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#### Amir, Macron discuss Gaza developments

His Highness the Amir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani discussed with President of the friendly French Republic Emmanuel Macron cooperation ties between the two countries and avenues of strengthening and developing them, in addition to the latest regional and international developments of joint interest, particularly the developments in Gaza and the Occupied Palestinian Territories. This came during a phone call the Amir received yesterday from the French president. During the call, Macron expressed his thanks and appreciation for His Highness the Amir for Qatar's contribution to securing the Olympic Games Paris 2024. His Highness the Amir expressed his wishes for the success of the French Republic in organising the Olympics events. (QNA)

#### Nine killed in Oman mosque shooting

Nine people were killed, including three attackers, and more than two dozen others were injured in an assault near a mosque in Oman late on Monday, law enforcement said. Four Pakistanis, an Indian and a police officer were among those killed in the gun attack. The Oman police said 28 people of various nationalities were wounded, including security personnel. Police have not said whether they have identified a motive for the attack or if they had made any arrests. Page 4

#### Six foreigners found dead in Bangkok hotel

Thai police are investigating the deaths of six foreign nationals whose bodies were found in a room at an upmarket hotel in Bangkok yesterday, including looking for a seventh person in connection with the incident. All six, who were of Vietnamese descent, with two carrying US passports, checked into Bangkok's Grand Hyatt Erawan hotel at two separate times after arriving on Saturday and Sunday. The group - three men and three women - checked into different rooms but their bodies were found in one room. which did not show any signs of struggle. Page 8

## **EAA highlights** education's role in combating climate crisis

The Education Above All (EAA) Foundation has highlighted the role of education in facing the challenges of climate crisis at a United Nations event.

Held in partnership with the Permanent Mission of Qatar to the United Nations, Generation Unlimited, Unicef, UNDP and the Green Climate Fund (GCF), the event titled "Education to Combat the Climate Crisis" took place during the High-Level Political Forum (HLPF 2024) on Sustainable Development at the United Nations Headquarters in New York.

The HLPF annual meeting is the core United Nations platform for follow-up and review of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) at the global level. This year's HLPF 2024, under the theme "Reinforcing the 2030 Agenda and Eradicating Poverty in Times of Multiple Crises: The Effective Delivery of Sustainable, Resilient, and Innovative Solutions," focused on several Sustainable Development Goals. including urgent actions to com-

bat climate change and its impacts. HE Ambassador Sheikha Alya Ahmed bin Saif al-Thani, Permanent Representative of Qatar to the United Nations, set the stage for a meaningful dialogue, sharing Qatar's commitment to investing on education and equipping children and youth with the knowledge and skills needed to build a sustainable future. The keynote address by Kevin Frey, CEO of Generation Unlimited, emphasised the critical role of education in addressing global environmental challenges and the importance of empowering youth to lead climate action in their communities.

During the session, EAA explored how education can significantly mitigate these impacts by fostering resilience and empowering communities with sustainable solutions. The discussion featured a panel of distinguished speakers, including Catalina Duarte Salcedo, education specialist with Unicef Colombia; Susana Puerto, head of the Youth Employment Accelerator at the ILO; Srilata Kammila, head of Climate Change Adaptation at the UNDP; Darren Karjama, Partnerships and Outreach Specialist at the Green Climate Fund; Maleiha Malik, executive

The HLPF annual meeting is the core **United Nations platform** for follow-up and review of the 2030 **Agenda for Sustainable Development Goals** (SDGs) at the global level

director of PEIC (Protect Education in Insecurity and Conflict) at EAA; Noura al-Kaabi, strategic partnerships researcher, Qatar Fund for Development, and Salwa al-Kuwari, a youth advocate from EAA, with George Tavola from EAA moderating the event.

The panel delved into th tersections of education, environmental protection, and sustainable employment, emphasising the need for innovative solutions to climate challenges. This discussion came at a critical time as the world deals with escalating climate threats, highlighting the need for educational strategies that lead to significant, climate-resilient changes. EAA reaffirmed its commitment to quality education as a crucial lever for sustainable development and peace. By focusing on educational interventions in areas facing severe environmental and climate challenges, EAA supports the building of more stable and inclusive societies.

Malik, stated: "We urge the global community to recognise the vital role of education in combatting climate change. To Page 2



Maleiha Malik, executive director of PEIC speaking at the panel.

### 57 more Gazans perish in Israeli genocide; UN-run school hit again

Reuters Cairo/Gaza

alestinian health officials said at least 57 people were killed yesterday in Israeli bombardments of southern and central areas of the Gaza Strip.

The Palestinian resistance movement Hamas has accused Israel of stepping up attacks in Gaza to try to derail efforts by Arab mediators and the US to reach a ceasefire deal.

In Rafah, five Palestinians were killed in an airstrike on a house. In nearby Khan Younis, a man, his wife, and two children were

Later yesterday, an Israeli airstrike on a car killed at least 17 Palestinians and wounded 26 others in Khan Younis in southern Gaza, the officials said.

The airstrike hit near a tented area housing displaced families in Attar Street in the humanitariandesignated area of Al-Mawasi, the health ministry said.

Footage showed residents carrying bodies of the dead and wounded on donkey carts and in rickshaws to hospitals.

In the historic Nuseirat camp in central Gaza, at least four Palestinians were killed in separate



Palestinians inspect a UN school sheltering displaced people, following an Israeli strike, in Nuseirat in the central Gaza Strip yesterday.

shelling and aerial strikes in central Gaza, medics said. An Israeli airstrike also killed four in Sheikh Zayed in northern Gaza. Hours later, an Israeli air strike

on a UN-run school that housed displaced families in the Nuseirat camp killed 23 people and wounded many others, health officials said.

At least 38,713 Palestinians have been killed in Israel's offensive in Gaza since October 7.

Among those killed was local journalist Mohamed Meshmesh, taking the number of journalists killed in the conflict to 160, the Hamas-run Gaza government media office said.

"Where is the safety for (UN) agency schools? There are no more safe agency schools, or safe clinics, no more safe houses, no safe streets. We have been left desolate, displaced and destroyed," said eyewitness Umm Omar Ahmed at Nuseirat camp.

Efforts to end the conflict stalled on Saturday after three days of negotiations failed to produce a viable outcome, Egyptian security sources said, and after an Israeli strike killed more than 90 people in the Khan Younis area.

## Katara's TSE plant saves cost and water

**By Joey Aguilar** 

The newly unveiled Treated Sewage Effluent (TSE) Polishing Plant at Katara - the Cultural Village, not only saves costs and water but also enhances the area's appeal as a destination, according to Katara Project director general, Engineer Mohamed al-Meer.

The Katara official told Gulf Times that using high-quality treated water for irrigation promotes healthier plant growth and reduces heat stress on green areas, making Katara even more attractive to residents and visitors.

"This will hopefully make the public aware of our efforts to not only provide, maintain and improve Katara - the Cultural Village as one of the major leisure and tourist destinations in Oatar but. to do that in a way which is sustainable, both economically and environmentally," he said, highlighting the importance of raising awareness about the project's



TSE Polishing Plant at Katara. PICTURE: Shaji Kayamkulam

positive impact and its benefits to the public.

In addition, Eng al-Meer explained that the removal of corrosive minerals from the TSE water during the polishing process increases the lifespan of cooling equipment, leading to further cost

savings and reduced maintenance. About ensuring compliance of the plant's design with the Min-

istry of Environment and Climate Change's (MoECC) wastewater treatment parameters, he said: "As with any treatment process, there is a waste element, in this case, salt water, technically termed 'Brine Rejection'; the MoECC imposes very strict parameters on the 'Brine Rejection' quality and this process and end product is fully co-ordinated and approved by them".



Mohamed al-Meer

He stressed that the plant's design ensures ample capacity to accommodate Katara's future expansions and the increasing demand for water across the country.

#### **GT EXCLUSIVE**

"As for the entire country, the potential is obviously there to utilise similar installations in other locations and developments subject to the availability of TSE water and the particular requirements of Government and individual developers," Eng al-Meer said.

He noted that the Katara Project aims to transition from using potable water supplied by Qatar General Electricity and Water Corporation (Kahramaa) to utilising readily available TSE water provided by the Public Works Authority (Ash-

Eng al-Meer said that Katara is also actively exploring ways to further promote sustainability, such as inviting university students to conduct research at the plant, fostering knowledge sharing and promoting best practices within the

Katara has become one of the most popular tourist destinations in the country, a melting pot of art, culture, and entertainment. Its diverse offerings cater to all tastes, from exploring the intricate details of traditional Qatari architecture to immersing oneself in vibrant art and music that celebrates the na-

tion's heritage. Katara's calendar features an array of events, covering traditional architecture, art exhibitions, and theatrical performances, among other activities and attractions.



#### **Chad PM meets Qatar's ambassador**



Chad's Prime Minister Allamaye Halina met with Qatar's ambassador in N'Diamena Talib bin Mohamed al-Mankhas. The meeting dealt with bilateral relations.

## Milipol 2024 seminars to focus on safety and security challenges

**By Shafeeq Alingal** 

Staff Reporter

ilipol Qatar 2024 seminars will focus on safety and security with international experts sharing insights and addressing current and future challenges of the sector in the Middle East.

According to the Milipol 2024 website, fire and rescue, cybersecurity and threats, artificial intelligence and border controls will be the main topics of the seminars. "A content-rich conference programme is organised to discover new trends and discuss the issues of security market key topics," the website said adding that the conference titles and speakers will be announced

The seminars will discuss challenges to safeguard highrise structures, measures to revolutionise fire prevention and road safety and security. Also, security convergence, integrating physical and cyber security



frastructures will be discussed

while the sessions will shed light

on integrated technologies for

in the protection of critical in-

smart and safe cities and forensics science for investigation. The 15th edition of Milipol Qatar 2024 will be held from October 29-31 at the Doha Exhibition and Convention Centre (DECC). Themed "the technology in the service of security", the latest edition promises to be a pivotal gathering for industry leaders, policymakers and ex-

perts from around the globe. Organised by the Ministry of Interior in collaboration with Comexposium Security, representing the GIE Milipol under Civipol, the co-operation implementer of the French Minis-

try of the Interior and Overseas, the event plays a crucial role in addressing Qatar's growing security needs and supports the security goals outlined in Qatar National Vision 2030.

This year's event will feature exhibitors from across the world showcasing cutting-edge innovations in security, safety, detection and prevention equipment and systems. Attendees will have the opportunity to explore a wide range of products and services designed to address contemporary security challenges. From advanced surveillance systems to state-of-the-art detection technologies, the show will present the latest solutions to ensure public safety and protect critical infrastructure.



## Rights forum calls for fighting racial discrimination

The regional dialogue forum on "human rights: promoting equality and combating discrimination in the context of migration" concluded in Doha vesterday.

The event was organised by the National Human Rights Committee (NHRC) in collaboration with the Arab Network for National Human Rights Institutions (AN-NHRI) and the UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR).

The two-day forum underscored the importance of constantly working to promote the awareness levels of human rights and the notions related to enhancing equality and repudiating all forms of racial discrimination. They advocated for leveraging education and culture to communicate with youth pertaining to the elimination of racial discrimination and promoting the concepts of tolerance and co-existence.

The recommendations that were read out by ANNHRI Secretary-General Sultan bin Hassan al-Jamali emphasised the imperative of constantly monitoring the reality of human rights concerning expatriate workers, identifying the challenges and presenting the suggestions of addressing them. Also, the recommendations urged civil society organisations



and media outlets to foster tolerance, co-existence and promote awareness of the danger of racial discrimination.

Besides, the participants called for unifying the efforts of combating racism in sports, through crafting policies, plans, and stepping up awareness campaigns, and other initiatives in this regard, underlining the importance of capacity-building programs and providing opportunities to enhance skills, mechanisms, and methodologies through training and educational programmes. They also called for strengthening and promoting the principles and values of Islamic Shariah, which advocate for equality and reject discrimination.

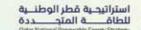
The second day of the forum featured the presentation of an array of working papers, includ-

ing a paper presented by NHRC that shed the light on the Qatari experience on ways to address the issue of racial discrimination. The working paper discussed the NHRC's role as an independent authority which is tasked with promoting and protecting human rights in the State of Qatar, in addition to exploring ways to address the issue of racial discrimination.

Additionally, the working paper highlighted the role of NHRC as an independent body in Qatar, in promoting and protecting human rights. It noted that the committee's jurisdiction and competencies are defined in accordance with the Paris Principles, which regulate the work of national human rights institutions since 1993.

The paper also addressed the NHRC-backed efforts in promoting a culture of equality, nondiscrimination, and combating racism, in addition to protecting the human rights of expatriates. It highlighted the annual reports issued by NHRC through which it monitors the State's performance in upholding human rights in all their aspects, including economic, social, and cultural rights, such as the right to work and related rights for migrant workers in the workplace. (QNA)





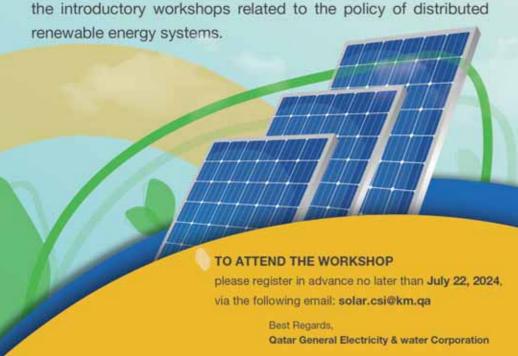


### Invitation

In line with Qatar National Renewable Energy Strategy and Qatar National Vision 2030, Qatar General Electricity & Water Corporation 'KAHRAMAA' is pleased to invite all accredited electrical contractors, including contractors interested in the connections of electrical works related to solar energy systems for buildings, to submit applications for qualification to work in the field of connecting and installing Distributed Renewable Energy Systems.

This aligns with KAHRAMAA Policy for Renewable Energy Systems Connected to the Distribution Network and in preparation for the announcement of acceptance of customer applications for distributed renewable energy systems in the State of Qatar.

We are also pleased to invite all concerned consultants to attend



#### **Tunisian delegation visits Police Academy**





As part of the co-operation between the ministries of interior of Qatar and Tunisia, a delegation from the Tunisian Ministry of Interior, headed by Brig Gen Mohamed al-Sabti al-Arfawi director of Intervent Units, yesterday visited the International Co-operation Department and the Police Academy. The visit, according to a statement by the Ministry of Interior (MoI) on X, aimed to exchange expertise and knowledge in security and policing fields and benefit from Qatari experiences. During the visit, the Tunisian delegation met Brig Hadi Hamad al-Shahwani, assistant director of the International Co-operation Department and several officials from Mol. The delegation also met Lt Col Dr Jassim Mohamed al-Obaidli, director of the Research and Studies Center at the Police Academy, during their visit to the academy building. The visits included discussions on ways to enhance frameworks for security and academic cooperation in policing.

#### **EAA** highlights education's role in combating climate crisis

#### From Page 1

"This forum represented an opportunity to galvanise support and accelerate efforts towards transformative education strategies that can mitigate climate risks. build resilience, and catalyse innovative approaches towards more sustainable educational and environmental outcomes. Furthermore, EAA is committed to empowering young people, especially those who have experienced the impacts of climate change, to take action for present and future generations.' The event marked a cornerstone for future initiatives and partnerships aimed at integrating educational strategies with climate action plans. It also highlighted the development of climate-resilient livelihoods through educational pathways leading to sustainable employment, alongside investments in new technologies and industries aimed at mitigating climate impacts.

### Registration open for Katara Qur'an contest

egistration for the 8th Katara Qur'an Recitation Katara Qur an Recumental Competition opens today (July 17) and continues until October 17.

The Cultural Village Foundation - Katara said the competition aims to encourage and discover outstanding talents in reading and reciting the Holy Qur'an, and to present to the world distinguished reciters according to the rules of Tajweed, to honour the outstanding and creative readers, and to motivate the younger generations to adhere to their religion and understand their duties towards their faith and Islamic message.

The screening committee will evaluate all entries and select the best 100 participants to proceed for the qualifying stage held in Doha. The 100 qualifiers will participate in the competition through 20 television episodes, with five participants competing in each episode. One of them will be selected to compete in the semi-final stage. During the semi-finals, 20 contestants, along with five reserves, will compete in five more episodes, with 5 people competing in each episode. One participant will be qualified from each episode to compete in the final stage. Among the five finalists, the top three winners of the prize will be announced, and the episodes will be broadcast in a special programme in collaboration with Qatar TV during the holy month of Ramadan.

Katara will produce a CD for the winner, reciting the entire Qur'an, in Katara's studios.

The total value for the Katara Prize for Our'an Recitation is QR900,000, where the winner receives QR500,000, the runner up receives OR300,000, and the third-place winner receives QR100,000. (QNA)



## Matar Qadeem Street: A one-stop shop for all





**By Peter Alagos** Business Reporter

atar's city planning has successfully provided residents of its ever-expanding communities with a plethora of services and establishments built along bustling thoroughfares across the country, which serve as a one-stop shop for urban convenience.

One such thoroughfare is Matar Qadeem (Al Matar Al Qadeem Street or Old Airport Street in English). Owing to its diversity of goods and services, Matar Oadeem's kilometre-long stretch is a melting pot of peoples and cultures.

The flow of human and vehicular traffic varies at different times of the day, but nighttime is usually when most people troop to its restaurants, quaint cafeterias, hardware stores, and barber shops, commonly labelled as "gents saloon."

Matar Qadeem is a magnet for residents looking for computer stores or repair shops, or wanting to score affordable tech and mobile phones and their accessories. While it does not rival the wide

barber shops. PICTURES: Shaji Kayamkulam **Matar Qadeem (Al Matar Al Qadeem Street or Old** Airport Street in English). Owing to its diversity of goods and services, Matar **Qadeem's kilometre-long** stretch is a melting pot of peoples and cultures

assortment of similar services and the availability of tech products and gadgets at the nearby Al Watan Centre, Matar Qadeem is an expedient alternative for those avoiding the hustle and bustle of driving or the public commute.

Motorists also find the diverse businesses at Matar Oadeem handy for quick emergencies, such as repairing a flat tyre or buying new ones, engine maintenance and battery trouble, or electrical problems, among others.

Shops are open for air-conditioning issues for automobile A/C units, while washing vehicles is a breeze and can help save time and avoid long queues in other wellknown but overcrowded car wash outlets.

Buying daily essentials is best done in one go at Qatar's large and

popular hypermarkets. But if one runs short of foodstuffs or household items, Matar Qadeem boasts of supermarkets and quaint grocery stores, including butcheries offering different meats from chicken to mutton. Fresh fish and vegetables are also available, courtesy of several shops there.

The flow of human and vehicular traffic varies at different times of the day, but nighttime is usually when most people troop to its restaurants, quaint cafeterias, hardware stores, and

> The street is home to many service-oriented businesses, including laundry and dry cleaning establishments, barbershops, car rental agencies, a handful of travel agencies, and some exchange houses, as well.

Perhaps, some of the busiest shops in Matar Qadeem offer typing and printing services. While they are small in terms of workspace, their expertise is quite significant as they specialise in the translation of official documents for submission, particularly in government ministries.

Matar Qadeem has a few pharmacies packed with a cross-section of medical supplies and equipment, while different optical shops offer a wide selection of decently priced frames and contact lenses.

The string of hardware stores

are the go-to places for paints, electrical and plumbing supplies, carpentry tools, and lighting accessories, which are ideal for home improvement projects. Matar Qadeem is also lined with shops that handle maintenance or repair of residential A/C units or washing machines.

For niche requirements like bookbinding and lamination services, there is a bookstore and a handful of stationery shops. Some photo studios, watch repair shops, and locksmiths also offer quick, specialised services.

Health buffs flock to some of Matar Qadeem's gyms, while a few protein shops cater to fitness enthusiasts. There are also different apparel shops for affordable clothing and footwear, as well as men's and ladies' tailor shops.

Of course, a trip to Matar Qadeem would not be complete without exploring its culinary offers. Aside from a few fast food chains, the street is lined with different cafeterias and small restaurants, offering affordable food and drinks, such as the popular egg sandwiches and karak.

### Second Katara Summer Camp begins on July 21

**才**atara − the Cultural Village Foundation is getting ready to organise the 2nd Katara Summer Camp on July 21.

The educational and recreational programme will run from July 21-August 7, on Sundays, Mondays, Tuesdays, and Wednesdays each week, targeting children aged 10-13

A number of different entities in the country are taking part in the camp to provide a rich and integrated programme.

These include the Ministry of Interior represented by the General Directorate of Civil Defence, the Ministry of Endowments (Awgaf) and Islamic Affairs, Qatar Red Crescent, Al Jazeera Media Institute, the Shooting Club, Al Shaqab, and Sawt Al Khaleej Radio.

Further, different Katara facilities and centres will contribute actively, including the Al Thuraya Planetarium and the Al Gannas Qatari Society. The programme will include various activities, such as workshops and practical training on awareness and heritage topics, as well as field trips and visits.

Katara has a dedicated telephone number: 50047041, and e-mail Hassan.alkuwari@katara.net to facilitate easy registration for parents, allowing them to enrol their children in the week of their choice. Participants will be divided into three groups, with a new group each week.

Through this camp, Katara aims to enhance the social and national values in the younger generation, develop their skills, and provide them with additional knowledge through various educational and training workshops, field trips, and tours of Katara's facilities.

Katara Summer 1st Camp 2023 received much praise from parents and participants.



File photo from Katara 1st summer camp.

#### **Lexus, Mercedes** models recalled

The Ministry of Commerce and Industry, in co-operation with Al Abdulghani Motors has announced the recall of Lexus NX, 2022-2023 models, due to the possibility of the forward recognition camera to fail while ignition is turned off due to software programming defect. The Ministry of Commerce and Industry, in co-operation with Nasser Bin Khaled and Sons Automobiles has announced the recall of Mercedes G-Class, 2022-2023 models, as the transmission housing in the rear axle may not match the required force specifications and may cause cracks in the housing during vehicle operations, which may lead to transmission oil leakage on the road. The ministry said the recall campaign comes wi framework of its ongoing efforts to protect consumers and ensure that car dealers follow up on vehicle defects and repairs. The ministry said it will coordinate with the dealers to follow up on the maintenance and repair works and will communicate with customers to ensure that the necessary repairs are carried out. The MoCl urged all customers to report any violations to its Consumer Protection and Anti-Commercial Fraud Department, which processes complaints. inquires and suggestions through the following channels: Call Centre: 16001, e-mail: info@ moci.gov.qa, X (formerly Twitter) · @MOCIQATAR, Instagram -MOCIQATAR. The MoCI mobile application, MOCI\_QATAR, is available on iPhone and Android

### **QU professor introduces remote** patient routing system

Prof Ridha Hamila, professor of Electrical Engineering, College of Engineering at Qatar University (QU), has introduced an innovative system for remote patient routing to medical facilities. This development promises to streamline patient scheduling and reduce the inefficiencies that currently plague healthcare systems worldwide.

Prof Hamila's system introduces a unified frame work designed to distribute patients across various medical facilities efficiently. This system employs advanced algorithms to minimise the total expected service time and the probability of service delays. The system features a processor in communication with a memory that receives scheduling requests from patients' devices over a network. It gathers real-time information from multiple medical facilities, including current patient loads, occupancy states. and availability.

Using this data t service time for each patient, including travel, waiting, and consultation times. It then selects the optimal medical facility to minimise delays and ensure timely treatment.

Comparative studies have shown that this system can improve performance by up to 50% over existing methods and algorithms.

The new system developed by Prof Hamila addresses these challenges by providing a robust framework for the efficient distribution of patients across heterogeneous medical facilities. The system is designed to optimise the entire scheduling process, from receiving patient requests to assigning them to the appropriate medical facility based on various factors. The system's architecture includes several innovative features designed to streamline patient scheduling and distribution.

The Control Unit maintains the state of medical facilities, including patient count, occupancy, and availability. These are regularly updated based on assignment decisions to ensure accurate scheduling. Patients are assigned to facilities based on their needs and the capabilities of each facility. The system uses a window-based method to estimate



Prof Ridha Hamila

the arrival rates of requests and service rates. Travel time from the patient's location to the medical facility is calculated using an estimated time of arrival model. Efficient communication between different system components ensures accurate data flow. The system prioritises patients with severe or critical conditions, ensuring they receive timely care while managing other patients who can tolerate more delay. By formulating an optimisation problem as a convex combination of expected service time and service time tail probability metrics, the system employs an efficient iterative algorithm to minimise these factors, demonstrating performance improvements of up to 50% compared to existing algorithms. This system not only improves efficiency but also ensures that patients receive timely and appropriate care, ultimately enhancing healthcare outcomes.

### Farms hope to raise output next season

number of local farm owners said they were making necessary preparations for the upcoming agricultural season in addition to plans to raise production through the use of cooled greenhous-

es and other modern techniques. Speaking to local Arabic daily Arrayah, owners dis-

closed that some farms have not stopped production during the summer and will continue their activities until winter, producing a variety of vegetables such as cucumbers. cowpeas, and sweet peppers in greenhouses, and squash, okra, and leafy vegetables in open spaces. Farming in open soil dur-

ing the summer requires more organic fertilisers and vitamins compared to the winter season. Production levels last sea-

son did not achieve the desired increase, they said, due to higher costs of agricultural inputs such as seeds and fertilisers, while prices of local

vegetables in the market remained the same. The farm owners were optimistic that the next season would be better than the previous year, as they have set up new greenhouses to increase production levels. They stressed the importance of adopting organic farming methods which helps preserve the environment, reduces pollution, and maintains the soil for many years compared to traditional farming which uses chemicals. Moreover, organic farming provides healthy food for

humans, free from toxic chemical residues. They also stressed the importance of the Ministry

of Municipality in terms of providing sufficient support to farms, Mahaseel in terms of increasing purchase prices for farmers, the Ministry of Commerce and Industry in regulating the entry of imported vegetables during the agricultural season, and

> productive farms. Some local farms have stopped vegetable production and shifted to producing animal fodder which have lower costs and faster growth and harvest times, besides higher profits compared to vegetables, they revealed.

Kahramaa in reducing bills for

Farm owner Yousef Tahir said he plans to grow 15 different types of vegetables next season. He hoped for more support to enable him to cut production costs. Farm owner Hamad al-Kuwari said production last

season was excellent and he plans on expanding greenhouse farming.

Ali al-Hinzab, farm owners, stressed that organic farming is considered the best in the country to maintain good production at reasonable cost.









### REGION/ARAB WORLD

# Six killed in Oman attack near mosque

**AFP** Muscat

six people including four Pakistanis were killed and nearly 30 wounded in a shooting near a mosque in the Omani capital Muscat, officials said yesterday.

"The Royal Oman Police have responded to a shooting incident that occurred in the vicinity of a mosque in the Al-Wadi Al-Kabir area" of the capital, a police statement

The three gunmen behind the attack were killed and police officers have "concluded the procedures for dealing with the shooting," it added.

The force gave a toll of six killed, including a police officer. It said 28 people "from various nationalities" were wounded, including rescuers and paramedics.

The foreign ministry in Islamabad said at least "four Pakistanis were martyred as a result of gunshots in the dastardly terrorist attack on the mosque."

Another 30 Pakistanis were wounded, it

One Indian was killed and another was wounded, India's embassy in Oman said on social media platform X. Footage verified by AFP shows people fleeing the mosque, its minaret visible, as gunshots ring out.

Speaking to AFP, Pakistan's ambassador to Oman Imran Ali said the mosque was

mostly frequented by south Asian expatriates. Oman is home to at least 400,000 Pakistanis, he said.

Pakistani Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif saidh e was "deeply saddened by the terror-

In a statement on X, he said: "Pakistan stands in solidarity with the Sultanate of Oman and offers full assistance in the investigation." Iran's foreign ministry spokesman, Nasser Kanani, condemned the shooting as a "divisive" act.

Pakistan's ambassador said the attack started with gunfire from a building adjacent to the mosque as hundreds of people gathered for prayers.

The worshippers were held "hostage" by militants before "they were later freed by Omani forces", Ali said.

Earlier yesterday, Ali toured hospitals that were treating the wounded.

The American embassy in Muscat issued a security alert following the shooting and cancelled all visa appointments for yesterday. "US citizens should remain vigilant, monitor local news and heed directions of local authorities," it posted on X.

Police said "all necessary security measures and procedures have been taken to handle the situation" following the attack.

"The authorities are continuing to gather evidence and conduct investigations to uncover the circumstances surrounding the incident," police added on X.

## Security forces shoot dead Palestinian in West Bank

**AFP** Ramallah

Israeli police said security forces shot dead a Palestinian in the West Bank yesterday after he stabbed an officer, while a relative said the man had been pursued by soldiers.

Police said soldiers and border guards were carrying out an "operation" in the town of Al-Bireh near Ramallah when a man ran towards them.

Ahmad al-Bitawi, director of the Palestine Medical Complex in Ramallah, said Ahmad Ramzi Sultan, 20, died "after being shot in the chest and abdomen during confrontations" on a road in Al-Birch

Bassam Sultan said his nephew had been to dawn prayers when he encountered soldiers.

"Since it was written on his ID card that he is a resident of Gaza, Ahmad tried to hide from the army in a nearby building. That's when they shot and wounded him," Sultan said.

He added his nephew was then taken to the Beit El Israeli settlement where

A Palestinian security source said that following "an altercation", a soldier opened fire on Ahmad, killing him.

Violence and arrests have soared in the Israeli-occupied West Bank since the Gaza war erupted over Hamas's



The mother (centre) of Ahmad Ramzi Sultan, a 20-year-old Palestinian of Gazan origin, is comforted as she mourns her son after he was killed during an Israeli army raid earlier in Al-Bireh north of Ramallah in the occupied West Bank during his funeral, yesterday.

storming of Israel in the first week of October last year.

Sultan said his nephew had been living in the West Bank since before the war.

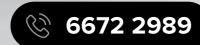
At around dawn, an AFP journalist saw Israeli military vehicles in the area, with soldiers spotted entering shops, including at least one bureau de

change. Israel has occupied the West Bank since 1967 and regularly carries out raids there, although they are far less common in Ramallah, the territory's institutional heart.

At least 574 Palestinians have been killed in the West Bank by Israeli troops or settlers since October first week last year, according to Palestinian officials.

## WAREHOUSE FOR RENT

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







## QatarEnergy LNG Tender Invitation

| No. | TENDER NUMBER /<br>DESCRIPTION   | TENDER<br>ISSUE<br>PERIOD      | TENDER<br>FEE<br>(QAR) | TENDER<br>BOND<br>(QAR) | TENDER<br>CLOSING<br>DATE |
|-----|--|--------------------------------|------------------------|-------------------------|---------------------------|
| 1   | LTC/C/COE/6635/24  Development of E-  Learning Content on Call-  Off Basis | 17/07/2024<br>to<br>23/07/2024 | 0                      | 136,000                 | 05/08/2024                |

#### Scope of Work:

Development of E-Learning Content which includes new Computer Based Training (CBT) courses, update and amend existing CBT courses to suit the Company's business needs and also to create Short Animated Videos, based on incidents, for communication within Company. Tenderer shall have an established office in Qatar. The contract is proposed to be awarded on Call-Off Basis for 3 Years tentatively commencing in Q4 of 2024.

<u>Bid Validity:</u> 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 Oatar

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: - <a href="https://icv.qa/US">https://icv.qa/US</a>

# Waste crisis deepens misery in Gaza as conflict rages

Reuters

Bulldozers plough through piles of waste, but angry residents find little relief as their children sift through garbage on Gaza's streets in a growing sanitation crisis that's adding to the misery of war.

"We can't sleep, we can't eat, we can't drink, the smell is killing us," said Ahmed Shaloula, one of many displaced Palestinians, who is from Gaza City and lives in Khan Younis.

Palestinians have faced one crisis after another since the conflict erupted between Israel and the Palestinian Hamas group in October. Aside from Israeli air strikes, shelling and a ground offensive, Palestinians are crippled by shortages of food, fuel, water, medicine and functioning hospitals.

Garbage is piling up in the impoverished enclave – one of the world's most densely populated places – which has been reduced mostly to rubble. At night, people stay awake fighting mosquitoes and some are catching diseases like scabies, Shaloula said.

"We are calling on the municipality of Khan Younis to remove the waste."



A Palestinian walks past piles of waste, as garbage collection and many other municipality services come to a halt due to the Israeli bombardment of the Gaza Strip, at the Al-Maghazi Palestinian refugee camp, in the central Gaza Strip.

But the call for government services is wishful thinking in Gaza after nine months of war, which erupted when Hamas stormed Israel.

Israel responded with an offensive that has killed more than 38,000 people, according to Gaza health authorities.
Khan Younis is the second-largest city

in Gaza, home to 2.3mn people.

Damage from the war and a shortage of fuel have created a waste problem, said Omar Matar, the official responsible for the removal of solid waste at Khan Younis Municipality. "The piling up of waste has led to bad smells, spread of insects and rodents in addition to the leakage of liquids from the waste to the underground water reservoir," he said.

The reservoir is the main source of drinking water for residents of Khan Younis. Clean water is unavailable in most of Gaza.

"This dumping land was not correctly designed to stop the leakage of waste liquids into underground water," said Matar

#### Tanker 'assesses possible Red Sea oil spill after Houthi attack'

Liberia-flagged oil tanker Chios Lion was assessing damage and investigating a potential oil spill after it was attacked by Yemen's Houthis in the Red Sea, the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden Joint Maritime Information Center (JMIC) said yesterday, Reuters reported from Cairo.

An unmanned watercraft inflicted minor damage to Chios Lion's port side on Monday as part of a swarm of attacks by the Houthis on the vessel and another ship sailing around 100 nautical miles northwest of Yemen's port city of Hodeidah. "While originally headed south, following the attack the vessel turned around and back north out of the threat area to further assess damage and investigate potential oil spillage," the JMIC said in a statement. It added that the captain and crew were safe. The manager of Chios Lion did not immediately respond to requests for comment. Yemen's Houthis said they targeted Chios Lion and Bentley I with ballistic missiles, drones and booby-trapped boats in response to the deadly Israeli airstrike on the southern Gaza Strip city of Khan Younis on Saturday. Since November, Houthi attacks have exacted an economic toll on global trade by forcing ship owners to route vessels away from the Suez Canal shortcut and toward the longer route around Africa. They also pose a risk to the environment in the form of spilled cargo such as oil and fertiliser as

well as other fuel.



#### Invitation to Tender

|                            |  | ion to rena                                    | ei —                        |  |                          |
|----------------------------|--|--|-----------------------------|--|--------------------------|
| Tender / Auction<br>Number | Subject  | Tender / Auction Document Fees (Nonrefundable) | Tender /<br>Auction<br>Bond | Tender/Auction<br>Offer                | Closing<br>Date          |
| AL-AWALIA/TD/2024/30       | Call-Off Agreement for the<br>Supply and Delivery of Tyers for<br>Mobile Heavy Equipment for<br>Qatar Primary Materials<br>Company ("Supplies")  | 1,000<br>QAR                                   | 90,000<br>QAR               | Two Bids<br>(Technical<br>&Commercial) | 25 July 2024<br>01:00 PM |
| AL-AWALIA/TD/2024/31       | Call-Off Agreement for the<br>Supply and Delivery of Electrical<br>Components for Hyundai &<br>Kranbau Cranes, BMHS<br>(Stackers & Conveyors) & Sub-<br>stations for Qatar Primary<br>Materials Company ("Supplies") | 1,000<br>QAR                                   | 25,000<br>QAR               | Two Bids<br>(Technical<br>&Commercial) | 25 July 2024<br>01:00 PM |
| AL-AWALIA/TD/2024/32       | Call-Off Agreement for Supply<br>and Delivery of Lubricants for<br>Mobile Heavy Equipment for<br>Qatar Primary Materials<br>Company ("Supplies")   | 1,000<br>QAR                                   | 125,000<br>QAR              | Two Bids<br>(Technical<br>&Commercial) | 25 July 2024<br>01:00 PM |
| AL-AWALIA/TD/2024/33       | Call-Off Agreement for Primary<br>Materials Transportation<br>Services for Qatar Primary<br>Materials Company ("Services")   | 1,000<br>QAR                                   | 300,000<br>QAR              | Two Bids<br>(Technical<br>&Commercial) | 25 July 2024<br>01:00 PM |

#### In accordance with the following conditions:

- Tender Documents can be collected online by sending email to tender.docs@qpmc.qa along with requested documents in point No.2.
   Tender Documents will be shared only after delivery of Deposit Slip Stamped by Commercial Bank along with Authorization Letter to the delegated person signed by authorized person as per Computer ID, Copy of commercial Registration (CR), Business License and Computer ID.
- 3) Bids are to be submitted in two sealed (in red wax) envelops (Technical & Commercial) and addressed to Tenders and Auction Committee, Tender reference number and subject are to be clearly written on the envelops, provided that the last date for submitting bids is one o'clock in the afternoon on the closing day. Any bids submitted after this date and time will not be accepted.
- in the afternoon on the closing day. Any bids submitted after this date and time will not be accepted.

  4) Tenderers shall submit the proposals to our head office located at Lusail, Building No. 108, St. No. 303, Burj Marina Tower, 17th Floor before the closing date. (To get the map of the new building, please scan the QR code below).

  5) Tender Fees are nonrefundable and can be transferred online to Account of Qatar Primary Material Company- Bank A/C (4050-651111-006)
- Tender Fees are nonrefundable and can be transferred online to Account of Qatar Primary Material Company- Bank A/C (4050-651111-006) at Commercial Bank of Qatar. IBAN No. (QA 18 CBQA 0000 0000 4050 651111 006). Tender reference number and subject are to be written on the deposit slip.
   Tender Bond (Bank Guarantee/ Manager Cheque) must be valid for 120 days after closing date and must be submitted in separate & sealed
- envelope along with technical bid and a photocopy is to be attached with commercial bid. Bids without tender bond will be rejected.

  Bids must be valid for 90 days after the closing date.

  Any queries relating to the Tender Documents must only be raised in writing, preferably by email, to the address specified in the respective
- Tender Document. Any response issued by Qatar Primary Material Company will be in the form of a question and answer and will be distributed to all Tenderers without revealing the identity of the originator of the query(ies) in the Form of Tender Bulletins. Queries must be received at the address specified in the respective ITT Documentation at least five (5) calendar days prior to the Tender closing date. Any queries received after such a date will be ignored.

  9) The amount of the Performance Bond to be provided by the awarded bidder is (10% of the contract value) and its validity period must remain
- valid under the contract implementation period and the guarantee period according to the terms of the tender.

  10) The Technical Bids shall be opened within one week of the closing date.
- 11) Qatar Primary Material Company has the right, during the contract period, to request an increase or decrease in the amounts of the items, works or services by a percentage not exceeding (20%) of the contract value with the same conditions and prices, provided that the increase is of the same type of contracted items, works or services.
- 12) Qatar Primary Material Company's tendering terms and conditions apply.
  13) For any inquiries about the tender except collecting the documents, please contact tender@qpmc.qs
  14) Location of the new building
  - For further Inquiry, please send your queries at Fax Number: 44479559 or email to tender@qpmc.qa
    or visit Qatar Primary Material Company website @ www.qpmc.qa



##74 4447 9411 (مان مرحل العراق الرئيسي الموقة - قطر منطقة لوسيل، برج ماريل ، رقم 1808 | اسجل تجاري - 3320 | واب يب 2005 | إمانته، 1971 4447 9411 (مانته، 1971 - 33204 | إدام المراقبة الرئيسي الموقة - قطر منطقة لوسيل، برج ماريل ، وقم 1908 | 1908 | 2008 | إدام الموقع 1908 - 33204 | 1908 | 1908 | 2008 | 1908 | 2009 | 1908 | 2009 | 1908 | 2009 | 1909 | 2009 | 1909 | 2009 | 1909 | 2009 | 1909 | 2009 | 1909 | 2009 | 1909 | 2009 | 1909 | 2009 | 1909 | 2009 | 2009 | 2009 | 2009 | 2009 | 2009 | 2009 | 2009 | 2009 | 2009 | 2009 | 2009 | 2009 | 2009 | 2009 | 2009 | 2009 | 2009 | 2009 | 2009 | 2009 | 2009 | 2009 | 2009 | 2009 | 2009 | 2009 | 2009 | 2009 | 2009 | 2009 | 2009 | 2009 | 2009 | 2009 | 2009 | 2009 | 2009 | 2009 | 2009 | 2009 | 2009 | 2009 | 2009 | 2009 | 2009 | 2009 | 2009 | 2009 | 2009 | 2009 | 2009 | 2009 | 2009 | 2009 | 2009 | 2009 | 2009 | 2009 | 2009 | 2009 | 2009 | 2009 | 2009 | 2009 | 2009 | 2009 | 2009 | 2009 | 2009 | 2009 | 2009 | 2009 | 2009 | 2009 | 2009 | 2009 | 2009 | 2009 | 2009 | 2009 | 2009 | 2009 | 2009 | 2009 | 2009 | 2009 | 2009 | 2009 | 2009 | 2009 | 2009 | 2009 | 2009 | 2009 | 2009 | 2009 | 2009 | 2009 | 2009 | 2009 | 2009 | 2009 | 2009 | 2009 | 2009 | 2009 | 2009 | 2009 | 2009 | 2009 | 2009 | 2009 | 2009 | 2009 | 2009 | 2009 | 2009 | 2009 | 2009 | 2009 | 2009 | 2009 | 2009 | 2009 | 2009 | 2009 | 2009 | 2009 | 2009 | 2009 | 2009 | 2009 | 2009 | 2009 | 2009 | 2009 | 2009 | 2009 | 2009 | 2009 | 2009 | 2009 | 2009 | 2009 | 2009 | 2009 | 2009 | 2009 | 2009 | 2009 | 2009 | 2009 | 2009 | 2009 | 2009 | 2009 | 2009 | 2009 | 2009 | 2009 | 2009 | 2009 | 2009 | 2009 | 2009 | 2009 | 2009 | 2009 | 2009 | 2009 | 2009 | 2009 | 2009 | 2009 | 2009 | 2009 | 2009 | 2009 | 2009 | 2009 | 2009 | 2009 | 2009 | 2009 | 2009 | 2009 | 2009 | 2009 | 2009 | 2009 | 2009 | 2009 | 2009 | 2009 | 2009 | 2009 | 2009 | 2009 | 2009 | 2009 | 2009 | 2009 | 2009 | 2009 | 2009 | 2009 | 2009 | 2009 | 2009 | 2009 | 2009 | 2009 | 2009 | 2009 | 2009 | 2009 | 2009 | 2009 | 2009 | 2009 | 2009 | 2009 | 2009 | 2009 | 2009 | 2009 | 2009 |

## Three kids among five dead in Israeli strikes on Lebanon

**AFP** 

ebanese official media said separate Israeli strikes yesterday on south Lebanon killed five people including three Syrian children, with Hezbollah announcing rocket fire at Israel in retaliation for one of the raids.

"Three Syrian children" were killed "in an enemy raid that targeted farmland in the village of Umm Toot", the National News Agency (NNA) said.

It also said an "enemy" drone strike had targeted a motorcycle on the Kfar Tebnit road elsewhere in south Lebanon, killing two Syrians.

A Lebanese security source. requesting anonymity as they were not authorised to speak to the media, told AFP that the two Syrians were "civilians" who worked nearby and had been swimming in the area.

The NNA said "eyewitnesses reported that the motorbike was carrying two people and that

China yesterday expressed willingness to facilitate

"reconciliation" between Palestinian factions, after

Fatah said its officials would meet in Beijing this

month with Hamas counterparts, AFP reported

from Beijing. Fatah's central committee deputy

the factions would meet with Chinese officials

delegation is to be headed by its political chief

Ismail Haniyeh, while the Fatah representation

will be led by deputy head Mahmud Alul, Fatah

"China has always supported all sides in Palestine

sources said. Asked about the comments

to achieve reconciliation and unity through

dialogue and negotiation," foreign ministry

yesterday, Beijing said it would "publish

information at an appropriate time".

in Beijing on July 20 and July 21. The Hamas

secretary-general Sabri Saidam said Monday that



Smoke billows following an Israeli strike in the village of Kfar Kila in southern Lebanon, yesterday.

spokesman Lin Jian said. Beijing, he said, "is

to strengthen communication with all parties

and work hard to realise the aim of Palestine's

willing to develop dialogue and reconciliation,

provide a platform and create opportunities for

all sides on the Palestine issue". "China is willing

domestic reconciliation," he added. Fatah movement

controls the Palestinian Authority, which has partial

administrative control in the Israeli-occupied West

have grown since the Hamas storming of Israel set

off the Gaza war, with violence also soaring in the

and Hamas in April but a meeting scheduled for

than its rival the United States.

Bank. Several reconciliation bids have failed, but calls

West Bank where Fatah is based. China hosted Fatah

June was postponed. China has positioned itself as a

more neutral actor on the Israel-Palestinian conflict

when a number of citizens tried to approach the bike... it was subjected to a second strike".

Hezbollah said it launched "dozens of Katyusha rockets" at northern Israel's Kiryat Shmona "in response to the Israeli enemy attacks" on south Lebanon, "particularly Kfar Tebnit and "the death of two civilians".

China says wants to facilitate 'reconciliation'

Hezbollah has traded almost daily fire with Israeli forces in support of ally Hamas since the Palestinian group's October first week storming of Israel.

In Lebanon, the cross-border violence since October has killed 511 people, mostly fighters but also including at least 104 civilians, according to an AFP tally.

## Iran 'open to resuming nuclear accord talks'

Tehran remains open to resuming negotiations with Washington on restoring their participation in a nuclear agreement, Iran's acting foreign minister told Newsweek magazine in an interview published yesterday.

Ali Bagheri Kani's remarks come as he prepares to address the UN Security Council in New York.

The US under President Donald Trump withdrew in 2018 from the nuclear accord between Iran and six world powers which restricted Tehran's nuclear pro-

Indirect talks between the US and Tehran to revive the deal have stalled. Iran is still part of the agreement but it has decreased its commitments due to US sanctions imposed on it.

Newsweek said: "On the foreign policy front, he (Bagheri Kani) said that Tehran remained open to resuming negotiations with Washington toward restoring mutual participation in a nuclear deal." However, Iran also intended to foster its deepening ties with China, Russia and neighbouring nations, it quoted him as saving. Iran will also call for greater action against Israel in view of the Gaza war, he said.



Iran's acting foreign minister Ali Bagheri Kani speaks to delegates during a meeting of the UN Security Council at the UN headquarters in New York City, yesterday.

The Biden administration said last week the US was not ready to resume nuclear talks with Iran under its

Bagheri Kani became the acting foreign minister after foreign minister Hossein Amirabdollahian died in a helicopter crash along with Iran's president Ebrahim Raisi in May.

Iranians then elected Masoud Pezeshkian as president, a moderate who said he will promote a pragmatic foreign policy and ease tensions with the powers involved in the 2015 nuclear pact.

## More than 10mn people displaced by Sudan war: IOM

Reuters

ore than 10mn Sudanese, or 20% of the popula-■tion, have been driven from their homes since the war there began, the International Organisation for Migration (IOM) said yesterday, as the world's largest displacement crisis continues to worsen.

The number is the latest dire figure out of the east African country, devastated by a conflict that began in April 2023. The war has left half the population of about 50mn facing a hunger crisis and in need of humanitarian aid.

the most of any country.

More than 2.2mn people have fled to other countries since the war began, while almost 7.8mn sought refuge inside the country, the IOM said in a bimonthly report. An additional 2.8mn people were already displaced by previous conflicts in the country.

Fighting between the army and paramilitary Rapid Support Forces that broke out in the capital Khartoum last year quickly expanded across Darfur to the west, with the RSF taking control of most centres. UN experts say hunger has replaced violence as the largest driver of migration from Darfur, where they face difficulty delivering aid.

"All refugees I met said the reason why they fled Sudan was hunger," said World Health Organisation country director Dr Shible Sahbani to reporters after visiting refugees from Darfur, the source of half of the displaced population, in Chad. "A woman who just reached Adre reported that all food they used to produce locally in Darfur was taken by the fighters," he added.

As the RSF expands its reach in the south east of the country in recent weeks, more than 150,000 people were displaced from Sennar state, the IOM said, many for the second or third time after RSF raids on markets and homes in the state's small towns and villages.

#### **TENDER ANNOUNCEMENT**

Replacement of Existing 8 Fenders and Design, Supply & Installation of **New Fenders for Jetty** 

| Tender Reference Number            | HPP1-SC001215          |
|------------------------------------|------------------------|
| Bid Closing Date & Time            | 14-Aug-2024            |
| Tender Document Fee                | QAR 2,000              |
| Last Date of Purchasing the Tender | 31-Jul-2024            |
| Tender Bond                        | 5 % of total bid value |

#### QTerminals hereby announces the above tender with the following terms and conditions:

- 1. The offer should be accompanied by a Tender Bond issued by one of the Banks operating in Qatar for the amount shown in the above table and valid for 120 days from the bid closing date. The offer which is not accompanied by the Tender Bond will not be considered.
- The deadline for submitting offers will be 11:00 am on the date shown above. Any offer received thereafter will not be considered and will be rejected.
- The tender documents will only be released upon payment of the tender document fee.
- The interested suppliers must also register their company via the QTerminals website under the Procurement section <a href="https://qterminals.com/procurement">https://qterminals.com/procurement</a>.
- Supplier must have valid company documents such as Commercial Registration, Establishment Card, Tax Card, Trade License and Classification Certificate and/or business activity from the regulatory authority.

#### **Tender Document Fee Payment:**

The Tender Document Fee of QAR 2,000 non-refundable should be deposited to QTerminals bank account as specified below. Please send a copy of the deposit receipt to:

#### suppliersupport@qterminals.com

| Beneficiary Name | QTERMINALS WLL               |  |
|------------------|------------------------------|--|
| Bank Name        | Qatar National Bank (QNB)    |  |
| IBAN             | QA75QNBA00000000013192809052 |  |
| BIC / SWIET Code | ONDAGAGA                     |  |

#### **Clarifications:**

For any clarifications / queries please contact at: suppliersupport@qterminals.com or +974-40445369

> كيوتيرمنلز ذ.م.م. | هـ ٥٠٠٠ ٤٤٤٤ ع٩٧+ | ف ٥٠٠١ ع٩٧+ | ص.ب ١١١١٢ - الدوحة قطر | رقم السجل : ٩٨٥١١ **QTerminals W.L.L.** | **T** +974 4044 5000 | **F** +974 4044 5001 | **P.O.Box** 11112 - Doha, Qatar | **C.R. No.** 98511

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## Police fire tear gas in Nairobi during anti-govt rallies

**AFP** Nairobi

olice fired tear gas and water cannon against dozens of demonstrators in Kenya's capital Nairobi yesterday, as scattered rallies across the country called for embattled President William Ruto to step down.

Activists led by young Gen-Z Kenyans launched peaceful rallies a month ago against deeply unpopular tax hikes but they descended into deadly violence, prompting Ruto to drop the planned increases.

Although street protests have eased since dozens of people were killed and parliament stormed in late June, demonstrators are still demanding the president's resignation, with yesterday's rallies using the "RutoMustGo" hashtag.

Heavily-armed police were deployed in Nairobi's central business district (CBD) - the epicentre of previous protests while young people armed with clubs stood guard outside their

businesses, an AFP journalist

Officers fired tear gas and water cannon on small crowds gathering in the CBD, with demonstrators criticising the "excessive force" deployed by the

"Police have used excessive force in dealing with the peaceful demonstrators," Kinuthia Ndung'u told AFP.

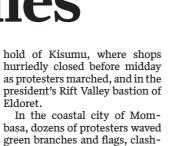
"We have a lot of young people who are now nursing injuries", the 27-year-old protester said.

"We are peaceful, we did not have any (weapons), but they are shooting at us, they are giving us tear gas," said another protester, Francis Mumo.

"Can't we come to the streets and march? Because it is our right to demonstrate. They are supposed to protect us", the 32-year-old added.

Local media reported seeing a body on the ground as scuffles broke out between police and protesters in Nairobi's Kitengela neighbourhood.

Demonstrations also took place in the opposition strong-



marching into the city centre. "We are protesting peacefully", they shouted, holding banners reading: "Justice for Gen-

ing briefly with officers before

Eldoret.

Zs" and "stop killing protesters". In addition to withdrawing the finance bill containing the proposed tax hikes, Ruto dismissed almost his entire cabinet last week and has promised more changes as he grapples with the most serious crisis of his near

two-year presidency.
But he has failed to defuse the simmering discontent felt by many Kenyans over mismanagement of public resources.

"We keep telling Ruto must go (but) he's not going anywhere," protester Maureen Nyaga, 33, told AFP in Nairobi.

"I am on the streets today because...we are waiting for our demands to be met." The statebacked Kenya National Commission on Human Rights said yesterday that 50 people have lost their lives and 413 injured since the start of the rallies on June 18.

Rights groups have accused police of using disproportionate force against the protesters.

Some of the previous rallies witnessed scenes of mayhem with widespread looting and property damage, with demonstrators claiming their peaceful action was hijacked by "goons".

Ruto has sought dialogue with the demonstrators, but the movement has spiralled into a broader campaign against his administration, with protesters calling for action against corruption and justice for victims of alleged police brutality.



People dance and chant songs in support of the Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF) and the incumbent President of Rwanda Paul Kagame following the release of provisional electoral results after the 2024 general elections at a market in Kigali, yesterday.

## Rwanda's Kagame wins fourth term with 99% of vote

**AFP** 

wandan President Paul Kagame was gearing up yes-Kagame was gearing ap , 1 ter winning a thundering 99.15% of votes according to partial results from an election where only two challengers were allowed to run against him.

The outcome of Monday's poll was never in doubt, with Kagame ruling the small African nation as de facto leader then president for three decades.

Partial results issued by the election commission seven hours after polls closed showed that Kagame had won 99.15% of the vote - even more than the 98.79% he got in the last poll

seven years ago.

Democratic Green Party candidate Frank Habineza could only muster 0.53% and independent Philippe Mpayimana 0.32%, according to the results issued with 79% of ballots counted.

In an address from the headquarters of his ruling Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF), the 66-year-old thanked Rwandans for giving him another five years in office.

"The results that have been presented indicate a very high score, these are not just figures, even if it was 100%, these are not just numbers," he said.

"These figures show the trust, and that is what is most important," he added.

"I am hopeful that together we can solve all problems." With 65% of the population aged under 30, Kagame is the only leader most Rwandans have ever

The bespectacled 66-year-

old is credited with rebuilding a traumatised nation after the 1994 genocide - but he is also accused of ruling in a climate of fear at home, and fomenting instability in the neighbouring Democratic Republic of Congo.

Over 9mn Rwandans - including 2mn first-time voters - were registered to cast their ballot, with the presidential race being held simultaneously as legislative elections for the first time. In Kigali's Nyabugogo market, shoppers were upbeat and unsurprised by the result.

"The reason he gets such high votes, which should be 100%, is because Rwandans love him," pensioner Frederick Bayingana said, listing Kagame's accomplishments in providing "development", "drinking water" and 'security".

'Today is a day for celebrations because this is the result I wanted," said motorcycle taxi driver Thomas Dushimirimana, 38. Full provisional results are due by July 20 and definitive results by July 27.

"In general, the electoral process happened in a safe and transparent atmosphere for Rwandans living abroad and at home," the National Electoral Commission

Kagame won with more than 93% of the vote in 2003, 2010 and in 2017, when he again easily defeated the same two challengers He has overseen controversial constitutional amendments that shortened presidential terms from seven to five years but reset the clock for the Rwandan leader, allowing him to potentially rule until 2034.

Rwandan courts had rejected appeals from prominent opposition figures Bernard Ntaganda and Victoire Ingabire to remove previous convictions that effectively disqualified them from Monday's vote.

The election commission also barred high-profile Kagame critic Diane Rwigara, citing issues with her paperwork - the second time she was excluded from running.

Ahead of the vote, Amnesty International said Rwanda's political opposition faced "severe restrictions...as well as threats, arbitrary detention, prosecution, trumped-up charges, killings and enforced disappearances".

The imbalance between the candidates was evident during the three-week campaign, as the RPF's well-oiled PR machine swung into high gear.

His rivals struggled to make their voices heard, with barely 100 people showing up to some events. Kagame's RPF militia is lauded for its role in ending the 1994 genocide — ousting the Hutu extremists who had unleashed 100 days of bloodletting targeting the Tutsi minority.

The perpetrators killed around 800,000 people, mainly Tutsis but also Hutu moderates.

Rwanda's GDP has grown by an average of 7.2% per year between 2012 and 2022, although the World Bank says almost half the population lives on less than \$2.15 a day.

In the par 589 candidates were chasing 80 seats, including 53 elected by universal suffrage.

In the outgoing assembly, the RPF held 40 seats and its allies 11, while Habineza's party had

Another 27 spots are reserved for women, the youth and people with disabilities.

#### anti-government protests, AFP reported from

Ford Foundation rejects accusations it backs protests

The US-based Ford Foundation yesterday rejected accusations by Kenyan President William Ruto that it was sponsoring "anarchy" and funding deadly Nairohi, The Fast African powerhouse ha been plunged into political chaos over the demonstrations, which started out as peaceful rallies led by Gen-Z Kenyans against proposed tax hikes but have spiralled into a wider campaign against Ruto and his administration. Dozens of people have been killed since the protests began a month ago, with the deadliest day on June 25 when angry crowds stormed parliament and police fired live bullets on protesters.

Protesters gather during an anti-government demonstration,

now-withdrawn finance bill, in Nairobi, yesterday.

following nationwide deadly riots over tax hikes and a controversial

Ruto criticised the Ford Foundation on Monday. telling a large crowd "that money they are giving out to sponsor violence, how are they going to benefit". "If they are going to sponsor violence in are going to call them out and we are going to tell them that they either style up or they leave.' The Ford Foundation pushed back in a statement yesterday, saying: "We do not fund or sponsor the recent protests against the finance bill." It said the organisation - which has distributed grants to civil and rights groups in the country for decades - maintained a "strictly non-partisan policy for all of our grantmaking".

## West DR Congo militia kills nine soldiers at weekend: army

militia group in west Democratic Republic of Congo killed nine soldiers in an army camp in a village on Saturday, the army spokesman and a chief of a nearby village said on Monday, in a province that has seen communal fighting over land since 2022.

The attack took place in Kwamouth territory in Mai-Ndombe province, where two rival communities - the Teke and the Yaka - have been fighting over land along the Congo River.

Congo army spokesman Sylvain Ekenge said 35 assailants were also killed, as well as one of the soldier's wives. The chief of the nearby village of Kimomo said a major, a lieutenant, two captains and five soldiers were killed.

"They surprised the soldiers at their post at around 5am," said Stanys Libye. "The military retaliated and some of the assailants were overpowered." Intercommunal violence in Kwamouth has killed hundreds of civilians on both sides and destroyed infrastructure since it flared in 2022.

Clashes have continued despite an April 2024 ceasefire agreement between Teke and Yaka traditional chiefs and the Mobondo signed in front of Congo President Felix Tshisekedi.

Some traditional chiefs have contested the deal, saying it was not inclusive.

#### 200 more Kenyan police deploy to tackle Haiti violence

Another 200 Kenyan police officers have left for Haiti under a UN-backed mission to try to quell rampant gang violence in the troubled Caribbean nation, senior police officers said yesterday, AFP reported from Nairobi. The deployment comes after the East African nation sent some 400 officers to the violence-rayaged Haitian capital Port-au-Prince in June, part of a controversial offer to send some 1,000 police to help stabilise the country. The promise – made by embattled President William Ruto, who is trying to calm anti-government protests at home — has run into persistent legal challenges in Kenya. "We have 200 police officers who left last night, they should land in their destination of Haiti this morning," one senior police officer said yesterday.

### Kenyan court orders suspected serial killer to be held for 30 days

**AFP** Nairobi

Kenyan court vesterday ordered a man who police said has confessed to murdering and dismembering 42 women to be detained for 30 days as they pursue their investigations.

Collins Jumaisi Khalusha, 33, described by police as a "psychopath", was arrested in the early hours of Monday following the horrific discovery of mutilated bodies in a Nairobi garbage dump.

He appeared in a court in the Kenyan capital where the magistrate approved a police request for him to be held for 30 days to enable them to complete their probe.

Since Friday, 10 butchered female bodies trussed up in plastic bags have been hauled from the site of an abandoned quarry in the Nairobi slum of Mukuru, according to the Kenya National Commission on Human Rights.

The head of the Directorate of Criminal Investigations, Mohamed Amin, said on Monday that Kalusha had confessed to murdering 42 women over a two-year period from 2022, and that his wife had been his first victim.

The DCI said in a statement vesterday that investigators were holding another two "persons of interest", one of whom



Collins Khalusha, 33, stands in the dock at the Kiambu law courts in Kenya, yesterday.

was allegedly found with the phone of one of the victims.

Kalusha was detained in the early hours of Monday near a bar where he had been watching the Euro 2024 football match, after officers analysed the phone of one of his alleged victims.

As officers swooped in, "he was in the process of luring another victim", Amin told reporters. "We are dealing with a psychopath," Amin said.

The grisly discoveries were made just 100 metres (yards) from a police station and the officers there have been transferred to ensure an unbiased investigation, acting national police chief Douglas Kanja said on Monday. The area -

including Kalusha's home, also about 100 metres from where the bodies were found will remain "active crime scenes", Amin said.

The dumped bodies have thrown a spotlight on Kenyan police and added more pressure on President William Ruto, who is already confronting a crisis over protests that saw dozens of demonstrators killed and officers accused of using excessive force.

The state-funded KNCHR said it was carrying out its own investigations into the Mukuru case because "there is a need to rule out any possibility of extrajudicial killings".

Amnesty International said it had been directly involved in the retrieval of some of the bodies and had sent independent pathologists to attend postmortems of the vic-

"While it is the case that a multiple homicide crime has taken place, only completing these autopsies will confirm the ongoing investigation into the perpetrator of these murders," said Irungu Houghton, executive director of Amnesty's Kenya branch.

Kenya's police watchdog, the Independent Police Oversight Authority, had also said on Friday it was looking into whether there was any police involvement or a "failure to act to prevent" the killings.

#### **Body of former Burundian president**

The body of Burundi's former president Pierre Buyoya (pictured) was repatriated to his home country yesterday, more than three years



after he was buried thousands of kilometres away in Mali, AFP reported from Nairobi Buyoya, who was credited with helping push democracy in the small African nation but accused of involvement in his successor's assassination, died in Paris in December 2020 after contracting Covid-19. Later that month Buyoya, who died aged 71, was interred in the Malian capital Bamako, his base for eight years as the African Union's special envoy to Mali and the Sahel. At the time, a senior Burundian government official had said Buvoya had the right to be buried in his home country but would not be given the honours afforded to a former head of state because of the sentence against him. A source at the airport in Burundi's main city Bujumbura said the plane carrying his remains touched down early yesterday afternoon. "In order to respect the last wishes of the deceased, the family has requested and

obtained from the Burundian

ate and rebury his remains in

AFP on Monday.

authorities permission to repatri-

his native country," the Buyoya's

family said in a statement sent to

## Trump cements grip on Republicans as ex-rivals fall in line

**AFP** 

onald Trump's failed primary challengers were to take the stage yesterday at the Republican Party convention, in a display of fealty to its all-dominant champion and now official US presidential candidate.

The unified front comes a day after the ex-president triggered high emotion when entering the convention hall in Milwaukee as he made his first public appearance since surviving Saturday's assassination attempt.

Three of Trump's political rivals turned endorsers - Florida Governor Ron DeSantis, former ambassador Nikki Haley, businessman Vivek Ramaswamy – were to address the

convention's 2,400 delegates last evening. Haley, who just four months ago said the United States can't "go through four more years of chaos" under Trump, had not been expected to appear.

But Saturday's shooting at a Pennsylvania campaign rally reshuffled the deck, and Haley was on Tuesday's speaking schedule along with Ramaswamy and De-Santis, a convention source said.

Seeking to reassure voters he remains robust despite the near-miss which injured his ear, Trump's team announced he will address a campaign rally on Saturday afternoon - just one week on from the attack - with his new vice presidential pick I D Vance.

Trump received a rapt ovation on Monday evening when he appeared with a bandage on his right ear signalling how close he came to

losing his life when a lone shooter on a roof fired at him.

The former president on Monday solidified the Republican ticket on Day 1 of the four-day convention, announcing Vance, a 39-year-old US senator from Ohio and a one-time harsh critic turned uncompromising supporter, as his running mate.

Vance, who says his modest Rust Belt upbringing makes him a voice for working-class voters in left-behind America, is set to address the convention today evening, while Trump will formally accept the party's nomination in a prime-time speech tomorrow.

The standard-bearer for a new kind of populism that has come to the fore under Trump, Vance is also one of the least experienced VP picks in modern history.

But he embraces Trump's isola-



Former US ambassador to the United Nations Nikki Haley, who challenged Donald Trump in the primaries, takes part in a sound check on the second day of the 2024 Republican National Convention at the Fisery Forum in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, yesterday. (AFP)

tionist, anti-immigration America First movement and is further to the right than his new boss on

Saturday's rally will be their first chance to lay out the Trump-Vance campaign message in person. Given the shocking events of a week earlier, the Trump appearance - and the level of security at the rally - will be closely watched.

On the convention floor, del-

egate and Trump supporter Austin Utley of Texas said he experienced "all kinds of crazy emotions" when his political hero made an

"The fact that he's here two days after he got shot just shows why we all support him and why evervbody's here, because he's a fighter." Utley told AFP.

Less than four months before Election Day some 50,000 Republicans have descended on the convention in Wisconsin, the state where the Republican Party was born 170 years ago.

While Trump, 78, is increasingly confident of a shock return to the White House - despite multiple legal problems and two impeachments clouding his first term - President Ioe Biden is reeling from weak polls and Democratic concerns over his health.

#### **Ex-president courts RFK Jr in leaked phone call**

**Trump recalls 'world's largest** mosquito bite' feeling; dubs Biden's call to him 'very nice'

Republican presidential nominee Donald Trump suggested to Robert F Kennedy Jr (pictured) that the independent presidential candidate could do something to support the Trump campaign, according to a video of a phone call on Sunday posted on social media and confirmed by Kennedy. "I would love you to do something — and I think it would be so good for you and so big for you," Trump can be heard saying via speaker phone in the video, apparently referring to the 2024 election

"We're gonna win," Trump said, after which Kennedy said, "Yeah."

"We're way ahead of the guy," Trump added, referring to Democratic incumbent President Joe Biden. Kennedy supporters range across the political spectrum, from liberal to conservative to independent, and some polls show he would draw voters from Trump and Biden both. Trump also spoke to Kennedy about Saturday's

assassination attempt, saying that the bullet that hit his ear "felt like a giant — like the world's largest mosquito."

Of Biden's phone call with Trump after the assassination attempt, Trump said: "It was very

Trump's phone call with Kennedy also included a conversation about vaccines, which echoed some of Kennedy's earlier views. The environmental lawyer has spread misinformation on vaccines for



years. "When you feed a baby, Bobby," Trump said, "a vaccination that is like 38 different vaccines, and it looks like it's meant for a horse, not a, you know, 10-pound or 20-pound baby...and then you see the baby all of a sudden starting to change radically. "And then you hear that it doesn't have an impact, right? But you and I talked about that a long time

After the call spread on social media, Kennedy vesterday apologised to Trump on social media platform X. "When President Trump called me I was taping with an in-house videographer," he wrote. "I should have ordered the videographer to stop recording immediately. I am mortified that this was posted." A day earlier, Kennedy posted on X about meeting with Trump, writing: "Our main topic was national unity, and I hope to meet with Democratic leaders about that as well. No, I am not dropping out of the race.'

## **US 'received intel of Iranian** plot to assassinate Trump'

#### Tehran blasts 'malicious' charges

Reuters

The United States received intelligence in recent weeks about an Iranian plot to assassinate former president Donald Trump, CNN said yesterday, and a US official said the Secret Service shared details of an increased threat with the Trump campaign.

The White House declined to comment, but said there were no indications that the suspected shooter in Saturday's attempted assassination of Trump had any foreign or domestic accomplices.

Iran said the accusations against it were "unsubstantiated and malicious."

US officials have for years worried that Tehran would retaliate against Trump for his ordering of the January 2020 killing of Iranian military commander Oassem Soleimani. "As we have said many times.

we have been tracking Iranian threats against former Trump administration officials for years, dating back to the last administration," said Adrienne Watson, spokesperson for the White House National Security Council.

"These threats arise from Iran's desire to seek revenge for the killing of Qassem Soleimani. We consider this a national and homeland security matter of the highest priority," she said.

CNN reported that the intelligence about the Iranian plot was passed on by a human source.

A US official said that on learning of the increased threat, the National Security Council contacted the Secret Service, which added resources and assets for Trump's protection.

The Trump campaign was also made aware of an evolving threat, the official said.

In a statement to Reuters, Iran's mission to the United Nations in New York said "these accusations are unsubstantiated and mali-

"From the perspective of the Islamic Republic of Iran, Trump is a criminal who must be prosecuted and punished in a court of law for ordering the assassination of General Soleimani. Iran has chosen the legal path to bring him to justice," Iran's statement said.

The Secret Service has been sharply criticised since the 20-year-old gunman who shot at Trump on Saturday was able to access a roof overlooking the rally and open fire, grazing Trump's ear, killing a rallygoer and wounding two other attendees.

President Joe Biden has ordered an independent review of how the gunman could have come so close to killing Trump, and the Secret Service also faces probes from Congress.

#### Top US senator found guilty of corruption; calls mount for resignation

Jurors found a powerful US senator guilty on all counts of corruption yesterday after gold bars and hundreds of thousands of dollars in cash were found at his home, prosecutors said, sparking calls for his resignation. Robert Menendez (pictured), a 70-yearold Democrat from New Jersey, was charged with extortion, obstruction of iustice and accepting bribes to perform favours for businessmen and will be sentenced on October 29. Menendez has vowed to appeal the verdict.

A spokesman for the Southern District of New York prosecutor's office said the total combined charges carry a maximum potential sentence of 222

years in prison. The counts on which Menendez was convicted after less than three days of jury deliberations included conspiracy to commit bribery, acting as a foreign agent while a public official, and obstruction of justice.

Menendez said outside court: "I have never been anything but a patriot of my country and for my country. I have never, ever been a foreign agent. Menendez, who said in June he would run as an independent in November's election, is a career politician and led the influential Senate Foreign Relations Committee until the charges were filed. He remains a sitting senator.

Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer, a fellow Democrat, called on Menendez

to step down. "In light of this guilty verdict, Senator Menendez must now do what is right for his constituents, the Senate, and our country, and resign,' Schumer said

Menendez shook his head from side to side as the verdict was read out, CNN

Prosecutors have alleged Menendez put his power as a top US senator "up for sale". "This wasn't politics as usual. This was politics for profit. And now that the iury has convicted Bob Menendez, his vears of selling his office to the highest bidder have finally come to an end." US Attorney Damian Williams, a prosecutor, said outside court.

In a raid on Menendez's New Jersey

home, FBI agents were said to have found nearly \$500,000 in cash hidden around the house, as well as gold bars worth around \$150,000 and a luxury Mercedes-Benz convertible.

His wife Nadine Menendez, to whom defence lawyers are seeking to shift the blame, has also been charged but will be tried separately as she is receiving treatment for breast cancer. Menendez was convicted alongside two

of the businessmen he allegedly helped - Egyptian-American Wael Hana and Fred Daibes, a real estate developer. A third businessman, insurance broker Jose Uribe, pleaded guilty to bribery charges in March and assisted

investigators.



## Biden makes first campaign trip since Trump attack

**AFP** 

Las Vegas

S President Joe Biden hit the campaign trail yesterday for the first time since the assassination attempt against Donald Trump, seeking to prop up his re-election bid as unease over his age resurfaces.

As Trump rides a wave of support at the Republican National Convention in Milwaukee, Biden is in Las Vegas to reach out to Black voters at the NAACP advocacy group. The 81-year-old president will

also sit down with Black broadcaster BET, the latest in a series of interviews as he tries to address concerns over his mental fitness following his dismal debate performance against Trump last

Amid his call for Americans to "lower the temperature" of politics in the wake of the attempt on Trump's life, Biden cancelled a campaign trip to Texas on Monday but continued with his Nevada visit.

Biden narrowly won Nevada in his 2020 election victory over



President Joe Biden before boarding Air Force One at Joint Base Andrews in Maryland. (Reuters)

Trump. The trip comes as the Democratic Party pushes ahead with plans to rush through Biden's own nomination ahead of its conference in August, despite calls to postpone the process while divisions remain over his candidacy.

While the attempt on Trump's life briefly silenced Democrats who called on Biden to step aside, tensions are emerging in public

again as president trails in most the polls. The New York Times reported that a group of Democrats in the House of Representatives was trying to rally support for a change to the rules to allow challenges at the convention.

But Biden's campaign insisted the virtual roll-call was necessary before the August 19 convention as Republican-led Ohio had moved its filing date to August 7, otherwise Biden risked not being eligible there. "It is our obligation as a campaign to make sure that President Biden is on the ballot," Biden deputy campaign manager Quentin Fulks told a press conference in Milwaukee.

At the NAACP meeting in Las Vegas, there was widespread support for Biden staying on.

"We're riding with Biden," said Sydney Martin, 65, assistant pastor of the Destiny House Christian Center in New York state, describing calls for Biden to step aside as a "trick by the enemy."

Asha Holmes, 28, said she would also back Biden although she had been "kind of hoping for Kamala (Harris, the vice-president) to try and run this year instead of him going for a second

But the questions continue about whether Biden can win again after a faltering showing at the Atlanta debate on June 27 where he mangled his words and lost his train of thought.

Biden, who says he messed up due to jet lag and illness, forcefully defended his ability to do the job in a major US network interview on Monday night.

"I'm old," Biden told NBC. "But I'm only three years older than Trump, number one. And number two, my mental acuity has been pretty damn good."

Biden also defended his rhetoric about Trump after Republicans accused him of stoking divisions ahead of the shooting in which the former president's ear

FBI investigators are still probing 20-year-old gunman Thomas Matthew Crooks' motivation for the attack on a Trump rally in Butler, Pennsylvania, A bystander was killed and Crooks was shot

Biden admitted it was a "mistake" to tell donors in a call last week that it was "time to put Trump in the bullseye" of his election campaign.

But Biden doubled down on what he said was the need to "talk about the threat to democracy" posed by former president Trump.

Trump refuses to accept the 2020 election results and faces criminal charges over the deadly January 6, 2021 assault on the US Capitol by supporters seeking to overturn his defeat by Biden.

#### 21 dead in Peru after bus falls into a ravine

**AFP** 

bus plummeted into a ravine in southern Peru yesterday, killing at least 21 people and wounding another 20, said police in the Andean country plagued by deadly road accidents.

The bus with more than 40 occupants was headed from Lima to the Andean region of Ayacucho when it veered off a cliff about 200 meters high in the early morning hours, highway safety division director Jhonny Valderrama said on RPP radio. Twenty injured people were taken to hospitals as rescue teams worked to recover bodies from the wreckage. Accidents are frequent on Peru's often winding, mountainous roads due to speeding, poor road upkeep, a lack of traffic signs and lax enforcement

of driving rules. Last year, the country registered more than 3,300 deaths from more than 87.000 traffic accidents. Seventeen people died in a similar bus crash on the same road in May.

## Six foreign nationals found dead in Bangkok hotel

Reuters

Bangkok

Thai police are investigating the deaths of six foreign nationals whose bodies were found in a room at an upmarket hotel in Bangkok yesterday, including looking for a seventh person in connection with the inci-

All six, who were of Vietnamese descent, with two carrying US passports, checked into Bangkok's Grand Hyatt Erawan hotel at two separate times after arriving on Saturday and Sunday, police official Thiti Saengsawang told re-

The group - three men and three women - checked into different rooms but their bodies were found in one room, which did not show any signs of struggle, he said.

"This was not self harm, but someone caused the deaths," said Thiti, adding that police were looking for a seventh person connected with the group.

"We are tracing every step since they got off the plane."

Police officers found the bodies after a call from the hotel staff at around 5.30pm (1030GMT) reporting that there had been deaths, the Thai police said in a statement.

Thai Prime Minister Srettha Thavisin, who visited the hotel late yesterday with senior police officials, ordered a swift investigation on the matter, the government said in a statement.

"The prime minister has ordered all agencies to urgently take action to avoid impact on tourism," it said.

"We need to conduct an autopsy to see if they had ingested anything," the statement quoted the premier as saying, dispelling rumours the deaths were connected to a theft and had involved a shooting.

Some of the six foreigners appeared to be on their first trip to the country, while others appeared to be return visitors, a po-

## N Korea diplomat defected to S Korea from Cuba: media

Seoul

senior North Korean diplomat based in Cuba defected with his wife and child to South Korea in November, South Korean media reports said yester-

South since 2016. Before fleeing to the South, Ri Il-kyu, 52, was a counsellor at the North Korean embassy in Cuba, he told South Korean newspaper Cho-

day, the highest-ranking North

Korean diplomat to escape to the

Yonhap News Agency also reported Rihad defected to the South, citing an anonymous government source

The South's unification ministry, which handles inter-Korean affairs. declined to comment on the reports, citing privacy issues.

Among Ri's jobs at the embassy was to block North Korea's rival South Korea and old ally Cuba from forging diplomatic ties, Chosun Ilbo reported. In February, the two countries established diplomatic relations.

Ri said he flew out of Cuba with his family but he did not elaborate further on how he pulled off the

high-risk escape. "I bought flight tickets and called my wife and kid to tell them about my decision, six hours before the defection. I didn't say South Korea, but said, let's live abroad," he said.

Another North Korean diplomat stationed in Paris and his family have also been seeking asylum in the US, South Korean television network TV Chosun reported late yesterday, citing multiple sources with knowledge of the matter.

North Koreans caught attempting to defect face severe punishment, including death, according to human rights groups and defectors who have been successful.

Fewer North Korean defectors have been arriving in South Korea in recent years due to strict limits on border crossings into China and hefty broker fees, human rights groups and experts say.

Last year, 196 North Korean defectors came to Seoul, down from as many as 2,700 a decade ago, South Korean government data showed. North Koreans who have recently defected to the South have mostly lived overseas, human rights activists say.

North Korea last year shut some  $embassies \,to \,revamp \,diplomatic \,ef$ ficiency. The South Korean government has said the closures are a sign that sanctions have made it extremely difficult for North Korean diplomatic missions to earn money for their operating expenses.

North Korea maintains an embassy in Cuba, though its ambassador returned home in March, according to media reports.

Ri entered North Korea's foreign ministry in 1999 and received a commendation from leader Kim Jong-un for successfully negotiating with Panama to lift the detention of a North Korean ship in 2013, Chosun said.

He told the newspaper he had decided to defect over disillusionment with the regime and unfair evaluation of his work.

Ri said he made a final decision to run when a request to travel to Mexico for a medical treatment was denied last year, adding that his parents and parents-in-law who might face reprisals for his defection had passed away.



Bangladesh Chhatra League, the student wing of the ruling party Bangladesh Awami League, and anti-quota protesters engage in a clash at the Dhaka College area, in Dhaka, Bangladesh, vesterday,

## Bangladesh shuts schools after six students killed in protests

Dhaka

angladesh yesterday ordered schools Baround the country to close I around the country to close indefinitely protests that prompted the mobilisation of paramilitaries to keep order.

Every high school, Islamic seminary and vocational education institute around the country was told to remain shut until further notice following weeks of escalating demonstrations against civil service hiring policies.

Yesterday saw a significant escalation in violence as demonstrators and pro-government student groups attacked each other with hurled bricks and bamboo rods, and police dispersed rallies with tear gas and rubber bullets.

Education ministry spokesman M A Khair said the shutdown order was issued in consideration of "the security of the students".

The order does not include Bangladesh's universities, where most students participating in the protests are enrolled, as the education ministry ordinarily does not have the authority to demand their closure. At least six people were killed yesterday as demonstrators mobilised for another day in cities around the country, defying earlier calls by Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina and the supreme court to return to class.

Three died in Chittagong and had signs of

"bullet injuries", hospital director Mohamed Taslim Uddin said adding that another 35 had been injured during clashes in the port city.

Another two died in Dhaka, where rival student groups threw bricks at each other and blocked roads in several key locations that ground traffic to a halt in the megacity of 20mn.

Police inspector Bacchu Mia confirmed the deaths saying one had succumbed to head injuries, while at least 60 people were also injured. In the northern city of Rangpur, police com-

missioner Mohamed Moniruzzaman said a student had been also killed in clashes there.

He did not give details as to how the student died, but said police had fired rubber bullets and tear gas to disperse protesters.

#### 'Super spicy' crisps land schoolkids in hospital

Fourteen Japanese high school students were taken to hospital yesterday after eating "super spicy" potato chips, local media said.

More than 30 pupils at a Tokyo high school were reportedly sharing the crisps during recess when some started complaining of nausea and acute pain around their mouths.

Fourteen of them were rushed to hospital, with all conscious but at least one feeling so ill they had to be transported on a wheelchair, Fuji TV said. The broadcaster said a male student brought the crisps to the school "just for fun" because he had eaten them before and found them "super spicy". The crisps concerned have the brand name "R 18+ Curry Chips", media outlets including Asahi Shimbun and Fuji TV said. According to the manufacturer's website, under-18s are "banned" from eating the crisps, which are "so spicy that they might cause you pain".

#### **Top US military official in Manila**



Philippines' military chief Romeo Brawner (left) inspects the troops with US chairman of the joint chiefs of staff General Charles Brown Jr (right), during his arrival at the military headquarters in

### Bangladesh turns back fleeing Myanmar soldiers

**AFP** Teknaf, Bangladesh

Bangladesh stopped dozens of Myanmar security personnel from crossing into its territory to flee advancing rebel forces, a local government official based near their river border said yesterday.

Clashes have rocked Myanmar's western frontiers since the Arakan Army (AA) attacked security forces in November, ending a ceasefire that had largely held since the country's 2021 military coup. Hundreds of Myanmar troops have taken refuge in India and Bangladesh since then, usually staying for days or weeks before being repatriated on juntaorganised flights.

But on Sunday at least 66 members of Myanmar's Border Guard Police (BGP) were sent

back immediately while trying to cross the Naf river into Bangladesh. "The BGP members wanted to enter Teknaf on two boats. The coast guard prevented their entry," Mujibur Rahman, a councillor of Bangladesh's southeastern border town of Teknaf,

There was no immediate comment from either Bangladesh's coast guard or Myanmar junta representatives.

A Teknaf-based journalist who took photographs of the boats said the vessels came close to a pier in the town but were pushed back towards Myanmar later in the night. "Some of them were not wearing any shirts," he said.

Months of fierce fighting in Myanmar have seen steady advances by the AA in the western state of Rakhine, piling further pressure on the junta as it battles opponents elsewhere in the coun-

## World's rarest whale washes up on New Zealand beach

Christchurch, New Zealand

The body of a spade-toothed whale - a species so rare it has never been seen alive - appears to have washed up on a New Zealand beach, scientists say.

The remains of the obscure, 16.4 foot long, beaked creature were found near a river mouth in southern Otago province on July 4, government researchers said.

It was identified by marinemammal experts from New Zealand's department of conservation and the national museum, Te Papa, as a male spade-toothed whale.

A DNA investigation has been launched to confirm its classification, the scientists said.

"Spade-toothed whales are one of the most poorly known large mammalian species of modern times," said the conservation department's coastal Otago operations manager,

"Since the 1800s, only six samples have ever been documented worldwide, and all but one of these was from New Zealand," Davies said

in a statement. "From a scientific and conservation point of view, this is huge."

The find was fresh enough to offer the first opportunity for a spadetoothed whale to be dissected, the conservation department said.

The species is "so rare next to nothing is known about them", it

The body of the whale has been placed in cold storage and genetic samples have been sent to the University of Auckland as curators of the New Zealand Cetacean Tissue Archive. It may take several weeks or months for the DNA to be processed and a final identification confirmed.

"The rarity of the whale means conversations around what to do next will take more time because it is a conversation of international importance," the conservation depart-

ment said. The species was first described in 1874 from just a lower jaw and two teeth collected from the Chatham Islands off the east coast of New Zealand.

That sample, along with skeletal remains of two other specimens found in New Zealand and Chile, enabled scientists to confirm a new

Marine scientist Vanessa Pirotta said researchers would study the whale's stomach contents, genetics, and how this sample compared to previous ones.

This could shine light on the whales' behaviour, their population and why they are so rare, Pirotta said, describing the discovery as "like hitting the jackpot".



New Zealand department of conservation rangers Jim Fyfe (left) and Tumai Cassidy walk beside what appears to be the carcass of a rare spade-toothed whale after it was discovered washed ashore on a beach near Taieri Mouth in New Zealand's southern Otago province.

## Taiwan firms 'shifting supply chains to India from China'

**Reuters** New Delhi

aiwan firms are shifting supply chains to India from China, as Taipei and New Delhi strengthen economic ties, the head of the island's key trade body said, as global trade tension rises among

major economies. Trade conflict between the US and China drove up Taiwan's foreign direct investment (FDI) in India to more than \$665mn in the five years to 2023, said James Huang, chairman of the Taiwan External Trade Development Council.

That compared with Taiwan's FDI of nearly \$277mn in India during the decade from 2006 to 2017,

Huang said in an interview.

"It is evident that more Taiwanese companies are moving supply chains out of China and are establishing them in India," he added.

Like most countries, India has no formal ties with Chinese-claimed Taiwan, but the two have established a close business relationship, with India keen on more investment from the major chip-producing nation to aid its efforts to boost manufacturing.

China claims Taiwan as its own territory, a claim Taiwan rejects. India also has difficult relations with China, particularly over a disputed shared border, that led in 2020 to their deadliest clash in decades.

Taiwan's Powerchip Semicon-

ductor Manufacturing Corporation partnered this year with India's Tata Group to build the first semiconductor fabrication facility in western Gujarat state, relying on a \$10bn

incentive scheme.

"We have programmes to bring in Indian students and talents to be trained in Taiwan in semiconductors and that would pave the path

for our future co-operation," Huang

Taiwan's supply chain shift has focused on mobile telephone assembly industries and footwear, he

Two-way trade between India and Taiwan stood at \$10.1bn during the fiscal year ending in March 7074

## Welsh leader Gething quits after just four months

**Reuters** London

aughan Gething quit as first minister of Wales yesterday after just four months in office, following a wave of ministerial resignations from the devolved Welsh government in protest over his leadership.

Zambian-born Gething, 50, became the first Black head of government in Europe in March but has faced a turbulent time in office.

He has been criticised over the source of a political donation, the transparency of his disclosures to the Covid-19 inquiry from his time as health minister, and his decision to dismiss a minister after accusing her of leaking to the media.

Last month he lost a non-binding vote of confidence.

"This has been the most difficult time, for me, and my family. A growing assertion that some kind of wrongdoing has taken place has been pernicious, politically motivated and patently untrue," Gething said, announcing his plan to step down as leader of the Welsh Labour Party and first minister.

"I have never ever made a decision for personal gain. I have never ever misused or abused my ministerial responsibilities. My integrity matters. I have not compromised

."
The mounting pressure on

Gething came to a head when four Welsh ministers – counsel general Mick Antoniw, housing minister Julie James, economy and energy secretary Jeremy Miles and culture minister Lesley Griffiths resigned vesterday

"Wales needs confident and stable government. I do not believe you are capable of delivering that," Antoniw said in his resignation letter to Gething.

Gething's departure triggers a second leadership contest in Wales this year.

Plaid Cymru, who ended a cooperation deal with Labour in Wales in May which had helped it through important votes in the Welsh Parliament, called for a snap election.

The Welsh government has responsibility for policy areas including health and education while others such as defence and energy are set by the government in London, where earlier this month Labour took power after 14 years in opposition.

The turmoil is a blow for new Prime Minister Keir Starmer, who has vowed to stabilise and rebuild Britain and met with Gething as part of a tour of the country just over a week ago.

"I know what a difficult decision this has been for him - but I also know that he has made it because he feels it is the best decision now for Wales," Starmer said in a statement.



Indian security personnel stand guard at Lal Draman in Doda district, Kashmir, yesterday.

# Five security personnel killed in Kashmir fighting

AFP

Srinagar, India

ive security personnel were killed in a firefight with gunmen in Jammu and Kashmir, the army and police said yesterday, with security sources saying militants had made a "tactical shift" in attacks.

The clash brings the number of soldiers and police killed this year to 17.

A security official, who asked not to be named, said militants had shifted operations from Kashmir valley to southern Jammu area, where "counterinsurgency measures are not as strong".

Kashmir's top political official Manoj Sinha said forces would "avenge" their deaths.

The Indian army's 16 Corps said security forces had launched an operation in the

Doda forest on Monday evening, some 135kms southeast of the territory's capital Srinagar, in the Jammu area.

A "heavy firefight ensued," the army said, saying four men were killed, including a captain. Indian army chief Upendra Dwivedi sent his "deepest condolences" to the families of the men.

A police officer, speaking on condition of anonymity, said a police officer also died of his wounds, adding two other soldiers had been hospitalised. Minister of Defence Rajnath Singh said he

was "anguished to learn about the cowardly attack" on the soldiers and police who had made the "supreme sacrifice".

Poinforcements were deployed to track the

Reinforcements were deployed to track the gunmen in the forested mountains.

This year, 61 people have been killed – including 17 civilians, 17 members of the secu-

rity forces, and 27 militants, according to the New Delhi-based South Asia Terrorism Portal (SATP), which tracks the violence.

That compares to 132 people killed in 2023, including 12 civilians, 33 security officers and 87 militants, according to SATP data.

This year, almost all the soldiers killed were in Jammu, while last year almost all were killed in the Kashmir valley.

Monday's clash came a day after the Indian

army said it killed three militants as they tried to cross from the Pakistan side of the heavily militarised dividing line, in Kashmir's Kupwara district.

In June, nine people were killed and dozens wounded when a gunman opened fire on a bus in the southern Reasi area.

It was one of the deadliest attacks since 2017, when gunmen killed seven people in another ambush on a bus.

#### Bankruptcy proceedings against Byiu's

An Indian tribunal began bankruptcy proceedings against troubled educational technology firm Byju's yesterday over a \$19mn unpaid sponsorship debt owed to the country's powerful cricket board. Byju's had rode a boom in demand for online learning products during the coronavirus pandemic but crashed hard after locked-down students returned to classrooms. Yesterday's ruling was the latest blow to the crashed company, once one of India's most hyped start-ups that has since lost more than 90% of its peak \$20bn valuation. The Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) had claimed an unpaid debt of Rs1.59bn (\$19mn) for sponsoring the jerseys of the Indian team during international cricket matches. The National Company Law Tribunal (NCLT) in Bengaluru accepted a petition from the board and ordered the appointment of an administrator to oversee Byju's

#### Official visit



Britain's King Charles III and Queen Camilla (right) meet a Golden Guernsey Goat during a tour of Les Cotils at L'Hyvreuse, in St Peter Port, Guernsey yesterday as part of their two-day official visit to the Channel Islands.

### Irish prime minister flays anti-immigration clashes

**AFP** Dublin

Trish Prime Minister Simon Harris condemned violent anti-immigration clashes on Monday at a planned asylumseeker housing facility in Dublin as "reprehensible", as 15 were arrested.

The clashes are the latest at sites earmarked for asylum seekers who have arrived in Ireland in growing numbers in recent years.

Videos posted on social media showed machinery and construction materials on fire at the building site, a former paint factory in the north of the capital.

Protesters threw bricks and launched fireworks at police, who used pepper spray to disperse the crowd of more than 100 mostly male teenagers.

Irish Prime Minister Simon Harris said "no person has a right to burn cars, damage property" or attack the police.

"These actions are criminal and are designed to sow fear and division. We should not accept them being legitimised in any way by describing them as 'protest'", Harris added in a state-

ment.
"A number of Garda vehicles have been damaged," police said, using the name for the Irish national force.

One video showed a person, believed to be a worker at the site, which is planned for repurposing as an accommodation facility for up to 500 asylum seekers, being removed from the scene on a stretcher.

Protests at the site entrance have delayed the start of work "for several months", the integration ministry said.

## UK launches armed forces review after Nato summit

AFP London

Britain yesterday launched a review of its armed forces, with the former Nato chief leading the evaluation.

The assessment, ordered by Labour Prime Minister Keir Starmer less than a week after he returned from a Nato summit, will set out a path to increasing defence spending to 2.5% of GDP.

The ministry of defence said the strategic defence review would begin work "immediately in recognition of the urgency of the threats facing the UK", and aim to deliver a report in the first half of 2025.

UK spending on defence in 2023 stood at 2.26%, according to latest official figures, while Poland spent 3.83%, the US 3.36% and France 2.06%.

The review will be headed by George Robertson, a former UK defence secretary under Tony Blair and Nato secretary-general from 1999-2003, and include foreign policy expert and former US presidential adviser Fiona

"We're confronted by a deadly quartet of nations increasingly working together," Robertson told a briefing on Monday referring to China, Russia, Iran and North Korea.

The UK and its allies had "to be able to confront that particular quartet", he said, adding that the world had changed "out of all recognition" since he was last in government.

His comments are a shift in tone from former prime minister Rishi Sunak's Conservative government which described Beijing as a "systemic challenge" and echoes Nato's hardening of its stance on China.

The review, launched less than two weeks after coming to power, is the government's response to Conservatives' efforts to cast doubts about Labour's commitment to defence.

During the election campaign, popular attack lines from the Tories included Starmer's lack of timeframe for increasing defence spending and claims that Labour was a "danger" to national secu-

Labour has accused the Conservatives of "hollowing out" Britain's armed forces during its 14 years in power, with cuts notably in personnel, units and equip-

Starmer said during the election campaign that the army, with some 75,000 regular soldiers, is at its smallest size since

the Napoleonic wars in the early 19th century, prompting questions about its ability to fight an all-out war.

At last week's Nato summit in Washington, Starmer reaffirmed the UK's support for the Western military alliance and its "serious commitment" to spending 2.5% of its GDP on defence.

Starmer said the review would make sure "that defence spending is responsibly increased".

It will be overseen by current Defence Secretary John Healey, who said "at the start of a new era for Britain, we need a new era for

defence".
"The review will ensure that

defence is central to the future security of Britain and to its economic growth and prosperity", Healey added.

The defence secretary had urged Nato to consider moving towards a 2.5% goal at the 75th anniversary summit last week, with Nato allies having committed in 2014 to reach a 2% goal.

European countries still to reach the 2% target included the Netherlands, Germany and Spain who all spent just around 1.5%.

Other specific aims of the review include "bolstering Ukraine in its fight against Russian aggression" and to "modernise and maintain the nuclear deterrent".



## COMMENT

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### **GULF @ TIMES**

## Regulatory scrutiny grows as AI adds to global concerns

Already at work in products as diverse as toothbrushes and drones, systems based on artificial intelligence (AI) have the potential to revolutionise industries from healthcare to logistics.

And, the unstoppable rise of AI is bringing about upheavals in the tech world and becoming a driving force across the global economy. The AI frenzy got a fillip when OpenAI transformed how the public think about AI with the launch of its hugely successful chatbot, ChatGPT.

But the complex, rapidly evolving field of AI raises legal, national security and civil rights concerns.

Of late, Microsoft and Apple have dropped plans to take board

roles at OpenAI in a surprise decision that underscores growing regulatory scrutiny of the Big Tech's influence over AI.

Microsoft, which invested \$13bn in the ChatGPT creator, will withdraw from the board, according to a Bloomberg report. Apple was due to take up a similar role, but an OpenAI spokesperson said the startup will have no board observers after Microsoft's departure.

Regulators in Europe and the US have expressed concern about Microsoft's sway over OpenAI, applying pressure on one of the world's most valuable companies to show that it's keeping the relationship at arm's length.

Microsoft has integrated OpenAI's services into its Windows and Copilot AI platforms and, like other big US tech companies, is banking on the new technology to help drive growth.

Microsoft isn't being singled out. The UK is looking into Amazon. com's \$4bn collaboration with AI company Anthropic, expressing concern that large tech companies are using partnerships to "shield themselves from competition."

For years, the technology companies were largely able to resist government oversight; that's changing fast

The US also is probing Nvidia's dominance over AI

For years, the world's biggest technology companies were largely able to resist government oversight. That's changing fast, in a wider

The US Department of Justice and 16 attorneys general have sued Apple. accusing the iPhone maker of violating antitrust laws by blocking rivals from accessing hardware and software features on its popular

In Europe, regulators, who suspect Apple, Alphabet's

Google and Meta Platforms of failing to comply with new laws limiting their dominance of the digital economy, have begun investigations that could pave the way for hefty penalties.

Meanwhile, Meta's Facebook, Alphabet's YouTube and Amazon. com have been scrambling to comply with tougher European Union rules governing digital marketplaces and the policing of social media

The EU regulations have already changed the way consumers use their iPhones and other gadgets. A successful DoJ suit could make it easier for consumers to use rival products on Apple's devices in its home country and largest market.

The biggest US tech companies including Microsoft as well as Nvidia, Alphabet and Amazon.com have poured tens of billions of dollars into AI businesses. While these investments and partnerships are a lifeline for the startups, regulators have expressed concern that they threaten to concentrate access to the most innovative large language models among the tech companies that already dominate other platforms.

Tech giants are also striking non-financial agreements. These include Apple's partnership with OpenAI to bring ChatGPT to the iPhone, and Microsoft's decision earlier this year to bring on Inflection AI's Mustafa Suleyman and most of his staff from the

The Big Tech, despite its overarching global reach, has for long been facing a widening trust deficit, both from the users and

Now, the rampant euphoria over AI has again problematised the good-vs-bad tech debate.

Google, Microsoft, IBM and OpenAI have encouraged US lawmakers to implement federal oversight of AI, which they say is necessary to guarantee safety.

And AI is the subject of regulatory reviews and consideration worldwide with companies and governmental bodies in the process of negotiating how to mitigate the potential harms without stifling

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## Shooting reveals hallmarks of US political violence

**By Mattia Ferraresi** Washington, DC

urope is no stranger to political violence like the recent attempt on Donald Trump's life at a campaign rally in Pennsylvania. More than 50 candidates and activists were physically assaulted during France's recent parliamentary election – a painful reminder of a not-so-distant past when violence was part of the language of political discourse in several European countries.

But political violence in the United States is different, because it occurs in a society where civilians own more than 300mn firearms and mass shootings are tragically frequent. As ugly as it may sound, the attempt to assassinate Trump is somewhat normal, in the sense that it is consistent with a widespread pattern of recourse to brute force in American life.

Political violence in the US takes on ever-changing forms, but a constant feature is the vicious rhetorical battle that follows every incident. Each side passionately blames the other for inciting the shooter with inflammatory statements, suggesting that the victim's political opponents bear moral responsibility for the violence. This is a rare area of bipartisan consensus among US politicians: the victim's political party determines the culprit,

but the narrative's structure is always the same. The time frame for dispassionately condemning violence shortens with each episode.

The attempt on Trump's life, which resulted in the death of one rally attendee and the 20-yearold shooter, had two immediate effects. First, it revitalised the martyrdom narrative of Trump's "MAGA" campaign, and followers instantly began producing merchandise glorifying the



Former president Donald Trump moments after surviving an assassination attempt during a campaign rally at the Butler Farm Show

surviving hero, who declared he would remain "defiant in the face of wickedness." Trump's tone in crediting God for "preventing the unthinkable from happening" fits perfectly with the MAGA narrative of a revered figure whom the world wants to kill.

The second, equally predictable effect is the accusation that Democrats are to blame for the attack. Senator JD Vance, Trump's vice-presidential pick, argued that the incident was a direct consequence of President Joe Biden's campaign portraying Trump as a threat to democracy, thus legitimising attempts to remove him by force. "That rhetoric led directly to (former) President Trump's attempted assassination," Vance claimed.

Similarly, US Representative Mike Collins suggested that the District Attorney's Office in Butler County, Pennsylvania, "should immediately file charges against Joseph R Biden for inciting an assassination." Even Representative Steve Scalise,

a victim of a 2017 attack by a left-wing extremist that the FBI classified as domestic terrorism. pointed to the Democrats' "incendiary rhetoric".

Meanwhile, Trump's campaign circulated clips of Democratic Representative Dan Goldman saying on live television that Trump needs to be "eliminated", a statement echoed by former House Speaker Nancy Pelosi. And his operatives highlighted a now-ominous-sounding quote from a frustrated Biden, who, after his recent disastrous debate performance, said: "We're done talking about the debate. It's time to put Trump in a bullseye."

Democrats and their supporters have been hastily condemning the incident, while reminding everyone that Trump openly incited a mob to storm the US Capitol on January 6, 2021 - the most horrific episode of political violence in recent American history - with the aim of overturning his loss in the 2020 election.

This rhetorical skirmish is likely to solidify Trump's lead over Biden in the polls, but the long-term implications are more devastating: a national conversation fuelled by hatred, victimhood, and resentment. In 2011, after the assassination attempt on Representative Gabby Giffords in Arizona, a Democratic-leaning news outlet popularised the term "stochastic terrorism", which refers to political violence by lone actors motivated by a radicalising atmosphere. The stochastic terrorist was supposedly Sarah Palin, the former Alaska governor and then Tea Party leader, who had circulated a map marking congressional districts to be targeted in the next elections, including Giffords' district, with what looked like crosshairs.

It later emerged that Giffords' attacker was a deeply disturbed individual with no knowledge of Palin's map, rallies, or political debate. Despite this, and despite the lack of evidence of a causal link between political rhetoric and such attacks, the term resurfaces after every attack and has entered specialised literature as if it described a valid concept.

Through shared tactics of manipulation, instrumentalisation, and selfvictimisation, Democrats and Republicans have become trapped in a mire of circular reasoning that is as perverse as it is dangerous. Alleging a connection between violence and political rhetoric becomes a rhetorical weapon itself, fuelling the extreme polarisation that makes political violence more likely. - Project Syndicate

 Mattia Ferraresi is Managing Editor of the Italian newspaper Domani and a 2019 Harvard Nieman Fellow. He is the author of several books, including the first volume on Donald Trump to be published in Italy and the forthcoming I demoni della mente (The Demons of the Mind).

#### Misinformation narratives in wake of bid on Trump's life

**By Seana Davis** Milwaukee, Wisconsin

isinformation and conspiracy theories were spreading online after an assassination attempt on former US president Donald Trump at a campaign rally on Saturdav. Thomas Matthew Crooks, 20. was alleged to have shot at the Republican presidential candidate from a rooftop during the rally in Butler, Pennsylvania,

wounding Trump's right ear. One spectator died and two others were injured. Reuters has fact-checked some of the most widely shared narratives online.

**Misidentified shooters** 

Within hours of the shooting, an image surfaced online of a man dressed in a black sweatshirt, hat and black sunglasses. Social media posts said the man was

"Antifa extremist" Mark Violets and that he was named by local police as the suspect in the assassination attempt. However, the man in the photograph is Marco Violi, who had nothing to do with the shooting. Violi is an Italian sports writer who shares content on the Italian soccer team AC Roma. In a statement emailed to Reuters and shared on his social media, Violi said he was in Rome and had awoken at 2am to numerous messages, adding that he "categorically denied any involvement in the situation. Violi was not the only individual

to have been misidentified in the immediate aftermath of the shooting.

Viral posts also misidentified another man, Maxwell Yearick, as the shooter. In 2016, various media outlets reported that Yearick, who does not resemble Crooks, was arrested outside a

altercation with police. Altered images, false claims

Pittsburgh Trump rally after an

shooting was staged **Doctored images of Trump** and Secret Service agents smiling on stage surfaced in the immediate aftermath of

the shooting. The fake images were shared to support claims that the assassination attempt had been "staged" as a ploy to boost Trump's popularity in

November's election. The original photographs were captured by an Associated Press photographer and show Trump and the agents with serious facial expressions.

The FBI on Sunday said Crooks acted alone and the agency had yet to identify a motive.

**Predictive programming** conspiracy theories Predictive programming is a

conspiracy theory, often revived

in the aftermath of a major news event, that suggests governments and powerful groups provide indications of planned events to the public by embedding predictions in books, TV shows and movies. Within an hour of the attempted assassination, a fabricated screenshot resurfaced of a cartoon of Trump in a casket and was described as a scene from the TV series \*The Simpsons. But this image has made the rounds on social media since at least 2017.

Matt Selman, an executive producer for the show, told Reuters in an email that the screenshot never appeared on the show, adding that it is "all too easy to create fake Simpsons 'predictions' like these for the purpose of misleading people." A spokesperson for Trump did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

- Reuters

## Ex-Kosovo rebel commander gets 18 years for war crimes

The Hague

former Kosovo rebel commander was found guilty of war crimes yesterday and sentenced to 18 years behind bars for abuses and murder in 1999 during Pristina's independence struggle. Pjeter Shala, 60, also known as "Com-

mander Wolf", was a local military leader in western Kosovo during the tiny country's 1998-99 independence conflict when separatist KLA rebels fought forces loyal to then Serbian leader Slobodan Milosevic, the court said.

"Having considered all the evidence, the panel finds you, Mr Pjeter Shala guilty... of war crimes," Judge Mappie Veldt-Foglia told the Kosovo Specialist Chambers in The Hague, adding he was sentenced to 18 years.

Drama erupted in the courtroom after Shala – dressed in a black suit, white shirt and purple tie - started loudly talking to

the judges during sentencing and had to be silenced by the judge.

He eventually calmed down after speaking briefly to his defence lawyers.

It was not immediately clear whether Shala's lawyers will appeal, but they have 30 days to do so. He pleaded not guilty. Shala faced four war crimes charges

torture, arbitrary detention and cruel treatment of at least 18 civilian detainees accused of working as spies or collaborating with opposing Serb forces in mid-1999, as well as one charge of murder.

The judges however acquitted him in the charge of cruel treatment and he was sentenced on the other three counts.

The judges said Shala was part of a group of KLA soldiers who severely mistreated detainees at a metal factory serving as a KLA headquarters in Kukes, northeastern Albania at the time.

There the KLA members held other Kosovar Albanians prison whom they accused of "aiding" enemy Serb forces - "or not being sufficiently sympathetic" to the



Pjeter Shala at the court in The Hague yesterday. (AFP)

KLA cause. The detainees were beaten daily with batons or baseball bats and "lived in constant fear, feeling they may be subject to physical abuse or death at any time," the judge said.

"Mr Shala was the first to hit the de-

tainees," Veldt-Foglia said. "Witnesses specifically recalled his brutality."

One detainee was shot in the leg and KLA members including Shala refused for him to get medical treatment.

"He died the next day in terrible agony," the judge said.

The four panel of trial judges reached their verdict based on "credible, consist-

ent... evidence beyond reasonable doubt". Shala was being tried before the Kosovo Specialist Chambers, a court located in The Hague to prosecute mainly former KLA fighters for war crimes.

The court was set up after a 2011 Council of Europe report naming KLA fighters as allegedly being involved in crimes.

The report also said there was evidence KLA guerrillas had been part of a human organ harvesting and trafficking network operating in Albania, although an EU task force later said there was no evidence for

Since its establishment in 2017, the court has investigated several former KLA commanders for possible war crimes.

They include former KLA political

commander Hashim Thaci, who dominated Kosovo's politics after it declared independence from Serbia in 2008, and rose to become president of the tiny country.

Thaci resigned in 2020 to face war crimes and crimes against humanity

His lawyers have vehemently denied any claims of organ trafficking and Thaci pleaded not guilty.

The Kosovo tribunal handed down its first verdict in December 2022, a 26-year jail term for former rebel commander Salih Mustafa, who ran a torture centre.

That sentence was later reduced on ap-

Faton Klinaku, acting chairman of the Kosovo Liberation Army War Veterans Organisation accused the court of taking "a political approach."

"Just like in the previous verdicts" against KLA fighters, he posted on Face-



Roberta Metsola holds a floral bouquet while the parliament applauds her after being elected during the first plenary session of the newlyelected European Assembly in Strasbourg yesterday. (AFP)

#### EU parliament re-elects speaker

#### Von der Leyen in focus as vote for **EU Commission** chief tomorrow

The European Parliament voted overwhelmingly vesterday for Maltese conservative Roberta Metsola to remain its speaker, in the first crunch vote on the EU's top jobs after elections in June. Tensions are high in Europe as European Union lawmakers start their five-year term, with current **European Commission President** Ursula von der Leyen's future on

Hungary's Prime Minister Viktor Orban, who sparked outrage among EU counterparts by visiting Russia and China, had been due to address the parliament, but his speech wa postponed - officially because of a busy voting schedule. As war rages on Europe's doorstep, the bloc faces multiple challenges including a stagnant economy and growing global uncertainty, which leaders will have to confront head-on. In the first major vote, current speaker Metsola, 45, won another two-and-a-half-year mandate after receiving 562 votes.

She is only the third woman to hold the post. Metsola belongs to the biggest

political group in the 720-seat parliament, the conservative European People's Party (EPP), and she has been in the role since 2022. "This must be a strong parliament in a strong union,"

She later vowed to address the problems facing EU citizens including Europe's "looming" housing crisis and promised to implement "proper" migration legislation.

"We will leave Europe a better place by creating a new security and defence framework that keeps people safe," Metsola said. She has been one of the EU's most vociferous supporters of Kyiv and after the vote, she vowed "continued and unwavering support for Ukraine". Ukraine's President Volodymyr Zelensky offered his congratulations to Metsola, adding that he looked forward to working closely with her. "I greatly appreciate President Metsola's personal involvement in supporting Ukraine," he said in a social media post. But all eyes will be on tomorrow's

vote when lawmakers decide whether to hand von der Leyen also of the EPP — another five years as commission chief. Since EU leaders struck a deal to endorse her candidacy in late June, von der Leyen has been scrambling to win over lawmakers in the main political groups. It could be a tight race The polyglot German won by only nine votes in 2019.

"She needs to walk a fine line to get the support of different groups in the European Parliament," said Elizabeth Kuiper, associate director of the **European Policy Centre think** 

Von der Leyen must satisfy lawmakers who do not want the EU to swerve from its focus on cutting carbon emissions to tackle climate change, while other MEPs want her to reduce the number of new environmental regulations.

If she fails to win the vote, EU leaders will have to propose a new name.

The far right made significant gains in June elections in the 27-country bloc, although a centrist coalition made up of the EPP, the Socialists, Democrats and Liberals is still the largest in the parliament.

Von der Leyen's EPP has 188 seats. With its coalition partners it in theory has the numbers to meet the 361-vote threshold. But several MEPs have said they will vote against her in the secret ballot

## Premier assumes caretaker role in deadlocked France

**AFP** 

rance's President Emmanuel Macron yesterday accepted the resignation of Prime Minister Gabriel Attal's government, which will now serve only in a caretaker capacity, the presidency said.

French politics have been in gridlock since an inconclusive snap election earlier this month, with parties in the National Assembly scrambling to put together a governing coalition and no successor to Attal in sight.

The outgoing premier and his team would "handle day-to-day business until a new government is named", the Elysee Palace said.

"For this period to come to an end as quickly as possible, it is up to republican forces to work together to build unity," it added, referring to mainstream political parties but excluding the far-right and hard left.

Macron had announced the plan earlier in the day at the government's first cabinet meeting since his allies got roundly beaten earlier this month in a snap parliamentary election he had called to "clarify" the political landscape. Macron told the ministers he would ask Attal

to stay on "for some weeks", probably until after the Paris Olympics, which open on July 26, meeting participants said. This gives political parties more time to build

a governing coalition after the July 7 election

runoff left the lower house without an overall A broad alliance called the New Popular Front (NFP) which includes Socialists, Communists. Greens and the hard-left France Un-

bowed (LFI) won the most seats, with 193 in the 577-strong lower chamber. Macron's allies came second with 164 seats and the far-right National Rally (RN) third with

The divided NFP alliance has been scrambling to come up with a consensus candidate



French Prime Minister Gabriel Attal leaves after the weekly cabinet meeting at the presidential Flysee Palace in Paris vesterday. (AFP)

for prime minister. But internal conflicts - notably between the LFI and the more moderate Socialists — have thwarted all efforts to find a personality able to survive a confidence vote in parliament.

Over the weekend, the Socialists torpedoed the hopes of Huguette Bello, 73, a former communist member of parliament and the president of the regional council in France's overseas territory La Reunion, who had support from the other left-wing parties.

The LFI, in turn, rejected 73-year-old Laurence Tubiana, an economist and climate specialist without political affiliation, who had the backing of the Socialists, Communists and Green party.

Leftist lawmaker Francois Ruffin yesterday called the NFP's infighting "shameful", a day after Green member of parliament Sandrine Rousseau said the disagreements made her "very angry".

On Saturday, Attal was voted in as leader of his party's National Assembly contingent, as he eyes his own future outside government, saying he would "contribute to the emergence of a majority concerning projects and ideas".

Macron and Attal, observers say, are still hoping to find a right-of-centre majority in parliament that would keep both the LFI and the far-right RN out of any new coalition. Macron told yesterday's cabinet meeting

that it was the "responsibility" of his allies to come up with a proposal "for a majority coalition or a wide-ranging legislative pact". This, he said, would help preserve his gov-

ernment's "economic achievements" and favour "social justice".

Following their resignation, Attal and other cabinet members will be able to take their seats in parliament and participate in any coalition building. Parliament reconvenes tomorrow and will start by filling the National Assembly speaker job and other key positions.

Cracks have appeared between Attal and his former mentor Macron, whom the prime minister appears to blame for the electoral defeat only six months after being appointed France's voungest ever head of government at 34

At yesterday's cabinet meeting there was "no tension" visible between the two men, but "no warmth" either, said one participant.

Macron still has almost three years to go as president before elections in 2027, when farright leader Marine Le Pen is expected to make a fresh bid for power.

#### 8 soldiers killed in militant attack on Pakistan base

Militants attacked a military base in northwestern Pakistan, killing eight security personnel, the military said yesterday, after a suicide bomber rammed a vehicle loaded with explosives into a perimeter wall. The attack, which occurred on Monday,

coincides with a resurgence of militancy in the restive northwest border region with Afghanistan, which last month prompted the government to launch a counter-insurgency operation in the area.

Militants targeted the base in Bannu, on the border with the tribal area of North Waziristan, which is known as a hotbed of militancy, and is close to the Afghanistan border. Security forces killed all 10 assailants involved, the military said in a statement. "This timely and effective response ... prevented major catastrophe, saving precious innocent lives," the statement added. Among the dead in Monday's attack were seven army members

and one paramilitary soldier. The British colonial era military base has historically been used as a launch pad for anti-militant operations, and is surrounded by civilian dwellings, which were shaken by the loud explosion from Monday's blast, two local officials told Reuters. They said the initial blast was used to take down

the perimeter wall to allow the other militants to enter the base. The attack was claimed by the Hafiz Gul

Bahadur Group, which the military said operates out of neighbouring Afghanistan "to orchestrate acts of terrorism inside Pakistan". A spokesman for Afghanistan's Taliban administration did not immediately respond to a Reuters request for comment. Islamabad says it has consistently taken up the

issue of cross-border attacks with the Taliban administration, which denies allowing Afghan soil to be used for attacks.

The matter has escalated tensions between

Another 7 dead in attack on health centre

Seven people including health workers, children and soldiers were killed in a militant attack on a health centre in northwest Pakistan, the military said yesterday.

All three militants were killed in retaliatory fire by security forces, a military statement said. It was the second major militant attack reported in 24 hours in northwest Pakistan.

the neighbouring countries, leading to clashes between their border forces. The militant group involved in the latest attack was the same one targeted by Pakistan in a rare cross border operation.

## Russia, North America in fierce start to wildfire season

**AFP** Paris

xtreme wildfires are spreading across Russia and North ■ America and shrouding swathes of the region in smoke, the EU's climate monitor said yesterday as it warned of worse to

Copernicus said unusually hot and dry conditions were causing blazes in Siberia, Canada and Alaska and a "remarkable intensification" of planet-heating gases as swathes of forest burn.

A column of smoke containing ash and harmful particles from wildfires in eastern Russia had drifted 3,000km across parts of eastern Mongolia, northeastern China and northern Japan.

The "anomalously high" levels of some airborne pollutants over that region were many times globally accepted safe limits, said the Copernicus Atmosphere Monitoring Service (CAMS).

Parts of Canada were on evacuation alert as flames ripped through western provinces, while nearly 250,0000 hectares in Alaska had been torched this year in an early start to the wildfire season.

"The current wildfires are already at record levels in some regions and with the second half of the summer still to come, more extreme fire emissions are anticipated, and we will be closely monitoring how they develop and how they impact air quality," said CAMS senior scientist Mark Par-

rington. Wildfire smoke contains fine airborne particles that can lodge deep in the lungs when inhaled and are harmful to human health. Mostly caused by lightning

strikes, wildfires are part of the natural cycle of boreal forests, which circle the far northern hemisphere and are dense, remote and difficult to access.

So-called "zombie fires" can smoulder beneath the surface during winter months, surviving on carbon-rich fuels before reigniting at the onset of spring or summer.

But this region is also warming quickly and forests there "have experienced a significant increase in the number and intensity of wildfires over the last two decades", Copernicus said.

Scientists have described increasing wildfires in famously frosty Siberia as a clear signal that

Earth's natural systems are being fundamentally altered by global warming.

These fires have a direct impact on global warming, razing forests that store carbon and pumping enormous volumes of heat-trapping greenhouse gases into the atmosphere.

The smoke can also settle on ice, reducing its ability to reflect solar radiation, and causing more heat to be absorbed.

As of July 15, carbon emissions from wildfires in Russia had already exceeded the June-July total estimated for the previous two vears. Copernicus said.

This was particularly acute in the eastern Amur oblast, where emissions since June 1 from fires there had already doubled the previous record for the same period.



A tourist poses for a photo in front of the Caryatids atop the Acropolis hill as a wildfire burns in the background amid high temperatures in Athens yesterday. (Reuters)







## Turkish embassy marks National Unity Day

he Turkish embassy in Doha has held an official commemoration ceremony to mark the 8th anniversary of the July 15 failed coup attempt and to celebrate Democracy and National Unity Day and pay tribute to the martyrs and express gratitude to the veterans.

Turkish citizens, members of the diplomatic corps in Qatar, Qatari and expatriate guests participated in the event.

Turkish ambassador Dr Mustafa Goksu and military attaché at the embassy Col Ali Cetin delivered speeches on the occasion. Besides, a message from Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan was read out.

Turkish journalist/writer Kemal Öztürk and academic Prof Dr Kudret Bulbul participated as keynote speakers to share their experiences on the FETÖ-led coup attempt and its reflections. The event also welcomed Dilek Yasar and Veysel Yasar, parents of Seher Yasar, a policewoman who was martyred in Ankara on 15 July 2016 while on duty at Special Operation Forces. A short-video prepared by the Directorate of Communication of Turkiye

screened during the event.

An exhibition of photos taken by Anadolu Agency (AA) depicted what had happened on the night of July 15 coup attempt.

On the sidelines of the Democracy and National Unity Day, the embassy organised several other events that included a panel discussion titled "July 15 coup attempt through the eyes of aca-

demics, journalists and victims" organised by the embassy in collaboration with Doha Yunus Emre Institute with the participation of Mr and Mrs Ya ar, Mr Ozturk, and Prof Bulbul. Another panel titled "Arab media and 15 July coup attempt" was held by the embassy and Doha Yunus Emre Institute with the participation of Zein Elabadin Tawfik, a journalist and a TV

presenter at Al Jazeera Network.

A commemoration ceremony was held at Turkiye-Qatar Combined Joint Task Force Command. The images of President Erdogan and His Highness the Amir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani were screened in symbolic Qatari buildings. The embassy also hosted the

ambassadors of African countries

resident in Qatar.



## Qatari students win bronze in International Biology Olympiad

team of students from Qatar won the bronze medal in the 35th International Biology Olympiad in Astana, Kazakhstan. Some 800 students from 80 countries participated in the Olympiad, which took place from July 7-14.

The International Biology Olympiad targets students under the age of 20 from various countries worldwide, aim-

ing to showcase the skills and abilities of outstanding students in biology at an

advanced academic level.

The Qatari team consisted of four students from government and international schools, along with team leaders and supervisors. The students are Ali Hamad al-Hammadi from Qatar Science and Technology Secondary School for Boys, Youssef

Rani al-Toum from James Wellington School Qatar, Fajr Khalid al-Muhannadi from Al Bayan Secondary School for Girls, and Mumina Joul Zar Ahmed from Mesaieed International Secondary School.

This achievement adds to Qatar's series of successes in international competitions, following continuous training provided to students by elite local and

international trainers from Qatar University, Qatar Science and Technology Secondary School for Boys, and biology educators from the Ministry of Education and Higher Education.

The International Biology Olympiad is a rigorous and intense competition and one of the world's most prominent specialised events. Held annually in July for 10 days, it sees participation from over 80 countries, with four students from each country alongside team leaders and supervisors. The host country prepares theoretical and practical questions to test students' abilities in solving biological problems across various branches of biology and assess their skills in conducting practical experiments. (QNA)

## MoT wraps up maritime inspection in Al Wakra



The Ministry of Transport (MoT) and relevant authorities have wrapped up the maritime inspection in AI Wakra. The inspection aimed at ensuring that the maritime vessels met all safety and legal requirements of all the participating entities in the inspection.





#### Kahramaa launches 'Tomorrow's Engineer' programme





The Qatar General Electricity & Water Corporation (Kahramaa) has launched the activities of its 'Tomorrow's Engineer' programme for students. School students aged 12-15 are part of the programme which runs until tomorrow. The programme, according to a post by Kahramaa on X, includes a set of workshops, implementation of engineering project models and field visits.



