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# GULF TIMES



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**BUSINESS** | Page 1

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## QC sends 40-truck aid convoy to Syria

Qatar Charity has announced the launch of a humanitarian aid convoy to support the people of Syria, consisting of 40 trucks as the first batch. This effort aims to address their urgent basic needs considering the ongoing crisis they are facing. The announcement was made at a press conference held at the convoy's starting point on the Syrian-Turkish border. **Page 12**



HE the Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman bin Jassim al-Thani participated in an expanded ministerial meeting on Syria in the Jordanian city of Aqaba yesterday.

## Qatar steadfast in support of Syrian people, says PM

QNA  
Aqaba

**H**E the Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman bin Jassim al-Thani participated in an expanded ministerial meeting on Syria in the Jordanian city of Aqaba yesterday, with the participation of Jordan, Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, Bahrain, Iraq, Lebanon, Egypt, the Secretary-General of the League of Arab States, in addition to Turkiye, the USA, France, Germany, the United Kingdom, the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs & Security

Policy/Vice-President of the European Commission, and the UN Special Envoy to Syria.

The meeting discussed ways to support a comprehensive political process led by the Syrians to achieve a transitional process in accordance with Security Council Resolution No. 2254, which meets the aspirations of the Syrian people, ensures the rebuilding of the Syrian state institutions, and preserves Syria's unity, territorial integrity, sovereignty, security, stability, and the rights of all its citizens.

During the meeting, HE the Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs stressed the need to ensure Syria's unity and the peaceful transfer of power

through a unifying political process based on UN Security Council Resolution 2254, in addition to enhancing efforts to protect civilians and countering terrorism.

In a social media post (X), HE Sheikh Mohammed said: "Today, I participated in the expanded ministerial meeting and the meeting of the Arab Contact Group on Syria, within the framework of regional and international efforts to support the brotherly Syrian people towards achieving their hopes and aspirations after long years of war. The State of Qatar will remain steadfast in its support for the brothers in Syria and in supporting all regional and international efforts." **To Page 16**

## 22 including mayor of Deir Al-Balah killed in Israeli air strikes

At least 22 Palestinians were killed in Israeli air strikes in Gaza yesterday, medics said.

At least 10 people were killed in an air strike near the municipality building in Deir Al-Balah in the central Gaza Strip where people gathered to receive aid, medics said.

Casualties were being carried by foot, on rickshaws and private cars from the site of the attack to the hospital, medics said. The strike killed the head of the Hamas-run administrative committee in central Gaza, Diab Ali al-Jaru, a Hamas source said.

Four more people were killed in a separate strike in the area.

A separate strike in Gaza City on a former shelter housing displaced people killed seven people, including a woman and her baby.

A local journalist, Mohammed Baalousha who worked for Dubai Al Mashhad television was killed in a separate air strike in Gaza City, health officials said. At least 137 journalists and media workers have been killed in Gaza in more than a year of war, according to The Committee to Protect Journalists.



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We extend our heartiest congratulations and greetings to

His Highness  
**Sheikh Tamim Bin Hamad Al Thani**  
Amir of the State of Qatar

His Highness  
**Sheikh Hamad Bin Khalifa Al Thani**  
Father Amir

His Highness  
**Sheikh Abdullah Bin Hamad Al Thani**  
Deputy Amir

and to all the honorable people of Qatar

We hope for more returns of this memorable occasion and wish that Qatar always enjoys security, welfare and prosperity under the wise leadership of His Highness The Amir



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GEORGETOWN UNIVERSITY QATAR

20 CELEBRATING TWO DECADES IN QATAR





On the occasion of **Qatar National Day, 18<sup>th</sup> of December** and in remembrance of the historic day in 1878, when Sheikh Jassim Bin Mohammed Bin Thani, founder of the State of Qatar set up the pillars of the Modern State of Qatar, we extend our heartiest congratulations and greetings to

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Deputy Amir

And to all the honourable people of Qatar

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The Chairman, the Board of Directors and all the employees of the QNB Group.



# Unfolding the Classic: HUAWEI Mate X6 Sets a New Benchmark for Foldables

Despite being hailed as the next big thing in smartphones, foldable devices have yet to fully capture the mainstream audience, even after more than half a decade on the market. While the premium price tag is often cited as a major deterrent, it doesn't entirely explain the full picture. The real issue lies in the lack of refinement. Many foldables still come with significant compromises, from added heft and shorter battery life to underwhelming cameras. But Huawei seems determined to change that narrative with the Mate X6. This new foldable is a clear departure from the status quo—nothing about it feels like a compromise. With sleek design, powerful specs, and a focus on performance, the Mate X6 proves that foldable can finally rival, or even surpass, traditional flagship smartphones.

## From Kunlun Glass to Rocket Steel

The Mate X6's exterior screen is protected by 2nd Gen Kunlun Glass, with a re-engineered glass network structure. This glass is now 25 times more durable against drops. The interior display is reinforced with a carbon fibre plate, boosting stiffness by 65%. Paired with an aviation-grade aluminium middle frame, this phone shrugs off daily wear and tear with ease. The frame itself is crafted from aerospace-grade aluminium, offering a 37% increase in material strength for exceptional resistance to compression and bending.

At its core lies an advanced multi-dimensional hinge, which is a feat of precision engineering. It reduces the hinge's folding thickness by 12% and the unfolded thickness by 14%, delivering a slimmer profile without sacrificing strength. Made from 100% Rocket Steel, the hinge boasts a 27% increase in strength, ensuring it can endure countless folds. From its Kunlun Glass exterior to its aerospace-grade frame and innovative hinge design, this device is built to last. The Mate X6 is sleek and sturdy.

## Ultra Chroma Camera: Unmatched Colour and Clarity

The HUAWEI Mate X6 packs a powerful camera system that offers unprecedented colour accuracy, detailed macros, and pro-level control. The Mate X6 employs 1.50 million spectral channels that bring a 120% improvement in colour reproduction accuracy. It captures true-to-life skin tones, vibrant clothing, and natural scenery even in challenging lighting. What you see is what you get, in every shot.

The Macro Telephoto lens on the Mate X6 takes unprecedented versatility to foldable phones. This lens delivers incredible flexibility for both macro and telephoto shots. It's the first foldable phone to support a 5cm telephoto macro lens, offering impressive detail even at a distance. The 50MP main camera on the Mate X6 features a 10-size adjustable physical aperture ranging from F1.0 to F4.0, giving you total control over depth of field and light intake.

## Three Apps at Once with Live-multitasking

A big folding screen leaves ample space for your



tasks allowing you to get more done in less time. But the Mate X6 takes it up a notch with live multitasking. It allows you to run up to 3 apps simultaneously with the screen unfolded in the expanded view. Even if you choose the expand one app, the other two will remain open alongside it and you can quickly switch between them just by sliding. It's multitasking at its best. If you are in an online meeting, you can open your work document and chat with your colleagues at the same time.

The EMUI 15 also adds a fun touch to the overall experience. It features a new Emoji Crush theme with 3D emojis on the lock screen AOD interface that emot in different expressions according to the user's operations - clicking, shaking, or tilting the device produces changes in the emoji's moods and causing them to collide and roll playfully across the screen. It's a quirky little touch that adds personality to your phone.

## Brilliant Dual OLED Displays

Now, the biggest reason to get a folding phone is the big screen. And the Mate X6 offers two of those. HUAWEI Mate X6 is equipped with HUAWEI X-True™ Display technology, which creates high-definition, high-brightness, high-refresh, and high-fidelity display

The phone features a 6.45-inch OLED external screen with a 2440x1080 resolution and a colossal 7.93-inch OLED internal display with an even higher 2440x2240 resolution. Both screens deliver exceptional clarity, vibrant colours, and crisp details. The external display has a peak brightness of 2500 nits, while the internal display hits a peak of 1800 nits. This ensures great visibility, even in direct sunlight. And with an adaptive refresh rate on both screens that adjusts between 1-120Hz based on what you're doing, you'll experience ultra-smooth visuals. The display is exceptionally good, whether you are using the phone open or closed.

## Orbit-Inspired Design

The design of the HUAWEI Mate X6 draws inspiration from star orbits. HUAWEI Mate X6 is lightweight, slim, and extremely durable, measuring only 9.85mm thick when folded, and 4.6 mm unfolded. The Nebula Gray edition features a Micro-Nano 3D Topography finish crafted from Vagen Fiber, a material derived from aerospace-grade S-grade glass fibre combined with high-performance bulletproof vest materials. This new material combines the lightness and strength of glass fibre and the toughness and durability of bulletproof vests.

In addition to the striking Nebula Gray, the Mate X6 is available in two ultra-thin plain leather options: Nebula Red and Black. The leather material is soft to the touch but also dustproof and resistant to fingerprints.

The HUAWEI Mate X6 is a remarkable step forward for foldable smartphones. With its ultra-durable construction, stunning displays, powerful camera system, and advanced multitasking capabilities, it sets a new standard for what a foldable phone can be.

## Unfold the Classic

### HUAWEI Mate X6

Ultra Slim and Durable | Ultra Chroma Camera  
Innovative Live-multitask

Product color, shape, interface and functions are for reference only. The actual product may vary.

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# شركة قطر للتجارة والنقل

## QATAR TRADING & TRANSPORT COMPANY

P.O. Box 4455



## HMC urges public to get vaccinated against flu

QNA  
Doha

With winter approaching, Hamad Medical Corp (HMC) is urging senior citizens and residents and their families to prioritise considering the annual flu vaccine.

HMC added that the free vaccine is available at more than 90 government, semi-government and private healthcare facilities across the country and offers crucial protection against the influenza virus, especially for vulnerable populations.

Deputy Chief for Long Term Care, Rehabilitation and Geriatric Care, and Medical Director of Rumailah Hospital and Qatar Rehabilitation Institute at HMC, Dr Hanadi Khamis al-Hamad, emphasised the importance of this vaccination, highlighting that the flu shot is a simple and effective way to protect senior citizens from the serious complications of influenza.

It's particularly crucial for older adults with underlying health conditions, as they are more susceptible to severe illness.

Dr al-Hamad indicated that at HMC, patients can ask to receive their flu vaccine when they attend their scheduled outpatient's department appointments and HMC is encouraging them to do this as soon as possible, adding that they can also take the vaccine at all Primary Health Care Centers and a range of private clinics in Qatar.

Regarding the methods of booking an appointment to get the influenza shot, Dr al-Hamad highlighted that this is done through either through the Primary Health Care Corp (PHCC), calling 107 for information or visiting a nearest PHCC centre for a walk-in flu vaccination.

She stated that they can also receive the vaccine during one of the scheduled appointments, asserting that the vaccine can be get at more than 50 private clinics across Qatar.

As for HMC Outpatient Department (OPD) appointments, the flu vaccine is available free for any patient attending a scheduled OPD appointment at an HMC facility, by asking physicians for the flu vaccine.

# QDA Al Bawasil Diabetes Camp to begin on Dec 20

The Qatar Diabetes Association (QDA) is all set to launch the 25th edition of the annual Al Bawasil International Camp for children living with diabetes. Touted to be the largest of its kind in the region, the camp is held under the slogan "We Can", according to an official press statement. The activities of the camp will begin on December 20 and will continue for six days, hosted by the Aspire Sports Excellence Academy.

This year, the camp will host 60 children aged seven to eleven, from 13 countries, including Qatar, Kuwait, Bahrain, Jordan, Sudan, Algeria, Libya, Tunisia, Bangladesh, Iran, Morocco, Oman and Egypt.

Al-Bawasil camps are an interactive platform for living with diabetes, as it aims and strives to help children learn the best ways to manage their diabetes and live with it positively to enhance their independence and confidence and to train them to apply the steps and tools required to deal with daily changes in glucose levels and make decisions that suit these changes.

In addition, the camp allows the children to meet and get to know each other in a safe environment which reduces the feeling of difference or uniqueness in their condition to encourages them to accept, integrate and face challenges with strength, confidence and positivity.

In celebration of the camp's silver jubilee, the opening ceremony will be held at the Student Center (Multaqa) at Qatar Foundation featuring a presentation on the history of the Bawasil Camp from its inception to the various stages of its de-



velopment. This year, the camp adopts the slogan 'Diabetes and Well-being' as the main theme for its activities, which include a comprehensive daily educational and awareness programme.

The programme features a range of recreational activities and workshops carefully prepared by the Qatar Diabetes Association. Some of these activities are held in collaboration with the Oral Health Department at the Primary Health Care Corporation, Cage Sport Centre and Qatar Academy for Nanny Training. Additionally, the camp includes external trips to the Qatar Olympic and Sports Museum 321 and Katara Beach.

Al Bawasil Camp is managed by a

qualified team consisting of physicians, nurses, and dietitians, and administrative teams consisting of several professional committees including medicine, nutrition, activities and programs, media, marketing, organisation and internal communication.

The first camp by QDA was held in January 1999 and has been held every year since then, and today it has become one of the most important camps for children with diabetes in the Middle East and North Africa.

In 2013, the International Diabetes Federation designated it as an international camp that could host children with diabetes from all over the world.



## QatarEnergy LNG Tender Invitation

No.	TENDER NUMBER / DESCRIPTION	TENDER ISSUE PERIOD	TENDER FEE (QAR)	TENDER BOND (QAR)	TENDER CLOSING DATE
1	LTC/A/STK/6904/24, B30 Material Agreement for Supply & Stocking of PPE items	11/12/2024 to 16/01/2025	0	25,000	21/01/2025

### Scope of Work:

QatarEnergy LNG invites proposal from reputed suppliers for 5 years Material Agreement for Supply & Stocking of PPE items. For other tender terms & conditions, please refer full tender documents.

**Bid Validity:** Bid should be valid for 365 calendar days from the Tender Closing Date.

### Place for Tender Collection and Bid Submission:

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

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

## JCI re-accreditation for ambulance service

Hamad Medical Corp (HMC)'s Ambulance Service has received Joint Commission International (JCI) re-accreditation, highlighting the organisation's unwavering commitment to providing the highest quality, life-saving care to patients in Qatar who need it the most.

JCI accreditation is a globally recognised symbol of quality and safety in healthcare and the evaluation team assessed various aspects of the service, including clinical care, patient safety, quality improvement, and leadership.

Assistant Executive Director of Ambulance Support Services, Ali Saleh Alyafei, noted that the HMC's ambulance service is a lifeline for individuals facing life-threatening emergencies and this accomplishment is a testament to the dedication and hard work of HMC's entire team, emphasising that HMC's staff consistently go above and beyond, and this recognition is a well-deserved reward for their efforts to provide swift, efficient, and compassionate care to patients at the most critical time. **(QNA)**



## MoPH organises training workshops on 'Growth Charts' programme

The Ministry of Public Health (MoPH), in collaboration with the Ministry of Education and Higher Education (MoEHE), the Primary Health Care Corp (PHCC), and Hamad Medical Corp (HMC), recently organised two training workshops on the "Growth Charts" programme for school students aged 5-19, in line with WHO guidelines. The workshops were attended by about 80 newly appointed school nursing staff and programme supervisors from the Ministry of Public Health and the Primary Health Care Corp. Acting Director of the Health Promotion Department, Dr Salah Alyafei, said the ministry has been implementing the Growth Charts Programme in schools across Qatar since the 2014-2015 academic year, underscoring the ministry's commitment to addressing child health issues. Dr Salah Alyafei emphasised that the programme aims to provide a comprehensive database and establish a monitoring system for the growth of school students, both boys and girls, across the three educational stages (primary, preparatory, and secondary). The programme also seeks to enable the early detection of growth disorders potentially related to nutrition, such as underweight, stunted growth, or short stature, as well as overweight and obesity. **(QNA)**

## Notice of Reduction of Issued Share Capital

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN pursuant to Article 30 of QFC's Companies Regulations, that VH International LLC, a limited liability company incorporated under QFC Laws, having QFC number 02088, and having its registered address at Office No. 209, Floor No. 1, Regus, Business Centre, No. 67, Doha, Qatar (the "Company") intends to reduce its Issued Share Capital of Qatari Riyal Five Hundred Thousand (QAR 500,000) consisting of Five Thousand (5,000) Equity Shares, having par value of Qatari Riyal One Hundred (QAR 100) each issued to Vidal Healthcare Services Private Limited, by the cancellation of 4,500 Equity Shares, such that the Company's Issued Share Capital shall become Qatari Riyal Fifty Thousand (QAR 50,000) consisting of Five Hundred (500) Shares, having par value of Qatari Riyal One Hundred (QAR 100) each with effect from 4th November 2024.

VH International LLC  
Director



## The Diplomatic Club Tender Committee invites Grade A and B Contractors for the following tender:

Tender No.	Tender Title	Tender Fee	TenderBond	Closing Date
TDC-CP-RFP-2024-009	Re-Development of Beach and New Floating Pontoon at The Diplomatic Club	QR 3,750,00	QR 150,000	02:00PM 15 January 2025

### CONDITIONS:

- Tender Documents may be obtained upon submission of **Authorization Letter to collect tender documents, copy of valid Commercial Registration, Computer Card, Trade License, Tax Card, Classification Certificate, and payment of the non-refundable tender fee at the Contracts & Procurement Department.** Payment of non-refundable tender fee shall be by cash, debit, or credit card at The Diplomatic Club.
- Tender Bond shall be valid for ninety (90) days from closing date.
- Performance Bond will be ten percent (10%) of total contract value. At the award of contract, if the bidder's payment terms require an advance payment, an advance payment guaranty must be submitted to the Tender Committee.
- Offers should be valid for 90 days commencing from the closing date.
- The Diplomatic Club's shall have the right to increase or decrease the work / quantity by 20% of the contract quantity or value.
- The Diplomatic Club reserves absolute discretion in awarding in full to one supplier or partially to different suppliers. The Diplomatic Club's is not bound to accept the lowest or any other tender or may suspend, postpone, or cancel the tender and is under no obligation to show reason thereof.
- The Diplomatic Club is not responsible for any or all costs associated directly or indirectly in preparation of bidder's proposal.
- Submission of proposals shall be by sealed envelope. Envelope 1 containing the Technical Proposal (no price details), Envelope 2 containing the Commercial Proposal and Envelope 3 - Tender Bond. All sealed envelopes shall be addressed to the Chairman - Tender Committee and marked with the Tender No. and Title and Bidder's company name.
- Tenders should be submitted not later than **02:00 PM on 15 January 2025** (closing date) and must be deposited into the Tender Box provided at the Contracts & Procurement Department, located at The Diplomatic Club, West Bay Dafna. Late submissions will not be accepted.
- Site visit will be arranged and issued via a Tender Bulletin to all registered participating contractors.
- All inquiry shall be directed only to the Tender Committee at T: 44847506 or E: [tendercommittee@dclub.com.qa](mailto:tendercommittee@dclub.com.qa)



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

S. No.	Tender Ref.	Tender Title:	Tender Bond QAR	Bid Closing Date & Tender Bond Validity Period
1	STC-CN-028-24-MC	Call-off Contract for Hydraulic & Pneumatic Services.	45,500/-	15 Jan 2025 at 12.00 noon & 180 days

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

Tender Registration Fee	QAR 500/- (Non-refundable) per Tender
Payable to	ORYX GTL Limited
IBAN (29 Digits)	QA23QNB00000000013010705001
Bank	Qatar National Bank - HQ or any branch (cash only)
Registration Dates	From 15 December 2024 to 19 December 2024
Registration Process and Requirements:	Write an e-mail to <a href="mailto:oryxgltenders@oryxglt.com.qa">oryxgltenders@oryxglt.com.qa</a> with the following attachments: 1. Copy of Commercial Registration (CR) 2. Copy of bank deposit slip of the Tender Registration Fee. 3. Copy of ICV Certificate

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

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

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

For more information about ORYX GTL and its tenders, please visit our website: <http://www.oryxglt.com.qa>



# Al Meera to celebrate QND with exciting offers

**18mn reward points prizes on offer for shoppers**

Al Meera Consumer Goods Company has announced a series of celebratory activities and promotions on the occasion of Qatar National Day (QND).

Running until January 11, 2025, Al Meera is inviting customers to join in the festivities and enjoy unmatched rewards, exclusive offers, and community engagement initiatives that embody the spirit of this national celebration.

As part of the celebrations and building on the resounding success of past raffles and promotions, such as the recent '30 Cars in 30 Days' campaign, Al Meera is giving Meera Rewards members the chance to win big. Eighteen lucky shoppers will walk away with 1mn Meera Rewards points each, making it a truly memorable National Day season.

In addition to the raffle, Al Meera is launching a promotional campaign featuring killer deals and significant discounts on hundreds of items, giving customers even more reasons to celebrate.



Furthermore, Al Meera is doubling rewards for customers who choose to support local and Al Meera-branded products during the campaign period.

This initiative reflects Al Meera's dedication to promoting Qatar-made goods while enhancing the value for shoppers.

Whether shopping in-store or online at [almeera.online](http://almeera.online), every purchase brings customers closer to these exceptional prizes.

The celebrations will also extend beyond the stores with Al Meera's proud sponsorship of Darb Al Saai, a cornerstone of Qatar National Day festivities. Customers are encouraged to visit Al Meera's pavilion near Gate No 2 to enjoy snacks, water, and other essentials while soaking in the vibrant atmosphere.

Commenting on the campaign, Al Meera stated: "Qatar National Day is a time for celebration, reflection, and togetherness. Our customers remain at the heart of all we do, and this campaign is our way of expressing gratitude for their loyalty while honouring Qatar's rich cultural identity. From festive in-store experiences to community engagement at Darb Al Saai, we are committed to creating meaningful connections during this special time."

Customers can join for free by downloading the Al Meera app and start earning points that can be redeemed across any of Al Meera's branches nationwide.

## Ooredoo 'Official Telecom Sponsor' of Lusail University Cultural Village event



Ooredoo was the Official Telecom Sponsor of the Lusail University Cultural Village Event, which celebrated the rich cultural diversity of Lusail University's student community. The event, held under the patronage of Professor Khaled bin Ibrahim al-Sulaiti, general manager of Katara, and attended by Dr. Ali bin Fetais al-Marri, chairman of the Board of Trustees of Lusail University, alongside Sabah al-Kuwari, director of Public Relations, Sponsorship, and CSR at Ooredoo Qatar, showcased the cultural heritage, traditions, and creativity of Lusail University students from more than 30 nationalities. The Cultural Village celebrated diversity through various activities, such as student performances, live cooking demonstrations, art exhibitions, and a fashion show of traditional attire. In addition, attendees enjoyed the opportunity to explore cultural booths showcasing unique costumes, cuisines and customs. Al-Kuwari said, "We are honoured to have supported Lusail University as the Official Telecom Sponsor of the Cultural Village Event. This partnership reflects Ooredoo's commitment to fostering community connections and celebrating cultural diversity, which are integral to our values as a company."

## Malabar Gold & Diamonds' factory division in Qatar wins 'QHSE Excellence Award 2023' by Manateq

The Al Nazha factory of Malabar Gold & Diamonds in Qatar has been honoured with the QHSE (Quality, Health, Safety & Environment) Excellence Award 2023 by Manateq, the main developer and operator for the industrial zones, logistics, and warehousing parks in the country.

The award was presented to Santhosh T V, regional head of Malabar Gold & Diamonds in Qatar, by Engineer Mohammed al-Emadi, CEO of Manateq Economic Zone, at a ceremony held at the Century Marina Hotel in Lusail. Also present at the event were Niyas A M, production manager at Al Nazha Factory, and other officials from Manateq. Malabar Gold & Diamonds, the world's sixth-largest jewellery retailer with over 370 showrooms across 13 countries, has gained international acclaim for its exceptional craftsmanship, quality, and commitment to excellence. The brand operates 16 state-of-the-art manufacturing units in Qatar, the UAE, Saudi Arabia, Oman, India, and Bangladesh, equipped with advanced technology for jewellery production, design studios, development centres, and a dedicated R&D facility.

Speaking on the occasion, Santhosh T V said: "Winning the QHSE Excellence Award by Manateq is a testament to our unwavering commitment to



Santhosh T V, regional head of Malabar Gold & Diamonds in Qatar, receiving the award from Engineer Mohammed al-Emadi, CEO of Manateq Economic Zone, during the recently held awarding ceremony.

quality, innovation, and sustainability. At Malabar Gold & Diamonds, we have always prioritised maintaining world-class standards in our products and fostering a safe, healthy, and sustainable work environment for our artisans. This recognition reinforces our dedication to excellence and inspires us to continually raise the bar in the global jewellery industry."

As a socially responsible jewellery brand, Malabar Gold & Diamonds ensures that all its manufacturing facilities operate with 100% compliance with environmental regulations and upholds rigorous sustainability practices. The brand is committed to sourcing raw materials ethically, adhering to international standards set by organisations, such as the London Bullion Market Association (LBMA) and the World Gold Council.

Malabar Gold & Diamonds was established in 1993 and is

the flagship company of Malabar Group, a leading diversified Indian business conglomerate.

With an annual turnover of \$6.2bn, the company currently ranks as the sixth largest jewellery retailer globally and has a strong retail network of over 370 showrooms spread across 13 countries. Malabar Gold & Diamonds also features an online store [www.malabargoldanddiamonds.com](http://www.malabargoldanddiamonds.com)

ESG (Environmental, Social & Governance) has been the primary commitment of the group since its inception. The key ESG focus areas of Malabar Group are health, housing, hunger-free world, education, environment and women empowerment. Integrating the principles of responsibility and sustainability into its core business, Malabar Group periodically strengthens its ESG goals to remain a socially conscious and responsible organisation.

## ACD partners with DeapQatar for clean-up drive at Singing Sand Dunes

The Asean Committee in Doha (ACD) and DeapQatar Conservation organised a clean-up drive at the Singing Sand Dunes yesterday.

The initiative brought together heads of mission of the seven Asean embassies in Doha, namely Mohamed Bahrin Abu Bakar of Brunei Darussalam, Ridwan Hassan (Indonesia), Faizal Razali (Malaysia), Lillibeth V Pono (the Philippines), Sumaya Baqavi (Singapore), Sira Swangsilpa (Thailand), and Nguyen Huy Hiep (Vietnam).

Around 100 volunteers, including Asean diplomats, staff of the embassies, and their families participated in the initiative, demonstrating a collective commitment to help contribute towards the sustainability and preservation of Qatar's environment. Equipped with gloves, garbage bags, and tools, the group collected 260kg of waste, including plastic bottles, containers, and other debris.

Singapore is the current ACD chair. Baqavi, the charge d'affaires of the Embassy of Singapore, stated that the ACD was delighted to partner with DeapQatar Conservation on this important initiative. She expressed the hope that such collective endeavours would inspire greater public interest in and awareness of environmental preservation.



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environmental preservation.

Baqavi said, "Qatar is making significant strides toward sustainability, through embracing renewable energy, eco-friendly initiatives, and green infrastructure to protect its environment for future generations. This is in line with the economic, social, and environmental objectives of Qatar National Vision 2030. The Asean Committee in Doha is honoured to be part of Qatar's ongoing commitment."

She added: "Asean is a region abundant in natural resources and has consistently placed high priority on environmental protection and sustainability. This commitment is firmly rooted in the Asean Socio-Cultural Community (ASCC) Blueprint 2025, which envisions a people-centred, environmentally friendly Asean Community dedicated

to advancing sustainable development. I am happy to witness how we have put this value into

practice and demonstrate how every individual can contribute to preserving the environment."



### Invitation to Tender

Qatar Development Bank hereby invites Ministry of Finance (MOF) Certified Facility Management Companies (Grade A & B) to participate in the following Tender:

Tender Ref.	Project Title	Description	Tender Fee	Tender Bond	Tender Closing Date
QDB-EPD/FS/11	Al Farjaan & Al Ezzab Markets, QDB Building (A), (B) & Multi-Storey Carpark and 1 Building at Lusail	Provision of Full Integrated Facilities Management Systems (IFMS)	QR. 5,000 (non-refundable)	QR. 2,600,000	12 January 2025 12:30 PM

- The Pre-Tender meeting to be held on **17 December 2024, 10:00 AM** at QDB Offices Building, Grand Hamad Avenue, in presence of QDB Representatives. Interested companies shall limit their representatives to 2 persons only.
  - The Tender Documents for the above will be sent electronically through **Procurement Department's E-Procurement System** to Tenderers individual email address, after the submission of original bank receipt against payment of non-refundable Tender Fees (as mentioned above) which should be paid to **Qatar National Bank (QNB)**, Account No. (0001-818570-003) in the name of Qatar Development Bank. Bank receipt may be submitted on the same day of this advertisement until **23 December 2024 from 8:30 AM until 2:00 PM**.
  - Tenderer shall submit the hard copy of the Original Tender Bond issued by a local bank in Qatar and should be valid for **150 days** from the Tender Closing Date or any issued extension.
  - Technical & Commercial Tender Submission shall be submitted electronically through our **Procurement Department's E-Procurement System**. Submission requirements are detailed in the Tender Document mentioned herein.
  - All Tender Clarifications should be sent to email: [eprocurement@qdb.qa](mailto:eprocurement@qdb.qa) no later than **14 calendar days** from the date of this advertisement. Any Tender Clarifications after this date shall not be entertained.
- For more information and inquiries, please call **4430 0154** or email [Eprocurement@qdb.qa](mailto:Eprocurement@qdb.qa)

### ANNOUNCEMENT

I, SAJAL SHAKEEL MUHAMMAD ZIA ANWAR

holder of

**PAKISTAN Passport No. DT5165511  
QID No. 29958608756**

hereby change my name

from

**SAJAL SHAKEEL MUHAMMAD ZIA ANWAR**

to

**SAJAL SHAKEEL SHAKEEL KHALID**

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

### ANNOUNCEMENT

I, MUHAMMAD HANIF

holder of

**Pakistan Passport No. AJ6784323  
QID No.28258601492**

hereby change my name

from

**MUHAMMAD HANIF**

to

**MUHAMMAD HANIF SHER WALI**

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

### ANNOUNCEMENT

I, SHEKH SHAHID ULLAH SUMON

holder of

**Bangladesh Passport No. A13779346  
QID No. 27905011938**

hereby change my name

from

**SHEKH SHAHID ULLAH SUMON**

to

**SHEIKH SAHID ULLAH SUMON**

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





On the Occasion of  
**Qatar National Day, 18th of December**  
and in remembrance of the historic day in 1878, when Sheikh Jassim Bin Mohammed Bin Thani,  
founder of the State of Qatar set up the pillars of the Modern State of Qatar,

We extend our heartiest congratulations and greetings to

His Highness  
**Sheikh Tamim Bin Hamad Al Thani**  
Amir of the State of Qatar

His Highness  
**Sheikh Hamad Bin Khalifa Al Thani**  
Father Amir

His Highness  
**Sheikh Abdullah Bin Hamad Al Thani**  
Deputy Amir

And to all the honourable people of Qatar  
We hope for more returns of this memorable occasion and wish that Qatar always enjoys security,  
welfare and prosperity under the wise leadership of His Highness The Amir



علي بن علي القابضة  
Ali Bin Ali Holding



# Commercial Bank hosts exclusive Gala Dinner to celebrate its golden 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary



HE Sheikh Bandar Bin Mohammad Al-Thani (Qatar Central Bank Governor) with Commercial Bank's Board of Directors

Doha, Qatar: Commercial Bank, a leader in innovative digital banking solutions in Qatar, marked the monumental occasion of its 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary with an exclusive Gala Dinner held on 9 December 2024 at the National Museum of Qatar.

The success Commercial Bank celebrates today reflects its resilience, commitment, and strategic insight. Throughout these five decades, the Bank has adeptly navigated the evolving market conditions in Qatar and embraced technological advancements, consistently ensuring that its services are at the cutting edge of the industry.

The event celebrated the remarkable journey of Commercial Bank, journeying back from its humble beginnings to its current position of prominence. A thoughtfully curated mix of cultural and contemporary entertainment was showcased throughout the Gala Dinner, embodying the Bank's efforts in seamlessly integrating tradition and innovation in delivering world-class financial services. Not only that, but the Bank paid a special tribute to Qatar's rich heritage with a moving performance of the national anthem, reflecting the State's continuous influence and support in writing Commercial Bank's success story.

**Sheikh Abdulla Bin Ali Bin Jabor Al Thani, Chairman of Commercial Bank said:** "Our corporate vision extends beyond immediate success to include sustainability and long-term impact. We are committed to integrating sustainable practices into every facet of our operations, ensuring that our growth benefits not only our stakeholders but also the broader community and environment. Through this Gala Dinner, we not only celebrate five decades of exceptional achievements, but also reinstate the promise we hold towards our customers and great nation.



HE Abdulla Bin Nasser Al-Thani, Mr. Ibrahim Jassim Al-Othman and Mr. Mohammad Yaser Al Mosallam

**Hussain Alfardan, Vice Chairman of Commercial Bank, reflected:** "Marking our 50th anniversary, we reflect with pride on the remarkable journey that has defined our Bank and the enduring legacy we have built together. This milestone represents more than just growth; it reflects the positive impact we have made, driving progress in Qatar and beyond. As we look into a future full of promise, we are prepared to seize new opportunities with resilience, strategic foresight, and a deep commitment to creating lasting value."

**"Omar Hussain Alfardan, Managing Director of Commercial Bank said:** "Fifty years ago, we envisioned a banking experience poised not only to prosper but to revolutionize the landscape of financial services. The enduring essence of our founders, reflected in our core values, demonstrates that our success is rooted in our passion and purpose. The Gala Dinner marks a significant turning point as we close the chapter on 50 years of outstanding performance and step confidently into our next 50 golden years."



Mr. Hussain Ibrahim Alfardan and Mr. Omar Hussain Alfardan



HE Sheikh Bandar Bin Mohammad Al-Thani, Mr. Omar Hussain Alfardan and Mr. Ali Alfardan

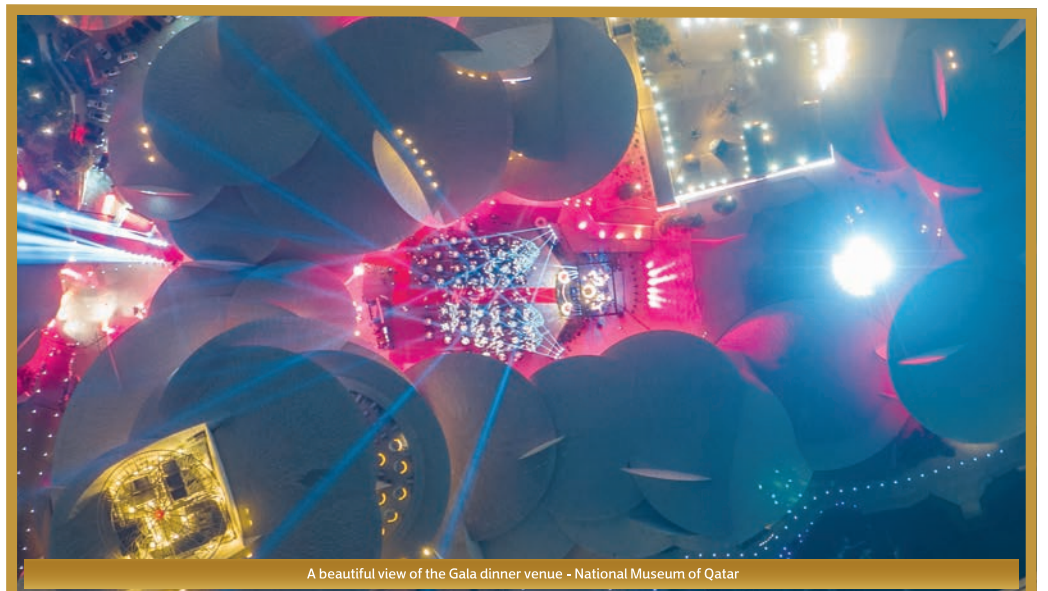




البنك التجاري  
COMMERCIAL  
BANK



HE Ali Bin Ahmed Al Kuwari (Minister of Finance), Sheikh Abdulla Bin Ali Bin Jabor Al Thani and HE Abdulla Bin Nasser Al-Thani



A beautiful view of the Gala dinner venue - National Museum of Qatar



Mr. Hussain Alfardan & HE Sheikh Hamad Bin Faisal Al-Thani (Vice Chairman - AlRayan Bank)



Live music performance



Sheikh Jabor Bin Abdulla Al Thani and Mr. Abdulla Abdulaziz Al Nasr (Vice Chairman - Al Nasr Holding)



HE Sheikh Bandar Bin Mohammad Al-Thani, Mr. Omar Hussain Alfardan and Mr. Ali Alfardan



HE Sheikh Mohammad Bin Faisal Bin Sultan Al Qassimi & Mr. Omar Alfardan with a delegation from UAB



Micheal Fadel performance



Nasser Alkubaisi performing the National Anthem of Qatar



Mr. Joseph Abraham (GCED) and Ms. Rana Salatt (EGM - Chief Internal Audit) at Commercial Bank



HE Abdul Rahman Al-Attiyah and HE Sheikh Ahmed Bin Nasser Bin Faleh Al-Thani



Al Nahham performance



Sheikh Abdulla Bin Ali Bin Jabor Al Thani with a delegation from National Bank of Oman



# ELEVATING EVERY MOMENT: GHOST & BLACK BADGE GHOST SERIES II LAUNCH IN DOHA



A distinguished masterpiece crafted to exhilarate, Rolls-Royce Ghost Series II and its bold alter ego, Black Badge Ghost Series II, have officially arrived in Doha, marking the unveiling of two distinguished motoring masterpieces. Taking centre stage at the beautiful St. Regis Marsa Arabia Island, The Pearl, Ghost Series II brought to life a stunning evolution of Rolls-Royce's most iconic nameplate, blending powerful, driver-oriented design with unmatched Bespoke craftsmanship. Following Ghost Series II, the bold Black Badge Ghost Series II was revealed, showcasing its daring presence and enhanced performance. Both models embodied Rolls-Royce's commitment to luxury, with their flawless engineering, cutting-edge technology, and timeless elegance, offering guests an immersive experience in the marque's exceptional craftsmanship and immersing them in the wonderful world of Rolls-Royce.



seven-spoke forged wheels, designed to showcase the powerful V12 engine and dynamic performance capabilities beneath.

Inside, the signature dark technical surfaces of Black Badge are further elevated with a new Clock Cabinet, where a black chrome Spirit of Ecstasy figurine takes centre stage, surrounded by an upgraded Central Information Display featuring the latest SPIRIT operating system. Meticulously crafted Technical Carbon surfaces, with diamond-weave patterns of carbon and metal, add depth and sophistication, while the use of physical vapour deposition on interior metals ensures long-lasting durability. Clients can also choose from innovative materials like the striking Duality Twill fabric or the distinctive Placed Perforation technique, both offering unmatched levels of craftsmanship and personalisation.

At the heart of Ghost Series II is Rolls-Royce's potent 6.75-litre twin-turbocharged V12 engine, delivering near-silent power through an eight-speed gearbox and all-wheel drivetrain. The celebrated Planar Suspension System, augmented by the Flagbearer System and Satellite Aided

**"With flawless performance and superior craftsmanship, Ghost Series II is designed to exhilarate. As this unparalleled masterpiece arrives in Doha to inspire those who seek luxury, its extraordinary performance and modern presence have captivated all those who embrace every moment.**

**Building on the celebrated character of Ghost, the new Series II stands as the most technologically advanced V12-powered Rolls-Royce, seamlessly blending serenity, elegance, and cutting-edge technology into one exceptional motor car. I'm honoured to reveal Ghost Series II and its alter ego, Black Badge Ghost Series II to our special clients, who had an exceptional opportunity to explore these masterpieces, their intricate details, and different dimensions that reflect their unique personalities."**

Ayman Berjawi, General Manager,  
Rolls-Royce Motor Cars Doha

**"A city where heritage and progress seamlessly intertwine, Doha is a landscape of innovation, luxury, and vision - a place where the world of Rolls-Royce Motor Cars truly comes to life.**

**Since 2009, Ghost has set the benchmark for luxury, captivating clients who value both elegance and performance. Now, Ghost Series II brings a stunning evolution empowering our clients to experience unmatched power, control, and agility. Striking the perfect balance between commanding power and exquisite Bespoke craftsmanship, every drive and every detail of Ghost Series II is a testament to excellence, thrilling the senses of those behind the wheel. With the unveiling of Ghost Series II and its Black Badge alter ego, we are reaffirming our commitment to offering extraordinary experiences to our clients here in Doha, where innovation and luxury are endless."**

James Crichton, Regional Director  
Rolls-Royce Motor Cars Middle East & Africa

the exterior's modern elegance. Additionally, for the first time, a new exterior colour has been added to the marque's existing palette of more than 44,000 prêt-à-porter hues. Mustique Blue evokes the glamour of the Caribbean Island it's named after, shimmering with glass and mica flakes that reference the 1929 Phantom II Continental's pioneering use of pearlescent paint.

The interior of Ghost Series II continues to embody the marque's mastery of craftsmanship, blending both analogue and digital luxury. The new pillar-to-pillar glass panel houses the advanced SPIRIT operating system, enabling bespoke digital personalization, from colour-customized instrument dials to seamless integration with the Rolls-Royce Whispers app. The cabin also offers an extraordinary auditory experience, thanks to an evolved 18-speaker, 1400-watt audio system that transforms the car's structure into a resonating soundstage. Using the car's aluminium sill sections as resonance chambers and integrating 'speakerless' exciters in the Headliner, Rolls-Royce creates a unique overhead sound experience. With a new Starlight Headliner that channels sound down into the cabin and automatic frequency adjustments, the result is a sound environment that is as refined as it is immersive. This acoustic mastery is matched by exquisite new expressions of craftsmanship, from the Spirit of Ecstasy Clock Cabinet to the Illuminated Fascia, which draws inspiration from the movement of the night sky. Rolls-Royce also introduces new materials like Grey Stained Ash and Duality Twill, combining traditional artistry with modern innovation for a truly bespoke, luxurious interior.

Black Badge Ghost Series II exudes a daring presence, with subtle yet striking exterior details, including a unique lower grille and darkened chrome elements throughout. For the first time, the door handles are finished in black, enhancing the model's bold, noir aesthetic. Its most dramatic statement comes from the 22-inch, part-polished,

while the rear introduces new tail lamps inspired by Spectre, with vertical light panels and curved chrome elements. Two new 22-inch, 9-spoke wheels complete

**The most technologically advanced and driver-focused V12 Rolls-Royce yet**

**Ghost Extended Series II offers 170mm more space in the rear suite for more comfort**

Transmission, ensures an unmatched 'magic carpet ride' while adapting to dynamic road conditions with effortless agility. For Black Badge Ghost Series II, the V12 engine is tuned to produce 29PS more power and 50Nm more torque, elevating performance further. A dedicated Black Badge Planar Suspension and revised braking system enhance agility and driver confidence, while a sportier exhaust note and faster gearshifts add an edge to the Black Badge experience, all without compromising Rolls-Royce's signature serenity.

Both Ghost Series II and Black Badge Ghost Series II continue to build on the legacy of Rolls-Royce Motor Cars, shaped in collaboration with its clients. These motor cars further demonstrate that the future of Rolls-Royce is a balance of heritage, innovation, contemporary craftsmanship, and bespoke, providing clients with an extraordinary canvas with which to bring to life their imaginations.





# QND reflects ethos of belonging, pride in Qatar's history: minister

**H**E the Minister of Municipality Abdullah bin Hamad bin Abdullah al-Attiah emphasised that the celebration of Qatar National Day (QND) is a milestone that reflects the ethos of belonging and pride in Qatar's history commenced by the Founder Sheikh Jassim bin Mohammed bin Thani.

HE al-Attiah extended his greetings to His Highness the Amir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani and to the people of Qatar on this occasion. Speaking to Qatar News Agency (QNA), he asserted that QND is a reminiscent of the noble values upon which the state was founded, such as unity, assiduous work and future visions, underlining that it is an opportunity to express gratitude for everyone who contributed to advance this tight-knit burgeoning entity.

The Ministry of Municipality (MoM) consistently charges ahead with its efforts to achieve its ambitious vision for pioneering, innovation and sustainability as part of its new strategy 2024-2030, that aligns with the third National Development Strategy, as well as the Qatar National Vision 2030, with the aim of fostering the population's welfare and improving life quality, highlighted HE al-Attiah.

He stated that 2024 has witnessed numerous milestones underscoring the ministry's commitment to offering outstanding services through comprehensive digital transformation, bolstering food security and self-sufficiency, and sustainably optimising urban environment, managing resources and cities.

He said that the ministry has developed the National Food Security Strategy for 2024-2030, incorporating cutting-edge technologies such as hydroponic and vertical farming, highlighting that



the cultivation of 3.1mn baby fish has exceeded annual targets.

These initiatives have played a pivotal role in significantly enhancing self-sufficiency rates, with vegetable production rising to 39%, compared to just 20% in 2017, dairy products increasing to 96%, up from 28%, and fresh poultry reaching 97%, compared to 50%, he pointed out.

He indicated that agricultural infrastructure has been substantially bolstered through the establishment of veterinary centres and producer markets, while vaccination and treatment campaigns have been conducted for over 1mn head of livestock and poultry, with the ministry strengthening local marketing efforts through programmes like Qatari Farms and Mahaseel while optimising agricultural support mechanisms.

He emphasised that as part of its overarching strategy to implement the Circular Economy and advance waste management, the Ministry of Municipality has prioritised collaborations with the private sector to outsource sanitation services, waste collection, and the conversion of waste into energy, in addition to deploying intelligent management systems (IMS) statewide, achieving the generation of over 245,000 megawatt-hours of electricity through waste-to-energy processes, with substantial quantities

of plastic and metals being effectively separated, and 200,000 tonnes of discarded tires being responsibly processed.

HE al-Attiah elaborated that the ministry has realised a 2.3% increase in green spaces as part of its initiative to plant 10mn trees, while the One Million Tree Initiative was conferred the distinction of best sustainable development initiative, with the Expo 2023 Doha building achieving a new Guinness World Records title for "The Largest Green Roof" in the world.

In addition, the city of Doha won the Shanghai Global Award for Sustainable Development in Cities, he highlighted, indicating that these efforts encompassed the establishment of sustainability park utilizing recycled materials, advancing Hamad International Airport Street with eco-friendly materials, and leveraging solar energy for the illumination of public parks.

The Ministry of Municipality has updated the spatial development plans for Al Wakra, Al Khor, and Al Thakira, aligning them with the national principles of urban development and the national framework for urban development, in addition to establishing new architectural requirements for commercial establishments in residential areas, he added.

He highlighted that the Ministry has launched the first phase of the smart cities solutions project in Al Wakra, including the smart waste management system and introduced the unified electronic inspection project, covering 20 types of inspections, along with the roll-out of 117 new digital services by the end of September 2024.

Furthermore, the city of Doha has won first place in the Excellence Award for Electronic and Smart Transformation within the

14th Arab Towns Organisation (ATO) awards and received a global award for Best visual work for the digital twin project of rainwater measurement stations.

Qatar was awarded the 2024 Global Innovation Award at the Cloud Cities Forum in Moscow, and the Doha Municipality was honoured for its significant contributions to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals. Furthermore, the Ministry of Municipality was granted the Leadership Award at the Qatar Government Excellence Awards for 2024.

These accomplishments exemplify the ministry's unwavering commitment to advancing sustainable development, fostering innovation, and enhancing the quality of life for residents while safeguarding the environment for future generations.

HE al-Attiah noted that the Ministry of Municipality has formulated a comprehensive strategy to achieve leadership, innovation, and sustainability, for the well-being of residents, which is designed to improve life quality for both nationals and residents through sustainable planning, effective policies, superb services, and modern infrastructure.

The strategy is grounded in robust institutional values, strategic pillars, and clear-eyed goals, in pursuit of accomplishing smart technologies, and impactful partnerships.

The ministry's mission is to ensure enduring planning and crafting effective policies and providing innovative services, as well as advancing infrastructure to translate the strategy into tangible reality, he highlighted, affirming that it has been charging ahead with the humanisation of cities, and fostering livelihood quality and welfare. (QNA)

# National Day enshrines values of unity, and solidarity

**H**E the Minister of Transport Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdullah bin Mohammed al-Thani affirmed that the celebration of the Qatar National Day is an occasion to renew the pledge of allegiance to the homeland and its wise leadership, which continues the path of construction, development and comprehensive renaissance and consecrates the values of unity, solidarity and love of the homeland that were established by the Founder Sheikh Jassim bin Mohammed bin Thani.

Speaking to Qatar News Agency (QNA) on the occasion of the National Day, he extended his congratulations and blessings to His Highness the Amir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani, His Highness the Father Amir Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa al-Thani, and His Highness the Deputy Amir Sheikh Abdullah bin Hamad al-Thani, and to the wise government and the generous Qatari people.

He added that as the National Day approaches, the Ministry of Transport is looking forward to exert all efforts to fulfil the obligations



towards the homeland, and achieve the ambitious goals of its vision.

This includes enhancing Qatar's global standing in the transport sector by continuing to strengthen the infrastructure for land, maritime, and air transport with the latest systems and technological innovations.

These efforts aim to support the needs of all service, economic, and environmental sectors, while effectively connecting the State of Qatar to the regional and global economy. (QNA)

# Occasion to re-emphasise commitment to providing high-quality healthcare services in the country

**P**rimary Health Care Corporation (PHCC)'s Managing Director Dr Mariam Ali Abdulmalik said that the National Day is an occasion to renew allegiance to His Highness the Amir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani and express gratitude and appreciation to government for its outstanding and clear efforts to keep Qatar at the forefront and at the pinnacle of excellence.

Speaking to Qatar News Agency (QNA), she added that Qatar is progressing confidently and steadily on the path of development and growth, relying on the awareness of its loyal people and their ability to innovate, create, and face challenges with determination, resilience, and confidence. She noted that National Day is a celebration of the glories of our past, the achievements of our present, and the promising future that heralds further prosperity and growth in light of the ongoing accomplishments of the nation and the successes of its people across various fields, both locally and internationally.

She said that as part of the Ministry of Public Health, PHCC is an active partner in implementing the National Health Strategy 2011-2016 and 2018-2022, and in achieving Qatar National Vision 2030.

Dr Abdulmalik added that PHCC is leading the transformation of health and well-being for Qatar's population by shifting the focus of care from a hospital-based treatment model to an enhanced preventive and health-oriented model.

She said that the corporation's new strategic plan for 2024-2030 will focus on transforming the delivery of primary healthcare services, aligning with the new Qatar National Health Strategy (2024-2030) and the National Development Strategy (2023-2030). The emphasis will be on population health, with ambitious goals set to improve health outcomes, enhance the quality and accessibility of services, and prioritize sustainability and resilience through a focus on preventive healthcare.

The PHCC managing director noted that the corporation will proactively identify and mitigate common risk factors such as smoking, high blood pressure, obesity, elevated blood sugar levels, and high cholesterol at early stages.

She explained that all the health challenges faced by the country in recent years, most notably the Covid-19 pandemic, as well as the intensive preparations for outstanding medical coverage during the FIFA World Cup Qatar 2022, were transformed into remarkable



**Dr Abdulmalik added that PHCC is leading the transformation of health, well-being for Qatar's population by shifting the focus of care from a hospital-based treatment model to an enhanced preventive and health-oriented model**

achievements. Dr Abdulmalik said more than 7,500 employees operate 31 health centres across the country, including seven recovery centres serving nearly 1.8mn patients.

The new centres in Al Khor, Umm Seneem, and Al Mashaf, which were launched in September, October, and November of 2022, respectively, as well as the new Al Sadd Health Centre in March 2023, represent the latest additions. These centres provide the growing population of Qatar with greater access to services, including specialised clinics, family medicine, maternal and child health, dentistry, school health services, home care, mental health services, in addition to recovery and preventive health services and early detection for breast and bowel cancer and annual smart screenings, she noted.

She pointed out that the corporation focuses on holistic and integrated care to improve patient access to services in a timely manner and across all levels of healthcare providers. The family medicine model applied in all health centres is a key element in providing integrated and comprehensive care for individuals and families, she affirmed, adding that services are provided based on the patients' medical history and within the context of the family and community, ensuring that co-ordinated care is delivered more effectively through multidisciplinary teams at health centres near patients' places of residence. (QNA)

# We share Qatar's joy on National Day: Kuwait envoy

**K**uwaiti ambassador to Qatar Khaled Badr al-Mutairi has extended his congratulations and blessings to Qatar, its Amir, government, and people, on the occasion of its National Day. He stated: "We share Qatar's joy on this glorious day, as we are bound by strong ties, deep kinship, solid fraternal relations and a shared destiny."

In a statement to Qatar News Agency (QNA), the ambassador congratulated His Highness the Amir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani and the brotherly Qatari people on the successful referendum on the 2024 constitutional amendments to Qatar's permanent constitution. He also expressed his congratulations to Qatar for successfully hosting the 44th Gulf Summit, highlighting its commitment to supporting the pioneering journey of the Gulf Co-operation Council (GCC) and its efforts to



maintain the unity and cohesion of the Gulf family.

He wished Qatar continued prosperity, safety and progress. He praised Qatar's steadfast and unwavering stance on regional and international issues, rooted in its foreign policy, which adopts mediation and peaceful resolution of conflicts a policy aligned with that of Kuwait. He specifically highlighted Qatar's advocacy for the cessation of the occupation enti-

ties' aggressions against the brothers in Palestine and Lebanon.

Al-Mutairi told QNA that Qatar's record in mediation is exemplary, most notably its distinguished role during this period in stopping the bloodshed in Gaza, rejecting harm to innocent civilians and sparing them the repercussions of these confrontations that have escalated the conflict.

He commended Qatar's achievements, particularly hosting the FIFA World Cup Qatar 2022, which gave the world an opportunity to learn about Qatar and its advancements in various cultural, humanitarian and tourism fields, turning it into a global focal point. He added that the memories of the opening ceremony, matches, and outstanding organisation remain vivid in everyone's minds.

He further noted that Qatar did not stop at this extraordinary achievement, as Doha continues

to launch numerous initiatives to host and organise international events and global exhibitions. Among these is Qatar's hosting of the next three editions of the Arab Cup in 2025, 2029, and 2033.

He expressed Kuwait's pride, as a fellow Gulf nation, in these accomplishments that have impressed the world and wished Qatar continued success in its journey of progress and achievement.

He also highlighted the unique nature of the relations between Kuwait and Qatar at all levels, whether at the level of political leadership or between the two brotherly peoples.

He emphasised the deep-rooted and fraternal bilateral relations shared by the two nations across various fields, underscored by ties of kinship and a shared destiny, describing these relations as "strong and historically entrenched". (QNA)

# Cultural entities keen to promote Qatar history and heritage during National Day celebrations

**T**he different cultural institutions in Qatar are preparing to launch comprehensive artistic celebrations at the upcoming National Day, stressing the importance of the national occasion for all.

Local Arabic daily *Arrayah* reported that these events will include various activities such as art exhibitions, film screenings, and interactive workshops, highlighting Qatar's national identity and celebrating its rich culture in all its aspects.

Qatar Museums is organising a series of activities at the National Museum of Qatar to celebrate Qatar National Day 2024. These annual celebrations showcase the richness of Qatari culture and heritage, targeting all the residents and visitors from around the world. Traditional Qatari dances will flow seamlessly from the exhibition halls to the outdoor spaces in Al Baraha, weaving a harmonious dialogue between the museum's interior beauty and the vibrant outdoor scenes. Visitors will also have the opportunity to collaborate with artists and experts, adding an interactive dimension to create a unique experience for all.

Al Baraha will serve as a dynamic stage for this artistic activity. Guests can also enjoy Qatar's renowned hospitality throughout the event and have a special taste of Arabic coffee. Qatar Fine Arts Association will host the "Qatari Fine Art" exhibi-



tion in celebration of the National Day highlighting the creative works of some Qatari artists that promote cultural values through paintings and artworks with focus on the Qatari identity. Participating artists will

showcase various pieces inspired by the maritime heritage, traditional Qatari life, desert landscapes, and Qatar's ongoing cultural development.

The Doha Film Institute will present screenings under its "Made in Qatar" programme, featuring a variety of films that celebrate Qatari heritage, identity, and culture. Qatar Photography Center at the Ministry of Culture will launch the "Aesthetics of National Day 2024" competition. The competition aims to capture the beauty of this occasion through the lenses of professional and amateur photographers.

Participation is free, and each participant can submit up to five photos taken during the National Day celebrations, with professional cameras



only. The deadline for submitting photos is Wednesday, December 25, 2024. Winners will receive cash prizes with QR20,000 for first place, QR15,000 the second and QR10,000 the third in addition to QR2,000 for the winners of the fourth to the tenth place.

The Cultural Village Foundation - Katara, is preparing an extensive lineup of cultural and heritage events in collaboration with various government and private entities. These activities aim to introduce the younger generations to Qatar's rich history and heritage. The events include traditional songs, national operettas, fireworks displays, drone shows, cultural performances, art exhibitions, and other activities.

Qatar National Library will host an array of cultural, artistic, and educational programmes for families and children, focusing on Qatar's history and heritage that include a number of lectures and special activities for children.





## Noble International School unveils new campus and celebrates 18th anniversary

**N**oble International School on Friday opened its new campus alongside the 18th annual day with diverse cultural programmes.

According to a statement from Noble, the two-day annual day celebration revolved around the theme "The Enchanted Library." Students brought to life various iconic literary characters on stage including Life of Pi, Malgudi Days, Inheritors of the Mother Earth and Anna Karenina among others captivating the audience with their performances.

The grand event witnessed the participation of representatives from the Ministry of Education and Higher Education, officials from the Indian embassy, school management members, the principal and vice-principals. Patron of the school, Eng Al Jasim Khalifa Jasim al-Malki inaugurated the new campus during the event.

School secretary Mashood VC delivered the welcome address and chairman Hussain Mohammed U presided. Special guests including Second Secretary of the Embassy of India, Bindu Nair and Azmy Ameer, president and trustee of Oryx Universal College delivered keynote speeches. General secretary KP Basheer, finance director Shoukath Ali Taj, vice-chairman KM Mohammed Easa and Abdul Rahim Kunnumal along with vice-principals Jayamon Joy, Shihabuddin M and Robin K Jose also addressed the audience.



School principal Shibu Abdul Rasheed presented the annual report showcasing the school's remarkable achievements over the past year. Dignitaries from various administrative, professional and social sectors were present. Topper students in the CBSE 10th and 12th board examinations last year were honoured along with teaching and non-teaching staff members who have completed over ten years of dedicated service to the school.

Cultural programmes by the students added colour to the celebration. Theatrical performances, inspired by renowned literary works offered a feast for the eyes and ears. Academic director Muneer Ahmed expressed gratitude.



## Qatar Charity's humanitarian aid convoy for Syria launched



**Q**atar Charity has announced the launch of a humanitarian aid convoy to support the people of Syria, consisting of 40 trucks as the first batch.

This effort aims to address their urgent basic needs considering the ongoing crisis they are facing.

The announcement was made at a press conference held at the convoy's starting point on the Syrian-Turkish border, attended by a delegation from Qatar Charity led by Nawaf al-Hamadi, assistant CEO for International Operations.

The convoy is part of the "Reviving Hope" campaign launched by Qatar Charity to assist the Syrian people in their current difficult circumstances. The Syrian population is suffering from severe shortages of essential goods, services, and supplies, compounded by the harsh winter

weather. Types of aid provided by the convoy includes flour (for distribution to bakeries and affected families), food baskets (containing essential food items), winter clothing kits, personal hygiene kits, non-food item kits, medical supplies, and consumables. The total cost of this aid is estimated at approximately QR4.5mn.

According to recent estimates by the UN Office for the Co-ordination of Humanitarian Affairs, more than 16mn people in Syria are in dire need of humanitarian assistance. Additionally, around 1mn people have been displaced from various Syrian cities since Nov 28, the majority of whom are women and children.

The UN has emphasised the urgent need for more shelter, food, and sanitation facilities considering the worsening situation. In his speech at the launch of the aid convoy, Nawaf

al-Hamadi, assistant CEO for International Operations at Qatar Charity, stated that the aid being dispatched as part of the convoy is in line with the "Reviving Hope" campaign. This initiative coincides with the return of many Syrians, including refugees and internally displaced persons, to their hometowns that they were forced to leave years ago. The goal is to help them stabilise in suitable living conditions, support their hopes for a better future, and provide them with the means to rebuild a dignified life after enduring years of hardship.

He added that this convoy represents the first phase of assistance in this ongoing campaign, reaffirming Qatar Charity's long-standing commitment to providing humanitarian support to the Syrian people, who have been affected by the crisis for over 13 years. The aid will help address the critical shortages in food, medical supplies, personal hygiene items, shelter, and winter clothing, all of which are necessary for surviving the severe winter.

He also urged the people of Qatar to extend their support to their Syrian brothers and sisters in this critical period, so that the aid can reach as many people as possible. (QNA)



## Jiwan awarded Michelin Bib Gourmand in 2025 Doha Guide



Jiwan Bib Gourmand



Head Chef Morgan Perrigaud.

**J**iwan, the modern Middle Eastern dining destination at the National Museum of Qatar (NMQ), and operated by QC+ (formally known as IN-Q Enterprises), has been awarded a Michelin Bib Gourmand at a ceremony on December 12.

QC+ are proud to have received considerable recognition from Michelin in addition to Jiwan's Bib Gourmand. Idam by Alain Ducasse at the Museum of Islamic Art was awarded one Michelin Star (one of only two Doha restaurants to have received a Star); Idam Mixologist Ratan Robi was given a Michelin Special Award: Exceptional Cocktails Award; while Desert Rose Cafe by Chef Noof al-Marri at NMQ was named as a Michelin Selected restaurant.

Jiwan thanked HE Sheikha Al Mayassa bint Hamad bin Khalifa al-Thani, for her vision, support and belief.

Chef Consultant Alain Ducasse said: "This Michelin Bib Gourmand recognises the work of the Jiwan team in creating a culinary experience that reveals the beauty, richness and warmth of the Middle East. Congratulations to Executive Chef Jeremy Cheminade; head Chef Morgan Perri-



gaud; Executive Pastry Chef Lucas Fourdrinier, and Restaurant Manager Sami Rachet, for their outstanding success. I would also like to sincerely thank QC+ for their trust and support for more than 10 years."

Yves Godard, director for F&B Operations and Commercial Leasing, said: "We are delighted to have been awarded this Michelin Bib Gourmand. We are immensely proud."

Cheminade said: "We have worked hard to create something really special with Jiwan, and this Bib Gourmand is also a recognition of the diverse culinary culture

of Qatar and the wider Arab region." Perrigaud added: "To have been recognised by Michelin is incredibly rewarding."

QC+ brands are deeply rooted in culture, heritage and creativity, and a fundamental principle of our work is to nurture the people of Qatar. Alongside the culinary excellence for which we gratefully receive Michelin's recognition, breadth of work encompasses innovative social wellness strategies like the Good Food School Initiative, a project ensuring access to nourishing food for all Qatari school children regardless of demographic.





## Angry Birds World launches Flock Fest

Angry Birds World at Doha Festival City has launched the highly anticipated "Flock Fest – Season 1", a celebration designed to bring families, friends and visitors of all ages together for an unforgettable entertainment experience.

Unveiled on Thursday, the festival will run until February 25 offering guests a blend of dynamic live performances, exhilarating rides, interactive games and a wide selection of delightful culinary treats, all set amidst a thoughtfully curated outdoor environment.

"Flock Fest", according to an official statement, is focused on creating lasting memories and reinforcing Angry Birds World's reputation as a top-tier family entertainment destination in Qatar.

The grand opening ceremony began with a ribbon-cutting presentation led by Leisure deputy managing director Jacob Kurian and Doha Festival City asset management director Christopher Barton.

This symbolic gesture not only marked the commencement of Flock Fest but also underscored Angry Birds World's ongoing commitment to delivering world-class entertainment experiences in Qatar.

Operated by Leisure, Angry Birds World stands alongside two other prominent attractions at Doha Festival City – Snow Dunes, an enchanting indoor snow park, and Virtuocity, a cutting-edge gaming and esports arena.

Following the ribbon-cutting, a dramatic curtain drop revealed a beautifully illuminated outdoor area meticulously adorned with vibrant décor and atmospheric lighting, setting the perfect tone for the festivities.

At the festival, visitors can look forward to a diverse range of activities crafted to captivate and engage the entire family.

Live shows featuring roaming performers and interactive storytelling will bring the world of Angry Birds to life in ways that stir the imagination.

Guests can hop aboard an array of thrilling rides each designed to provide safe, memorable excitement for everyone from young children discovering their first taste of adventure to adults seeking a fresh twist on family fun.

As part of Flock Fest, Angry Birds World has also introduced new attractions.

These include archery, knock-out, angry bull, bungee trampoline, face painting, corn hole and carnival-style skill games adding even more fun and variety to the festivities.

To complement the entertainment offerings, Flock Fest presents a tempting variety of food and beverage options ranging from local favourites to indulgent desserts.

The opening festivities drew attendance from numerous stakeholders, media outlets, influencers and content creators – all eager to share the excitement of Flock Fest with their respective audiences.

"We are delighted to welcome guests to Flock Fest at Angry Birds World," a spokesperson said. "This event embodies our unwavering commitment to excellence, offering exhilarating activities, unforgettable performances, and a joyous atmosphere designed to create lasting memories."

Angry Birds World is situated at the South Food Court of Doha Festival City.

It is an entertainment destination inspired by the internationally beloved Angry Birds franchise, featuring immersive rides, interactive attractions, and engaging live shows, ensuring a memorable experience for visitors of all ages.



## Dreama Centre launches new story series for children

The Dreama Centre for Orphan Care, part of the Qatar Social Work Foundation under the Ministry of Social Development and Family, has unveiled the second series of its new children's story collection at an event held at Hamad Bin Khalifa University in Education City.

This collection highlights stories of prophets and companions who faced various challenges in their lives, offering inspiring examples for children to build their confidence and embrace resilience.

During the event, Dreama Centre executive director Sheikhha Najla bint Ahmed al-Thani stated that

they believe in providing meaningful content that enriches the minds of orphans, instills values of perseverance and determination, and shares humanitarian messages.

She added that these stories are not just narratives; they are messages of hope and educational tools to help children understand that challenges are a natural part of life, and they too can overcome them, just as the prophets and companions did before them.

Sheikhha Najla emphasised that this project is one of the most significant initiatives aimed at nurturing humanitarian values in our orphaned children.

It delivers creative and meaningful content that carries noble messages, touches hearts, and enriches minds.

She highlighted that the new series focuses on the stories of remarkable historical figures, including prophets and companions.

Sheikhha Najla said that stories are a unique educational tool and a universal language that resonate with children's minds and hearts in a simple yet profound way.

She added that through this series they aim to instill noble values, build self-confidence, and inspire children to become active contributors to their communities.

Sheikhha Najla also commended the efforts invested in creating this collection, expressing her gratitude to the authors who skillfully crafted these stories with care and dedication.

Hassan Youssef Al Obaidli, the director of the Programmes Department at the Social and Sports Activities Support Fund (SDAM), stated that this project reflects their shared commitment to promoting human values and guiding orphaned children to overcome challenges and believe in their abilities, through the stories of prophets and companions that carry valuable lessons. – QNA

## Surging interest raises hot air balloon festival to new heights



Hassan al-Mousawi

By Joey Aguilar  
Staff Reporter

The Qatar Hot Air Balloon Festival is witnessing a surge in international interest, with organisers getting a record number of applications for its fifth edition.

Speaking to *Gulf Times* on the sidelines of Friday's Nightglow event, Safe Flight Solutions chief executive Hassan al-Mousawi noted that they received more than 170 applications for just 50 available slots, highlighting the growing popularity of this crowd-puller festival.

"We started with 30 balloons in the first edi-

tion, and now, with 50 balloons," he said. "Every year, the level of interest to come and join is increasing."

Al-Mousawi said that the festival, organised by Safe Flight Solutions, has been attracting hot air balloon enthusiasts from around the world.

This, he stressed, can be attributed not only to the increased interest in Qatar's captivating landscapes (showcased in videos and pictures on social media and the Internet) but especially to Qatar's renowned hospitality and the enduring legacy of the FIFA World Cup 2022.

About Qatar hosting or organising the biggest hot air balloon festival globally, he said: "We would love to, our aim is to grow this festival."

"We have a lot of support from Qatar Tourism and other partners like Katara and Dukhan Bank," he continued. "Both government and private enterprises are providing a lot of support."

This year's festival introduces a unique attraction: a small on-site hot air balloon factory. Skilled seamstresses are constructing a balloon from scratch, allowing visitors to witness the intricate process firsthand.

Al-Mousawi said the newly built balloon is expected to be ready by the end of the festival and will take its maiden flight, offering visitors an unforgettable experience.

The event has drawn participants from 21 countries, covering diverse regions across the world.

The daily "Sunrise Launches" have been attracting many residents and commuters in the early morning, while others have watched the balloons from their take-off points.

Nightly "Nightglow" events and laser light and flame shows offer further spectacles.



The 'Nightglow' attracted a large number of spectators on Friday. PICTURES: Joey Aguilar

## Aston Martin's new DBX707, 'Supercar' of SUVs

The award-winning Aston Martin DBX707 has become the marque's single powertrain in the British ultra-luxury performance brand's SUV portfolio, a statement from Alfordan Luxury Motors said.

Launched in 2022, the DBX707's blend of performance, exceptional dynamics, style and luxury saw it rapidly ascend to the pinnacle of the sector, as the "true Supercar of SUVs".

"With its best-in-class performance and dynamics, world-class design and the highest levels of luxury, the DBX707 immediately established a new ultra-luxury SUV benchmark," said Marco Mattiacci, global chief brand and commercial officer of Aston Martin. "Now upgraded with state-of-the-art technology and a completely new interior, the DBX707 moves the game on once more, further elevating the standard by which all competitors are judged."

In parallel to a comprehensive interior redesign, the DBX707 now receives Aston Martin's next-generation infotainment system.

This bespoke, fully integrated multi-screen system features wireless Apple CarPlay and Android Auto plus multiple USB-C connections and full online connectivity supported by the Aston Martin customer app.

Information is displayed using best-in-class Pure Black touchscreen technol-

ogy with full capacitive single and multi-finger gesture control.

The main driver's instrument cluster is a 12.3" screen – 1.5" larger than those found in the DB12 and Vantage – with a second 10.25" central infotainment display screen integrated into the new dashboard and centre console.

The DBX707 features buttons for the key mechanical operations of gear selection, drive mode, heating and ventilation, continuing Aston Martin's philosophy of creating the perfect blend between digital and analogue controls.

There are also control switches for suspension, ESP and exhaust, lane keep assist and park distance control, ensuring the most used controls are always conveniently to hand.

Complementing the integration of Aston Martin's next-generation infotainment system, the DBX707 also showcases an all-new interior; the latest evolution of the bold new design debuted in the DB12 and Vantage.

The clean, contemporary lines create a fabulous sense of space and cohesion, with a striking horizontal design line bisecting the upper and lower sections of the new dashboard.

Every area of the interior has been enhanced, from the new steering wheel to redesigned D-pull door release handles and elegant vertical air vents, both of which are now matched to bright chrome

or dark chrome interior jewellery.

New front door veneer panels are larger and available in a variety of new materials, including gloss smoked oak, gloss titanium mesh and updated zircote wood, piano black and carbon fibre veneers.

There are three different interior trim specifications, each with its own signature detailing: "Inspire Comfort" features matrix embroidery and quilting, "Inspire Sport" has vector embroidery, and "Accelerate with Alcantara" has an extra element of sportiness.

Additional detailing comes in the form of micro piping and sateen embroidery.

And, of course, there is extensive scope for further personalisation via Aston Martin's bespoke service, Q by Aston Martin.

The DBX707 is now fitted as standard with the Aston Martin Premium Audio 800w 14 speaker audio system.

Developed utilising advanced hardware, this system features a surround sound mode with QuantumLogic surround sound processing for a totally immersive soundscape.

True audiophiles will delight in the optional system developed with Aston Martin's audio partner, Bowers & Wilkins.

Acoustically engineered to the DBX707's interior volume and shape, this exceptional system uses technologies and innovations found in Bowers & Wilkins's acclaimed world-class loudspeakers.

Aluminium Double Dome tweeters and Continuum midrange speakers give this 23-speaker, double-amplified 1,600W surround sound system a balanced and accurate sound.

Dedicated 3D headline speakers, bass speakers and a powerful subwoofer deliver a powerful and dynamic sound experience.

The DBX707, the latest in the core model line-up to behold the new Aston Martin Wings, also introduces a number of detail changes to the exterior.

Foremost amongst these are five new paint colours – Epsilon Black, Helios Yellow, Sprint Green, Malachite Green, and Aura Green – plus the addition of Podium



Green, first exclusively available on the DBX707 AMR23 Edition.

There are two new wheel finishes: Satin Black on the 23" Fortis wheel, and Copper Bronze on the 23" Forged wheel.

Design of the 22" Sport, 23" Fortis and 23" Forged rims remain unchanged, with Silver, Gloss Black, Textured Black, Satin Black and Satin Black Diamond Turned finishes also available on selected wheels.

Other visible changes include new "presenting" door handles, which power outwards when the car is unlocked, and new flush glass swivel-head door mirrors.

Driven by the adoption of a more sophisticated Advanced Driver Assistance System (ADAS), the new mirror design features improved fully integrated cameras to support the 3D parking camera functionality, which sees the whole mirror and shell assembly swivel as-one to provide adjustment.

In addition to providing better camera packaging, the flush-fit edge-to-edge mirror design maximises the size of the reflective surface for a greater field of view.

Underpinning this extensive suite of changes is the formidable hardware package for which the DBX707 is renowned.

Star of the show is the 707PS/900Nm 4.0-litre twin-turbocharged V8 and 9-speed "wet clutch" automatic gearbox.

Mated to a sophisticated all-wheel drive system capable of sending up to 100% of the torque to the rear axle on



demand, the DBX707 can launch from 0-100kph in 3.3 seconds and achieve a top speed of 310kph.

With braking power delivered by 420mm front and 390mm rear Carbon Ceramic brakes, the DBX707 sits on 22" wheels as standard, with a choice of cast or forged 23" alloy wheels available as options.

Aston Martin engineers have further honed the DBX707's class-leading dynamics, the quest for continual improvement resulting in a new calibration for the electronic dampers and air springs.

Implemented to increase transient body control, the resulting improvement in response, precision and driver confidence extends the DBX707's dynamic superiority in its Supercar of SUV's class, the statement added.







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**GULF TIMES**

## 2025 budget reflects Qatar's commitment to boost economy, foster sustained development

Qatar's commitment to enhancing human capital development and improving public service quality has been reflected on Qatar's general budget for 2025.

Two key sectors – education and health have been allocated a significant outlay they deserve – QR41.4bn, which accounts for 20% of the total budget.

Strategic sectors such as trade and industry, research and innovation, tourism, digital transformation, and information technology have also been allocated significant resources to support economic diversification and sustainable development efforts.

These sectors play a vital role in shaping a knowledge-driven, innovative economy.

This underscores Qatar's commitment to the development of its nationals, recognising that the development of human capital is vital for the progress of all other sectors, be it economic or social.

Qatar's 2025 budget approved by His Highness the Amir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani clearly aligns with the country's plans and strategies to support its ongoing economic growth and achieve economic diversification within the framework of the Qatar National Vision (QNV) 2030.

The budget for fiscal 2025 expects total revenues of QR197bn and an expenditure of QR210.2bn with an anticipated deficit of QR13.2bn.

### Qatar's 2025 budget allocates QR41.4bn to education and health, emphasising human capital development and economic diversification under QNV 2030

According to HE the Minister of Finance Ali bin Ahmed al-Kuwari, Qatar has set an oil price of \$60 per barrel in preparing the budget.

HE al-Kuwari said, "Qatar continues to adopt a conservative approach in estimating oil and gas revenues, with an average oil price of \$60 per barrel. This approach aims to enhance financial flexibility and ensure spending stability."

The minister noted that Qatar's total expected

revenues for the 2025 fiscal year budget are estimated at QR197bn, reflecting a 2.5% decrease compared to the 2024 budget revenues.

He stated, "The anticipated oil and gas revenues for 2025 are QR154bn, down from QR159bn in the 2024 budget, marking a 3.1% decrease. Non-oil revenues for 2025 are estimated at QR43bn, which remains unchanged from 2024 levels."

The budget projection of QR43bn non-oil revenues reflects the country's focus on non-oil sectors as part of its economic diversification policies and efforts to establish alternative income sources alongside gas and oil.

Al-Kuwari said total expenditures projected at QR210.2bn next year, showed a 4.6% increase compared to 2024.

He noted the expected budget deficit of QR13.2bn will be financed through local and external debt instruments, as required.

Allocations for salaries and wages are set to rise by 5.5% in 2025 compared to 2024, totalling QR67.5bn.

Current expenditures will see a 6.3% increase, while secondary capital expenditures are expected to grow by 7.7%.

Meanwhile, major capital expenditure allocations will experience a modest 1.4% increase to ensure the ongoing implementation of strategic and developmental projects.

Qatar's economy has shown itself to be resilient following the World Cup in 2022. Caution over fluctuating oil price, reduction of national debt, and promoting private sector employment are among the priorities.

The budget underscores the effectiveness of sound economic policies and strategies adopted by Qatar, particularly in achieving economic diversification in line with Qatar National Vision 2030.

It aligns with the Third National Development Strategy, focusing on economic diversification and building a knowledge- and innovation-based economy.

The budget clearly reflects the wise leadership's commitment to further strengthening the national economy and fostering sustainable development.

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## Meloni in the 'right' frame



Italian Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni speaks during the Atreju political meeting organised by the young militants of Italian right wing party Brothers of Italy (Fratelli d'Italia) yesterday in Rome. (AFP)

# Boeing struggles to make best-selling plane again

By Allison Lampert, Dan Catchpole  
Seattle

Since a crippling strike at many of Boeing's US plane factories ended more than a month ago, progress ramping up production of its best-selling 737 MAX jet has been deliberately slow.

Safety inspectors inside the 737 MAX factory outside Seattle laboriously scoured half-constructed planes for flaws they may have missed during the seven-week work stoppage.

Other workers poured over manuals to restore their expired safety licenses. The factory was initially so lifeless in mid-November that one employee left early because the bins of fasteners he was tasked with replenishing weren't being used, according to a source inside the plant. The result: no new 737 MAX plane has been completed. Boeing said on Tuesday that it had restarted MAX production last week, as first reported by Reuters.

Boeing's cautious approach, following criticism that the planemaker for years rushed production, has garnered praise from regulators and some airline CEOs.

But it also has some smaller suppliers who cut jobs or operating hours during the strike hesitating to staff-up again, creating further uncertainty in an already fragile supply chain, according to three suppliers, one analyst and an industry source. Both Boeing and rival Airbus have struggled to meet production goals due to supply chain delays. Boeing CEO Kelly Ortberg in October told analysts he was anticipating a bumpy return from the supply chain post strike.

Parts that used to take a day to be finished at a processing shop now take a week, one supplier told Reuters.

This account of Boeing's effort to restart production of its strongest-selling jet is based on interviews with a dozen Boeing

factory workers and 10 suppliers, most of whom spoke on condition of anonymity because they are not authorised to talk to the media.

It shows that Ortberg is sticking to his pledge to cautiously restart 737 MAX production, prioritising safety and quality due to heightened regulatory scrutiny following a January mid-air panel blowout on a near-new plane.

The interviews also revealed that some suppliers are still struggling to recover from the strike, after wrestling with slumping plane production during Covid-19, and the 2019 MAX grounding following two fatal crashes involving the model.

Boeing "will continue to steadily increase production as we execute on our safety and quality plan and work to meet the expectations of our regulator and customers," Boeing spokesperson Jessica Kowal said. "We will also continue to work transparently with our suppliers, listening to concerns and looking for opportunities to improve collaboration to ensure our entire production system operates safely and predictably."

After weeks of inertia, there were fresh signs of movement inside Boeing's Renton 737 MAX factory last week, three sources said, with green fuselages entering the final assembly line where the wings and tail get attached.

The restart, while not bringing immediate relief, is good news for financially-strapped fuselage supplier Spirit AeroSystems which was running low on storage space during the strike. A Reuters reporter saw over 100 MAX fuselages lined up at Spirit's Wichita factory this week.

Spirit Aero spokesperson Joe Buccino said the company was "working closely with Boeing as they restart production." Boeing executives have privately said they hope to produce 15 to 20 MAX jets this month, two of the 10 suppliers and one industry source said, although one of them cautioned that the chance of hitting the higher end of that target is unlikely. The Boeing

spokesperson did not comment on those numbers.

Boeing typically closes most planemaking operations between December 24 and January 1.

While Boeing doesn't disclose production figures, the planemaker said in October that before the strike it was preparing to hit a target of 38 737 jets per month by year's end.

At the factory, daily tasks are paired with exacting efforts to clean up and take steps to avoid error, with note-taking FAA officials carrying clipboards and donning reflective vests a regular sight, they said.

FAA Administrator Mike Whitaker praised Boeing on December 5 for not following past practice by immediately restarting production after the strike, instead focusing on workforce and training. Still, Whitaker told Reuters that Boeing has a long journey to achieve its targeted safety culture. "The plant's cleaner, as you would expect, but they're frank about the fact that they've got a long way to go," he said.

Stabilising Boeing's MAX production is key both for the planemaker and for the financial health of its supply chain on the jet with 4,200 outstanding airline orders and which is expected to drive revenues for years to come.

Six out of the 10 suppliers told Reuters they won't bring back workers before 2025, partly because they are unsure whether Boeing will need to again change its production plans.

Two suppliers said they were told by Boeing that the planemaker is expected to give a private update on a key internal 737 supply chain production milestone for the supply chain, this month.

"Supplier trust in Boeing rates is at a low point," said Glenn McDonald, a supply chain specialist at US aerospace consultancy AeroDynamic Advisory, which advises clients in areas like business and corporate strategy.

"Suppliers have been burned

before by investing for rates that didn't come ... that doubt becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy?"

In the short term, Boeing can likely count on excess parts and components it has amassed this year to build its planes since until the strike it largely continued purchasing from suppliers at a higher rate than it needed because it was producing fewer jets due to the blowout. Then, purchasing largely slumped during the strike. As production comes back online, supplier scepticism over Boeing's rates could impede needed investments to meet Boeing's plans for a return to a rate of 38 and above next year, according to three suppliers, McDonald and an industry source.

Boeing's struggles mean it will take longer to return 737 MAX production to its pre-strike levels than after a 2008 work stoppage, when the planemaker got back to a monthly rate of 31 in about 25 days, McDonald said.

That longer recovery is being acutely felt by some of the hundreds of small suppliers that dot Boeing's manufacturing heartland in Washington state. Smaller aerospace suppliers are less bullish on making capital investments than many of their larger counterparts, said Christopher Chidzik, principal economist at the Association for Manufacturing Technology, a trade group.

In October, despite the Boeing machinists strike, aerospace producers increased orders of manufacturing technology to the highest level of 2024, indicating that they used the downtime to replace and expand technology used on production lines, he said.

Smaller job shops went against that trend, he added.

Seattle-area supplier Rosemary Brester hoped she and her husband would be able to get their metal aircraft components processed more quickly following the end of the strike, but delays persist.

The couple, who have been running Hobart Machined Products since 1978 out of a workshop beside their home, rely on a finishing specialist to anodise and paint their precision parts before sending them to larger companies that sell to Boeing.

This used to take a day, now it takes a week, because the finishing specialist has been short-staffed since laying off workers during the strike.

"All we can do is manufacture to the schedule we have, maybe expedite parts and pay a bit more to get them to our customers on time," she said.

"Until I see some real stability, I'm not going to hire anybody," Brester said.

Carmen Evans, co-owner of New Tech Industries in Mukilteo, Washington near Boeing's colossal Everett factory complex, said the small supplier is ready to produce more specialised tooling for its largest customer. But they are now in a type of limbo as they wait for Boeing's MAX factory to start humming again.

"It's not like the floodgates have opened up yet," she said.



Larry Bester creates machined parts for Boeing planes in his home-based Hobart Machined Products facility in Hobart, Washington. (Reuters)





Mikheil Kavelashvili (left) is congratulated by lawmakers after being elected as Georgia's new president at the parliament in Tbilisi. (AFP)

## Ex-footballer elected Georgia's new far-right president

Georgian ex-footballer turned far-right politician Mikheil Kavelashvili yesterday was voted Tbilisi's next figurehead president in an election process denounced as "illegitimate" by the current pro-EU leader. Picked by the governing Georgian Dream party as a loyalist, the former forward for English Premier League champions Manchester City is known for his expletive-laden parliament speeches and tirades against government critics. He was voted into the role by an electoral college controlled by Georgian Dream, after the party abolished the use of popular votes to elect the president under controversial constitutional changes passed in 2017.

Kavelashvili was the only candidate and is set to be inaugurated on December 29, amid ongoing social upheaval as thousands of anti-government protesters have flooded Tbilisi for weeks, furious at Georgian Dream for shelving EU accession talks.

Protesters have described Kavelashvili as a "puppet" of billionaire Bidzina Ivanishvili, Georgian Dream's founder, who in turn has called him "the embodiment of a Georgian man". Born in Georgia's tiny southwestern town of Bolnisi in 1971, Kavelashvili began his career as a professional footballer in the 1980s, playing for clubs in Georgia and Russia and becoming a striker for his country's national team.

The 53-year-old played for Manchester City from 1995-1997, scoring on his debut against bitter crosstown rivals Manchester United. He then joined Swiss club Grasshoppers, where he spent most of his time on the bench, before stints elsewhere in Switzerland at Zurich, Luzern, Sion, Aarau and Basel. Kavelashvili was disqualified from running for president of the Georgian Football Federation in 2015 due to a lack of higher education — a requirement for the role.

## Turkiye reopens embassy in Syria

Turkiye reopened its embassy in Damascus yesterday, nearly a week after president Bashar al-Assad was toppled by forces backed by Ankara, and 12 years after the diplomatic outpost was shuttered early in Syria's civil war. The move came as Middle Eastern and Western diplomats were meeting in Jordan for high-level talks on Syria, and a day after nationwide celebrations at Assad's ouster.

Ankara has been a major player in Syria's conflict, holding considerable sway in the northwest and financing armed groups there, and maintaining a working relationship with the Islamist Hayat Tahrir al-Sham (HTS), which spearheaded the offensive that brought down Assad.

The Turkish flag was raised over the diplomatic mission, in an embassy district of Damascus, in the presence of the new charge d'affaires Burhan Koroglu, an AFP journalist said.

Turkish Foreign Minister Hakan Fidan, who on Friday said the embassy would be "operational" yesterday, also said Ankara had urged Assad backers Russia and Iran not to intervene as the Islamist-led rebels mounted their lightning advance last week. "The most important thing was to talk to the Russians and Iranians to ensure that they didn't enter the equation militarily... They understood," Fidan told private television network NTV. Turkish diplomats joined counterparts from the European Union, the United States and the Arab world yesterday for talks in the Jordanian city of Aqaba.

# S Korea president impeached in a 'victory of the people'



South Korean lawmakers cast their votes during a plenary session of the impeachment vote of President Yoon Suk-yeol at the National Assembly. (Reuters)

AFP  
Seoul

South Korean lawmakers yesterday impeached President Yoon Suk-yeol over his failed martial law bid, with the opposition declaring a "victory of the people".

The vote capped more than a week of intense political drama in the democratic South following Yoon's failed attempt to impose martial law on December 3.

Hundreds of thousands of people took to the streets of the capital Seoul in rival rallies for and against Yoon yesterday.

In a televised address following the parliamentary vote, the impeached Yoon said he would "step aside" but did not apologise for his botched bid to impose martial law.

Out of 300 lawmakers, 204 voted to impeach the president on allegations of insurrection while 85 voted against. Three abstained, with eight votes nullified.

With the impeachment, Yoon has been suspended from office while South Korea's Constitutional Court deliberates on the vote.

The court has 180 days to rule on Yoon's future and Chief Justice Moon Hyung-bae vowed to hold "a swift and fair trial".

If the court backs his removal,

Yoon will become the second president in South Korean history to be successfully impeached.

Two hundred votes were needed for the impeachment to pass, and opposition lawmakers needed to convince at least eight parliamentarians from Yoon's conservative People Power Party (PPP) to switch sides.

"Today's impeachment is the great victory of the people," opposition Democratic Party floor leader Park Chan-dae said following the vote.

PPP lawmaker Kim Sang-wook told broadcaster JTBC that Yoon had "completely betrayed the values of conservatism".

"That is why we, as ruling party lawmakers, have decided to remove him ourselves," he said.

Prime Minister Han Duck-soo — now the nation's interim leader — said in an address to the nation that he "deeply acknowledges the heavy responsibility for the current situation" and "sincerely apologises to the people".

"What is most important right now is that there must not be even the slightest gap in the administration of state affairs," said Han, who convened a National Security Council late yesterday evening.

A Seoul police official told AFP at least 200,000 people had massed outside parliament in support of removing the president.



This aerial photograph taken yesterday shows protesters calling for the ouster of South Korea President Yoon Suk-yeol gathering to await the outcome of the second martial law impeachment vote in Seoul. (AFP)

Choi Jung-ha, 52, danced in the street after the vote.

"Isn't it amazing that we, the people, have pulled this off together?" she told AFP.

"I am 100 percent certain the Constitutional Court will side with the impeachment."

On the other side of Seoul near Gwanghwamun square, police estimated 30,000 had rallied in support of Yoon, blasting patriotic songs and waving South Korean and American flags.

"Yoon had no choice but to declare martial law. I approve of every decision he has made as president," supporter Choi Hee-sun, 62, told AFP before the vote.

The Democratic Party said ahead of the vote that impeachment was the "only way" to "safeguard the Constitution, the rule of law, democracy and South Korea's future".

"We can no longer endure Yoon's madness," spokeswoman Hwang Jung-a said.

At the rally outside parliament supporting impeachment, volun-

teers gave out free hand warmers last morning to fight the subzero temperatures, as well as coffee and food.

K-pop singer Yuri of the band Girls' Generation — whose song *Into the New World* has become a protest anthem — said she had prepaid for food for fans attending the demonstration.

"Stay safe and take care of your health!" she said on a superfan chat platform.

One protester said she had rented a bus so parents at the rally would have a place to change diapers and feed their babies.

Another said they had initially planned to spend their Saturday hiking.

"But I came here instead to support my fellow citizens," Kim Deuk-yun, 58, told AFP.

Yoon's future will now be determined by the court, which has previously blocked an impeachment.

In 2004, then-president Roh Moo-hyun was removed by parliament for alleged election law

violations and incompetence, but the Constitutional Court later reinstated him.

The court currently only has six judges, meaning their decision must be unanimous.

Following Saturday's vote, parliament speaker Woo Won-shik said the National Assembly would seek to nominate three more judges to the court as soon as possible.

"The future of South Korea lies within its people," he said.

Yoon remained unapologetic and defiant as the fallout from his disastrous martial law declaration deepened and an investigation into his inner circle has widened.

His approval rating — never very high — plummeted to 11%, according to a Gallup Korea poll released Friday.

The same poll showed that 75% supported his impeachment.

Following Yoon's impeachment, a spokeswoman for the European Union called for a "swift and orderly resolution" to the political crisis in line with South Korea's constitution.

# US has made 'direct contact' with Syria's HTS: Blinken

AFP  
Aqaba (Jordan)

The United States has made "direct contact" with Syria's victorious Hayat Tahrir al-Sham rebels despite designating the group as terrorists, Secretary of State Antony Blinken said yesterday, as he sought international unity on a peaceful transition.

"We've been in contact with HTS and with other parties," Blinken told reporters after talks on Syria in the Jordanian Red Sea resort of Aqaba.

He did not give details on how the contact took place but when asked if the United States reached out directly, he said: "Direct contact — yes."

Blinken said that the contact was partly related to the search for Austin Tice, the US journalist kidnapped in 2012 near the start of the brutal civil war.

"We have pressed upon everyone we've been in contact with the importance of helping find

Austin Tice and bringing him home," Blinken said.

He said that in the dialogue with HTS the United States also "shared the principles" on Syria that he has publicly laid out.

Blinken indicated the United States was open eventually to easing sanctions on Syria but not yet.

Referring to HTS statements since their victory, Blinken said: "We appreciate some of the positive words we heard in recent days, but what matters is action — and sustained action."

"This can't be a decision on the events of one day," he said.

If a transition moves forward, "we in turn will look at various sanctions and other measures that we have taken and respond in kind."

Blinken was closing a regional tour in which he has sought common ground after HTS overthrew Bashar al-Assad, whose family ruled brutally for half a century.

In Aqaba, Blinken took part in talks that brought together top Arab and European diplomats as



US Secretary of State Antony Blinken delivers a statement to the press after meeting with the foreign ministers of the Arab Contact Group on Syria. (Reuters)

well as Turkiye, the main supporter of rebel groups in Syria.

In a joint statement, the participants called for a Syrian-led transition to "produce an inclusive, non-sectarian and representative government formed through a transparent process".

The statement also stressed "respect for human rights", the importance of combating "terrorism and extremism" and demanded "all parties" cease hostilities in Syria.

"Syria finally has the chance

to end decades of isolation," the group said.

UN Syria envoy Geir Pedersen earlier told Blinken: "We need to make sure that state institutions do not collapse, and that we get in humanitarian assistance as quickly as possible."

The United States and other Western governments classify HTS as a terrorist group due to its roots in Al Qaeda's Syria branch.

The designation severely impedes activities of businesses and aid workers who risk falling foul of US law enforcement if they are seen as directly supporting a terrorist group.

Since seizing power last weekend, rebel leader Abu Mohammed al-Jolani has spoken in conciliatory terms about making peace with the broad spectrum of Syrian society.

Some analysts note that HTS has not focused on US or other Western targets.

Few expect a quick move by the United States to lift the terrorist designation, especially with a political transition set next month

following Donald Trump's victory in the presidential election.

In Britain, a senior minister said that the government would decide quickly whether to remove the terrorist designation but Prime Minister Keir Starmer said it was still "far too early" to do so.

Blinken said that he found hope in the street celebrations in Syrian cities in recent days.

"No-one has any illusions about how challenging this time will be, but there's also something incredibly powerful — the Syrian people determined to break with the past and shape a better future," he said.

He also hailed the US-backed, Kurdish-led Syrian Democratic Forces for raising the new "independence" flag of the rebels, after for years flying their own flag as they achieved limited self-rule.

Blinken said it was for Syrians to decide how to incorporate Kurds in the country but he hailed SDF fighters — who are bitterly opposed by Turkiye — for their role in fighting the Islamic State group.

# Retired cop finds trove of unreleased Jackson songs

A retired California highway patrolman has stumbled into possession of a trove of unreleased Michael Jackson songs — which the world may never have a chance to hear. Gregg Musgrove, now a stay-at-home dad, procured the tapes after an associate purchased a storage unit in the city of Van Nuys that contained the recordings, according to the *Hollywood Reporter*.

The unit had once belonged to music producer Bryan Loren — who also worked with artists including Whitney Houston and Sting — but whose whereabouts are currently unknown. Inside were cassette tapes and digital-audio tapes (DAT) of 12 unreleased tracks Jackson had worked on before releasing his

Grammy-nominated *Dangerous* album in 1991.

Sadly for Jackson's many fans, an attorney hired by Musgrove to contact the Jackson estate was told that the estate owns the copyright on all of the late singer's musical recordings and compositions, so they cannot be released publicly.

The estate later clarified for the *Hollywood Reporter* that it holds the master recordings of the recently unearthed songs in its vaults, and that "nothing commercial or otherwise can be done with the DAT copies." Some of the songs had only been rumoured to exist, while others had been partially leaked. Musgrove told the *Hollywood Reporter*, but added "a couple aren't even out there in the



JUST BEAT IT: The songs cannot be released for legal reasons.

world." Some tapes include the voice of Jackson and apparently Loren discussing the songs and

the creative process. "To hear Michael Jackson actually talk and kind of joke

back and forth, it was really, really cool," said Musgrove. The tracks include one titled *Don't Believe It*, an apparent reference to rumours about Jackson concerning sexual assault against minors. On another, *Truth on Youth*, Jackson appears to engage in a rap duet with LL Cool J. It was not clear what Musgrove might have paid his associate for the tapes, but he still stands to come out ahead. He plans to offer the tapes to major auction houses, and buyers are expected to line up. In 2012, Lady Gaga purchased 55 pieces of Jackson memorabilia — reportedly including one of his crystal-studded gloves — while a jacket he wore during his *Bad* tour sold for \$240,000.



## Qatar steadfast in support of Syrian people: prime minister

From Page 1

HE Sheikh Mohammed also participated in the meeting of the Arab Ministerial Contact Committee on Syria, held in Aqaba.

The committee comprises Jordan, Saudi Arabia, Iraq, Lebanon, Egypt, and the Arab League Secretary-General, with the participation of Qatar, the UAE and Bahrain, the cur-

rent Arab League Summit president.

At the meeting, which discussed the latest developments in Syria, HE Sheikh Mohammed stressed the need to ensure Syria's unity and the peaceful transfer of power through a unifying political process based on UN Security Council Resolution 2254, in addition to enhancing efforts to protect civilians and countering terrorism. - **QNA**

## Jordan's king meets heads of delegations taking part in meeting on Syria



Jordan's King Abdullah II ibn al-Hussein held a meeting with Qatar's Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs HE Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman bin Jassim al-Thani and foreign ministers Prince Faisal bin Farhan bin Abdullah al-Saud (Saudi Arabia), Fuad Hussein (Iraq), Dr Abdallah Bou Habib (Lebanon), Dr Badr Abdelaaty (Egypt), Sheikh Abdullah bin Zayed al-Nahyan (UAE), Dr Abdullatif bin Rashid al-Zayani (Bahrain), Hakan Fidan (Turkiye), Antony Blinken (US), Jean-Noel Barrot (France), Arab League Secretary-General Ahmed Aboul Gheit, High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs & Security Policy/Vice-President of the European Commission Kaja Kallas, and Special Envoy of the UN for Syria Geir Pedersen yesterday. The meeting, which was also attended by Jordanian Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs and Expatriates Dr Ayman al-Safadi, discussed developments in Syria. - **QNA**



Snapshots from the launch event.

# LuLu launches initiative to highlight local products

Retail giant LuLu Hypermarket has launched the "Qatari Products: Our First Choice" festival at its D-Ring Road outlet, marking a grand celebration of local products, in collaboration with the Ministry of Municipality.

To run until December 18, the festival highlights Qatar's finest food and non-food products, celebrating the nation's rich cultural

heritage and traditions.

Since its inception in 2010, the festival has become a hallmark event across all LuLu outlets in the region, showcasing locally produced goods while supporting small Qatari businesses and entrepreneurs.

Shoppers can explore a wide range of fresh produce, such as vegetables, herbs, chicken, eggs,

Arabic lamb and beef, chilled and frozen items, dairy, processed foods, baked goods, groceries, health and beauty products, linens, pillow and table covers, bed sheets, and much more.

The inaugural ceremony witnessed the presence of dignitaries including Saud al-Marri from the ministry's Food Security Department, Ahmed al-Yafei from the ministry's Agricultural Affairs Department, Safwa Farm general manager Fardan Alfardan, Mahaseel Company general manager Mohammed Ismail al-Mohammed, and LuLu Group international director Dr Mohamed Althaf.

Senior LuLu officials and distinguished Qataris from public and private sector organisations were also present.

Speaking at the event, Dr Althaf emphasised Qatar's advancements in agriculture and food security.

"Qatar has made remarkable strides in strengthening its agricultural capabilities and enhancing food security," he said. "This initiative highlights the progress in local food production, the nation's growing self-sufficiency, and the availability of high-quality, pesticide-free products."

Over the past eight years, Qatar's agricultural sector has evolved to meet 80% of the nation's essential food requirements, a testament to its investment in modern farming technologies and sustainable practices.

"This growth is not just about quantity but also quality," Dr Althaf said. "From high-quality

crops to speciality products once imported, Qatar's farms now offer an impressive range of fresh and local produce."

The festival also serves as a platform to connect consumers with Qatar's agricultural heritage.

By celebrating local farming traditions and culinary practices, it fosters pride in locally produced food and ensures the preservation of traditional agricultural knowledge.

While no nation is entirely self-sufficient in food, Qatar has successfully developed a robust supply chain for short-life perishables.

The country can now meet immediate food needs within a two-to-three-day window, ensuring continuous availability of fresh

produce and dairy products.

"This year's festival showcases over 300+ locally produced items from 35 Qatari farms, along with renowned Qatari brands such as Baladna, Safwa Farm, Agrico Qatar, Dandy, Al Maha, Rawa, Rayyan, Qbake, Pearl, Jawharh, Flora, Gourmet and many more," Dr Althaf added.

LuLu Group has been a key player in supporting Qatar's local farmers and entrepreneurs, promoting their products as part of its social and economic commitment to the nation.

The retailer's long-standing partnerships have helped to market local agricultural produce to a broad audience while contributing to the country's food security and sustainability goals.



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