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QNL announces
photography
competition



Qatar National Library (QNL) will launch a photography competition from August 1-15 on the architectural design of the library, where competitors will submit artistic images that highlight the aesthetics of the library's engineering and design. **Page 2**

Trump holds first post-shooting rally

Donald Trump was set to hold a triumphant first campaign rally yesterday since surviving an assassination attempt, in startling contrast to President Joe Biden, who remains hunkered at home with Covid, resisting unprecedented Democratic pressure to step aside. Trump prepared to descend on battleground Michigan to stump with his vice presidential running mate J D Vance for the first time. **Page 6**

Bangladesh army out to quell protests

Soldiers were patrolling Bangladeshi cities yesterday to quell growing civil unrest sparked by student demonstrations, with riot police firing on protesters who defied a government curfew. This week's violence has killed at least 133 people so far. **Page 8**

Israel bombs Yemen in Gaza war escalation

AFP
Hodeida, Yemen

Israeli warplanes struck the Houthi-controlled Yemeni port of Hodeidah yesterday, a day after a drone attack by the Iran-backed rebels killed a civilian in Tel Aviv, both sides said.

The strikes, which triggered a raging fire and plumes of black smoke, are the first claimed by Israel in the Arabian peninsula's poorest country, some 1,800km away.

Israeli Defence Minister Yoav Gallant said more operations against the Houthis would follow "if they dare to attack us".

Gallant said the Hodeidah strikes were also a warning to other Iran-backed armed groups around the Middle East that have claimed attacks on Israel during the Gaza war.

The Israeli military said "fighter jets struck military targets in the area of Hodeidah port in Yemen



A huge column of fire erupts following strikes in the port city of Hodeidah yesterday.

in response to the hundreds of attacks carried out against the state of Israel in recent months".

In a statement on social media, top Houthi official Mohamed Abdulsalam reported a "brutal Israeli aggression against Yemen".

The attack targeted "fuel storage facilities and a power plant" in Hodeidah "to pressure Yemen to stop supporting" Palestinians in the Gaza war, he said.

The Houthi-run health ministry said there were deaths and injuries in the Hodeidah strikes, but it did not give a toll.

Footage aired by Al Masirah showed a massive blaze on the seafront, with a large plume of black smoke rising into the sky.

The channel also broadcast images of casualties being treated in hospital, many of them bandaged and lying on stretchers in packed rooms.

A man interviewed by the broadcaster said many of the wounded were port employees. **Page 3**

Qatar welcomes ICJ 'ruling'; calls for end to Israeli occupation

● EU backs world court's decision

QNA
Doha



nise the State of Palestine within the 1967 borders with East Jerusalem as its capital, and fully realise the right of return for Palestinian refugees.

AFP adds from Brussels: The top UN court's ruling that Israel's 57-year occupation of Palestinian land was "illegal" is "largely consistent with EU positions", the bloc's foreign policy chief said yesterday.

and international organisations to refrain from recognising or supporting Israel's illegal actions.

The statement also said that the advisory opinion reflected that the principles of international law that must be respected, urging all countries to act immediately to implement the court's opinion unconditionally.

The statement also affirmed Qatar's steadfast position on the justness of the Palestinian cause and the moral imperative to support the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people.

The statement reiterated Qatar's support for the court's stance and called on all states

to end its illegal occupation as quickly as possible, halt all new settlements, evacuate all settlers from the occupied Palestinian territories, and compensate all those affected by these unlawful practices.

It emphasised the need to work together to end the Israeli apartheid occupation, recognising the State of Palestine within the 1967 borders with East Jerusalem as its capital, and fully realising the right of return for Palestinian refugees.

But the European Union's High Representative for Foreign Affairs said that the bloc had taken "good note" of the court's ruling and urged further backing for the court's opinion.

"In a world of constant and increasing violations of international law, it is our moral duty to reaffirm our unwavering commitment to all ICJ decisions in a consistent manner, irrespective of the subject in question," Josep Borrell said. **Page 3**

30 more Gazans massacred as Israel steps up attacks

Reuters
Cairo

Israeli forces pounded several areas across the Gaza Strip yesterday, killing at least 30 Palestinians, according to health officials, as tanks advanced deeper into western and northern Rafah.

Among those killed were local journalist Mohamed Abu Jasser, his wife, and two children, in an Israeli strike on their house in the northern Gaza Strip, a medic said.

Gaza's Hamas-run government



An explosion occurs following an Israeli air strike on a residential building, in Nuseirat in the central Gaza Strip, yesterday.

Flights resume after global IT outage wreaks havoc

AFP
Paris

Planes were gradually taking off again yesterday after global airlines, banks and media were thrown into turmoil by one of the biggest IT crashes in recent years, caused by an update to an antivirus programme.

Passenger crowds had swelled at airports on Friday as dozens of flights were cancelled after an update to a programme operating on Microsoft Windows crashed systems worldwide.

By yesterday, officials said the situation had returned virtually to normal in airports across Germany and France, as Paris



Passengers wait for new flight assignments due to the global communications outage caused by CrowdStrike at Orlando International Airport.

prepared to welcome millions for the Olympic Games starting on Friday.

Multiple US airlines and airports across Asia said they had resumed operations, with check-in services restored in Hong Kong, South Korea and Thailand, and mostly back to normal in India, Indonesia and at Singapore's Changi Airport as of Saturday afternoon.

Microsoft estimated that 8.5mn Windows devices were affected in the global IT crash, adding that the number amounted to less than one percent of all Windows machines.

"While the percentage was small, the broad economic and societal impacts reflect the use of

CrowdStrike by enterprises that run many critical services", it said.

Microsoft said the issue began at 1900 GMT on Thursday, affecting Windows users running the CrowdStrike Falcon cybersecurity software.

CrowdStrike said it had released an update on Thursday night that caused a system crash and the infamous "blue screen of death" fatal error message.

CrowdStrike said it had rolled out a fix for the problem, and the company's boss, George Kurtz, told US news channel CNBC he wanted to "personally apologise to every organisation, every group and every person who has been impacted".

The company also said it could

take a few days for a full return to normal.

Reports from the Netherlands and Britain suggested health services might have been affected by the disruption, meaning the full impact might not yet be known.

Media companies were also hit, with Britain's Sky News saying the glitch had ended its Friday morning news broadcasts, and Australia's ABC similarly reporting major difficulties.

Australian, British and German authorities warned of an increase in scam and phishing attempts following the outage, including people offering to help reboot computers and asking for personal information or credit card details. **Business Page 3, Page 6**



Ministry holds awareness workshop for Sea Shore Group workers

The Ministry of Labour, in collaboration with the Ministry of Public Health and Qatar Red Crescent, conducted an awareness workshop for Sea Shore Group workers. The event introduced participants to the ministry's e-services, offered guidance on preventing injuries and heat stress at work, and raised their awareness of occupational safety and health. During the workshop, representatives from the Ministry of Labour's departments reviewed the recently updated e-services under the ministry's digital transformation plan. They also addressed workers' enquiries about the labour sector.



The workshop featured presentations to raise workers' awareness of the importance of occupational safety and health with a focus on mental health, in addition to training them on proper first aid techniques to prevent work

injuries and heat stress. The workshop is one of many awareness seminars conducted by the Ministry of Labour as part of the 'Towards a Safe Work Environment' campaign, aimed to raise awareness



among workers on e-services, the importance of following occupational safety and health precautions, and the importance of adhering to workplace safety guidelines.

Judges named for 2nd edition of Qatar Tourism Awards

Qatar Tourism has announced a distinguished seven-member jury panel for its second edition of the Qatar Tourism Awards.

These eagerly awaited awards honour organisations and individuals known for consistently delivering exceptional tourism experiences in Qatar.

The panel's meticulous task involves evaluating tourism businesses that excel in seven primary categories: Service Excellence, Gastronomic Experiences, Iconic Attractions and Activities, World-Class Events, Digital Footprint, Smart and Sustainable Tourism, and Community Leadership. Each category emphasises distinct aspects of the visitor and resident experience.

The jury includes the following distinguished members: Sheikha Alanoud al-Thani, chair of TenX Ventures; Dr Abdulla al-Mehshadi PhD Eng, CEO of Al Wa'ab City; Ramzan al-Naimi, innovation expert; Professor Rana al-Sobh, dean of the College of Business and Economics at Qatar University; Ali bin Towar al-Kuwaiti, representative of Qatar Museums' Year of Culture programme and media personality; Engineer Azzam Abdulaziz al-Mannai, CEO, Sport Accelerator, a member of Aspire Zone Foundation; and Marcel Leijzer, deputy director, Technical Co-operation and Silk Road Department - UN Tourism.

Sheikha Alanoud al-Thani is a dynamic businesswoman, seasoned investor, and influential independent board member. She currently chairs TenX Ventures, among other family-owned businesses. Sheikha Alanoud previously served as deputy CEO and chief business officer at the Qatar Financial Centre (QFC). Her efforts in attracting foreign



direct investment (FDI) significantly contributed to the development of a sustainable local economy.

Ali bin Towar al-Kuwaiti is a representative of Qatar Museums' Year of Culture programme and is involved in setting up the English-language "37 TV" for Qatar Media Corporation. He published six books and directed over 400 documentaries.

Engineer Azzam Abdulaziz al-Mannai, CEO, Sport Accelerator - a member of Aspire Zone Foundation, has over 15 years of extensive experience in the oil and gas industry, in addition to six years in the sport industry, and holds a solid commercial background by profession.

Marcel Leijzer joined UN Tourism in 2006, where he is deputy director, Technical Co-operation and Silk Road Department - UN Tourism. His main task is to co-

ordinate the formulation and implementation of tourism projects related to strategy development, marketing, poverty reduction, biodiversity conservation and capacity-building.

Ramzan Rashid al-Naimi, innovation expert and entrepreneur, is a certified practitioner (Level 1) in Innovation Management. With more than 23 years of experience in the media, marketing and branding industry, he founded two companies specialized in the field of design, media production and innovation.

Professor Rana Sobh is a professor of Marketing and dean of the College of Business and Economics at Qatar University. Throughout her career, she has contributed to several national and international projects and served on many local and international organisations' advisory boards.

Dr Abdulla Hassa al-Mehshadi PhD, Eng is the CEO of Al Wa'ab City and has held several other leadership positions. He previously served as CEO of Msheireb Properties; maintenance manager of Qatar Fertiliser Company (Qafco); consultant to the Minister of Environment; and managing director of the Private Engineering Office.

The carefully selected panel of judges will evaluate submissions expected to surpass last year's total of over 300 entries from across the sector. Winners will receive extensive promotion locally, regionally, and internationally to enhance their visibility. The second edition of the Qatar Tourism Awards is slated for October 27.

The Qatar Tourism Awards is open to all businesses and individuals in the tourism sector. The event is a benchmark for excellence, highlighting the nation's top tourism offerings, services, and innovations and outstanding achievers.

It is a chance to help set the standard for the tourism industry and recognise those who elevate Qatar's tourism reputation on the global stage. Winning the prestigious Qatar Tourism Awards is a demonstration of excellence that strengthens brand equity, shapes businesses or careers, and gaining national and international recognition.

Submissions are a simple process where the applicants need to answer five questions and add supporting documents. The application portal was launched on June 9 and the deadline for application submission is August 8.

For a comprehensive entry guideline, visit www.qatartourismawards.com, or call the dedicated hotline (106) or e-mail qtawards@visitqatar.qa

QIB announces winners of 20mn Avios in Qatar Airways Privilege Club, Visa campaign



Qatar Islamic Bank (QIB) has announced the winners of its recent joint campaign with Qatar Airways Privilege Club and Visa. The campaign was held from May 20-June 19 and offered QIB Qatar Airways co-branded Visa cardholders a chance to win from a prize pool of 20mn Avios points. The winners were selected at the official draw under the supervision of the Ministry of Commerce and Industry (MoCI) officials and QIB.

A total of 328 lucky cardholders received Avios points, including, Nawal Mohamed Al-Mulla, Shaikha Saed al-Hajri, and Maryam Abdulla al-Abdulla, who received the grand prize of 1mn Avios, 600,000 Avios, and 400,000 Avios, respectively, enhancing their travel experiences with Qatar Airways. Among the winners, the grand prize for QIB Qatar Airways co-branded Visa Signature cardholders was 1mn Avios, with an additional 150 winners each receiving 75,000 Avios.

For QIB Qatar Airways co-branded Visa Platinum cardholders, the grand prize was 600,000 Avios and 100 winners were awarded 45,000 Avios each. Lastly, the grand prize for QIB Qatar Airways co-branded Visa Gold cardholders was 400,000 Avios, with 75 winners each receiving 30,000 Avios.

D Anand, QIB general manager - Personal Banking Group, said: "We are pleased to offer our customers Avios for shopping, flights, upgrades, extra baggage and more exclusive benefits. Partnering with Qatar Airways Privilege Club and Visa enables us to provide our customers with truly unforgettable experiences. Congratulations to all the winners, and we look forward to rewarding more customers in the future."

Shashank Singh, Visa VP and general manager for Qatar and Kuwait, said: "Visa provides unmatched benefits that enhance our cardholders' travel journeys. They also enjoy the peace of mind that comes with secure transactions and global acceptance at over 130mn merchant partners worldwide. We are pleased to have partnered with QIB and Qatar Airways Privilege Club on this rewarding campaign and congratulate the lucky winners."

Ehab Amin, senior vice-president - Qatar, Qatar Airways, said: "At Qatar Airways Privilege Club, we are committed to enhancing the lives of our members. We congratulate the winners and look forward to providing them with unforgettable travel experiences."

For more information, visit [www.qib.com.qa/en-AviosPromotion](http://qib.com.qa/en-AviosPromotion)

Australian official receives credentials of Qatar's envoy



The Chief of Protocol at the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Arthur Spyrou, received in Canberra a copy of the credentials of Ali bin Saad al-Hajri as Qatar's ambassador extraordinary and plenipotentiary to Australia. (QNA)

Exhibition raises anti-drugs awareness



The Studies and International Affairs Department at the General Directorate of Drug Enforcement organised its second exhibition under the slogan 'Together Towards a Safe Future' on July 18-19. The exhibition, according to a post by the Ministry of Interior (MoI) on X, was held at Qatar Mall. The exhibition aimed to raise awareness about the harms and dangers of drugs, ways to prevent them, and to enhance security and preventive awareness to maintain a safe, stable and drug-free society.

QNL to launch photography competition from August 1-15

By Tawfiq Lamari
Staff Reporter

Qatar National Library (QNL) will launch a photography competition from August 1-15 on the architectural design of the library, where competitors will submit artistic images that highlight the aesthetics of the library's engineering and design.

The pictures could be of the external view or the internal library

courtyards, from a unique and creative perspective.

Participants must be residents of Qatar with a valid Qatar ID, and must be 18 years and above. Each participant must submit up to four photographs. Photos must focus on aspects of the library's architecture. They must be original and taken by the participant, at QNL. Photos generated by artificial intelligence (AI) are not permitted.

The photographs must be of high-quality and high-resolu-



tion, so that they can be edited or colour-graded for enhancements. There are no limitations on the device used to capture the photos;

they can be taken with a phone or a professional camera.

The submission requirements specify that the photos must be

published as a new post on Instagram. The images can be old or new but the Instagram post must be published during August 1-15. Profiles must be set to the public to view the entries. The caption of the post must include the hashtag #QNLThroughMyLens to be a valid entry.

The judging will be based on the unique perspectives and creativity in composition, the quality of the photo in terms of focus, lighting, and exposure.

All entries must be published

on the participant's Instagram account by Thursday, August 15. The winner will receive an iPhone 14 Pro. The winner will be announced on August 18 (World Photography Day), on QNL social media channels. The winner's photos will be featured on QNL social media.

By entering the competition, participants agree to grant QNL the right to use the submitted photos for promotional purposes, with full credit given to the photographer, QNL said on its website.

GCC welcomes ICJ ruling on illegality of Israel occupation of Palestine

The Gulf Co-operation Council (GCC) has welcomed the opinion issued by the International Court of Justice on Friday, regarding the illegality of the continuing Israeli occupation of the Palestinian territories in the West Bank and Gaza for 57 years, QNA reported from Riyadh.

In a statement yesterday, Secretary-General of the GCC Jasem Mohamed Albudaiwi said that this legal opinion confirms and reinforces the Palestinian people's attainment of their legitimate and legal rights in accordance with international and United Nations resolutions to regain the Palestinian territories seized by the Israeli occupation forces. The settlement decisions and

attempts to change the geography carried out by the Israeli occupation forces are illegitimate measures that do not enjoy any regional or international recognition, and do not change anything on the ground, stressing that the seized Palestinian territories will remain Palestinian and an inherent right of the Palestinian people, the statement said.

It reiterated the firm positions of the GCC countries towards the Palestinian issue, and support for the establishment of an independent Palestinian state within the borders of June 4, 1967, with East Jerusalem as its capital, and support for the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people to obtain their state.

Yemen's Houthis vow 'effective response' over air strikes



A handout picture obtained from Houthi Ansarullah Media Center shows a huge column of fire erupting following reported strikes in the Yemeni fighters-held port city of Hodeidah, yesterday.

AFP
Hodeidah

Israeli warplanes struck the Houthi-controlled Yemeni port of Hodeidah yesterday, a day after a drone attack by the fighters killed a civilian in Tel Aviv, both sides said.

The strikes, which triggered a raging fire and plumes of black smoke, are the first claimed by Israel in the Arabian peninsula country, some 2,000 kilometres away, analysts said.

"The blood of Israeli citizens has a price," Israeli Defence Minister Yoav Gallant said, adding more operations against the Houthis would follow "if they dare to attack us."

Gallant said the Hodeidah strikes were also a warning to other armed groups around the Middle East that have claimed attacks on Israel during the Gaza war.

"The fire that is currently burning in Hodeidah, is seen across the Middle East and the significance is clear," he said.

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu echoed the warning in a televised address. "Anyone who harms us will pay a very heavy price for their aggression," he said.

Just hours after Friday's strike in Tel Aviv, Gallant had vowed Israel would retaliate against the Houthis, who control swathes of Yemen, including much of its Red Sea coast.

Israeli military spokesman Daniel Hagari said F-15 jets carried out the strike and all re-

turned safely to base.

Rear Admiral Hagari accused the Houthis of using Hodeidah "as a main supply route for the transfer of Iranian weapons...like the (drone) that was used in the attack on Friday."

In a statement on social media, top Houthi official Mohamed Abdulsalam reported a "brutal Israeli aggression against Yemen".

The attack targeted "fuel storage facilities and power plant" in Hodeidah "to pressure Yemen to stop supporting" Palestinians in the Gaza war, he said.

The Houthi-run health ministry said at least 80 people were wounded in the Israeli strikes, most of them with severe burns. It did not immediately report any deaths.

An AFP correspondent in Hodeidah reported hearing several large explosions and seeing smoke over the port.

Footage aired by the rebels' Al-Masirah television, which AFP could not independently verify, showed casualties being treated in hospital, many of them bandaged and lying on stretchers in packed rooms.

A man interviewed by the broadcaster said many of the wounded were port employees.

"The city is dark, people are on the streets, petrol stations are closed and seeing long queues," said a Hodeidah resident, who spoke on condition of anonymity citing safety concerns.

Maritime security firm Ambrey said it observed four merchant vessels in the port at the time of the air strike and another eight in the anchorage.

"No damage to merchant vessels has been reported at this time," it said.

The United States, which along with Britain has carried out several rounds of air strikes against the Houthis in an attempt to put an end to their attacks on shipping in the Red Sea, said it played no part in yesterday's strikes.

"The United States was not involved in today's strikes in Yemen, and we did not co-ordinate or assist Israel with the strikes," a US National Security Council spokesman said.

"We've been in regular and ongoing contact with the Israelis following the strike in Tel Aviv that killed an Israeli civilian on Friday morning. We fully recognise and acknowledge Israel's right to self-defence."

UN chief Antonio Guterres had appealed for "maximum restraint" after the Tel Aviv drone strike to avoid "further escalation in the region".

But Houthi politburo member Mohamed al-Bukhaiti swiftly threatened revenge for the Hodeidah strikes.

"The Zionist entity will pay the price for targeting civilian facilities, and we will meet escalation with escalation," he said in a post on social media.

The Houthis' Lebanese ally, Hezbollah, warned that the Israeli strikes on Hodeidah marked a dangerous turn nine months into the Gaza war.

"The foolish step taken by the Zionist enemy heralds a new, dangerous phase," said the group, which has exchanged nearly daily fire with the Israeli army throughout the war.

Hodeidah port, a vital entry point for imports and international aid for fighters-held areas of Yemen, had remained largely untouched through the decade-long war between the Houthis and the internationally-recognised government propped up by the European Union.

The war has left millions of Yemenis dependent on aid supplied through the port.

"Traders now fear that this will exacerbate the already critical food security and humanitarian situation in northern Yemen, as the majority of trade flows through this port," said Mohamed Albasra, senior Middle East analyst for the US-based Navanti Group.



Injured Palestinians and family members crowd a hall in the Al-Aqsa Martyrs hospital in Deir Al-Balah in the central Gaza Strip, yesterday, amid the ongoing conflict between Israel and the Palestinian Hamas movement.

EU Middle East envoy promises to push for two-state solution

AFP
Jerusalem

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's stubborn opposition to a Palestinian state does not deter the European Union's Middle East peace envoy from believing a two-state solution remains achievable.

Sven Koopmans, in an interview with AFP, said with the Gaza war ongoing and Israel needing international support, Netanyahu's government cannot indefinitely disregard European views on resolving the conflict.

"I think that recently he was very explicit about rejecting the two-state solution," Koopmans said.

"Now, that means that he has a different point of view from much of the rest of the world."

The Dutch diplomat said one side's rejection of "the outcome that we believe is necessary" does not mean efforts to seek a solution should cease.

Last month the European Union invited Israel to discuss Gaza and human rights.

Israel agreed to a meeting after July 1, when Hungary, which supports Netanyahu's government, assumed the EU presidency.

"It is important that we have

that discussion," said Koopmans.

"I am sure that in such a meeting, there will be very substantive discussions about what we expect from our partner Israel."

"And that relates to things that we do not see at present."

Koopmans said it was "completely unacceptable" for there to be thousands of aid trucks waiting at the Gaza border.

The envoy also raised concerns about Israeli settler violence in the occupied West Bank, saying some attacks amounted to "genuine terrorism".

Named as special representative for the peace process in 2021, Koopmans said the European Union was one of the most energetic institutions pushing for a two-state solution.

Koopmans said his work was guided by the EU's 1980 declaration recognising the "right to existence and to security" for Israel and "the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people".

The declaration called Israeli settlements on Palestinian land "a serious obstacle to the peace process". The European bloc was only nine members then and Koopmans acknowledged divisions within the 27 existing members on the Middle East strife.

But he insisted the bloc "should not make ourselves smaller than we are".

He highlighted that the 27 countries, with a combined population of 450mn, were Israel's largest trading partner and the top aid donor to the Palestinians.

"We are the biggest political

neighbour to both of them. Of course, we are not the biggest security provider, let's be honest. But we are a big and relevant actor."

EU NUANCES

Koopmans listed his top priorities as ending the suffering in Gaza, preventing a regional war between Israel and Hezbollah, and reviving the peace process to establish "a free state of Palestine living alongside a safe and secure Israel".

The envoy acknowledged the "different nuances" of EU members on the Middle East.

Spain and Ireland joined non-EU member Norway in recognising a Palestinian state this year.

Hungary and the Czech Republic have on the other hand sought to block EU sanctions against Israeli settlers in the West Bank.

The Palestinian state recognitions infuriated Israel, while Koopmans said the move could "contribute" to a solution to the conflict. The European Union is also a major backer of the Palestinian Authority that many countries say Israel seeks to undermine. "We want to see the PA thrive. We want it to have an ability to govern in an effective and legitimate manner," said Koopmans.

"We want to strengthen the PA also so that it can again take over in Gaza when the time is there."

The European Union met with foreign ministers from Egypt, Jordan, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates in May and Koopmans said there were "positive reactions" to its proposals.

Gaza hospital says newborn saved from dead mother's womb

AFP
Gaza Strip

A Gaza hospital said yesterday it saved a baby boy from his mother's womb after she died from wounds sustained in an Israeli strike.

Ola Adnan Harbi al-Kurd, who was nine months pregnant, barely survived a punishing night of missile strikes that rescue services across the Hamas-run territory said killed more than 24 people, including six members of the same family.

But by the time Kurd reached Al-Awda Hospital, she was "almost dead", according to surgeon Akram Hussein.

Doctors were unable to save the mother, but performed an ul-

trasound that detected the baby's heartbeat. They quickly staged an emergency caesarean section "and extracted the fetus," the surgeon told AFP.

The newborn was initially in critical condition, but after receiving oxygen and medical attention was stabilised, said Raed al-Saudi, head of the hospital's obstetrics and gynaecology department. He was placed in an incubator and transferred to Al-Aqsa Hospital in Deir Al-Balah.

Kurd was among three women and a child killed by an Israeli missile fired on the Nuseirat refugee camp in central Gaza, according to a medical official at Al-Awda Hospital. Her husband was also wounded in the strike on the family home.

Israel has not confirmed in-

dividual strikes, but a military statement said troops were "conducting targeted raids on fighters' infrastructure sites" in central Gaza.

Israel has stepped up its offensive in several parts of the territory in line with Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's order to increase pressure on Hamas following the Palestinian group's storming of southern Israel in the first week of October last year.

One man was killed in a drone hit while riding a bicycle on a street near the southern city of Khan Younis, the Palestinian Red Crescent said.

Air strikes on two homes in Gaza City in the north each left six dead, according to the civil defence agency and paramedics.

Israel's military statement said

"troops eliminated a number of fighters in several different encounters" and had launched an operation on the Tal al-Sultan refugee camp near the southern city of Rafah.

The war in Gaza has made childbirth increasingly perilous, with pregnant women facing not only near-daily strikes that hamper access to health facilities, but also widespread food insecurity, degrading sanitary conditions and water scarcity.

The few hospitals that are still working have been stretched to breaking point, according to humanitarian groups.

Pre-term deliveries and maternal complications, including eclampsia, haemorrhage and sepsis, have been rising, Doctors Without Borders said this week.



Baby Malek, who was reportedly delivered by caesarean section after his 9-months pregnant mother succumbed to her injuries sustained during an overnight Israeli strike on Nuseirat in the central Gaza Strip, lies in an incubator at the Al-Awda hospital in Deir Al-Balah, yesterday.



Hezbollah, Hamas say rocket salvos fired at Israel

AFP
Beirut

Hezbollah and its Palestinian ally Hamas said they fired rockets and explosive-laden drones at Israeli positions yesterday to avenge strikes on civilians in Lebanon and Gaza fatalities.

Hezbollah has traded near-daily fire with Israeli forces in support of Hamas since the Palestinian group's October first week storming of southern Israel triggered war in the Gaza Strip.

Earlier yesterday, Lebanon's state-run National News Agency said Syrian nationals, including children, had been injured after an "enemy drone targeted an empty four-wheel drive" near their tent, near the border.

Doctor Mouen Kalakesh who heads the Marjayoun government hospital said a woman and her three children, two of them minors, had been admitted for shrapnel injuries after the strike outside Burj al-Muluk.

Among them was an 11-year-



A Lebanese army soldier checks the wreckage of a vehicle after an Israeli air strike targeted the area near the village of Burj al-Muluk, some 18kms from the town of Nabatiyah, yesterday, amid ongoing cross-border clashes. **Right:** Rescuers evacuate injured Syrians living in makeshift tents in Lebanon, after the Israeli military targeted the area near the village of Burj al-Muluk.

old boy in critical condition after he sustained shrapnel injuries and a head wound, Kalakesh told AFP.

Hezbollah said it launched "dozens of Katyusha rockets" on Dafna, an area in Israel's north that the group said it was targeting for the first time, "in response to the attack on civilians".

Hamas' armed wing, the Ezzedine al-Qassam Brigades, said

they also fired a rocket salvo from south Lebanon towards an Israeli military position in the Upper Galilee "in response to the Zionist massacres against civilians in the Gaza Strip".

Later yesterday, Hezbollah said it also had launched "explosive-laden drones" targeting "artillery and missile positions" and Israeli troops at a site in the Go-

lan Heights as well as Iron Dome platforms. Before the drone attack, the Israeli army said a total of 45 "projectiles" had been fired from Lebanon yesterday afternoon, towards the occupied Golan Heights and the Galilee, reporting no casualties.

The army said it struck "the launcher..." in southern Lebanon from which the projectiles

were launched toward the Golan Heights, also targeting "an additional Hezbollah launcher".

Hezbollah leader Hassan Nasrallah had warned his group would hit new targets in Israel if more civilians were killed in Israeli strikes.

Israeli strikes on Thursday killed at least five people in Lebanon, including the commander of

a Hamas-allied group, a security source and fighter groups said.

On Tuesday, Lebanese official media said Israeli strikes on south Lebanon killed five Syrians, three of them children, with Hezbollah announcing rocket fire at Israel in retaliation.

The violence since October has killed at least 515 people in Lebanon, according to an AFP tally.



**QATAR FUEL ADDITIVES COMPANY LIMITED
QAFAC**

TENDER ANNOUNCEMENT

The Tender Committee of QAFAC invites qualified local suppliers to participate in the following

Tender in accordance with QAFAC tendering procedures:

No.	Tender No.	Description	Collection Fees Qrs.	Tender Bond Qrs.	Bid Closing Date
1	QTC/064/24	Four (4) Years Call off for Contract Offsite Storage for Document Management Services	300/-	58,000/-	18 th August 2024
2	QTC/065/24	Replacement of Roof Sheets in GSS Building and Fire Hall at QAFAC plant site, Mesaieed	300/-	55,000/-	18 th August 2024

Interested companies are invited to collect the above tender documents as follows:

- **Collection Date** : From Sunday, 21st July, 2024 (QAFAC working days from Sunday to Thursday only)
- **Collection Time** : 08:00 a.m. – 2:30 p.m.
- **Location** : The Gate, Bay Tower 2, 13th Floor, West Bay, QAFAC
- **Tender Fees** : As shown above, (**non-refundable**) can be paid at QAFAC Doha Office
- **Validity** : Offers must be valid for 120 days from closing date.
- **Bid Bond** : Offers must include a Bid bond issued from a local bank and valid for 120 Days from closing date.
- **Authorization** : Tenders will be issued to authorized company personnel with the following:
 - 1. Official authorization on Company Letter Head
 - 2. Proper Identification
 - 3. Copy of Company's Commercial Registration
 - 4. Focal Point of Contact (Name, Telephone, Mobile & Email)

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 have been established for less than 2 years and insurance companies are exempted from this requirement. For further details please visit ICV digital Portal :- <https://icv.qa/US>

Drone strike damages ship off Yemen: UK agency

A commercial vessel was attacked twice by drones off the coast of Yemen yesterday but proceeded with its voyage despite sustaining damage, a British maritime security agency said. AFP reported from Dubai. The United Kingdom Maritime Trade Operations, run by the British navy, said the attack happened 64 nautical miles northwest of Mokha, Yemen, near the strategic Bab al-Mandeb Strait. The vessel was first hit by an uncrewed aerial system that exploded close by, causing minor damage, UKMTO said. The second attack involved an uncrewed surface vessel that also exploded nearby, it said, adding both the crew and vessel were safe. The vessel later reported a missile "splashing in close proximity," which appears to have been a failed missile strike, said UKMTO. The agency did not identify the vessel or say who was behind the attacks. Yemen's Houthi rebels have launched dozens of drone and missile strikes against Israel-linked shipping since November in a campaign they say is intended to signal solidarity with Palestinians amid the Gaza war. The Houthis have attacked at least 88 commercial vessels in nine months, according to a tally by the Washington Institute for Near East Policy think tank. On Friday the rebels struck a Singapore-flagged container ship with missiles and drones, sparking a fire that the crew later extinguished.

The Houthi attacks have prompted some shipping companies to detour around southern Africa to avoid the Red Sea, a vital route that normally carries about 12% of global trade. Egypt's Suez Canal on Thursday reported a 23.4% drop in annual revenues which it attributed to disruption to Red Sea shipping.

TRAGEDY Sudan apartment fire kills nine

Fire tore through an apartment block in Port Sudan killing nine people in the city which the Sudanese army has made its base during fighting with rival paramilitaries. Police said yesterday, AFP reported from Port Sudan. Emergency services rescued several people who had been trapped on the ground floor of the building when an electrical short circuit triggered the blaze. At least four people remain in hospital but are in stable condition, the police said in a statement, without saying when the blaze took place. Sudan has been gripped by war since April 2023. The conflict between the regular army under Abdel Fattah al-Burhan and the paramilitary Rapid Support Forces, led by his former deputy Mohamed Hamdan Daglo, has left tens of thousands dead and forced more than 10mn from their homes, according to the United Nations.

QChem
Qatar Chemical Company Limited

Al Dafna – Amwal Tower – First Floor
P.O. 24646 Doha / Qatar – Tel. 44847111 – Fax 44847695
Website: www.qchem.com.qa

ANNOUNCEMENT FOR TENDERS

No.	Document No.	Description	Tender Bond	Bid Closing Date
1.	QC/TC/TA/70/24	Hiring of Portable Gas Detectors for Q-Chem, Q-Chem II and RLOC Turnaround	QR 227,500/-	12:00 hrs. on 10 th September 2024

Brief Scope:

Contractor to supply MX4/ MX6/Ventis pro multi-Gas Detectors on rental basis including qualified Technicians during Q-Chem II TA 2025, RLOC TA 2025 & Q-Chem TA2028.

Tender Documents for the above description can be obtained as follows:

A. Pay to Bank and send the original receipt with authorization letter via email.

For each tender pay a **non-refundable document fee of QR 1,000/-** Payable to Q-Chem, Bank Account (Contract Services - Tender) – Account Number 001-242007-003 with HSBC Bank) and submit the original receipt with an Authorization letter on Tenderer Company Letterhead with ID copy of the Tenderer representative via email to tdvertisement@qchem.com.qa In the authorization letter Tenderer shall nominate a single focal point with contact mobile number, **official email address**, office number, fax number for the communications related to this tender for the transfer and receipt of the tender documents. **The Bank receipt must indicate the tender number and the tenderer name (company name).**

B. Date and Time of Tender documents Issuance via email

Tender documents issuance from **21st July 2024 to 25th July 2024, 8am-12noon.**

C. Proposal details

Proposals should be valid for 240 days from the tender closing date.

D. Submission of Proposals

Guidelines for Electronic Bids Submission is attached in the Tender documents.

ARPM Tender Committee announces the following Tender

Tender No.	Subject	Fees QR.	Tender Bond QR.	Opening Date	Closing Date
ARPM/177/2024/TEN/DOH	Tender for Implementation of WIFI Infrastructure and Guest Authentication System for Diyafa Furnished Suites, Doha	500	5,000	21-Jul-24	18-Aug-24
ARPM/178/2024/TEN/DOH	Tender for Core Switches, Wi-Fi Controllers and Access Points Upgradation for Banana Island Resort Doha	500	5,000	21-Jul-24	18-Aug-24
ARPM/179/2024/TEN/DOH	Supply of Employee Uniform for Hotel Properties	250	5,000	21-Jul-24	18-Aug-24

1. Interested parties can collect copies of the tender documents from ARPM Purchasing Department, via email to m.aslef@arpm.com.qa and L.cabra@arpm.com.qa during working hours 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. (Fri & Sat Closed)

2. A payment of a non-refundable document's fees should be deposited in cash to:

- **Beneficiary Name:** Al-Rayyan Projects Management (ARPM)
- **Account No.** 0013-022375-004 (Qatar National Bank)
- **IBAN No.** QA86QNB000000000013022375004

And the original deposit receipt should be submitted upon receiving the terms and conditions.

3. A tender bond (as stated above), issued by a bank operating in the State of Qatar and valid for 120 days from the closing date should accompany tenders. **The executed tender bond should be included with the technical offer.**

4. All tenderers MUST collect their original bonds from ARPM – Purchasing department upon expiry of the Tender Bond, unless alternative instructions are issued by ARPM.

5. Proposal to be submitted in sealed envelopes as per the RFP requirements in both HARD COPY & SOFT COPY on CD or USB.

6. Copies of valid **Company Commercial Registration, Computer Card & Authorization Letter** must be submitted in order to collect the tender documents.

7. The successful tenderer is required to submit a performance bond issued by a bank operating in the State of Qatar equivalent to 10% of the total contract sum and shall be valid for a period expiring 150 days after contract expiry.

8. Offers should be valid for 120 days commencing from the closing date (as stated above).

9. ARPM has the right to increase or decrease the scope of services by 20% with the same terms and conditions.

10. ARPM is not bound to accept the lowest tender or any other tender and is under no obligation to show any reasons thereof.

11. Bids should be submitted not later than 12:00 noon on the closing date and must be deposited into the Box, provided in the ARPM Purchasing office, located at the 9th Floor, ARPM, Head office and should be in sealed envelopes addressed to the Chairman - Tenders Committee, quoting the Tender Number and Subject.

12. Offers arriving thereafter may not be considered.

CHAIRMAN – TENDER COMMITTEE
TEL: 40341804

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O R Y X G T L L i m i t e d

TENDER ADVERTISEMENT

ORYX GTL Limited is pleased to announce the following tender(s):

S. No.	Tender Ref.	Tender Title:	Tender Bond QAR	Bid Closing Date & Tender Bond Validity Period
1	STC-MT-028-24-MC	Supply of ABB NOx Analyzer Module	45,500/-	14 August 2024 at 12:00 noon & 180 days

Companies wishing to register their interest and obtain Tender Document(s) for the above Tender(s) must pay a non-refundable registration fee and register with ORYX GTL as detailed below:

Tender Registration Fee	QAR 500/- (Non-refundable) per Tender
Payable to	ORYX GTL Limited
IBAN (29 Digits)	QA23QNBA00000000013010705001
Bank	Qatar National Bank - HQ or any branch (cash only)
Registration Dates	From 21 st July 2024 to 25 th July 2024 8:00 am to 1:00 pm
Registration Process and Requirements:	Write an e-mail to oryxgtltenders@oryxgtl.com.qa with the following attachments: 1. Copy of Commercial Registration (CR) 2. Copy of bank deposit slip of the Tender Registration Fee. 3. Copy of ICV Certificate

COMPANIES WHO HAVE PAID THE NON-REFUNDABLE REGISTRATION FEE BUT FAILED TO FORMALLY REGISTER AT THE DATE AND TIME STATED ABOVE WILL NOT BE CONSIDERED AS ACCEPTABLE TENDERER.

TENDER BOND SHALL BE ISSUED BY A BANK REGISTERED IN THE STATE OF QATAR.



Farmer Mohamed Mahmoud Ould Brihm poses for a portrait in front of his date palm in the oasis of M'heiret, a village located in the Adrar region in Mauritania.

Age-old Mauritania date harvest threatened by climate change

AFP
Atar, Mauritania

Wandering atop a small sand dune in central Mauritania, Aliene Haimoud gazed despondently at the yellowing date palms before him — the trees are dying if they are not already dead.

The advance of the desert is striking in the oasis village of Azougui, some 450 kilometres northeast of Nouakchott, the West African state's capital.

Despite the ever-encroaching sand which is gradually swallowing up the trees, residents here are preparing for the Guetna — the annual date harvest.

The popular event is rooted in a long nomadic tradition and involves large family celebrations centred around the small, sweet fruit — the region's main source of income.

"You go from 10 to 1,000 friends," one local said cheerfully.

But when a palm tree dies, a little of the life in each village is extinguished.

"Because of the sand, people are forced to settle elsewhere, because here there can be no more harvests," said Haimoud, president of the local co-operative association.

Nearly 20,000 palm trees have perished since the 1980s and his village is becoming emptier every year, he said.

Like other countries in Western Africa and the Sahel region, Mauritania is on the front lines of climate change.

Temperatures in the region are rising 1.5 times faster than the global average, while rainfall is erratic and wet seasons are decreasing, according to a 2022 report from the UN Human Rights Office.

In Mauritania, the government has tried to halt the desertification by planting trees to repel the onslaught of sand.

But the chosen *prosopis* variety has caused the soil to dry out even more, further exacerbating the palm trees' fragility.

Around 70 kilometres further south, the green oasis of M'heiret has also been decimated.

Some 6,000 palm trees, already weakened by years of drought, were swept away two years ago by the massive flooding of a wadi — a stream that forms during the rainy season.

The trees now lie in the riverbed, which is completely dry at this time of year.

"This place used to be full of palm



An aerial view of the date palms of M'heiret, a village located in the Adrar region in Mauritania.



A general view of date palms covered by the water retention of the Seguelil dam, in the Adrar region of Mauritania.

trees," said Amou Dehah, who was mayor of the village at the time.

"Their owners are still here, but there's nothing left for them," he added.

"If there are no more palm trees, there is no more work. If there's no work, there's no money," Dehah said.

"We need to find a solution. If we don't, people will go and live elsewhere, because this is our only source of income," he added.

Beside him, 56-year-old Mohamed Mahmoud Ould Brihm said he was worried about his 50 palm trees which are planted close to the wadi and have been passed down through generations.

"Of course, I'm afraid of losing everything. I'm even afraid that my house will be destroyed," he said.

The residents of M'heiret, which is renowned for its quality and variety of dates, have called for the construction of a dam which they say would act as a buffer against future downpours and create favourable growing conditions.

"The dam is the best solution," said Houdy Sidina, professor of biology and agronomy at the University of Nouak-

chott. "It helps to combat drought, irrigate palm trees and prevent flooding," he added.

Sidina referred to the region's Seguelil Dam, which was inaugurated in 2019, and permanently irrigates the surrounding oasis, transforming the lives of local people.

The government has also improved irrigation systems, provided solar panels and planted new date palms for poor farmers, said Sidi Ahmed, president of a network of groups for the sustainable development of oases.

In his garden of around 20 palm trees near the regional hub of Atar, Moustapha Chibany picked a succulent date and popped it in his mouth.

"What interests me is not the economic aspect, it's the love of dates. Without them, there would be no life here, in such hostile conditions," he said.

Faced with competition from North African dates, Chibany said that sharing the most effective techniques, combatting waste and promoting better quality species, would help revive the Mauritanian industry.

Govt reveals huge rise in DR Congo monkey pox cases

AFP
Kinshasa

The Democratic Republic of Congo is suffering an "exponential rise" in the number of monkeypox cases, the government said yesterday.

Government spokesperson Patrick Muyaya said the cumulative number of suspected cases had hit 11,166, including 450 deaths, for a fatality rate of four percent.

He said a report by the country's health ministry revealed "an exponential increase in the number of cases".

Muyaya added that the western province of Equateur was worst affected.

The report said the government was taking a series of measures to combat the disease, notably "medical care, monitoring of contacts with the respective health zones (and) promotion of community-based surveillance."

The report came just days after the World Health Organisation (WHO) warned of the threat to global health posed by the "Mpox" disease amid concern of a potential epidemic outbreak of

a new, more deadly strain of the virus in the DRC.

The latest outbreak shows "no sign of slowing down", said WHO head Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus.

He cited 11,000 reported cases and 445 deaths, with children worst affected.

Rosamund Lewis, specialist in monkey pox at the WHO, also warned of the risk of the virus crossing borders.

South Africa recently reported 20 cases, including three deaths.

Mpox was first discovered in humans in 1970 in what was then Zaire, now the DRC. Since then it has been mainly limited to countries in the west and centre of the continent.

Historically, most sufferers were contaminated by infected animals.

But since May 2022, health officials have reported Mpox virus infections worldwide, primarily affecting those engaged in physical relations. Since last September, a new, even more deadly strain has been spreading in the DRC, also being transmitted through physical contact.

The new strain has so far been transmitted exclusively from person to person, Lewis said.

Malian music star Diabate dies

Mali's "king of kora" Toumani Diabate died on Friday at the age of 58 following a short illness, the musician's family announced on social media, AFP reported from Bamako.

"My dear dad is gone forever," the Malian great's son Sidiki Diabate, who is also a musician, wrote on Facebook.

Toumani Diabate was a master of the African stringed instrument, the kora. He died at a private clinic in Bamako, the capital of the west African nation, another member of Diabate's family said.

Diabate was born in 1965 to a family

of griots — storytellers who are the guardians of Mali's traditions and oral histories. Fellow stars of the vast west African music scene paid tribute to Diabate. Senegal's Youssou N'dour lauded a "virtuoso of the kora, an unmatched musical arranger" in a post on X. Malian Grammy award-winning singer Oumou Sangare, known as the "Songbird of Wassoulou", said Diabate was "a bridge between our ancestral traditions and modernity". Salif Keita, the "Golden Voice of Africa", lamented the loss of (Mali's) national treasure".

QATARI INVESTORS GROUP PROPERTY INVITATION FOR TENDER						
SER. NO.	TENDER NO.	DESCRIPTION	QUANTITY	DOCUMENT'S FEES	TENDER CLOSING DATE	TENDER GUARANTEE CHEQUE
1	QIGP/T04/2024	INVITATION TO SUBMIT A BID FOR THE CONSTRUCTION OF VILLA (6+2) LOCATED AT WADI AL SAIL	LUMP SUM	1000 QR	11/8/2024	10% OF THE BID VALUE

General conditions:

1) Tender Documents can be collected from Qatari Investors Group head office at below address:
Qatari Investors Group
Lusail, 1st Floor, Zone No: 69 / Street No: 223
P O Box 22504, Doha, Qatar
TEL: 974 44747000
FAX: 974 44860976

2) Documents fees should be paid by cash during collection of documents and not refundable.
3) Tender closing date is August 11, 2024 at 12 pm, any offers after this date and time will be automatically rejected.

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South Africa police uncover multi-million dollar meth lab

Reuters
Johannesburg

South African police have uncovered an industrial scale meth manufacturing lab in one of the country's biggest ever drug busts and arrested four suspects including two Mexicans, said yesterday.

The laboratory was discovered on a farm in Groblersdal, a small town in Limpopo province, the police said in a statement.

They found large quantities of chemicals used in the manufacturing of illicit drugs including acetone and crystal meth, with an estimated street value of 2bn rand (\$109.5mn), the statement said. "What makes this different from other (seizures) is the involvement of Mexican citizens," said Katlego Mogale, national spokesperson for the Hawks, an

elite police unit which took part in the raid. "It means that our task has just become very difficult," she told Reuters.

It is not clear whether the suspects were manufacturing drugs to distribute within the country or elsewhere, she said.

South Africa is a major drug transit country due to its geography and international trade links, and also a growing market for synthetic drugs, according to the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC).

Methamphetamine trafficking in particular is on the rise in Africa, the UN agency said in its 2023 World Drug Report.

Whilst the investigation continues, the arrested suspects will make their first court appearance tomorrow on charges of manufacturing, dealing and possession of illicit drugs, the police statement said.



This picture taken in 2022 shows Springsteen during the 37th Annual Rock and Roll Hall of Fame Induction Ceremony at the Microsoft Theatre in Los Angeles. -AFP

Bruce 'the Boss' Springsteen is officially a billionaire

“The Boss” is officially a billionaire, Forbes said on Friday, estimating that Bruce Springsteen is conservatively worth \$1.1bn.

The guitar hero bard behind hits including *The River* has solidified much of his wealth in recent years, the financial outlet indicated, in no small part due to a blockbuster sale in 2021 of his music catalogue to Sony for an estimated half-a-billion dollars.

The deal followed his wildly successful Broadway show run.

Now, Springsteen is on a global tour currently set to run through 2025.

According to industry tracker Pollstar, in 2023 Springsteen sold more than 1.6mn concert tickets, raking in \$380mn in revenue.

And the 74-year-old *Dancing in the Dark* singer shows no signs of slowing down.

For decades the *Jungleland* songwriter has penned music that focuses a sentimental lens on underdogs and the working class – and he's sold 140mn albums globally, placing him among the all-time bestselling musicians ever.

A Rock and Roll Hall of Fame inductee with 20 Grammys and an Oscar to his name, Springsteen is also set to be the subject of a forthcoming biopic, with Jeremy Allen White of *The Bear* fame slated to play him.

His marathon shows are the stuff of legend, with the longest clocking in at more than four hours, a performance he pulled off in Helsinki in 2012.

Other industry heavyweights who have hit the billionaire mark include Rihanna, Jay-Z and Taylor Swift. -AFP

Lula rapped over joke about violence against women

Brazil's President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva sparked controversy this week after making a joke about violence against women. At a forum of ministers and business leaders Brasilia, Lula described new data about an increase in abuse against women as “sad news”. Then, reacting to a study which found such abuse often occurs after football matches, the 78-year-old leader joked that “If the guy is a Corinthians fan, it's OK”, in reference to his favourite team. The comments, broadcast live on Tuesday, triggered condemnation. “Besides not being funny, Lula's comment normalises a Brazilian tragedy that should worry everyone, especially the president: at least 10,600 women have been victims of femicide since 2015,” Amnesty International wrote on X, referring to the report that found aggression against women increases by 21% on game days, adding “It's not OK”. -AFP

ANNOUNCEMENT

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holder of

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QID No. 30935600661

hereby change my name

from

MOHAMMAD ZIYA OLAKARA

to

ZIYA SHAHIN OLAKARA

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THE PERMANENT COMMITTEE FOR
NATIONALITY AFFAIRS

within 15 days from the publication of this notice.

Trump to hold his first campaign rally after assassination attempt

AFP/Reuters
Washington

Donald Trump is set to hold a triumphant first campaign rally since surviving an assassination attempt, in startling contrast to President Joe Biden, who remains hunkered at home with the coronavirus (Covid-19), resisting unprecedented Democratic pressure to step aside.

As Trump prepared to descend on battleground Michigan to stump with his vice-presidential running mate JD Vance for the first time, Biden loyalists continued to defend the embattled president.

“I'm all in,” Michigan Senator Debbie Stabenow said in a call yesterday with reporters ahead of the Republicans’ rally in her state.

She predicted that Trump and Vance would “try to rewrite history and pretend to care about working people”, but then added dismissively: “Give me a break.”

The president and his team have remained publicly adamant about his plans to continue campaigning – a spokesman said yesterday that Biden would be back on the trail “next week” – though some reports suggest discussions have begun in his inner circle about how exactly he might step aside.

Pressure has become intense, with a growing number of senior Democratic lawmakers and donors warning the 81-year-old president that a Biden-led ticket could cost not only control of the White House but Congress as well.

Biden is trailing in opinion polls and is behind in every swing state against Trump. Many Democrats fear he may have virtually no path to victory and that the party needs a new presidential candidate to take on Trump.

There has been massive speculation over who could replace Biden.

As vice-president, Kamala Harris appears best-positioned to do so.

Senator Elizabeth Warren, a leading progressive who sought the party’s presidential nod in 2020, gave Harris a boost yesterday without turning her back on the president.

“Joe Biden is our nominee,” she said on MSNBC. “He has a really big decision to make.”

“But what gives me a lot of hope right now is that if President Biden decides to



Police officers are seen providing security before the Trump campaign rally at Van Andel Arena in Grand Rapids, Michigan. -AFP

step back, we have Vice-President Kamala Harris, who is ready to step up, to unite the party, to take on Donald Trump, and to win in November.”

Some Democrats, however, fear that such a late switch from Biden could trigger chaos, dooming the party.

Michael Tyler, the Biden-Harris communications director, insisted yesterday in the briefing call with Stabenow that the president would be back on the campaign trail “as soon as we have a green light”.

Team Trump for its part is effervescent after an exceptional streak of political good luck – from favourable court rulings to Biden’s disastrous debate and even to the attempt on Trump’s life that he used to galvanise his base.

The 78-year-old candidate meanwhile used the just-ended Republican National Convention to demonstrate absolute control over the party, firing up supporters to a rare pitch.

In a long string of posts on X late on Friday, Biden slammed a series of points Trump made in his convention speech.

“He bragged about getting along with dictators,” Biden said in one post. “That’s because Trump wants to be a dictator. He said so himself.”

As of late Friday, dozens of the most ar-

dent Trump supporters began lining up outside Van Andel Arena in Grand Rapids, Michigan for the rally at 5pm (2100 GMT).

By morning, hundreds waited in line amid jubilant chants of “USA! USA!”

Edward Young, 64, preparing for his 81st Trump rally, was wearing a T-shirt showing the already iconic photo of Trump pumping his fist immediately after being shot.

“They have turned him into a martyr and left him alive,” he said, adding, “Now he’s more powerful than ever.”

The rally will represent a moment remarkable by any measure, with Trump striding back on stage exactly one week since a 20-year-old gunman on a Pennsylvania rooftop attempted to kill him.

“I had God on my side,” he told the convention on Thursday.

Just as Trump’s convention address shifted quickly from a plea for unity to harsh attacks on the Biden administration, he seems certain to assail Biden and Harris yesterday over illegal immigration, inflation, crime, the wars in Ukraine and Gaza, China policy and oil drilling.

All eyes, however, will be on the security posture, especially given questions over Secret Service lapses at the Pennsylvania rally.

The Secret Service declined to comment



A rally-goer waits for the doors to open for a rally featuring Trump and his running mate JD Vance at the Van Andel Arena in Grand Rapids, Michigan. -AFP

on security for the Grand Rapids event.

An investigation is under way into the security failures at the Pennsylvania rally.

“The Secret Service does not discuss the means and methods used for our protective operations,” the agency said in a statement.

Trump will speak inside an enclosed 12,000-capacity sports facility that allows more complete control of the perimeter.

Security nevertheless is expected to be extra tight.

It will be Trump’s debut campaign appearance with Vance, a US senator from Ohio who at age 39 could appeal to younger voters.

And Vance’s blue-collar connection could help Trump, a billionaire businessman, win over critical swing states like Michigan, Pennsylvania and Wisconsin.

Outspoken US congresswoman Jackson Lee dies



This picture taken last year shows President Joe Biden with Lee after the State of the Union address to a joint session of Congress at the Capitol. -Reuters

AFP/Reuters
Washington

Congresswoman Sheila Jackson Lee, a Democrat and outspoken advocate for racial justice and minorities’ rights, has died, her family said on Friday.

She was 74.

Lee, a black representative from Texas who served in Congress for nearly three decades, revealed last month that she had been diagnosed with pancreatic cancer.

“Today, with incredible grief for our loss yet deep gratitude for the life she shared with us, we announce the passing of Representative Sheila Jackson Lee,” her family said in a statement posted on social platform X.

The family described her as “a fierce champion of the people” and a “humanitarian”.

Calling Jackson Lee a “towering figure in our politics”, US President Joe Biden wrote in a statement yesterday that “she spoke truth to power and represented the power of the people of her district in Houston with dignity and grace”.

The Congressional Black Caucus paid tribute to the

“titan and stalwart member of Congress” and “a fierce advocate for social and economic justice, national and homeland security, energy independence, and children and working families”.

During her tenure she served, among other things, on the Judiciary Subcommittee for Crime, Terrorism, and Homeland Security and on the Homeland Security, Judiciary and Budget committees.

She also led some key legislative initiatives, including authoring the Violence Against Women’s Act and the Juneteenth National Independence Day Act.

Former president Bill Clinton in a statement called her “a fearless fighter for the people” and “one of our country’s most effective leaders”.

She was a vocal proponent of police reform in the face of congressional roadblocks after the 2020 police killing of George Floyd, a black man whose death sparked nationwide protests.

Last year Jackson Lee showed up at a protest in Houston against anti-Asian hate, bringing several Asian children on stage to declare “Stop the Asian hate, stand for the American flag”.

Jackson Lee considered leaving Congress in 2023 in a bid to become Houston’s first female black mayor, but was defeated in a run-off.

US CDC confirms two additional bird flu cases in Colorado

The US Centres for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has confirmed two additional cases of bird flu in Colorado poultry farm workers. Last week, Colorado reported four confirmed infections of H5N1 bird flu and was checking on the status of a fifth suspected case.

The two new cases were in poultry workers with exposure to infected poultry during depopulation and disposal activities, the CDC said on Friday.

The latest cases are part of a worldwide outbreak of H5N1 bird flu that has been spreading in wild birds and infecting poultry and various species of mammals.

The health agency also said preliminary results from blood samples collected from 35 people who work in dairy farms in Michigan with infected herds did not show neutralising antibodies specific to the H5N1 virus. -Reuters

Microsoft says 8.5mn of its devices were affected by CrowdStrike-related outage

The global tech outage that was related to a software update by cybersecurity firm CrowdStrike affected nearly 8.5mn Microsoft devices, Microsoft said in a blog post yesterday.

“We currently estimate that CrowdStrike’s update affected 8.5mn Windows devices, or less than 1% of all Windows machines,” it said in the blog.

A software update by global cybersecurity firm CrowdStrike, one of the largest operators in the industry, triggered systems problems that grounded flights, forced broadcasters off air and left customers without access to services such as healthcare or banking.

“While the percentage was small, the broad economic and societal impacts reflect the use of CrowdStrike by enterprises that run many critical services,” Microsoft said in its blog post.

CrowdStrike has helped develop a solution that will help Microsoft’s Azure infrastructure accelerate a fix, Microsoft said, adding that it was working with Amazon Web Services and Google Cloud Platform, sharing information about the effects Microsoft was seeing across the industry.

The air travel industry was recovering yesterday from the outage that caused thousands of flights to be cancelled, leaving passengers stranded or grappling with hours of delays as airports and airlines were caught up in the IT outage.

Delta Air Lines, one of the hardest-hit airlines, said that as of 10am EDT (1400 GMT) yesterday, more than 600 flights had been cancelled, adding that additional cancellations were expected. -Reuters



US FAA probes latest Southwest Airlines flight that posed safety issues

Reuters
Washington

The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) said yesterday that it is investigating a Southwest Airlines flight after it flew at a very low altitude over Tampa Bay, Florida, the most recent in a series of incidents raising safety questions.

The July 14 flight by a Southwest Boeing 737 MAX that had departed from Columbus, Ohio, was approximately three miles (5km) from the Tampa airport when it dropped to as low as about 175' (53m), according to FlightRadar24 data.

An air traffic controller alerted the crew of Southwest Flight 425 to their low altitude and the plane was diverted to Fort Lauderdale.

Southwest said yesterday that it is in contact with the FAA “to understand and address any irregularities” following the July 14 flight.

“Nothing is more important to Southwest than the safety of our customers and employees,” the airline added.

This was the latest in a string of Southwest flights that have

raised safety concerns, including a Southwest 737 flight in April that came within about 400' (122m) of the ocean off Hawaii after the first officer inadvertently pushed forward on the control column and the plane hit a maximum descent rate of about 4,400' per minute.

The FAA is also investigating another very low altitude Southwest flight about nine miles (14.5km) from the Oklahoma City airport.

The June 19 incident involving Southwest Airlines Flight 4069 that had departed from Las Vegas dropped to about 500'.

After an alert sounded, an air traffic controller alerted the flight crew.

The US National Transportation Safety Board and FAA are also investigating a Southwest 737 MAX flight on May 25 that experienced a “Dutch roll” at 34,000' while en route from Phoenix, Arizona, to Oakland, California.

Such lateral asymmetric movements are named after a Dutch ice skating technique and can pose serious safety risks.

The FAA is also investigating a June 25 Southwest flight that departed from a closed runway in Portland, Maine.

Motorcycle-riding sultan crowned Malaysian king

By **AFP**
Kuala Lumpur

Malaysia installed yesterday a motorcycle-riding billionaire sultan as its new king in lavish ceremonies for a post seen as a ballast in times of political crises.

The coronation ceremony for Sultan Ibrahim Iskandar, 65, at the National Palace in Kuala Lumpur followed his oath-taking in January as the country's 17th monarch.

Malaysia is a constitutional monarchy, with a unique arrangement that sees the throne change hands every five years between the rulers of nine Malaysian states headed by centuries-old Islamic royalty.

While chiefly ceremonial, the position of king has in recent years played an increasingly important role.

Royal intervention was needed to name prime ministers three times following the

collapse of governments and a hung parliament that followed the 2018 electoral defeat of scandal-tainted premier Najib Razak.

In addition to overseeing major political appointments, the king serves as the official head of Islam in the Muslim-majority country and commander-in-chief of its armed forces.

Bloomberg estimates that Sultan Ibrahim and his family, rulers of southern Johor state just across from Singapore, are worth at least \$5.7bn.

Their holdings include land in Singapore and investments in industries such as palm oil, real estate and telecommunications.

Yesterday's ceremony was witnessed by dignitaries including Malaysian Prime Minister Anwar Ibrahim, Sultan Hassanal Bolkiah of neighbouring Brunei and Bahrain's King Hamad bin Isa al-Khalifah.

Wearing a traditional coat decorated with gold thread and a royal headdress,

Sultan Ibrahim pledged to abide by the constitution and "uphold the religion of Islam and ensure peace in Malaysia".

Anwar congratulated and pledged loyalty to the new king.

Sultan Ibrahim has been outspoken about Malaysian politics and corruption.

He is also seen as a religious moderate. In 2017, he ordered a laundrette owner to apologise for allegedly discriminating against non-Muslims.

Married with six children, he has in the past made annual trips around Johor on a Harley-Davidson motorcycle, handing out charity to poor people.

He also has significant personal business interests, including a stake in Forest City, a \$100bn development project off the coast of Johor led by Chinese investors.

The social media-savvy king has a vast collection of luxury and sports cars as well as private jets.

He also plays polo and is an officer in



Sultan Ibrahim Iskandar and Queen Raja Zarith Sofiah Idris Shah sit on the thrones during his coronation at the National Palace in Kuala Lumpur. -AFP

the national armed forces who underwent military training in the United States.

Sultan Ibrahim attended the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy at Tufts University in the United States, where he completed courses on "Southeast Asian

Strategic Studies" and "International Law of the Sea", the palace said.

The last time a Johor sultan held the crown was four decades ago, when Sultan Ibrahim's father, Sultan Iskandar, was proclaimed Malaysia's eighth king in 1984.

Philippines ramps up pilot training, eyes more jets

By **Kirsty Needham**
Reuters

The Philippine Air Force must ramp up pilot training if it is to buy 20 or more multi-role fighter jets as it modernises and expands joint operations with its navy, a commander said yesterday.

Philippine pilots are taking part for the first time in multinational war games overseas, the "Pitch Black" war games involving 20 Indo-Pacific and European countries over a vast area of northern Australia.

The exercises are consuming 1mn litres of aviation fuel a day, as fighter jets from the United States, Britain, Australia, Singapore, Japan and South Korea, among others, test war tactics and skills, organisers said.

The Philippines brought four of its 12 South Korean-built FA-50 fighter jets to the games and is assessing the capabilities of more advanced jets for its modernisation programme, the contingent's commander, Colonel Randy Pascua, told Reuters in Darwin.

The Philippine military chief Romeo Brawner said this month that the government had approved a decision to buy "faster and more lethal" multi role jet fighters because the FA-50 was "not enough to defend our country", although no decision had been made on the type or how many.

Pascua said the air force needs to close a "big technological gap" as it modernises its fighter jets, including lifting pilot skills.

"If we have to acquire more than 20 multi-role fighters, we really need to step up," he said. "We are here to train and enhance our opera-



A FA-50 fighter jet is parked on the tarmac at RAAF Darwin base, as it participates in Exercise Pitch Black, which takes place from July 12 to August 2, near Darwin, Australia. -Reuters

tional capability because we had lost capability for air defence for decades."

Participation in Pitch Black would strengthen the Philippines' international partnerships and "enforce our commitment to regional security and stability", he said.

The Philippines Air Force is focused on maritime domain awareness in joint operations with

the navy, and Manila is building its air defences amid tensions with Beijing.

Manila and Beijing locked in a confrontation in the disputed South China Sea and their encounters have grown more tense as China presses its claims to shoals in waters that the Philippines says are well within its exclusive economic zone.



PNG Air Force pilots pose during Exercise Pitch Black at RAAF Tindal Base near Katherine, Northern Territory, Australia. -Reuters

"We have been training with the Royal Australian Air Force for several years and the Enga landslide was the first time we had to deploy," he said.

The small PNG planes have been landing in remote Jabiru to deliver supplies during Pitch Black, as well as RAAF Tindal Base, home to Australia's F-35 fighter jets.

Australia's Governor-General, Sam Mostyn, inspected one of the PNG aircraft at the RAAF Darwin

base open day.

Australia and the United States last year struck defence deals with PNG, which is also being courted by Beijing, amid strategic competition by major powers in the Pacific Islands.

"Papua New Guinea is one of our key allies in the region," said Fiona Pearce, senior Australian Defence Force officer for RAAF Tindal.

"Their survival and our survival are interdependent," she added.

PNG Air Force takes to skies among Top Guns

By **Kirsty Needham**
Reuters

One of the world's youngest air forces is taking part in war games alongside cutting-edge stealth fighter jets as the Pacific Island nation of Papua New Guinea (PNG) boosts defence ties with Australia and the United States.

Papua New Guinea's trainee pilots have queued for take-off with US F-22 Raptor and Australian Joint Strike Fighter jets in northern Australia this week in the 20-nation "Pitch Black" war games.

"It is a learning experience for us as a small air force and it helps to build our air force," said Major Randall Hepota, one of six PNG Air Force pilots flying three small P-750 turboprop aircraft.

At home, the New Zealand-made plane can take off and land in very short spaces and transports supplies and troops to border areas in treacherous mountain terrain.

Lieutenant-Colonel Douglas Vavar, the commanding officer of PNG Air Wing, said Pitch Black offered exposure to the world's best pilots and was helping PNG learn how to integrate with a large coalition force.

"We are becoming an air force. Flying in Papua New Guinea is a must," he said in an interview yesterday at RAAF Base Darwin. "Eighty per cent of the population live in rural areas - so the only way you can get access to them is to fly."

The PNG Air Force could land closer to the site of the Enga landslide disaster in May to deliver aid than larger Royal Australian Air Force planes, he said.

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"Papua New Guinea is one of our key allies in the region," said Fiona Pearce, senior Australian Defence Force officer for RAAF Tindal.

"Their survival and our survival are interdependent," she added.

Vietnam to lay former leader Trong to rest next week

By **Reuters/AFP**
Hanoi

Vietnam will hold a state funeral next week for Nguyen Phu Trong, the leader of its ruling Communist Party who died on Friday, the government said yesterday.

There will be two days of national mourning on July 25-26, a government statement said, with the state funeral on the second day.

During the mourning period there will be no public entertainment, and flags at offices and other public places will fly at half-mast, it said.

Trong died at the age of 80 after holding Vietnam's most powerful position for 13 years, overseeing fast economic growth, a years-long anti-graft crackdown and a pragmatic foreign policy.

His duties have been temporarily assigned to President To Lam, a rising star within the party who could further consolidate his powers if he is allowed to keep the two roles.

Trong will be laid to rest at Hanoi's Mai Dich Cemetery at 3pm (0800 GMT) on July 26, the party said in a statement.

The government statement called Trong's death a huge loss to the party, the state, the Vietnamese people and his family.

"After nearly 60 years of work, Trong has

made many great and especially outstanding contributions to the glorious revolutionary cause of the Party and the nation," it added.

During his time as party head Trong had pursued a pragmatic foreign policy, including nurturing ties with the United States.

Entertainment and sporting event organisers have already suspended activities, with social media users in the country changing their profile pictures to black in a show of mourning for the late leader.

Users on Facebook, X and Threads also posted photos and eulogies of the former Communist Party general secretary.

Vietnam has one of most heavily restricted media environments in the world and citizens are often hesitant to express their views online.

"A great heart has stopped," Hoang Quoc Ky wrote on his Facebook page after changing his cover photo to a picture of Vietnam's national flag flying at half-mast.

"He was a bright and perfect communist, a sharp politician ... who devoted his whole life for socialism and the happiness of the people," Ky added.

"Trong was a very enthusiastic patriot in his own manner," blogger DzungArt Nguyen wrote on Facebook. "(We) acknowledge his passion ... may he rest in peace."

The profile pictures of social media accounts for Vietnamese state media agencies were also changed to black, with compa-



A vendor arranges newspapers reporting on the death of Nguyen Phu Trong in Hanoi. -AFP

nies and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) in the country following suit.

In Beijing, Chinese President Xi Jinping visited the Vietnamese embassy "to mourn the passing" of his fellow communist party general secretary, state news outlet Xinhua reported.

Trong is the first party general secretary to die in office since the death in 1986 of Le Duan, a brother-in-arms of Ho Chi Minh.

He is also the first leader to have held three consecutive mandates at the head of the party, after the liberalisation of the economy in 1986.

Panama to start deporting migrants from Darien Gap within months

Panama's government expects to start deportation flights for migrants who crossed the country's dangerous Darien jungle in two to three months, the country's chief of migration Roger Mojica said on Friday.

The flights will be paid by the United States under a recent agreement that the two countries closed earlier this month.

"We are establishing the needs, equipment and requirements that Panama has to face in order to start the programme, and we are in conversations with the United States," Mojica said during a conference call. "We estimate we should be able to start the process in two to three months."

Panama's new president, Jose Raul Mulino, has vowed to curb unlawful immigration and has started to work closely with the US to control passage through the jungle that links Central America to Colombia. Panama's Darien Gap, a jungle which bridges Central America with the South American continent, saw a record half a million migrants cross last year seeking security and better lives abroad. -Reuters



Malaysia coastguard says tanker involved in fire has left

Malaysia's coastguard said yesterday that one of the two large oil tankers involved in a collision that led to fires on both had left the location of the accident and was believed to have turned off its tracking system.

The coastguard said it was tracking the whereabouts of the Sao Tome and Principe-flagged tanker Ceres I, which was suspected to be within Malaysian waters.

The Ceres I was involved in a collision reported early on Friday with the Singapore-flagged Hafnia Nile about 55km (35 miles) northeast of the Singaporean island of Pedra Branca, the Maritime and Port Authority of Singapore (MPA) said on Friday.

The 40 crew on the Ceres I were all accounted for, the MPA had said, adding that 14 had been evacuated by a Singapore Air Force helicopter while 26 were conducting fire-fighting operations onboard.

The Chinese owner of the Ceres I could not be reached for comment.

The Ceres I is a very large crude carrier (VLCC) supertanker, which ship-tracking data last showed was carrying around 2mn barrels of Iranian crude.

However, Iran's oil ministry said yesterday that neither ship had been carrying Iranian crude.

The area where Ceres I had been anchored is known to be used by so-called dark fleet ships for the transfer of Iranian oil in contravention of US sanctions, Michelle Wiese Bockmann, principal analyst at Lloyd's List Intelligence, said on Friday.

Matt Stanley, head of market engagement for EMEA & APAC with Kpler, said on Friday that the Ceres I has "gone dark" many times, referring to when vessels switch off their AIS tracking transponders.

The 74,000-deadweight-tonnes capacity Panamax tanker Hafnia Nile was carrying about 300,000 barrels of naphtha, according to ship-tracking data from Kpler and LSEG.

All 22 crew aboard the Hafnia Nile were evac-

uated and arrived in Singapore on Friday.

A video taken yesterday and posted by the Malaysian coastguard showed the charred Hafnia Nile afloat.

Singapore's MPA did not immediately respond to a request for comment yesterday.

Salvage experts boarded the Hafnia Nile and established a towing connection with one of the attending tugs, the tanker's operator Hafnia said in a statement yesterday.

"A first assessment on board the vessel confirms that no visible flames are observed," Hafnia said. "Pollution levels around the vessel are still undetermined."

Discussions are underway with Malaysian authorities to safely move the tanker, it added.

Hafnia also said it is also co-operating with Singapore on the ongoing investigations into the cause of the incident.

Singapore is Asia's biggest oil-trading hub and the world's largest bunkering port.

Its surrounding waters are among the busiest global sea lanes. - **Reuters**

Indian coastguard battling major fire aboard cargo vessel in Arabian sea

Three Indian Coast Guard ships were battling a major fire yesterday aboard a cargo vessel in the Arabian Sea after it picked up a distress call, the organisation said.

The vessel MV Maersk Frankfurt reported explosions on its front deck on Friday, 6.5 nautical miles (12km) south of Karwar while sailing from India's Gujarat state to Colombo in Sri Lanka.

"Ships Sujet, Sachet and Samrat have been fighting the fire for over 12 hours, preventing its spread," the India Coast Guard said in a statement yesterday posted on social media platform X.

It posted images and videos showing the firefighting effort.

No casualties were reported from the merchant vessel.

The coastguard said a Donier aircraft was conducting aerial assessments and that an additional plane was also in position for search and rescue.

It said another ship was also despatched from Mumbai and likely to join the effort by Sunday.

The *Indian Express* newspaper reported the MV Maersk Frankfurt was carrying International Maritime Dangerous Goods (IMDG) cargo, quoting an unnamed coast guard spokesperson.

It said the firefighting operation was being carried out "amid rough seas and inclement weather conditions". - **AFP**

Army out in force amid Bangladesh unrest

AFP/Reuters

Dhaka

Soldiers were patrolling Bangladeshi cities yesterday to quell growing civil unrest sparked by student demonstrations, with riot police firing on protesters who defied a government curfew.

This week's violence has killed at least 133 people so far, according to an AFP count of victims reported by police and hospitals, and poses a monumental challenge to Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's autocratic government after 15 years in office.

A government curfew went into effect at midnight and the premier's office asked the military to deploy troops after police again failed to subdue widespread mayhem.

"The army has been deployed nationwide to control the law and order situation," armed forces spokesman Shahdat Hossain told AFP.

The curfew will remain in effect until at least 10am (0400 GMT) today, private broadcaster Channel 24 reported.

Streets in the capital Dhaka were almost deserted at daybreak, with troops on foot and in armoured personnel carriers patrolling the sprawling megacity of 20mn.

The curfew was eased for two hours from noon yesterday to allow people to shop for supplies and



Youths play cricket in an empty street in Dhaka during a curfew imposed in response to student-led protests against government job quotas. - **Reuters**

complete other chores.

Those venturing out had their identification cards inspected by army personnel at check points. TV footage showed troops had set up roadblocks and bunkers using sandbags across strategic locations of Dhaka.

Reuters TV footage showed armed soldiers surveying roads littered with stones and debris as shops remained shuttered.

Trees and barricades were uprooted on streets where charred vehicles stood.

Young men played football on a deserted road during the relaxation in the curfew.

However, thousands returned

to the streets later in the day in the residential neighbourhood of Rampura, with police firing at the crowd and wounding at least one person.

"Our backs are to the wall," protester Nazrul Islam, 52, told AFP at the scene. "There's anarchy going on in the country ... they are shooting at people like birds."

Hospitals have reported a growing number of gunshot deaths to AFP since Thursday.

"Hundreds of thousands of people" had battled police across the capital on Friday, police spokesman Faruk Hossain told AFP.

"At least 150 police officers were admitted to hospital. Another 150 were given first aid treatment," he said, adding that two officers had been beaten to death. "The protesters torched many police booths ... many government offices were torched and vandalised."

Staff at the Dhaka Medical College Hospital told AFP that two more police officers and nine others were killed yesterday, while four people admitted to intensive care succumbed to their injuries.

Three more protesters were killed in the industrial town of Savar on Dhaka's outskirts, a major centre of Bangladesh's garment exports.

Enam Medical College Hospital spokesman Zahidur Rahman confirmed the latter deaths to AFP, adding that "nine people came



Soldiers disembark armoured vehicles as they patrol the streets to disperse the anti-quota protesters in Dhaka. - **AFP**

here with bullet wounds."

A spokesman for Students Against Discrimination, the main group organising the protests, told AFP that two of its leaders had been arrested since Friday.

Hasina had been due to leave the country today for a planned diplomatic tour but abandoned her plans after a week of escalating violence.

"She has cancelled her Spain and Brazil tours due to the prevailing situation," her press secretary Nayeemul Islam Khan told AFP.

Near-daily marches this month

have called for an end to a quota system that reserves more than

half of civil service posts for specific groups, including children of veterans from the country's 1971 liberation war against Pakistan.

Critics say the scheme benefits families loyal to Hasina, 76, who has ruled the country since 2009 and won her fourth consecutive election in January after a vote without genuine opposition.

Hasina's government is accused by rights groups of misusing state institutions to entrench its hold on

power and stamp out dissent, including by the extrajudicial killing of opposition activists.

Since the first deaths on Tuesday, protesters have begun demanding Hasina leave office.

"It's not about the rights of the students anymore," business owner Hasibul Sheikh, 24, told AFP at the scene of the Rampura protest.

"We are here as the general public now," he added. "Our demand is one point now, and that's the resignation of the government."

Pierre Prakash of Crisis Group told AFP the lack of competitive elections since Hasina took office had led to mounting public frustration.

"With no real alternative at the ballot box, discontented Bangladeshis have few options besides street protests to make their voices heard," he said.

"The rising death toll is a shocking indictment of the absolute intolerance shown by the Bangladeshi authorities to protest and dissent," Babu Ram Pant of Amnesty International said in a statement.

Authorities imposed a nationwide Internet shutdown on Thursday that remains in effect, severely hampering communication in and out of Bangladesh.

Government websites remain offline and major newspapers including the *Dhaka Tribune* and *Daily Star* have been unable to update their social media platforms since Thursday.

Bangladesh Television, the state broadcaster, also remains offline after its Dhaka headquarters was set on fire by protesters the same day.

Overseas telephone calls mostly failed to connect.

"To take a country of nearly 170mn people off the Internet is a drastic step, one we haven't seen since the likes of the Egyptian revolution of 2011," said John Heidemann, chief scientist of the networking and cybersecurity division at USC Viterbi's Information Sciences Institute.

The Internet shutdown meant many people could not top up their electricity meters, leaving them without power.



Police injured in fresh Dublin anti-immigration riot

AFP

London

Three police officers were injured in the latest anti-immigration protests at a site earmarked for housing asylum-seekers in Dublin, authorities said.

It was the latest in a series of clashes at the site in a deprived northern suburb of the Irish capital over the past week.

Police said a planned public gathering at the site on Friday initially "passed off peacefully" before turning into an "incident of public disorder".

A fire broke out at the building site, with police subjected to "both verbal and physical abuse including rocks, concrete bricks and other objects being thrown at them", they said in a statement.

The Garda - Ireland's national police force -

said that officers used pepper spray and batons to "defend themselves".

Three police officers who were injured were "recovering" yesterday, according to a police update.

A man in his 20s arrested on Friday was later released without charge.

Irish Minister for Justice Helen McEntee condemned the clashes on social media, saying that "a small minority of individuals are inciting violence and fear in an attempt to divide our communities".

"I utterly condemn the attacks we have seen on Gardai in Coolock. An attack on a member of An Garda Siochana is a serious criminal offence which carries a prison sentence of up to 12 years," McEntee said in a statement on X.

The unrest came just days after violence broke out at the site for the planned accommodation in a former paint factory in the Coolock area.

It is intended to house around 500 asylum-seekers.

On Monday, at least 21 people were arrested after police cars were attacked and machinery set on fire.

Irish Prime Minister Simon Harris called Monday's violence "reprehensible" and "criminal".

The latest violence comes amid rising far-right sentiment as the government struggles to respond to a surge in asylum-seeker arrivals and a wider housing shortage.

Last November, central Dublin was engulfed by riots after far-right social media accounts incited protests following a knife attack on schoolchildren by an Irish citizen from an immigrant background.

Arson attacks have also increased on buildings around Ireland planned for accommodating asylum-seekers, with several dozen fires at such properties since 2023.

Myanmar alliance agrees to extend ceasefire with junta in northern state

An alliance of armed groups in Myanmar has agreed to extend a ceasefire with the junta in northern Shan state after "pressure" from China, a leader of one of the groups said yesterday.

The ceasefire, which was extended to July 31, comes after clashes saw its fighters seize territory from the military along a strategic highway to China.

The area has been rocked by fighting since late last month, when the so-called Three Brotherhood Alliance renewed an offensive against junta troops along the road to China's Yunnan province.

The alliance of ethnic minority armed groups - made up of the Myanmar National Democratic Alliance Army and the Ta'ang National Liberation Army (TNLA) - initially agreed to a four-day ceasefire from July 14-18.

A third member of the alliance, the Arakan Army, did not agree to the ceasefire.

"China put a lot of pressure on us to have a ceasefire immediately," the leader from the TNLA, who asked not to be named, told AFP. "Therefore, we have to do it as we can't avoid it."

However, the leader warned that if junta troops launched offensives on the alliance's troops or if they continued to bomb civilians during the ceasefire, they would "attack back".

Fighting broke out in Myanmar after the military's ouster of Aung San Suu Kyi's government in a coup in 2021.

The putsch sparked renewed fighting with ethnic minority armed groups, as well as with pro-democracy "People's Defence Forces".

The clashes in the Shan state since last month shredded a previous Beijing-brokered truce that in January halted an earlier push by the three groups.

The new agreement, however, does not cover the neighbouring Mandalay region, where members of the alliance and other opponents of the military have been battling junta troops in recent weeks.

China is a major ally and arms supplier to the junta, but analysts say it also maintains ties with armed ethnic groups in Myanmar that hold territory near its border.

Myanmar's borderlands are home to myriad ethnic armed groups who have battled the military since independence from Britain in 1948 for autonomy and control of lucrative resources.

Some have given shelter and training to newer "People's Defence Forces" (PDFs) that have sprung up to battle the military after the coup in 2021.

AFP was unable to reach a junta spokesman for comment. - **AFP**

Journalist sentenced to almost 5 years jail in Mongolia

AFP

Ulaanbaatar

A Mongolian court sentenced a controversial journalist to almost five years in prison for illegally obtaining state secrets and a host of other crimes, in a case that critics say exposes a deepening crackdown on press freedom.

Naran Unursetseg became one of Mongolia's best-known journalists by exposing abuse in a Buddhist boarding school, violence in

the military, and by taking on some of the country's most powerful.

Her confrontational broadcasts with her outlet, Zarig, sparked controversy over her tactics but won her legions of fans in a country where corruption is deep-rooted and has sparked civil unrest.

On Friday, Unursetseg wrote on Facebook that a court in the capital Ulaanbaatar had sentenced her to four years and nine months of prison time following a closed-door trial.

"This is repression," she wrote.

A court decision said she was found guilty of illegally obtaining state secrets, tax avoidance, disclosing personal information, and defamation.

"

French police, protesters clash after port blockade

AFP
La Rochelle

Protesters clashed with police in France's western port of La Rochelle yesterday, as conservationists and small farmers mobilised against massive irrigation reservoirs under construction.

Local government officials had banned demonstrations in the city, which is a popular tourist site in summer.

A 2,000-strong march, one of two through the city, was charged by police at around 1:30pm.

Running battles erupted around barricades and burning rubbish bins as some protesters threw projectiles and police fired tear gas grenades.

"We were in the demo, they started blocking ahead and behind," said Lilia, a 25-year-old who declined to give her full name. "They isolated us off to one side to charge everyone else."

Police said around 500 participants in the march were so-called "black bloc" far-left radicals.

Prosecutors in La Rochelle said four members of the police and

five demonstrators received medical care for minor injuries.

Several shops were damaged or looted, along with bus shelters and advertising hoardings. A building site was ransacked for cinder blocks and wood to construct barricades.

Police arrested seven people, mostly for trespassing.

The second, more peaceful march, made up of around 3,000 people family groups, moved from the city centre towards the commercial port. Many wore costume disguises.

Some used kayaks or inflatable boats to approach the La Pallice agricultural export terminal, singled out by organisers as the target for the demonstrations.

The two marches joined up mid-afternoon along the waterfront before turning back and dispersing calmly.

Police had used tear gas earlier yesterday to clear around 200 people who entered the terminal at dawn, including farmers with old tractors.

That confrontation broke up mostly peacefully.

The protests in the city on France's Atlantic coast were intended to show that new "reservoirs aren't being built to grow food locally, but to feed international markets", said Julien Le Guet, a spokesman for the "Reservoirs, No Thanks" movement.

Activists say the reservoirs, set to be filled from aquifers in winter to provide summer irrigation, benefit only large farmers at the expense of smaller operations and the environment.

Several dozen are under construction in western France, their supporters arguing that without them farms risk vanishing as they suffer through repeated droughts.

Last year, clashes between thousands of demonstrators and police in Sainte-Soline, around 90km inland from La Rochelle, left two protesters in a coma and injured 30 officers.

Further scuffles broke out Saturday as demonstrators returned to La Rochelle's centre from the

agricultural port, some launching fireworks at the police, who responded with tear gas and water cannons.

"Cease fire, there are children in the march," Le Guet shouted. "Don't make the same mistake as at Sainte-Soline!"

Fears of clashes had been high all week. More than 3,000 police deployed around a "Water Village" protest camp in Melle, a few kilometres from Sainte-Soline, as authorities warned of

a risk of "great violence".

The prefecture banned the demonstrations in popular summer tourist destination La Rochelle, but organisers went ahead with them.

On Saturday, "our aim wasn't to clash with law enforcement, it's often law enforcement who aim to clash with us," said Juliette Riviere, an SLT member.

Prosecutors said that six people had been taken into custody by mid-afternoon yesterday.



European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen (left) and Italian Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni during a press conference in Lampedusa, Italy, after a visit to a reception centre for migrants last September. (Reuters)

Meloni willing to work with EU head despite voting against her

Reuters
Rome

Italian Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni said she would still be able to work with Ursula von der Leyen despite her Brothers of Italy party having voted against a second term for the German as head of the European Commission.

Members of the European Parliament backed Von der Leyen's bid for another five-year term at the helm of the European Union's powerful executive body on Thursday. "We have co-operated until now and we will continue to do so in the future," Meloni said of her relationship with Von der Leyen.

"We are people who have responsibilities and we understand their importance," Meloni said in an interview with Italian daily *Corriere della Sera* published yesterday.

Meloni, who has led a right-wing Italian government since 2022, said she supported Von der Leyen's comments in her address to the European Parliament on the need to control immigration but the Italian leader added that Europe overall needed less regulation and to find ways to boost its economic competitiveness. She also stressed Italy's importance as the third-largest economy in the EU and a founding member of the bloc, adding that it had the most stable government of all major EU nations.

"Everyone recognises the weight and role of Italy," she said.

The Italian prime minister also said she would be able to work with whoever was elected US president in November. "For me what counts is the strength of the alliance with the United States," she said.

"To think that an alliance between two G7 nations would change with a change of government is stupid and childish."

Poland urges EU to boost US ties to counter Russian 'disinformation'

Poland wants the European Union to launch a campaign in the United States to raise awareness with the American public about the importance of the joint relationship. In a paper prepared for an EU foreign ministers' meeting tomorrow, Poland calls for positive action ahead of the US presidential election on November 5 to counter what it describes as Russian "disinformation" aimed at sowing division between the EU and Washington. "At this critical moment in history, it is imperative that we collectively take swift and robust action to strengthen the transatlantic relations through strategic communication about the EU in the US," the paper, seen by Reuters, says. It adds: "This means scaling up our de-bunking and, even more importantly, pre-bunking of Russian disinformation and launching campaigns which set the record straight about where Europe stands today and about the benefits of diplomacy, collective security and open society." The Kremlin has said it would not meddle in the November US election. It has also dismissed US allegations that it orchestrated campaigns to sway the 2016 and 2020 US presidential elections.

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"At this critical moment in history, it is imperative that we collectively take swift and robust action to strengthen the transatlantic relations through strategic communication

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GULF TIMES

Global growth steady amid slowing disinflation, policy uncertainties

The global economy is set for modest growth over the next two years amid cooling activity in the US, a bottoming-out in Europe and stronger consumption and exports for China, but risks to the path abound, according to the International Monetary Fund (IMF).

Global growth projections are unchanged at 3.2% this year and slightly higher at 3.3% for next year, but there have been notable developments beneath the surface since the World Economic Outlook in April, the fund noted.

Growth in major advanced economies is becoming more aligned as output gaps are closing, IMF said in its recent World Economic Outlook.

The United States shows increasing signs of cooling, especially in the labour market, after a strong 2023. The euro area, meanwhile, is poised to pick up after a nearly flat performance last year.

Asia's emerging market economies remain the main engine for the global economy. Growth in India and China is revised upwards and accounts for almost half of global growth.

Yet, prospects for the next five years remain weak, largely because of waning momentum in emerging Asia. By 2029, growth in China is projected to moderate to 3.3%, well below its current pace.

As in April, IMF has projected that global inflation will slow to 5.9% this year from 6.7% last year, broadly on track for a soft landing.

But in some advanced economies, especially the United States, progress on disinflation has slowed, and risks are to the upside.

In its latest WEO update, IMF finds that risks remain broadly balanced, but two downside near-term risks have become more prominent.

First, further challenges to disinflation in advanced economies could force central banks, including the Federal Reserve, to keep borrowing costs higher for even longer.

That would put overall growth at risk, with increased upward pressure on the dollar and harmful spillovers to emerging and developing economies.

Mounting empirical evidence, including some of our own, points to the importance of global 'headline' inflation shocks – mostly energy and food prices – in driving the inflation surge and subsequent decline across a broad range of countries.

The good news is that, as headline shocks receded, inflation came down without a recession. The bad news is that energy and food price inflation are now almost back to pre-pandemic levels in many countries, while overall inflation is not.

"Growth in major advanced economies is becoming more aligned as output gaps are closing," IMF chief economist Pierre-Olivier Gourinchas said in a blog post accompanying the report, adding that the US was showing increasing signs of cooling, while Europe was poised to pick up.

The IMF significantly hiked its China growth forecast to 5% – matching the Chinese government's target for the year – from 4.6% in April due to a first-quarter rebound in private consumption and strong exports.

The IMF also boosted its 2025 China growth forecast to 4.5% from 4.1% in April.

Gourinchas told Reuters that the new data poses a downside risk to the IMF forecast, as it signals weakness in consumer confidence and continuing problems in the country's property sector.

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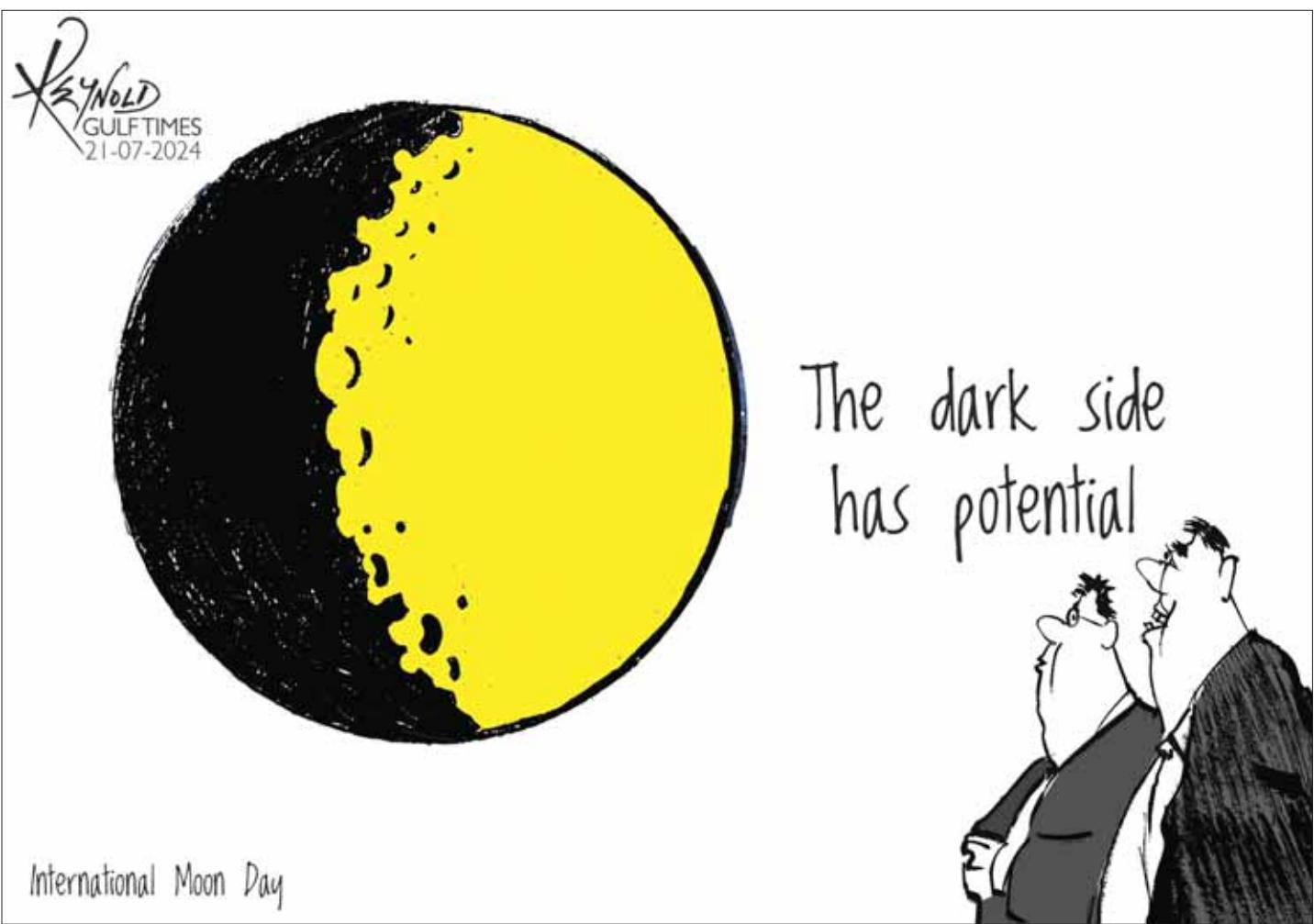
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International Moon Day

Preparing for a future of extreme heat waves

By Renzo R Guinto
Singapore

People across Asia have eagerly awaited the end of heat-wave season, which now appears to be drawing to a close. In my home country, the Philippines, the first typhoon of the year arrived in late May, lowering temperatures that had climbed to nearly 50°C Celsius (122°F Fahrenheit). Over the previous few months, the record-breaking heat led to school closures, a spike in emergency-room visits, reduced productivity, and a return to remote work.

While the public-health effects and economic impact of extreme heat waves can be difficult to measure, the speed at which they are forgotten is alarming. This mirrors the cycle of panic and neglect that often follows pandemics: societies forget the lessons of past health crises and are caught unprepared when the next one arrives.

Just as we must improve pandemic preparedness, we must mitigate the health risks posed by life-threatening temperatures. As climate change accelerates, heat waves are expected to become increasingly frequent and intense, especially in Asia.

To survive this "new normal," we cannot rely on inadequate public-health guidelines like drinking more water and staying in air-conditioned spaces, as if the vast majority of the world's population has access to air conditioning or even clean water. Nor is it acceptable to suggest that women should cope with extreme heat by not wearing underwear, as a former Philippine health minister recently suggested.

Instead, governments must adopt a more proactive approach and accelerate efforts to build heat resilience. By the time the

KEY POINTS

- The first typhoon in the Philippines ended the heat wave season, which had caused school closures, increased emergency visits, and a shift to remote work.
- Governments need to adopt proactive measures to build heat resilience, focusing on housing, transportation, and water access, rather than relying on inadequate public-health guidelines.
- Heat-preparedness programmes must target vulnerable groups and integrate heat-related illness management into health policies and medical training.

next historic heat wave hits, all countries should have a national plan to address it, along with adaptation measures for local communities. In fact, every aspect of policymaking should be viewed through the lens of resilience.

Beyond the health sector, the top priorities should be housing, transportation, and water – which are all targets under the Sustainable Development Goals.

Housing should come first. Many of Asia's most vulnerable people live in poorly ventilated public housing or densely populated slums. Globally, an estimated 1.6bn people suffer from inadequate living conditions. Given that such surveys do not usually account for ventilation, this could well be an underestimate.

There are more viable options for adaptation than advising poor people to live in air-conditioned buildings. In addition to being costly, air conditioners consume vast amounts of electricity, with researchers estimating that they are responsible for 3.9% of global greenhouse-gas emissions. Instead of burning more fossil fuels to meet this increased energy demand, policymakers must reimagine urban development to protect both the planet and public health. For example, some countries in Asia, including Indonesia and Singapore, have begun using low-

cost "cool roof" paint to lower indoor temperatures without air conditioners.

Transportation is another heat-sensitive sector. Whether riding in overcrowded buses or waiting for extended periods on sweltering train platforms, commuters in low- and middle-income countries are often exposed to extreme temperatures. Investing in sustainable transportation systems that also provide comfort during heat waves is crucial to achieving vital climate and public-health goals.

To build heat resilience, governments must also address the global water crisis. Although hydration is crucial for protection against extreme heat, nearly one-third of the world's population does not have access to safe drinking water. Single-use plastic water bottles are not the answer; like air conditioning, they are costly, carbon-intensive, and polluting.

Heat-preparedness programmes must focus on highly vulnerable groups, such as farmers and fisherfolk, construction and factory workers, the elderly, and people with comorbidities. This effort must also be extended to prisoners, detained migrants, and psychiatric patients, all of whom are often confined to extremely hot, cramped spaces.

Like storm and pandemic-response protocols, heat

preparedness must be embedded in health policies. To this end, Asian countries' disease-surveillance systems should be updated to account for heat-related illnesses before the region endures another historic heat wave. Maintaining adequate supplies of medical equipment, from basic items like intravenous fluids to cooling vests, is also crucial.

Moreover, the potential effects of extreme heat must be integrated into the education and training of emergency doctors, community-health workers, and primary-care providers, who are often the first point of contact for underprivileged patients. Regrettably, the clinical management of heat-related illnesses like heatstroke was mentioned only in passing when I was a medical student.

Lastly, researchers must focus not only on the epidemiology of heat, but also the effectiveness of our policies and interventions. The National University of Singapore, for example, launched a research centre dedicated to heat resilience in 2023; my institute will complement this with a new initiative on planetary health that will help health systems and communities across Asia build climate resilience.

With global temperatures rising at an alarming rate, we have no choice but to adapt to a warmer world. At the same time, accelerating decarbonisation could enable us to reduce the frequency and intensity of extreme heat waves. By pressuring governments and corporations to stop burning fossil fuels, we can build true heat resilience and improve planetary health. – Project Syndicate

• Renzo R Guinto is Associate Professor of Global and Planetary Health at the Duke-NUS Medical School in Singapore.



A man takes a shower with a hose during a heat wave in Manila. (AFP)



By Joseph E Stiglitz & Andrew Kosenko
New York

Russia's outrageous invasion of Ukraine has upset the post-World War II order and undercut the rule of international law, with profound effects on geopolitics and economics that are just now being felt. While authoritarian regimes are challenging democratic ones on a global scale, the most devastating effects have, of course, been felt in Ukraine. More than two years into the war, the country is fighting for its survival, not just militarily but also economically.

As the Ukrainian government continues to adapt its economy to the changing nature of the war, and begins the process of reconstruction, it is setting the parameters for all that will follow after the fighting has ended. Success now is linked to success after the war. But competing economic visions mean competing views about what should be done.

Some are pushing for Ukraine to join the ranks of countries that have embraced neoliberalism, meaning privatisation and liberalisation of not only trade, capital, and finance but also of labour markets (policies that once went under the rubric of the Washington Consensus). Given Ukraine's large debt, the argument goes, it will need to tighten its belt to repay what it owes, lest it risk the confidence of foreign investors, who hold the key to future success.

It is as if this discussion were happening 30 years ago. Back then, plenty of mainstream economists still believed that such policies were sound, even though there was already extensive work demonstrating the weaknesses in the theoretical arguments for them. In East Asia, countries that did not follow the neoliberal playbook had performed impressively, and mounting evidence from Latin America and Africa showed that countries that embraced the Washington Consensus often experienced deindustrialisation, slow growth, episodic crises, and increasing inequality.

If it wasn't obvious enough then, it certainly is now. Current theory and an overwhelming abundance of real-world evidence show that neoliberalism has been a colossal failure. Ukraine must look elsewhere.

The nature of the challenge

As bad as neoliberalism is for economies in normal times, it is even worse for countries at war or undergoing the kind of transformation that Ukraine will face in the years ahead. The conventional price mechanism – which conveys information, provides incentives, and coordinates economic activity – performs uniquely poorly under wartime conditions. Time is of the essence, and the ability and willingness to pay may diverge sharply.

In fact, no government has ever conducted a successful war by adhering strictly to free-market principles. Even in America's recent "war" against Covid-19, political leaders turned to the Defence Production Act. This Cold War-era law gives the government substantial powers to intervene in markets to combat critical threats, and its past uses have included fixing prices during the Korean War, ensuring supplies of key raw materials, and regulating heavy industry.

Of course, a government-directed economy does not work. But we have too often erred in the other direction, relying on unregulated, ill-functioning markets even after doing so has led to dramatic economic failures. Ukraine's task will be to find the right balance. At the same time, since robust economic development is predicated upon military security, much of this discussion will be moot if Ukraine lacks the means to defend itself. Continued Western military aid therefore is crucial.

Beyond defence, the challenges Ukraine faces are distinct and complex, and they involve far more than just the reconstruction of physical infrastructure and bombed-out homes. When the war began, Ukraine still had not created all the institutional and legal infrastructure necessary for a well-functioning market economy. A market economy requires trust, but this was already weak during the Soviet era, and it was undermined further during the early years of the post-communist transition, which gave rise to an oligarchy that could take advantage of the rule of law in the West and ride roughshod over it in Ukraine.

The war has since destroyed not only physical capital but also human and natural capital. While Ukraine is known for its fertile soil, large parts of the land have been mined, and de-mining is slow and expensive. About 18% of Ukrainian territory and millions of people are under Russian occupation. The broader human toll is difficult to overstate.

Ukraine has suffered large labour displacements with the departure of many

The way forward for Ukraine's economy

While Ukraine's war expenditures remain urgent, its typical revenue sources have dried up. Notwithstanding the unprecedented support Ukraine has received from many in the international community, its financing challenge is a long-term one, and most of the elements that it will need to succeed must be put in place today, by Ukrainians themselves



Ukrainian infantrymen of the Carpathian Sich 49th Infantry Battalion, named after Oleg Kutsyn, drafted during new mobilisation, communicate after a training in an unspecified location not far from front line in Donetsk region on Friday. (AFP)

women and children (6.5mn, by some estimates) and the military deployment of at least 700,000 fighting-age men. There are concerns that Ukraine will emerge from the war with a large gender imbalance, which could have long-term social and economic repercussions.

Some reasons for hope

Wars can have a transformative effect on societies, especially if wartime governments keep an eye on the post-war economy they hope to achieve. In the case of the United States, each world war produced systematic and lasting changes, and compelled the government to address the consequences of the social inequities of the time. The introduction of school meal programmes, for example, was motivated partly by the need to ensure that the population was physically prepared for what might await. Military recruits provided shocking proof that many Americans were not receiving the nourishment they needed to lead healthy, productive lives.

WWII was pivotal in driving America's transformation from a predominantly rural, agrarian society to an urban, industrial economy. The GI Bill helped ensure that (almost) everyone received as much education as they would benefit from, and the war-driven increase in female labour-force participation changed the economics of gender. The major technological advances that the war induced – in telecommunications, aeronautics, and other domains – would go on to revolutionise all economies and societies.

Ukraine, for its part, will have several advantages as it looks to transform itself after the war. The large cohort of Ukrainian citizens who have spent extensive time outside the country will be able to send back not only financial remittances but also valuable knowledge and knowhow. Moreover, Ukraine's accession to the European Union will force an overhaul of its legal and institutional infrastructure. Though these changes will not guarantee long-term democratic consolidation (as Hungary has shown), studies indicate that EU accession is among the most important factors determining post-communist performance.

Ukraine also should have a competitive edge in many of the sectors that will drive future growth globally. Its workforce is well educated, flexible, and very inexpensive. Pay varies by

region and industry, but the average monthly salary is only about \$500 per month, with the highest monthly salaries (in Kyiv's information-technology sector) ranging from \$1,000-2,600.

Finally, there is one important (perhaps uniquely) Ukrainian phenomenon that bodes well for the future. In the wake of the 2013-14 Euromaidan protests and

Russia's subsequent invasion and illegal annexation of Crimea, Ukrainian civil society experienced a renaissance. Colloquially, Ukraine survived because of two groups of people: the voluntary who willingly offered their time, expertise, or money, and the dobrovol'tsi ("people of good will") who volunteered for the uniformed services.

The voluntary networks operate on trust, which economists recognise to be a major component of development. Implicit norms are as necessary for growth as are explicit, enforceable laws, and the academic literature is full of examples of how, both historically and in experimental settings, trust facilitates welfare-increasing interactions that would not be possible otherwise. Repeated, transparent interactions make it easier to overcome barriers to mutually beneficial cooperation. Ukrainians are already promoting fundraisers on social media, providing in-kind donations, driving goods hundreds of miles, and working on recovery initiatives.

These voluntary networks – domestic and diaspora – may be crucial to ensuring that the government policies we propose below ultimately succeed. The solidarity and trust that was fostered during the fight for democracy in WWII contributed enormously to the subsequent quarter-century of rapid, shared growth in Europe and the US. The same could be true for Ukraine – provided it mobilises these resources, ensures that the burden of the war is shared fairly, and provides equitable opportunities during the recovery process.

Financing the recovery

While Ukraine's war expenditures remain urgent, its typical revenue sources have dried up. Notwithstanding the unprecedented support Ukraine has received from many in the international community, its financing challenge is a long-term one, and most of the elements that it will need to succeed must be put in place today, by Ukrainians themselves.

To finance reconstruction, Ukraine should be able to avail itself of the Russian assets that are frozen in the US and Europe. Europe's current position on this issue makes no sense. It seems to believe that Russia should be able to violate international law by invading its neighbour, yet still enjoy full property protections under Western laws.

But never mind that the rule of law does, in fact, permit Russian assets to be put toward Ukrainian reconstruction; even the \$300bn in frozen Russian central-bank reserves will not be enough. The West also will need to provide more generous financial support. Westerners should recognise that this is a small price to pay to counter the threat Russia's war represents. Though we have been engaged in a great battle, we have not had to send any troops. To keep it that way, we must continue to provide as much aid as is necessary for Ukraine to win (which is different from merely not losing) the war.

Part of this assistance must take the form of debt relief, because there simply is no way that Ukraine can repay all that it owes. We know from bitter experience that you cannot squeeze water from a stone. Austerity policies geared toward eking out a little more for creditors inevitably fail, and often leave both the creditor and the borrower worse off. The interest rates charged by the International Monetary Fund, official creditors, and private lenders should be substantially reduced to a level consistent with a financially sustainable path.

Since Ukraine will need to be able to self-finance to a significant degree (it would be a mistake to rely too much on

Ukraine's President Volodymyr Zelensky has been jetting across the world relentlessly for whatever military aid he can get. (Reuters)

must design the rules of the game to ensure fairness and efficiency and to prevent exploitation. That means guiding and shaping competitive markets through credible regulation and appropriate digital, innovation, and intellectual-property policies.

While many of these areas will be covered by the *acquis communautaire* – the enormous body of European law that Ukraine will adopt in the course of its EU accession negotiations – Ukraine should start focusing on them immediately. EU membership negotiations can take many years, and even within the EU framework, governments may exercise enormous discretion. In doing so, Ukrainians should bear in mind the failure of neoliberalism. Having experienced communism's overarching effort to control every aspect of life, many will be tempted to go to the other extreme – to let markets rip. That would be a grave mistake.

Play to your strengths

Now that young Ukrainians have earned a reputation around the world for their technical skills, Ukraine can become embedded in the global digital economy, especially if the government supports infrastructure investment, high-quality technical education, and research. The diffusion of technology (as opposed to its creation) is likely to play a pivotal role in the country's economic future. Ukraine may be ahead when it comes to some technologies – not least those involving defence – but it is still playing catch-up in other areas. Policies and institutions to promote technology transfers thus should be a high priority in the reconstruction period.

Looking further ahead, the EU single market – with its free movement of people, goods, capital, and ideas – will be an important source of growth. While the Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area (which entered into force in 2016), and the Association Agreement (2017) provide some pre-membership benefits, more can be done to deepen EU-Ukrainian economic integration well before Ukraine's official accession.

As industrial policy comes back into vogue around the world, Ukraine should pursue "managed trade," as many of the most successful developing countries have done.

For example, instead of auctioning off licenses for lithium mining rights, as Ukraine was in the process of doing in 2021 and 2022, the government might instead insist on local production of lithium-ion batteries. The same goes for other Ukrainian rare earths and critical raw materials (titanium, zirconium, and non-ferrous metals). Not only is the world undergoing an energy transition, but Western democracies are trying to ensure that authoritarian regimes do not gain monopoly control over critical components of the supply chain. That gives Ukraine a strong bargaining position.

In addition to exporting raw materials and agricultural products, Ukraine should develop local industries that produce higher value-added intermediate and final goods. While the era of export-led growth may be over, Ukraine can still compete – or even demonstrate a comparative advantage – in some advanced industries (information technology, defence technology, agriculture, certain medical and dental services, entertainment and culture, and design and fashion).

Place-based industrial policy – that is, strategies that take advantage of unique local strengths and opportunities – can play an important role both in winning the war and creating the conditions for a full recovery. Local institutions and local insights will be key to the broader reconstruction process. If and when international funds arrive, it is Ukrainian bureaucrats who will spend the money. That is as it should be. One commonly cited reason for the Marshall Plan's success is that it was decentralized; an important corollary of this is that Ukraine must improve local institutional capacity and transparency.

The imperative of assistance

The uncertainties associated with how the security situation will play out constitute a massive impediment to reconstruction and rehabilitation, and markets will not provide the necessary insurance. That makes it imperative that the Ukrainian and Western governments step in and provide insurance against these security risks, and possibly even against their macroeconomic consequences.

While here we have suggested a framework for Ukraine's economy, its economic prospects and its security are intertwined. Reducing military insecurity would obviously have enormous economic benefits, and nothing might do more in this respect than Ukraine quickly joining the EU and Nato. As Nato celebrates its 75th anniversary, nothing would be more emblematic of its values than laying out a path toward membership. (Of course, many other factors go into those decisions.)

With sufficient assistance from the West, Ukraine will prevail over its much larger and richer authoritarian neighbour. To secure that victory, and to enjoy the fruits of what victory might bring, Ukraine will have to move faster in its transition from a post-communist oligarchy. But it will succeed only if it rejects the failed neoliberal capitalism that dominated the past half-century. – Project Syndicate

• Joseph E Stiglitz, a former chief economist of the World Bank and former chair of the US President's Council of Economic Advisers, is University Professor at Columbia University, a Nobel laureate in economics, and the author, most recently, of *The Road to Freedom: Economics and the Good Society*.

• Andrew Kosenko is Assistant Professor of Economics at the School of Management at Marist College.





Arabic calligraphy contest evokes good response

The first Qatar International Competition in Arabic Calligraphy, known as Al Raqim, is evoking a good response from the competitors, according to a statement from the Ministry of Endowments (Awqaf) and Islamic Affairs. The organisers are receiving a good number of entries, according to the statement.

Dr Saleh bin Ali al-Marri, director of the Sheikh Abdullah bin Zaid Al Mahmoud Islamic Cultural Centre (Fanar) and chairman of the organising committee, said the first weeks of the competition witnessed a large and qualitative turnout from inside and outside Qatar.

"Al-Raqim is considered one of Qatar's most prominent cultural initiatives. It aims to serve the Arabic language and enhance cultural exchange between peoples

and nations," al-Marri said.

This strong co-operation between Awqaf and the Centre for Research, History and Islamic Culture (IRCICA) in Istanbul reflects the extent of Qatar's keenness to embody cultural initiatives in Arabic calligraphy and the service of the Holy Qur'an and the Arabic language. The two institutions previously co-operated to organise the first competition for writing the Holy Qur'an, the "Qatar International Competition for Calligraphy of the Holy Qur'an" in 2011.

Fanar has started receiving entries for the competition. Entries will be accepted until December 26. The organising committee said any person with a passion for Arabic calligraphy, aged 18 years or over, can participate in the competition. Entries that meet

the conditions on the competition website will be accepted. All details of the competition are available on Al Raqim's official website www.alraqim.qa

Participants can send the entries in a sealed envelope via mail to Fanar at the address: Qatar International Competition in Arabic Calligraphy "Al-Raqim"

Sheikh Abdullah bin Zaid Al Mahmoud Islamic Cultural Centre - Abdullah Bin Jassim Street, Doha, Qatar, PO Box 2204.

The entries should be packed well to avert any damage. The organising committee said that the participant must write his name, surname and address in detail on the back of the envelope. Also, they must attach all required documents in the same envelope.

Al Raqim is one of the Arabic competitions with the high-

est prize money. The total prize money of the competition is QR1mn. There are five categories featured in the competition with each recognising eight winners. The jury of Al-Raqim consists of five of the world's leading calligraphers.

Awqaf earlier launched Al Raqim at Fanar in the presence and sponsorship of HE the Minister of Endowments and Islamic Affairs Ghameem bin Shaheen al-Ghanem. The contest is the largest international competition organised by the centre in collaboration with the Museum of Islamic Art (MIA). The competition epitomises the goals of the Qatar National Vision 2030 in entrenching its cultural role in the Middle East and the entire world, in addition to promoting cultural exchange among Arab nations.



Students learn about importance of saving Qatari environment

The Ministry of Environment and Climate Change (MoECC) has concluded the activities of the first edition of the Summer Environmental Club.

According to an official statement from the ministry, the club's activities lasted three weeks with the participation of 20 students from across Qatar. The camp had several lectures and tours.

The activities included educational lectures and workshops presented by environmental experts and field visits that enhanced environmental awareness

among students. The activities were a real opportunity for participants to learn about the importance of preserving natural resources and dealing with them wisely and sustainably in light of environmental challenges such as pollution, environmental issues and climate change.

Students learned about the concept of sustainability and the protection of wildlife and marine life. The club also provided students with an opportunity to practically apply what they learned. The camp left a positive impact on the participating students while making

them more enthusiastic about research and innovation.

The summer activities achieved remarkable success with the co-operation of various departments of the ministry. The idea of the club comes from the ministry's belief that young people are the hope of the future and through their efforts, a clean and sustainable environment can be achieved for future generations.

Participants enjoyed several activities that enhanced their awareness of the components of the Qatari environment. In the first week, they learned about

wild plants in Qatar, their medicinal and aromatic benefits and harmful plants that are not suitable for humans or animals. They also learned about the birds of the Qatari environment and their role in maintaining the environmental balance. The ministry also organised tours to various places including Qur'anic Botanical Garden and Qatar National Museum.

The second week had a workshop that addressed the importance of utilising food scraps and converting them into organic fertiliser.

Pak Shamaa School students get top marks in SSC - I & II exams

The students of Pak Shamaa School and College have excelled in the SSC - I & II examinations held by the Federal Board of Intermediate and Secondary Education (FBISE), Islamabad.

In the examination results recently announced by FBISE, Pak Shamaa School and College students showed 100% results in SSC - II and 90% results in SSC - I

followed by Zainab Abdul Rashid (446), and Hania Latif (432).

The following in SSC - II are Maira Zafar (985 marks), Hamrah Raza (971), Muzaaz Ahmad (970), Eshan Zafar (956), and Hanan Ahmed (952).

"Ten of our students had scored above 900 marks and five were above 800 marks," said Kaukab, who also congratulated the teachers, parents, and students for the excellent performance.

M A Shahid, president of the PSSC Management Committee, applauded all the members of the staff for showing remarkable progress, citing appreciation for the committee.



Mohamed Arslan Shoaib



Mohamed Anas



Khadija al-Kubra



Bareerah Zainab



Maira Zafar



Hamrah Raza

Friends of the Environment Centre holds summer camp



The summer camp 'I Explore' by the Friends of the Environment Centre of the Ministry of Sports and Youth has marked great attendance by youngsters. The second week of the event, according to an official statement, witnessed five events for the participants.

While launching the summer

programme Farhoud al-Hajri, Executive Director of the Friends of the Environment Centre, said the programme's great success in the previous editions and the response from the participants were the major reasons for organising the latest edition which includes workshops and practical and educational lectures in addition to tours for participants aged 13-25.

The activities of the current episode were developed with great attention by the centre's team of experts. So that they keep pace with the developments and events of the current period. Also, they meet the requirements for building the skills and knowledge of the

current generation while keeping with the country's development plans and the aspirations of these young people," al-Hajri explained.

The activities of the second week included the journey of knowledge, environmental agriculture in the Qatari environment, what to plant in the summer, natural arts and Arab Youth Day.