they were ordered by Israeli army to evacuate their neighbourhoods, ride on a vehicle loaded with belongings, in the southern Gaza Strip, yesterday.

Desperate Gazans sleep outside after new evacuation order

AFP
Khan Yunis

Tens of thousands of Palestinians fled a southern Gaza district yesterday, forced to forage for food and water in blistering heat after an Israeli evacuation order set off fears of a major new battle in its war on Hamas. The UN estimated that up to 250,000 people are impacted by the Israeli military order for civilians to leave Al-Qarara, Bani Suhaila and other localities near the territory's second city of Khan Yunis. Thousands spent the night on the streets as many families have moved so many times since the start of the war in October first week, that they have run out of places of refuge. Midday temperatures rose above 30 degrees Celsius and there was no shelter, said Ahmed al-Najjar, a 26-year-old resident of Bani Suhaila, whose family fled on Monday but then decided to return home to brave any new fighting there. Anxiety skyrocketed after the evacuation order was issued late Monday, he told AFP. "We did not know where we would go and we do not have enough money to buy a new tent," said Najjar.

"We had to spend the night on the street and that has increased our stress. This morning we decided to go home again. There is nowhere else. "Whatever happens, happens," he said. "We have nothing to lose now." The war started after Hamas' October first week storming of southern Israel. Israel's retaliatory offensive has killed at least 37,925 people, also mostly civilians, according to data from the health ministry in the Hamas-run territory. Israel has not specifically said there will be a military operation in southern Gaza, but so far nearly every evacuation order has heralded major battles. Despite new casualties arriving from air strikes and fighting, the European Gaza hospital started evacuating patients because it is located inside the evacuation zone, a medical source said. The UN agency for Palestinian refugees, UNRWA, estimates there are 1.7mn displaced across the besieged territory, out of a population of more than 2mn. UNRWA estimates there are 250,000 people in the latest zones ordered emptied. It previously said about 1mn people had fled the southern city of Rafah ahead of an Israeli operation that began on May 7.

"The vast majority of them were already displaced, some multiple times," said UNRWA spokesperson Juliette Touma. Amid the latest Gaza mass displacement, Bakri Bakri, 39, lay on the ground among hundreds of people on a scrap of land in Khan Yunis. "There is no room for us or any of the displaced," he said. "We just hope a solution can be found." Another Gazan man, Abdullah Muhareb, said his family had already fled their home in the Al-Fokhari district once because of a previous Israeli warning of an impending assault. "We suffered a lot and lived for a long time in the tent city in Mawasi" on the coast, until the army withdrew from Khan Yunis, said the 25-year-old. "Then we went home again," he said. "There was a lot of damage because of the bombing, but we arranged it like a home and we could rest. "But there is no rest in this barbaric war." He added that "we have left again and we do not know where to go. We went back to our place in Mawasi, but we could not find it as there are so many displaced. "We slept in the street without shelter, without food, without water. There was bombing around us. We just want this devastation to end, we do not have the energy to endure it anymore."

Lebanon says Israeli GPS jamming confounding ground and air traffic

AFP
Beirut

Uber driver Hussein Khalil was battling traffic in Beirut when he found himself in the Gaza Strip – according to his online map, anyway – as location jamming blamed on Israel disrupts life in Lebanon. "We've been dealing with this problem a lot for around five months," said Khalil, 36. "Sometimes we can't work at all," the disgruntled driver told AFP on Beirut's chaotic, car-choked streets. "Of course, we are losing money." For months, whacky location data on apps have caused confusion in Lebanon, where the Hezbollah group has been engaged in cross-border clashes with Israel. The near-daily exchanges started after Hamas, Hezbollah's Palestinian ally, launched an unprecedented storming of Israel in the first week of October, triggering the ongoing war in Gaza. In March, Beirut lodged a complaint with the UN about "attacks by Israel on Lebanese sovereignty in the form of jamming the airspace around" the Beirut airport. Khalil showed AFP screenshots of apps displaying his location not only in the Gaza city of Rafah – around 300 kilometres away – but also in east Lebanon near the Syrian border, when he was actually in Beirut. With online maps loopy, Khalil said "one passenger phoned me and asked, 'Are you in Baalbek?'" referring to a city in east Lebanon. "I told her: 'No, I'll be at your location (in Beirut) in two minutes.'" Numerous residents have reported their online map location as appearing at Beirut airport while they were actually elsewhere in the capital. Since Hamas's October first week storming, Israel has taken measures to disrupt Global Positioning System (GPS) functionality for the group and other opponents. The Israeli army said in October that it disrupted GPS "in a proactive manner for various operational needs". It warned of "various and temporary effects on location-based applications". Specialist site gpsjam.org, which compiles geolocation signal disruption data based on aircraft data reports, reported a low level of disruption around Gaza in the first week of October.



Lebanese Uber driver Hussein Khalil tries to restart his GPS jammed geolocation on the Uber application on his mobile phone after appearing as Gaza's southern city of Rafah, as he sits in his vehicle in Beirut's Hamra street.



Hussein Khalil shows his GPS jammed geolocation on the Uber application showing the area of Hermel in eastern Bekaa valley, as he sits in his vehicle in Beirut's Hamra street.

But the next day, disturbances increased around the Palestinian territory and also along the border between Israel and Lebanon. On June 28, the level of interference showing on the site was high above Lebanon and parts of Syria, Jordan and Israel. An AFP journalist in Jerusalem said her location appeared as if she was in Cairo, Egypt's capital about 400 kilometres away. The interference has at times extended to European Union member Cyprus, some 200 kilometres from Lebanon, where AFP journalists have reported their GPS location appearing at Beirut airport instead of on the island. "Israel is using GPS jamming to disrupt or interfere with Hezbollah's communications," said Freddy Khoueir, global security analyst for the Middle East and North Africa at risk intelligence company RANE. It is "also using GPS spoofing... to send false GPS signals, aimed at disrupting and hindering drones' and precision-guided missiles' abilities to function or hit their targets," he added. The Hezbollah has "a large arsenal" of such GPS-assisted weapons, he noted. The cross-border exchanges have killed more than 490 people in Lebanon – mostly fighters

– according to an AFP tally, with 26 people killed in northern Israel, according to authorities there. Fears have grown of all-out conflict between the foes that last went to war in 2006. Asked about GPS jamming in northern Israel, where Hezbollah has concentrated its attacks, a spokesperson for Israel's defence ministry told AFP's Jerusalem office that "currently, we are unable to discuss operational matters". Lebanon's civil aviation chief Fadi El-Hassan said that since March, the body has asked pilots flying in or out of Beirut to "rely on ground navigation equipment and not on GPS signals due to the ongoing interference in the region". Ground navigation equipment is typically used as a back-up system. Hassan expressed frustration that "in this technological age, a pilot who wants to land at our airport cannot use GPS due to Israeli enemy interference". Lebanon is ensuring "the maintenance of ground navigation equipment at all times in order to provide the necessary signals for pilots to land safely," he said. Avedis Seropian, a licensed pilot, said he had stopped using GPS in recent months.

Kenya police, protesters clash

Crowds in Kenya's capital Nairobi lobbed rocks and looted businesses as police officers fired tear gas in scattered violence during fresh anti-government protests yesterday following last month's deadly demonstrations, AFP reported from Nairobi. Activists have continued to agitate online against President William Ruto, despite his decision last week to withdraw a controversial bill that triggered what he has branded "treasonous" protests by Gen-Z Kenyans. The Kenya National Commission on Human Rights (KNCHR) on Monday said that 39 people had been killed and 361 injured during two weeks of protests – with the worst violence occurring in Nairobi last Tuesday – and condemned the use of force against demonstrators as "excessive and disproportionate". It is the most serious crisis to confront Ruto since he took office in September 2022 in a nation often considered a beacon of stability in a turbulent region.

Slow art: the master illuminator of Tehran

AFP
Tehran

Iranian artist Mohamed Hossein Aghamiri sometimes labours for six months on a single design, very carefully – he knows a single crooked line could ruin his entire artwork. In the age of AI-assisted graphic design on computer screens, the centuries-old tradition of Persian illumination offers an antidote to rushing the creative process.

Aghamiri's fine brush moves natural pigments onto the paper with deliberate precision as he creates intricate floral patterns, religious motifs and elegantly flowing calligraphy. The exquisite artwork for centuries embellished literary manuscripts, religious texts and royal edicts as well as many business contracts and marriage certificates. Aghamiri, 51, is one of Iran's dozen or so remaining masters of the ancient illumination art of Tazhib, which was inscribed last year on Unesco's list of intangible heritage. "It is a very unique job that requires a lot of patience and precision," Aghamiri, a veteran of the craft with over 30 years' experience, said in his downtown Tehran studio. "It's not accessible to everyone." Tazhib's non-figurative and geometric flourishes have traditionally adorned the margins of holy books and epic poems. The artform dates back to the Sassanid era in Iran but flourished after the seventh century advent of Islam, which banned human depictions. Aghamiri says it often takes him months to finish one design and that a single misplaced stroke that disrupts its symmetrical harmony can force him to start over. When AFP visited, he was working on a so-called shamsa design, a symbolic representation of the sun, about 50 centimetres across with intertwined abstract, geometric and floral patterns. He said he started the piece over four months ago and aimed to finish it within six weeks, using natural pigments such as lapis lazuli, saffron, gouache and pure gold, from China. "Gold has a very strong visual appeal," said Aghamiri. "It's expensive and it enhances the perceived value of the work." Aghamiri hails from a family of artists and artisans with a rich history in Iranian craft traditions including calligraphy, miniature painting and carpet design. His work has been showcased in museums in Iran and in nearby Arab countries of the Gulf region where interest in Oriental and Islamic art continues to grow. "Eighty percent of my works are sold in the region, especially in the Emirates and Qatar" as well as in Turkey, he said. In recent years, Aghamiri garnered interest abroad and even began teaching the ancient art



Mohamed Hossein Aghamiri, an artist who specialises in Persian miniatures, poses for a picture with his artwork in his workshop in Tehran.

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online to students from across the world, notably the United States. Soon, he also hopes to hold workshops in Britain for his craft, which he says is fundamentally different from European illumination art, which flourished in the Middle Ages. European designs, he said, are more figurative and can depict human faces, animals and landscapes, and often illustrate biblical scenes. Unesco labelled the Persian art of illumination as part of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity in December 2023, at the request of Iran as well as Turkey, Azerbaijan and Uzbekistan. "Twenty years ago, I didn't have much hope" for the future of Persian illumination, said Aghamiri. "But things have changed, and I see that this art is becoming more and more popular."

ANNOUNCEMENT

I, **RAKHI**
holder of
INDIA Passport No. S7662721
QID No. 29135600684

hereby change my name
from
RAKHI
to
RAKHI KARIKKAT KARUNAKARAN

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

ANNOUNCEMENT

I, **MOHAMMED ASJAD TAHER**
holder of
INDIA Passport No. X6044727
QID No. 29335622914

hereby change my name
from
MOHAMMED ASJAD TAHER
to
ASJAD TAHER MOHAMMAD

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



GWM Launches in Qatar with over 200 booked cars



Teyseer Motors, one of the top Automotive Dealerships in Qatar, launched the Great Wall Motor (GWM) Showroom at Airport road. The state of the art showroom reflects the premium values of the GWM brand and ensures to give discerning customers the best car retail experience.

The showroom launch featured the unveiling of GWM's iconic SUV brand, the Tank 500, which alongside the Tank 300 dominate the Chinese off-road market with a 60% market share. These models combine intelligent technologies with robust off-road capabilities. The event also showcased the coveted Haval brand of SUVs, one of the most popular SUVs in China with a sales volume of with over 9 million users worldwide. It has been a sales champion in China consecutively for over nine years. Additionally, GWM introduced the top Chinese pickup brands, GWM Poer and Wingle, and the stylish electric car, Ora 3. GWM's impressive range of HEVs (Hybrid Electric Vehicles) is now available in Qatar, offering residents and citizens a variety of options. Aligned with the company's philosophy—Greener, Wiser, Mightier—GWM ensures its cars are intelligent, sturdy, and contribute to a greener environment by reducing carbon emissions.

GWM's footprint covers Europe, ASEAN, the Middle East, North Africa, South America, Eastern Europe, Central Asia, Australia, New Zealand, South Africa and other global markets, the total sum of which is over 170 countries and regions. GWM has established 9 R&D bases globally (in China, the United States, Germany, Japan, Canada, South Korea, Austria and India) along with 5 Software R&D Centers, 10 major full-process vehicle production bases in China, 3 full-process overseas vehicle produc-



tion bases in Eurasia, Thailand and Brazil, and has multiple KD factories in Ecuador, Pakistan and other places.

Deeply rooted in the Middle East region for more than 26 years, in order to further strengthen the local operation, GWM has established its regional office in Dubai since early 2022, followed by a regional parts distribution center, also based in Dubai, in early 2023, which is covering the regional markets of

Middle East and North Africa. In the meanwhile, GWM has been constantly expanding its service system across the GCC region, consistently providing the quality services for GCC customers. With the signing ceremony of the partnership with Teyseer Motors, GWM is marching into a brand new chapter of Middle East operation.

Mr. Khalifa Al Mannai, Deputy Chairman of Teyseer Group, expressed his enthusiasm about the

significant event that transpired on the 2nd July 2024, stating, "GWM brand is known for manufacturing vehicles which are powerful yet elegant. At Teyseer we are committed to customer satisfaction & believe that our association will provide great options for our customers. The cars are very technologically advanced. Also at Teyseer we will ensure that these wonderful cars will be backed up with a robust after sales support. We are also

excited to see the overwhelming response from automobile experts & enthusiasts".

Mr. Sunny Bhat, Director - Sales & Marketing, Great Wall Motor Middle East quoted "Great Wall Motors (GWM) is thrilled to announce its partnership with Teyseer Motors for the official launch of GWM vehicles in Qatar, marking a significant milestone in our global expansion strategy. Leveraging Teyseer Motors' local market knowledge, we aim to

introduce innovative vehicles to Qatar.

The partnership with Teyseer Motors underscores our shared values and commitment to delivering exceptional automotive solutions in Qatar, setting new benchmarks for quality and service in the sector. Qatar customers can look forward to innovative vehicles that combine cutting-edge technology with GWM's renowned standards of reliability and safety.

GWM vehicles are tailored to meet the diverse needs of Qatar's dynamic market, offering robust performance, advanced features, and eco-friendly options that align with the nation's vision for sustainable mobility and modern automotive solutions.

Our portfolio includes Haval, the leading Chinese SUV brand, GWM Pickups, top Chinese pickups, Tank, the dominant off-road SUV brand in China and Ora Electric Vehicles, pioneering sustainable mobility solutions.

In addition, we are pleased to announce Qatar as the debut market for our electric vehicle brand, Ora, in the GCC region. GWM's philosophy of "Go With More" underscores our commitment to continuous improvement and safety. Our vehicles consistently attain 5-star ANCAP Safety Ratings, exemplified by the recent 5-star rating of the Tank 500, highlighting our dedication to engineering excellence".

Cars were delivered during this event. Mr. (Mohamed Hamayda) Managing Director Strong Rent A Car who took the delivery of his (Tank 500) mentioned that "I selected (Tank 500) for its sturdy features & equally impressive design".

Following the landmark event, Teyseer Motors and Great Wall Motor eagerly anticipate setting new benchmarks in the Qatari automotive landscape.





HEARING

Man convicted of planning attack on UK military base

A man was convicted of planning an attack on a military base after being arrested with an explosive device in the grounds of a hospital, Britain's Crown Prosecution Service said. Mohamed Farooq was found guilty of preparing acts of terrorism following a trial at Sheffield Crown Court. The 28-year-old had previously pleaded guilty to possession of an explosive substance with intent to endanger life, possession of an explosive substance in suspicious circumstances and possession of information likely to be useful to a terrorist. Farooq was arrested outside St James's Hospital in Leeds, after showing a gun and saying he "felt like killing everyone", the CPS said.

LEGAL

UK water firms at risk of claims after sewage ruling

British water companies are at increased risk of lawsuits over pollution after a landmark ruling from the United Kingdom's Supreme Court yesterday, amid public outrage over discharges of raw sewage in Britain. The Manchester Ship Canal, which owns the Victorian-era canal in northern England, won an appeal that means it can sue United Utilities over discharges of water contaminated with untreated sewage. A United Utilities spokesperson said the company was considering the implications of the Supreme Court's ruling, adding that United Utilities had made an early start on a proposed \$3.80bn programme to cut spills by 60% over the decade to 2030.

PEOPLE

Judi Dench among first woman members of UK's Garrick Club

Veteran actors Judi Dench and Sian Phillips have become the first woman members of London's esteemed Garrick Club after it voted in May to allow women to join, the *Guardian* reported yesterday. Founded in 1831 for actors and "men of refinement and education", the Garrick was one of the last such clubs not to allow women in, except as guests of men. But following a bitter row, the club opened up its membership in May and fast-tracked the actors' applications during its annual general meeting on Monday, according to the *Guardian*. The club's membership is a closely guarded secret.

CRIME

Indonesian police probe arson claims in death of reporter

Indonesian police are investigating an accusation by a journalists' group that arson was behind a fire that killed a reporter and three of his family, an official said yesterday, a rare incident that has prompted concern over media freedom. Indonesia's association of independent journalists (AJI) blamed arson for a June 27 blaze in the North Sumatra home of a reporter, Rico Sempurna Pasaribu, after he reported on illegal gambling involving local officials. The *Kompas* newspaper said the journalist died along with his wife, one of his children and a grandchild, citing his daughter.

Sri Lanka to save \$5bn from bilateral debt deal

AFP
Colombo

Sri Lanka will save \$5bn following the restructuring of its bilateral debt, much of which is owed to China, through slashed interest rates and longer repayment schedules, the president said yesterday.

The nation defaulted on its foreign borrowings in 2022 during an unprecedented economic crisis that precipitated months of food, fuel and medicine shortages.

President Ranil Wickremesinghe said a deal struck last week had secured a moratorium on debt payments until 2028, extending the tenure of loans by eight years and cutting interest rates to an average of 2.1%.

Wickremesinghe said bilateral lenders led by China, the government's largest single creditor, did not agree to a reduction on their loans but the terms agreed would nonetheless help Sri Lanka.

"With the restructure measures we have agreed, we will make a saving of \$5bn," Wickremesinghe told parliament in his first address to the legislature since the debt deal.

Some of Sri Lanka's loans from China are at high interest rates, going up to nearly 8% compared to borrowings from Japan, the second largest lender, at less than 1%.

Sri Lanka struck separate deals with China and the rest of the bi-

lateral creditors, including Japan, France and India.

Bilateral creditors account for 28.5% of Sri Lanka's outstanding foreign debt of \$37bn, according to treasury data from March. That excludes government-guaranteed external loans.

China accounts for \$4.66bn of the \$10.58bn that Sri Lanka has borrowed from other countries.

Wickremesinghe said he expected to complete shortly the restructure of a further \$14.7bn in external commercial loans, including \$2.18bn from the China Development Bank.

Japanese Foreign Minister Yoko Kamikawa hailed the agreement after a meeting with her visiting Sri Lankan counterpart Ali Sabry in Tokyo, according to a news release from the Japanese foreign ministry.

She said Japan would be prepared to resume lending to existing yen-loan projects once Japan confirms the Sri Lankan government's intention to work expeditiously towards the conclusion of a bilateral deal on top of the latest debt agreement.

Sri Lanka's 2022 crisis sparked months of public protests that eventually forced the resignation of then-president Gotabaya Rajapaksa after an angry mob stormed his compound.

Wickremesinghe said the nation was bankrupt when he took over and he hoped the \$2.9bn International Monetary Fund bailout he secured last year would be the island's last.

Flood-affected residents rescued

Rescue workers evacuate flood-affected residents following heavy rains in Yueyang, in central China's Hunan province, yesterday.

Philippines vows to protect interests in South China Sea

Reuters
Manila

The Philippines and China yesterday agreed on the need to "restore trust" and "rebuild confidence" to better manage maritime disputes, even as Manila told its neighbour it will be "relentless" in protecting its interests in the South China Sea.

The Philippine foreign ministry said it had "frank and constructive" discussions with China on the South China Sea during the ninth round of talks under their bilateral consultation mechanism, hosted by Manila.

The high-level meeting between senior foreign ministry officials followed what the Philippine military described as the "most ag-

gressive" actions in recent history by China's Coast Guard against its vessels during last month's routine resupply mission that seriously injured a Filipino sailor.

"There was substantial progress on developing measures to manage the situation at sea, but significant differences remain," the department of foreign affairs (DFA) said in a statement.

Earlier in the day, the Vatican's foreign minister Archbishop Paul Richard Gallagher, called for the peaceful resolution of conflicts, including in the South China Sea, which China mostly claims as its own territory.

"We encourage parties in conflict to abide by international law," Gallagher, who is in Manila for an official visit, said in a joint press briefing with his Philippine counterpart.

Manila has sought wider international support on its maritime claims, seeking closer ties with countries to advocate for a rules-based order that recognises international law.

The Permanent Court of Arbitration in 2016 said China's expansive claims had no legal basis.

But China, which maintained that its actions in the South China Sea have been lawful and professional, has said that it does not accept any claim or action based on the ruling.

"The Philippines will be relentless in protecting interests and upholding its sovereignty, sovereign rights and jurisdiction in the West Philippine Sea," the DFA said in the statement using the term Manila uses to refer to waters within its exclusive economic zone.

Bird flu hits McDonald's breakfasts in Australia

Good luck getting a late-morning McMuffin in Australia.

McDonald's has cut breakfast service timings by one-and-a-half hours, the company said, after a shortage of eggs caused by bird flu outbreaks that have led to the slaughter of about 1.5mn chickens.

"Like many retailers, we are carefully managing supply of eggs due to current industry challenges," McDonald's said on Facebook, adding that from yesterday it had stopped serving breakfast at 10.30am instead of the usual time of midday.

"We are working hard with our Aussie farmers and suppliers to return this back to normal as soon as possible," the fast food company said.

Australia is battling outbreaks of several strains of highly pathogenic avian influenza that have struck 11 poultry facilities, most of them egg farms, in its southeast since May.

None of the strains are the H5N1 variant of bird flu that has spread through bird and mammal populations worldwide, infecting billions of animals and a small number of humans.

Kim Jong-un attends meeting

North Korean leader Kim Jong-un (R) attends the Enlarged Meeting of 10th Plenary Meeting of 8th Central Committee of the Workers' Party of Korea, held in North Korea.

Police arrest teenager over Sydney stabbing

Reuters
Sydney

Australian police said they had arrested a 14-year-old boy after a stabbing at the University of Sydney yesterday morning, which triggered a lockdown of the university buildings.

Emergency crews treated a 22-year-old man, who was taken to a hospital in a serious but stable condition, New South Wales state police said in a statement.

New South Wales police assistant commissioner of counter-terrorism Mark Walton told a news conference the boy's motive or ideology had not yet been determined, but expressed concern at increasing evidence young people were being radicalised online.

"They are embracing violent extremist ideologies and moving towards violence," he said.

The attacker was known to po-

lice and government agencies, he added.

The alleged attacker boarded a bus after the incident and was arrested near a hospital, police said. He has been sent for a mental health assessment, police said, and had previously come into contact with the authorities.

There is no ongoing risk to the community, and the victim and the alleged attacker were not known to each other.

A University of Sydney spokesperson said a police operation was underway at its Camperdown campus and that police would remain on campus while investigations continue. Police have cordoned off the crime scene.

The attack comes about two months after six people were killed and 12 injured in a knife attack at a mall in Sydney's Bondi area, and an Assyrian church bishop was wounded in an unrelated stabbing attack during a service in Sydney's west.

UK baby killer found guilty of trying to kill another child

Reuters
London

Former nurse Lucy Letby was yesterday found guilty of trying to murder another newborn baby, adding to convictions last year that made her Britain's most prolific serial child killer of modern times.

Letby, 34, was found guilty last August of murdering seven babies and trying to kill six more between June 2015 and June 2016 while working as a nurse in the neonatal unit of the Countess

of Chester Hospital in Chester, northern England.

She was jailed for life and told she would never be released. Letby denied having harmed any baby in her care.

Last month, she went on trial for a second time on one count of attempted murder of a further baby girl, known as Child K, a charge on which the original jury had failed to reach a verdict.

Prosecutor Nick Johnson told Manchester Crown Court that Child K was born prematurely at 25 weeks in February 2016 at the hospital, and had been connected

to a ventilator and other machines monitoring her heart rate and oxygen levels.

Little more than an hour after the birth, while other staff were absent, Johnson said, senior doctor Ravi Jayaram entered the room where she was being looked after to find the baby's breathing tube dislodged, alarms that should have sounded had become disabled, and Letby standing there "doing nothing".

Johnson added that on two further occasions that night, Letby interfered with the breathing tube to give the impression there

was a particular problem with the baby.

"These were the actions of a cold-blooded, calculated killer," senior Crown prosecutor Nicola Wyn Williams said in a statement yesterday following the verdict.

Child K died in a different hospital three days later, although the prosecution said this had nothing to do with the allegation against Letby.

In her evidence, Letby again denied having ever harmed any baby put in her care, and said she had no recollection of the night

in question. Her defence lawyer said the evidence was not there to prove her guilt.

Letby was originally found guilty of killing the five baby boys and two baby girls by injecting the infants with insulin or air, or force-feeding them milk.

The case shocked Britain and prompted the government to order an inquiry into why concerns about her behaviour had not been heeded by hospital bosses.

Police also said they were carrying out further investigations into whether there were other

victims at hospitals where Letby had previously worked.

For some on social media, Letby has become a cause celebre who was herself a victim of a terrible miscarriage of justice and, ahead of the latest trial, the New Yorker magazine ran an article questioning the evidence against her.

In May, however, England's Court of Appeal rejected her attempt to overturn her conviction, which had been mainly based on arguments that evidence from the prosecution's expert witness was flawed.

Parliament removes parts of Gandhi's speech targeting Modi

Reuters
New Delhi

Indian opposition leader Rahul Gandhi's first speech in the new parliament ran into controversy with parts of it, including accusations against Prime Minister Narendra Modi and his party, re-

dacted yesterday for violating the rules of the legislature.

The decision by the Speaker of the lower house came a day after Gandhi made his maiden speech as the leader of the opposition in the chambers, his first official position after two decades as a lawmaker representing the main opposition Congress party.

Among the sections removed from the speech, which was telecast live by TV channels, were Gandhi's attacks on Modi and his Hindu nationalist Bharatiya Janata Party and what he said were their links to religious hate and violence.

Gandhi also made multiple references to industrialists Gautam Adani and Mukesh Ambani and linked

them to Modi and his government, which were removed by Speaker Om Birla, parliament records showed.

Following the speech, federal ministers Ashwini Vaishnaw and Kiren Rijju told reporters that they met Birla to point out "inaccuracies" in Gandhi's speech and were assured their complaint would be examined. Under Indian

parliamentary rules, the Speaker can expunge or redact words used by lawmakers in the chambers that are deemed defamatory, indecent, unparliamentary, or undignified, following which they cease to exist in parliament's records and can no longer be reported by the media.

Responding to the Speaker's de-

cision, Gandhi said "truth cannot be expunged". He wrote to Birla requesting the redacted remarks be restored, saying they were not violations and conveyed the "ground reality" and "factual position".

"Taking off from records my considered remarks goes against the very tenets of parliamentary democracy," he said.

Hindenburg denies Sebi allegations on Adani issue

Reuters
New Delhi

Hindenburg Research has denied allegations by India's securities regulator that it colluded with a US asset manager to use non-public information to set up a short bet against Adani Group last year, which if proven would breach the country's rules.

Hindenburg posted a copy of a 46-page "show cause" notice from the Securities and Exchange Board of India (Sebi) outlining the allegations on its website on Monday, in the latest twist to a saga that began last year when the US-based short-seller alleged improper business dealings by Adani.

The notice said that six entities including Hindenburg, Kingdon Capital Management and a Mauritius-based trading fund set up by Kotak Mahindra Bank violated certain rules under the Prevention of Fraud and Unfair Trade Practices regulation. It was dismissed in a statement by Hindenburg as "non-sense". Kingdon did not respond to an e-mailed request for comment yesterday. Hindenburg's statement did not mention its relationship with Kingdon and did not respond to an e-mail requesting comment.

"Sebi has neglected its responsibility, seemingly doing more to protect those perpetrating fraud than to protect the investors being victimised by it," Hindenburg said in its

statement on the notice, which two sources at Sebi with direct knowledge of the matter confirmed was authentic.

Sebi said in the notice that it had received information from or through the US Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) in the course of its investigation.

Adani, which has consistently denied Hindenburg's allegations, suffered a loss of as much as \$150bn in combined market value after the report, but its share price has since recovered to the same levels as before. Sebi did not respond to a request for comment yesterday on Hindenburg's statement or the show cause notice. If proven, the alleged breaches could result in financial penalties and the repayment of any gains deemed to have been illegal. Hindenburg said in its statement that it made \$4.1mn in gross revenue through "gains related to Adani shorts from that investor relationship" and just \$31,000 through its short position of Adani's US bonds. It did not name the investor.

"It was a tiny position," said Hindenburg, whose response sheds some light on its Adani short, which intrigued other investors because Indian securities rules make it hard for foreigners to bet against companies there.

Sebi alleges Hindenburg colluded with its client Kingdon Capital Management by providing a draft of its report on Adani Group before it was released publicly.



An ambulance carries the victims of the stampede at Hathras in Uttar Pradesh yesterday.

116 killed in stampede at Uttar Pradesh gathering

AFP
Lucknow, India

At least 116 people were crushed to death at an overcrowded religious gathering in northern India yesterday, government officials said, the worst such tragedy in more than a decade.

A large crowd had gathered for a sermon by a preacher near the northern Indian city of Hathras, but as they were leaving, a fierce dust storm sparked panic.

Many were crushed or trampled, falling on top of each other, with some collapsing into a roadside drain in the chaos.

"The attendees were exiting the venue when a dust storm blinded their vision, leading to a melee and the subsequent tragic incident," said Chaitra V, divisional commissioner

of Aligarh city in Uttar Pradesh.

"We... are focusing on providing relief and medical aid for the victims," the divisional commissioner added.

Senior police officer Shalabh Mathur said that it appeared "more people had come than permission was asked for".

Several hours after the crush, Chaitra said that "the death toll stands at 116", with at least 18 others injured.

Most of the dead were women, according to state chief medical officer Umesh Kumar Tripathi.

Lines of ambulances rushed the injured to hospitals.

Wailing women and crying men gathered outside one mortuary in the town of Etah, where many of the dead were taken, seeking news of their relatives.

"When the event finished, everyone started

running out," a woman told the Press Trust of India news agency.

"People fell in a drain by the road. They started falling one on top of the other and got crushed to death."

Prime Minister Narendra Modi announced compensation of \$2,400 to the next of kin of those who died and \$600 to those injured in the "tragic incident".

"My condolences are with those who have lost their loved ones... I wish for the speedy recovery of all the injured," Modi wrote on social media platform X.

President Droupadi Murmu said the deaths were "heart-rending" and offered her "deepest condolences".

Yogi Adityanath, Uttar Pradesh chief minister, expressed his condolences to the relatives of those killed and ordered an investigation into the deaths, his office said.

Modi visit 'could deepen Russian trade ties to India'

The Kremlin yesterday said that the final details of a visit by Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi to Russia were being worked out, and that deepening trade and economic co-operation would be one of the key themes of the visit. The Kremlin has yet to announce the dates of the visit by Modi, though a Russian state news agency reported last month that the visit would take place in July. "I can only confirm once again that the visit is in the final stage of preparation," Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov told reporters. "A very important visit."

Peskov said that regional security and global security issues were always high on the agenda of such meetings. "In addition, our trade and economic co-operation is also one of the main issues that is being discussed, the most diverse areas of co-operation that we intend to develop, for which there is mutual political will," Peskov said.



A family carries their belongings on a banana raft at the flood affected Mayong village in Morigaon district, Assam, yesterday.

Heavy rainfall triggers floods, at least 11 dead

Reuters
Guwahati, India

Heavy rain continued to trigger flood and landslides in India's north and north-east, killing at least 11 people and affecting hundreds of thousands, officials from two affected states said yesterday.

In India's most populous state of Uttar Pradesh, which has been hit by torrential rain, nine people died in rain-related incidents in the last 24 hours, an official bulletin said.

Two people died on Monday in the north-eastern state of Assam, which has been hit by a second wave of flooding since June 16, affecting more than 600,000 people in 19 districts, and displacing more than 8,000, a state disaster management statement said.

The Kaziranga national park in Assam - home to nearly 2,200

one-horned rhinos, or two-thirds of their world population - is also under water, with more than half of its 233 camps flooded, drowning four hog deer, officials said.

"The flood water has now entered my house. The water has damaged my paddy and crops. I have a family of five and I have to take shelter here. If the situation worsens, I will lose my house," Faizul Islam, a local resident told news agency ANI.

Visuals from ANI showed inundated fields and roads across Assam, as people moved precious belongings and furniture from their water-filled homes.

In the northeastern region of neighbouring Bangladesh, the flood situation was worsening rapidly due to continuous rain and upstream water flow from India, leaving tens of thousands of people marooned, officials said yesterday.

Tycoon launches mass weddings to celebrate son's nuptials

AFP
Navi Mumbai, India

Asia's richest man, billionaire Indian tycoon Mukesh Ambani, yesterday launched the start of the lavish finale of his son's wedding celebrations with mass nuptials for 52 "underprivileged" couples.

Pre-wedding parties for his son have already included multi-day galas, a European cruise for 1,200 guests, a specially-built temple, and entertainment provided by performers ranging from R&B star Rihanna to the Backstreet Boys.

Ambani, 67, is chairman of Reli-

ance Industries - India's biggest company by market capitalisation - and took part with his family in yesterday's ceremony with some 800 guests. "Starting with this function, the family pledged to continue supporting hundreds more such weddings across the country," his company said in a statement.

Ambani's younger son Anant and fiancée Radhika Merchant, both 29, are set to marry in a three-day ceremony in India's financial capital Mumbai from July 12.

The billionaire father is no stranger to throwing a costly wedding. Ambani held the most expensive wedding in India to date for his daughter in 2018, which reportedly



Shloka Mehta Ambani, Akash Ambani, Mukesh Ambani, Nita Ambani, Isha Piramal and Anand Piramal pose with brides and grooms during the ceremony in Navi Mumbai, India, yesterday.

cost \$100mn and saw US singer Beyonce perform.

Ambani, for his son, has already thrown two extraordinary parties ahead of the main celebrations later this month. That included a three-day gala in February for 1,500-plus guests in Gujarat state.

At that party, Rihanna performed her first concert since last year's Superbowl to guests including Facebook founder Mark Zuckerberg, and ex-US president Donald Trump's daughter Ivanka.

A second leg in June was a four-day Mediterranean cruise, where singer Katy Perry performed at a masquerade ball at a French chateau in Cannes. The Backstreet Boys,

US rapper Pitbull and Italian tenor Andrea Bocelli also provided entertainment. At the wedding ceremony yesterday, at a Reliance office park in the city of Navi Mumbai, each couple was given gold and silver wedding jewellery, \$1,200 in cash and groceries "sufficient for one year", the company said.

"Today marks the beginning of the festivities for our children Anant and Radhika's wedding," Nita Ambani, the billionaire's wife, told reporters at the wedding venue.

"As a mother, it fills me with happiness to witness the marriages here today... I pray for their happiness and well-being throughout their lives."



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GULF TIMES

A resurgent dollar amid persistent US exceptionalism

A resurgent US dollar is exasperating central bankers and governments around the world, forcing them into action to relieve the pressure on their own currencies.

The dollar inched higher in Asian trading last week as markets assessed former president Donald Trump was the victor in the first US presidential debate.

President Joe Biden stumbled through early exchanges in the debate, a performance that may intensify worries about his ability to defeat Trump in the November election.

Trump has reiterated a pledge to impose 10% duties on imports should he win in November, a move that could put upward pressure on inflation, potentially delaying interest-rate cuts that could weigh on the greenback.

"Strength in US activity has been a mainstay of our long-dollar bias, and the persistence of US exceptionalism is a major FX theme. But this has always been in the context of high market conviction that the Fed would invariably begin its easing cycle this year. This is now being challenged, and the corresponding de-pricing of Fed cuts has taken the dollar to new year-to-date highs," says Meera Chandan, Global FX Strategist, JP Morgan.

The resurgent dollar is wrecking havoc in Asia this year, putting pressure on central banks to step up the defence of their currencies.

Traders are watching for authorities to intervene in Japan while policymakers in India, Vietnam and Indonesia have all stepped into the market.

The weakness in the yen and the yuan is seen to have spillover effects on regional currencies

almost 5% since end-December as Federal Reserve officials signal that they may hold off on rate cuts until inflation falls sustainably to their target.

The yuan's weakness has also contributed to the Bloomberg Asia Dollar Index's decline of over 3% this year. The Chinese currency has fallen more than 2% in 2024.

The weakness in the yen and the yuan is seen to have spillover effects on regional currencies, especially the won and the Taiwan dollar.

Other emerging-market currencies have not been spared either, with the Turkish lira and Brazilian real sliding more than 10% this year.

The greenback has gained against virtually every major peer in 2024, defying many on Wall Street who came into the year predicting a dollar selloff. That's prompted escalating warnings from Japan on its readiness to intervene to buoy the yen from near a 34-year low.

China and Indonesia have moved to steady their currencies, while Sweden and India are also under pressure.

Those intensifying efforts are reminiscent of 2022 when officials in Switzerland and Canada lamented their weakening exchange rates amid a surge in inflation and the strong dollar ripped through emerging economies, contributing to Sri Lanka's historic default.

"The US dollar keeps turning up the heat on other central banks," said Helen Given, a foreign-exchange trader at Monex. "Given the current global environment where central banks appear to be looking to end their tightening cycles, there doesn't seem to be a safe way out from the dollar's continued dominance."

Exchange rates matter because depreciating currencies increase the cost of imported goods, stoking inflation as those expenses feed through to prices in grocery stores and factories. Meanwhile, there's a higher likelihood that money will pour out of a nation with a weak currency in search of higher yields elsewhere – so-called capital flight – harming domestic investment and growth.

The irony, of course, is that unilaterally intervening in currency markets – where \$7.5tn changes hands every day – can only temporarily alter an exchange rate.

REYNOLD
GULFTIMES
03-07-2024



After Biden debate performance, world should prepare for Trump

By Richard Haass
New York

The first – and potentially only – debate between the 45th and 46th presidents of the United States constituted a clear win for Donald Trump, as far more viewers focused on Joe Biden's apparent physical and mental infirmities than Donald Trump's evasions and trafficking in partial or outright lies. The question now, though, is what, if any, difference it will make in the presidential election that is now just four months away.

The debate most likely increases the odds that Trump will occupy the Oval Office come noon on January 20, 2025. Going into Thursday night's debate, Trump was slightly ahead in many of the national polls and, more importantly, in the half-dozen "swing" states that will most likely determine the election's outcome. The debate only added to this advantage.

The context favours Trump. This year has already proven to be a tough one for incumbents seeking re-election, as outcomes in India and France have demonstrated (with Britain up next). Polls also show a low approval rating for the prime ministers of Japan and Canada, which could lead to a change of leadership in those countries. Biden and the US are poised to be consistent with this trend.

Like many of his fellow incumbents, Biden has struggled to manage rising immigration and

economic challenges. His failure to deal effectively with the southern border has allowed some 10mn men, women, and children to enter the US illegally. Then there are the effects of inflation, something voters are reminded of every time they go to the grocery store or fill their car with gasoline. Biden can point to domestic and foreign-policy accomplishments, but they are less salient to many Americans.

Most critical is the question of his age. Doubts are widely and deeply held that Biden is simply too old for what is arguably the world's most demanding and important job. He is 81, turns 82 in November, and, if re-elected, would turn 86 while still in the White House. And he is an old 81. As the debate demonstrated, he walks stiffly, loses his train of thought, and has a weak and raspy voice. Trump is only three years younger and makes little sense when he speaks, often taking bizarre rhetorical detours, but manages to project a more vigorous image.

Given Biden's better outing at a campaign stop the day after the debate, some believe he can bounce back. After all, Ronald Reagan and Barack Obama recovered from poor debate performances. But that was because they were seen as great orators who simply had a bad night. Biden's problem is that his poor showing reinforced an already-entrenched narrative that will be difficult, if not impossible, to alter. His performance could even threaten to turn him into something of a lame duck, further weakening his influence at home and abroad.

All this said, Biden will be

the Democratic Party candidate chosen at the party's convention this August unless he takes himself out of the running and frees his pledged delegates to vote for someone else. Who this "someone" would be – Vice-President Kamala Harris, a sitting governor or senator, a member of his cabinet – is anybody's guess.

It is obvious that Biden and his inner circle are resisting calls (including from sympathetic editors at major news outlets) for him to step aside. Neither he nor his loyal lieutenants, many of whom have been close to him for decades, have given any indication that the president will bow out.

Biden's declining political fortunes could well prove to be a drag on other Democratic candidates come autumn. It is possible that a Trump victory could help bring about a Republican takeover of the Senate at the same time Republicans hold the House of Representatives. Together with a Supreme Court that has increasingly demonstrated sympathy for positions supported by Trump and congressional Republicans, this would bring about the American equivalent of a parliamentary system, with power consolidated in the hands of a party that is better understood as radical rather than conservative.

There would be few checks on power strong enough to mitigate this imbalance; on the contrary, Trump's plans to weaken the independence of the civil service, together with his promise to politicise the Justice

Department and regulatory agencies, would concentrate power further. Trump would be free to lower taxes, impose tariffs, ease already loose controls on gun ownership, enforce immigration law as he sees fit, and increase the enormous debt.

Foreign policy would also be vulnerable to significant change, because the US political system gives broad latitude to the executive. It is quite possible that Trump would reduce or even eliminate US support for Ukraine, hollow out US commitments to Nato, give Israel an even freer hand to prosecute war in Gaza and Lebanon and build settlements, refuse to participate in global efforts to combat climate change, and prioritise bilateral trade issues with China over broader concerns with Beijing's behaviour abroad.

Elections have consequences, and this one more than most, given that the differences between the candidates far exceed any similarities. In the wake of a debate that appears to have tipped the scales against Biden, and with no way of knowing if someone else will be the Democratic candidate and how he or she would fare, US friends and allies should prepare themselves for potentially major changes come January. — Project Syndicate

• Richard Haass, President Emeritus of the Council on Foreign Relations, is a senior counsellor at Centerview Partners and the author of The Bill of Obligations: The Ten Habits of Good Citizens and the weekly newsletter Home & Away.

As the debate demonstrated, Joe Biden walks stiffly, loses his train of thought, and has a weak and raspy voice. Donald Trump is only three years younger and makes little sense when he speaks, often taking bizarre rhetorical detours, but manages to project a more vigorous image



Former president Donald Trump (left) and incumbent president Joe Biden sparring at the first presidential debate last week. (Reuters)

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Msheireb Properties wins prestigious 2024 Green Apple Award for Beautiful Buildings



Msheireb Properties has been awarded the prestigious Green Apple Award for Beautiful Buildings in 2024.

The award recognises the company's "Transforming Doha's Heritage Houses - Msheireb Museums" project, noting its contributions to the built and visual environment, and environmentally friendly features.

The Green Apple Awards, established by the Green Organisation in 1994, are known internationally as symbols of excellence in environmental best practices.

Msheireb Properties' win highlights its commitment to sustainable development and architectural preservation.

Msheireb Properties chief executive Eng. Ali al-Kuwari expressed his pride in the achievement.

"Msheireb Museums exemplifies our vision of creating innovative, environmentally friendly spaces that honour Qatar's rich heritage while embracing modern sustainability practices," he said. "This award further cements Qatar's position as a leader in sustainable development and cultural preservation in the region."

"Winning this award validates our efforts in transforming these historic houses into world-class museums," said Msheireb Museums general manager Abdullah Al Naama.

"It demonstrates that preserving our cultural legacy and implementing cutting-edge sustainable technologies can go hand in hand," he added. "This recognition inspires us to continue our mission



Msheireb Museums comprises four carefully restored and transformed historic Qatari houses, preserving cultural heritage while integrating with the modern urban development of Msheireb Downtown Doha.

of educating visitors about Qatar's history through these beautifully restored and repurposed buildings."

Msheireb Museums comprises four carefully restored and transformed historic Qatari houses, preserving cultural heritage while integrating with the modern urban development of Msheireb Downtown Doha.

The museums showcase Qatar's journey from its roots in traditional domestic life, the petroleum industry's pioneers, the Msheireb district's modern development, and the histories of slavery both regionally and internationally.

What sets the Msheireb Museums

apart is the approach to sustainability and heritage conservation.

The museums are a successful example of the fusion of traditional Qatari and contemporary architectural design, making history accessible and relevant in the rapidly changing urban and cultural landscape of 21st-century Doha.

This careful balance of original architectural elements with modern construction techniques ensures that the museums educate about the past while preserving it for future generations with environmentally sustainable systems to protect artefacts in world-class museum conditions.

Over 109,000kg of mangoes sold in first 5 days of Al Hamba Festival



Khaled Saif al-Suwaidi at the Al Hamba Festival.

By Joey Aguilar
Staff Reporter

More than 109,000kg of mangoes were sold in the first five days of the Al Hamba Festival, receiving a huge response from Qatar residents and visitors, organisers have said.

The event was launched on June 27 at Souq Waqif and showcases this iconic fruit's diverse flavours and varieties, including Chaunsa, Safed Chaunsa, Sidhri, Anwar Ratool and Duseri.

It is organised by the Pakistan embassy in Doha in collaboration with the Celebrations Organising Committee of the Private Engineering Office (PEO).

"We've had a very positive response from people in Qatar. We've been able to showcase different varieties of mangoes throughout the festival, and we expect even more varieties to arrive from the Punjab region soon," Serein Asad, trade and investment attache at the Pakistan embassy in Doha, told

reporters on the sidelines of the festival.

"The Punjab mangoes are bigger, more aromatic, and sweeter with a richer taste," she added.

She noted that the 10-day event also features mango saplings, providing an opportunity to introduce people to the entire process of mango cultivation, from the tree to the final product.

According to Asad, this exhibition is an opportunity to explore how to cultivate mangoes in Qatar, given its climate and sustainable farming practices.

Besides mangoes, she said the festival also showcases other Pakistani fruits, many of which are not readily available in Qatari supermarkets.

Visitors can enjoy jamun and falsa, a blueberry-like fruit with a sour flavour, in addition to peaches, apricots, and plums.

"We want to introduce people to the diverse range of fruits available in Pakistan," the embassy official said. "We've had a great turnout, with people from all walks of life



coming to enjoy the festival with their families. We've even seen transit passengers, who are only in Qatar for 24 hours, stopping by."

Khaled Saif al-Suwaidi, general supervisor of the festival, echoed the sentiment, highlighting the significant number of visitors.

"This is a huge number for an exhibition, and we're seeing new varieties of mangoes coming in every few days," he said. "It also offers a glimpse into the Pakistani culture."

He noted that the festival aims to connect mango sellers and pro-



The 10-day event also features mango saplings, providing an opportunity to introduce people to the entire process of mango cultivation. **PICTURES:** Joey Aguilar

Left: The event showcases the fruit's diverse flavours and varieties, including Chaunsa, Safed Chaunsa, Sidhri, Anwar Ratool and Duseri.

ducers with Qatari businesses, exploring innovative ways to cultivate mangoes in Qatar.

It also serves as a cultural exchange, attracting visitors from various countries, including Nepal and China, and from the GCC, Europe, and the Arab region.

M7 invites designers to showcase their brands at 'Not Your Average Labels' pop-up



M7 is dedicated to supporting designers by providing them with the means to gain exposure and connect with both local and international audiences.

M7 has announced the return of its highly anticipated pop-up event, "Not Your Average Labels", scheduled for November.

Designers are invited to apply for this unique opportunity to showcase their brands at M7 and be a part of Qatar's growing creative community.

M7 is dedicated to supporting designers, by providing them with the means to gain exposure and connect with audiences, both local and international.

The pop-up event is a key initiative in M7's mission to highlight the diverse talents in Qatar and the Mena (Middle East and North Africa) region and pro-

vide platforms for them to develop successful businesses.

Curated by M7, the "Not Your Average Labels" retail pop-up previously featured 22 brands from Qatar and the GCC, including coveted names such as 1309 Studios, Marpholio, Harlienz, and 1886.

The event successfully created a platform for designers to present their work and engage with a wider audience, setting a high standard for future editions.

M7 is now calling for applications from talented designers with strong brand aesthetics and fresh

perspectives in design to submit their entries to participate in the second edition for the retail pop-up event, which will take place over five days and will blend notable brands with new labels to discover.

This year's categories for application are "Ready-to-wear" (menswear and womenswear), "Evening-wear", "Abaya", "Accessories" (shoes, bags and eyewear) and "Home Décor" (excluding furniture).

Designers interested in participating in the initiative are encouraged to submit their applications and submitting all mandatory documents to ensure the

processing of their application.

To be considered, brands must be Qatar-based and from Mena region, officially registered and have a commercial registration licence, have their own point of sale system, and fully complete the application form and submit the necessary documents.

Designers are invited to submit their applications at <https://m7.org.qa/en/calendar/m7-pop-up-open-call/>

Following an initial screening, the M7 events team will contact selected applicants for further details.

Application opens for Doha Debates' ambassador programme

Young people in Qatar and across the globe are invited to apply for the fifth cohort of the Doha Debates Ambassador Programme, which equips youth leaders with the skills they need to conduct intercultural discussions, address global problems and build a healthy, equitable future.

Offered by Qatar Foundation (QF)'s Doha Debates, the virtual 12-week programme combines majlis-style discussion, storytelling, consensus building and systems thinking to help ambassadors explore, debate and generate solutions to the world issues that are most important to them.

From September 3 to November 27, ambassadors will attend weekly sessions guided by facilitation expert Dr Brandon Ferderer, systems-thinking specialist Jennifer Geist, and other international guest speakers.



Through the lens of Doha Debates' podcast *The Negotiators*, ambassadors will learn to facilitate and participate in discussions of complex global problems.

They'll also learn to understand and value the diverse worldviews and personal stories of their fellow ambassadors - a take-away the previous cohort valued.

"I have realised that sharing your story allows you to learn more about yourself, your character, your beliefs and the causes

close to your heart," said Methode Emmanuel Ihirwe, a Rwandan biomedical laboratory sciences student who participated in the fourth cohort. "Every one of us is unique, which is why there are lessons that we learn from each other's perspectives."

Programme alumni also stay actively engaged with Doha Debates, representing the organisation at high-profile events and projects.

Ambassadors were part of the onstage audience at three Doha Debates town halls in 2023, asking questions of the expert guests, and have also posed questions to further discussion on episodes of the Doha Debates Podcast.

Doha Debates managing director Amjad Atallah said: "In order to bring about positive global change, the next generation of leaders needs a brave space where they can cultivate community, seek out truth,

understand intercultural perspectives, and take on the world's most challenging problems."

"The Doha Debates Ambassador Programme is that space, and we're thrilled to offer such a unique and inspiring opportunity to these trailblazers who are forging a more hopeful future," he said.

The Doha Debates Ambassador Programme is open to fluent English speakers between the ages 18-26 who have consistent access to an Internet-enabled computer for video conferencing.

Potential candidates should join Doha Debates' online community and complete the brief "Introduction to the Majlis" course, after which they will be prompted to submit an application at <https://dohadebates.com/IntroMajlis>

The deadline for application is July 25. Interested candidates can learn more and apply at DohaDebates.com/Ambassador