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## Shura approves constitutional amendments

QNA  
Doha

The Shura Council held its regular weekly session yesterday, for the fourth ordinary session of the first legislative term, corresponding to the 53rd annual session, chaired by HE Speaker of the Council Hassan bin Abdullah al-Ghanem.

During the session, the Shura Council unanimously approved the draft constitutional amendments after reviewing the report of the special committee studying the amendment of some articles of the Constitution.

Constructive and in-depth discussions took place, with the esteemed members of the Shura Council showing great commitment for enhancing national unity, upholding the principle of justice and the rule of law, and ensuring the country's supreme interest in accordance with the directives of His Highness the Amir.

On this occasion, HE the Speaker extended his heartfelt thanks and gratitude to His Highness the Amir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani for his wise directives and insightful vision, which he expressed in his historic speech at the opening of the fourth session of the first legislative term. This speech laid out a comprehensive plan to en-

hance Qatar's development and prosperity.

HE the Speaker emphasised in his speech that the draft constitutional amendments, which were proposed based on the directives of His Highness the Amir places the country at a crucial moment that will advance it and open doors for growth, progress, and prosperity, which future generations will remember with pride and honour.

He said that these amendments represent an important step in strengthening national unity and upholding the rule of law. His Excellency added that the purpose of proposing these constitutional amendments is to preserve the unity of the people and enhance equal citizenship in terms of rights and duties.

HE al-Ghanem stressed that these amendments reflect Qatar's commitment to applying the principle of justice and the rule of law in all areas of life, fulfilling the aspirations of Qatari citizens for a better future governed by law.

The draft constitutional amendments include altering the texts of Articles (1), (7), (13), (74), (77), (80), (81), (83), (86), (103), (104), (114), (117), and (150) of the Permanent Constitution of Qatar, in addition to adding Article (75 bis), Article (125/final paragraph), and cancelling Articles (78), (79), and (82) of the Constitution. **Page 2**

## Israel passes law to ban UNRWA operations

The Israeli parliament passed a law yesterday to ban UN relief agency UNRWA from operating inside the country and occupied east Jerusalem, despite objections from the United States.

Lawmakers passed the bill with 92 votes in favour and 10 against, after years of harsh Israeli criticism of UNRWA, which has only increased since the start of the war in Gaza. The ban on the UN agency - which has provided essential aid and assistance across Palestinian territories and to Palestinian refugees elsewhere for more than seven decades - is a blow to humanitarian work in Gaza.

The UN agency for Palestinian refugees condemned the Israeli parliament's approval of a bill banning its activities in Israel and occupied east Jerusalem, calling the move "outrageous".

"It's outrageous that a member state of the United Nations is working to dismantle a UN

agency which also happens to be the largest responder in the humanitarian operation in Gaza," Juliette Touma, spokeswoman for UNRWA said.

"If it's implemented it's a disaster including due to the impact this is likely to have on the humanitarian operation in Gaza and in several parts of the West Bank," she said, adding the agency is the lead provider of "shelter, food and primary health care" in war-battered Gaza. The media adviser to the UN relief agency UNRWA, Adnan Abu Hasna, said that Israel's decision to ban the organisation's operation inside the country will mean the collapse of the humanitarian process as a whole.

Hasna described the decision as an "unprecedented" escalation while speaking to Qatar's Al Jazeera Mubasher TV.

Britain's Foreign Secretary David Lammy expressed "profound regret" that Israel was "considering shutting down UNRWA's operations".

## Amir, Kuwait's first deputy PM discuss bilateral ties



His Highness the Amir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani met in his office at the Amiri Diwan yesterday with First Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Defence and Minister of Interior of the sisterly State of Kuwait Sheikh Fahad Yusuf Saud al-Sabah and his accompanying delegation on the occasion of his visit to the country to participate in the 15th Milipol Qatar Exhibition and Conference 2024.

At the outset of the meeting, the Kuwaiti first deputy prime minister conveyed to His Highness the Amir the greetings of Amir of the sisterly State of Kuwait, Sheikh Meshal al-Ahmad al-Jaber al-

Sabah, and his wishes to the Amir of good health and happiness and to the people of Qatar further development and prosperity.

For his part, His Highness the Amir entrusted Sheikh Fahad Yusuf Saud al-Sabah with his greetings to the Kuwaiti Amir and his wishes of good health to him and to the brotherly people of Kuwait enduring progress and growth. During the meeting, they discussed the deep-rooted brotherly relations between the two countries and ways to strengthen them, in addition to the prominent developments of shared interest regionally and globally. **(QNA)**

## Amir, Dutch PM discuss Lebanon, Gaza developments

His Highness the Amir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani discussed with Prime Minister of the Kingdom of The Netherlands Dick Schoof relations between the two countries and ways to develop and strengthen them in various fields. His Highness the Amir also discussed the most prominent regional and international issues of common interest, especially the developments in the Gaza Strip, the occupied Palestinian territories and Lebanon. This came during a phone call His Highness the Amir received from the prime minister of The Netherlands. **(QNA)**

## National Ageing Survey from Nov 3-Jan 31

The Ministry of Public Health (MoPH), in collaboration with the National Planning Council and Hamad Medical Corporation (HMC), has announced the launch of Qatar's National Ageing Survey. The fieldwork for the survey is set to take place from Nov. 3, 2024 to Jan 31 of 2025. The survey is designed to collect crucial information and statistical indicators related to the health and needs of individuals aged 60 and above. **Page 8**

## HIA serves 13.7mn passengers in Q3-2024

Hamad International Airport (DOH) has reported serving 13.7mn passengers in the third quarter (Q3) of 2024, reflecting a robust 7.9% growth compared to the same period last year. Point-to-point traffic also experienced growth by 11.7%, contributing to the airport's overall performance. The passenger traffic growth was driven by strong demand for air travel. **Page 5**

## Apple rolls out AI features

Apple yesterday rolled out its first set of artificial intelligence (AI) features, dubbed "Apple Intelligence", across its premium iPhone, iPad, and Mac devices, marking the tech giant's major push into generative AI. The release, first previewed by the company in June, marks Apple's foray into an AI race that has seen the US tech giants rush into ChatGPT-style technology.

## Gaza truce talks to continue

AFP  
Jerusalem

Israel said yesterday it had discussed with international mediators the outline of proposed talks with Palestinian resistance movement Hamas on a deal to release Israeli hostages.

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's office said Mossad intelligence chief David Barnea had met US and Qatari officials in Doha and agreed they should talk to Hamas about a deal to free Israelis seized in last year's October 7 attack.

The statement came two days after Egypt's President Abdel Fattah al-Sisi proposed a two-day truce and limited hostage-prisoner exchange that, he said, could lead to a permanent ceasefire.

"During the meeting, the parties discussed a new unified framework that combines previous proposals and also takes into account key issues and recent developments in the region," Netanyahu's office said.

## It should end: Biden

US President Joe Biden, asked about the possibility of a ceasefire said he would talk to Israel immediately to push for a ceasefire. "My staff is talking to them right now," Biden said, after casting an early ballot in the race for his successor. "We need a ceasefire. We should end this war. It should end, it should end, it should end."



US President Joe Biden casts his early-voting ballot in New Castle, Delaware, yesterday.

## 100,000 trapped in north Gaza

Reuters  
Cairo

Israeli tanks thrust deeper yesterday into two north Gaza towns and a historic refugee camp, trapping around 100,000 civilians.

The Gaza Strip's health ministry said at least 19 people were killed by Israeli airstrikes and bombardment yesterday, 13 of them in the north of the devastated coastal territory.

The Palestinian Civil Emergency Service said around 100,000 people were marooned in Jabalia, Beit Lahia and Beit Hanoun without medical or food supplies.

The emergency service said its operations had come to a halt because of the three-week Israeli assault into the north.

North Gaza's three major hospitals, whose officials refused Israel's orders to evacuate, said they were hardly operating. At least two had been damaged by Israeli



Medics evacuate injured people and cancer patients from the Kamal Adwan Hospital in Beit Lahia in the northern Gaza Strip yesterday.

fire during the assault and run out of medical, food and fuel stocks.

North Gaza residents said Israeli forces were besieging schools and other shelters housing displaced families, ordering them out before rounding up men and pushing women and

children to leave the area for Gaza City and points in the south.

More than 43,020 Palestinians have been killed and 101,110 injured in Israel's military offensive in Gaza since Oct 7, 2023, the Gaza health ministry said in a statement yesterday.

## Deputy PM meets Swedish defence minister



HE the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of State for Defence Affairs Dr Khalid bin Mohammed al-Attiyah met with the visiting Swedish Defence Minister Pal Jonson and his accompanying delegation. The meeting discussed topics of common interest, co-operation relations between the two sides, and ways to enhance and develop them. It was attended by several senior officials and officers from both sides. (QNA)

## PM meets GCC justice ministers



HE the Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman bin Jassim al-Thani met at the Amiri Diwan yesterday with Their Excellencies and Highnesses participants in the meeting of the GCC justice ministers. He welcomed the guests, wishing them success in their meeting in Doha. (QNA)

# Shura clears draft constitutional amendments

QNA  
Doha

The Shura Council held its weekly session yesterday, for the fourth ordinary session of the first legislative term, corresponding to the 53rd annual session, in the Tamim Bin Hamad Hall at the Council's headquarters, chaired by its Speaker HE Hassan bin Abdullah al-Ghanem.

At the beginning of the session, the Council praised the European tour of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani which included Italy and Germany. The Council pointed out that the state visit to Italy and the official visit to Germany reflect Qatar's commitment to enhancing bilateral relations and strategic partnerships with those countries.

The Council confirmed that these visits open new horizons for co-operation in the fields of economy, education, innovation, and the promotion of stability and peace on both regional and international levels. It added that the tour of His Highness comes at a crucial time to enhance dialogue and understanding on global common issues, such as sustainable development and international security, thus reinforcing Qatar's role in achieving international peace and stability.

Following this, HE the Shura Council Secretary-General, Nayef bin Mohammed al-Mahmoud, read out the agenda, and the minutes of the previous session were approved. During the session, the Council unanimously approved the draft constitutional amendments after reviewing the report of the special committee studying the amendment of some articles of the constitution. Constructive and in-depth discussions took place, with the esteemed members of the Shura Council showing great commitment for enhancing national unity, upholding the principle of justice and the rule of law, and ensuring the country's supreme interest in accordance with the directives of His Highness the Amir.

On this occasion, HE the Shura Council Speaker extended his thanks and gratitude to His Highness the Amir for his wise directives and insightful vision, which he expressed in his historic speech at the opening of the fourth session of the first legislative term. This speech laid out a comprehensive plan to enhance Qatar's development and prosperity.

HE al-Ghanem emphasised that the draft constitutional amendments, which were proposed based on the directives of His Highness, places the country at a crucial moment that will advance it and open doors for growth, progress, and prosperity, which future generations will remember with pride and honour. He added that these amendments represent an important step in strengthening national unity and upholding the rule of law.

He added that the purpose of proposing these constitutional amendments, as indicated by His Highness in his speech to the Shura Council, is to preserve the unity of the people and enhance equal citizenship in terms of rights and duties. HE the Speaker stressed that these amendments reflect Qatar's commitment to applying the principle of justice and the rule of law in all areas of life, fulfilling the aspirations of Qatari citizens for a better future governed by law.

He added that the approval of these amendments and the noble goals they aim to achieve mark historic moments in the development and growth of Qatar, highlighted its security and social cohesion, stressing that the goal now is to bolster that unity even further for future generations. HE the Speaker reaffirmed that the Shura Council, which has paid great attention to

studying these amendments under the wise leadership's guidance, pledged to His Highness the Amir and the Qatari people to continue performing its national duties with full responsibility and sincerity, aiming to strengthen national unity and consolidate the pillars of the state, based on justice and the rule of law.

HE al-Ghanem praised the fruitful and constructive co-operation with the esteemed government, appreciating the support and attention it has given to the draft constitutional amendments. He noted that this exemplary co-operation between the legislative and executive branches reflects a shared commitment to achieving the vision of His Highness the Amir in strengthening justice and the rule of law, which he described as the foundation for driving development and ensuring the citizens' aspirations for a future marked by stability and progress.

### Articles under review

The draft constitutional amendments include altering the texts of Articles (1), (7), (13), (74), (77), (80), (81), (83), (86), (103), (104), (114), (117), and (150) of the Permanent Constitution of the State of Qatar, in addition to adding Article (75 bis), Article (125/final paragraph), and cancelling Articles (78), (79), and (82) of the Constitution, as follows: The proposed text for Article (1) will be (Qatar is an independent sovereign Arab State. Its religion is Islam and Shariah law shall be a main source of its legislations. Its political system is democratic based on Shura, justice and the rule of law.

The Arabic Language shall be its official language. The people of Qatar are a part of the Arab nation) instead of the existing text (Qatar is an independent sovereign Arab State. Its religion is Islam and Shariah law shall be a main source of its legislations. Its political system is democratic. The Arabic Language shall be its official language. The people of Qatar are a part of the Arab nation.)

The proposed text for Article (7) will be (The foreign policy of the State is based on the principle of strengthening international peace and security by means of encouraging peaceful resolution of international disputes, and in accordance with the role of the State in resolving these disputes at the regional and international levels through mediation and dialogue, and what this entails in terms of maintaining balanced relations with all parties; shall support the right of peoples to self-determination; and shall not interfere in the domestic affairs of states; and shall co-operate with peace-loving nations) after it was (The foreign policy of the State is based on the principle of strengthening international peace and security by means of encouraging peaceful resolution of international disputes; and shall support the right of peoples to self-determination; and shall not interfere in the domestic affairs of states; and shall co-operate with peace-loving nations).

The proposed text for Article (13) will be (Without prejudice to the provisions of the two preceding articles, and where it is not possible to delegate powers to the Heir Apparent, or in other circumstances that he deems appropriate, the Amir may, by an Amiri Order, designate a deputy from the Ruling Family to discharge some of his powers and functions; and where the person who has been so designated holds a post or performs a function in any institution, the same person shall cease to discharge the duties of that post or function during his deputation of the Amir; and the Deputy Amir shall, as soon as he is so designated, take, before the Amir, the same oath as taken by the Heir



**Article (117) has been amended stating that (only those holding the Qatari nationality may assume the position of minister.) And this is a change from the previous text, which states that (only those with original Qatari nationality may hold the position of minister)**

Apparent) instead of (Without prejudice to the provisions of the two preceding articles, and where it is not possible to delegate powers to the Heir Apparent, the Amir may, by an Amiri Order, designate a deputy from the Ruling Family to discharge some of his powers and functions; and where the person who has been so designated holds a post or performs a function in any institution, the same person shall cease to discharge the duties of that post or function during his deputation of the Amir; and the Deputy Amir shall, as soon as he is so designated, take, before the Amir, the same oath as taken by the Heir Apparent).

The proposed text for Article (74) will be (The Amir shall take the following oath prior to the discharge of his functions: I swear by Almighty God to respect Shariah law, the Constitution and the law, protect the independence of the State, safeguard its territorial integrity, and defend the freedom and interests of its people.) instead of (The Amir shall take the following oath prior to the discharge of his functions in a special session convened by the Shura Council: I swear by Almighty God to respect Shariah law, the Constitution and the law, protect the independence of the State, safeguard its territorial integrity, and defend the freedom and interests of its people.)

### The Shura Council

The proposed text for Article (77) will be (The Shura Council shall consist of no less than forty-five members, and the appointment of the members shall be issued by an Amiri Order), after it was (The Shura Council shall consist of 45 Members, thirty of whom shall be elected by direct, general secret ballot; and the Amir shall appoint the remaining fifteen Members from amongst the Ministers or any other persons. The term of service of the appointed Members in Shura Council shall expire when these Members resign their seats or are relieved from their posts.)

The proposed text for Article (80) will be (The member of the Shura Council should fulfil the following conditions: 1. To be a holder of an original Qatari nationality; 2. To be good in reading and writing Arabic; 3. Not to have been convicted for an offence involving moral turpitude or dishonesty unless rehabilitated in

**HE the Speaker emphasised that the draft constitutional amendments, which were proposed based on the directives of His Highness the Amir, places the country at a crucial moment that will advance it and open doors for growth, progress, and prosperity, which future generations will remember with pride and honour. He added that these amendments represent an important step in strengthening national unity and upholding the rule of law**

the end of the council's term, no replacement member shall be appointed.)

This is a change from the previous text, which stated that (if a seat of an elected member of the Shura Council becomes vacant at least six months before the end of their term for any reason, a successor shall be elected within two months from the date the council is notified of the vacancy, and if a seat of an appointed member becomes vacant, a new member shall be appointed as their replacement. In both cases, the new member shall complete the term of their predecessor.)

Article (86) has been amended in the proposed text which broadly states that (if the council's meeting is delayed beyond the annual date stipulated in the previous article, the duration of the session shall be reduced by the difference between the two dates.) This is a change from the previous text, which states that (notwithstanding the provisions of the previous two articles, His Highness the Amir shall invite the Shura Council to its first meeting following the general elections of the council within a month from the conclusion of those elections. If the council's meeting in this session is delayed beyond the annual date stipulated in the previous article, the duration of the session shall be reduced by the difference between the two dates.)

Article (103) has been amended in the proposed text stating that (a member's membership may not be revoked unless they lose trust and credibility, either lose one of the membership conditions, or fail to fulfil their membership duties. And the decision to revoke membership must be issued by the council with a two-thirds majority of its members.) This is a change from the previous text, which states that (a member's membership may not be revoked unless they lose trust and credibility, lose one of the membership conditions on which they were elected, or fail to fulfil their membership duties. The decision to revoke membership must be issued by the council with a two-thirds majority of its members.)

Article (104) has been amended in the proposed text which states that (in cases of necessity and public interest, His Highness the Amir may dissolve the Shura Council by a decree. And if the council is dissolved, a new council must be appointed no later than six months from the date of dissolution. Until the new council is appointed, His Highness the Amir, with the assistance of the Council of Ministers, shall exercise legislative authority.) This is a change from the previous text, which states that (His Highness the Amir may dissolve the Shura Council by a decree, mentioning the reasons for the dissolution, provided that the council cannot be dissolved for the same reasons again. However, if the council is dissolved, elections for the new council must be conducted no later than six months from the date of dissolution. Until the new council is elected, His Highness the Amir, with the assistance of the Council of Ministers, shall exercise the legislative authority.)

Article (114) has been amended in the proposed text stating that (it is not permitted to combine membership in the Shura Council with holding public office in the state, except in cases where such com-

ination is allowed by law.) This is a change from the previous text, which states that (it is not permitted to combine membership in the Shura Council with holding public office, except in cases where such combination is allowed by the constitution.)

Article (117) has been amended stating that (only those holding the Qatari nationality may assume the position of minister.) And this is a change from the previous text, which states that (only those with original Qatari nationality may hold the position of minister.)

Article (150) has been amended in the proposed text to state that (the amended temporary basic system in force in the state, issued on April 19, 1972, is hereby repealed, and the current Shura Council shall continue to discharge its functions until the members of the new Shura Council are appointed.) And this is a change from the previous text, which states that (the amended temporary basic system in force in the state, issued on April 19, 1972, is hereby repealed, and the provisions pertaining to the current Shura Council shall remain in effect until the new Shura Council is elected.) The proposed constitutional amendments also include the addition of the following two texts to the permanent constitution of the State of Qatar: (75 bis) HH the Amir may invite the ruling family council, the people of authority and influence, and the Shura Council, or any of them, to discuss matters he deems important, and (125/last paragraph), HE the Prime Minister may delegate some of his powers to his deputies and ministers.

The proposed constitutional amendments included the repeal of Article (78) (The electoral system shall be issued by law, specifying the conditions and procedures for nomination and election.), Article (79) (The electoral districts into which the state is divided and the areas of each shall be determined by decree.), and Article (82) (The law shall designate the judicial authority responsible for determining the validity of the elections of the members of the Shura Council).

### Persons with disabilities

The session proceeded to review a bill concerning persons with disabilities, referred by the esteemed government, and decided to submit it to the Legal and Legislative Affairs Committee for further perusal and submission of its report to the council. Additionally, the council reviewed a bill to amend certain provisions of Law No. (15) of 2011 pertaining to the combat of trafficking in persons, referred by the esteemed government, and decided to submit it to the Internal and External Affairs Committee for further perusal and submission of its report to the council.

On the other hand, the council discussed the report of the Financial and Economic Affairs Committee concerning its perspective on the statement of the esteemed government regarding the proposal of desire submitted by the council to benefit from retirees in the labour market and take the appropriate decision accordingly.

HE the Shura Council Speaker briefed the members of the Council on the submission of the draft state budget for the fiscal year 2025, and the bill approving the state budget to the Financial and Economic Affairs Committee, in accordance with Article (135) of the council's internal regulations.

Also discussed was the report of the President of the 17th meeting of Chairpersons of the Shura, Representatives, National and Ummah Councils in the countries of the Gulf Co-operation Council (GCC) submitted to the 18th meeting slated to be convened in the United Arab Emirates in November 2024.

## Qatar Charity's projects benefit families in Somalia



support they received from QC, noting that these projects represented a lifeline for them and a starting point for improving their living conditions.

Hodan Abdi Khalif, a beneficiary of the livestock project in Kismayo, said: "I lost all my livestock during the last drought, and was struggling to support my family. Thanks to Qatar Charity's support, I received several sheep that will enable me to resume my work in livestock farming, and now I have great hope for improving my family's situation."

Mohamed Abdi Hassan, said: "It was difficult for me to secure a stable income earlier. Now, thanks to the grocery store that Qatar Charity helped me open, I look forward to supporting my family and providing for their basic needs." During 2023, QC implemented around 560 projects in the economic empowerment sector in Somalia, benefiting nearly 3,350 individuals, the statement added.

Qatar Charity (QC) has implemented hundreds of economic empowerment projects for about 150 neediest families in various regions of Somalia, a statement said yesterday.

The income-generating projects provided to the beneficiaries include livestock (cows and sheep), three-wheeled transport carts, small retail shops, sewing

machines for women, in addition to support in agriculture and handicrafts. Abd al-Fattah Adam Moalim, director of QC's Office in Somalia, explained that these projects significantly contribute to maintaining the cohesion of the Somali community and protecting families from falling into unemployment and poverty.

Several beneficiaries expressed their gratitude for the

## HMC marks anniversary of molecular genomic services

The Department of Laboratory Medicine and Pathology (DLMP) at Hamad Medical Corporation (HMC), under the leadership of Dr Einas al-Kuwari, DLMP chair, is marking the 23rd anniversary of molecular genomics services in Qatar.

Established in 2001, the Molecular Genetics Laboratory has been pivotal in diagnosing genetic diseases and advancing Qatar's healthcare system.

Dr al-Kuwari acknowledged: "Our molecular genetics services have revolutionised medical diagnostics in Qatar, providing cutting-edge, specialised services crucial to patient care. Over more than two decades, we have remained committed to staying at the forefront of medical advancements, ensuring that our patients access the latest and most effective diagnostic tools."

This dedication to excellence has transformed how genetic disorders and personalised treatments are approached, setting new standards in the region. The Molecular Genetics Laboratory, one of the most specialised diagnostic facilities, serves thousands of patients annually, offering comprehensive testing for genetic diseases. The lab ensures high-quality care through rigorous international standards, performing around 55,000 genetic tests annually for approximately 30,000 cases.

The laboratory plays a crucial role in the National Pre-Marital Screening Programme, which has been operational since 2009. Cancer diagnosis and treatment have also been transformed by genomic advancements.

Genomic abnormalities, including accumulated mutations, contribute to cancers like melanoma, lung, and colorectal cancer. Precision medicine relies on understanding a patient's unique genomic profile, combining insights from blood tests, tissue samples, and molecular biomarkers to guide individualised treatment plans. This multi-disciplinary approach ensures that patients receive the most appropriate and effective care.

The rapid evolution of precision medicine has made it possible to accurately diagnose genetic disorders and provide targeted gene therapies. Dr Moza al-Kuwari, acting head of Molecular Genetics at HMC, said: "Children suffering from spinal muscular atrophy have been successfully treated using gene therapy, thanks to accurate genetic diagnosis. Most recently we are working on implementing genotyping for precise management of Alzheimer's diseases."



Dr Einas al-Kuwari

The Molecular Genetics Laboratory also supports blood cancer diagnosis and management, offering internationally accredited genomic analyses for blood and marrow referrals. Dr Susanna Akiki, head of Hemato-Oncology at HMC, emphasised that genomic technologies are central to their strategy.

The Solid Tumour service, led by Dr Wafa Abualainin, clinical scientist and head of Solid tumours - Diagnostic Genomic Division, works closely with HMC oncologists, pathologists, and other healthcare professionals to improve cancer patient care. This service focuses on a wide range of cancers, including but not limited to lung, colon, breast, thyroid, pancreatic and brain cancers. The service speeds up diagnosis and treatment, improving outcomes for adult and paediatric cancer patients.

Pharmacogenomics, a relatively new field clinically approved in Qatar, is another significant area of innovation at DLMP. This science aims to tailor medications to patients' genetic profiles, optimising dosages and minimising side-effects, thereby improving safety and treatment efficacy.

Artificial intelligence plays a growing role in genomics at HMC. AI tools are employed to analyse complex data, link it to clinical symptoms or initial diagnoses, and to generate results rapidly.

## Transport minister attends signing of Qatar-Afghanistan air services pact



HE the Minister of Transport Jassim Saif Ahmed al-Sulaiti yesterday attended the signing of an air services memorandum of understanding (MoU) between Qatar and Afghanistan to increase air traffic rights between the two countries. The MoU was signed by Mohammed Faleh al-Hajri, in charge of managing the Qatar Civil Aviation Authority, and Mula Abdul Salam Haidari, Deputy Minister of Transport and Aviation of the Afghanistan caretaker government. The minister and Haidari also discussed bilateral co-operation in the areas of civil aviation and transportation.

## QF plays central role in bridging genomics gap

When the World Innovation Summit for Health (WISH), Qatar Foundation (QF)'s global health initiative, hosts its seventh edition in Doha on November 13 and 14, several issues relevant to the region will come into focus, a statement said yesterday.

A recent study showed that only about 0.17% of people in published genomic studies are of Arab ancestry, with 88% being of European ancestry. This hinders the progress of precision medicine worldwide, as people of European origin represent a minority among the global population.

Yet, at the same time, they constitute the largest percentage of human genome research, which directly affects understanding of prevalent diseases, the methodology for developing treatments, the pharmaceutical industry, and innovative ways to prevent diseases.

The theme of this year's WISH is 'Humanising Health: Conflict, Equity and Resilience', and two of its four tracks are the health of vulnerable and minority populations and system-level innovation and change.

Precision medicine is one of the main fields that will contribute to system-level innovation and change, in addition to the role it plays in highlighting the health of minorities who are not included in research, especially genomic studies.

Speaking about the dominant representation of Western genomes, Dr Radja Badji, translational genomics manager at QF's Qatar Precision Health Institute (QPHI), said: "Historically, genomic research and major biobanks were



Qatar Biobank and the Qatar Genome Programme have significantly enhanced the inclusivity of genomic databases.

established in Western countries where there was substantial early investment in genetic research infrastructure. This led to easier access to research funding and a more established framework for collecting and utilising genomic data."

However, the tide is changing. In the past decade, several Arab countries including Qatar, Saudi Arabia, UAE, Egypt, and Jordan have set up national genome programmes. Qatar, in particular, has been at the forefront in ensuring Arab genomes are better represented in global genomic databases.

Dr Badji said: "QPHI, through its Qatar Biobank and Qatar Genome Programme, is strategically positioned to address these imbalances by focusing on recruiting a diverse participant base within Qatar. QPHI also emphasises the integration of genomic research

into national health strategies, which encourages diverse population participation."

He added that Qatar Biobank and the Qatar Genome Programme have significantly enhanced the inclusivity of genomic databases, by sequencing and sharing over 14,600 whole genomes from the Qatari population and more than 2,900 genomes from 19 other Arab countries with the research community.

A recent study highlighted that as of 2022, Qatar contributed 96.2% of the Arab representation in GWAS datasets, with the remaining 3.8% coming from 10 other countries, emphasising the significant impact of Qatar's initiatives on global research. "These efforts have led to identifying more than 24.6mn previously unknown variants and numerous novel disease-associated variants," added Dr Badji.

## PHCC launches second phase of school oral health programme



As part of the development of the Primary Health Care Corporation (PHCC)'s Asnani School Programme, the management has decided to launch the second phase targeting the teaching and administrative staff in schools to raise awareness about the importance of oral and dental health. The Asnani Programme team had organised awareness lectures directed at the teaching and administrative staff in primary schools at various intervals, aiming to educate them on the importance of oral and dental health. Dr Najat al-Yafei, manager of the Oral Health Promotion & Prevention Department at the Preventive Health Directorate, stated that the goal of the second awareness phase is to reach all the teaching, administrative staff and to introduce them to the programme. They would become role models in spreading awareness of oral health, just as they impart knowledge to their students.

## New multi-gym facilities at four PHCC wellness centres

The wellness centres at Rawdat Al Khail, Al Wajbah, Al Khor and Al Ruwais health centres have received four-station resistance training equipment (multi-gym), a statement from the Primary Health Care Corporation (PHCC) said yesterday.

Dr Sarah Rashid Musa, consultant community medicine and wellness in charge at Rawdat Al-Khail Health Centre explained that for wellness centre entry, risk and eligibility are assessed by a physician. Patients are referred and enrolled into a 12-week wellness programme that start with assessment of body measures, composition, cardiopulmonary and muscular endurance.

Individualised exercise programme is tailored to each patient's health condition, risk factors, lifestyle behaviour, and goals are discussed with the patient and monitored throughout. The programme consists of a supervised class of aerobic, resistance, and functional exercise, along with flexibility/stretching exercise.



A multi-gym at one of the PHCC health centres.

Imad Sayah Shujaa, a gym instructor at Rawdat Al Khail Health Centre, highlighted that the multi gym offers variety of strength exercises targeting different muscle groups, including upper, lower and core. Users can perform various exercises such as chest presses, shoulder presses, bicep curls, triceps extensions, leg extension, leg curls and rows by adjusting the weight sacks and positions of the exercise handles.

"The multi-station offers several

safety advantages compared to free weights by providing more controlled environment, reducing the risk of injury from dropped weights, minimising strain on joints and muscles and weight features such as weight locks and adjustable resistance allowing gradual progression of exercise," Shujaa added.

"All gym instructors have received training on the multi-station resistance training equipment to ensure proper usage and safety," Dr Musa added.





The panellists at the conference.

## Experts analyse effects of Russian invasion of Ukraine at conference

**Q**atar University's Gulf Studies Centre (GSC), a part of the College of Arts and Sciences, along with the Centre of International and Regional Studies at Georgetown University in Qatar, organised a conference titled, 'Russia's Invasion of Ukraine: Assessments, Implications, Prospects'.

The event brought together leading experts in economics and international relations to address the ongoing conflict in Ukraine and its far-reaching consequences on the global system of international relations, with special emphasis on perspectives from the GCC and the broader Middle East.

The conference explored the diverse viewpoints on the conflict's implications and assessed its impact on the interests of Global North and Global South nations. In addition it also explored regional responses from the Middle East and Arab Gulf countries. Through direct and candid discussions, experts analysed the complex interplay between Russia's invasion of Ukraine and its influence on the international system and global economic relations.

The GSC director Dr Maryam al-Kuwari said: "The impact of Putin's war in Ukraine on the GCC economies has been in the centre of researchers' attention for quite a while. However, it is still possible to say that the full picture has rarely been described. Traditionally,



A view of the audience.

researchers' attention is bound to two issues: increased incomes of the GCC hydrocarbon exporters and intensification of contacts between Moscow and the Arab Gulf states. Yet, the reality is far more complicated and the goal of this event us to demonstrate this complexity it by putting the story of the Gulf states within the wider context of regional and international context."

Research associate professor in GSC, Dr Nikolay Kozhanov observed that Russia's invasion of Ukraine has significantly reshaped the international system and global economic relations. "Notably, access to global energy markets has been restricted, impacting both major suppliers and consumers as well as prompting a reconfiguration of global supply chains. "The conflict has exacerbated pre-existing economic issues, particularly those stemming from the Covid-19 pandemic, creating

a multi-crisis environment. The war has also led to the "weaponisation" of the global economy, as both Russia and its opponents leverage economic measures against each other, challenging the principles of a liberal market. The situation remains uncertain and it is extremely important for the GCC countries to be aware of the ongoing changes and adjust to them accordingly."

Nearly three years since the onset of the conflict, the forum also highlighted the lack of consensus among global actors regarding Russia's involvement and its effects on the international system.

The gathering marked a significant opportunity to develop insights and recommendations for policymakers, contributing to a more nuanced view of the war's impact from the perspective of the Global South, and particularly from the GCC and Middle East regions, a statement added.

## HIA serves over 13.7mn passengers in Q3-2024

**H**amad International Airport (HIA) has reported serving 13.7mn passengers in the third quarter (Q3) of 2024, reflecting a 7.9% growth compared to the same period last year. Point-to-point traffic also experienced growth by 11.7%, contributing to the airport's overall performance, a statement said yesterday.

The passenger traffic growth was driven by strong demand for air travel, with July marking the airport's busiest month ever, handling 4,742,068 passengers followed by 4,717,885 passengers in August and 4,246,742 in September.

In the Middle East, the key growth countries were Saudi Arabia, the UAE and Bahrain while in Europe, the growth was led by Spain, the UK and Germany. China market grew by over 43% compared to the previous year.

The number of aircraft movements at HIA reached 71,425 during Q3-2024, which is 6.2% more than the same period in the previous year. This included 24,179 take-offs and landings in July, 24,329 in August, and 22,917 in September. This strong performance highlights the airport's growing role as a major global aviation hub, handling increased volumes of air traffic with efficiency and precision.

HIA handled 670,643 tonnes of cargo in Q3-2024, a 13.5% increase compared to Q3-2023. The cargo handled was consistent across the quarter, with 221,398 tonnes processed in July, 219,525 tonnes in August, and 229,719 tonnes in September. This growth reinforces the airport's position as a key



cargo hub in the region, supporting global trade and supply chains. Additionally, over 11mn bags were

processed at HIA in Q3-2024, an 8.9% increase from the same quarter last year.



## Awqaf leads cochlear implant initiative for 40 Kyrgyz kids

**A** Qatari medical team is set to conduct cochlear implants for 40 male and female children with hearing impairment in Kyrgyzstan.

This comes as part of the co-operation between the Ministry of Endowments (Awqaf) and Islamic Affairs, represented by the General Administration of Endowments and the Ministry of Public Health, represented by Hamad Medical Corporation (HMC).

The medical team, according to a statement from Awqaf, reached Bishkek on Thursday and met with Kyrgyz Minister of Health Dr Alim Kadir Beshmaliev. The Qatari delegation includes Saad bin Omran al-Kuwari, chairman of the Cochlear Implant Support Committee at Awqaf and Dr Abdul Salam al-Qahtani, vice chairman of the committee and head of the Qatar Cochlear Implant Programme at HMC. The health and safety of children who underwent operations during previous visits by the Qatari medical delegation were reassured. The Qatari medical team also held a co-ordination meeting with the hospital administration to prepare for conducting initial examinations for children nominated for operations and to evaluate the cases that will undergo operations.

Al-Kuwari pointed out that the Qatari delegation had previously performed cochlear implant operations on 175 children. "During this visit, the medical team will conduct a comprehensive examination and evaluation of these

cases to determine the extent of their response to rehabilitation and their good integration into society and the educational process, as children who have undergone cochlear implants are being rehabilitated in specialised medical centres in the Kyrgyzstan under the supervision of a Kyrgyz medical team," he said.

Endowment can be done through the website of the General Administration of Endowments (<https://www.awqaf.gov.qa>). The online endowment can be done using a bank card through the administration's website (<https://www.awqaf.gov.qa/atm>). Mobile transactions can be done through website (<https://www.awqaf.gov.qa/sms>). Quick collection is available at 55199996 and 55199990.

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**Precision Diagnostics:**  
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As healthcare progresses, a new horizon is emerging—Precision Diagnostics is changing laboratory testing, paving the way for medical treatments tailored to each individual's genetic profile. No longer limited to standard testing, this approach expands possibilities for disease prevention, diagnosis, and treatment. This shift marks a transformation in healthcare.

**Precision Diagnostics: A Pathway to Better Care**

At the core of precision diagnostics lies the capability to deliver highly accurate, individualized information. Advances in genomics, molecular science, and digital technologies enable us to identify diseases at their earliest stages, allowing for targeted, effective treatments. Precision diagnostics moves beyond generalized care models to create customized treatment plans, improving patient outcomes.

For instance, in cancer treatment, precision diagnostics makes strides by examining tumors at the molecular level. Healthcare providers can pinpoint genetic mutations and adjust therapies to address those mutations, enhancing treatment effectiveness and minimizing adverse effects by aligning therapy with the patient's genetic blueprint.

**Personalized Medicine: The Future of Improved Care & Cure**

One of the most promising outcomes of precision diagnostics is its ability to advance personalized medicine. Using genetic data, doctors can design treatments tailored to a person's biological makeup, especially in managing chronic conditions where standard treatments often fall short.

For instance, precision diagnostics helps clinicians identify which patients benefit most from specific medications, avoiding the trial-and-error approach common in conditions like diabetes, cardiovascular disease, and autoimmune disorders. By adapting care to each individual's genetic and environmental factors, healthcare providers can ensure patients receive appropriate, effective treatments.

**Pharmacogenomics: Matching Medication to Our DNA**

A significant breakthrough in precision diagnostics is pharmacogenomics—the study of how a person's genes affect their response to medications. This rapidly evolving field changes how we prescribe drugs, particularly where finding the correct medication and dose is challenging.

Pharmacogenomic testing allows doctors to predict patient responses to medications based on genetics, removing uncertainty and enabling the prescription of the right drug at the optimal dose. Reducing side effects and improving treatment outcomes, pharmacogenomics represents a new level of healthcare efficiency and safety.

**Precision Diagnostics: A Proactive-Approach to Prevention & Wellness**

Precision diagnostics isn't just about treatment; it's about prevention. By identifying diseases before symptoms arise, this approach empowers individuals to control their health. Genetic screening can reveal risk factors for conditions like breast cancer or heart disease, giving individuals the chance to take preventive measures.

Beyond genetics, precision diagnostics incorporates advanced imaging and biomarker testing, detecting early disease signs such as Alzheimer's. These insights enable early intervention, slowing disease progression and shifting healthcare from reactive to proactive care.

**Ethics and Privacy: Protecting Genetic Data**

As we utilize genetic data, ethical concerns around privacy gain importance. The sensitivity of genetic information requires robust protections. For example, at Micro Health Laboratories, we maintain high standards of data security to ensure patients' data is treated with care and transparency.

**A Future of Precision for All**

The benefits of precision diagnostics shouldn't be limited to a select few. By making genetic testing accessible and affordable, we can ensure everyone benefits from this revolution in medicine. As technology advances, our goal is to dismantle barriers, creating an inclusive and equitable healthcare system.

**The Future is Now!**

We're entering a new era in laboratory testing—where precision is vital to improving patient outcomes. Through early detection, customized treatments, or preventive strategies, precision diagnostics redefines healthcare. It's about understanding the person behind the condition and providing care as unique as their DNA.

With each advancement, we move closer to a future where healthcare is personalized, offering patients the best path to health and well-being.

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Dr Hanan Alyafei, Sheikh Dr Mohamed bin Hamad al-Thani and Saud al-Shammari at the press conference yesterday. PICTURE: Ram Chand

# Qatar announces National Ageing Survey for above 60

**The survey will be done through home visits to a sample of 1,808 individuals, including both Qatari citizens and residents, after prior contact and co-ordination with them**

**By Joseph Varghese**  
Staff Reporter

The Ministry of Public Health (MoPH), in collaboration with the National Planning Council and Hamad Medical Corporation (HMC), has announced the launch of Qatar's National Ageing Survey for the population above 60.

The survey will be done through home visits to a sample of 1,808 individuals, including both Qatari citizens and residents, after prior contact and co-ordination with them. For any inquiries about the survey or its field team, the public can reach out to the Unified Health Sector Contact Centre on 16000.

The National Ageing Survey, designed to collect crucial information and statistical indicators related to the health and needs of individuals aged 60 and above, will be held from Novem-

ber 3-January 31, 2025.

The details of the survey were discussed at a press conference yesterday by Sheikh Dr Mohamed bin Hamad al-Thani, director of the Non-Communicable Diseases Prevention Programmes, MoPH; Saud al-Shammari, assistant director of the Department of Censuses, Surveys and Statistical Methods at the National Planning

**"The survey aims to understand the current state of the elderly population in the country and provide them with greater care and contribute positively to the community at large"**

Council; and Dr Hanan Alyafei, senior consultant in Home Care at HMC.

Sheikh Dr Mohammed said: "The survey aims to understand the current state of the elderly population in the country and provide them with greater care and contribute positively to the community at large. We aim to assist the elderly population to lead a healthy life and help them lead a comfortable life in their old age. Through these measures we hope to increase the life expectancy in the country from the current levels to much higher one."

The survey includes a comprehensive health assessment of participants, involving biometric measurements such as blood pressure, weight, hearing, and lung function. Additionally, physical and cognitive abilities will be tested and participants will be asked to complete a questionnaire on their health status and lifestyle.

Sheikh Dr Mohamed emphasised that the survey marks a significant step towards promoting and protecting the rights of the elderly. The survey aims to identify their health and social needs by developing a national database on the health of the elderly, which will aid in creating strategies, policies, and future plans that better address this demographic's needs. The survey also supports the implementation of the National Health Strategy 2024-2030 and aligns with Qatar National Vision 2030.

Al-Shammari said: "Through this survey, we aim to collect ac-

curate and comprehensive data on the elderly using the latest tools and scientific techniques for data collection and analysis. This will enable stakeholders to develop sustainable policies and programmes that meet their aspirations and ensure a healthier and happier life. The privacy of participants' data would be strictly maintained, with information being used solely for statistical purposes. Survey results will be presented as aggregated reports without any individual data."

Dr Alyafei, highlighted the significance of the survey in improving services for the elderly and ensuring their needs are met with the highest level of healthcare possible.

"The Home Care Services team will actively participate in the survey to maximise its benefits, especially given the team's extensive experience working with the elderly."

The officials urged the public to support this national initiative and to collaborate with the survey team. The survey team has received extensive training from MoPH and its partners, in collaboration with the World Health Organisation on conducting home visits and collecting data.

## WCM-Q highlights alarming impact of plastic bottled water



Authors of the commentary.

Researchers at the Institute for Population Health (IPH) of Weill Cornell Medicine - Qatar (WCM-Q) have published a commentary highlighting the massive global impact of bottled water on the health of people and the environment.

The commentary, published in BMJ Global Health, calls for an urgent rethink of international consumption habits, which see a staggering 1mn units of plastic bottled water sold every single minute worldwide.

The commentary challenges the widespread assumption that bottled water is safer and cleaner than tap water – in fact, in many countries, bottled water is subject to far looser quality standards than the rigorous standards that apply to tap water.

Plastic bottled water has also been shown to carry the risk of harmful chemicals leaching from the plastic into the water itself, especially if the water has been stored for a long time or exposed to direct sunlight or high temperatures.

The researchers also point out that up to 80% of plastic bottled water samples have been found to contain harmful contaminants like microplastics, plus other harmful substances such as phthalates and bisphenol A (BPA), which are added to plastics to make them stronger and more flexible, but which are known to be endocrine (hormone) disruptors that are detrimental to human health.

Microplastic contamination has been shown to be associated with health issues such as immune system dysregulation and oxidative stress, while exposure to BPA has been linked to cardio-

vascular disease, diabetes, and obesity.

The long-term effects of exposure to these chemicals remain unknown. Furthermore, plastic water bottles are the second most common ocean pollutant, accounting for 12% of all plastic waste, surpassed only by plastic bags.

The authors of the commentary from the IPH at WCM-Q are Dr Ravinder Mamtani, professor and vice-dean for population health and lifestyle medicine; Dr Sohaila Cheema, associate professor of clinical population health sciences and assistant dean for the IPH; Dr Amit Abraham, assistant director of the IPH; and Dr Karima Chaabna, manager of population health, IPH. Dr Albert Lowenfels of New York Medical College in Valhalla, New York, is also a listed author.

Dr Mamtani said: "The sheer magnitude of bottled water consumption, plus the evidence relating to contamination with harmful chemicals and microplastics, means that there is an urgent need for a serious conversation on the international stage about the impact of bottled water on the health of populations all over the world."

The commentary, titled "Re-thinking bottled water in public health discourse," makes a number of recommendations, calling for public health campaigns to address misunderstandings about the safety and cleanliness of tap water versus bottled water, increased investment in infrastructure in low- and middle-income countries to improve availability of clean tap water, and tougher regulations on bottled water to ensure safety and quality.

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The attendees of BPG's 28th annual off-site event.

# BPG organises 28th annual off-site event

Award-winning agency BPG (Bates PanGulf, part of WPP) recently concluded its 28th annual off-site event in Ras Al Khaimah, a statement said.

The three-day BPG Camels, hailed as the agency's best off-site to date, brought together 154 attendees representing 35 nationalities across seven markets, reinforcing BPG's commitment to diversity, integration, and innovation.

Avi Bhojani, Group CEO, BPG Group, said: "Culture is more than just words on paper. From collaboration without ego to embracing innovation and staying client-centric, we're reminded that ideas have no seniority; everyone brings something valuable to the table. In the age of AI, we continue to push together for excellence, celebrate success, and stay human by design."

BPG Camels fostered cross-discipline creative brilliance, highlighting BPG's 'digital-first, integrated by intent' positioning. Eleven teams tackled as many creative briefs, highlighting their ability to generate high-impact campaigns under pressure.

Toby Hoare, global client lead for Unilever at WPP and BPG board member, said: "Awards validate creative thinking, foster ambition, attract and retain top-tier talent, and build client trust. They also enhance brand reputation,



Gold winning team with jury.

with creative brands achieving 2.4x higher income growth over five years."

Building on an impressive 50% growth in 2023 revenue, BPG is setting ambitious goals for 2025. The off-site showcased the agency's potential to achieve these targets, focusing on high-stakes creative challenges evaluated by a jury of industry experts: Sonal Dabral (founder creative consultancy, Tribha and former CCO/chairman of Bates Asia, DDB India, Ogilvy India, Malaysia, and Singapore); Mariagrazia De Angelis (general manager at Landor MEA); Dominic Stallard (founder,

The Experience Makers); Clark Williams (director of Marketing and Communications - NEOM/Trojena) and Ravi Rao (former CEO GroupM, Mena and strategic advisor to BPG).

The off-site also underscored the critical role of culture in talent attraction and retention. As the industry grapples with hybrid work models and evolving employee expectations, BPG's cohesive culture stood out.

Darius Labelle, president, BPG UAE, added: "At BPG, we recognise the importance of creating a deliberate process that allows our teams to not only generate ideas

but also refine and elevate them into meaningful solutions. Drawing from John Cleese's concept of 'Open and Closed' states, we make intentional space for both exploration and execution."

With its multidisciplinary approach, emphasis on collaboration, and a surge of fresh ideas, BPG is poised for global industry recognition and a successful 2025.

Williams stated that "nobody does 'culture' better than BPG, which continues to attract and retain excellent people who eventually become some of the agency's biggest advocates."

Stallard said: "The BPG off-site was more than just an event - it was the start of a cultural movement. The agency is well on its way to major industry recognition!"

De Angelis said: "It was an inspiring event - in just six hours the competing teams were able not only to come up with exciting ideas but also package them in a compelling way."

Rao said: "BPG's commitment to fostering a thriving company culture - both in workplace and through their off-site events has been key to their sustained success."

Dabral said: "What stood out for me, was the remarkable volume and quality of ideas generated in such a short time, driven by a powerful spirit of collaboration."

## QM kicks off Fall with diverse Nov activities

Qatar Museums (QM) welcomes the upcoming Fall season with a diverse range of activities. November will feature a wide variety of family programmes including workshops, camps, and storytelling and Family Day sessions for both kids and adults.

M7 will host some creative workshops and training in November to engage the public with the works of celebrated American artist Ellsworth Kelly. These events are curated as part of the Ellsworth Kelly at 100 Exhibition which will open at M7 on October 31.

M7 for Educators: Teacher Training and Toolkit Exploration For educators; English Sessions: November 6: 9am-12 noon; November 17, 18: 4pm-6pm. M7 Kids Workshop: Shapes in Space (for ages 8-12) - November 2: 1pm-3pm.

The Museum of Islamic Art (MIA) will host storytelling sessions, family day activities, workshops and a photo walk complementing the exhibition In the Footsteps of Ara Güler: Exploring the Photographer's

Legacy for children and adults.

Story Time at MIA Library: Pirate Jamjoom - November 4: 11am-12 noon; Photo walk inspired by the themes of Ara Güler's photography, in collaboration with Tasweer: Khalifa al-Obaidly, November 8: 2pm-5pm. Only limited slots are available.

Family day: November 9: 3pm-5pm; Workshop: The Art of Drawing Jewellery, November 18-20: 3pm-4.30pm.

Mathaf: Arab Museum of Modern Art will host a series of workshops. Blue city with clay (for ages 10-13) - November 25, 28: 3pm-5pm; Art meets Fashion, November 6, 13, 20, 27: 4pm-5pm - Adults will explore design inspired by Gerome's exhibition.

3-2-1 Qatar Olympic and Sports Museum will organise a special programme to promote physical activity and well being. Run for Diabetes - November 7: 2pm-7pm, organised in collaboration with Aspire and the Qatar Diabetes Association.

Liwan, will host a workshop on Souq Al Haraj: An Urban Furniture Lab - November 2, 6, 10, 13, 17, 20, 24, 27: 4pm-6.30pm.

## Rwanda: A nation's journey of resilience and renewal

By Amjad Vanimal

With its picturesque landscapes, well-maintained roads, awe-inspiring infrastructure, and incredibly hospitable people, you find yourself in the Republic of Rwanda. Nestled in the Great Rift Valley of East Africa, this landlocked gem stands at the crossroads of the African Great Lakes region and Southeast Africa. Known as the "Land of a Thousand Hills," Rwanda is not just a destination; it's an experience that blends stunning natural beauty with a complex history and a bright future.

As we embarked on our journey from Doha with RwandAir, we were immediately greeted by the unmistakable warmth of Rwandan hospitality. The atmosphere was charged with optimism, reflecting a nation that has triumphed over its tumultuous past. Although global headlines surrounding the Marburg virus had caused some concern, RDB and the Rwandan health department reassured us of a safe and enriching FAM trip. Media representatives from around the world—spanning Qatar, Canada, France, Kenya, and Ethiopia—had gathered for this week-long adventure, offering us a unique opportunity to immerse ourselves in one of Africa's cleanest and safest nations.

**A Complex History:** The beauty of Rwanda is starkly juxtaposed with its tragic past. The country's history is marred by the 1994 genocide, where nearly one million people lost their lives in a brutal conflict fueled by ethnic tensions between the Hutu and Tutsi communities. For around 100 days, the world stood by as horrific violence unfolded. The genocide serves as a painful reminder of humanity's capacity for cruelty, yet Rwanda has demonstrated an extraordinary ability to heal. The people of Rwanda have chosen a path of coexistence, aiming for progress and unity despite the lingering scars of history.

**Kigali Genocide Memorial:** One of the most poignant experiences during our visit was the Kigali Genocide Memorial. Located in the capital city, this powerful tribute honours the nearly one million Tutsi and moderate Hutu victims of the genocide. Established in 2004, the memorial includes mass graves where over 250,000 victims are buried. Walking through the exhibits, we were struck by the detailed historical narratives that revealed the root causes and consequences of the genocide. Photographs, artifacts, and survivor testimonies provided a sobering insight into the events that unfolded, emphasizing the vital need for tolerance, unity, and peace.

One of the most heart-wrenching sections was the children's room, memorializing young victims and the innocence that was lost. The memorial's purpose extends beyond remembrance; it promotes peacebuilding and reconciliation in Rwanda. Managed by the Aegis Trust, the memorial advocates for global awareness against hate and prejudice, echoing the solemn pledge of "Never Again."

**Campaign Against Genocide Museum:** Another significant site was the Campaign Against Genocide Museum, situated at the Parliament Building in Kigali. This museum honours the heroic efforts of the Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF) in stopping the genocide. Here, we learned about the resistance and resilience that characterized the RPF's actions, led by current Rwandan President Paul Kagame. The exhibits detailed the events leading to the genocide and the international community's apathy during those dark days.



A particularly evocative feature of the museum is the "Tunnel of Escape," which preserved a secret route used by RPF soldiers to navigate Kigali during the chaos. This tangible connection to history deepened our understanding of the conditions faced by those who fought to protect civilians. Through this museum, Rwanda communicates a powerful message of resilience and unity while educating future generations about the dangers of hatred and violence.

**Imbuga City Walk:** Beyond the memorials, Rwanda's capital is a vibrant hub of life and culture. Imbuga City Walk, a beautifully landscaped urban space in Kigali, is designed for leisure and social interaction. As we strolled along the well-maintained paths surrounded by lush greenery, we felt a sense of tranquility wash over us. The walk often hosts cultural events, art exhibitions, and performances, showcasing Rwandan heritage and fostering community engagement.

Project Manager John Claude Niyibizi shared the vision behind Imbuga City Walk: "This project aims to enhance the quality of life for the residents of Kigali. By minimizing traffic and integrating green spaces, we're not only improving the environment but also fostering a healthier and more enjoyable community space."

The walk is more than just a recreational area; it symbolizes Rwanda's commitment to sustainability and urban development.

**Nyamirambo Women's Center:** Another remarkable aspect of Rwanda's resilience is evident in community initiatives like the Nyamirambo Women's Center (NWC). Established in 2007, this organization empowers women through vocational training, literacy classes, and entrepreneurship support. The center not only focuses on skill-building but also provides health education on reproductive health and nutrition, addressing the needs of women in the community.

Visitors to the NWC can participate in guided tours of the Nyamirambo neighbourhood, which not only promotes local culture but also generates income to sustain the centre's activities. This initiative is a

testament to the spirit of solidarity and empowerment among Rwandan women.

**Nyandungu Eco Park:** For those seeking a natural escape, Nyandungu Eco Park offers a serene environment in Kigali, promoting environmental conservation and community well-being. Covering approximately 121 hectares, the park features walking and cycling trails, picnic areas, and diverse habitats, from wetlands to forests. Visitors can immerse themselves in nature while learning about the importance of sustainability.

The park also plays a significant role in promoting eco-tourism, attracting both locals and visitors. Its commitment to enhancing quality of life aligns with Rwanda's broader environmental initiatives.

**Canopy Walk Experience,** located in the lush Nyungwe Forest National Park, offers an unforgettable adventure amid the treetops. This 160-meter-long walkway, suspended 70 meters above the forest floor, provides stunning panoramic views of one of Africa's oldest rainforests. Visitors can expect an exhilarating journey with sightings of diverse wildlife, including rare primates like chimpanzees and colobus monkeys, along with vibrant bird species unique to the region. The walk offers a rare perspective of Rwanda's pristine natural beauty, making it a must-do activity for eco-tourists and adventure seekers exploring the country's rich landscapes.

**Ellen DeGeneres Campus for the Dian Fossey Gorilla Fund:** No visit to Rwanda would be complete without acknowledging its incredible wildlife. The Ellen DeGeneres Campus for the Dian Fossey Gorilla Fund, located in Musanze, serves as a central hub for mountain gorilla conservation. Opened in 2020, the campus features state-of-the-art facilities dedicated to research, education, and community engagement.

Visitors can participate in educational programs and guided tours, gaining insights into the lives of mountain gorillas and the ongoing conservation efforts. The campus embodies Rwanda's commitment to wildlife protection and sustainable tourism, fostering a deeper appreciation for these magnificent creatures.



### Trekking in search of gorillas

Rwanda's breathtaking landscapes and unique wildlife are epitomized by the unforgettable experience of trekking to observe mountain gorillas in their natural habitat. These intelligent and socially complex creatures inhabit the misty Virunga Mountains, shared by Rwanda, Uganda, and the Democratic Republic of the Congo. With a population of around 1,063, mountain gorillas are endangered due to habitat loss and poaching. Adult males, with striking silverbacks, can weigh up to 220kg and reach heights of six feet. Herbivores by nature, they consume up to 20kg of vegetation daily, making them both awe-inspiring and vital to their ecosystem.

Trekking to see mountain gorillas is an unforgettable adventure, typically starting in Volcanoes National Park in Rwanda. A trekking permit is essential to visit the gorillas, and it's advisable to book well in advance due to limited availability, as only 96 permits are issued per day. The fees collected from permits contribute to conservation efforts and support local communities.

Led by experienced guides, trekking expeditions prioritize safety while providing fascinating insights into gorilla behaviour. Depending on the group assigned, the trek can last a few hours as you navigate through dense forests and steep hills. The excitement of finally encountering a family of gorillas makes every step worthwhile. Upon locating a gorilla group, you have the opportunity to observe them for an hour, witnessing their interactions—grooming, playing, and engaging in social behaviours that reveal their intricate social structures.

As our guide, Daniel, explained, "These mountain gorillas can live up to 35 to 40 years in the wild, and some have even been known to live longer in captivity. The gestation period for females is about 8.5 months, similar to that of humans." He added that gorillas experience different developmental stages, with females typically beginning to reproduce around eight years of age and males transitioning into the "silverback" stage by age 12.

Rwanda has made remarkable strides in gorilla conservation, contributing to a steady increase in their population. Initiatives such as anti-poaching patrols, habitat restoration, and community engagement programs play vital roles in these efforts. By visiting the gorillas, tourists directly support these initiatives, promoting sustainable tourism that benefits both wildlife and local communities.

This journey through Rwanda's stunning landscapes not only brings adventure but also deepens appreciation for conservation and the delicate ecosystems supporting these majestic animals, making it a truly transformative experience.

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**GULF TIMES**

## Prosperity requires a healthy planet

Progress on poverty reduction has slowed almost to a standstill in recent years. With nearly 700mn people still living on less than \$2.15 per day, the world is far from the goal of eradicating extreme poverty by 2030. At the current pace, it will take at least three decades to reach this target, and more than a century to lift everyone above the poverty line of \$6.85 per day used for upper-middle-income countries. Today, 44% of the global population falls below this threshold.

Tepid economic growth, the Covid-19 pandemic, ongoing conflicts, and the escalating climate crisis have disrupted – and even reversed – a quarter-century of extraordinary progress, during which the share of the world's population living in extreme poverty plunged from around one-third to one-tenth. While high-income countries have largely recovered from these setbacks, extreme poverty in the poorest countries is still higher than in 2019, and their growth is expected to be weaker than in the decade before the pandemic. And as global warming accelerates, nearly one in five people will likely experience an extreme weather event from which they will struggle to recover, exacerbating poverty.

According to the World Bank's new Poverty, Prosperity, and Planet Report, altering this trajectory requires recognising that poverty, shared prosperity, and climate risks are interconnected. In response, countries must foster faster and more inclusive growth while also shielding people from the effects of climate change.

Addressing inequality can play an important role in achieving these interconnected goals. In the world's most unequal countries, economic growth leads to a smaller reduction in poverty. If every country experienced annual per capita income growth of 2%, it would take another 60 years to eliminate extreme poverty. But if the Gini index – a measure of income inequality – in every country were to decrease by 2% annually, that target would be reached in 20 years.

High levels of inequality also prevent the less well-off from climbing

**As global warming accelerates, nearly one in five people will likely experience an extreme weather event from which they will struggle to recover, exacerbating poverty**

the socioeconomic ladder, depriving them of opportunities to improve their lives. Delivering better-functioning labour markets, investing in education and health, and strengthening social safety nets would enable poor people to benefit from economic growth.

Each country's path forward should be tailored to its specific circumstances in order to deliver the best possible outcomes across these dimensions while managing tradeoffs. For low-income countries supported by the World Bank's International Development Association (IDA), that means promoting faster and more inclusive growth and

increasing investment in public services and infrastructure to improve access to education and create jobs. Because these countries are home to 70% of all people living in extreme poverty and produce minimal greenhouse-gas (GHG) emissions, their anti-poverty efforts do not come at a high environmental cost.

The focus in lower-middle-income countries should be on delivering sustained growth and shared prosperity, and improving the efficiency of policies to boost income, build climate resilience, and keep GHG emissions in check. Scaling up investment in climate mitigation is especially important because the emissions of many middle-income countries are projected to rise over the coming decades. Such investments could also lead to better health outcomes – for example, by reducing air pollution.

Lastly, upper-middle-income and high-income countries, which account for four-fifths of global carbon dioxide emissions, must rapidly phase out their dependence on fossil fuels and lead the green transition. Although GHG emissions are projected to decline under current policies, the pace is not nearly fast enough to limit global warming.

Ending poverty and boosting shared prosperity on a liveable planet requires bold policy choices, co-ordinated global action, and a significant increase in financing for sustainable development, which would allow low-income countries to invest in improving the lives and livelihoods of their people.

Today, the world has a historic opportunity to overcome the injustices and mitigate the dangers of entrenched poverty, systemic inequality, and climate change. We must not squander this chance to make meaningful, lasting progress toward broad-based prosperity. – Project Syndicate



# First Trump came for the immigrants

By Nina L. Khrushcheva  
Moscow

**V**ermin. Rapists. Poison in America's blood. These are just a few of the dehumanising epithets Donald Trump has used to describe Hispanic immigrants in the US. Now, he is promising the "largest deportation effort in American history." His vision of rounding up millions of people is unlike anything seen in a democracy and sounds more like Nazi-occupied France.

Try to imagine what Trump's plan would entail. Immigration agents raiding farms and factories to haul away workers. School teachers and administrators coerced into informing on students. Covert surveillance of Roman Catholic churches, so that Hispanic worshippers can be nabbed. Families being separated, with parents being sent away and potentially losing contact with their minor children.

Trump says that only undocumented immigrants – who Republicans claim number 20-30mn, far higher than authoritative estimates of around 12mn – would be targeted. But with over 60mn people of Hispanic heritage living in the US (as of 2020), does anyone imagine that his immigrant dragnet would not ensnare US citizens? US Immigration and Customs Enforcement hardly has a spotless record in this area, and it has never carried out anything like mass deportation on the scale that Trump envisions.

Trump would give his operation the patina of legality by invoking an old and obscure law: the Alien Enemies Act of 1798, which authorises the president to "apprehend, restrain, secure,

and remove" non-citizens within the US who hail from a "hostile" country. The act was supposedly intended for use during wartime, to prevent espionage and sabotage, but that is not why President John Adams enacted it. He wanted to intimidate the followers of his own vice-president, Thomas Jefferson, whom he believed were excessively influenced by French revolutionaries.

Since the US was not actually at war with France, Adams included a provision that the Act could be used against nationals of a foreign state that threatens an "invasion" or "predatory incursion." But, in practice, the Alien Enemies Act has been invoked only three times, always during major conflicts.

During the War of 1812, all British nationals living in the US were required to report their status. During World War I, President Woodrow Wilson invoked the act against nationals of the Wilhelmine, Austrian, and Ottoman empires, as well as citizens of their ally Bulgaria, claiming that these so-called enemy aliens could be treated as prisoners of war.

Most infamously, President Franklin D. Roosevelt invoked the act after the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor in December 1941, with Japanese, German, and Italian nationals all being designated enemy aliens. The vast majority of those herded into internment camps were Japanese, but a number of German Jews – who had avoided Nazi death camps by emigrating to the US – were also rounded up and detained.

For Trump, immigrants themselves – not the countries they come from – are invading the US. And, as the Brennan Center for Justice warns, the Alien

Enemies Act can be "wielded against immigrants who have done nothing wrong, have evinced no signs of disloyalty, and are lawfully present" in the US. There is no reason to think that Trump will not take full advantage of this, especially given the Supreme Court's recent ruling that current and former presidents enjoy near-total immunity from critical prosecution for their official acts while in office.

Discussions about Trump's anti-immigrant policies have often focused on their economic impact which, according to Bloomberg, could cost the US economy some \$4.7tn over ten years. Who will harvest produce in California's Central Valley following Trump's purge? Who will change the sheets and scrub the floors of hospitals and retirement homes? Who will bury the dead and maintain the cemeteries?

With Trump's immigrant purge costing the US economy so dearly, the prices of food and other basic goods could skyrocket. Moreover, deportation itself is expensive. According to one estimate, deporting 1mn undocumented immigrants per year – the rate Trump's vice-presidential candidate, J.D. Vance, has suggested – could cost \$88bn annually.

But the economic costs of mass deportation would be dwarfed by the costs to America's soul. When I moved to the US almost 35 years ago, I thought that my experience growing up in the Soviet Union would be far removed from the ways of this supposed bastion of freedom and the rule of law. Today, I hear in Trump's shocking campaign rhetoric – his menacing talk of "enemies within" and his utter lack of regard for rights, norms, and the rule of law – the echoes of something familiar:

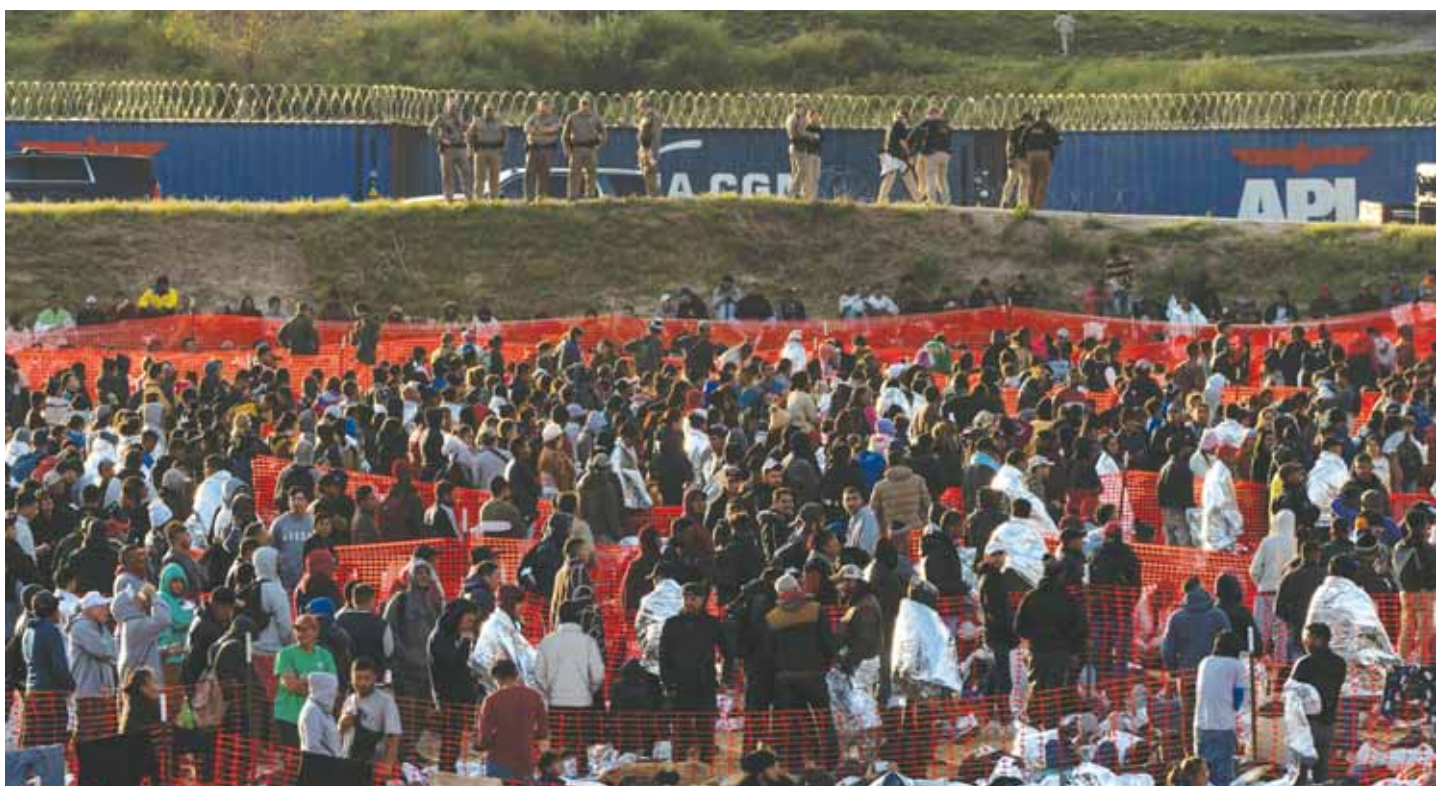
a dangerous dictator eager to rule over a weak, divided, and paranoid society.

What happens if the "sharp nighttime ring or the rude knock at the door" – the terror of my homeland during the darkest years of Stalinist terror – becomes part of American life? Will Americans turn a blind eye to the immigrant holding camps that spring up? Will people become informers, turning in their neighbours and co-workers to Trump's immigration police?

America is already being terrorised by Trump. That much is clear whenever powerful leaders debate themselves for his favour. Cardinal Archbishop of California's Central Valley following Trump's purge? Who will change the sheets and scrub the floors of hospitals and retirement homes? Who will bury the dead and maintain the cemeteries?

Among some groups – not least the Republican establishment – such cowardice would almost certainly persist in the face of mass deportations. But anyone tempted to vote for a man planning to implement a policy of state terror should remember Pastor Martin Niemöller's famous post-WWII confession: "First they came for the Communists," he began, "and I did not speak out, because I was not a Communist." The same went for Socialists, trade unionists, and Jews. But then "they came for me," he concludes, and "there was no one left" to speak out. – Project Syndicate

● *Nina L. Khrushcheva, Professor of International Affairs at The New School, is the co-author (with Jeffrey Taylor) of In Putin's Footsteps: Searching for the Soul of an Empire Across Russia's Eleven Time Zones (St. Martin's Press, 2019).*



File photo: Migrants wait at a processing centre in Eagle Pass, Texas, on December 19, 2023.

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# Alaraby TV launches programme on situation in Gaza and Lebanon

By Tawfik Lamari  
Staff Reporter

In line with the anniversary of the ongoing war, Alaraby TV has launched a new programme titled *Fi Zamm Alharb - Taqdeer Mawqif (In Times of War - Situation Assessment)*, which covers the developments in Gaza and Lebanon.

Hosted by Khaled al-Gharabli and Wael al-Tamimi, the programme aims to provide Arab viewers with an in-depth analysis of the escalating conflicts in the Middle East. The programme brings together a range

of politicians, academics and experts from various fields to offer insight into the political, economic, and military dynamics shaping the region, with the aim of informing viewers of the realities behind the headlines and to raise pressing questions about the Middle East's future amidst renewed geopolitical tensions.

In the first episodes, the programme hosted former Jordanian foreign minister Marwan Muasher, who discussed Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's vision for a "New Middle East", emphasising the absence of a strong Arab project to counter these initiatives.

Military affairs expert Dr Omar Ashour provided an analysis of the military realities in Gaza and Lebanon and the obstacles facing Netanyahu's plans.

The programme also welcomed former Lebanese minister Dr Tarek Mitri, who shared his perspective on implementing UN Security Council Resolution 1701 as a solution to halt the current Israeli aggression on Lebanon.

In a special episode, the programme hosted former UK Labour Party leader Jeremy Corbyn to discuss Western protests against Israeli violations in Gaza and Lebanon and the reasons why these pro-



A screenshot from the programme.

tests have not developed into an influential movement.

The programme's creators also announced an exclusive interview with Hamas leader Osama Hamdan to discuss the future of the movement following the death of its political bureau chief Yahya Sinwar.

*In Times of War - Situation Assessment* airs Sunday to Wednesday at 10pm Doha time, in addition to being available on Alaraby TV's platforms.

Alongside its analytical content, the programme enhances the information presented with the 3D graphics technology to place viewers at the heart of events.

## Decade of partnership between Qatar, UK libraries a boon to the world

The partnership between the Qatar National Library (QNL) and the British Library (BL) is one of the most prominent ones that the British institution has concluded throughout its long history to enrich human knowledge and make information available to researchers worldwide.

This partnership, which began in 2012, resulted in the launch of the Qatar Digital Library (QDL) in 2014 as part of a long-term partnership between Qatar Foundation (QF), the QNL and BL.

After 10 years since its inception, it has become one of the largest digitisation projects for national libraries, as the partnership includes the digitisation of a large collection of the BL's holdings to deepen the understanding of the modern history and cultural and civilisational heritage of the Gulf region and the Arab and Islamic worlds.

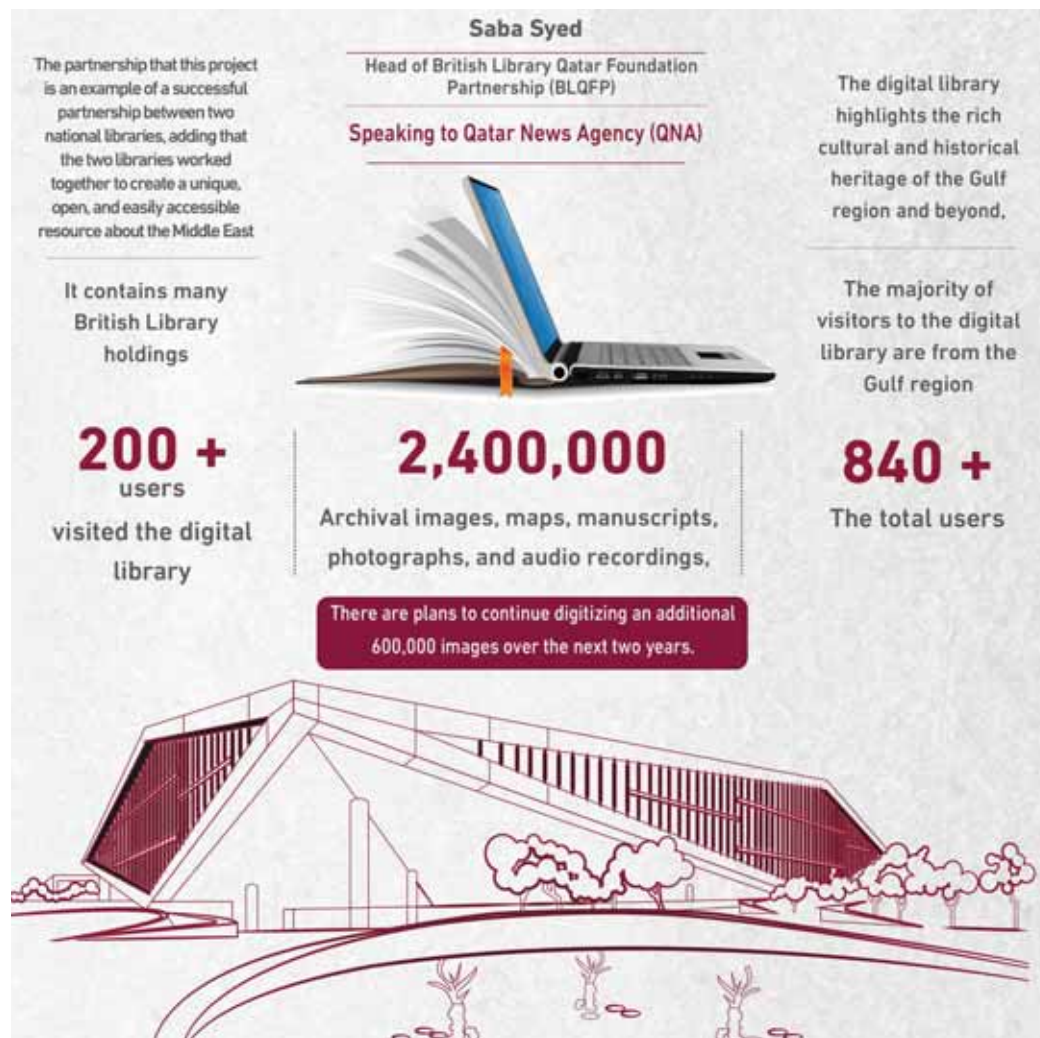
In collaboration with the QNL, the BL has digitised its collections of Gulf history and Arab science and made them available to millions of users around the world, opening up new areas of research and creativity, and revolutionising the ease of accessing, viewing, and studying these collections rich in historical information.

In January 2019, the third phase of the partnership began and saw the digitisation of 900,000 new pages of documents and records on the history of the Gulf region, as well as manuscripts of Arabic works in the fields of science, medicine, engineering, and astronomy.

New digitised materials about the Gulf include music, maps, ships logs, reports, letters, correspondence, private papers, and historical publications.

Most of the reports, letters, and documents selected for the digitisation project in its third phase constituted completely new material for researchers as they had not been indexed or published before.

These documents shed new light on the history of Qatar and the Gulf region, particularly the East India Company (EIC)'s ship records from the 17th century to the mid-19th century, after being converted into digital maps that help users learn about the steady increase in the number of shipping operations between the Gulf,



India, and Britain, since the first moments of the Gulf regions integration into the global economy.

Head of British Library Qatar Foundation Partnership (BLQFP), Saba Syed, told the Qatar News Agency (QNA) that this project is an example of a successful partnership between two national libraries.

The two libraries, she said, worked together to create a unique, open, and easily accessible resource about the Middle East, accomplished through a detailed and complex digitisation process that involved technical challenges that were overcome using innovative digital solutions to make historical documents available.

Syed explained that the QDL is a special partnership that includes a huge archive containing 2,400,000 archival images, maps,

manuscripts, photographs, audio recordings, and many other items from the BL's collections.

It features a guide with descriptions in Arabic and English, as well as over 200 articles by experts in both languages.

The digital library highlights the rich cultural and historical heritage of the Gulf region and beyond, and it is available online for free for the first time, becoming an important resource and tool for researchers, historians, and enthusiasts of all ages with a passion for knowledge.

The project, Syed said, involved the BL's collections, including the British government's India Office Records (IOR) covering the period from 1763-1951, private documents and Arabic scientific manuscripts, including maps, photographs, records, correspondence, audio files, and manuscripts, all

of which provide insight into the rich life, politics, business and culture of the Gulf region.

She said that among the most prominent documents are 500 maps and plans of the Arabian Gulf and the region as a whole, private papers of Sir Lewis Pelly, who resided in the Gulf between 1862 and 1872, and Arabic scientific manuscripts from the British Library's Manuscripts Collections, covering topics such as medicine, mathematics, astronomy, and engineering.

The content highlights a selection of photographs, postcards, sketches, drawings, watercolours, etchings, engravings, and illustrations, she added.

The official said that the digital library is an indispensable resource for those involved in research projects, as well as for authors and individuals who are

searching for their family roots.

"In just the past year, the digital library has seen more than 200,000 users," she said. "We are now in the fourth phase, having reached a total of more than 840,000 users and 7.7mn browsing processes during the third phase, which spanned from January 2019 to June 2022."

Syed noted that the majority of visitors to the digital library are from the Gulf region, which constitutes six out of the top ten nationalities using the library.

She stated that over 50 books and hundreds of articles that have been published between 2017-2023 cited content from the Qatar Digital Library.

About the future co-operation prospects, Syed said that there are plans to continue digitising an additional 600,000 images over the next two years.

The British Library is an important part of both British and global cultural heritage.

Located in the heart of London, it is the second largest library in the world after the US Library of Congress in terms of content.

The library houses around 150mn books, images, maps, manuscripts, and illustrations from all corners of the world, in various languages and formats, both printed and digital.

The library receives copies of every book published throughout the United Kingdom and Ireland, along with a significant number of titles from outside the country.

This allows it to add approximately 3mn new items each year, including books, manuscripts, illustrations, magazines, newspapers, audio recordings, musical recordings, videos, patents, maps, stamps, databases, and more.

Some items in its collection date back to around 2000 BC, and all these materials occupy about 11km of new shelving annually.

Among the library's holdings are around 18mn books, along with vast quantities of manuscripts and historical items.

The library originally began as part of the British Museum from the mid-19th century, functioning as a large reading room within it.

It became a separate entity through legislation passed in 1973 and subsequently moved to its current location in the St Pancras area of central London by 1997.

## QFFD supports Syrian refugees in Jordan and Lebanon

The Qatar Fund for Development (QFFD) has contributed \$4mn to support more than 72,000 Syrian refugees in Lebanon and Jordan through the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) multi-purpose cash assistance programme over four months.

From February to May 2024, this assistance enabled more than 58,700 Syrian refugees in Lebanon and about 14,000 refugees in Jordan to secure their most urgent needs, including food, rent, and healthcare.

Acting QFFD director-general Sultan bin Ahmed al-Aseeri has emphasised the importance of continued support and co-operation with the UNHCR.

"The QFFD is committed to addressing the urgent needs of Syrian refugees and their host communities," he said. "Our partnership with the UNHCR is a testament to our shared responsibility towards the international community."

Ahmed Mohsen, the UNHCR representative to Qatar, said: "This contribution came at a critical time, especially with the continued growth of humanitarian needs and the ongoing struggle of refugees to provide basic necessities for their families."

The multi-purpose cash assistance programme has been a cornerstone of the UNHCR's response to the Syrian refugee crisis, allowing beneficiaries to choose their priorities with dignity and contributing to the local economy.

Lebanon remains one of the countries hosting the largest number of refugees relative to its population, with an estimated 1.5mn Syrian refugees, while Jordan continues to host about 625,000 Syrian refugees and approximately 69,000 refugees of other nationalities registered with the UNHCR.

Qatar is one of the main partners of the UNHCR in the region.

Contributions from the QFFD to support UNHCR programmes have reached nearly \$103mn since 2018, benefiting about 2mn refugees in Bangladesh, Jordan, Lebanon, and internally displaced persons in Afghanistan, Iraq, and Yemen. - QNA

## AJMI to launch new course

Al Jazeera Media Institute (AJMI) will launch a course on media discourse analysis from November 17-19.

The course will be led by trainer Dr Mohammed al-Ali.

The course focuses on enhancing the participants' understanding of media discourse concepts and learn how to apply media analysis tools to build and form effective and impactful discourses, a statement said.

The course targets professionals holding a university degree in media and having practical experience in the field.

It sheds light on how media influences formation of public opinion by deconstructing media discourse into its basic elements, in addition to focusing on different types of discourses and required tools for analysing such discourses in depth.

The course covers topics such as an introduction to media discourse analysis, discourse deconstruction, understanding media discourse importance among other types, and analysing media texts in their temporal and political context.

Dr al-Ali, supervisor of the Careful Journalism Unit at Al Jazeera Net, has extensive experience of more than two decades in media and training, and has previously held various positions in several major media institutions, the statement added.



## "Púrpura" –

A One-of-a-Kind Brazilian Gemstone Collection by World-Renowned Designer Ana Albuquerque



We are proud to unveil Púrpura, a dazzling collection of rare Brazilian gemstones that reflects the deep richness of purple hues and the mastery of high-end jewelry design. Named after the Portuguese word for "purple," this exclusive collection symbolizes both elegance and rarity, capturing the breathtaking beauty of Brazil's finest natural treasures.

refined craftsmanship. Each piece in the collection is carefully designed to reflect Ana Albuquerque's unparalleled attention to detail, combining the vibrant energy of Brazil's gemstone heritage with contemporary luxury.

The Púrpura collection is centered around the allure of amethysts, one of Brazil's most coveted gemstones, and features various shades of purple that resonate with sophistication and strength. The meticulous selection of gemstones, set in unique and stunning designs, showcases the brilliance that only Ana Albuquerque can bring to life.

This collection is not just a tribute to gemstones but a celebration of femininity, empowerment, and timeless beauty. With Ana Albuquerque at the helm, Púrpura pushes the boundaries of design, offering pieces that are both works of art and timeless investments.



Created by none other than the one of the world's greatest designers, Ana Albuquerque, Púrpura represents a bold fusion of nature's brilliance and

## Msheireb Properties celebrates at Qatar Tourism Awards

Msheireb Properties, the leading sustainable real estate developer in Qatar, announced winning several honours at the Qatar Tourism Awards 2024, presented by Qatar Tourism (QT) and UN Tourism, for the second consecutive year.

In the hospitality sector, Msheireb Properties' hotels, including Zula Wellness Resort by Chiva-Som, Mandarin Oriental Doha, and Premier Inn Doha Education City Hotel, received several awards.

The awards recognise innovation and excellence in the nation's tourism sector, aiming to raise awareness of Qatar as a world-class tourism and leisure destination.

In a press statement, Msheireb Properties chief executive engineer Ali Mohammed al-Kuwari, said: "The Qatar Tourism Awards celebrate the very best of the industry, and it's a special distinction for us to be recognised among them."

Msheireb Downtown Doha (MDD) was named "Leading Sustainable Attraction", while Msheireb Museums received the "Iconic Local Attraction" award.

The company's hospitality portfolio achieved remarkable success, with Mandarin Oriental Doha winning "Outstanding 5-Star Hotel", and Zula Wellness Resort securing two awards - "Exceptional Resort Experience" and "Exceptional Spa Experience" through its Chiva-Som, Hua Hin facility.

Premier Inn Doha Education City Hotel was recognised as the "Outstanding 3-Star Hotel".

"These awards reflect the hard work of our entire team," al-Kuwari said.

"We remain dedicated to preserving Qatar's rich cultural heritage while pushing the bound-



aries of sustainable development."

"By leveraging innovative technologies and creating meaningful cultural experiences, we'll

continue to attract diverse visitors and solidify

MDD as a vital cultural hub for years to come," he said.

## Old Doha Port wins double at Qatar Tourism Awards

During its first participation in the Qatar Tourism Award, Old Doha Port won the honours for "Outstanding Cultural Tourism Experience" and "Leading Event Celebrating Local Culture".

Old Doha Port's two recognitions, a statement said, solidify its place as one of the nation's newest and most prominent tourist destinations, offering diverse cultural experiences to both the local community and international visitors.

Dedicated to preserving and celebrating Qatar's maritime heritage, Old Doha Port embodies the characteristics of Qatari culture through its distinctive architecture, which is inspired by Qatari coastal cities and villages.

In addition to the traditional cultural events, Old Doha Port continuously hosts annual fishing competitions and pearl diving events, both of which are distinctly significant to Qatar's culture.

They also have previously hosted Open Water Days, Kids Games Booths, and the Throwback Food Festival.

These events mark Old Doha Port as a hub for local celebrations and events, reinforcing its status as a premier tourist destination enjoyed by both locals and international visitors.

"Winning these two prestigious awards at the Qatar Tourism Awards is a monumental achievement for Old Doha Port as we continuously work towards becoming the leading maritime and tourism destination," chief executive Mohammed Abdulla al-Mulla said.

"The port has become the official maritime gateway to Qatar for visiting yachts, boats, and cruise ships, where the rich tapestry of Doha's history intertwines with cutting-edge maritime services, sustainable practices, and cultural heritage," he said. "We are always innovating our offerings to provide memorable experiences."

Old Doha Port is currently gearing up to host and organise the Qatar Boat Show 2024, from November 6-9.



# QNB Group main sponsor of Milipol 2024



Officials at the signing ceremony for QNB to be the main sponsor for Milipol 2024.

QNB Group is the main sponsor for Milipol, a platform for companies and professionals in the security industry to showcase their latest products and services, a statement said.

The 15th edition of the event will take place from today under the theme *Technology in the Service of Security* at the Doha Exhibition and Convention Centre (DECC).

The bank's sponsorship, it was explained, comes as part of its continuous dedication to be at the forefront and to align itself with all projects that support the security objectives of Qatar National Vision 2030.

It also adds emphasis on the role the bank undertakes to tackle the issues in the field of homeland security, law enforcement and civil defence to exchange knowledge and ideas.

"We are delighted to be the main sponsor for Milipol Qatar 2024, one of the region's prominent exhibitions on homeland security and safety," said QNB Group chief

operating officer Ali Rashid al-Mohannadi.

"This prestigious event offers a unique platform demonstrating our commitment to advancing security technologies and collaborative innovations," he said.

Milipol Qatar 2024 focuses on cybersecurity, artificial intelligence (AI), and cyber threats, as well as cybersecurity measures that can be used to protect critical infrastructure and the implementation of modern technology for safe and secure cities.

The event also offers solutions and tools for the latest security trends and technologies.

QNB Group stands as the leading financial institution in the Middle East and Africa, recognised as one of the most valuable banking brands in the region.

With a robust presence in over 28 countries across three continents, Asia, Europe, and Africa - QNB offers comprehensive financial services and solutions.

Its global network serves a diverse clientele, spanning corporate, institutional, and retail sectors.



## VCUarts Qatar makes its mark at AIR expo

Nine artists from Virginia Commonwealth University School of the Arts in Qatar (VCUarts Qatar), a Qatar Foundation (QF) partner university, are part of the Fire Station's latest Artist in Residence (AIR) exhibition, "A House Overlooking the World", which runs until December 31.

The exhibition showcases a diverse range of works created by 17 artists who participated in the 2023-2024 residency programme.

The VCUarts Qatar designers are MOTOElastic (a creative studio by VCUarts Qatar faculty members Marco Bruno and Simone Carena), faculty member Charlotte Rodenberg and alumnae Somaia Dorzadeh, Aisha al-Abdulla, Hannah Fakhri, Maryam Altajer, Noora Alhardan and Zainab Alshibani.

"A House Overlooking the World" showcases artworks emanating from the artists' constant search either within themselves or the environment and society around them, and is a metaphor reflecting on finding a sense of self in a fast-changing world.

Through their installations, the artists share rich and diverse narratives and emotions centred around three main themes: environmental, social and cultural explorations.

In a press statement, Fire Station director Khalifa al-Obaidly, who also teaches at VCUarts Qatar, said: "The introspective nature of the exhibition required a skilful display of artistic representation which is not easy. It was masterfully done by the artists and I would like to congratulate them on their hard work."

VCUarts Qatar faculty and students have regularly participated in Fire Station's AIR programme, designed to foster and promote artistic talent in Qatar.

It extends over nine months, usually from September to June.

Selected artists are given studio space in the Fire Station building.

The programme also offers access to fabrication facilities to support their artistic development.

The programme has achieved remarkable success, according to Qatar Museums, extending its influence to include a three-month residency at the esteemed Cite Internationale des Arts in Paris and Studio 209 NY, a part of the renowned International Studio & Curatorial Programme (ISCP) in New York City.

## Qatar-Morocco 2024 Year of Culture unveils Jedariart project in Rabat

The Years of Culture (YoC) initiative has announced the Rabat, Morocco iteration of Jedariart, a public art programme that showcases the creativity of Qatari and Qatar-based artists through murals and collaborative street art.

For the first time this year, Qatar Museum (QM)'s mural programme collaborated with Morocco's Jidar street art festival

under the lead of the General Commissioner of Qatar-Morocco 2024 YoC in Rabat's serene Hassan II Park.

Three Qatari artists have partnered with three Moroccan artists to create joint installations under Jidar's project "Cubist Landscape".

In a press statement, Dimitrije Bugarski, public art specialist overseeing the programme, said: "The Jedariart project in Rabat celebrates the enduring friendship between two nations and highlights the artists who breathe life into our shared cultural heritage."

The Rabat edition of Jedariart, titled "Cubic Landscapes", consists of three art cube installations created collaboratively by the six artists.

Painting began on October 21 and was unveiled to the public on October 27.

Set in the scenic Hassan II Park, these structures merge traditional painting with contemporary street art, symbolising the convergence of cultural and creative diversity from both nations.

The cubes, serving as visual metaphors for journeys, invite viewers to experience the fusion of two distinct art traditions in one unique space.

Hassan II Park is an expansive public space located in the heart of Rabat near the historic site of Chellah and the Bab Zaafer gate.

Three artistic duos collaborated on



Sharefa al-Mannai's creation.

Right: Mubarak al-Thani and Aicha Abouhadj's creation.



Anfal al-Kandari's creation.



Fatima Ezzahra Khilad's creation.

the installations: Anfal al-Kandari (@funkyah), a Kuwaiti/Qatari visual artist exploring themes like the inner child and parallel universes, partnered with contemporary Moroccan artist Marmouche Hamza (@hamzamarmouche).

Sharefa al-Mannai (@90mannai), a multidisciplinary artist known for mixing surrealism and collage art, teamed up with Moroccan muralist Fatima Ezzahra Khilad (@ms\_timaaa), whose work delves into the concept of memory and its lasting impact on the present.

The third pairing comprises Mubarak al-Thani and Moroccan graphic designer and illustrator Aicha Abouhadj (@aicha\_abou\_art), who is passionate about exploring her Amazigh heritage and identity.

Jedariart, first launched by the QM's

Public Art Department in 2020 under the patronage of Chairperson HE Sheikha Al Mayassa bint Hamad bin Khalifa al-Thani, brings art into the public sphere, encouraging reflection on cultural, social, and historical themes.

From Doha's Corniche to Souq Waqif, Hamad International Airport, and even the Qatari desert with installations like Richard Serra's monumental sculpture East-West/West-East, the programme creates unexpected encounters with art.

The Jedariart Cubic Landscapes installations will remain in Hassan II Park through the end of 2024, with plans for a public exhibition thereafter.