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Iran warns will defend itself after Israeli strike

AFP
Tehran

Iran warned yesterday it would defend itself after Israeli air strikes killed at least four soldiers and further stoked fears of a full-scale regional war in the Middle East.

Iran warned Iran would "pay a heavy price" if it responded to the strikes, and the US, Germany and Britain demanded Tehran not escalate the conflict further.

US President Joe Biden said he hoped "this is the end" after the pre-dawn Israeli strikes, noting that "it looks like they didn't hit anything other than military targets".

The European Union called for all parties to exercise utmost restraint to avoid an "uncontrollable escalation".

Other countries, including many of Iran's neighbours, condemned Israel's strikes and some, such as Russia, urged both sides to show restraint and avoid what Moscow dubbed a "catastrophic scenario".

Iran insisted it had the "right and the duty" to defend itself, while its Lebanese ally Hezbollah said it had already launched rocket salvos targeting five residential areas in northern Israel.

Confirming its own strikes after explosions and anti-aircraft fire echoed around Tehran, the Israeli military said it had hit Iranian missile factories and military facilities in several regions.

The "retaliatory strike has been completed and the mission was fulfilled", and Israeli aircraft "returned safely", a military spokesman said.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said that Israel had chosen the targets in Iran based on its national interests, not according to what was dictated by the United States.

Iran confirmed Israel had targeted military sites around the capital and in other parts of the country, saying the raids caused "limited damage" but killed four soldiers.

Iran's military said that only radar systems were damaged in Israeli strikes and said it was prioritising a ceasefire in Gaza and Lebanon.

"A large number of missiles were intercepted and enemy aircraft were prevented from entering the country's airspace", the statement said.

Israeli aircraft were reduced to firing a "small number of long-range missiles with very light warheads from a distance", inside the US-patrolled airspace of neighbouring Iraq, it added. **Page 7**



Explosions seen near Tehran, amid an Israeli attack on Iran, yesterday. (Screen grab from social media)



Wounded Palestinians receive treatment at the Kamal Adwan Hospital in Beit Lahiya the northern Gaza Strip yesterday.

Situation in northern Gaza 'catastrophic': WHO chief

Palestinian massacre toll goes up to 42,924

AFP
Geneva

The World Health Organisation (WHO) chief warned yesterday of a disastrous situation in the north of the war-ravaged Gaza Strip, with "intensive military operations unfolding around and within healthcare facilities".

"The situation in northern Gaza is catastrophic," Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus said on X, warning that "a critical shortage of medical supplies, compounded by severely limited access, are depriving people of life saving care".

He pointed in particular to the situation at Kamal Adwan, northern Gaza's last functioning hospital, which was stormed by Israeli forces on Friday, according to Gaza's health ministry.

Israeli forces withdrew from the hospital complex yesterday,

30 killed in strikes on Beit Lahiya

At least 30 people were killed in Israeli strikes on several houses in northern Gaza's Beit Lahiya yesterday, the official Palestinian news agency WAFA said.

and the Palestinian enclave's health ministry said the troops had detained dozens of male medical staffers and some of the patients.

Medical staffers have refused Israeli army orders to evacuate the hospital or leave their patients unattended.

The Israeli military said it had expanded the humanitarian-designated area of Al-Mawasi in the southern Gaza Strip, where the army has in the past told Palestinians to go when forced to evacuate their homes.

The ministry charged that the raid on the facility in the Jabalia camp, where Israel launched a major operation earlier this month, left two children dead.

"Reports of the hospital facilities and medical supplies being damaged or destroyed during the siege are deplorable," he said.

The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) described the situation in northern Gaza as "extremely dire" and said people wishing to evacuate must be assured safe passage.

Israeli military strikes on the towns of Jabalia, Beit Hanoun and Beit Lahiya in northern Gaza have so far killed around 800 people during a three-week offensive, the Gaza ministry added.

Israel's campaign has killed 42,924 people in Gaza, the majority civilians, according to figures from the Hamas-run territory's health ministry which the United Nations considers reliable.

Israeli army blows up houses in Lebanon border villages

Lebanese state media said the Israeli army dynamited houses in Lebanese border villages yesterday. The official National News Agency said "the army of the Israeli enemy has since dawn blown up and destroyed houses" in the border village of Adaiseh. The NNA also reported "large explosions" in the border village of Kfar Kila, saying the blasts were heard across the south as columns of smoke rose above the area. The Israeli military had earlier reported "the explosion of a large quantity of explosives in Lebanon" that was strong enough to trigger earthquake warnings in large parts of Israel. **Page 7**

Major advances in HMC kidney transplant care

The establishment of the Kidney Transplant Precision Medicine Programme at Hamad Medical Corporation (HMC) between medical genetics and kidney transplant departments marks a significant advancement in kidney transplant care, particularly for high-risk patients with hereditary kidney diseases.

Dr Hassan al-Malki, head of Nephrology Division and the director of the Nephrology Transplant Programme at HMC said the innovative programme focuses on utilising advanced and sophisticated genetic testing modalities to improve the outcomes of kidney transplant.

"The Kidney Transplant Precision Medicine Programme is a

groundbreaking advancement in the field of kidney transplant," Dr al-Malki said. "By harnessing the power of personalised and genomic medicine, we can tailor treatment plans to the unique genetic and molecular characteristics of each patient with hereditary kidney diseases. This approach holds the promise of significantly improving the safety and quality of transplant of our patients and their donors and ultimately enhancing the quality of life for individuals with kidney disease."

Reem Ibrahim Bux, the clinical lead of Adult and Reproductive Genetic Counselling Services at HMC said this unique programme aims to identify underlying genetic conditions. "This includes hereditary polycystic kidney dis-



Dr Reem al-Sulaiman



Dr Hassan al-Malki



Reem Ibrahim Bux

ease, Alport syndrome, and other inherited conditions that could affect both donors and recipients at the process of kidney transplant," Bux said. "This provides more personalised insights into potential genetic risks and offering more tailored care strategies for those undergoing kidney transplants."

"Our primary goal is to provide

appropriate genetic testing and interpret complex results for recipients, donors, and their families. We help families understand the implications of any identified conditions, including potential risks and their impact on long-term transplant success. By doing so, we enable them to make informed decisions about their

current treatment and also preventative options for themselves and their family members," she added.

Dr Reem al-Sulaiman, acting chair of HMC's Medical Genetics Department, highlighted the programme as a pivotal initiative that exemplifies the principles of precision medicine.

"This programme effectively bridges bench to bedside by utilising genomic platforms to identify genetic variants that could influence transplant outcomes," Dr al-Sulaiman noted. "This allows for the development of more personalised and safer kidney transplant plans for high-risk patients and their donors, making the process safer and more cost-effective for both parties."

PM condemns Israeli attack, calls for restraint

HE the Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs, Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman bin Jassim al-Thani, yesterday held a phone call with Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Islamic Republic of Iran, Abbas Araghchi. During the call, they discussed co-operation relations between the two countries and ways to strengthen them, in addition to latest developments in the region. HE the Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs reiterated during the call Qatar's condemnation of Israel's targeting of the Islamic Republic of Iran, deeming it a violation of Iran's sovereignty and a clear breach of international law. HE Sheikh Mohammed expressed Qatar's utmost concern over the grave consequences of this escalation, stressing that it is important for all parties to exercise restraint and avoid everything that would destabilise security and stability in the region. **(QNA)**

GCO relocated to Msheireb Downtown

Msheireb Properties has announced the relocation of the Government Communications Office (GCO) to its new headquarters in Msheireb Downtown Doha. GCO serves as the strategic communications arm of the state, playing a pivotal role in enhancing the communication industry in Qatar. HE Sheikh Jassim bin Mansour bin Jabor al-Thani, director GCO, said that Msheireb Downtown Doha reflects a strategic location in the heart of the capital and boasts smart infrastructure and state-of-the-art facilities. He affirmed that the relocation will support the performance of the GCO. **Page 3**

24 die in bus crash in central Mexico

At least 24 people died and five others were injured when a bus crashed on a highway in Mexico's central state of Zacatecas yesterday. The accident occurred in the early morning hours when the bus carrying the victims collided with the back of a tractor-trailer. Efforts were ongoing to recover some of the bodies that had fallen into a ravine, a local official said.



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Indian 1kg

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QAR 18.75

٢ Kg.

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TENDER CHICKEN BREAST

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منوع ٧٢ غرام / ٨ قطع
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Day Biscuits
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QAR 18.00
QAR 8.00

جوران لكل عميل
2pcs Per Customer

بارليامونت دايلى ديلايث
أرز بسمي ٤.٥٥ كيلو
Parliament Daily Delight
Basmati Rice 4.54kg

QAR 18.75

١.4 kg.

ساديا
Sadia
دجاج بدون احشاء

QAR 11.00

ساديا دجاج
١.٤ كيلو
Sadia
Chicken 1.4kg

بريزيدن زبدة غير مملحة
٤٠٠ غرام
President Unsalted Butter
400gm

QAR 21.50
QAR 17.50

زيتون اسباني اخضر/اسود
ماتوع اللوى ١ كيلو
Spanish Green/Black
Pitted Olives 1kg

QAR 29.50
QAR 19.50

٤.5 Kg.

أومو مسحوق غسيل
منوع ٤.٥ كيلو
Omo Washing Powder
Asstd 4.5kg

QAR 48.00
QAR 29.00

٤.8 Ltr.

برسيل منظف سائل للفسيل
منوع ٤.٨ لتر / ١ حبة
Persil Liquid Detergent
Asstd 4.8Ltr X 1pc

QAR 76.25
QAR 39.00

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عماني ١ كيلو
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Oman 1kg

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QAR 3.00



Qatar attends GCC meeting of communication heads

Qatar has participated in the second meeting of the heads of delegations from government communication centres and offices of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries. The event was organised by Ministry of Media's Government Communication Center in Saudi Arabia, in partnership with Royal Commission for AlUla. Government Communication Office Di-

rector of Strategic Planning and Studies Saud Ahmed al-Buainain chaired Qatar's delegation at the meeting. The meeting discussed a variety of topics related to enhancing joint media co-operation among the communication offices and centres of GCC states. This included establishing a mechanism for sharing multimedia to advance Gulf communication efforts, particularly during national

days and joint occasions, as well as setting an executive plan for training and sharing expertise. Knowledge-sharing sessions were held during this meeting in which heads of centres and offices' delegations discussed projects that represented an opportunity to share experience and expertise in order to advance government communication work in GCC states. (QNA)

GCO relocated to Msheireb Downtown

Msheireb Properties has announced the relocation of the Government Communications Office (GCO) to its new headquarters in Msheireb Downtown Doha, a significant step that strengthens the modern city's position as a pioneering hub for media and other creative industries in Qatar.

GCO serves as the strategic communications arm of the state, playing a pivotal role in enhancing the communication industry in Qatar.

Its primary functions include providing communication support to governmental and semi-governmental entities, helping them deliver clear and consistent media messages to the public, which promotes the achievements of the state across various fields.

HE Sheikh Jassim bin Mansour bin Jabor al-Thani, director GCO, said that Msheireb Downtown Doha reflects a strategic location in the heart of the capital and boasts smart infrastructure and state-of-the-art facilities.

He affirmed that the relocation will support the performance of the GCO in terms of creative production, its ability to coordinate between government entities, and



Ali Mohammed al-Kuwari

its continued enrichment of the media landscape in general.

Ali Mohammed al-Kuwari, CEO of Msheireb Properties, said: "We are proud to welcome the Government Communications Office to Msheireb Downtown Doha, now strategically located as the government's centre for communications.

This relocation aligns our vision of transforming the city into a world-class media centre, providing a vibrant environment for media, technology, and creative economy professionals to enhance their work."

The new headquarters features an advanced studio, the first of its kind in the region, equipped with the latest digital technologies for producing high-quality creative content to serve government institutions and boost their communi-



HE Sheikh Jassim bin Mansour bin Jabor al-Thani

cation with the public, supporting the mission of the GCO and its active role in elevating communication activities in the country. The studio includes specialised halls for podcast recording, documentary film production, interactive press conferences, as well as facilities for professional photography and organising advanced training workshops.

In addition, the new headquarters will house an office for TikTok and the first creative studio for the global platform in the region, as part of the partnership signed with TikTok on the side-lines of the Web Summit Qatar earlier this year.

The new headquarters will also host an office for the digital social media technology company Snap to boost the presence of its Snapchat platform in the region.

Qatar renews commitment to bolster women's role in peace and security

QNA
New York

Qatar has reaffirmed its steadfast commitment to working with the international community in advancing efforts that elevate the role of women in peace and security. It emphasised that supporting the Women, Peace, and Security (WPS) agenda is essential for achieving the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals.

This declaration was made by HE Sheikhha Alya Ahmed bin Saif al-Thani, Qatar's Permanent Representative to the UN, during the Security Council's open discussion on "Women Building Peace in a Changing Environment" in New York.

She underscored that, despite significant strides in the WPS agenda, many conflict zones continue to see grave violations of international humanitarian and human rights laws, often met with impunity. She noted that women and girls bear the brunt of these crises, particularly in Gaza, where ongoing aggression leads to severe humanitarian violations.

Women and girls are especially vulnerable, facing risks from air-strikes, health crises, shortages in essential supplies, the destruction of educational infrastructure, and widespread displacement.

Emphasising the urgency of translating political commitments into tangible actions, HE Sheikhha Alya called for increased awareness of women's vital role in peace and security.

She highlighted the importance of empowering women in conflict prevention and response efforts, stressing that women's leadership in these areas is essential to addressing today's complex global challenges.

Reaffirming Qatar's dedication to fully implementing the WPS agenda, she expressed pride in Qatar's support for the UN Secretary-General's "Joint Pledge for Women's Participation in Peace Processes".

She added that the upcoming 25th anniversary of UN Security Council Resolution 1325 presents a valuable opportunity to reflect on the transformative impact of the WPS agenda.

HE Sheikhha Alya underscored

the need to expedite progress across the agenda's four pillars: prevention, protection, participation, and relief and recovery. She welcomed the newly adopted "Charter for the Future", which she described as a critical platform for advancing these goals, particularly in recognizing women's pivotal role in achieving lasting peace.

Their full and equal participation in decision-making at all levels of peace and security processes is fundamental to sustaining global stability.

In response to discussion points raised, she called on the international community to act on political will by implementing specific measures and establishing accountability mechanisms to track progress in women's involvement in peace initiatives. Highlighting the significance of building local capacities, she emphasised the need to engage women at all levels to shape sustainable peace outcomes. She also noted Qatar's active membership in the Arab Network for Women Peace Mediators, which works to facilitate women's participation in peace-building efforts.

QF to convene annual gathering of Arab Global Scholars

Qatar Foundation (QF) will convene the Arab Global Scholars (AGS) annual gathering from November 3-5 unveiling the evolution of its longstanding initiative linking Arab scholars and intellectuals back to their region to positively impact its development and address regional and global challenges alike. The continuously growing AGS community traces its origins back to 2006, when QF gathered a select group of Arab expatriate scientists to establish a robust scientific research network to support the development of knowledge-based economies across the region. Doha became its central hub through the

formation of the Arab Expatriate Scientists Network, which has evolved into AGS. AGS is an innovation-focused community designed to foster connections among Arab scholars by establishing links with universities, research centres, the government, as well as industry collaborators from within Qatar. Continued growth of the initiative will be spearheaded by Hamad Bin Khalifa University (HBKU). During the AGS Annual Gathering, distinguished Arab-origin minds that work to impact various fields, will participate in a three-day programme spearheaded by HBKU. Renowned experts will be

among the attendees discussing the steady cultivation of networks among Arab scholars, universities, research institutes, and industry partners. QF's Dr Hilal Lashuel, an American-Yemeni scientist and longstanding member of AGS, said: "This community was founded on a core mission to foster 'brain gain' and 'brain circulation' throughout the Middle East and North Africa. In doing so, AGS is determined to develop new models of collaboration and partnerships among Arab Scholars to advance research and innovation while supporting economic growth in Qatar and across the region."

Qatar condemns Israeli bombing of Iran

Qatar has expressed its strong condemnation and denunciation of Israel's targeting of the Islamic Republic of Iran, deeming the act a blatant violation of Iran's sovereignty and a clear breach of international law. In a statement yesterday, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs voiced Qatar's deep concern over the potentially serious consequences of this escalation, urging all parties involved to exercise restraint, resolve conflicts through dialogue and peaceful means, and avoid actions that could destabilise the region's security and stability. The ministry reiterated Qatar's call for the international community to intensify efforts to calm and de-escalate the situation and end the suffering of people in the region, particularly in Gaza and Lebanon. (QNA)

QIB, Mastercard celebrate grand prize winner of 'Cards Summer Campaign'

Qatar Islamic Bank (QIB) and Mastercard have announced the winner of the Summer Spends Campaign, which ran from July 1-September 30, 2024. This year's campaign gave QIB Mastercard credit and debit cardholders the opportunity to win exciting prizes, including a luxurious BMW Electric iX40 and cash prizes totalling QR300,000, as well as up to 10,000 loyalty points for each new credit cardholder.

As part of its commitment to sustainability and eco-friendly practices and in line with Qatar National Vision 2030, QIB opted for an electric car as a grand prize to encourage its customers to make sustainable choices that contribute to a better future by reducing carbon emissions.

Mohammad Hamad al-Athba was the grand prize winner, driving home with a BMW Electric iX40. Moreover, 30 Mastercard cardholders received cash prizes of QR10,000 each upon their qualification for the draw by using their Mastercard credit or debit cards for a transaction worth QR500 or more during the campaign period.

The draw process was conducted electronically and overseen by representatives from QIB and the Ministry of Commerce and Industry (MoCI). QIB remains committed to delivering exceptional value tailored to its customers' needs. This campaign highlights QIB's dedication to rewarding customers for their continued trust and loyalty, while also offering them extraordinary benefits and experiences.

Al-Athba said: "I am grateful to QIB for this opportunity to win this luxurious BMW Electric iX40. I am proud to be a



Mohammad Hamad al-Athba, the grand prize winner of the Summer Spends Campaign together with QIB and Mastercard officials.

This campaign highlights QIB's dedication to rewarding customers for their continued trust and loyalty, while also offering them extraordinary benefits and experiences

QIB's customer and I encourage everyone to open an account and seize the opportunities to win and rewards offered by the bank."

D Anand, QIB general manager - Personal Banking Group, said: "We are pleased with the success of the campaign, which underscores the loyalty of our valued customers. This is a testament to their trust in QIB and our dedication to enhancing the banking experience for all. "Through our collaboration with Mastercard, we continue our tradition of providing remarkable rewards and incentives to customers using their Mastercard credit and debit cards." Erdem

Cakar, country manager, Qatar and Kuwait, Mastercard, said: "At Mastercard, we are dedicated to fostering a future where both people and the planet can thrive, embodying our ethos of doing well by doing good. "This collaboration highlights Mastercard and QIB's shared commitment to making everyday purchases more rewarding while encouraging environmentally conscious consumer behaviour. We are excited to continue delivering innovative solutions and rewarding experiences to our cardholders through our longstanding partnership."

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Official

Amir congratulates Austrian president

His Highness the Amir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani and His Highness the Deputy Amir Sheikh Abdullah bin Hamad al-Thani sent cables of congratulations to Federal President of Austria Alexander van der Bellen on his country's National Day. HE the Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman bin Jassim al-Thani also sent a similar cable of congratulations to Federal Chancellor Karl Nehammer.

Qatar condemns killing of Lebanese journalists in Israeli raid

Qatar has strongly condemned the killing and wounding of several Lebanese journalists in a recent Israeli raid targeting their residence in Beirut, considering it to be a part of a pattern of systematic crimes against journalists amid the ongoing war on Gaza; a flagrant violation of international humanitarian law; and a direct assault on media freedom, freedom of expression, and the public's right to access information. In its statement today, the Ministry underscored the urgent need to hold the Israeli occupation accountable for this egregious crime and called for swift international action to prevent further attacks on media personnel. The ministry expressed the condolences of the State of Qatar to the families of the victims, and to the governments and peoples of Lebanon, as well as its wishes for a speedy recovery for the wounded.

Qatar deplors Israeli storming of Kamal Adwan Hospital in Gaza

Qatar condemned in the strongest terms the Israeli occupation forces' storming of Kamal Adwan Hospital in the northern Gaza Strip, arresting medical staff and a number of patients and wounded, detaining women without water or food, destroying ambulances and targeting electricity generators, and considered it a heinous crime against defenceless civilians and a flagrant violation of the provisions of international humanitarian law. In a statement yesterday, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs emphasised that the Israeli attacks on civilian sites, including the storming and besieging of hospitals, represent a dangerous escalation in the ongoing confrontations and could have dire consequences on the security and stability of the region. The ministry urged the international community to fulfil its responsibilities and provide protection for dozens of children, patients, injured individuals, and medical personnel who are being held by the Israeli occupation authorities inside the hospital. **(QNA)**

Education ministry holds first progress review meeting for 2024-2030 strategy



The Ministry of Education and Higher Education held its first review meeting to assess the progress made in implementing its 2024-2030 strategy, which was officially launched last September under the slogan 'Igniting the Spark of Learning'. HE the Minister of Education and Higher Education Buthaina bint Ali al-Jabr al-Nuaimi participated in the meeting, alongside senior ministry officials, strategic programme leaders, and project managers. The meeting focused on reviewing and discussing the key achievements to date across the strategic programmes and projects. It also addressed future development strategies and identified the necessary resources to ensure that each program achieves its objectives within the specified timeframe. **(QNA)**

Ministry holds training course on use of nuclear technologies in agriculture

The Ministry of Municipality is conducting a regional training course titled "Bioinformatics and Genetic Improvement of Crops and Methodologies for Screening to Achieve Food Security," held from October 20-31.

Organised in collaboration with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and the Ministry of Environment and Climate Change, the course includes participants from Qatar, Gulf states, Jordan, Lebanon, Syria, Iraq, and Yemen.

The training covers essential topics, including an introduction to crop genetic improvement, traditional and mutation-based breeding techniques, molecular approaches to biological stress resistance, advanced screening methodologies, and future prospects for genetic enhancement.

Director of the Agricultural Research Department at the Ministry of Municipality, Hamad Saket al-Shammari, emphasised the significance of peaceful atomic energy applications in agriculture, highlighting its critical role in addressing global food needs and fostering self-sufficiency in food production. He added that mutation breeding and genetic engineering techniques help improve plant traits to better adapt to local environments, enhancing productivity.

Al-Shammari also pointed out the agricultural challenges specific to the Arab region, such as water scarcity and harsh desert climates, noting the potential of nuclear technology to support the development of drought-resistant and climate-resilient crop varieties, thus strengthening local and global food security.

He stressed that this course aligns with Qatar National Vision 2030, which seeks to diversify income sources, achieve self-sufficiency, and ensure food security. Al-Shammari commended the IAEA for providing technical support and expertise to ongoing research projects in the region, including the RAS5099 regional co-operation project focused on enhancing crop species and agricultural technologies.

He further emphasised that nuclear



Director of the Agricultural Research Department at the Ministry of Municipality, Hamad Saket al-Shammari, emphasised the significance of peaceful atomic energy applications in agriculture, highlighting its critical role in addressing global food needs and fostering self-sufficiency in food production

technologies in agriculture align with environmental sustainability goals by minimising pesticide use and optimising water consumption, helping to protect natural resources for future generations.

According to al-Shammari, the main objective of this course is to equip experts, researchers, and technicians with the skills needed to harness bioinformatics and crop genetic improvement, significantly advancing the agricultural sector in the Arab region in line with the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Assistant National Liaison Officer, Abdulrahman al-Abduljabbar echoed the importance of nuclear applications in agriculture, noting their impact on boosting agricultural productivity, enhancing crop quality, and achieving environmental sustainability.

In turn, Head of the Genetic Resources Department at the Agricultural Research Department, Aisha Dasmal al-Kuwari highlighted the role of nuclear technology in fostering pest- and disease-resistant plant varieties, thereby reducing the dependence on chemical pesticides.

She added that these technologies help create crop varieties that use water more efficiently.

Mohammed al-Azzazi, a biotechnology expert at the Ministry, presented on the peaceful applications of atomic energy in Qatar's agricultural research.

He detailed several collaborative projects with the IAEA, including QAT5006, which enriches genetic diversity and conserves plant resources; QAT5008, which focuses on soil, nutrient, and water management best practices; and RAS5099, which promotes climate-smart crop production, noting the positive outcomes of these initiatives.

This training course falls under the RAS5099 regional technical cooperation project, which aims to promote climate-smart crop production and boost crop productivity through nuclear technology. It is part of Qatar's continuous efforts to build food security and sustainable agriculture capabilities, underscoring the nation's commitment to adopting advanced scientific solutions to tackle regional environmental and climate-related agricultural challenges. **(QNA)**

Liwan open day to explore design experiences

Liwan Design Studios and Labs is set to organise an open day tomorrow to explore the latest experiences of multidisciplinary design, as well as innovative research projects state-wide embraced by Liwan. The open day offers the opportunity for public to visit the exhibitions organised by members of the innovative community in Qatar and react to the multidisciplinary designers, as well as creative entrepreneurs and artists, among them the Dutch-Moroccan fashion designer, courtier, Mohamed Benchellal, who won numerous awards. During the Open Day, Benchellal will discuss his upcoming exhibition at National Museum of Qatar (NMOQ), that will showcase couture dresses designed and produced during his residency at Liwan. The exhibition aims to spotlight not only the designer and his creations but also Arab design, as well as regional support and collaboration. His studio will be open to visitors, and he will be present to comment on his work and experiences.

Director of Liwan Design Studios and Labs, Aisha bint Nasser al-Sowaidi said: "All our studios and creative spaces are open for visitors to see the great work being done at Liwan and we invite them to explore the multitude of interesting design work that is taking place here. With our members and residents in attendance, this is an opportunity for creatives across Qatar to come together to connect, exchange ideas, attend talks and workshops, showcase their work, and experiment with design." **(QNA)**



VENDOR PRE-QUALIFICATION INVITATION

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|------------------|---|--|
| QF/PD/24/PQ/917 | Vendor Pre-Qualification of Event Management and Production Companies for Large QF Events | 2 nd December 2024, 3:00 PM |

Qatar Foundation (QF) Procurement Directorate is inviting qualified companies to participate for the above Pre-Qualification (PQ) requirement. Interested companies shall request the Pre-qualification documents by providing clear copies of the following document to QF email: pdpq@qf.org.qa before **3rd November 2024; 3:00 PM**.

- A Covering Letter signed by authorized signatory that states Company's intent to participate and should list the following information:
 - QF Pre-Qualification Reference Number and Title
 - Company's Commercial Registration (CR) number *(For companies with other holding companies listed in their CR, the commercial registration number and name of corporate partner should also be mentioned in the letter)*
 - Name and contact details of the Company's focal person in charge of all correspondence related to the pre-qualification. All related correspondence will be issued to the provided email address only.

Note: It is also mandatory to mention the correct PQ reference number and title in the email subject.

QF Procurement Directorate will verify and issue the PQ documents to companies who have fully complied with above requirements.

Qatar Foundation Terms and Conditions shall apply as stipulated in the Pre-Qualification document.

QF-PD-PQA-01

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:

| S.N | Tender No. | Description | Collection Fee | Tender Bond | Bid Closing Date |
|-----|------------|---|----------------|---------------|--------------------------------|
| 1 | QTC/089/24 | Four (4) Years Call off Contract for Inspection and Maintenance of Fire Fighting Equipment at QAFAC Plant, Mesaieed | Qrs. 300/- | Qrs. 15,000/- | 10 th November 2024 |

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

- Collection Date :** From Sunday, 27th October 2024 (QAFAC working days from Sunday to Thursday only)
- Collection Time :** 08:00 a.m. – 14:30 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:
 - Official authorization on Company Letter Head
 - Proper Identification
 - Copy of Company's Commercial Registration
 - Focal Point of Contact (Name, Telephone, Mobile & Email)

The Transport Company MOWASALAT (KARWA)

Mowasalat (Karwa) announces the following tender:

| Tender Ref. No. | Tender Title | Tender Fee | Electronic Tender Fee Payment Dates | Tender Bond | Bid Closing Date |
|-----------------|---|------------|-------------------------------------|-------------|------------------|
| TC-043-LTS-2024 | Supply & Maintenance of Toyota Hiace (13-Seater) Auto Transmission Vehicles | QAR 800 | 27 October to 3 November 2024 | QAR 26,000 | 1 December 2024 |

CONDITIONS:

- Interested bidder shall pay the tender fee to Mowasalat Bank Account details as shown:
- Bidder must submit proof of tender fee payment (Bank Deposit Slip + a Signed & Stamped Expression of Interest (indicating Tender Ref. No. and Title / Company Name and details of nominated contact person i.e., Tel. No., Fax No., and Email address) + Copy of valid Commercial Registration to Mowasalat Secretary - Tender Committee at email: tenders@mowasalat.com
- Tender documents will be released via email on the next working day after the tender fee payment date to all bidders who have submitted the bank deposit slip and other documents requested (i.e., **4 November 2024**)
- Bonds: Tender Bond & Performance Bond:** Bids must be accompanied by Bonds issued by a local bank operating in the State of Qatar as per the Qatar Central Bank template. Further details of bonds can be found in the tender documents. **Bids without Tender Bond shall not be considered.**
- Tender validity:** Bid validity period shall be 180 days from the bid closing date.
- Tender documents submission:** Bids must be submitted in 3 separate sealed **(IN RED WAX)** envelopes addressed to **Secretary - Tender Committee** clearly highlighting the Tender Ref. No. & Tender Title:
 - Envelope 1#** must include the Technical Bid submission (1 Original + 1 non-Editable copy in a USB)
 - Envelope 2#** must include Commercial Bid submission (1 Original + 1 Editable MS Excel spreadsheet copied in a USB)
 - Envelope 3#** must include the Tender Bond (1 Original)
- Bid Closing Date:** Bid submission deadline is **12.00 noon Doha Local Time** as on the Bid closing date shown above. The 3 envelopes must be handed over to the Office of The Secretary - Tender Committee, located at Mowasalat Head Office, Industrial Area. Any tender submitted after the deadline will not be considered.

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

Tel.: 4458 8724 Fax: 4458 8850





QF officials addressing the press conference at Education City Stadium.

Education City launches diverse sporting events to welcome NSD

By **Shafeeq Alingal**
Staff Reporter

Qatar Foundation's (QF) Education City has launched diverse sporting events while preparing for National Sport Day and continuing its mission to establish itself as an inclusive hub of sports and a centre for activity for people of all ages and skill levels.

Education City is becoming home to a range of sporting opportunities for individuals and teams, alongside advanced facilities for avid sportspeople, and green spaces for all members of Qatar's community to enjoy.

While addressing a press conference, Mashal Shahbik, director of Events and Protocol said QF is committed to providing diverse and inclusive sports opportunities through its facilities and initiatives in alignment with Qatar's vision of fostering a healthy and active society. "Education City has become a leading sports destination, offering daily programmes and activities that cater to everyone, from beginners to professionals, while ensuring accessible facilities that promote the inclusion of people with disabilities. QF also places significant focus on advancing women's sports by offering dedicated spaces, programmes, and opportunities exclusively for women. Education City Stadium now serves as a hub for women's and girls' sports and fitness activities, creating a space for them to connect, engage in various activities, and to adopt a healthy and active lifestyle," she said.

She invited everyone to take part in the exciting range of activities at Education City. "This year's programme will feature three key races: a running race, a triathlon, and mountain bike races, with different distances

and levels to accommodate all participants. We are grateful to our partners for their collaboration in organising these events."

With daily programmes that are suitable for professionals and beginners, people are invited to join Education City's sports clubs, fitness classes, and training programmes along with the option to book courts, halls and pools for enjoying hobbies with family and friends. Class schedules and training programme timings can be accessed through the Education City app - available to download for free at the Apple Store and Google Play - or by visiting www.educationcity.qa

Focusing on inclusivity, Education City offers facilities accessible for people with disabilities, dedicated spaces for women, and training programmes for children and youth to discover and develop their athletic talents. These include paths for walking, running and cycling, as well as spaces such as Oxygen Park and Qur'anic Botanic Garden, providing families with a relaxing escape from the whirl of everyday life.

Preparations are also underway for Qatar's National Sport Day on February 11, 2025, when Education City will host three main competitions: the Education City Race, with distances of 10km, 5km, and 3km for adults, and 3km and 800m for children; along with the Education City Triathlon, which combines elements of fun and challenge and includes three sports - swimming, cycling, and running. There will also be the Education City Mountain Bike Trail Races, featuring a 15km race and a 5km race.

In addition to the three main races, the day will include sporting activities suitable for all ages and levels, and early registration

can be completed through the Education City app. More information about National Sport Day 2025 at Education City can be found at www.educationcity.qa/nsd and this will be continually updated in the run-up to the day.

Meanwhile, the Education City Stadium has become a hub for women's and girls' sports, hosting a weekly Ladies Night every Tuesday over the coming months from 5-9pm featuring participation from up to 20 partner organisations and attracting around 1,200 participants each week.

In collaboration with Qatar Sports for All Federation, Education City Stadium is set to host a series of women's community running races catering to different ages and skill levels, with four rounds scheduled for November and December starting from November 2.

"In Qatar Foundation Schools, we believe that access and exposure to sports from a young age plays a crucial role in shaping young minds and fostering a love for physical activity. Through our opportunities, we foster an environment where every student, from beginners to aspiring and practising national champions can develop their skills and build confidence, creating a strong foundation for the future," said Abdallah Shaheen al-Kaabi, head of Sports Affairs at QF's Pre-University Education.

"Qatar National Sport Day has always presented itself as the perfect backdrop for our students to showcase all the hard work that they put into exploring, mastering and excelling within a wide range of sports, through our offerings like our Qatar Foundation School Sports Association activities that take place across the academic year," al-Kaabi added.

Omega's four watches of timeless quality unveiled

Omega's iconic red bag has been opened to reveal four watches of timeless quality.

Each model is distinguished by its black tones and stainless steel craftsmanship an enduring combination that forever remains in style.

The festive selection has been chosen from Omega's Speedmaster, Seamaster, De Ville, and Constellation collections, allowing everyone to discover the unique spirit, heritage, and aesthetic of the Swiss brand's four emblematic families. These are gifts that can be worn and cherished for years to come.

The Speedmaster 38mm follows the look of Omega's legendary Moonwatch, but does so with pure refinement.

The smaller size offers a sense of sophistication, while the tachymeter scale on the bezel and the Seahorse medallion on the caseback makes an historic connection to the Speedmaster's famous legacy. It is a perfect chronograph for someone with an adventurous spirit and graceful style.

New in 2024, this 38mm version of the Aqua Terra is crafted for classic tastes. With its lacquered black dial featuring rhodium-plated details, it exudes a look of quiet luxury, while also exemplifying Omega's rich ocean heritage.

Presented on a linked bracelet, the watch is powered by a Co-Axial Master Chronometer movement, offering sublime precision and magnetic resistance.

With the De Ville Prestige, Omega has turned simplic-



ity into an artform. This 40mm stainless steel model may seem minimalist in its appearance, but look closer and you'll find a variety of distinguishing details. This includes the domed and sun-brushed black dial that is enriched with Roman numerals and cabochon indexes in PVD Sedna™ Gold. The seven-row bracelet is also a Prestige signature, while the Co-Axial Master Chronometer movement completes the Omega excellence.

Direct from the stars, Constellation Meteorite, a 41mm constellation timepiece is made with a dial of genuine meteorite. The natural pattern of this ancient space material means that no two watches will ever appear the same - and your version will be the only one like it on Earth. Combined with the Constellation's renowned design and Co-Axial Master Chronometer precision, this is a timepiece of true stellar quality.

New mosque opens at Fereej Kulaib

The Ministry of Endowments (Awqaf) and Islamic Affairs, represented by the Department of Mosques, has opened a new mosque at Fereej Kulaib.

Spread over an area of 639sq m, the Ali Mubarak Rabia Al Kuwari Mosque can accommodate 198 worshippers, according to an official statement from Awqaf.

The opening comes within Awqaf's plan to expand the number of mosques in all regions of the country, keeping pace with urban and population growth, which is in line with Qatar National Vision 2030.

With number MS 237, the mosque has a main prayer hall that can accommodate 126 worshippers and a prayer hall on the mezzanine floor that can accommodate 72 worshippers. The mosque includes an ablution area and has a tall minaret. A house for the imam and a residence for the muezzin are attached to the mosque.

The mosque also includes a spacious ablution place in addition to a large number of public parking lots, several of which are allocated to persons with disabilities. The entrances and exits of the mosque are disability-friendly. The mosque also has a tall minaret.

The Department of Engineering Affairs at the ministry is concerned with fulfilling the needs of the regions in the country for mosques and prayer grounds while providing temporary mosques and supervising their preservation as well as preparing the annual plan for the maintenance of mosques and imams' residences. These are in co-ordination with the competent authorities.



For mosque designs, the department takes into account the requirements of different areas along with the guidelines for green and sustainable buildings and preserving the aesthetics of heritage in designs that reflect the authenticity of Qatari and Islamic heritage by the highest standards.

The ministry's plans to build mosques also take into account the population density map along with engineering, architectural specifications, and heritage aspects within the framework of caring for the mosques to perform worship and to serve the worshippers.

Awqaf's website provides the facility to search for mosque locations geographically, according to the global navigation system, through accurate and specific maps that facilitate access to mosque locations in all cities across the country.

Katara names captain for sixth 'Fath Al Khair' boat journey

By **Tawfik Lamari**
Staff Reporter

Katara has announced the nomination of Salah Ibrahim al-Mannai to lead the 6th 'Fath Al Khair' traditional boat journey, which is scheduled to start on December 6, when it will head to its first stop in the Sultanate of Oman.

Saeed al-Kuwari, head of the Marine Events Department at Katara Beach Management, said that this journey will provide an opportunity to exchange cultures and embody the Qatari maritime heritage. Fath Al Khair will

pass through a number of ports, where various models of maritime events will be displayed.

He explained that participating in various events at ports where it will be stopped, comes within the framework of showing the maritime heritage of Qatar and presenting it to the public in an integrated manner.

Al-Mannai, the captain of the 6th 'Fath Al Khair' traditional boat journey, thanked the Beach Management for nominating him to lead the journey. He explained that the journey aims to introduce Qatari heritage. The first stop will begin in the state of Musandam in Oman where the

team will participate in a maritime festival. Al-Mannai indicated that the stay in Musandam will be about five to six days, after which the team will head to the Emirate of Sharjah in Khor Fakkan, to participate in another marine festival.

He confirmed the formation of a distinguished team for this trip, and spoke of his great confidence in the success of the mission. He also said that the trip is expected to last for a month and two days, depending on the wind speed and transportation conditions. He pointed out that participation in the Sharjah Festival will end on January 7.



File photo of Qatari traditional boats.

More locally produced vegetables to hit retail markets in coming weeks



The local produce of vegetables has started to hit the retail market across various shops, supermarkets and vegetable markets including Al Saliya Central Market.

Even though the amounts that have been on display recently are considered very limited, they have contributed in stabilising the prices of some varieties such as cucumber and tomatoes.

Speaking to local Arabic daily *Arrayah*, some farm owners and farm managers stressed that most local farms would be ready to supply the local market with various types of vegetables within November, including eggplants, capsicum, zucchini, tomatoes, and various leafy vegetables. This was mainly achieved through expansion of using greenhouses and introducing sophisticated agriculture technology that enabled farmers to exploit more space in their farms that were difficult to use earlier.

Eng Abdulrahman Ahmed al-Obaidan, stressed that the expected amount of production of his farm this year would hit around 2,000 tonnes of various vegetables, which is 500 tonnes more than last year production. He explained that farm uses smart agriculture methods to

make the best use of its space and capabilities. He said that all the production would mainly be sold locally as export is not yet open for such products.

Mohamed Ajlan al-Kaabi said that a few days ago the first crop of cucumber was harvested and over the next few weeks more crops would be collected such as capsicum, zucchini and tomatoes. He said that his farm have added around 20 new greenhouses to its assets over this year, which have considerably participated towards enhancing the production. He further pointed out that his farm has invested in planting strawberries inside eight greenhouses in addition to its distinguished products of bee honey.

Ahmed al-Kuwari said that his farm has already started to sell its products at the local market since the start of October, especially products such as zucchini and cucumber. He noted that more products will be ready soon for harvest and would hit the market. The production of his farm is expected to amount to 1,000 tonnes of different vegetables this year while the production of last year amounted only to around 800 tonnes. This is mainly due to added piece of land that was exploited to expand the agriculture processes.

Global human rights alliance chief declares support for institutions in conflict zones

HE Maryam bint Abdullah al-Attiyah, the chairperson of the Global Alliance of National Human Rights Institutions and chairperson of Qatar's National Human Rights Committee, affirmed the Alliance's support for national institutions in Iraq, Palestine, Lebanon, Yemen, Libya and Sudan, noting the Alliance's keenness to find sources of support for the stability of institutions and the continuation of their activities with the greatest possible degree of independence.

This came during Her Excellency's participation in the conference of the Arab Network of National Human Rights Institutions, accompanying its 23rd General Assembly in the Jordanian capital, Amman.

The Global Alliance extended support to its member institutions in conflict, dispute and war zones, she added, praising the efforts of the Arab Network of National Human Rights Institutions, while noting that the Arab Network has become a place for important co-operation and a place for joint and influential Arab meetings.

Al-Attiyah further said that the evaluation of the network's role is conducted by its member national institutions in the Arab region, especially since that received real support from the network in difficult circumstances through which their countries have undergone and are still undergoing, pointing out that the Arab network has carried out many activities that contributed to strengthening and protecting human rights in the Arab region.

Minister of Political and Parliamentary Affairs of Jordan Abdul-Moneim Odat said that his country gives a deep and effective dimension to the issue of human rights during its democratic process.

He added that international legitimacy and human rights organisations today face a real test to their value, usefulness, impact



HE Maryam bint Abdullah al-Attiyah.

and influence in changing the course of events by putting an end to the Israeli crimes in the Gaza Strip and Lebanon which flagrantly violate all laws and agreements.

Secretary-General of the Arab Network Sultan bin Hassan al-Jamali stressed the continuation of the Network's efforts to support the Palestinian cause and its endeavours to stop the aggression on the Gaza Strip through support and advocacy for the legal efforts in which the Network participated, to hold Israeli war criminals accountable to ensure that they do not escape punishment.

Al-Jamali referred to the efforts of the Network's General Secretariat staff in implementing the network's programmes and their good response and interaction with member institutions and partner organisations, noting that these efforts enabled the implementation of all items of the Arab Network's operational plan for the year 2023, and the relevant updates to meet the needs and challenges that emerged as a result of the war launched by the Israeli occupation on the Gaza Strip and the West Bank and on Lebanon that violated all international conventions and norms, committing the most heinous crimes, and disre-

garding the international community.

Head of the National Council for Human Rights in Egypt ambassador Moushira Khattab stressed that the Arab Network seeks to expose the crimes of the Israeli occupation against humanity in the Gaza Strip and its efforts to displace people from their land, appreciating the efforts in this regard at a time when the ugliest crimes and flagrant violations of human rights and double standards are increasing amidst a terrible silence.

She added that peace will only be achieved by establishing an independent Palestinian state, and that the war on Gaza has proven the inability of the international system to achieve justice and respect human rights.

Representative of the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Mohammed al-Nsour appreciated the efforts of the Network in protecting human rights in the Arab region, enhancing awareness of these rights and providing a cross-border platform for the exchange of knowledge, expertise and best practices.

He said that national institutions play a crucial role in effectively empowering international human rights standards at the level of the Arab world, and represent the cornerstone in promoting and protecting these rights at the international level.

Governance and Peacebuilding Team Leader, UNDP Regional Hub for Arab States, Giordano Segneri stressed the importance of the international community's role in supporting national human rights institutions in Arab countries and the pivotal role played by these institutions in protecting the rights of individuals, promoting the rule of law, and continuing to implement training programmes, technical support and advice to support members at the national and regional levels. (QNA)



ICC showcases nation's rich diversity at Bharat Utsav event

Indian Cultural Centre (ICC) presented an event named Bharat Utsav, showcasing India's cultural gala at Qatar National Convention Centre recently.

The event was witnessed by many Qatari dignitaries, ambassadors and members of the diplomatic corps of 18 countries, Indian embassy officials as well as Indian community leaders, and a large number of community members.

Chief guest of the evening was Vipul, Indian ambassador. He lauded the hard work, dedication of Indian community to showcase the event, and for



celebrating the rich cultural diversity and tourism of different states in India. Vipul also released a souvenir to commemorate the occasion.

The event was ably organised with the active participation and involvement of various socio-cultural organisations of the Indian community.

Ooredoo launches SDN Connect: The future of high-speed connectivity in Qatar

Ooredoo has announced the launch of SDN Connect, an innovative high-speed private connectivity ultra-low latency solution designed to meet the evolving needs of organisations in Qatar.

SDN Connect is poised to revolutionise business connectivity with unparalleled speeds of up to 100Gbps and harnesses the power of Ooredoo's expansive network to offer exceptional and reliable connectivity across Qatar. This state-of-the-art solution caters to all business needs through multiple speed tiers, including 1Gbps, 10Gbps, 40Gbps, and 100Gbps, ensuring that SDN Connect is both robust and flexible.

Designed to help the business community navigate today's digital landscape, SDN Connect boasts several key features, including comprehensive Service Level Agreements (SLAs) with up to 99.9% availability, software-defined control, and advanced capabilities, such as Data Centre



Enterprise Services Centre support via a managed network interface device (NID).

Thani Ali al-Malki, chief business officer at Ooredoo Qatar, said: "The introduction of SDN Connect represents a significant milestone in our mission to drive digital transformation in Qatar. By offering a fast, expansive, and secure connectivity solution, we are not only providing businesses with the essential infrastructure they need in today's world but also a future-proof foundation that can evolve and upgrade their efficiency, innovation, and productivity for years to come."

SDN Connect is an integral part of Ooredoo's suite of cutting-edge solutions focused on modernising businesses in Qatar. This offering spans key areas, including enterprise connectivity, operational control, and retail setups, underscoring Ooredoo's unwavering commitment to driving digital transformation, fostering innovation, and promoting sustainable growth in the country.

to Data Centre connectivity, Storage as a Service (SaaS), and Video Broadcast Transport. These features are further supported by resilient network paths and sophisticated traffic management, ensuring that SDN Connect is both future-proof and easily scalable.

SDN Connect also incorporates robust security measures, including secured uncontented bandwidth between A and Z locations, complemented by 24/7 support from the Ooredoo En-

Qatar Amateur Radio Society takes part in international contest

The Qatar Amateur Radio Society (QARS) has joined the prestigious International Amateur Radio Contest (CQ World Wide DX Contest 2024), which was launched yesterday and will span two days, drawing radio enthusiasts from across the globe.

In preparation, QARS has established an international station at its headquarters, equipped to operate on all frequencies designated for the contest. Towers, antennas, computers, and other critical equipment have been meticulously set up to ensure optimal performance. In addition, several QARS members will participate remotely via their personal stations, with the Society represented globally by its official call sign, A73A. Held annually, the CQ World Wide DX Contest is considered one of the foremost global amateur radio events, attracting top talent and marking an essential date on the international radio hobbyist calendar.

In this context, QARS chairman HE Abdullah bin Hamad al-Attiyah stressed that the society's participation in this competition this year is exemplary, as all the requirements required by the com-



petition have been provided, and a high-level model station has been prepared that features a number of modern devices and high-quality antennas to achieve an advanced position worldwide, expressing his hope that the Society will achieve first place worldwide through its participation this year.

QARS Vice-President Dr Ahmed Hamad al-Mohannadi, underscored the significance of participating in global competitions, which showcase the advancements and expertise within amateur radio societies worldwide. He noted that QARS aspires to attain a prominent ranking this year, reflecting the skills and dedication of Qatari amateurs in a field where many have competed internationally for years. Secretary of QARS, Sabaan Mismar al-Jassim, highlighted the society's

esteemed reputation internationally, which has been bolstered by the support of relevant Qatari ministries and institutions. He proudly recalled last year's accomplishments, where QARS secured second place globally and first in Asia and the Arab world, a standard they strive to exceed each year.

Speaking to QNA, al-Jassim emphasised that Qatar's standing in amateur radio grows stronger with each international participation.

He also praised Qatar Satellite Company "Es'hailSat" for its contributions, noting that QARS, through "Es'hail 2", provides a dedicated band that covers about 75% of the world. This enables amateur radio operators worldwide to utilise Qatar's satellite services, a valuable offering by Qatar to the global amateur radio community. (QNA)

GU-Q welcomes over 200 high school students for Open House



Dean Safwan Masri.



A panel discussion during the Open House.

The Georgetown University in Qatar (GU-Q)'s 2024 Admissions Open House got underway with over 200 prospective students and their families in attendance.

The event, titled Discover Georgetown: Majors and Academic Pathways, provided an immersive opportunity for high school students and transfer applicants to experience what it means to be a Georgetown University student in Qatar.

Addressing the audience, Dean Safwan Masri emphasised GU-Q's distinctive environment. "You are not just coming here because you are enrolling at Georgetown University—earning that fantastic seal of approval and taking expected courses—but because there's something very

holistic, exciting, and innovative about your student experience," he shared.

He highlighted GU-Q's small class sizes, which means students get personal attention from their professors, and its location in Education City, where they can take classes at other top universities. He also mentioned the strong connection to Georgetown's other campus locations, giving students the chance to study in Washington, DC, or even Florence, Italy.

Joseph Hernandez, assistant dean, Admissions and Strategic Enrolment Management, added: "In nearly every career—whether you aim to be a diplomat, business leader, policymaker, doctor, or engineer—your ability to navigate complex global challenges

will set you apart. Being part of the global community at GU-Q means learning alongside peers from around the world, sharpening your ability to collaborate, communicate, and lead."

One of the standout moments of the evening was a panel discussion in which Dr Ayman Shabana, curricular field chair for the Culture and Politics major, discussed how GU-Q's interdisciplinary programmes equip students to tackle real-world issues with his fellow field chairs: Dr Phoebe Musandu for International History, Dr Gerd Nonneman for International Politics, and Dr Alexis Antoniadis for International Economics. The Early Action and Regular Decision deadlines are November 15 and January 15, 2025, respectively.

ANNOUNCEMENT

I, ZAMAL MD HALEM MODEL
holder of

BANGLADESH Passport No. EM0763849
QID No. 28305005330

hereby change my name

from

ZAMAL MD HALEM MODEL

to

JAMAL MOROL

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

ANNOUNCEMENT

I, TABREZ SAYED SHABBIR AHMED
holder of

INDIA Passport No. N0754414
QID No. 28235600445

hereby change my name

from

TABREZ SAYED SHABBIR AHMED

to

TABREZ SHABBIR KADIRI

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

'Mthayel' Nabati Poetry contest final stage qualifiers revealed

The ninth round of 'Mthayel' Nabati Poetry Competition, organised by the Qatar Poetry Centre of the Ministry of Culture under the theme of "Ethics Have Evidence" has concluded at Darb Al Saai Theatre, Umm Salal. The event is set to continue until December 2024. In a statement yesterday, the ministry said that poet Saeed Fahd al-Sabouq qualified from the ninth and final stage, thus completing the list of finalists. The list comprises a phalanx of poets, namely Omar al-Wad'ani, Hamad Jaber al-Jarhab, Mohammed Majid al-Juhani, Sultan Bandar al-Ajmi, Saeed bin Ali al-Ofair al-Marri, Faisal Namas al-Riyahi, Abdullah Nasser al-Subaie, and Saleem Ali al-Hawl. The qualifiers will compete for the final to receive a grand prize of QR1mn for the poet who is crowned with the first place, with winner of the

second place receiving QR200,000. Additionally, winners of the third to the fifth place, each will receive QR100,000. Members of the jury committee, Hamad bin Saleh al-Marri and Hamad bin Abdullah al-Naemi from Qatar, Widan al-Marikhi from Saudi Arabia, Mishal al-Zubi from Kuwait, and Hamoud bin Wahqa from Oman, expressed their gratitude for the prominent level of competition in this round. They noted that the poems were so profound that they elevated the standard of poetry in society, along with the promising talents these poems will generate. Winner of the ninth stage of the competition, the poet Saad al-Sabouq said he is extremely happy after being qualified for the final. He affirmed that this greatest victory stemmed from his participation with a phalanx of the best poets in the region before a high-level jury committee, declaring his readiness for the final. (QNA)

Desperate wait for food in Gaza



Palestinian children wait for a meal as they sit around a fire in the Bureij camp for Palestinian refugees in the central Gaza Strip, yesterday, amid the ongoing war between Israel and Hamas.

Turkiye calls for end of Israeli 'terror' after strikes on Iran

AFP
Istanbul

Turkiye yesterday condemned Israel's strikes on Iran and called for an end to what it said was Israel's "terror" in the region.

"Putting an end to the terror created by Israel in the region has become an historic task for the establishment of international peace and security," the Turkish foreign ministry said in a statement.

"We condemn in the strongest terms the Israeli attack on Iran. By committing genocide in Gaza, preparing to annex the West Bank and killing civilians every day in Lebanon, Israel has brought our region to the brink

"We condemn in the strongest terms the Israeli attack on Iran"

of a greater war," the ministry added.

Israel said its strikes on Iranian military installations was a retaliation to Iranian missile attacks on Israel earlier this month.

Turkiye's statement said it called on the international community to take steps to restrain the Israeli government and ensure that international law is respected.

It asked that "actors in and outside the region adopt a rational and prudent attitude".

Tehran presses on despite tensions

AFP
Tehran

Tehran carried on largely as normal yesterday after a night of explosions from Israeli strikes reverberating across the city, accompanied by criss-crossing trails from air defences.

By mid-morning the bustling capital had resumed its usual rhythm as buses wove their way through the streets, taking troubled Iranians to work.

Iranian officials and media have played down the attack, but on the streets of Tehran many were concerned that it had marked a new escalation and a step towards all-out war.

Hooman, a 42-year-old factory employee, was on a night shift when he heard the blasts.

"It was an echoing sound...terrible and horrifying," he told AFP. "Now that there is war in the Middle East, we are afraid that we will be dragged into it."

Yesterday's Israeli attack came in response to Iran's missile strike on October 1, itself a retaliation for the killing of fighter group leaders and a Revolutionary Guards commander.

The latest tit-for-tat moves take place against a backdrop of the ongoing war between Israel and the Palestinian group Hamas, and which has expanded to include Lebanon's Hezbollah in recent weeks.

Yesterday, the Israeli military said it had conducted "precise strikes on military targets in Iran", in response to what it said were "months of continuous attacks from Iran".

It warned Tehran against responding.

Iran confirmed Israel targeted military sites in Tehran province as well as other areas, saying the



Iranians walk in Tehran Bazaar after several explosions were heard in the capital, yesterday.

blasts heard were the "activation of the air defence system" intercepting the Israeli attack.

At least two Iranian soldiers died in the strikes.

Some in Tehran voiced fears over an escalation of the conflict.

"If they attack, it will be us who will be crushed," said Moharam, a 51-year-old day labourer.

Others, however, said they were entirely unaware an attack had even happened.

Iranian media has downplayed the attack, which also targeted areas in the border provinces of Khuzestan and Ilam, and reported it caused "limited damage" thanks to Iran's air defence forces.

State media carried footage showing traffic flowing normally

in several cities as people went about their daily business.

Other TV footage showed Iranians singing, dancing and mocking Israel from a Tehran rooftop during the strikes.

Iranian officials emphasised that all school activities and sport events were to be held as scheduled.

Flights over Iran were briefly suspended for a few hours following the attack, but later resumed as scheduled.

Sepideh, a 30-year-old insurance manager, said she woke up yesterday and hurried to work like usual despite her worries.

"War is frightening...but I don't think a terrible war will happen in Iran," she said.

GCC denounces Israeli action against Iran

QNA
Riyadh

GCC Secretary-General Jassem Mohamed Al-Budaiwi has expressed his condemnation and denunciation of the Israeli military targeting of Iran.

He described this action as a violation of its sovereignty and a breach of international laws and norms.

Albudaiwi affirmed the Gulf Co-operation Council's rejection of these military operations and called on all parties to exercise maximum restraint to avoid the consequences of continued military conflicts in the region.

He also called on the international community to assume its responsibilities in de-escalating the situation.

SAUDI CONDEMNS

Saudi Arabia has expressed its condemnation and denunciation of the military targeting of Iran, considering it a violation of Iran's sovereignty and a breach of international laws and norms.

According to the Saudi Press

Agency (SPA), the kingdom reiterated its firm stance against the ongoing escalation and the expanding conflict, which threatens the security and stability of the region and its people.

KUWAIT CRITICISES

The Kuwaiti Ministry of Foreign Affairs yesterday strongly denounced and rejected the Israeli occupation's aggression on Iran. In a statement, the Kuwaiti Foreign Ministry said the aggression reflects the policy of chaos adopted by Israeli occupying forces by breaching countries' sovereignty, jeopardising regional security and breaking international law principles and norms, as well as international charters.

The ministry added that Kuwait underlines the necessity of taking earnest steps to maintain regional security and stability as per international laws and charters.

OMAN SLAMS

The Sultanate of Oman has expressed its strong condemnation and deep concern regarding an air strike conducted by Israel on Iranian territory early yesterday morning, QNA reported.

In an official statement re-

leased by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Oman denounced Israel's ongoing practices that pose serious threats to regional stability and risk escalating unrest. Oman reiterated its call for the international community to take decisive and effective measures to halt such acts of aggression, emphasising the urgent need to address repeated violations against neighbouring nations in the region.

Oman also renewed its appeal for a comprehensive approach to resolving regional crises by addressing their root causes, particularly through ending Israel's illegal occupation of Palestinian and other Arab territories. The Sultanate underscored the importance of stopping hostilities in Gaza and adhering to UN and Security Council resolutions. Oman called for respecting the Palestinian people's right to self-determination, advocating for the establishment of an independent Palestinian state along the 1967 borders in line with the two-state solution and the Arab Peace Initiative, as the pathway to achieving a just and lasting peace for all parties.

Ghana rejects report on militants finding refuge in its north

Ghana's government yesterday rejected Reuters reporting on militants in Burkina Faso that found they are discreetly using neighbouring Ghana's north as a logistical and medical base to sustain their insurgency, Reuters reported from Accra. In a statement yesterday, Ghana's security ministry said there were no "non-aggression policy" or tacit agreements with militant groups. "The ministry strongly rejects the portrayal of Ghana as a 'supply line' for militants. Ghana's counter-terrorism efforts are rightly commended by her partners in the relentless regional and global fight against terrorism," the statement said. It added that national security forces were actively

engaged in counter-terrorism efforts, particularly along Ghana's northern border. "The Government of Ghana, through its State Security and Intelligence agencies, conducts continuous operations to prevent any terrorist infiltration or cross-border movement of militants and has been doing so over the years with notable successes," the statement said. Ghana shares a 600-km border with Burkina Faso, a country at the heart of an insurgency linked to Al Qaeda and Islamic State that has killed thousands and displaced millions across West Africa's Sahel region south of the Sahara. Insurgents have gained ground over the past 12 years despite costly foreign-backed military efforts to push them back.



Ivorian diplomatic personnel repatriated from Lebanon due to the conflict between Israel and Lebanon carry their belongings during their arrival from Beirut at Felix Houphouet Boigny International Airport in Abidjan, yesterday.

Ivory Coast brings diplomats, nationals out of Lebanon

AFP
Abidjan

The Ivory Coast government yesterday brought its ambassador, diplomatic staff and scores of nationals out of Lebanon because of the widening conflict in the region, the foreign ministry said.

The ministry said that the evacuation involved about 100 Ivory

Coast nationals living in the conflict-stricken country, of whom around 60 had said they wanted to leave.

Ivory Coast organised the repatriation operation because of "the rising tension between the Israeli army and the Hezbollah fighters," the ministry said.

About 20 people left on Friday and more will leave as places become available on commercial flights, the ministry added.

Lebanon state media say Israel army blows up houses in border villages

AFP
Beirut

Lebanese state media said the Israeli army dynamited houses in Lebanese border villages yesterday, as Israel said it used 400 tonnes of explosives to destroy a Hezbollah tunnel, more than a month into an all-out war.

The official National News Agency said "the army of the Israeli enemy has since dawn blown up and destroyed houses" in the border village of Adaiseh.

The NNA also reported "large explosions" in the border village of Kfar Kila, saying the blasts were heard across the south as columns of smoke rose above the area. Israeli military spokesman Avichay Adraee said 400 tonnes of explosives were used to blow up a "strategic underground facility" in southern Lebanon.

The "tunnel" was more than 1.5 kilometres (around a mile) long, Adraee said.

The Israeli military had ear-



Smoke rises from the site of an Israeli air strike that targeted the southern Lebanese village of Kfar Roummaneh yesterday, amid the ongoing war between Israel and Hezbollah.

lier reported "the explosion of a large quantity of explosives in Lebanon" that was strong enough to trigger earthquake warnings in large parts of Israel.

The Israeli army published a video showing massive detonations at the border.

Lebanese state media has reported several incidents of Israeli blasts targeting houses in border villages in recent days.

Israel's Channel 12 broadcast footage on Friday that appeared

to show one of its presenters detonating a building while embedded with Israeli troops in the south Lebanon village of Aita al-Shaab. Hezbollah says it is fighting Israeli troops at close quarters in Lebanese border villages.

The two sides began exchanging cross-border fire last year, but all-out war erupted on September 23, when Israel ramped up its air campaign against Hezbollah strongholds.

At least 124 killed after Sudan's RSF attack village, activists say

Sudan's paramilitary Rapid Support Forces (RSF) killed at least 124 people in a village in El Gezira State on Friday, activists said, in one of the deadliest incidents of an 18-month war and largest in a spate of attacks in the state, Reuters reported from Cairo/Dubai. Following the surrender of high-ranking RSF officer Abuagla Keikal to the army last Sunday, pro-democracy activists said the RSF has carried out revenge attacks in the farming state where he comes from, killing and detaining civilians and displacing thousands. Gezira has already faced a months-long rampage in which residents told Reuters the RSF looted homes, killed scores of civilians and displaced hundreds of thousands. Al-Sireha village, in the north of the state, experienced the worst of the recent violence when at least 124 were killed and 100 injured in the RSF raid, the Wad Madani Resistance Committee, a pro-democracy group, said yesterday. In a statement on Friday, the RSF accused the army of arming civilians in Gezira and of using forces under Keikal's command, prompting its attacks. The army and the RSF did not respond to requests for comment.



Russians behind fake video of ballots being destroyed: US officials

AFP
Washington

Russian actors were behind a viral video falsely showing mail-in ballots for Donald Trump being destroyed in the swing state of Pennsylvania, US officials said on Friday, amid heightened alert over foreign influence operations targeting the upcoming election.

The video, which garnered millions of views on platforms such as the Elon Musk-owned X, purports to show a man sorting through mail-in ballots from the state's Bucks County and ripping up those cast for Trump.

On Thursday, the Bucks County Board of Elections declared the video as "fake", saying that the envelope and other materials depicted in the footage are "clearly not au-

thentic materials" belonging to or distributed by them.

In a joint statement on Friday, the Office of the Director of National Intelligence (ODNI), the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) and the Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency said the video was part of a Russian disinformation operation.

"Russian actors manufactured and amplified a recent video that falsely depicted an individual ripping up ballots in Pennsylvania," the statement said.

"This Russian activity is part of Moscow's broader effort to raise unfounded questions about the integrity of the US election and stoke divisions among Americans," the joint statement added.

The statement said Russia was expected to create and release more such content in an attempt to "undermine trust" in the integrity of the November 5 elections.

The video surfaced as American authorities brace for a surge in disinformation in the final days of a nail-biting election between Republican nominee Trump and the Democratic candidate, Vice-President Kamala Harris.

The video, also debunked by AFP's fact-checkers, was connected to a Kremlin-aligned disinformation network known as Storm-1516, according to researchers including Darren Linvill, co-director of Clemson University's Media Forensics Hub.

Linvill, who has closely studied the network, said the account on X - previously called Twitter - that distributed the video has regularly amplified other narratives from this network.

Storm-1516 has previously produced fake videos to discredit the campaign of Harris and her running mate Tim Walz, according to disinformation researchers.

Last month, the Microsoft Threat Analysis Centre said that Russian operatives are ramping up disinformation operations to malign Harris's campaign by disseminating conspiracy-laden videos.

Aside from Russia, Iran and China are also fanning "divisive narratives to divide Americans and undermine Americans' confidence in the US democratic system", the ODNI warned in a memo earlier this week.

"Foreign influence efforts will intensify in the lead-up to Election Day, especially through social media posts - some of which are likely to be artificial intelligence (AI)-generated or enhanced," the report said.

"These actors probably perceive that undermining confidence in the elections weakens the legitimacy of our democracy and consequently makes the United States less capable of effectively pursuing policies that are counter to their interests," it added.

Appeals court says counting ballots received after Election Day is illegal

A US appeals court has said that it is illegal for states to count mail-in ballots received after Election Day, siding with Republicans in a case challenging Mississippi's five-day grace period.

The ruling by a conservative three-judge panel of the New Orleans-based 5th US Circuit Court of Appeals did not strike down Mississippi's law but called into question mail-in voting practices used in about 20 states nationally, in a voting-rights fight that many predict will end up at the US Supreme Court.

The judges did not order any immediate changes to Mississippi's procedures and left it up to a lower court to decide what to do next, saying that it is important to preserve the status quo ahead of the November 5 election between Democratic Vice-President Kamala Harris and Republican former president Donald Trump.

The election will also decide control of Congress.

Republicans are generally sceptical of mail-in ballots, with Trump repeatedly claiming without evidence that they are sources of widespread fraud.

Republican National Committee Chairman Michael Whatley praised the decision in a statement.

"This is a major win for election integrity, upholding the law and commonsense ballot safeguards," Whatley said.

Representatives for the Democratic Party did not immediately respond to a request for comment on Friday.

A spokesperson for Republican Mississippi Attorney-General Lynn Fitch said: "We respect the court's decision and look forward to further proceedings in the case."

The decision only directly applies to states under the 5th Circuit's jurisdiction: Mississippi, Texas and Louisiana.

It is a win for the Republican National Committee, the Mississippi Republican Party and two Republican voters who sued in January to challenge the Mississippi law, which was enacted by the state's Republican-controlled legislature in 2020.

The state's Libertarian Party filed a similar lawsuit.

US Circuit Judge Andrew Oldham, a Trump appointee, wrote for the panel that Mississippi's law was preempted by federal law establishing a singular day for the election of Congress and the president.

"Federal law requires voters to take timely steps to vote by Election Day," he wrote. "And federal law does not permit the state of Mississippi to extend the period for voting by one day, five days, or 100 days."

The decision in the case comes as Democrats and Republicans spar over election rules in scores of lawsuits across more than two dozen states, including the handful that will likely decide the next president.

Also on Friday, a federal judge blocked Virginia's removal of people it said had not proved their citizenship from voter rolls, saying that it ran afoul of a federal prohibition on purging large numbers of voters in the final 90 days before an election.

Republican Virginia Governor Glenn Youngkin said the state will appeal. - Reuters

US okays \$2bn arms sales to Taiwan

The US State Department has approved a \$2bn arms sale package for Taiwan including advanced radar, a move that could provoke Beijing.

The sale, which awaits approval by Congress, includes several anti-aircraft systems, including NASAMS and 123 missiles totalling \$1.16bn, according to the agency responsible for the sale.

The agency also announced the sale of radar systems to Taiwan worth \$828mn. The equipment will be derived from US Air Force supplies. China maintains a near-daily presence of fighter jets, drones and warships around the island. - AFP

Harris and Trump battle for votes in swing states to break deadlock

AFP/Reuters
Washington

Kamala Harris and Donald Trump battled for holdout votes over the penultimate weekend of campaigning across US swing states, with Michelle Obama to join the Democrat onstage before the Republican nominee hosts a rally in New York.

With just 10 days left in a bitterly contested presidential race, the rivals converged yesterday on Michigan, one of the three "Blue Wall" states - along with Wisconsin and top prize Pennsylvania - that Democrats see as critical to Election Day victory on November 5.

In Michigan, Harris and Trump are battling for voters that include a large Arab American and Muslim population concerned about Israel's ongoing war in Gaza, and union workers worried about how electric vehicles could reshape the US auto industry, which is headquartered in Detroit, the state's largest city.

Trump has courted auto workers by pledging car-loan tax breaks and crackdowns on Chinese car sales.

Earlier this month he made detrimental remarks about Detroit, a majority black city that Republicans have criticised for its crime rates, even as they dropped significantly in recent years.

He said of Harris: "Our whole country will end up being like Detroit if she's your president."

Polls show a dead heat in the race's final days, and with more than 38mn people nationwide already casting early ballots, Ameri-



Beyonce and Harris embrace as they attend the vice-president's campaign rally in Houston, Texas. - Reuters

cans are deciding whether to elect the country's first-ever woman president, or its oldest commander in chief.

Part of Harris's strategy is to peel moderate Republicans away from an increasingly vituperative Trump, who continues to demean some Americans as the "enemy".

The former president still refuses to accept his defeat at the polls four years ago and is expected to reject the result if he loses again - potentially pitching the US into chaos.

For Republican AD Jefferson, a 62-year-old labourer attending Harris's rally in Houston, the Trump turmoil is too much.

"I just think she's less controversial," he told AFP. "I'm a Republican, but I feel like Trump is just too chaotic for me."

Fresh off a high-energy rally in Texas with pop icon Beyonce to highlight Republican restrictions on abortion, Harris headed to Kalamazoo, Michigan where she

courted voters by deploying one of the Democratic Party's most popular emissaries: former first lady Michelle Obama.

Her husband Barack Obama joined Harris on Thursday for a rally in Georgia.

Harris, 60, campaigns today in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, the largest city in the largest of the swing states likely to determine the outcome of the presidential election under the US electoral college system.

She will go from neighbourhood to neighbourhood across the city persuading residents to cast their ballot, as she targets historically black and Latino districts.

Trump, who swept the three Blue Wall states in his shock victory in 2016 only to see Joe Biden reclaim them for Democrats four years later, is strategising that clawing back one or more of the trio and winning the other so-called Sun Belt swing states would propel him back into the White House.



Trump dances on stage during a campaign rally at Suburban Collection Showplace in Novi, Michigan. - AFP

With just a few thousands votes possibly the difference between victory and defeat in the tightest of swing states, Trump held rallies yesterday in Michigan and Pennsylvania, where a ground game and relentless barnstorming of the battlegrounds could prove decisive.

They follow the release late on Friday of the extended, three-hour interview that Trump taped for the *Joe Rogan Experience*, America's most popular podcast.

He is seeking to woo Rogan's massive, largely male audience, as the Republican candidate hunts for viral moments that tap into his everyman appeal.

Then tonight Trump performs a campaign quirk: rallying his supporters in Madison Square Garden, the iconic arena in the heart of Democrat-heavy New York.

Analysts have pondered why Trump is campaigning in his native New York despite virtually no chance of flipping the state.

The brash billionaire and one-

time reality television star may be keen to orchestrate a spectacle and demonstrate he can fill an arena in a Democratic bastion.

However, critics, including Trump's 2016 rival Hillary Clinton, have noted that Madison Square Garden was also the scene of a 1939 pro-Nazi rally organised by a group supportive of Adolf Hitler.

"She said it's just like the 1930s," Trump said at a Friday rally in Michigan, referring to Clinton's remarks a day earlier on CNN. "No it's not, no. This is called 'Make America Great Again'."

The weekend campaigning follows a row over accusations that the ex-president has been running to be an authoritarian leader, following claims by Trump's longest-serving White House chief of staff, echoed by Harris, that Trump is a "fascist" who cannot be trusted with power again.

Harris is leading Trump nationally by a marginal 46% to 43%, a recent Reuters/Ipsos poll showed.

US issues historic apology for boarding school atrocities

President Joe Biden delivered an impassioned, historic apology on Friday for one of the United States' "most horrific chapters": ripping Native American children from their families and putting them in abusive boarding schools aimed at erasing their culture.

From 1819 until the 1970s, the United States ran hundreds of Indian boarding schools across the country to involuntarily assimilate Native children into European settler culture, including forced conversion to Christianity.

A recent government report revealed harrowing instances of physical, mental, and sexual abuse, along with the estimated deaths of nearly 1,000 children - with the true figure thought to be considerably higher.

"I formally apologise, as president of the United States, for what we did," he said in a speech that alternated between fiery and deeply emotional, addressing the Gila River Indian Community in Laveen Village, Arizona.

He added the roughly 150 years the school system existed were one of the "most horrific chapters in American history" and a "sin on our soul".

Several hundred people attended, many of them in traditional tribal dress.

They cheered as Biden apologised for the generational trauma faced by the Native American community due to the boarding schools across the country.

Biden faced a brief interruption



Biden gestures after speaking at the Gila River Crossing School in the Gila River Indian Community, in Laveen Village, near Phoenix. - AFP

when a pro-Palestinian protester shouted: "How can you apologise for a genocide while committing a genocide in Palestine?"

The president replied: "There is a lot of innocent people being killed and it has to stop."

US support for Israel's wars in Gaza and Lebanon after the events of October 7, 2023 has led to months of demonstrations across the United States.

Rights advocates have demanded an arms embargo against Israel as tens of thousands of civilians have been killed in the region, and Palestinians in the Gaza Strip have grappled with hunger and disease.

Israel and Washington deny genocide allegations brought against Israel at the World Court in relation to Gaza, and Washington has maintained its support for its ally.

Biden was joined in the Laveen Village event by US Interior Secretary Deb Haaland, the first Native American to serve as a cabinet secretary, who struck a defiant tone as she recalled her own ma-

ternal grandparents "were stolen from their communities and forced to live in a Catholic school".

Federal authorities "failed to annihilate our languages, our traditions, our life ways", she continued. "In spite of everything that has happened, we are still here!"

The Biden administration has invested significantly in Native American communities, with executive actions expanding tribal autonomy, directing agencies to prioritise gender-based violence, designating monuments to protect sacred ancestral sites, and more.

The apology follows formal declarations in Canada, where thousands of children died at similar boarding schools, and other countries around the world where historic abuses of Indigenous populations are increasingly being recognised.

In all, there were more than 400 schools, often church-run, across 37 states or then-territories.

Native children were forcibly taken under a policy of what activists call cultural genocide to

"civilise" them, a brutal agenda summed up in the phrase "Kill the Indian, Save the Man".

Emerson Gorman, a Navajo Nation elder, told AFP in a 2020 interview that he was taken from his family at just five years old.

At the boarding school, boys were forced to cut their long braids, forbidden to speak their language, told their religion was "evil", and pressured to convert to Catholicism.

Official apologies for the nation's past wrongdoings are rare.

In 1988, President Ronald Reagan signed legislation to compensate more than 100,000 Japanese Americans incarcerated in internment camps during World War II.

President Bill Clinton in 1997 formally apologised for the infamous Tuskegee Experiment of the mid-20th century where hundreds of black men were left untreated for syphilis to learn how the disease progresses.

In 2016, Barack Obama became the first sitting president to visit Hiroshima, where the United States dropped a nuclear bomb in 1945, although he stopped short of a formal apology.

And in 2008, the US House of Representatives apologised for 246 years of African American slavery and the racist Jim Crow laws that followed.

The Senate passed a similar resolution the next year.

However, the congressional apologies did not include reparations to the descendants of slaves. - AFP/Reuters

White globs on shores of Canada's Newfoundland stump scientists

Lumpy white globs washing up on the shores of Canada's Atlantic island province of Newfoundland for weeks have captivated the imagination of locals and are baffling scientists.

The slimy, spongy globs as big as dinner plates were discovered by beachcombers in September scattered over the beaches of Placentia Bay on the island's southern tip.

People have posted on social media asking if anyone knew anything about them.

Responses flooded in, some speculating that they may be clumps of cheese, alien poo or whale boogers.

"OMG is that Olaf?" a snowman character in the Disney film *Frozen*, posted Selina Stoyles.

Others opined they might be discarded

breakfast biscuit dough or paraffin waxes from a tanker that was cleaned out and discharged at sea. They tried to light them on fire, discovering that they are combustible.

Authorities say they are taking this possible pollution threat to the coastal environment "very seriously".

The Canadian Coast Guard sent a three-person team "to assess the situation" and

collect samples of the globs on the beaches west of the provincial capital St John's, for testing.

Federal environmental emergencies officers also visited the area several times, conducting what the environment ministry said were extensive "aerial, underwater, and manual surveys of the beaches and shorelines in the area". - AFP

Rival London marches pass off peacefully amid heavy police presence

Reuters
London

Right-wing, anti-immigrant protesters and opposing anti-racism demonstrators held large rallies in London yesterday, with both passing off peacefully amid a beefed-up police operation to prevent any clashes between the rival groups.

Several thousand people waving English and British flags joined the "Unite the Kingdom" nationalist rally by parliament, organised by anti-immigrant activist Stephen Yaxley-Lennon, known by the pseudonym Tommy Robinson. A counter-protest

■ **Anti-immigrant protesters and anti-racism groups march**
■ **Large police numbers to head off any clashes**
■ **Britain saw days of rioting in July**

of anti-racism campaigners and trade unionists also took place nearby, with marchers carrying banners saying "Refugees Welcome" and "Smash the Far Right". Police officers were drafted in from around the country to avert



A person with a dog attends an anti-immigration protest, in London.

possible unrest, but the London force said on X only a handful of arrests had been made.

Britain saw days of rioting in towns and cities across the country at the end of July in the wake

of the murder of three young girls at a dance workshop in Southport, after misinformation on social media wrongly identified the suspected killer as a Muslim migrant.

The unrest, which Prime Minister Keir Starmer described as racist and blamed on far-right thugs, targeted hotels housing asylum seekers and mosques.

It ended after police made more than 1,500 arrests and charged about 1,000 people. The right-wing protesters who marched yesterday describe themselves as "patriots", and say Britain is under threat from migrants and Islamification. Their critics, including most lawmakers, say their number includes racists,

far-right supporters and soccer hooligans bent on violence. Yaxley-Lennon, who was accused by some media and politicians of inflaming tensions which led to the July riots, was not present at the march as he is being held in police custody ahead of a contempt of court case to be heard tomorrow.

On Friday, he was also charged under terrorism laws with failing to provide his mobile phone PIN code when he left Britain in July. Yesterday's protests came as official figures showed the number of asylum seekers crossing the Channel this year from Europe in small boats – an issue that has angered many in Britain – had hit 29,578, more than for the whole of 2023.

UK govt urged to set 'ambitious' climate change action target

AFP
London

UK government advisers yesterday urged ministers to set an "ambitious" target of cutting greenhouse gas emissions by at least 81% by 2035 to combat climate change. The last Conservative government in 2020 set a goal of 68 percent emission cuts on 1990 levels by 2030.

But the nation's top climate change advisory body said earlier this year that "only six years away, the country is not on track to hit this target" and urged the new Labour government to step up its efforts.

In a letter Saturday to Energy Secretary Ed Miliband, the Committee on Climate Change (CCC) said the 81-percent target was "deliverable" and "informed by the latest science, technological developments, and the UK's national circumstances".

But it added: "Setting a target is not enough. The UK must back up its international commitments through actions here at home." The committee said in July only around one-third of the emissions reductions the UK needed to make were currently covered by credible plans – mostly in the electricity supply and surface transport sectors.

Labour, which won power in July, is due to unveil its climate plans under the global Paris Agreement, which requires countries to take action to mitigate the

worst impacts of global warming. The legally binding international treaty on climate change, signed in 2016, aims to keep global average temperature rises "well below" 2C above pre-industrial levels.

It also pushes to limit warming to 1.5C – seen as the threshold beyond which the worst impacts of climate change will be felt. Countries are due to submit new five-year proposals to cover the period 2025 to 2035 ahead of COP30 in Brazil next December. To meet the 1.5C target, the world's carbon emissions must fall to net zero by 2050.

Four years ago, the UK Conservative government set a goal of 68 percent emission cuts by 2030 compared with 1990 levels, which was in line with the CCC's advice at the time. Environmental groups welcomed the committee's latest recommendation but urged the government to go even further.

"The Climate Change Committee has given ministers a useful benchmark for climate action but they may want to aim higher to show true global leadership and take full responsibility for the UK's historic role as a major carbon polluter," said Doug Parr, policy director at Greenpeace UK.

"Actions speak louder than words, and true leadership means the government must also set out tangible plans to deliver on its 2035 target," he added. Isabella O'Dowd, WWF's head of climate policy, also called on the government to "show global leadership

by going further and adopt climate targets for international aviation and shipping". "Acting now will revitalise the UK economy, increase our energy security and support a just transition for all sectors," she said.

The CCC previously urged action "across all sectors of the economy", laying out 10 recommendations including a mass roll-out of heat pumps and a far wider use of electric vehicles. Everywhere, low-carbon technologies "must become the norm", while in UK energy production should move away from oil and gas, it said in its annual report in July.

Committee member Corinne Le Quere, a climatologist at the University of East Anglia, said the UK had achieved a nearly 50 percent fall in emissions, but action was needed across the board. "The UK has focused a lot on the decarbonisation of its electricity network, exiting coal and the deployment of renewable energies, particularly wind power. But we haven't had enough attention paid to other sectors of the economy," she told AFP.

"The government really needs to diversify its measures so that the entire economy is decarbonised."

The UK's last coal-fired power station officially closed at the end of September – a first among G7 nations. Labour has said it wants to decarbonise the energy mix further, investing heavily in offshore and onshore wind, tidal power and nuclear.

Eye on London Eye



People look at the London Eye in London, Britain.

Scammers swipe 22 tonnes of cheddar in UK cheese 'heist'

AFP
London

British celebrity chef Jamie Oliver yesterday urged cheese lovers to help police catch scammers who conned a London dairy out of 22 tonnes of English and Welsh Cheddar. Oliver described the theft as a "brazen heist of shocking proportions".

He told followers on Instagram to be alert if they heard anything about "lorry loads of very posh cheese" being offered "for cheap", adding that the cheddar would

have originally been worth around £300,000 (\$388,000). The appeal comes after the Neal's Yard Dairy said it delivered more than 950 wheels of cheddar to the alleged fraudster posing as a wholesale distributor for a major French retailer before realising it had been duped.

The company, a leading UK distributor and retailer of British artisan cheese, said it had still paid Hafod, Westcombe and Pitchfork, the small-scale producers of the stolen cheese, so they would not have to bear the cost. It added that it was working with London's

Metropolitan Police to identify the perpetrators. The Met said in a statement Friday it was investigating a "report of the theft of a large quantity of cheese" from the London outlet. "Enquiries are ongoing into the circumstances," it said, adding that no arrests had been made so far.

The dairy is calling on to cheesemongers around the world to contact them if they suspect they have been sold the stolen cheese, particularly clothbound cheddars in a 10kg or 24kg (22 pound or 52 pound) format with the tags detached.

Final campaigning in tight Japan poll

AFP
Tokyo

Candidates in Japan's super-tight election made last-ditch appeals to voters yesterday, with opinion polls suggesting the ruling coalition might fall short of a majority. Such a bombshell outcome in today's vote would be the worst result for the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) since 2009, and potentially a knockout blow to Prime Minister Shigeru Ishiba.

Ishiba – a fan of trains, 1970s pop idols and making model ships and planes – only last month took the helm of the LDP, which has governed Japan for almost all of the past seven decades. After a tough internal contest, the 67-year-old former defence minister became premier on October 1. Days later, he called the snap parliamentary elections, promising a "new Japan".

Ishiba pledged to revitalise depressed rural regions and to address the "quiet emergency" of Japan's falling population through family-friendly policies such as flexible working hours. But he has since rowed back his position on issues including allowing married couples to take separate surnames.

He also named only two women ministers in his cabinet. Rising prices have rankled voters, and also dogging Ishiba is the fallout from a party slush fund scandal that helped sink his predecessor, Fumio Kishida.

A poll on Friday by the Yomiuri Shimbun daily suggested that the LDP and its coalition partner Ko-meito might struggle to get the 233 lower house seats needed for a majority.

Ishiba has set this threshold as his objective, and missing it would undermine his position in the LDP and mean finding other coalition partners or leading a minority



Japan's Prime Minister Shigeru Ishiba, leader of the Liberal Democratic Party, gestures at a campaign event in Tokyo.

government. Local media speculated that Ishiba could potentially even resign immediately to take responsibility, becoming Japan's shortest-serving prime minister in the post-war period.

The current record is held by Naruhiko Higashikuni who served for 54 days – four days more than British leader Liz Truss in 2022 – just after Japan's 1945 defeat in World War II. "The situation is extremely severe," Ishiba reportedly said on the stump Friday. But at a rally yesterday, he made a fresh promise of renewal to hundreds of supporters. "We want to start afresh as a fair, just and sincere party, and seek your mandate," he said.

In many districts, LDP candidates are in neck-and-neck battles with those from the Constitutional Democratic Party (CDP) – the second-biggest in parliament – led by popular former prime minister Yoshihiko Noda. "The LDP's politics is all about quickly implementing policies for those who give them loads of cash," Noda said at a rally yesterday.

"But those in vulnerable positions, who can't offer cash, have been ignored," he added, accusing the LDP-led government of offer-

ing insufficient support for survivors of an earthquake in central Japan.

Noda's stance "is sort of similar to the LDP's. He is basically a conservative," Masato Kamikubo, a political scientist at Ritsumeikan University, told AFP. "The CDP or Noda can be an alternative to the LDP. Many voters think so," Kamikubo said.

Ishiba promised to not actively support LDP politicians caught up in the funding scandal running in the election, although they are still standing. According to media reports, the party has also provided 20mn yen (\$132,000) each to district offices headed by these figures.

"It is truly frustrating that such reports come out at a time like this," Ishiba said in a campaign speech on Thursday. "Those candidates will not use the money." "We cannot be defeated by those with biased views," he added. Hitomi Hisano, an undecided voter from the central Aichi region, told AFP in Tokyo that the LDP's funding scandal was a big factor for him. "The LDP has sat in power for too long. I see hubris in there," the 69-year-old said. "So part of me wants to punish them."

Festival goodies

Schoolchildren react after receiving new bags donated by a non-governmental organisation (NGO) as gifts ahead of the Diwali festival at a Government Primary School in Hyderabad, India.



Philippine rescuers battle floodwaters to reach stranded

Rescuers in the Philippines raced yesterday to reach people still stranded in areas made inaccessible by flooding from Tropical Storm Trami, which has killed at least 97 people. Trami battered the main island of Luzon and forced nearly half a million people to flee their homes as heavy rain caused widespread floods and landslides.

In the hardest-hit Bicol region, residents trapped on the roofs and upper floors of their homes were still awaiting desperately needed assistance, officials said. "The floods have yet to subside. Calls asking for help are still pouring

here," Bicol regional police director Andre Dizon told AFP. "We need to rescue them as soon as possible because starvation can be a problem. We're hearing reports that children are already getting sick."

In the region's Camarines Sur province, food and drinking water were in increasingly short supply as some areas remained completely submerged and difficult to access, he added. President Ferdinand Marcos visited the province on Saturday to inspect the damage. "Our main problem here is that many areas are still flooded," he told government officials dur-

ing a briefing. "We have flood control systems but the amount of water is unmanageable. This is climate change. This is all new, so we have to come up with new solutions too," Marcos added.

Trami's death toll rose Saturday as rescuers retrieved more bodies from floodwaters and landslide sites, mostly from the Bicol region and Batangas province, south of Manila. Police have recorded 36 deaths in Bicol, most due to drowning. The number of confirmed dead in Batangas has risen to 54, provincial police chief Jacinto Malinao told AFP, with at least 21 people missing. —AFP



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Making biodiversity credits work

Humans do not just depend on nature; we are part of it. Indigenous peoples and local communities understand this and act as responsible stewards of their natural environment. If we are to succeed at mitigating and adapting to climate change, as well as halting and reversing biodiversity loss, passing a vibrant and healthy planet on to future generations, we must learn from – and support – these guardians of nature.

Conservation relies on a complex set of factors, including education and awareness, enforcement of rights and laws, effective policymaking, and finance. But it is finance – specifically, how to close the \$700bn annual biodiversity-financing gap by 2030 – that is a central focus of the UN Convention on Biological Diversity, taking place this week in Cali, Colombia.

Among the innovative financing mechanisms that have been attracting attention as a potential solution are biodiversity credits.

If used effectively, biodiversity credits can channel financing toward nature's stewards, improving their material conditions and reinforcing the legitimacy of their critical role in environmental stewardship. Moreover, by putting a "price on nature," such credits may encourage businesses to take more care not to undermine biodiversity.

But there is no guarantee that biodiversity credits will meet their potential. After all, while other public-interest markets can and should work, they often do not. Consider voluntary carbon markets, which look great on paper but have sometimes failed to live up to their promise – highlighting the dangers as well as the potential of market-based solutions. If markets for biodiversity credits are to be more successful, they must be better designed, implemented

If used effectively, biodiversity credits can channel financing toward nature's stewards

robustly, and governed effectively. Indigenous peoples, who know nature's true value, must be central to this process – not merely consulted on it.

This recognition drove the creation of the International Advisory Panel on Biodiversity Credits last year. Comprising roughly two dozen environmental, policy, and business and finance experts, as well as conservation practitioners, local community activists, and indigenous leaders (including the authors), the panel was tasked with designing a framework for biodiversity-credit markets that could credibly deliver benefits for nature, climate, and people.

To this end, over a year was spent consulting with hundreds of interested parties, studying third-party research, carrying out research, and analysing ongoing biodiversity-credit pilot programmes.

The conclusions are clear. Yes, biodiversity credits could deliver on their promise of channelling funds toward nature conservation and restoration, encouraging business to engage in nature-positive activities, and supporting the needs and interests of nature's most effective stewards. But they will not – and could cause harm – without appropriate market design and governance. To that end, here are five recommendations.

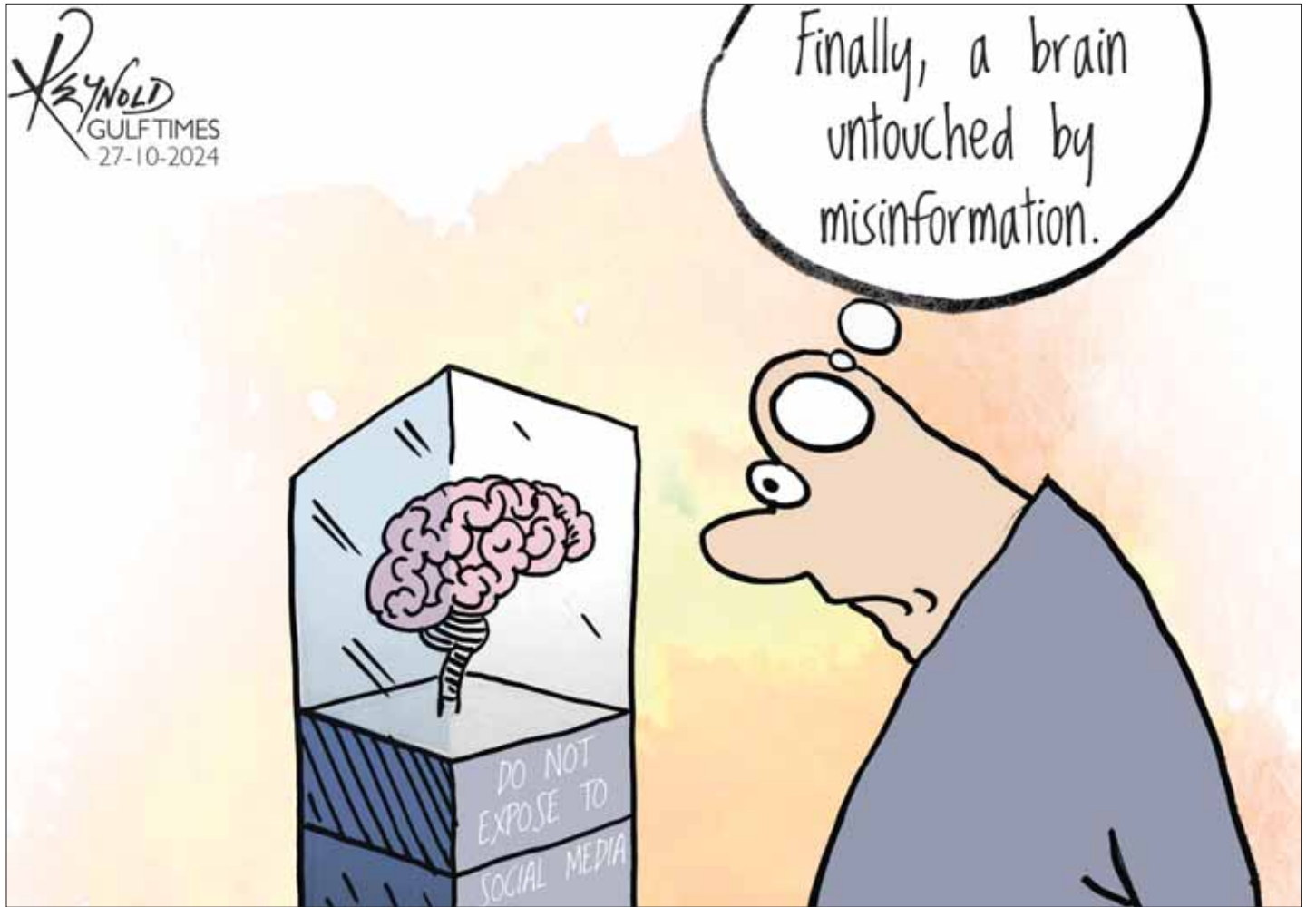
First, unlike carbon markets, there should be no globally traded biodiversity offsets. The scheme would limit claims to those entities that have actually invested in nature.

Second, biodiversity markets should not be mainly voluntary, as carbon markets are. Instead, government policy – at the national, regional, local, and municipal levels – should support the rapid scale-up of demand and its effective use.

Third, biodiversity credits should be bought and sold only where there is clear evidence that local people's rights – including those laid out in the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples – have been respected.

Fourth, price floors need to be established, to ensure that, even at their minimum level, biodiversity credits provide nature's stewards sufficient financing.

Lastly, equitable access to markets must be assured; the adoption of more radical approaches to transparency concerning where and how money is invested and returned, together with investment in building up the capacity of nature's stewards to negotiate the value of nature's capital can help here. – Project Syndicate



European security cannot be found in the past

By Friedrich Merz
Berlin

A short trip to Germany instead of the planned state visit. A four-way meeting in the Chancellery instead of the conference in Ramstein to co-ordinate future aid for Ukraine with some 50 participating states, including numerous heads of state and government. With Hurricane Milton in Florida preventing US President Joe Biden from adhering to his planned itinerary, the entire European political scene was thrown off course.

There is no other way to describe the events of the last 14 days. Worse yet, what happened – or, more accurately, what didn't happen – in Germany exemplifies the desolate state of European foreign and security policy at a critical moment.

Why did the Ramstein conference have to be cancelled? Was it only because the American president couldn't be there? Were the Europeans not strong enough to host a conference without the participation of the American president, or, if necessary, with the US Secretary of State or Secretary of Defence present?

The just-completed German-United Kingdom defence pact suggests that where there is a will, action can be taken. But Europe needs more than such

narrowly tailored bilateral agreements, no matter how positive they can be.

The reason is abundantly clear: Ukraine is desperately waiting for more help. The third winter of the war Russian President Vladimir Putin launched in February 2022 is just around the corner, and the country's situation is getting worse by the week. That Ukraine will get "all the help it needs, and it will get it for as long as it needs it," has been the routine refrain heard in most European capitals, especially from the German government, for two and a half years. But this claim is simply wrong, no matter how many times it is repeated.

The history of aid to Ukraine is a history of constant dithering and hesitation, of stalling and tactics. When nothing else helps, the American president is called upon to break the political logjam.

But Biden spent much of this year, before his withdrawal from the presidential race, on the campaign trail. Now he is on a farewell tour. A new president will be elected on November 5, and if his name is Donald Trump, there will be no slipstream for the Europeans to hide in. The cancelled Ramstein conference would have been the perfect opportunity for Europe to at long last take the lead.

German Chancellor Olaf Scholz should have shown what the Zeitenwende ("turning

point") which Scholz declared following Russia's invasion means for Europe as a whole.

Together with France and Great Britain, he should have made clear statements to Putin: If you did not end your war of terror against Ukraine's civilian population within 24 hours, they could have said, the range limits on the weapons being supplied to Ukraine will be lifted.

If that were not enough, it could have been added that Germany would supply Taurus cruise missiles to Ukraine to help destroy the Russian army's supply routes into the country. France and Great Britain are already supplying cruise missiles with the range needed to hit the Russian army's supply lines and are apparently prepared to go down this path.

Fear and the desperate hope of being able to portray himself as a "peace chancellor" shortly before Germany's federal election next year have become Scholz's dominant motives. But "fear is the mother of all cruelty," as Michel de Montaigne, the 16th-century French philosopher, put it. French President Emmanuel Macron has no doubt read Montaigne and understands that warning.

Instead of acting decisively at Ramstein, Scholz had a nice coffee with Biden, shortly before the US president was awarded the special level of the Order of Merit of the Federal Republic

of Germany. But that award ceremony was a moment that united Great Britain, France, Germany, and the US merely in nostalgia, not in defining the decisive action and sense of purpose which Europe needs today.

Indeed, the ceremony recalled nothing so much as how Germany's government behaved in the years before the fall of the Berlin Wall and reunification, before the division of Europe was overcome, before the war in Ukraine. The old Europe of the Cold War sought comfort in the past and confidence in the solitary US leadership that defined the era. Europeans forging their own decisions were rarely even an afterthought back then. For example, did no one even think of inviting Polish Prime Minister Donald Tusk to the meeting in Berlin?

Biden's flight back to Washington following the aborted Ramstein conference and the diminished meeting in Berlin's Chancellery may take on an almost symbolic significance in the future: the last Atlanticist US president for a long time bidding farewell to Europe. And the Europeans, without leadership and without the slightest idea of what lies ahead, waving goodbye to him, dreamily reminiscing about earlier times. – Project Syndicate

• Friedrich Merz is Leader of the Christian Democratic Union.



German Chancellor Olaf Scholz and US President Joe Biden give statements at the Chancellery in Berlin, Germany, on October 18.

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Ruling party set to win Georgian elections

AFP
Tbilisi

Georgia's ruling party is set to beat the pro-Western opposition in a closely watched legislative election, according to partial results yesterday that indicated a new setback to the Caucasus country's bid to join the European Union.

The election in Russia's southern neighbour has been portrayed by political analysts as a fundamental choice between a European future for Georgia or closer ties with Moscow.

With votes from 70% of precincts counted, the central election commission said the Georgian Dream party was leading with 53%, while an opposition union was on 38.28%.

"Georgian Dream has secured a solid majority" in the new parliament, the ruling party's executive secretary, Mamuka Mdinaradze, told journalists.

Brussels has been deeply critical of Georgian Dream's policies and has warned that the election will determine Georgia's chances of joining the bloc.

Rival exit polls published after voting in the country of 4mn had shown the ruling party and the opposition ahead.

Pro-opposition President Salome Zurbishvili had hailed a victory for "European

Georgia" after one exit poll showed the opposition in the lead.

After a poll saying the government had won, Hungary's nationalist Prime Minister Viktor Orbán congratulated Georgian Dream, saying on social media that it had scored an "overwhelming victory".

In Tbilisi, voters expressed diverging views of their country's future direction.

"Of course, I have voted for Europe. Because I want to live in Europe, not in Russia. So, I voted for change," said Alexandre Guldani, an 18-year-old student.

However, Giga Abuladze, who works in a kindergarten run by the Orthodox Patriarchate, said: "We should be friends with Russia – and Europe."

"There is an opposition and so be it but it mustn't be disruptive. We need to help each other," the 58-year-old said, praising Georgian Dream's billionaire founder Bidzina Ivanishvili.

Opposition parties alleged incidents of ballot stuffing and intimidation during voting.

Zurbishvili said there had been "deeply troubling incidents of violence" at some polling stations.

A video circulated on social media showing a fight between dozens of men outside a polling station in suburban Tbilisi.

Another showed scuffles outside a campaign office in Tbilisi of the United Na-

tional Movement (UNM), Georgia's main opposition force, founded by jailed ex-president Mikheil Saakashvili.

There were also videos of an alleged ballot stuffing incident in the southeastern village of Sadakhlo.

Georgian Dream said during the campaign that it wanted a supermajority in order to pass a constitutional ban on all major opposition parties.

After the publication of the exit poll showing a win for the government, Ivanishvili hailed the party's "success in such a difficult situation".

"I assure you, our country will achieve great success in the next four years. We will do a lot," he said.

In power since 2012, the party initially pursued a liberal pro-Western policy agenda. However, it has reversed course over the last two years.

Its campaign centred on a conspiracy theory about a "global war party" that controls Western institutions and is seeking to drag Georgia into the Russia-Ukraine war.

In a country scarred by Russia's 2008 invasion, the party has offered voters bogeyman stories about an imminent threat of war, which only Georgian Dream could prevent.

Georgian Dream's adoption of a controversial "foreign influence" law early this year targeting civil society sparked weeks



Supporters of the Georgian Dream party celebrate at the party's headquarters in Tbilisi after the announcement of exit poll results in parliamentary elections. - Reuters

of street protests and was criticised as a Kremlin-style measure to silence dissent.

The move prompted Brussels to freeze Georgia's EU accession process, while Washington imposed sanctions on dozens of Georgian officials.

The opposition coalition has signed up

to a pro-European policy platform outlining far-reaching electoral, judicial and law enforcement reforms.

They agreed that if they won a majority they would form an interim multi-party government to push through the reforms before calling fresh elections.

Thousands rally in Lisbon against racism in policing

Reuters/AFP
Lisbon

Thousands of people took to the main avenue of downtown Lisbon on yesterday to protest police violence, several days after a policeman shot a Cape Verde-born Portuguese resident, triggering a wave of unrest.

Rights group Vida Justa, which called the protest, changed the route to avoid clashes with supporters of the far-right anti-immigration party Chega, which held a separate smaller rally also in central Lisbon in support of the police.

Violence had broken out on the multi-ethnic outskirts of the capital after Monday's shooting of Odair Moniz, a 43-year-old chef, in the Amadora suburb.

Police said that Odair Moniz was shot dead while trying to escape after attacking officers with a knife.

That account has since been called into question by several reports in the press.

The 20-year-old police officer who shot Moniz – twice – has since been charged with manslaughter, Portuguese media reported.

"Odair was a good father, someone who was appreciated by his whole community," Luis Gomes, a 30-year-old at the protest who lives in the same neighbourhood as Moniz told AFP.

"We don't judge people by the colour of their skin. I know it's not easy for the police, but they need to be better prepared. No one has the right to kill anyone," added Gomez, who works as a private security guard.

Jose Rosa, a 58-year-old from Cape Verde who has lived in Portugal since childhood, said he was "saddened by all this".

"This is not the first time one of our young people has been killed and there is no justice," he told AFP, while adding that he regretted the past week's violence.



People shout slogans as they take part in a demonstration in Lisbon against police use of force and racism following a week of unrest sparked by the shooting of a black man by officers. - AFP

Demonstrators shouting "justice for Odair" carried posters bearing slogans such as "Stop killing us" and "Who to call when the killer is the police?"

Fabio Lima, 36, said "police violence is a common practice in our neighbourhoods".

"The police, who are supposed to make us calm and safe, leave us anxious and scared. I'm much safer in my neighbourhood without the presence of the police ... this is not a normal reaction," he said.

Vida Justa said "violence and police impunity" must stop and people in the poorest suburbs

cannot "be treated as non-citizens".

Gabriela Ferreira, 42, said it was "important to demand justice, to be on the streets and show that we are not afraid".

"There is discrimination and some infiltration in the police forces of people who are openly racist, who may even have some fascist or extreme right-wing political links," she said.

Last year, the UN Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination said it was concerned about excessive use of force by police in Portugal, particularly "against people of African descent".

Seven dead in overnight Russian attacks on Ukraine

AFP
Kyiv

Russian missile strikes killed five people including a child in the Ukrainian city of Dnipro last night, while a teenager and another person died in attacks on Kyiv and the surrounding region, officials said yesterday.

The strikes came less than 48 hours after Russia finished hosting a three-day summit of the Brics group of emerging economies in the city of Kazan, where President Vladimir Putin faced calls from world leaders to end the conflict.

"After everything that was said in Kazan, Russian murderers returned to their usual business," Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky said yesterday. "This proves once again that aggression cannot be stopped by talking, but only by decisive actions in defence of the state."



Municipal workers remove a destroyed car on the site of a Russian missile strike in Dnipro, eastern Ukraine. - AFP

The strikes on Dnipro late on Friday killed five people and damaged multiple buildings including a hospital, authorities said.

More than a dozen other people

were wounded in the city, including children, Dnipropetrovsk region governor Sergiy Lysak said on Telegram.

Images shared by the governor

showed rescuers working over a pile of rubble, while another showed what appeared to be a hospital room with its windows blown out.

Separate night attacks on the capital Kyiv and surrounding region left two people dead, including a teenage girl who was killed in a drone strike on an apartment building, according to regional authorities.

Ukrainian cities including Kyiv have been subjected to deadly drone and missile attacks throughout Russia's invasion.

Kyiv has been asking for more air defences from its allies ahead of what is likely to be its toughest winter yet, as Moscow ramps up strikes on energy infrastructure.

The Russian military said yesterday that it had captured the frontline village of Oleksandropol in Ukraine's eastern Donetsk region, where it has made a string of advances in recent months.

Mexico rules out labelling drug violence as 'terror'

Mexican President Claudia Sheinbaum has ruled out categorising drug cartel-related violence as "terrorism", a day after clashes left 19 people dead and a car bomb wounded three police.

Two police officers died in a shootout with alleged criminals on Thursday in the violence-plagued southern state of Guerrero, the government said.

Security forces killed 17 members of a criminal group that later attacked the military in the same area, Public Security Minister Omar Garcia Harfuch told a news conference, three more than previously reported.

Eleven suspects were arrested, he said.

"These groups, as we can see, have a very important firepower," including light machine guns, he added.

Further north on Thursday, in Guanajuato state, a car bomb detonated outside a police station, wounding three officers.

A second explosion was reported later in the same region, causing material damage.

Asked whether her government viewed the attacks as "narcoterrorism", Sheinbaum told reporters that the violence "can-

not be classified as terrorism".

According to Garcia Harfuch, the attacks in Guanajuato were linked to a drug cartel turf war.

"It's a dispute between two criminal groups to fight each other and intimidate the authorities," he said.

Former US president and White House contender Donald Trump has previously floated the idea of designating Mexican drug cartels as terrorist organisations.

Guerrero and Guanajuato are two of the Mexican states that are most affected by criminal violence.

Guerrero, home to the beachside resort city of Acapulco, has endured years of bloodshed linked to turf wars between cartels fighting for control of drug production and trafficking.

Guanajuato is a thriving industrial hub and home to several popular tourist destinations, but it is also now considered Mexico's most violent state.

The northwestern cartel stronghold of Sinaloa has also seen a spike in violence since the July arrest of drug lord Ismael Zambada in the United States unleashed a wave of gang infighting. - AFP

Brazil fines meat packers \$64mn over Amazon cattle

Brazil's environmental protection agency IBAMA has imposed 365mn reais (\$64mn) in fines on cattle ranches and meat packers, including the world's largest JBS SA, for raising or buying cattle on illegally deforested land in the Amazon.

IBAMA said on it had identified 69 properties that had sold 18,000 head of cattle raised on deforested land, and 23 meat packing companies that bought the cattle in the states of Para and Amazonas.

The enforcement operation was aimed at curbing deforestation in the Amazon by monitoring the chain that produces or sells cattle from illegally deforested areas, IBAMA said.

JBS denied buying cattle from the properties named by IBAMA. "None of the JBS purchases indicated by IBAMA were made from embargoed areas," the company said.

JBS added in a statement that its geospatial monitoring system ensures the company does not acquire animals from farms involved in illegal deforestation, the invasion of indigenous lands or environmental conservation areas.

Extensive cattle ranching along with clearing land to sell timber or grow soy are driving deforestation in the Amazon rainforest.

A number of meat packers signed commitments with prosecutors in 2013, agreeing not to buy cattle from ranches that were cleared illegally or have been blacklisted for environmental crimes.

JBS and more than a dozen other major agriculture firms have also pledged to eliminate deforestation from their supply chains by 2025, including destruction linked to indirect suppliers that sell to middlemen who then sell to meat packers. - Reuters

Two US airlines suspend flights to Haiti

JetBlue and Spirit Airlines suspended flights to Haiti this week, sources at Port-au-Prince's international airport said, as a fresh spike in gang violence roils the struggling Caribbean nation. Both airlines canceled flights between Fort Lauderdale in Florida and Port-au-Prince, although JetBlue maintained its direct flight from New York City. Neither airline has publicly stated why the flights were suspended,

though Haiti has seen a recent spike in gang violence in several neighbourhoods of the capital and other areas.

A UN report released on Wednesday said that more than 10,000 people had been displaced due to attacks in the past week around the Port-au-Prince metropolitan area. Haiti has for years been beset by political, humanitarian and security crises. - AFP

Eight killed in Pakistan suicide bombing

A suicide bomber detonated at a checkpoint in western Pakistan yesterday, killing eight people and wounding five more, officials said.

The bomber set off the blast from the back of a motorbike rickshaw near the town of Mir Ali in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province, a local police officer told AFP on condition of anonymity.

Four police officers were killed alongside two members of a state paramilitary force and two civilians in the attack near the border with Afghanistan, he said.

A local official who also did not want to be named confirmed the toll. The attack was claimed by a little-known militant group calling itself "Aswad ul-Harb". - AFP

Brazil seals \$30bn compensation deal over 2015 dam collapse



This picture taken in 2015 shows a general view of a dam in Mariana, Brazil, owned by Vale SA and BHP Billiton Ltd that burst. - Reuters

Brazil on Friday signed a 170bn reais (\$29.85bn) compensation agreement with miners BHP, Vale and Samarco for the Mariana dam collapse in 2015, one of the country's worst environmental disasters.

The collapse of the dam at the iron ore mine owned by Samarco, a joint venture between Vale and BHP, near the city of Mariana in southeastern Brazil, unleashed a wave of tailings in a disaster that killed 19 people, left hundreds homeless, flooded forests and polluted the length of the Doce River.

Brazilian President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva attended a ceremony in Brasilia to mark the signing of the agreement, with the government saying the first instalment of 5bn reais must be paid within 30 days.

The agreement provides for the payment of 132bn reais, of which 100bn reais represent "new resources" that must be paid to the public authori-

ties within 20 years by the companies involved in the tragedy.

They will allocate the other 32bn reais to pay for compensation for affected people and reparation actions that will remain under their responsibility, in addition to the 38bn reais that the miners say they have disbursed.

The government's solicitor-general, Jorge Messias, said the resources provided in the agreement will allow local authorities to repair the financial losses of families hit by the tragedy and pay for environmental recovery actions in affected areas in the states of Minas Gerais, where the dam is located, and Espirito Santo through which the Doce River flows to the sea.

The annual payments will be scheduled until 2043, with values varying between 7bn reais in 2026 and 4.41bn reais in the last instalment. - Reuters

Artist sheds light on Qatari women's role in shaping society

Qatari visual artist Noura al-Mazrouei has spoken at length about the motivation and drive behind a group of new artworks that she recently unveiled in her exhibition "Hareem Al Awal", which has opened in Katara - the Cultural Village.

The artworks have been widely acclaimed by the visual arts audience.

Al-Mazrouei told the Arabic daily *Arrayah* that her passion for art stems from her keenness to document the stories and traditions that form the Qatari cultural identity and enhance the community's understanding of its roots and authenticity.

She also expressed her appreciation for the support she receives from cultural institutions in Qatar, in particular the Fine Arts Society and Katara.

Al-Mazrouei explained that she uses an abstract style in her creations that allows her to convey her

feelings and thoughts in a way that touches on the depth of Qatari heritage, helping her in her latest exhibition to shed light on the role of Qatari women in society.

She stressed that her works on display in the exhibition rely on drawing faces without clear features, allowing viewers to interpret the painting based on personal experience and imagination.

The exhibition documents the stories and traditions of the past that shaped the Qatari cultural identity.

"For years, I have felt an urgent desire to document our rich heritage in an artistic way," she said. "I believe that this art contributes to enhancing understanding and respect for our ancient history, and reflects the cohesion and strength of Qatari society."

"The paintings here are not just pictures, they are platforms that carry stories from a bygone era," al-Mazrouei added. "When



I started drawing on this idea, I wanted to honour the role of Qatari women, who have always been a symbol of dedication."

The idea revolved around highlighting the true image of Qatari women in the past, whether through traditional clothing or the jewellery they used to adorn themselves with.

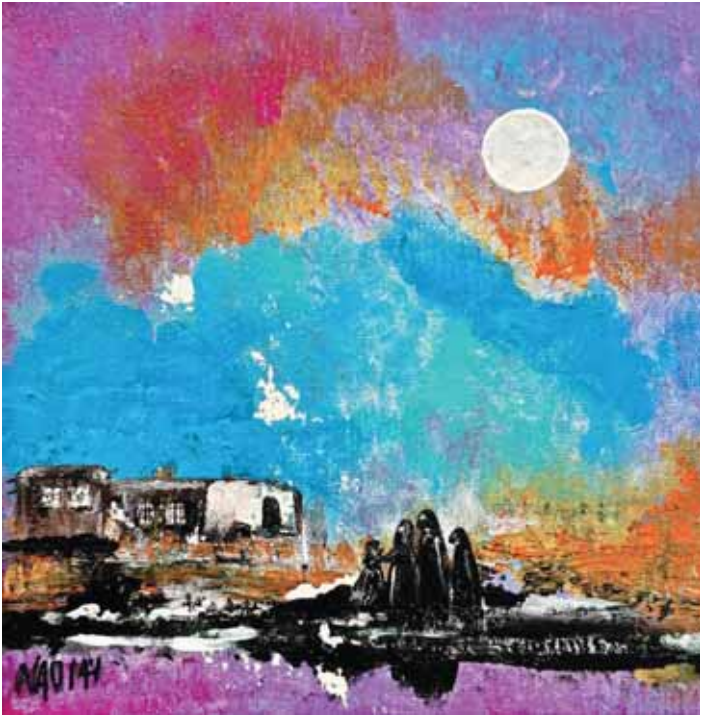
Each painting has a special story, expressing a tale or situation that women experienced in the past, and each one carries a message about family cohesion and the role of the mother, and even traditional jewellery that was a symbol of a simple life.

"In my works I used acrylics to give the paintings a special strength and expression," al-Mazrouei said. "It took me about two years to prepare the current works, and when I received an invitation to participate in the Diplomatic Day, I felt a strong desire to display these works under the name 'Hareem Al Awal'."

"I feel very grateful for Katara's support," she continued. "This exhibition is an important step for me, and I look forward to continuing in this field and conveying more stories of our society through art."

The exhibition includes 21 diverse paintings.

Al-Mazrouei has said that her goal through these works is to present a complete story about "Hareem Al Awal" so that the viewer can have a sense of the depth of Qatari women's heritage and learn about the authenticity and values that they represent.



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