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Boeing deal biggest in Qatar Airways' history

With the commitment for the 737 MAX 8, it would be the first Boeing single-aisle aeroplane model to join Qatar Airways' fleet in more than 15 years.

The Peninsula

DOHA: The mega deal of $18.6bn (QR67.7bn approximately), signed between Qatar Airways and Boeing to purchase up to 100 planes, was the biggest contract inked in the airline's 19-year history, said Akbar Al Baker, Chief Executive of Qatar's national carrier.

Speaking at a joint press conference to discuss the deal in Washington, Al Baker said that Qatar Airways ordered 30 Dreamliners (787-9) and 10 777-300ERs, valued at $11.7bn. The airline also signed a 'Letter of Intent' for up to 60 737 MAX 8s, valued at $6.9bn, he added.

The high-profile event was attended by Qatar's Minister of Finance, H E Ali Sherif Al Emadi, who is also the Chairman of Qatar Airways; Qatar's Ambassador to the US, Mohammad Jaham Abdulaziz Al Kuwari and US Deputy Secretary of State, Tony Blinken. The deal was signed by Al Baker and Ray Conner, CEO of Boeing Commercial Airplanes during the press conference.

"Qatar Airways, already one of the fastest growing airlines in the history of aviation, today announces a significant and historic aircraft order that will power our future growth for the years and the decades ahead," said Al Baker.

"Boeing has proven to be a valuable partner, and today's announcement is testament to our appreciation of the quality of their product and their dedication to providing world class customer service." On relations with Boeing, Al Baker said that they were renewed in 2006. Since then, there have been many milestones in the partnership. Qatar Airways was the first to operate the 787 in the Middle East and is a launch customer for the 777X. With the commitment for the 737 MAX 8, it would be the first Boeing single-aisle plane model to join Qatar Airways' fleet in more than 15 years.



Qatar Airways Group Chief Executive Akbar Al Baker (centre) discusses the agreement with reporters following a press conference co-hosted with Boeing Commercial Airplanes President and CEO Ray Conner.

On the airline's expansion in the US market, Al Baker said that the latter was one of the most important markets for Qatar Airways due to its diversity in terms of nationalities and destinations.

He highlighted that the strong competition in the market helped Qatar Airways maintain its edge, as the airline has never finished below the top five ranking of best airlines over the past 10 years.

Conner said that the partnership between Qatar Airways and Boeing reflected the former's confidence in Boeing's new technology present in the 777X and 737 MAX. He added that the deal was a new milestone in the two companies' partnership, highlighting that it will provide 104,000 job opportunities in the US commercial aeroplanes industry.

Meanwhile, the US Secretary of Commerce, Penny Pritzker, welcomed the deal in a statement read at the press conference.

She noted that the agreement demonstrated the importance of global commercial partnerships in strengthening bilateral ties between the US and Qatar.

The order builds on the airline's current fleet of 84 Boeing aircraft, a combination of 787s and 777s, all delivered over the last nine years. With this new order, Qatar Airways increases its firm order backlog of Boeing wide-body aeroplanes from 65 to 105, including 60 777Xs.



Prime Minister and Interior Minister H E Sheikh Abdullah bin Nasser bin Khalifa Al Thani at a meeting to direct officials to find a clear and quick mechanism to help citizens seeking housing.

PM seeks to expedite citizens' housing

The Peninsula

DOHA: Prime Minister and Interior Minister H E Sheikh Abdullah bin Nasser bin Khalifa Al Thani has directed the authorities concerned to find a clear and quick mechanism to help citizens seeking housing and complete the procedures in time.

This can be done through loans or by providing housing to those in need, *Qatar News Agency* reported. The Prime Minister also directed the setting up of a suitable place to meet citizens seeking those services.

This came during a field visit made by the Prime Minister to the Ministry to get an update on the latest development of work there.

The Prime Minister also called for swiftly finalising the plan to appoint Qatari citizens in jobs occupied by foreigners, subject to that the Qatari nationals fulfil the requirements of those jobs.

New device forces drivers to buckle up

By Irfan Bukhari
The Peninsula

DOHA: A new safety device, 'Lifebelt' that prevents car engines from starting until the driver puts on the seat belt is likely to hit the market soon.

The dealers are expecting a good demand for the device when it is launched especially from parents and employers.

"We are all set to market the Lifebelt in the coming two or three months and all arrangements have been finalised in this regard," said Zaid Al Hamdan, Executive Director Ajyal Tek (an IT company) in an exclusive talk with *The Peninsula*.

The road safety device was invented by Robert Allison in 2009. Lifebelt is a seat belt ignition interlock system after installation of which the vehicle's engine will not start until the belt is buckled. The device caught public attention when Allison first threw light on the Lifebelt in the second episode of Shark Tank's first season in August 2009.

Al Hamdan said that the potential buyers of the device would be parents and employers. "Parents are welcoming this device as they think it will develop seat belt wearing habit among children while the companies would get them installed in their vehicles to ensure the safety of their employees," said Al Hamdan.

He said that his company had won international distribution rights of Lifebelt which is manufactured by an international ISO certified company. He said that the manufacturer had the capacity to produce as many as 20,000 units per week.

"Our company Ajyal Tek has also introduced some modifications in the Lifebelt," he added.

He said according to international studies 80 per cent reduction in deaths caused by accidents had been noticed if motorists wore a seat belt.

"Lifebelt eventually develops the habit of wearing seat belts," he said.

He said his company was in talks with various industrial units in Qatar for installation of Lifebelt in workers' buses.

"Our talks with Woqod have been fruitful and the device will be available for sale at all Woqod fuel stations, when it is launched," he said. The price of the Lifebelt, Al Hamdan said, would be QR550.

"We have done extensive five years testing for the device. Therefore, we can bet on its efficacy and credibility," he added.

Al Hamdan said that his company in collaboration with various private and government organisations was running a road safety awareness campaign, named National Vision.

"As many as 25 ambassadors of various countries are cooperating with us in this noble cause. We are also grateful to the National Traffic Safety Committee of the Ministry of Interior for the support it always extended for running the campaign."

→ Continued on page 2



The Lifebelt equipment.

Road closure due to cycling championship

The Peninsula

DOHA: The road from Lusail towards The Pearl-Qatar will be closed today from 1.30pm until 5pm due to the UCI 2016 Road World Championships being hosted by Qatar from today until October 19.

The roads from Katara signal to The Pearl-Qatar and from West Bay to Katara will also be closed because of the cycling championship in which 82 countries are participating. Traffic will be diverted to alternative roads, the Ministry of Interior said yesterday. Motorists coming from Al Khor through Al Khor Coastal Road have to divert from Sumaisma bridge towards old Shamal road.

The organising committee has arranged alternative facilities to reach The Pearl-Qatar including shuttle bus service from Doha Exhibition Center and Katara as well as a water taxi service from Katara. For internal transportation inside The Pearl-Qatar, the residents and public can use golf cars during the road closure timings, said a statement.

Storm destruction trail



An abandoned car damaged by a fallen tree sits along Interstate 16, in Savannah, Georgia in the United States after Hurricane Matthew hit the southeast.

→ See also page 15

Russia vetoes UN Council resolution on truce in Aleppo

Reuters

BEIRUT: Russia vetoed a French-drafted United Nations Security Council resolution yesterday that would have demanded an immediate end to air strikes and military flights over Syria's Aleppo city and called for a truce and humanitarian aid access throughout Syria.

Meanwhile, a rival Russian-drafted resolution that aimed to revive a failed September 9 US and Russia ceasefire deal on Syria did not garner the minimum nine votes.

Fighting continued in the almost six-year conflict with Syrian government forces recapturing territory from insurgents in several western areas.

President Bashar Al Assad's forces, backed by Russian air power and Iranian, Lebanese and Iraqi fighters on the ground, hold the upper hand around the key battleground of Aleppo, whose opposition-held eastern sector has been encircled for all but a short period since July.

The government side's bombardment of Aleppo since a ceasefire brokered by Washington and Moscow in September collapsed after a week has drawn condemnation from the United Nations and countries supporting the Syrian opposition.

France, which opposes Assad, demanded in its draft resolution an end to air strikes and military flights over Aleppo city. Russia has backed Assad with a year-long air campaign against the rebels.

French President Francois Hollande yesterday had urged United Nations Security Council members not to use their veto against a resolution that calls for an end to bombardments of Aleppo.

Russia's draft, which does not include that demand, urges Moscow and Washington to revive the ceasefire deal.

Rebels also suffered setbacks further northeast near the Turkish border yesterday.

Over 4,000 screened for breast & bowel cancer

'Screen for Life' national programme achieved significant success in five months since launch in January.

By Fazeena Saleem
The Peninsula

DOHA: 'Screen for Life', a national programme that promotes awareness and early detection of cancer in Qatar, has screened more than 4,000 people for breast and bowel cancer within five months, said a senior official.

Between February and July, a call centre dedicated to the programme invited 21,651 people for breast and bowel cancer screening.

A total of 14,579 people were scheduled to be screened and 4,243 underwent check-ups, Dr. Shaikha Abu Shaikha, Manager, Cancer Programme Division, Primary Health Care Corporation (PHCC), told *The Peninsula*.

"Since the launch in January 2016, the programme has made significant achievement in spreading awareness in the community, and we are moving at a very fast pace in a short time frame, making remarkable progress," she said.

'Screen for Life' invites all women aged 45–69 even without any breast cancer symptoms to undergo screening. For bowel cancer screening, all men and women aged 50–74 and without any symptoms are urged to make appointments for screening.

They are requested to call 8001112 and schedule an appointment at Al Wakrah or Leabaib health centre or in the Mobile Screening Unit dedicated to mammograms.

PHCC has taken the role in creating awareness about breast and bowel cancer screening and providing services.

"PHCC has assigned a dedicated team which works tirelessly throughout the year to spread messaging to promote breast and bowel screening," said Dr Shaikha. "Activities to date include full-fledged messaging campaigns, outreach activities, awareness lectures and workshops, among others.

"PHCC has also collaborated with several institutions in Qatar to expand our outreach," said Dr. Shaikha. "In parallel to the inauguration of the health centres in Al Wakrah and Leabaib, we have launched a call centre dedicated to reaching out to the community and inviting eligible people to take appointment and undergo screening for breast and bowel cancer on scheduled dates and time," she added.

According to the Ministry of Public Health, among the incidence of cancer in Qatar, breast cancer accounted for 17.42 percent and bowel cancer 10.55 percent.

"Breast cancer is a preventable condition and it is important that women are aware that early screening can save their lives. "By detecting cancerous cells before they have a chance to progress into later stages, it is much easier to treat and with nearly 100 percent survival rate," said Dr Shaikha.

Organisations line up activities

The Peninsula

DOHA: As an effort to help early detection of breast cancer, various organisations have come together to mark World Breast Cancer Month.

Breast cancer is by far the commonest cancer in women, accounting for 31 percent of cases in the country, according to Qatar Cancer Registry.

Worldwide, early detection of breast cancer has helped reduce the risk associated with the disease. The risk for women developing breast cancer is 56 per 100,000 people in Qatar. Majority of them are under 60, with a high proportion of women in advanced stages of the disease.

Al Wakrah Hospital (AWH) held indoor and outdoor activities, including lectures, workshops and interactive sessions for the public and staff to provide knowledge and tools needed for people to take charge of their health. The activities also raised awareness about the importance of early detection in saving lives.

"Experts and healthcare professionals around the globe agree that when it comes to breast cancer survival rates, early detection is critical. We advise women of any age to adopt preventative health strategies such as following a healthy diet, getting regular check-ups and having yearly mammograms," said Dr Mohamed Alloub, Senior Consultant, Obstetrics and Gynaecology, AWH.

Meanwhile, Souq Waqif Boutique Hotels organised an awareness workshop for its staff. It was conducted by Qatar Cancer Society (QCS) at Al Mirqab Boutique Hotel to inspire and support the participants in leading a healthy lifestyle that will help prevent breast cancer.

Sidra Medical and Research Center (Sidra), in cooperation with QCS, will hold tomorrow an awareness lecture and workshop for patients and visitors at Sidra Outpatient Clinic to help recognise signs and symptoms of the disease through a model demonstration.

Sidra has also teamed up with Primary Health Care Corporation (PHCC) to host a lecture for its staff. The session will cover information about breast cancer and highlight screening options available in Qatar. A PHCC team will also provide information on how to schedule an appointment for mammogram.

Similar activities are also planned across other HMC's hospitals, and will feature interactions and comprehensive discussions with audiences.



Officials with the graduates at the ceremony.

94 graduate from HEC Paris in Qatar

The Peninsula

DOHA: The Class of 2016 of HEC Paris in Qatar held its graduation ceremony at Hamad Bin Khalifa University.

The batch included 94 graduates — 45 Executive MBA (EMBA) and 49 Specialised Master in Strategic Business Unit Management (SBUM) participants. The class comprised 40 nationals in SBUM and 23 in EMBA – a reflection of the growing popularity among nationals of the programmes offered by HEC Paris in Qatar.

Both programmes also attracted 31 non-Qataris from 16 nationalities, which is indicative of the multinational appeal of the programmes.

Thirty-four graduates were women. One of the most prominent members of Class of 2016 was H E Sheikha Hind bint Hamad Al Thani, Vice Chairperson and CEO, Qatar Foundation (QF).

She said, "We should never stop learning in our journey towards developing not only for our own careers, but also for the success of the company which we work for. The skills and knowledge I have gained from my time at HEC Paris has assisted in my ambitions and goals and I look forward to sharing this with my peers."

HEC Paris Dean Professor Peter Todd announced Professor Nils Plambeck as the new Dean of Qatar campus and thanked outgoing Dean Prof. Laoucine Kerbache for his tenure over the past four years.

Ooredoo national telecom partner of FINA World Cup

The Peninsula

DOHA: Ooredoo has been named National Telecommunication Partner of 2016 FINA/airweave Swimming World Cup which began yesterday.

The international series of short course (25m) swimming competitions started on August 26 in Paris, with further legs of the nine-meet circuit in Berlin, Moscow, Beijing and Dubai before arriving in Doha.

Waleed Al Sayed, CEO, Ooredoo Qatar, said: "As national telecom partner, Ooredoo is providing essential support for competitors and competitions, including enhanced access to our Supernet in the stadium for fans, media and competitors.

Ooredoo is providing a strong Internet connection at the stadium with smart Wi-Fi solution to enable visitors to share selfies, videos and photos from the competition.

The championship is being held at Hamad Aquatic Center in Aspire and athletes include last year's overall winners Katinka Hosszu and Cameron Van der Burgh.

Dr. Summers is keynote speaker for 2016 WISH Summit

The Peninsula

DOHA: The World Innovation Summit for Health (WISH) has announced Dr. Lawrence H. Summers **(pictured)** as a keynote speaker for 2016 Summit.



Dr. Summers will discuss the future of aid with a focus on investing in global health on the second day of the summit on November 30.

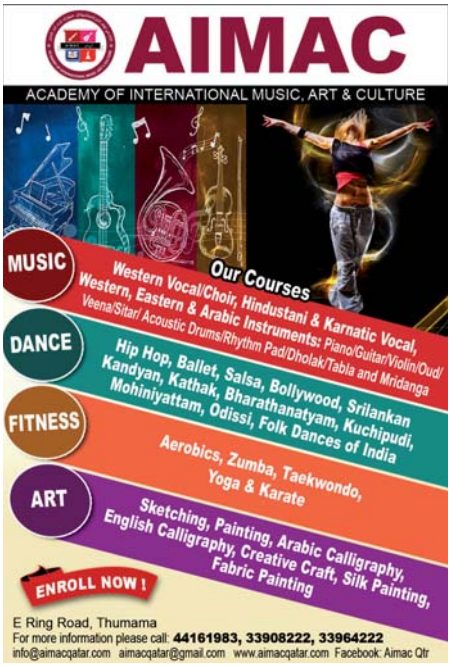
He will draw on key lessons from other sectors, including education and food aid. He will also consider the ongoing, dangerous neglect of global functions and examine the implications this has on research and development of new medicines, vaccines, diagnostics, policy and implementation research for flu pandemic preparedness and antimicrobial resistance.

Most of the world's poor live in 'pockets of poverty' in middle-income countries, and Dr. Summers will make the case for supporting global functions as a way to reach the impoverished populations.

Dr. Summers is a Charles W. Eliot University Professor and President Emeritus at Harvard University. He has served as secretary of the Treasury; director of the White House National Economic Council; president of Harvard University and chief economist of the World Bank.

He is a passionate advocate for innovation in healthcare. During his presidency at Harvard, he launched a major effort to make Boston, and Cambridge in particular, the global leader in life sciences research, with the formation of programmes for stem cell research and genomics.

He recently chaired the Commission on Global Health, praised by the UN Secretary-General who said it "will bring more than health — it will bring equity and contribute to a life of dignity for all".





Qatar committed to promoting crime-free communities: Official

QNA

NEW YORK: Qatar confirmed its commitment to implement recommendations of the Doha Declaration at the national, regional and international levels.

In a statement to the Social, Humanitarian and Cultural Third Committee on 'Crime prevention and criminal justice' and 'International drug control' , Sarah Abdulaziz Al Khater, member of Qatar's delegation to the 71st Session of the UN General Assembly, said Qatar is keen to further enhance cooperation with the UN Office on Drugs and Crime to contribute to the promotion of communities free of crimes and drugs, which enjoy sustained levels of comprehensive security, peace and justice.

The recommendations were made at the 13th United Nations Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice in Doha in April 2015.

Accident victims leading road safety campaign

Continued from page 1

"The road-accident victims are the front row participants in our campaign and are creating awareness by telling people their tragic accidents tales," Al Hamdan said, adding his company had also sought support from the Ministry of Education and Higher Education for taking the road safety message to schools.

Al Hamdan said Gulf English School and College of North Atlantic Qatar were cooperating with Ajyal Tek in its road safety campaign.

Several private companies, including Vodafone Qatar, Ezdan Holding Group and Qatar International Islamic Bank, have also extended support.

RasGas' student competition shines light on crucial STEM subjects

How do you inspire today's high school student to consider a career in science, technology, engineering or mathematics? If you're energy giant, RasGas Company Limited (RasGas), you partner with Qatar's Ministry of Education and Higher Education to challenge local students to a competition that brings high school textbook theories to life through real-life applications.

This was the goal of the second consecutive Qatar Helium competition, which offered 36 participating high schools the opportunity to collaborate in teams and compete with each other through projects that focused on the topic of helium and its various industrial uses.

The number of competing schools increased by 40 per cent from last year, highlighting the success of the initiative, which, as RasGas' Chief Executive Officer, Hamad Mubarak Al Muhannadi, confirmed, is about "encouraging the younger generation to develop an interest in the subjects that drive innovation".



RasGas's Chief Executive Officer Hamad Mubarak Al Muhannadi with high school students at the 'Qatar Helium' Competition Award Ceremony, held at RasGas Headquarters in West Bay, Doha.

"Knowledge–sharing is integral to RasGas, and supporting education is a key fundamental for the sustainable development of our business and our country.
"We believe that a highly educated society translates into an innovative skilled workforce, and our goal is to build a knowledge-based society by adding value to the economic and social development of Qatar. The 'Energising Education' initiative is thus RasGas' long-term educational strategy targeting local and international students to make a difference in their experience of learning."



Hamad Mubarak Al Muhannadi
Chief Executive Officer, RasGas

Winning students bring Qatar Helium to life

Fourteen winning teams from 36 schools were recognised for participating in RasGas' Qatar Helium competition.

"The country has a vast resource of helium and we think we can put it to use in the right way," states Mechanical Engineering enthusiast, Muhammed Al Mohsen.

Putting her theory into practice was Yasmeen Ahmed Aboujabal, currently in her final year at AlWakrah Girls Secondary School, who, with her teammates, Hind Al Obaidli and Dhabia Fahad Al Obaidli, suggested an interesting new use for helium: "Since Qatar has one of the world's highest road accident rates, we focused on the airbag system in cars. We wanted to further develop the system and replace it with a different reactant which is helium. The current reactants can cause harmful injuries such as third-degree burns, and from our research we found that substituting them with helium will decrease the injuries caused by the current airbag system."

Yasmeen's project partner, Dhabia, whose goal is to pursue a Chemical Engineering major after high school, states, "Working on this project helped me learn a lot about scientific research as well as keeping up with current news. I enjoyed working on it as I strongly believe in our work, and our goal is to push it forward. As Qatar is one of the many countries that care for its people and their health, I don't envision that this will be that difficult".

Project partner, Hind, found tremendous value in how Qatar Helium encouraged her growth as a young adult: "After working on this project I feel like my confidence level has increased. I can articulate my points well in front of a large audience which was not something I liked doing before".

"Before the competition, students only knew helium as 'He', and its position in the periodic table," says Enas Mohammed Mohammed, Chemistry teacher at AlWakrah Girls Secondary School.

"However, their knowledge on the topic has advanced tremendously since, and they have improved not only their scientific skills but their public speaking skills too. I have watched them grow into self-assured young adults, ready to utilise their knowledge in the real world".

Fadi Azmi Abdelrahman Younis, Chemistry teacher at Tariq bin Zayed Secondary School for Boys, was pleased by his students' enthusiasm to participate in Qatar Helium: "This year, when I told my students that the competition was happening, they were highly enthusiastic to take part. I think they enjoy being challenged to apply research methods in a real-life situation, improve their critical thinking and grow their confidence".

The ability to adapt ideas and accomplish a goal within a team dynamic was key for Seif El-din Diaa Ezzat: "At the beginning of the competition, my teammates and I came with several ideas, and instead of choosing just one, Mr. Fadi helped us incorporate our ideas into one big project - a recreational park and awareness facility that would make learning about helium fun. One of our suggestions for a use of helium is an ice-skating rink. Helium's freezing point is -272.2 degrees Celsius which would help freeze water in order for people to skate".

Muhammed Abdulghany, a winning competitor for the second consecutive year and aspirant Genetic Engineering student, confirms that the Qatar Helium competition, part of RasGas' 'Energising Education' initiative, is impacting the minds of our younger generations: "This competition encouraged us to be creative and innovative beyond our expectations. It showed us that by using what we learn every day, we can make a positive impact on human life".

Pull-up fact - Qatar is recognised as one of the world's largest exporters and producers of helium, currently meeting 25% of the world's global demand.

What is STEM and why is it so important?

STEM stands for Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics, the four subjects that pervade every part of our lives, and play a key role in the sustained growth and stability of economies around the world.

What do STEM-based competitions accomplish for students?

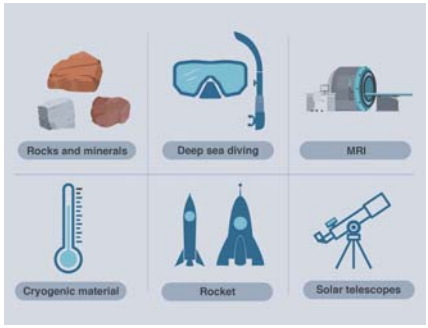
- Enable innovation
- Foster critical thinking and creativity
- Prepare students for university
- Boost confidence







Helium uses and benefits



- Rockets: Helium is used to clean out rocket engines, pressurise the interior of liquid fuel rockets, condense hydrogen and oxygen to make rocket fuel, and force fuel into the engines during rocket launches
- Deep Sea Diving: Deep sea divers use mixtures of helium and oxygen to breathe underwater, avoiding the problems caused by breathing ordinary air (predominantly nitrogen and oxygen) under high pressure, including disorientation and debilitating joint injuries
- Cryogenic material: Liquid helium is an important cryogenic material and is used to study superconductivity and to create superconductive magnets
- MRI: Liquid helium's use in magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) continues to increase as the medical profession accepts and develops new uses for the equipment
- Rocks and minerals: Helium can be used to estimate the age of rocks and minerals containing uranium and thorium by measuring their retention of helium
- Solar telescopes: Helium is used in solar telescopes to reduce the distorting effects of temperature variations in the space between lenses

Ihsan marks World Day for Elderly

Senior citizens, families and children participated in the celebrations.

By Amna Pervaiz Rao
The Peninsula



Mubarak bin Abdul-Aziz Al Khalifa, CEO of Qatar Foundation for Elderly People Care (Ihsan), taking a tour of stalls with other officials during the celebrations of World Day for Elderly at Aspire Park yesterday.
Pic: Abdul Basit / The Peninsula

DOHA: Qatar Foundation for Elderly People Care (Ehsan) hosted many activities to mark the World Day for Elderly at Aspire Park on Thursday. The event was opened by Mubarak bin Abdul-Aziz Al Khalifa, CEO of Qatar Foundation for Elderly People Care, along with the chief guest Sheikh Khalid bin Jabar Al Thani, Chairman of Qatar Cancer Society.

Senior citizens, families and children participated in the celebrations. This year the slogan for the celebration was 'We Care by Our Heart'. Exciting competitions for children took place and many gifts were distributed. Ehsan had collaborated with volunteers from different centers like Qatar Red Crescent Society and Childhood Cultural Center. Mubarak Bin Abdul Aziz Al Khalifa said: "Our goal is to educate the community to promote the rights of the elderly and create harmony between different generations."

Abdullah Al Khater, CEO of Aspire Zone, said: "Qatari society is one of the societies who are keen to honour and appreciate large or small participations. We are happy to help Qatar Foundation for Elderly People."

Khalid Abdullah Hussein, Director of Public Relations and Media Foundation of Qatar Foundation of Elderly People Care, said: "We targeted the festival promotion for the educational aspects of the public towards the care of elderly."

A wide range of stalls were installed at Aspire Park. Qatar Foundation for Elderly People Care showcased different departments. Health care department had a stall for a regular check-up for lifestyle diseases. The elder people did diabetic and blood pressure check-ups at the health care stall. Physiotherapy Department had a stall where the elderly people were assisted by Frances Muhi, Head of Physiotherapy department. The home visitors department showcased their department in another stall in which the social workers registered the citizens and expats of 60 plus years. The social worker department stall had a Physiologist for the assessment of the patient. Childhood Cultural Center had a stall for children WITH different activities for their grandparents.

Ali Abdullah, a Qatari senior citizen, said: "I am overwhelmed by the support at this event. I took the communication course offered by the Qatar Foundation for Elderly People Care. Now I can easily communicate with people and it will be helpful for me in future."

New office for Switzerland and Croatia visa centre

The Peninsula

DOHA: Residents of Qatar can now apply for Switzerland and Croatia visas and enrol for biometrics at a newly relocated Joint Visa Application Centre launched in Doha. The new centre has been set up at Abdul Jaleel Business Center, 1st Floor (103), Airport Road, Al Matar Street, Doha, in the heart of the main shopping and business district, said a press release.

The new centre efficiently caters to the growing requirements of travellers to Switzerland and Croatia from Qatar. Services at the centre commenced from 02 October 2016.

Commenting on the launch, Srinarayan Sankaran, COO – Middle East, VFS Global, said, "We are pleased to launch this relocated Switzerland and Croatia Joint Visa Application Centre that offers greater convenience and ease to the residents of Qatar." VFS Global in partnership with Mannai Trading Co. WLL has been present in the State of Qatar since 2005.



Officials inaugurating the new premises.

Japan envoy addresses Qatari young leaders before visit to Japan

The Peninsula



Ambassador of Japan to Qatar, Shingo Tsuda, and other officials with Qatari young leaders who are participating in the Rising Leaders Program of Qatar Leadership Center (QLC).

DOHA: Ambassador of Japan to Qatar, Shingo Tsuda, addressed Qatari young leaders who are participating in the Rising Leaders Program of Qatar Leadership Center (QLC) prior to their visit to Japan.

Also present were Dr Mohammad Najdawi, Director of Leadership Knowledge Base, Qatar Leadership Centre, Takumi Hiraga, General Manager of Doha Liaison Office, Itochu Corporation and most of the 37 participants who will pay a visit to Japan between 16th and 20th of this month under the above-mentioned program.

Ambassador Shingo Tsuda emphasised the importance of human development for a nation and praised the Qatari leadership's vision as follows:

"Thanks to the initiative of His Highness the Emir, Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani, the Qatar Leadership Centre was established, and today, energetic and promised young leaders in Qatar gathered here from many different fields of both governmental and private sectors. I believe that each of you has accomplished many in the previous career and is now taking a responsible position in your own place. You all are holding in your hands, the future of your country, the State of Qatar."

"Human development is critically important for sustainable development of a country, and it can be accomplished through good education, which expands your knowledge and provides professional skills. For Qatar as well, fostering a healthy and capable national manpower has been a priority among resources. This is embodied in the Qatar National Vision 2030, which places large emphasis on the empowerment of young generations."

The Ambassador also encouraged the participants by saying, "The Rising Leaders Program provides you with plenty of chances for first-hand learning to make all of you leading players of your nation. For this purpose, Itochu Corporation has been playing a significant role to make this opportunity more valuable to everyone. You will be listening to lectures on stories of success, attending workshops and visiting such prominent companies as Toyota, Sony and NEC Corporation."

Ambassador Tsuda touched also upon the excellent relationship between the two countries.

"In the year of 1972, the diplomatic relations between the two countries was established, and Japanese companies started engaging in the oil and steel sector in Qatar. Japan also initiated the first LNG project in the 1980s and became one of the pioneers in the development of the LNG industries in Qatar. Since then, Japan has been the biggest trading partner of Qatar amounting to $35bn in 2014. In addition, the frequent exchange of visits between the two countries is another landmark in our good relationship. It was only last month that Prime Minister Shinzo Abe met with His Highness the Emir in New York as the seventh summit for two leaders."

Takumi Hiraga from the Doha Liaison Office of Itochu Corporation, which has been coordinating the trip, said: "I strongly hope all of you learn a lot from this trip, and wish you to be a fan of Japan". It was followed by a group photo of the Ambassador and the participants, together with Itochu Corporation staff and the Embassy's officials.

ASPIRE ZONE

STATE OF QATAR
Aspire Zone
ANNOUNCES THE FOLLOWING

SN	Tender No.	Subject	Tender Bond	Tender Fees	Closing Date	Submission Type	Place of Collection & Submission
1.	AF/C/AL5884/16	Supply and Delivery of Potable Water, Supply for Hire Water Tankers and Removal of Wastewater / Sewage at Aspire Zone on a Call-off Basis	QR. 40,000	QR. 200	06/11/2016	2 Envelopes (Technical + Financial)	Aspire Zone Tender Committee

- Tender documents for the above Projects are available for collection as mentioned in the above table from **Aspire Zone Foundation General Tender Committee Office from 7:30AM to 12:00PM** (Tel No. 44136727) located at Aspire Zone New office Located inside Aspire Park behind Villagio Mall & next to Hamad Aquatic Center) upon presentation of a formal letter of authorization on Company letterhead, duly signed and stamped, copy of the Commercial Registration, copy of the ID, and a stamped receipt for the non-refundable documentation fee (as mentioned above) which should be paid to Qatar National Bank, Account No. 0013-012515-052 (ASPIRE ZONE). Please find a location map in the following link: www.aspirezone.org/upload/getdownload.aspx?id=361
- In case of purchasing more than one tender, a separate bank receipt should be submitted for each tender
- Site visits for the above tenders will start on **October 17th 2016** interested companies are advised to purchase the tender document(s) before that date in order to be able to attend the site visit.
- Submission of Tenders shall follow the **TWO-ENVELOPE** bidding system. i.e., the Technical offer shall be submitted in a sealed envelope and the Commercial offer in another sealed envelope.
- Tenders should be accompanied with a Tender Bond as stated above and in accordance with the specimen form attached with the tender document issued as a Bank Guarantee from one of the local Banks registered in Qatar valid for 120 days from date of opening of tenders. The Successful Tenderer will be required to submit a Performance Bond of 10% of the Contract Sum, which will remain valid till (7) days after completion of the Contract / Maintenance period.
- Aspire Zone has the right to increase or decrease the quantities of the Goods/Works/Services up to 20% of the contract amount and adjust the contract amount accordingly.
- Aspire Zone has the right to split the award of the tender.
- The Closing time will be at **12:00 Noon**, on the closing date mentioned above; any offer arriving thereafter will not be considered.
- Tenders are to be submitted in triplicate (1 Original + 2 Copies) in a sealed envelope, addressed to the Chairman of Aspire Zone Foundation, General Tender Committee as endorsed in Arabic and English and deposited in the Tender Box of **Aspire Zone Foundation Tender Committee**.

Chairman of ASPIRE ZONE FOUNDATION
General Tender Committee

Rendezvous Restaurant opens



Sheikh Nasser bin Abdulaziz (centre) and Mohammad bin Abdulaziz Al Rabaan (left) cutting a ribbon in the presence of other officials to mark the opening of Rendezvous Restaurant at Gulf Mall on Thursday.
Pic: Abdul Basit / The Peninsula

Required

Kitchen for Commercial Catering and Laundry

Sale or Lease

- Location: Commercial Area.
- Valid Commercial License.
- Civil Defense Approval. Area: Kitchen 1000 – 2000 m2. Laundry 500- 1000 m2.

Please Contact: 50450742
Email: prqatar@outlook.com

QRCS attends China summit

DOHA: Qatar Red Crescent Society (QRCS) recently participated in the 'Post-World Humanitarian Summit' held in China. It was organised by the International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), the Red Cross Society of China, and the Research and Development International of Chinese Academy of Social Sciences (CASS-RDI).

QRCS's Executive Director, Fahad bin Mohammed Al-Nuaimi, particaptaed in the summit on behalf of the organisation. 'Post-World Humanitarian Summit' focused particularly on identifying the most pressing humanitarian challenges affecting Asia Pacific and MENA and the ways to respond to them.

In addition, the summit also focused on providing leadership and result-driven approaches to bring community resilience to the next level, defining concrete modalities for localising aid and linking up local, regional, and global efforts into a better integrated and coordinated approach, preventing and ending conflicts in Asia Pacific and MENA regions and facilitating investment to generate outcomes and lasting impact.

RAF to build 100 residential units for Syrian refugees

The QR4m project is situated along the Syrian-Turkey border.

The Peninsula

DOHA: Sheikh Thani bin Abdullah Foundation for Humanitarian Services (RAF) has laid the foundation stone, at a cost of QR4m, for a project to build 100 residential units for sheltering displaced Syrians at Bab Al Hawa camp along the Syrian-Turkey border.

The project called 'Village of Abwab Al Rahma' (Doors of mercy) will house hundreds of internally displaced people.

The foundation stone was laid by Dr Ayed bin Dabssan Al Qahtani, Chairman, Board of Trustees and General Director, RAF, and Yavuz Dede, General Secretary of Turkish humanitarian organisation (IHH), the strategic partner of RAF.

The village was named after the radio programme 'Abwab Al Raham' organised by RAF in February to collect the donation for building 100 residential units. Each unit will comprise rooms, a hall, a bathroom and a kitchen furnished with necessary home appliances. Solar system will be installed to provide electricity.

Wells and a central water tank will be built to make water available to residents. The village will have a mosque and a market comprising 25 shops. Parks and play areas for children will also be added to the facility.

"RAF has been implementing various relief and development projects for Syrian people affected by the war far the past five years", said Al Qahtani.

"The fund-raising campaign launched through the Radio programme received a good response from listeners. Contributions poured in to build the village and protect the beneficiary families from the harsh weather and cold. These areas are used to an extreme cold wave. The village will provide them shelters until they return to their homes," said Al Qahtani.

RAF will continue supporting Syrian people. The housing projects are very important. RAF is the first organization to provide portacabins at the Al Zatari camp and other camps sheltering Syrian people in Jordon and Lebanon.

RAF was ranked first among non-governmental organizations in terms of making donations to Syrian people, said Al Qahtani.

The fund raising programme Abwab Al Rahma played a key role in collecting donations to finance many projects for poor people all over the world, said Iz-al-Din Al Sada, from Holy Quran Radio, which hosted the programme.



Officials from RAF and Turkish humanitarian organisation IHH laying the foundation stone for the housing project at Bab Al Hawa camp along Syrian-Turkey border.

Dr Al Marri calls for review of laws to form civil society bodies

The Peninsula

DOHA: Dr Ali bin Samikh Al Marri, Chairman of Qatar National Human Rights Committee (QNHRC) has called for a review of legislations of all countries to ensure establishment of civil society organisations and to empower them.

In a paper presented at a workshop on regional arrangements for the promotion and protection of human rights, organized by the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (UNHCHR) in Geneva, Al Marri said independence and immunity of human rights organizations and civil society must be ensured.

It is important for human rights activists and civil society organisations to be independent and be protected to be able to follow up and implement regional and global recommendations on human rights, Al Marri said.

The situation differs from country to country as some have committees for implementation of such recommendations.

For instance, QNHRC enjoys immunity and it is free to practise activities related to human rights and its members face no legal or disciplinary action for opinions or statements he/she delivers, Al Marri emphasised.

The committee is carrying out its responsibilities effectively and making necessary follow-up for the implementation of regional and global recommendations.

"We have learned from our own experience that creating positive relations and engaging in dialogue is more effective than waiting for government bodies to take actions under pressure," he said.

Many Arab expat families eating out as more restaurants open

By Sidi Mohamed
The Peninsula

DOHA: Eating out has become a habit for many Arab expat families, with an increase in the number of restaurants even in residential areas.

The growth in the number of restaurants offering a wide variety of food entices many people who otherwise prefer to eat at their homes. Single workers and families also turn to these food outlets as a place to enjoy each other's company.

Also, people have become busy so they would rather dine out than stay at home and cook their meals.

This phenomenon, however, presents a big challenge to many families, threatening family ties, says an expert.

"There is no problem in dining at restaurants. The problem is when it becomes a habit. Eating at restaurants has become a threat to family ties and relationships. Sitting together during meals gives families a chance to talk and discuss issues. Family meeting is very important from the psychological point of view especially if the family is big. I advise parents not to miss such a chance," Dr Moza Al Malki, a Qatari expert in counseling and psychotherapy, told this daily.

A family should be able to sit together at least twice a day, she added. "I know that life has changed and many of our eating habits have changed. Life has become quick, and so no one is able to sit with his family three times a day, but we should be keen to do that whenever we can," she explained.

Al Malki said that "family meeting when eating together offers a fun atmosphere and provides a chance to discuss challenges they face. It is a chance for parents to know the problems their children face." "It is not only a table for eating, but a table for teaching and exchanging good words among family members".

In addition, eating at home is healthier than eating at restaurants because we know that fast food is full of fat and preservatives, while the meals which are prepared at home are healthier, and not costly, she concluded.

Fatima, a mother who spoke to this daily, said that most of her family members eat at restaurants and everyone brings a different meal with him, except during Fridays when they gather together for one meal. She said that they didn't have time to sit together to eat and this is a very old habit. Everyone does whatever he wants.

Ramez, from Lebanon, commented that he likes to visit restaurants with his family only during weekends due to the variety of meals there which is difficult for them to prepare at home. It is also a chance for his wife to take rest from cooking. In addition, the restaurant he visits offers shisha smoking which he likes since he can't smoke at home because it will endanger the health of his children.

Fadel, a restaurant operator, said that his restaurant has 50 customers daily while it receives more than 200 persons on Thursdays, Fridays and Saturdays and people have to wait in queue, most of them families, because his restaurant offers family area.

Some Qataris prefer to take away meals and it's rare to see them eat in the restaurant, said another restaurant operator.



Domasco and Pari Gallery officials at the launch of f the latest addition to the flagship MR-G Series in the G-SHOCK line.

Domasco launches top Casio G-Shock line-up MR-G at Pari Gallery

The Peninsula

DOHA: Domasco, the exclusive distributor of Casio in Qatar, has announced the launch of the latest addition to the flagship MR-G Series in the G-SHOCK line in Pari Gallery store at Lagoona Mall.

The MR-G series offer the ultimate in tough watch design. It combines a sense of quality evoked by finely finished metallic elements with the distinctively solid feel of G-SHOCK, which conveys its shock-resistant performance. MR-G has gained popularity among adults who want to enjoy a G-SHOCK watch for many years to come.

During the launch Faisal Sharif, Managing Director of Domasco, said: "Domasco's watches division works vigorously to present our customers with awe-inspiring time pieces. The MR-G is distinguished by its sporty design, finest materials and innovative functions. For the first time, the legendary G-SHOCK shock resistance will be guaranteed in a watch with a pure titanium case. In addition, MR-G is protected with 'diamond-like coating', a particularly high-quality coating process, for a unique texture and superior abrasion resistance. It's the ultimate watch for tough men on the go."

Workshop on eye health for school nurses

The Peninsula

DOHA: The Ministry of Public Health (MoPH) organised a five-day workshop on eye health for school nurses. The event was organiSed in collaboration with Ministry of Education and Higher Education and Primary Health Care Corporation (PHCC).

The workshop comes as part of eye health promotion in schools and prevention of cases of visual impairment among students through early detection.

The workshop featured various lectures on eye exam, health, injuries, and ways of handling it.

The workshop comes in line with MoPH's efforts to cope with "Vision 2020" with an aim to train the participants on the proper methods and requirements of examining students' eyes. It also gave a special focus on how to fill up the online forms which have been updated this year to make the process of data collection more efficient.

"The ministry has started the implementation of Eye Health Promotion Programme several years ago. The programme has achieved a great success particularly after the expansion of its implementation to cover all private and community schools," said Sheikha Dr Al Anoud bint Mohamed Al Thani, Director of Health Promotion and Non-Communicable Diseases, MoPH.

The specialists form Blindness Control Programme, in cooperation with school nurses, conduct a vision sharpness test for students, given the fact that school-age children are more vulnerable to vision problems, squint and amblyopia (lazy eye).



Islamists trump rivals in Morocco general elections

Complaints of fraud as 43 percent cast ballots out of 6,750,000.

AFP

RABAT: The Islamist party which has headed Morocco's coalition government since Arab Spring-inspired protests five years ago has beaten liberal rivals in parliamentary elections, results showed yesterday.

Prime Minister Abdelilah Benkirane's Islamist Justice and Development Party (PJD) took 125 seats out of 395, the interior ministry said after all ballots were counted. Its main rival, the Authenticity and Modernity Party (PAM), which had campaigned against the "Islamisation" of Moroccan society, won 102 seats, the ministry said.

Istiqlal, the party which historically fought for independence from France, came third with 45 seats.

In any case, the real power will remain in the hands of King Mohammed VI, the scion of a monarchy that has ruled the North African country for 350 years.

Interior Minister Mohamed Hassad said that the election was "transparent" and had gone well, rejecting accusations of voter fraud from both sides.

The PJD had earlier issued a statement saying it was "very concerned about numerous reports of fraud being carried out by authorities" in favour of the PAM, and called on the interior ministry to "urgently intervene".

PAM spokesman Khalid Adennoun declined to comment but said that his party had filed "50 complaints" of voting irregularities, some concerning the PJD in Tangiers.

An Islamist candidate was attacked and wounded outside a polling station in Rabat, according to local media. A video shared on social networks also showed a man stuffing a ballot box, leading the PJD to file a complaint, media reported.

Participation was at 43 percent, or roughly 6,750,000 voters, Hassad told a press conference in the capital Rabat.

Early turnout had been low in Rabat with many people waiting until after the weekly noon prayers to cast their ballots while others trickled to the polls after office hours. Meriem, a voter in her 40s, said after casting her ballot in central Rabat: "I came to carry out my duty as a citizen. Our Morocco needs a healthy democracy."

To make life easier for the illiterate, who make up a third of Morocco's population, the 30 parties in contention were marked on ballot papers with symbols such as a tractor or camel.

The PJD came to power in 2011, months after massive street protests prompted concessions from the monarchy. A new constitution transferred some of the king's powers to parliament, at a time when autocratic regimes were falling in Tunisia, Egypt and Libya.



Moroccan Prime Minister and Secretary-General of the ruling Islamist Justice and Development Party (PJD), Abdelilah Benkirane addresses mediapersons after the announcement of preliminary results of the 2016 legislative elections in the Moroccan capital Rabat.

While in government, the PJD passed a controversial reform of the retirement system and followed a relatively liberal economic policy.

Its task has been complicated by the unstable world economy and a drought this year that hit Morocco's vital agricultural sector and sent growth plummeting.

The party has been weakened by rising unemployment and what critics say is a failure to make good on promises in 2011 to tackle corruption.

It has also faced a string of scandals within its ranks including a drugs bust, a land-grab deal and the suspension of two vice-presidents found in a "compromising position"on a beach.

The opposition PAM, formed in 2008 by a close adviser to the king, had hoped to take advantage in the polls.

Headed by Ilyas El Omari, it has poured enormous resources into a campaign criticising the government's economic record as "catastrophic" and pledging to roll back the "Islamisation" of society.

Several parties fielded ultra-conservative Salafists, in a sign that Islamists are becoming a feature of Moroccan politics. The PJD and the PAM have ruled out joining forces in a grand coalition. Under the 2011 constitution, the king appoints a prime minister from the biggest party in parliament once the election results have been announced.

Top general in Yemen's Saudi-backed army martyred

Reuters

DUBAI: A top general in forces loyal to Yemeni President Abdrabuh Mansur Hadi's government has been killed in fighting with Iran-aligned Houthi troops east of the capital Sana'a, sources on both sides of the conflict said.

Major-General Abdel-Rab Al Shadadi, commander of Yemen's Third Military Region—which has its headquarters in the city of Marib east of Sana'a—was the most senior member of the pro-Hadi forces to be killed in nearly 19 months of civil war in Yemen.

The Houthi-run Saba news agency quoted a pro-Houthi military source as saying late on Friday that artillery gunners targeted Shadadi after they pinpointed his location.

Yesterday, Saudi-owned Al-Arabiya channel quoted a statement from the Hadi government as saying Shadadi died in hospital after being badly wounded in Marib.

A Saudi-led coalition has been fighting to restore Hadi to power since March 2015, after the Iran-aligned Houthis seized Sana'a and forced the government into exile.

UN-sponsored talks to stop the fighting, which has killed more than 10,000 people, ended inconclusively in August.

Last month, a source in the Saudi-led coalition said the head of Houthi special forces, Major General Hassan Almalsi, was killed while leading a squad of Houthi fighters trying to infiltrate Yemen's southern province of Najran.



Forensic officers work at the scene of a suicide bombing in Haymana, in the outskirts of Turkish capital Ankara, yesterday.

Two militants blow themselves up in standoff with Turkey cops

Reuters

ANKARA: Two militants believed to be preparing a car bomb attack detonated explosives, killing themselves in a remote area near Ankara yesterday after Turkish police told them to surrender, the provincial governor said.

The militants, believed to be one male and one female, probably had ties to the Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK) armed group, Ercan Topaca told reporters at the scene of the blast outside the capital.

"It looks like there is a high probability of a PKK link," Ankara Governor Ercan Topaca said in comments broadcast by *CNN Turk*.

Video footage showed forensic teams in white overalls inspecting the site as police secured the area around a hut in flat countryside on the road to the town of Haymana.

"A big disaster was prevented. They were probably going to attack Ankara," Justice Minister Bekir Bozdag said in an interview with broadcaster *CNN Turk*, also pointing the finger at the PKK.

"...Turkey is in a critical position. There are clashes in Syria and Iraq and sources of terror there."

The PKK leadership is based in the mountains of northern Iraq and the Kurdish YPG militia in Syria has close ties to the group. A Turkey-backed rebel operation in northern Syria aims to push both jihadist group Islamic State and YPG forces away from the border.

The state-run *Anadolu* news agency said President Recep Tayyip Erdogan had convened a meeting with security officials in Istanbul, without specifying a reason.

Police seized two pieces of plastic explosives and 200kg (440 pounds) of ammonium nitrate at the scene of yesterday's explosion, the governor's office said in a statement.

Ammonium nitrate is an ingredient in bomb-making.

The office said security forces moved against the militants around 6am (0300 GMT) at a stud farm some 30km (19 miles) from the capital after a tip-off from Diyarbakir, the main city in the Kurdish heartland of southeast Turkey.

An identity card found at the scene, believed to belong to one of the would-be bombers, was of a man from the southeastern province of Bingol. A third individual was also being sought, the governor said.

The PKK has fought a three-decade-long insurgency, focused on the southeast, in which more than 40,000 people have been killed. It is designated a terrorist group by Turkey, the United States and the European Union.

Egypt miffed at US Embassy's security warning

Reuters

CAIRO: Egypt's Foreign Ministry sharply criticised the US Embassy in Cairo for advising citizens to avoid large gatherings in the capital until today, calling the move "unjustifiable".

The largest Arab nation is currently battling an Islamist insurgency mainly concentrated in the Sinai Peninsula and which gained pace after its military ousted President Mohamed Mursi, an Islamist, in 2013 after mass protests against his rule. There have been occasional militant attacks in Cairo and other cities.

The US Embassy's message warned against being in public spaces such as concert halls, movie theatres, museums, shopping malls, and sports venues citing "potential security concerns" but did not specify what they were.

Chem

Qatar Chemical Company Limited

Al Dafna - Amwal Tower - First Floor
P.O. 24646 Doha / Qatar - Tel. 44847111 - Fax 44847695

ANNOUNCEMENT FOR TENDER

No.	Document No.	Description	Tender Bond	Bid Closing Date
1	QC/TC/FM/57/16	Building & Furniture Maintenance Services at Q-Chem, Q-Chem II and RLOC for Three Years	QR. 318,500/-	12:00 hrs on 8th November 2016

Brief scope:
Contractor to provide qualified & experienced manpower and supply required material to carry out the Building Maintenance & Furniture Maintenance Services for Q-Chem facilities in Main Office at Doha, QChem & Q-Chem II at Mesaieed and RLOC at Ras Laffan for 3 years period.

Tender Documents for the above description can be obtained as follows:
- For each tender pay a non-refundable document fee (cash only) of Qr. 1000/- Payable to Q-Chem, Bank Account (Contracts Services - Tender) - Account Number # 001-242007-003 with HSBC Bank) and submit the original receipt with an Authorization letter on Tenderer Company Letterhead with ID copy of the Tenderer representative. In the Authorization Letter Tenderer shall nominate a single focal point with contact mobile number, office number, fax number and email ID for the communications related to this tender for collection of documents as below:

- Date and Time of Tender Documents Issuance From 9th October 2016 to 13th October 2016 Between 8:00am and 12:00 noon

- Location: Al Dafna, Omar Al Mukhtar St, Amwal Tower, Building #58, Zone # 61, First Floor, Receptionist
- Tender should be valid for 240 days from the tender closing date.

- Tender must be accompanied by a Provisional Bank Guarantee(Tender bond) issued by one of the Qatari Banks or by a Bank operating in Qatar and should be valid for 240 days from the tender closing date.

- Completed Tender Documents are to be delivered in sealed envelopes addressed to:
THE SECRETARY, TENDER COMMITTEE, QATAR CHEMICAL COMPANY LIMITED, AL DAFNA, OMAR AL MUKHTAR ST, AMWAL TOWER , BUILDING #58, ZONE # 61, FIRST FLOOR, DOHA, QATAR.

COLLEGE OF THE NORTH ATLANTIC - QATAR

The Tender Committee announces the following Tender RFP(s):

Tender / RFP Number	TENDER / RFP Title	Electronic Copies Available For Download As Follows	Tender Registration Fee	Tender Bond % of Bid or Fixed Amount	Closing Date
CNAQ-2016-45	Catering Services - Holiday Dinner - Vendor Venue	October 9 - 13 , 2016	N/A	20,000 QR	14:00 Hrs. 23rd October 2016
CNAQ-2016-46	RFP - Event Mgmt. - Holiday Dinner Entertainment	October 9 - 13 , 2016	N/A	3000 QR	14:00 Hrs. 23rd October 2016
CNAQ-2016-47	IPad Pro	October 9 - 13 , 2016	N/A	10% of bid	14:00 Hrs. 23rd October 2016
CNAQ-2016-48	Promotional Items - Student	October 9 - 13 , 2016	N/A	10% of bid	14:00 Hrs. 23rd October 2016

Electronic Copies ONLY, can be downloaded from our website :
http://www.cna-qatar.com/industry/pages/tenders.aspx

NOTE - After download of Electronic Copies, all companies MUST register by sending an email to the address below on or before Last Download Date(s) noted above. This email automatically registers you as a tender participant.

- Tender bond shall be 10% unless otherwise specified in each of the tender documents listed above.
- Eligibility: Manufacturer or manufactures authorized dealer/representative, with a minimum of 5 years' experience in the same field.
- Offers should be valid for 120 days commencing from the above closing date.
- CNA-Qatar would not be bound to accept the lowest or any other tender and is under no obligation to show reasons thereof.
Tenders delivered after the closing date and time specified above will be accepted.
- Tender bids to be submitted no later than 2:00 pm of the closing date, and should be in Separate Sealed Envelopes marked:
Envelope A - Technical, B – Commercial - (Enclose 1 Original, 1 Copy, and 1 Electronic (CD or USB) in each envelope.)

Envelope should be addressed as follows: Tender Committee, College of the North Atlantic-Qatar,
P.O. Box 24449, Bldg. 16, Level 1, Room 36, 68 Al Tarafa, Duhail North, Doha, Qatar

Tender/RFP # : _____ Title : _____ Vendor Name _____ CNA-QATAR.COM

For more information contact: procurement@cna-qatar.edu.qa

Militant group claims murder of policeman

Reuters

CAIRO: A new Egyptian militant group, the Hasam Movement, yesterday claimed responsibility for the killing of a policeman in the country's north.

Gunmen shot Gamal Al Deeb, a policeman working with the Homeland Security agency, eight times outside his home in the northern Beheira province shortly after midnight, the Interior Ministry said. He died of a bullet to the head.

"The Hasam Movement's assassination squad has carried out the field execution of the hardened criminal Gamal Al Deeb who committed his crimes in all ages," the group said in a statement on social media.

Niger govt must reinforce camps after attack: Ban

More than 60,000 Malian refugees now live in Niger.

Reuters

NIAMEY: UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon urged Niger's government to reinforce security around refugee camps after gunmen killed 22 soldiers stationed at a camp for 4,000 Malian refugees.

Thursday's attackers also burned an ambulance and looted a health centre at the Tazalit camp in Niger's western Tahoua region, bordering Mali, a UN statement said.

The Malian refugees were unharmed, the United Nations refugee agency UNHCR said.

The camp shelters Malians who have fled to Niger since Islamist militants, some with links to Al Qaeda, seized Mali's desert north in 2012.

A French-led military intervention pushed back the insurgents a year later but clashes with rebels and Islamist attacks have led more people to flee. More than 60,000 Malian refugees now live in Niger.

Last month, a Malian woman and child were killed when unidentified gunmen attacked a security post at another refugee camp in Niger, the United Nations said.

Niger's government said it had launched an investigation into the Tazalit attack and declared two days of national mourning.

"The president of the republic (and) the government present, in the name of the devastated Nigerien people, their condolences to the families of the victims," said a statement.

Niger's small army is not only seeking to prevent armed groups and bandits entering from Mali to the west, but also fighting Boko Haram militants launching raids.

Boat capsizes in Indonesia; seven feared dead

AFP

JAKARTA: Seven teenagers were feared dead yesterday, a day after they went missing when their boat capsized on a river in Indonesia, officials said.

None have been found despite a major rescue operation.

The wooden boat was carrying 25 Islamic boarding school male students across the Bengawan Solo river on Java when it capsized early Friday.

Officials said they suspected overloading caused the boat to tilt.

"They were about to reach land, about 7 metres away or so, but the kids, probably from overexcitement, came to the front of the boat, making the boat unbalance," Suprapto, a local disaster management official said.

The missing passengers were aged between 12 and 19.

Eighteen other passengers survived, Suprapto, who like many Indonesians goes by one name, added.

Scores of rescuers were deployed to search the river using inflatable boats soon after the accident but none of the missing has been found so far.

Rescuers said rain, muddy water and strong currents were hampering the search.



Rescuers search for missing teenagers at Bengawan Solo river in Tuban, East Java province, yesterday.

Indonesia has a poor water transport safety record and regularly suffers fatal boat accidents.

Last month, an explosion on a speedboat on the resort island of Bali left two foreigners dead and 18 other tourists injured.

On March 4, the ferry capsized and sank in the Bali Strait off Banyuwani.

Four of the 75 people on board were reported missing.

One in five workers in Japan risks death from overwork: Report

AFP

TOKYO: A fifth of the Japanese workforce faces the risk of death from overwork, according to a new government survey into the country's notoriously strenuous working culture.

Hundreds of deaths related to overwork -- from strokes, heart attacks and suicide -- are reported every year in Japan, along with a host of serious health problems, sparking lawsuits and calls to tackle the problem.

The survey was part of the nation's first white paper on "karoshi", or death from overwork, endorsed by Prime Minister Shinzo Abe's cabinet on Friday.

While the popular image of Japanese salarymen toiling long hours for the company before taking the last train home is changing, many still spend far more hours in the office than counterparts in other modern economies.

According to the paper, 22.7 percent of companies polled between December 2015 and January 2016 said some of their employees logged more than 80 hours of overtime each month -- the official threshold at which the prospect of death from work becomes serious.

The report added that approximately 21.3 percent of Japanese employees work 49 or more hours each week on average, well above the 16.4 percent reported in the US, 12.5 percent in Britain and 10.4 in France.

The survey concluded that Japanese employees also reported feeling high levels of stress related to their work, pushing officials to call on companies to improve working conditions.

Religious event



Nepalese Army soldiers fire a cannon during an event to celebrate 'Phulpati', the seventh day of 'Dashain', Hinduism's biggest religious festival in Kathmandu, yesterday.

Kin of US personnel 'can' return to DRC

Reuters

KINSHASA: Family members of US personnel in Democratic Republic of Congo can return to the country, the US embassy said, one week after ordering them to leave over safety concerns related to the volatile political climate.

"The order to depart was made last week out of an abundance of caution considering the unstable and unpredictable security situation in the DRC," the embassy said in a statement.

"In our latest re-evaluation, we have assessed that security conditions permit the return of family members," it added.

Kabila is barred by constitution from standing in the next presidential election, originally scheduled for next month. His opponents say he is intentionally delaying the elections to cling to power .

Nigerian state bans pro-Iran group

AFP

KANO: A Nigerian state where clashes between the military and Shia Muslims led to over 300 deaths last year has banned the Islamic Movement of Nigeria (IMN), saying it was a security threat.

Two days of violence began on December 12, when supporters of the pro-Iranian cleric and IMN head, Ibrahim Zakzaky, refused to allow the chief of army staff's convoy to pass through the northern city of Zaria in Kaduna state.

In April, rights group Amnesty International accused Nigeria's military of shooting dead more than 300 Shia Muslims, burying them in mass graves and destroying evidence of the crime.

The Kaduna state government later confirmed the Amnesty report, saying that the army used "excessive force" and that those responsible for the killings should be prosecuted.

But in a press release issued late Friday, Kaduna state governor Nasir El-Rufai said IMN was a threat to Nigeria.

"The Kaduna state government has issued an order declaring the Islamic Movement in Nigeria (IMN) an unlawful society."

It said the term applied to "any organisation whose activities are dangerous to the security and good governance of the state."

"We are not surprised by this decision of the Kaduna state government to ban the IMN," spokesman Ibrahim Musa said.

"What do expect from someone that attacked you in your house, killed people in hundreds and demolished homes for no just reason?"

"We condemn this illegal decision in the strongest terms and we will challenge this decision through all legitimate means."

INVITATION TO TENDER

Supreme Committee for Delivery & Legacy

The Supreme Committee for Delivery & Legacy (SC) is pleased to announce the following tender:

Tender No.	Tender Title	Tender Bond (QAR)	Tender Fee (QAR)	Last Date to Issue RFP	Tender Closing Date	Email Address
TDO-16-TTC-0028	Project Management Services for Training Sites Programme	250,000	5,000	17 October 2016	6 November 2016	TSPM@sc.qa

The SC invites suitable local consultancy companies to tender for Project Management/Construction Management Services for the Training Sites Programme. The Programme includes renovation of several existing sports facilities as well as construction of new sports facility clusters for use as Team Base Camp Training Sites during the 2022 FIFA World Cup Qatar™.

Who should respond to this invitation to tender?

- Locally registered consultancy companies that have relevant experience in project and construction management of government projects.

Potential bidders should note the following:

- All correspondence in relation to this tender process will be in English.

Tender process:

- Applicants should register their interest by submitting an Expression of Interest letter, along with an accompanying copy of a valid Commercial Registration by email to the relevant email address listed in the table above.
- Upon receipt, the applicants will be issued a Confidentiality Agreement (CA).
- Applicants should then pay the non-refundable tender fee to the following SC account at Qatar National Bank (QNB):

SUPREME COMM FOR DELIVERY & LEGACY
Account No.: 0013-002022-001
IBAN: QA74 QNBA 0000 0000 0013 0020 2200 1

- Applicants must then return a completed CA and tender fee payment slip with bank stamp to the SC by email to the relevant email address, and submit a hard copy of the above documentation to the address below:

Supreme Committee for Delivery & Legacy
Capital Procurement – Technical Delivery Office
Al Bidda Tower, 34th Floor
PO Box 62022
Doha, State of Qatar

- Upon receipt of a conformant CA and proof of payment of the tender fee, the applicant will be issued a copy of the Request for Proposal (RFP).
- Requests for RFP documents after 17 October 2016 will be rejected.
- The decision to issue RFP documents to an applicant rests solely with the SC.
- Any queries in relation to this tender should be addressed in writing to the email address above.

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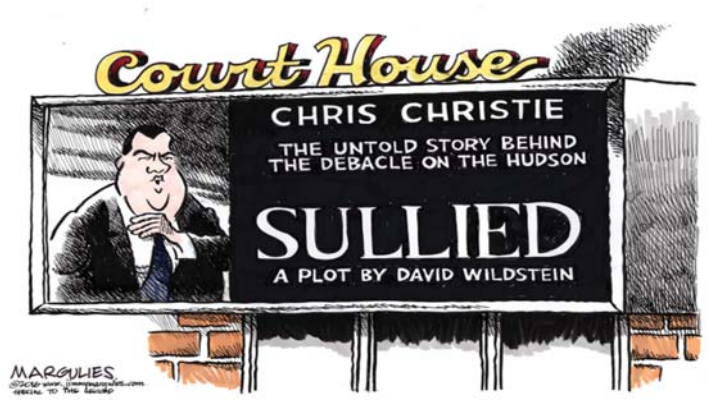
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EDITORIAL

Trump in trouble

Trump is defeating Trump. The controversial Republican candidate had dug so many holes, knowingly or unknowingly, that he keeps falling into one after the other, suffering enough damage to scuttle his march into the White House.

In the latest incident, Donald Trump's campaign faces the risk of falling apart after he was shown in a 2005 video making lewd comments on women. The video was taped months after Trump married his third wife, Melania. The mercurial, gaffe-prone Republican candidate, who has been specialising in utterances of utter lies, provocation and ignorance, finds the latest controversy too hot to handle. His Republican camp has reacted with shock and disbelief. There were calls for him to quit after several prominent members of the party withdrew their support. At least three members of the Senate announced they will not vote for Trump and former rival Carly Fiorina were among those who called on him to withdraw. House Speaker Paul Ryan disinvited Trump to a scheduled appearance yesterday in Wisconsin. Republican women are seething with anger.

The Republican candidate's campaign faces the risk of falling apart after he was shown in a 2005 video making lewd comments on women.

Trump quickly apologised and scrambled to prevent the damage, but the fury and humiliation his remarks have triggered will not die down before inflicting further damage. His apology appeared shallow. "Anyone who knows me knows these words don't reflect who I am. I said it, I was wrong, and I apologize," Trump said in a video statement, posted on his Facebook page. "I've said some foolish things, but there's a big difference between the words and actions of other people," he said.

Hillary Clinton will be the biggest beneficiary of Trump's troubles. Democrats have sought to highlight Trump's misogyny in order to encourage women voters not to support him with less than a month to go until the November 8 election.

It's ironic that the man who promises to make America great again is losing, or has already lost, his own greatness. All indications are that it's going to get worse for Trump. The time for bluff and bluster is over. In the coming days, he will have to measure his every word and will be held accountable for the words that had escaped his lips in the past, erroneously or otherwise.

Fortunately or unfortunately, the Republican party is getting hammered for the actions of its candidate. The gravity of injuries the party will suffer will be clear only after the elections. The party is caught in a cul-de-sac. It's too late to change its candidate as the election is very close.

Quote of the day

I want to believe that tonight, when the resolution will be presented to the Security Council, no country will oppose it and notably that none of the permanent members will use their veto.

Francois Hollande
French President



Syria: Do people really care?



By James Denselow
Al Jazeera

As the US-Russian peace talks finally collapsed against a backdrop of intense attacks on eastern Aleppo, Syria appears to have fallen even further into darkness. On Sunday, campaigners organised a global "day of rage" to express their feelings about events.

Yet in London, while a few hundred people marched in the rain in the centre of the city, tens of thousands shopped busily nearby, seemingly oblivious to events. So do people really care about what is happening in Syria?

Soon the conflict will have gone on longer than World War II. In the space of more than 2,000 days of crisis, hundreds of thousands of people have been killed and half of the country's population have been forced from their homes.

BBC reporters ask how do you report something you can't show people because it is judged too ghastly for them to see?

Apathy towards the crisis

Journalists, politicians and humanitarians have instead engaged in an arms race of more and more dramatic language to try to shake people out what could be described as an accepting apathy towards the crisis.

Humanitarians in particular pour over dictionaries and thesauruses to find new language to describe Syria's descent into a Dante-esque hell.

The UN humanitarian chief, Stephen O'Brien, said recently that Syria is a "living hell" and a "pitiless and merciless abyss of a humanitarian catastrophe".

The destruction of hospitals has suddenly become the new normal. Families huddle together in a single room of their Aleppo homes, preferring to die together than apart. A seven-year-old's Twitter account tells stories of doing homework while the bombs fall around her.

Images of dazed and bloodied children sitting alone in the backs of ambulances or lying face down dead on the sands of Turkey spark all-too-brief moments of soul-searching before things carry on as before.

If Syria is a conflict of a generation, we can't say we didn't know what was happening, and that knowledge places a burden of responsibility on all of us, not just those who are the perpetrators of violence or its victims.

The Economist described Syria this month as Obama's "greatest geopolitical failure", yet an absence of leadership is partly the product of no public demand for such leadership.

The Economist described Syria this month as Obama's greatest geopolitical failure, yet an absence of leadership is partly the product of no public demand for such leadership.

Deep aversion

Simply put, the root of this lies in a post-9/11 deep-seated primacy to concerns about "terrorism" and a legacy of the botched invasion and occupation of Iraq. Combined, this has left a deep aversion to getting seriously involved in the conflicts of the Middle East.

Syria, in the eyes of many, is "not our problem". Instead it is the fault of others, where the blame can lie and justify inaction.

The enormity of the crisis is almost indigestible to those who do not see it directly. As Stalin once was alleged to have said, "the death of one man is a tragedy, the death of millions is a statistic".

There are a whole host of statistics demonstrating how bad things are in Syria but perhaps they've contributed to desensitising us to the shared humanity and empathy needed for people to care more as to what is happening there.

Fear about the rise of the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant group (ISIL, also known as ISIS) and concern about small numbers of westerners going there and larger numbers of Syrians coming here dominates European debate.

Indeed, there is far more active politics when it comes to taking in Syrians, as western publics and their politicians debate the symptoms rather than the cause.

The Syrian crisis is a test of our common humanity and global values, and it is one that we are failing. We cannot simply see the people of the region as either regime, radicals or refugees. While there are no easy options more, much more, can and should be done.

Tens of thousands have signed up to the Syria Campaign whose central call is for a "peaceful and democratic future for Syria".

The recent prominence of the "White Helmets" civil defence teams, the subject of a Netflix documentary and a Nobel Prize nomination, has suddenly given the wider public some "good guys" to get behind.

Meanwhile, at a practical level, there is a huge range of local and international humanitarian agencies that can be supported.

Most important, however, is for people to place political pressure on their representatives to push Syria up the political agenda. To ask what they are doing to help bring an end to the suffering of Syrian civilians.

With the collapse of US-Russian talks, there is already a pivot towards pressurising Moscow to do more to de-escalate the fighting.

Nick Clegg, the former British deputy prime minister, called on FIFA to cancel the 2018 World Cup in Russia following their "barbarism in Aleppo".

Edmund Burke once said that "all that is necessary for the triumph of evil is that good men do nothing".

In Syria, we must work to ensure that easy apathy is defeated by tackling the difficult choices that come with responsibility to act.

James Denselow is a writer on Middle East politics and security issues and a research associate at the Foreign Policy Centre.



People who fled from Islamic State controlled areas arrive in the northern Syrian rebel held town of Waqf, near Al Rai town, in Aleppo Governorate, Syria.

This only happens in occupied Palestine



By Dr Daud Abdullah



Palestinians inspect Israeli air strike in east of Gaza city.

After a visit to Hebron in 1996, the late Palestinian scholar Edward Said wrote, "The present situation cannot last, there are too many inequities and injustices at the heart of Palestinian life." Two decades on, there is no end in sight to the wretched conditions he deplored back then. On the contrary, they have grown worse.

Not even Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas's controversial decision to attend the funeral of former Israeli President Shimon Peres was enough to bring about a token suspension of the daily torment of Palestinians in the occupied territories. Immediately after his return to Ramallah, Israel declared Tel Rumeida, a neighbourhood in the Governorate of Hebron, to be a closed military area.

As is always the case when such closures are imposed, Palestinian students and residents who attempted to attend classes or go about their daily affairs were told to return to their homes until the 600 illegal Jewish settlers living in Hebron had observed their religious festivities. These celebrations are expected to last several days and so the ancient Ibrahimi Mosque was also closed to Muslim worshippers for six days.

Like their Muslim compatriots who are routinely denied access to their mosques, Christian Palestinians in Bethlehem and Jerusalem must also have permits to worship in their churches from which they are separated by the eight-metre high "security" wall. Before the creation of the state of Israel in 1948, Christians made up 18 per cent of Palestine's population.

The present situation cannot last, there are too many inequities and injustices at the heart of Palestinian life. Two decades on, there is no end in sight to the wretched conditions he deplored back then. On the contrary, they have grown worse.

Today, they account for less than 1.5 per cent. For reasons of political correctness, western politicians and church leaders have turned a blind eye to the real causes of this exodus; they have chosen instead to look for a scapegoat in alleged "persecution by Muslims". That is palpable nonsense and plays into Israel's nefarious hands.

In Hebron, life is far from normal for its 200,000 Palestinian inhabitants at the best of times. Every aspect of their lives is overshadowed by the activities of the settlers who now live illegally among them, with full military protection courtesy of the Israel Defence Forces. Palestinians must contend with the hideous road blocks and military checkpoints that swamp the old city and its environs.

Recent reports confirm that more than 1,000 residential apartments have been vacated because of the harassment affecting the local Palestinian population. This was entirely predictable; Israel's closure of more than 800 commercial businesses was meant to do exactly that — make life so intolerable for the locals that they will leave "of their own accord". In Zionist terminology this is known rather sinisterly as "silent transfer."

Elsewhere in the occupied West Bank, the system of inequity and injustice described by Edward Said is no less punitive. The predominantly farming community in Qalqiliya has been virtually encircled by Israel's apartheid wall, with farmers separated from their land.

More than 170,000 men, women and children are similarly locked in by the wall in Bethlehem. Former US President Jimmy Carter found it appalling that they had to obtain "permanent resident" permits from the occupation authorities in order to continue living in their own homes.

It does not take much to recognise the similarities between the Israeli permit system and the hated South African Pass Laws. Just as it was illegal for black Africans to enter designated "white areas" in South Africa so too is it illegal for Palestinians from the West Bank or Gaza Strip to visit Jerusalem, for example, without military permission. At present, the general rule is that only those aged 45 years or over are considered for a permit.

While there are, of course, subtle differences, the South African jurist John Dugard has pointed out that the common features between South African apartheid and Israel's version are discrimination, repression and territorial fragmentation.

Under these repressive and degrading conditions it was only a matter of time before a third intifada erupted in the occupied territories.

Israel's determination to seize Palestinian land for its settlements; its closure and desecration of religious sites; and its extrajudicial killings have all provided the combustible mix that has fuelled the intifada for the past year. The sheer number of settlers (more than half-a-million) and military checkpoints scattered across the West Bank (more than 500) also make the conditions ripe for anger and disaffection to fester.

Throughout their long struggle against Zionist colonisation, Palestinians have staged several uprisings. Once in motion these have never been easy to suppress. Being the weaker of the two parties militarily and politically, the Palestinians have on every occasion suffered untold human and material losses. Yet, for every successive generation, it has been considered to be a price worth paying for their freedom from Israel's brutal military occupation.

The nature and course of the uprisings have always been unpredictable. This is especially the case today since there is no single political faction that has emerged clearly to lead or coordinate events on the ground.

In the absence of any serious political initiative, and given Israel's determination to maintain its occupation and dominance over the Palestinians, it is only reasonable to expect the current intifada to continue well into the future. In this regard, Edward Said was right: there will be no end to Palestinian efforts to end the prevailing system of inequity and injustice of a kind which only happens in occupied Palestine.

The writer is the Director of Middle East Monitor (Memo).

News media industry: Going for broke



By Arnab Neil Sengupta
Al Jazeera

For decades, the mighty newspaper industry had been sitting pretty like Humpty Dumpty on a wall, unfazed by radio and television's challenges. But the dawn of the digital age is setting it up for a big fall. Or so conventional wisdom suggests.

That was also the message of John Oliver, the English comedian and television host, when he remarked in a recent segment of Last Week Tonight: "The truth is publishers are desperate and no one seems to have a perfect plan to keep newspapers float."

From the evidence at hand, it is hard to dispute his point that the newspaper industry today is in "big trouble". But to focus only on newsprint-based media, the evidence also suggests, is to not see the wood for the trees. It may well be that the print journalist's days are numbered, but the career prospects seem scarcely any brighter for journalists across the media spectrum who cannot imagine reinventing themselves as aid-agency officers, PR executives or full-time novelists.

For the past several years, even small talk within the press pack has tended to be about little else but the grim handwriting on the wall, which goes something like this:

Print is doomed, television is dying a slow death, online has begun to level off despite all the bells and whistles, only "digital" looks promising in this era of smartphones and other mobile devices — but that too mainly as a bright shiny object to dazzle venture capitalists in search of the Next Big Thing.

For news organisations, what this means is a constant struggle to stand out in a business that the Nieman Lab calls a "media ecosystem dominated by choice, fragmentation and news consumers' gravitation towards sources that confirm their beliefs and reinforce their biases".

Meanwhile, for journalists the sense of impending doom has moved steadily closer to reality, with newsroom downsizing and print-edition closures leaving many of them without a regular paycheque before they can even google "LinkedIn".

"In India, a few media houses are rolling in money but the rest are struggling," Geeta Seshu, an independent journalist and consulting editor of the media watch site The Hoot, told Al Jazeera by phone from Mumbai. "The pauperisation of media professionals in the industry is not something journalists like to talk about. "A handful of top personnel are drawing huge salaries while the rest are woefully underpaid. Many medium and small media houses can't even pay their employees on time." To economists, the current predicament of journalists may be just a case of market forces favouring certain occupations that require a high degree of specialisation over others that are more generalist in nature and whose output is hard to monetise.

However, to rights activists, social scientists and public intellectuals, it is deeply worrying that society may be on the brink of losing something a lot more valuable than just a profession with a certain je ne sais quoi as a result of the existential crisis confronting news journalism.

From their perspective, the fabulous profits being racked up year after year by Silicon Valley-based new-media behemoths such as Facebook and Google offer no answers to the questions about the viability of critical analysis of the roles of government and business as newspapers and TV channels worldwide struggle with shrinking revenues.

In what no longer sounds like an incredible scenario, citizens exposed to crime, corruption, incompetence or injustice will have little prospect of redress unless they approach the judiciary, non-governmental organisations, local politicians or, heaven forbid, extra-legal authorities, where once just a report in the local newspaper or TV channel would have sufficed. At the national and international levels too, there is a serious risk that news media will increasingly offer a lopsided view of events, with wall-to-wall coverage of personalities and controversies which attracts big audiences and generous advertising crowding out stories championing the underdog that require research, time, resources and news-gathering budgets.

"What kinds of news are being potentially put at risk in the new ecosystem? Long-form investigative news [and] more complex stories that are not easily and instantly digestible by users and therefore don't generate these numbers," Justin Schlosberg, a lecturer in journalism and media at the University of London, told Al Jazeera's Listening Post for a recent episode on the fight between Facebook Inc and ad blockers.

"The kinds of news that hold local centres of powers to account are in many ways the vanguards of the fourth estate, and we need to be really worried about the pressures this new news economics is placing on them." Analysts say that in advanced democracies with perceived low levels of corruption, rights violations and abuse of political and administrative power, the net effect of a steady decline in the audience numbers, profits and influence of the so-called legacy media on society is likely to be harmful, but to what extent precisely is still an open question.

On the other hand, in countries where news headlines have traditionally been the only leverage available for ordinary people to use against autocratic or apathetic governments and errant private companies, a future without independent, deep-pocketed media houses and investigative non-profits is bound to be a future fraught with risks to rule of law and danger for democratic and liberal values, say the analysts.

In the long run, they say, if enough bright graduates are not attracted to the industry owing to its crippled finances and occupational hazards, the press will gradually fail to meet society's expectations of its role as a vital public service, the impressive pace and breadth of digital-media innovation notwithstanding.

"Journalism has never been a high-paying profession, but these days the attraction it holds for young people is even less, not only because it is not remunerative but also because it is seen as a dangerous occupation," Luis Teodoro, a former dean of the University of the Philippines College of Mass Communication and current deputy director of the Center for Media Freedom and Responsibility, told Al Jazeera in a phone interview from Manila.

Print is doomed, television is dying a slow death, online has begun to level off despite all the bells and whistles, only "digital" looks promising in this era of smartphones and other mobile devices — but that too mainly as a bright shiny object to dazzle venture capitalists in search of the Next Big Thing.

All thoughts and views expressed in these columns are those of the writers, not of the newspaper.
All correspondence regarding Views and Opinion pages should be mailed to the Editor-in-Chief.

EU and UN to continue Philippine aid

Anatolia

ZAMBOANGA CITY: The European Union (EU) and United Nations (UN) have given no indication they will stop assistance to the Philippines, despite President Rodrigo Duterte telling international bodies to withdraw financial aid.

A report in the *Philippine Star* yesterday said that despite being told by Duterte earlier this week that it "better choose purgatory, (because) hell is filled up," the EU is extending $190,000 in assistance to the country for energy-related measures.

The Star reported that the UN, for its part, has no plans to stop assistance despite a constant drubbing from Duterte, who has said that the country would survive without foreign aid.

The EU is extending $190,000 in assistance to the country, while UN, for its part, has no plans to stop giving aid despite a constant drubbing from Duterte.

On Friday the EU and the Philippines Department of Energy launched the Access to Sustainable Energy Program, aimed at providing electricity to 90 percent of Philippine households through maximized use of renewable energy.

"We see that the Philippines and the EU are sharing many objectives looking forward on issues such as climate change, sustainable energy, pro-poor agenda, trying to lift people out of poverty," EU Ambassador Franz Jessen said.

Jensen added the 9-billion pesos financing agreement will run for three to four years, depending on "how fast the money is being spent and being used by the communities".

On Friday, UN Resident Coordinator and Development Program Resident Representative in the Philippines Ola Almgren was reported to have said relations between the world body and Manila remain undamaged.

"We need to look at the broader aspect of the Philippines' role in the UN and the work that we do here to judge that. I remain firm in my belief that that relationship will continue in as good a level as it has been in the past," Almgren said.

He underlined there is no way the UN would stop giving aid and expressed confidence "the partnership between the UN and the Philippines will remain strong as it has been as we go forward".

"The Philippines is a member-state of the UN since the very beginning. It's a question of what has been the contribution of the Philippines to the United Nations and that contribution has been fantastic ever since the beginning of the UN and even in recent years," Almgren underlined.

Duterte has repeatedly lashed out at the United States, EU and UN over criticism of his war on drugs.

Duterte won the May 9 election on a crime-fighting campaign, and has pledged to curb corruption and criminality within three to six months -- but has requested a six-month extension saying he had not realized the severity of the "drug menace".

Of the more than 3,000 deaths reported under the anti-drug campaign, 1,490 are under investigation as of September 10 with authorities blaming suspected vigilante groups.

No certainty war games with US will end: Army

Reuters

MANILA: A review by the Philippines of joint military drills with the United States could see exercises continue or scaled back, a military spokesman said on Saturday, following more rhetoric from the president about scrapping them completely.

An assessment would be conducted among the defence top brass and the executive about the merits of exercises that have gone on for decades between the two treaty allies. A unilateral decision would be taken, then the US would be notified, said armed forces spokesman Restituto Padilla.





An aerial view shows the eruption of Mount Aso in Aso, Kumamoto prefecture, southwestern Japan, yesterday. RIGHT: An officer of the city government cleans a car covered in volcanic ash which came from the eruptive crater of Mount Aso.

Alert as Japan's Mount Aso spews volcanic ash

Reuters

TOKYO: Mount Aso, a volcano on Japan's main southern island of Kyushu, erupted early yesterday, Japan's Meteorological Agency said, spewing volcanic ash 11,000 metres into the sky.

Police and municipal governments said there were no reports of injuries from the eruption, which began at 1:46am local time on one of the peaks of the 1,592-metre mountain in Kumamoto Prefecture.

It was the first "explosive eruption" at the peak since January 1980, according to the meteorological agency.

The agency raised the alert level for the volcano to level 3 on a scale of 5, telling people not to approach the mountain and warning of falling rocks. It also warned of falling ash in 10 prefectures.

TV footage showed volcanic ash had accumulated on cars, houses and roads in the city of Aso and ash was falling as far as 320km away, Japanese media said.

Farmers have reported recently that some vinyl greenhouses where tomatoes and asparagus were being grown 6-8km away from the crater had been broken by ash and small rocks.

A window was cracked by a falling rock at an Aso youth centre about 5km away from the crater but there were no reports of injuries, an official at Aso city hall said.

"We are concerned that more damage on crops will be reported," the official said.

Kyushu Electric Power Co said the eruption had no impact on its Sendai nuclear plant, which is about 160km south of Mount Aso and is one of the two reactors that are online in Japan.

Up to 29,000 households lost power shortly after the eruption but the problem was fixed in less than two hours, a spokesman at Kyushu Electric said.

Mount Aso is one of the most active peaks in Japan but is also a popular hiking spot.

Japan lies on the "Ring of Fire", a horseshoe-shaped band of fault lines and volcanoes around the edges of the Pacific Ocean, and is home to more than 100 active volcanoes.

11 suspected militants die in Bangladesh army raids

Reuters

DHAKA: Bangladeshi security forces killed 11 members of an Islamist militant group yesterday, most of them dying in a three-hour gun battle on the outskirts of the capital.

Authorities said the dead were believed be members of Jamaat-ul-Mujahideen Bangladesh (JMB), blamed for an attack on a cafe in Dhaka in July in which 22 people were killed, mostly foreigners.

The militants were killed in three separate raids on hideouts on the outskirts of Dhaka, Home Minister Asaduzzaman Khan said recently.

Seven militants were killed in one raid after police were tipped off that the JMB's Dhaka unit chief and his associates were there.

"We requested them to surrender but they opened fire at our officers instead and also exploded grenades, which prompted them to retaliate," Khan said, adding the three-hour gun battle left seven militants dead.

"The dead militants include JMB's Dhaka military commander Akash, which is his organisational name. We are trying to find out his real identity."

Explosives, weapons and machetes were recovered from all three hideouts and three police officers were injured, police said.

The July 1 attack in Dhaka's diplomatic quarter was claimed by Islamic State militants and was one of the most brazen in Bangladesh, which has been hit by a spate of killings of liberals and members of religious minorities in the past year.

Police have killed more than three dozen suspected militants in shootouts since the Dhaka cafe attack, including its presumed mastermind, Bangladesh-born Canadian citizen Tamim Ahmed Chowdhury.

Chowdhury is reported to have been the subject of a profile in an Islamic State journal called Dabiq that identified him as its top operative in Bangladesh. The Syria-based militant group also published "selfie" photos of the cafe attackers on its propaganda channels while the hostage crisis was continuing.

The government has consistently denied the presence in the country of any transnational militant organisation such as Al Qaeda or Islamic State.

But police believe that JMB, which has pledged allegiance to Islamic State, was involved in organising the cafe attack.

The targeting of foreigners could hurt foreign investment in the poor South Asian economy, whose $28bn garments export industry is the world's second largest.

Vietnam declares California-based group 'terrorist'

Reuters

HANOI: Vietnam has declared a US-based activist group a terrorist organisation and warned that any Vietnamese found to be involved with the group would be regarded as co-conspirators and punished.

The government said the California-based Viet Tan, or Vietnam Reform Party, had recruited and trained operatives to use weapons and explosives.

Vietnam has long been sensitive to the activities of Viet Tan, calling the group "reactionaries" but the announcement was the first time it had designated it a terrorist organisation.

Vietnam's police-run Ministry of Public Security said Viet Tan had trained members in militant activities, kidnaps and murders and arranged for operatives to sneak in to Vietnam to organise protests and instigate violence.

The group in a statement said the government feared organised opposition and the police were "regurgitating baseless propaganda" to try to deter Vietnamese from "peaceful political advocacy."

"Let the people of Vietnam decide whether Viet Tan is a threat," it said.

The US State Department said Viet Tan was not listed as a terrorist entity under US law.

Myanmar warned fresh clashes may derail peace process

Anatolia

YANGON: A coalition of ethnic armed groups in Myanmar has warned that fresh military offensives in ethnic areas could derail the country's peace process.

Local media have reported that the military has been using helicopter gunships and fighter jets in an effort to root out rebels near the northern border town of Laiza -- the Kachin Independence Army's headquarters -- after fighting erupted in the area last month.

Yesterday, the vice-chairperson of the United Nationalities Federal Council (UNFC) -- an umbrella association of 11 ethnic armed groups -- claimed that the army was responsible for fresh fighting in northern Kachin State, eastern Shan State and Karen State

"Fighting in these three areas started because of military offensives," Naing Hantha said recently.

"They (the military) should realise that peace is built through political channels, not through fighting."

Naing Hantha demanded the military stop the offensives immediately, and look at finding ways to end the conflict through negotiation.

"We strongly condemn the Tamadaw (the military) for the fresh offensive," he added.

The warning came as hundreds of activists gathered in Yangon yesterday to demand an end to armed conflicts between the central government and ethnic armed organisation.

National Day rehearsals



Military vehicles pass the Presidential Office during a rehearsal two days before Taiwan's National Day to mark the founding of the Republic of China in 1911, in Taipei, yesterday.

Vietnam rejects lawsuits by fishermen against Taiwanese firm

AFP

HANOI: A Vietnamese court has rejected hundreds of lawsuits filed by fishermen who demanded more compensation from a Taiwanese-owned steel plant responsible for a devastating toxic leak, a leading activist said yesterday.

In a rare case of civic action in authoritarian Vietnam, crowds of fishermen swamped a court house last month to file 506 lawsuits against Taiwan's Formosa, which is building a multi-billion-dollar steel plant in Ha Tinh province.

The conglomerate paid Vietnam's government $500m after it was blamed for dumping waste that poisoned tonnes of fish and decimated the local seafood industry earlier this year.

Local fishermen launched their lawsuits in an effort to wrest more money from Formosa and demand it shut down the steel operation altogether.

But Catholic priest Dang Huu Nam, who helped lead the plaintiffs, said the court had returned more than 100 case files and that he was expecting more.

"We will look into why the files are returned as the court did not say concretely, before deciding what moves to do next," Nam said.

The judge, Nguyen Van Thang, was quoted in state-run media saying that all 506 cases were returned.

The fishermen had asked for compensation of roughly $2.5m but did not provide clear evidence of their losses, he said according to Phap Luat, an official legal news site.

Dead fish and other marine life began washing up on Vietnam's central coast in April, hitting fishermen and triggering rounds of protests.

Govt to amend 118-year-old criminal procedure code

A panel will look into ways to amend CrPC 1898 so as to improve the criminal justice system and the procedure of registering FIRs and to block bogus cases.

Internews

LAHORE: A committee formed by the Prime Minister has been given till December next year to amend the Code of Criminal Procedure (CrPC) 1898 so as to improve the criminal justice system and the procedure of registering FIRs and to block bogus cases and trial of those unfit for prosecution.

Attorney General Ashtar Ausaf Ali will head the committee. Ali said that the government was serious about providing people access to prompt justice. "My predecessor had worked hard on this but was unable to complete the task. I have till December next to see this through."

The attorney general maintained that the amendments would be made in consultation with all provinces.

Sources in the Punjab government, however, said that they were yet to receive a response on the recommendations forwarded by the Punjab Law, Home and Prosecution Departments in August this year.

The recommendations had been sent to the federal government after approval from Chief Minister Shahbaz Sharif.

They explained that the amendments suggested would help save time and tax payers' money and would prevent people from filing calumnious criminal complaints to settle personal scores.

The suggested amendments were drawn up in the light of research conducted by the government to look into why courts, prosecutors and the police pursued criminal cases they knew to be defective or fabricated.

Over 50 percent of the cases submitted for trial in Punjab were either false or poorly investigated. This raised chances of wrongful convictions and miscarriage of justice and sometimes allowed criminals to get off scot-free. The situation is no different in other provinces, they said. Among the recommendations sent by the Punjab is an amendment to Section 154 of the CrPC which would authorise SHOs to conduct initial inquiries prior to registration of FIRs in order to set aside false complaints.

Amendments to Sections 161, 162 and 510 of the CrPC would make DNA reports and audio/video recordings of statements by prosecution witnesses, admissible evidence.

An amendment to Section 173 would allow prosecutors to assess challans to see whether there was sufficient evidence to ensure indictment before submitting them in courts. They would have the authority to not pursue cases that lacked sufficient evidence. Appeals against a prosecutor's decision in this regard would lay with the prosecutor general. Additionally, the complainant could file a writ. SHOs or investigation officers would submit reports to prosecutors regarding challans.

The prosecutors would then check the reports and decide whether or not to return them to the police to plug in any loopholes. After rechecking these reports, the prosecutors would inform the district prosecution head if a case was fit for trial or not.

The district prosecution head would approach the court which would decide if a detained suspect should be released on request.

Prosecutors would follow the code of conduct, notified by the prosecutor general, in deciding whether cases were fit for trial. The Punjab Prosecution Department is looking to have its governing law amended in the coming Punjab Assembly session in order to make it binding for all prosecutors to follow a code of conduct.

The attorney general said the committee was mulling over suggestions to allow magistrates to allow registration of cases after checking the FIRs Sections 161 to 167 would also be amended so as to make it mandatory for witnesses to sign statements before police so that they could be held responsible in case of retraction. Forensic evidence would also be made admissible after the amendments. Section 173 [dealing with police officers' reports] too would be amended, he said without elaborating on what the amendment would be. He said that he had already constituted a sub-committee comprising advocate generals and prosecutor generals to evolve a consensus on how to make the amendments.

In response to a question of why the federal government had not yet responded to the Punjab government's recommendations, Ali said that that the committee would consider proposals from all provinces. He said they had consulted officials from Balochistan and Punjab and the next session will be held in Sindh.

"This is why we have planned a full-day conference for the sub-committee to put forward their input and to give them ownership of the final amendment draft," he said.

People flee Kunduz as fighting continues

Reuters

KABUL: Parmi fled the fighting in the northern Afghan city of Kunduz with 13 members of her family this week, in shock at how quickly the city's defences had collapsed to the Taliban.

Now in Kabul, she speaks bitterly of the failure of the government to protect the city, a year on from the last time it was overrun by militants.

"There is blood and dead bodies everywhere in Kunduz. Our young people are dying and the government hasn't done anything for us," she said, in the hotel she has been staying since Thursday with scores of other refugees from Kunduz.

Her comments, and similar accounts from others, who speak of a blacked-out city running out of food, water and medicine, underline the despair of Kunduz residents and the anger building up against the government of President Ashraf Ghani.

Parmi, 42, who like many Afghans goes by only one name, managed to escape with her family, putting a chain on the door of their house and leaving with only the clothes they were wearing after artillery and mortar fire hit their neighbourhood.

"We had to crawl out of the area; there were bullets everywhere. We left home empty-handed, now my clothes are dirty and I have nothing to wear," she said but added that she and her family were relatively lucky.

"Anyone who doesn't have money is left there under threat of mortars and gunfire," she said.

Special forces units, backed by American advisers and air strikes, have been battling to drive Taliban fighters from the city which the insurgents entered unexpectedly at the start of the week, and fighting continues in many areas.

Following widespread reports of security forces abandoning their positions, poor coordination and rivalries among commanders, there has been heavy criticism that the government failed to learn from last year, when the Taliban seized and held the city for two weeks before pulling out. "Even as the security situation got bad, we didn't believe Kunduz would collapse," said Shogofa Bahar, a medical assistant who fled the city for Kabul this week. "But the situation got worse and worse."

The United Nations said on Thursday that as many as 10,000 refugees had arrived in Kabul and northern towns including Taloqan and Mazar-i-Sharif.

But Kunduz is only one of the many hotspots that have flared in the past few weeks, with heavy fighting seen in Lashkar Gah, capital of the southern province of Helmand, Farah in the west, Baghlan in the north and Nangarhar in the east.

Afghanistan already has more than 1.2 million internal refugees, with some 260,000 forced to flee their homes across the country this year as the fighting has continued.

In Takhar, the neighbouring province to Kunduz, Sunatullah Timor, a spokesman for the provincial governor, said 5,000 families had been registered with authorities but their arrival was putting pressure on local food prices.

Hundreds of families have also arrived in Baghlan but many had moved on to safer areas because of the fighting.



Afghan National Army (ANA) soldiers fire a mortar round at Taliban positions during a battle with Taliban in Kunduz provice yesterday.

Two US service members hurt in Afghanistan

AP

KANDAHAR: Two US service members were wounded in eastern Afghanistan yesterday when their vehicle struck a roadside mine, the military said.

They were "conducting a normal security patrol" near the airport on the outskirts of Jalalabad city, capital of Nangarhar province, when "their vehicle hit the improvised explosive device," the US military's spokesman in Afghanistan, Brig. General Charles Cleveland said.

"The individuals were evacuated from the scene of the incident to Jalalabad Airfield for treatment," he said in a statement. The incident happened early morning, he said.

According to procedure, the troops were not identified. The incident follows the death earlier this week of a US service member, also in Nangarhar, where American military are involved in counter-terrorism operations against the Islamic State group and the Taliban.

So far seven US service members have died in Afghanistan this year.

In violence elsewhere in the country, three Afghan police officers were killed in an insurgent attack in southern Kandahar province.

Samim Khpolwak, spokesman for the provincial governor in Kandahar said that insurgents attacked the police in the Maiwand district. He also said that four other police officers were wounded in the attack.

Full body scanners made operational in three airports

Internews

ISLAMABAD: Random checks will be conducted at the Benazir Bhutto International Airport (BBIA) in Islamabad after the new body scanner, which conducts full body scans in under a few seconds, became functional yesterday during a ceremony.

"Not all passengers will be asked to go through the scanner. Only those thought to be acting suspiciously will be asked to walk through the machine," said a spokesperson for the Anti-Narcotics Force (ANF).

He said that two attempts of smuggling drugs out of the country had already been foiled due to scanning via the machine.

The official said the machines will help ensure "clean travel" from Pakistan to other destinations.

The DG ANF appreciated the ANF's arrangements for training airport staff in operating the machines. He said that during the training, two cases of capsule ingestion were detected and cases registered in this regard. The scanning machines were manufactured by a British firm Braun and were donated by Saudi Arabia.

They were installed at three major airports last week, including BBIA, Allama Iqbal International Airport in Lahore and the Jinnah International Airport in Karachi and they were all made functional yesterday.

US against declaring Pakistan a 'terrorist state'

Internews

ISLAMABAD: The United States has assured Pakistan that it does not want to declare it a state sponsor of terrorism and desires to work with Islamabad "as cooperatively as we can" to eliminate terrorist safe havens from the South Asian region.

At a Saturday afternoon news briefing, US State Department spokesperson John Kirby also said that the United States had full confidence in Pakistan's capability to protect its nuclear weapons and to prevent terrorists from accessing them. "I have not seen anything specifically about the bill and obviously we don't," said Kirby when asked if the US government would support a congressional bill and an online petition that seek to label Pakistan a 'terrorist state'.

"We're confident that Pakistan has the security controls they need to have in place on their arsenal, and I'd let them speak to that more specifically. I wouldn't get into that," said the US official when asked if Washington believed Pakistan could prevent terrorists from accessing its nukes.

In response to a question about Pakistan's seriousness in combating terrorism, Kirby said terrorism was as much a threat to Pakistani citizens and their children as it was to Afghan and Indian citizens and Pakistan took this challenge very seriously.

"We don't think for a minute — we don't believe for a minute that they don't take the challenges before them seriously or the lives and security of their children," he said.

Senator Mushahid Hussain Sayed and ShezraMansab Ali Kharal, MNA, currently in Washington to present Pakistan's case on Kashmir, have been urging Americans to reduce their pressure on Pakistan. They repeated this message in more than a dozen meetings with US officials and lawmakers this week.

The envoys also reminded Americans that the situation in South Asia was changing rapidly and Pakistan had other options too, such as further strengthening its ties with China and improving relations with Russia.

Senator Mushahid Hussain's statement at a Washington think tank that the United States was "no longer a superpower, it is a declining power," raised many eyebrows, causing some to warn that Pakistan could spin out of US influence if pushed too hard.

Protest against India



Activists of All Jammu and Kashmir Civil Society shout anti-India slogans during a demonstration in Karachi yesterday.

Sharif family rejects claims of business links in India

Internews

LAHORE: The Sharif family yesterday rejected the allegations levelled against it by the Chairman of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Imran Khan and reiterated that it does not own any business in India, local media reported.

The Sharif family's spokesperson said that the prime minister's kin do not own and run any businesses in India. Imran Khan should not misguide the nation by propaganda, said the spokesman. He added that Imran Khan should be ashamed of spreading baseless allegations and lies. Imran Khan has time and again claimed that the Sharif family has businesses in India, although the allegations have always been denied by the latter as baseless.

In September, Tahirul Qadri had also pointed out ties between the Indian workers and Sharif family which were later refuted by the Managing Director of Sharif Group of Industries. MD Yousaf Abbas Sharif had also said that not a single Indian is working in Sharif family sugar mill.

Earlier this year, Prime Minister's son Hussain Nawaz denied any links to business partnerships in India. He had said that his family neither owns any commercial business in India, nor are they involved in a business partnership with any Indian industrialist anywhere in the world.

Protests spread across Kashmir after boy's death

With the boy's death, as many as 91 people have died and over 12,000 injured during the last 92 days, when current unrest started in the Valley.

IANS



Protesters clash with police during the funeral procession of Junaid Ahmad, 12, in Srinagar yesterday.

SRINAGAR: Clashes broke out in Srinagar after a boy with pellet injuries died in hospital yesterday, taking to 91 the toll in the nearly three month-long cycle of violence, and forcing authorities to impose curfew, while violent protests were also reported from other parts of the Kashmir Valley.

Twelve-year-old Junaid Ahmad Bhat of Saidpora area, who was admitted to a hospital with pellet injuries after security forces fired pellets at him on Friday, died yesterday morning, leading to tension.

Local residents, as well as the ruling Peoples Democratic Party (PDP), said Bhat had not been part of any protests in the area and his death needs to be probed.

PDP General Secretary Nizamuddin Bhat demanded a probe into the boy's death. Hundreds of protesters, carrying Bhat's body, clashed with the security forces in Eidgah area, and the latter had to use tear smoke shells to disperse the mourners.

As trouble spread to other areas of Srinagar, authorities quickly imposed curfew in areas falling under seven police stations here.

The prevailing tension checked the progress towards peace in the city where private transport and pedestrian movement had nearly normalised during the last one week.

In the evening, tensions, however, decreased marginally in the uptown civil lines area where private vehicles moved following relaxation in protest schedule by the separatists from 5 pm to 6 am.

However, the old city areas did not witness any lowering of tensions where authorities continued with curfew to prevent protests and violence.

With the boy's death, as many as 91 people have died and over 12,000 injured during the last 92 days since July 9, when the current unrest started in the Valley after the July 8 killing of Hizbul Mujahideen commander Burhan Wani.

For the 13th consecutive Friday, no congregational prayers were allowed inside the historic Jamia Masjid in old city's Nowhatta.

Authorities also foiled the separatist march to the uptown Sonawar area where the office of the United Nations Military Observers Group in India and Pakistan (UNMOGIP) is located.

Meanwhile, clashes also erupted in Pulwama and Shopian districts in south Kashmir and Bandipora in the north Kashmir.

All educational institutions, public transport and main markets have remained shut in the Valley.

Train services between the Valley and Bannihal town in the Jammu region have also remained suspended during this period.

Swachh Bharat Abhiyaan taken from Egypt: World Bank

IANS

WASHINGTON: The Narendra Modi government's ambitious Swachh Bharat Abhiyaan is based on the knowledge sharing from a similar project in Egypt, World Bank President Jim Yong Kim said here.

"Through our new structure of global practices, knowledge sharing across countries has become easier and faster. When the Government of India came to the bank to prepare a major programme to expand sanitation services for the poor, we were able to transfer knowledge and experience from Egypt's Rural Sanitation Project and apply it in India," Kim said at the plenary meet of the World Bank held on Friday.

"That resulted in the $1bn Swachh Bharat Rural Sanitation Project in India, which applied knowledge of good service delivery — in the areas of local governance, transparency and accountability to citizens — that had already been taken to scale in Egypt," he added.

Kim said that the bank was looking to share knowledge from these two projects globally to help deliver better results on the ground.

India has one of the largest networks of roads in the world, but the the two percent of its national highways carry 40 percent of traffic, causing bottlenecks that can limit productivity and slow economic growth.

"Infrastructure is key to integrating economies and delivering services. To help improve India's roads, International Finance Corporation invested $250m in the Singapore-based firm Cube Highways. The firm is acquiring a portfolio of toll roads in India, injecting much-needed funds for road developers to complete their projects," Kim said.

Forces prepared to take up any challenge: IAF chief

IANS



Former cricketer Sachin Tendulkar looks on as he attends the Air Force Day parade at Air Force Station Hindon in Ghaziabad yesterday.

HINDON AIR FORCE STATION: Asserting that the armed forces are prepared to take on any challenge, the Indian Air Force (IAF) chief, Air Chief Marshal Arup Raha yesterday said there has been enough discussion on the surgical strikes across the LoC, but the forces will not talk about it.

"There has been so much discussion on this issue in the country; every section of society is giving opinion on this issue. ... The armed forces are supposed to deliver the result that the nation expects. We are not going to talk about it; we will just deliver," Air Chief Marshal Raha said at the Hindon Air Base on the 84th Air Force Day.

Raha is also Chairman of the Chiefs of Staff Committee. Responding to a question on the surgical strikes and politicisation of the issue, Raha refused to comment on the Indian Army action across the Line of Control on the night of September 28-29 and related issues.

The surgical strikes came in the wake of the September 18 terrorist attack on an army camp in Uri town of Jammu and Kashmir, in which 19 soldiers were killed.

In his speech at the Air Force Day function earlier, Raha mentioned both the Pathankot and Uri attacks in Punjab and Jammu and Kashmir respectively.

"Terrorist attacks at Uri (army camp) and Pathankot (IAF) base show the troubled times we are living in," Raha said.

Asked to comment on the issue later, the Air Force chief said India is learning lessons every time something happens. "We are getting smarter and smarter; we are learning lessons every time something happens. I think we are very well prepared now to face any such contingency," he said.

"The armed forces are well prepared to take on any sub-conventional threat. We have had one or two cases... A determined terrorist can always get the better of people but the aim is to prevent it... the deterrence. We should be able to detect any such attack right in the beginning so that we can neutralise them (terrorists) before they cause any damage," the IAF chief said.

Raha, in his speech, said that India is being seen as a "net security provider" in the Indian Ocean region.

Earlier, in a message on newly-created official Facebook page of the IAF, Raha said the IAF is prepared to deal with "any challenge" in "most befitting manner".

"We continue to train to take up any threat and are fully prepared to undertake any challenge in most befitting manner," the IAF chief said.

The official Facebook page of the IAF has been named 'Indian Air Force, Power to Punish'.

Asked if the name was an indication, Raha said in a lighter tone: "That was put up on our Facebook page, power to punish, that is a fact, but I think we will make it power to serve the nation".

Bihar village court bans goods made in China

IANS

PATNA: A Gram Kachahri (village court) in Bihar's Aurangabad district yesterday banned the sale and purchase of 'Made in China' goods, after declaring China an enemy for supporting Pakistan.

It also passed a provision with consensus to punish people found violating the order by imposing a fine, officials said.

It is a first of its kind happening in the state when a village body banned 'Made in China' products. The village court of Obra panchayat decided to ban the products manufactured in China, impacting the sale of Chinese goods in the panchayat area with a population of over 10,000, a district official said.

Gudiya Devi, sarpanch of the village court, said that she had called a meeting that was attended by members of the village court and local residents.

"We have decided to ban 'Made in China' goods and appealed to people not to use any Chinese goods," the sarpanch said.

"China is an enemy as it is supporting Pakistan against India," Gudiya said.

She said local residents also supported the move to ban the sale and purchase of such products. According to her, there are over two dozen shops in Obra panchayat that sell 'Made in China› goods.

Delhi heading for chaos with our decisions being nullified: Kejriwal

IANS

NEW DELHI: Hitting out again at Delhi Lt. Governor Najeeb Jung, Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal said yesterday all the decisions taken by his government in the last one-and-a-half years are being rendered "null and void", which will lead to chaos.

"This will have serious ramifications for the city and it will send Delhi back by almost two years. But unfortunately, that is exactly what is happening in Delhi," he said at a press conference at his residence here. Kejriwal's remarks come a day after Jung declared Mehboob Alam's appointment as Delhi Waqf Board CEO illegal and dissolved the religious body on Friday.

He also asked the Delhi government to withdraw its last year's notification of increasing circle rates of agricultural land in Delhi.

At this Kejriwal said: "We increased the circle rate of agricultural land in Delhi from Rs53 lakh to Rs3.5 crore. Many farmers even got the money as per revised rates from their land. Now that decision is being made 'ab initio' null and void. Will we take the money back from the farmers."

"We have made many flyovers, now will they be demolished? We constructed 8,000 classrooms. Will they have to be demolished as well," he asked.

Kejriwal said if there is corruption involved in all those decisions, then the Lt. Governor can get them investigated, but they should not be made null and void just because his consent was not taken.

He said before the August 4 High Court order, which held the Lt. Governor had primacy over the Delhi administration, his government took various decisions "legitimately", believing that Lt. Governor's consent was not needed for some issues.

"However, LG believed that his consent was needed. Our intention was not wrong while taking those decisions. The court case was going on and now there's the interpretation that his approval is needed," Kejriwal said.

He also noted that while prior approval was not taken, all the files were sent to the Lt Governor for his information.

"LG could have raised an objection then. You can't express a difference of opinion in infinity. What will happen to those orders now? Delhi will be headed for chaos if it goes on like this," he said.

Electricity for all by May 2017: Minister

IANS

VADODARA: India would have 100 percent electrification for all by May 1, 2017, Union Power Minister Piyush Goyal said yesterday.

"I am confident that 100 percent electrification in rural, Left-Wing Extremism (LWE) districts and dense forests would be achieved by May 1, 2017, a year ahead of the schedule Prime Minister Narendra Modi had set," Goyal told reporters on the margins of a two-day conference of power ministers here.

Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh, Odisha, Uttar Pradesh, Telangana and West Bengal are considered LWE or Maoist affected states.

The state-run Rural Electrification Corporation (REC) is also formulating a scheme to extend soft loans to the states at a flat rate on long-term to achieve 100 percent household electrification across the country.

Power ministers and officials from 20 states and two Union Territories participated in the conference along with heads of state-run energy firms. Goyal also said he was sure all states will join the Ujawal Discom Assurance Yojana (Uday) by November so that they can sign the agreements by December and issue bonds by March 2017.

Festival preparation



Labourers load an effigy of the Ravana onto a truck on the outskirts of Amritsar yesterday, ahead of the festival of Dussehra.

German cops find explosives stashed in apartment

The suspect who remains at large, Syrian Jaber Albakr, could have had "an Islamist motive," sources said.

AFP

BERLIN: Police yesterday found several hundred grams of "explosive materials" in the east German apartment of a Syrian man suspected of planning a bomb attack, and arrested three people connected to him.

The suspect who remains at large, 22-year-old Syrian Jaber Albakr, could have had "an Islamist motive" sources close to the police said.

"Highly explosive materials were found in the apartment concerned in Chemnitz, new evacuation measures are necessary," tweeted police in Germany's east.

Officers found "several hundred grams (of a) very dangerous substance which cannot be moved without protective measures", said police spokesman Tom Bernhardt.

Two of those arrested were seized close to city's railway station while the other was taken into custody in city centre. A package belonging to one of those arrested was undergoing analysis.

"They were known to the suspect we are looking for and were arrested and detained," said Bernhardt who added that the trio were being questioned.

Germany has been on edge after suffering two attacks claimed by the Islamic State group (IS) in July—an axe rampage on a train in Wuerzburg that injured five and a suicide bombing in Ansbach that left 15 wounded.

The attacks in July rattled Germans' sense of security and fuelled concerns over country's record influx of migrants and refugees last year.

Police in the state of Saxony, where Chemnitz is located, issued a search warrant for Albakr after officers received information from domestic intelligence services, a police spokesman said, saying he was born in Syria in January 1994.

They added that Albakr was wearing a black hooded sweatshirt and was "suspected of preparing a bomb attack" and issued an image of the man.

He arrived in Germany as a refugee last year and was under interior ministry surveillance for a period, according to *Focus* magazine, which cited intelligence sources.

The German magazine's website added that he had been plotting to attack an airport in the country.

A vast police operation was underway as heavily armed officers, some wearing balaclavas, combed the area around Albakr's apartment and local residents were evacuated.

An explosion was heard in the leafy Chemnitz suburb which investigators said was a police entry device.

Part of city's main station was sealed off by officers as a remote-controlled robot was deployed to inspect a suspect package on a platform.

German police said previously they had identified 523 people who posed a security threat to the country, around half of whom were known to be currently in Germany.



A remote-controlled robot for defusing bombs at the main station of Chemnitz during a police operation, yesterday. Police found several hundred grammes of explosives during raids in an apartment.

Festival of Lights



The Berlin Concert Hall at the Gendarmenmarkt Square was illuminated during the Festival of Lights show in Berlin.

Lithuania says Russia deploying N-capable missiles on Nato doorstep

AFP

VILNIUS: Russia is again deploying nuclear-capable Iskander missiles into its Kaliningrad outpost bordering two Nato members, Lithuania said yesterday, warning the move was aimed at pressuring the West into making concessions over Syria and Ukraine.

"Russia is holding military exercises in Kaliningrad, and its scenario includes deployment of Iskander missile systems and the possibile use of them. We are aware of it," Lithuanian Foreign Minister Linas Linkevicius told reporters.

He said modified Iskander missiles had a range of up to 700km which means they could reach German capital Berlin from the Russian exclave, which is sandwiched between Poland and Lithuania.

Moscow also sent Iskanders to Kaliningrad in 2015 as part of a series of mammoth military drills amid heightened tensions with the West over Ukraine.

Linkevicius said that this time he thought Moscow was using the move to "seek concessions from the West".

Polish Defence Minister Antoni Macierewicz in Warsaw yesterday called Russia's "activities very alarming", but declined to say whether he knew about any fresh deployment of Iskanders to Kaliningrad.

Estonian media reported on Friday that Russia was shipping Iskanders on a civilian vessel in the Baltic sea.

Angry French protest against Calais plan

AFP

PARIS: Demonstrators took to the streets yesterday in several towns across France to protest the government's plan to relocate migrants from the squalid Calais "Jungle" camp that is being shut down to their communities.

Around 250 people joined a march in Forges-les-Bains, about 30km southwest of Paris, against a migrant reception centre which opened Monday, housing 44 Afghans.

"The state forced this centre on us but I for one don't intend to just put up and shut up," said Lea, a young mother of two, who declined to give her surname.

Valerie Rigal, a leader of the marchers who are calling for a "moratorium" on further arrivals, insisted the villagers were not opposed to all migrants.

"We're not against migrants. We would have happily taken migrant families. What we didn't want was single men only," she said.

"My daughter takes the bus outside the centre every day. She's worried about running into groups of strange men."

The leafy hamlet of 3,700 residents, surrounded by woodland and corn fields, is expected to receive 91 asylum seekers. They are to be accommodated in an imposing disused hospital surrounded by high fencing.

In Pierrefeu-du-Var, southern France, a disused part of a psychiatric hospital has been chosen by authorities to house 60 asylum seekers currently in Calais who will be relocated from November.

Opposition to that plan brought out some 600 people to a rally in the village about 20 kilometres from Hyeres near the Mediterranean coast, police said.

Patrick Martinelli, mayor of the village of 6,000 residents, with the local council voted against the state's plan to send 60 men to Pierrefeu-du-Var, arguing that "a rural village was unsuitable for receiving such a population".

The far-right National Front (FN) party later on Saturday afternoon staged in its own anti-migrant protest with around 650 supporters, according to police.

But not everyone agreed with the efforts to block the migrant centres.

Another demonstration in Pierrefeu-du-Var, organised by anti-far-right and leftist groups, took place with around 250 people carrying banners saying "Yes, to solidarity and welcome for migrants and refugees," an AFP correspondent there reported.

Also in Forges-les-Bains onlookers at the anti-migrant protests criticised the demonstrators' attitude. "It's shameful," said Jennifer Sandalian, who works in a retirement home, fighting back tears.

"We all have a role to play in welcoming migrants, as human beings. We have to show them another image of France."

In Montpellier, southern France, around 100 protesters opposed to "the migrant invasion" and the "Islamisation" of the country were met by roughly the same number of anti-fascist demonstrators.

Riot police were deployed to separate the two groups.

And in Allex, south east France, 80 people gathered to protest the plans to resettle migrants currently in Calais across the country.

UK 'will allow EU citizens to stay' after Brexit

AFP

LONDON: All EU citizens currently living in Britain will be able to stay after Brexit, a newspaper reported yesterday citing unnamed cabinet ministers, despite the government's refusal to publicly guarantee their status.

Official research suggests that more than 80 percent of the 3.6 million EU citizens living in Britain would be eligible for residency by the time Britain is expected to leave the European Union in 2019, the *Daily Telegraph* reported.

Under plans being drawn up by the interior ministry, the remainder would be offered some kind of amnesty involving the right to permanently stay in Britain, it said.

Conservative Prime Minister Theresa May has said she "fully expects" to be able to guarantee the rights of EU citizens to stay in Britain, but said it was dependent on the rights accorded to Britons living elsewhere in the EU.

Earlier this week, International Trade Secretary Liam Fox repeated her position, and said that their fate was part of Britain's negotiating hand.

"To give that away before we get into the negotiation would be to hand over one of our main cards in that negotiation and doesn't necessarily make sense at this point," he told a fringe meeting at the Conservative party conference.

After a referendum campaign fought on the issue of control over EU migration, the conference was dominated by tough talk on immigration, including proposals to make firms declare foreign workers, which were widely condemned.

May has said she intends to begin the two-year Brexit process by March 2017, putting Britain on course to end its membership of the EU by early 2019.

Belgium missed 13 chances to unmask Paris attackers

AFP

BRUSSELS: Belgian police missed 13 opportunities to unmask the participants of the deadly Paris November attacks before the events, according to an internal report leaked to a newspaper yesterday.

The police report in *De Tijd* daily shows that as early as February 2015, the force were in possession of phone records linking terrorist suspects with Salah Abdeslam the sole surviving member of jihadist team that attacked Paris in November 2015.

The information however was not handled, due to lack of investigators, *De Tijd* reported.

Of the 13 missed chances for Belgian police to catch some of Paris attackers, six were due to staffing shortages, the secret report said.

Also left ignored by police until after the tragedy was a request from Spanish authorities for more information on Salah's older brother Brahim Abdeslam after he journeyed to Spain in March 2015.

Eight months after that visit, Brahim would blow himself up in a Paris cafe on the night of the massacre.

Salah Abdeslam has also been linked to several jihadists directly involved in the bomb attacks in Brussels on March 22 this year.

Earlier leaks of report said Molenbeek police warned higher ups that Abdeslam brothers had been radicalised with links to Paris attacks ringleader Abdelhamid Abaaoud, who was already known as an important figure from IS.

But the information was never followed up, the report said.

Ruling party projected to win Georgia vote

AFP

TBILISI: The ruling Georgian Dream party leads Georgia's parliamentary elections, two rival exit polls commissioned by a pro-government and a pro-opposition TV stations showed yesterday.

The exit polls forecast notably different margins for two pro-Western parties, but both confirmed Georgian Dream's victory over opposition United National Movement (UNM), which came second in the race.

An exit poll commissioned by a group of TV channels understood to be close to ruling party, gave Georgian Dream 53.8 percent of the vote—ahead of UNM's 19.5 percent.

Another exit poll released by pro-opposition Rustavi 2 TV said Georgian Dream and UNM received 39.9 and 32.74 percent of the vote respectively.

Rustavi 2 TV also said that—for the first time in Georgia's post-Soviet history—a small pro-Russian party, Alliance of Patriots, cleared the 5-percent threshold to make it to the legislature.

The vote percentages may not necessarily be reflected in parliamentary seats because almost half will be determined on a first-past-the-post basis rather than by the proportional representation system that was the basis for both exit polls.

Due to country's complex election rules the final makeup of 150-seat parliament may only become clear by late November. Earlier in the day, Georgians voted in bitterly contested parliamentary polls.

"We are making a step towards strengthening our country and democracy," Georgia's President Giorgi Margvelashvili told journalists after casting his ballot.

"I voted for the Georgian parliament where many political parties will be represented," he said.

Georgian Prime Minister Giorgi Kvirikashvili has promised free and fair polls, which "will mark important step to the future of democratic Georgia."



Georgia's President Giorgi Margvelashvili casts his vote for the parliamentary elections at a polling station in Tbilisi, yesterday.

Trump refuses to quit as new scandal erupts

Trump sought to do damage control in a hastily recorded apology, declaring himself a changed man.

Reuters



Republican presidential nominee Donald Trump is seen in a video screengrab as he apologises for comments he made about women during a statement recorded by his presidential campaign, yesterday.

NEW YORK/WASHINGTON: Republican presidential nominee Donald Trump vowed yesterday to remain in the race after prominent members of his party withdrew their support and called for him to drop out following news of a recording of him making lewd comments about women.

Trump sought to do damage control early yesterday morning in a hastily recorded apology, declaring himself a changed man and attempting to shift the focus to his opponent, Democrat Hillary Clinton.

Trump told *Wall Street Journal* yesterday "zero chance I'll quit."

Three Republican members of the Senate publicly announced they will not vote for Trump and former rival Carly Fiorina called on him to withdraw.

There is no precedent for a major party to replace their nominee this late in the campaign and it remains unclear if there is an avenue to force him from the race. Voting has already begun in several states, including the important swing states of Virginia and North Carolina.

Disclosure of a 2005 video of Trump talking on an open microphone showed the then-reality TV star openly using vulgar language about women. The video was taped months after Trump married his third wife, Melania.

Trump took to Twitter yesterday morning, seeming to make light of the controversy by posting on the online social media website "Certainly has been an interesting 24 hours! Anyone who knows me knows these words don't reflect who I am. I said it, I was wrong, and I apologise," Trump said in his video statement.

The video overshadowed the publication of excerpts of Clinton's closed-door paid speeches that were made public by a hacker who claimed to have obtained them from the email account of John Podesta, the chairman of the Democrat's campaign. In the speeches, Clinton advocates for more open borders and trade, a position she abandoned during the primary because it was politically untenable to Democratic progressives. Likewise, Trump has repeatedly criticised her for past support of free trade.

Trump's comments aired in a near-constant loop on US news programmes on Friday.

The video opened deep divisions within the Republican Party about how to respond, with a stream of Republican leaders condemning the remarks and some withdrawing their support for Trump.

US Representative Jason Chaffetz of Utah, who has been one of Clinton's fiercest critics, said he had retracted his endorsement of Trump, telling CNN he would not be able to look his 15-year-old daughter in the eye if he voted for Trump.

Martha Roby, a Republican member of Congress from the conservative state of Alabama, announced she would not be voting for Trump.

"Donald Trump's behaviour makes him unacceptable as a candidate for president, and I won't vote for him," she said in a statement. "Hillary Clinton must not be president, but, with Trump leading the ticket, she will be."

Utah's Republican Governor Gary Herbert said on Twitter he would also no longer vote for Trump. "Tonight, millions of Republicans are facing a moment of truth," Herbert said.

Republican lawmaker Mike Coffman from Colorado told CBS that Trump should "step aside" and said "his defeat at this point seems almost certain."

Other prominent Republicans indicated they would stick with their support of Trump. Ralph Reed, head of the Faith and Freedom Coalition, and Tony Perkins, head of the conservative Family Research Council, both told news outlets they will continue to support Trump.

Hillary leads Trump in race by five points: Poll

Reuters

NEW YORK: Democratic presidential candidate Hillary Clinton leads Republican rival Donald Trump by 5 percentage points among likely voters, roughly the same advantage she has held over the past several weeks, according to the Reuters/Ipsos national tracking poll.

The September 30-October 6 opinion poll showed that 43 percent of likely voters supported Clinton while 38 percent supported Trump. Clinton has consistently led Trump by 4-6 points in every weekly poll since the beginning of September.

Clinton and Trump will meet again in their second debate tonight, which will be in a town hall format, with election fast approaching.

When asked in the poll, roughly one out of every five likely voters would not pick either major party candidate and instead selected options such as "Other," "Wouldn't Vote" or "Refused."

Americans have expressed a dim view of both Clinton and Trump this year. Both are disliked by a majority of likely voters, according to the poll, and an increasing number of women have expressed "unfavourable" view of both candidates this week.

In a separate poll that includes alternative-party candidates, Clinton led the field by 5 percentage points. Among likely voters, 42 percent supported Clinton, 37 percent supported Trump, 8 percent picked Libertarian candidate Gary Johnson and 2 percent supported Jill Stein of the Green Party.

US formally accuses 'Russian hackers' of political cyber attacks

Reuters

WASHINGTON: The US government for the first time formally accused Russia of a campaign of cyber attacks against Democratic Party organisations.

"We believe, based on the scope and sensitivity of these efforts, that only Russia's senior-most officials could have authorised these activities," a US government statement said early yesterday about hacking of political groups.

"These thefts and disclosures are intended to interfere with the US election process."

US intelligence officials concluded weeks ago that the Russian government was conducting or orchestrating cyber attacks against the Democratic National Committee and the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee, possibly to disrupt or discredit the election, in which Democrat Hillary Clinton faces Republican Donald Trump.

A Kremlin spokesman called the US allegations "nonsense", the Interfax news agency reported.

Yesterday, Russian Foreign Ministry said the US accusations lacked any proof and were an attempt by Washington to fan "unprecedented anti-Russian hysteria".

"This whipping up of emotions regarding 'Russian hackers' is used in the US election campaign, and the current US administration, taking part in this fight, is not averse to using dirty tricks," Deputy Foreign Minister Sergei Ryabkov said yesterday.

The Obama administration's decision to blame Russia for the attacks is the latest downward turn in US relations with Moscow, which are under strain over Russia's actions in Syria and Ukraine and in cyberspace.

Also on Friday, US Secretary of State John Kerry said Russian and Syrian actions in the Syrian civil war, including bombings of hospitals, "beg for" a war crimes investigation.

Clinton's campaign chairman, John Podesta, said the public blaming for the hacks left one remaining question of "why Donald Trump continues to make apologies for the Russians". Trump had previously expressed doubt about Russia's involvement. In July, he suggested Russia should attempt to retrieve and publish emails from Clinton's private server.

Hours after the US government's accusation was levied, WikiLeaks posted hundreds of emails on its website purportedly hacked from Podesta's private account.

Until Friday, the Obama administration had avoided publicly singling out Russia in connection with the mounting civilian deaths in Syria or the cyber attacks.

The statement by the Department of Homeland Security and the Office of the Director of National Intelligence did not blame the Russian government for hacking attempts against state election systems, but said "scanning and probing" of those systems originated in most cases from servers operated by a Russian company.

However, a Department of Homeland Security spokesman said US officials had concluded that the hacking attacks or probes of state voter registration systems were "consistent with Russian motivations".

Concern has grown about the reliability of the US voting system as a result of the breach, and Trump has called the system "rigged," but without providing specific evidence.

US intelligence officials have said there is no evidence that voting recording systems have been manipulated.

Identifying Russia as the actor behind the cyber attacks on political organisations falls short of more punitive measures the United States has taken against other countries for cyber intrusions.

Lawmakers of both political parties welcomed the formal accusation. Republican Senator Cory Gardner said he planned to introduce sanctions legislation.

Earlier this year, a US grand jury indicted seven Iranians employed by two Iran-based computer firms on charges of hacking into the US financial sector.

March for peace



People take part in a march for peace through the streets of Medellin, Colombia, yesterday just days after voters shot down a historic peace accord between the government and the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) to end the war.

College heats campus with used cooking oil

AP

KEENE, NEW HAMPSHIRE: Things are heating up at New Hampshire's Keene State College, which is now using 100 percent used cooking oil to keep more than a third of its campus warm.

Officials say the college's decision to replace their polluting heating fuel oil with purified waste vegetable oil both supports a local business and improves air quality around campus.

Cary Gaunt, the director of campus sustainability, said he was told by industry leaders that Keene State is the only college in the country using purified waste vegetable oil to heat a campus .

"We are taking bold steps to demonstrate our values by significantly reducing our greenhouse gas footprint and improving the well-being of the people on our campus and the surrounding community."

The college uses the new carbon-neutral fuel for heat and hot water, and intends to increase its use of the alternative fuel in the coming years.

Peru claims deforestation slowing

Reuters

LIMA: Deforestation in Peru has slowed since peaking at nearly 700 square miles in 2014 when swaths of Amazon were illegally cleared for oil palm plantations, the head of the country's forest service said.

Fabiola Munoz said tougher new laws and enforcement, including fines 700 percent higher and jailtime for people who destroy primary forest, are helping Peru rein in deforestation. "People really used to think there would be no consequences," Munoz told foreign media. "That's changed."

In 2015, Peru lost about 160,000 hectares of forest cover, and less should be cleared this year, Munoz said. So far in 2016, about 120,000 hectares have been destroyed.

"We expect the trend to continue to be downward. But we have to be more active, we can't let our guard down," Munoz said.

Environmentalists have criticised Peru for not doing enough to keep wood and gold from being torn illegally from its forests for export, and for allowing local authorities to dole out agricultural concessions that include swaths of virgin rainforest.

Munoz said the government has ordered oil palm plantations in Peru to halt activities after finding they had illegally cleared primary forest in previous years.

Schools warn of 'virtual kidnapping' scam

AP

WASHINGTON: Schools across the US are warning about a scam to convince parents that their children have been kidnapped — even though they haven't — and to collect ransom money.

Cases of "virtual kidnapping" have been reported over the past two months in Virginia, California, Texas, Arizona and other states. Authorities say the scam often targets parents of college students, tricking some into paying thousands of dollars and appears to be on the rise nationally.

In many cases, parents receive a call from a stranger who claims to have kidnapped their child, and can often provide the child's name or other details. Some parents have reported hearing screams or a muffled cry in the background. Then the caller orders parents to wire money in exchange for their child's release.

"They really prey on people's fears, and in this case it's a very intense fear, thinking that your child's been kidnapped," said Jay Gruber, police chief at Georgetown University, where a parent reported the scam. In that case, the parent used social media to contact the child, and didn't pay the ransom.

Usually, the ransom demand is between $600 and $1,900, according to the FBI's New York field office, which issued a warning about the scam in January 2015. FBI officials said they weren't available to comment. Gruber said the scheme emerged in the US more than a year ago but has become more common recently.

Thirkel Freeman was driving with his wife, Coretta, last week when a man called Coretta's cell phone and said he had kidnapped their daughter, Kiauna, a senior at the University of Maryland. The caller even put a woman on the phone who claimed to be Kiauna and had a similar voice, pleading them to pay the ransom. The man threatened to kill Kiauna if they didn't.

"He says, 'If you play games with me, it's over,'" said Thirkel, of White Plains, Maryland. "At that point, we were at the peak of traumatisation."

Coretta called the police, who arrived and guided the couple through the call. But the Freemans ultimately wired $1,300 to the caller before finding out Kiauna was safe on campus.

Several colleges have issued alerts about the scam, including Georgetown, Arizona State University, George Mason University and the University of Texas at Arlington.

The calls often come from outside area codes, sometimes from Puerto Rico, according to FBI. If someone calls demanding a ransom, authorities say parents should try to text their child or reach them through social media to confirm their child's safety. Or they can ask the alleged kidnapper to have their child call back from his or her own phone.





Onlookers walk past a washed out portion of State Highway A1A in the aftermath of Hurricane Matthew in Flagler Beach, Florida, yesterday. RIGHT: A downed tree from Hurricane Matthew rests against a home, in Savannah, Georgia, yesterday.

Matthew rakes Atlantic coast; US deaths at 10

Matthew raked Georgia and South Carolina with torrential rain and stiff winds and made landfall of Charleston, near McClellanville where it caused serious flooding.

AP

CHARLESTON, SOUTH CAROLINA: A fast-weakening Hurricane Matthew continued its march along the Atlantic coast yesterday, lashing two of the South's most historic cities and some of its most popular resort islands, flattening trees, swamping streets and knocking out power to hundreds of thousands.

The storm was blamed for at least 10 deaths in Florida, Georgia and North Carolina. In its long wake, it also left at least 470 dead in Haiti in one hard-hit district alone, according to officials, with other stricken areas still unreachable four days after the disaster struck.

Matthew raked Georgia and South Carolina with torrential rain and stiff winds, and — for the first time in its run up the US coastline — its storm centre blew ashore, making landfall north of Charleston, near the town of McClellanville, where it caused serious flooding.

"We are all blessed that Matthew stayed off our coast," Florida Governor Rick Scott said. "We are blessed that we didn't have a direct hit."

As of 2 pm, Matthew — by some measures the most powerful hurricane to menace the US in more than a decade — was just barely a hurricane, with winds of 75 mph, and was hitting Myrtle Beach, South Carolina, and Wilmington, North Carolina. Its winds were down from 145mph when it roared into Haiti.

North Carolina Governor Pat McCrory warned people not to let their guard down just because Matthew was losing steam.

As the hurricane began making its exit, it looked as if forecasters had gotten it right. Matthew stayed near the middle of the National Hurricane Centre map's "cone of uncertainty" as it scraped the coast.

"What would you rather have as the alternative?" said Colorado State University meteorology professor Phil Klotzbach.

In Savannah, Georgia, floodwaters submerged a long stretch of President Street, which links downtown to highway to Georgia's Tybee Island. A homeless woman was seen staggering through waters up to her neck. The shivering woman made it to the water's edge. A bystander handed her a sheet, which she wrapped around her neck.

A Coast Guard helicopter crew also rescued a man stranded on a sailboat in a river near Tybee Island.

Matthew also brought some of the highest tides on record along the South Carolina coast. Streets in Charleston were flooded.

Leigh Webber watched the torrential rains from the porch of her home in the city's historic district.

"It's not as bad as maybe I was expecting," she said.

"I feel badly for a lot of the businesses downtown that have been closed since Wednesday," she added.

South Carolina's golf-and-tennis resort Hilton Head Island also took a blow as the eye of the storm passed 20 miles to the east.

The two roads onto island of 40,000 people were blocked by fallen pine trees, and many roads were under water. Signs were blown over, and power was out across the island.



Residents wade through flood waters on East Battery Street as storm surge and rain water from Hurricane Matthew hit Charleston, South Carolina.

Haitians in pain; aid sought

AFP

JÉRÉMIE, HAITI: The full scale of the devastation in hurricane-hit rural Haiti became clear yesterday as the death toll surged, three days after Hurricane Matthew levelled huge swaths of the country's south.

As Matthew threatened the US coast, President Barack Obama urged Americans to mobilise in support of Haiti, where a million people were in need of assistance after the latest disaster to strike the western hemisphere's poorest nation.

While the capital and biggest city, Port-au-Prince, was largely spared, the south suffered devastation.

Aerial footage from the hardest-hit towns showed a ruined landscape of metal shanties with roofs blown away and downed trees everywhere. Brown mud from overflowing rivers covered the ground.

With power lines down, people have been cut off from communications since the storm struck Tuesday.

Virtually all the town's corrugated-iron homes have been destroyed, with only a few concrete buildings left standing.

"It was as if someone had a remote control and just kept turning the wind up higher and higher," said Carmine Luc, a 22-year-old woman.

"When the roof of my house blew off, I clung to a wall with my left hand, and with my right, I held on with all my strength to my three-year-old child—who was screaming," she said.

A ship carrying nine containers of food and medical supplies headed for Dame Marie, further west in Grand'Anse department.

"It's probably the hardest hit department and the conditions don't allow for a helicopter to land there," Interior Minister Francois Anick Joseph said.

"So we're doing our best to help those affected."

Convoys were headed to other affected areas by land, sea and air, he said, including two helicopters provided by the US military to transport 50 tonnes of water, food and medicine elsewhere in Grand'Anse.

Further south, Haiti's third-largest town of Les Cayes was battered, its Sous-Roches district turned from a quiet beachfront neighbourhood to a chaos of mud and shattered trees.

"I thought I was going to die. I looked death in the face," said 36-year-old Yolette Cazenor, standing in front of a house smashed in two by a fallen coconut palm tree.

Over 10 hours, blasts of hurricane-force wind and heavy rain levelled all the crops in the community's fields, promising lean months ahead even by Haiti's impoverished standards.

Up to 80 percent of crops have been lost in some areas, according to the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs.

Around one million people are in need of urgent assistance, according to CARE France, a humanitarian group.

"They have nothing left except the clothes on their back," it said.

New Jersey train service set to resume tomorrow

AP

NEWARK, NEW JERSY: Rail service at a New Jersey transit station damaged after a train crash last week that killed a woman on the platform and injured more than 100 will resume tomorrow, as officials continue to investigate why the train was travelling twice the speed limit before it hit the station.

Eight of the 17 tracks at Hoboken Terminal will reopen tomorrow at the busy station where commuters connect with other trains and with ferries heading into New York City, New Jersey Transit announced yesterday.

Also, a state lawmaker said the Assembly will request New Jersey's auditor initiate an investigation into the crash. Assemblyman John McKeon said Assembly Speaker Vincent will ask the auditor to investigate the crash, likely by tomorrow.

One person was killed and more than 100 were injured last Thursday morning when the train slammed through a bumper at end of the track and dislodged an overhead canopy, showering debris onto the train.

The federal agency investigating the crash said the train was going about twice the speed limit of 10mph just before the crash.

With the resumption of service, a new rule will require that the conductor join the engineer whenever a train pulls into the terminal, NJ Transit spokeswoman Jennifer Nelson said. That means a second set of eyes will be watching as a train enters the final phase of its trip at stations where there are platforms at the end of the rails.

In the September 29 crash, the engineer was alone at the time. He has told federal investigators he has no memory of the crash.

Some rail safety experts caution that having a second person in a cab isn't automatically safer, since crew members can sometimes distract each other. It took investigators until Tuesday to make New Jersey crash site safe enough to remove an event recorder from the lead car that had smashed into and over a bumper at the end of the line. The damaged train that took out part of a canopy wasn't removed until Thursday.

According to National Transportation Safety Board, the train sped up and was going twice the 10mph speed limit before it slammed into a bumping post at the end of the rail line, went airborne and hurtled into the station's waiting area.

The train was travelling at 8 mph and the throttle was in the idle position less than a minute before the crash. About 38 seconds before the crash, the throttle was increased and reached a maximum of about 21 mph, the NTSB said. The throttle went back to idle and the engineer hit the emergency brake less than a second before the crash, investigators said.

NJ Transit trains have an in-cab system designed to alert engineers with a loud alarm and stop locomotives when they go over 20mph, according to an NJ Transit engineer who spoke on condition of anonymity.

The engineer said the throttles have eight slots, putting the fourth spot at about half power. The engineer said the throttle should be set to idle, or the first and slowest speed spot, when entering Hoboken Terminal. The tracks into station run slightly downhill, so there would be no need to push the throttle any higher, the engineer said.

Chicago teachers & officials look to avert strike

AP

CHICAGO: Contract negotiations between Chicago teachers and officials in the nation's third-largest school district will happen throughout the weekend in hopes of reaching a deal to avert a strike.

The Chicago Teachers Union has said its members are prepared to stop instruction for about 400,000 students as early as Tuesday morning for its second major strike since 2012, when teachers were out for seven school days.

At issue during the negotiations, which have stretched into a second year, are pension contributions, pay raises, staffing levels and classroom funding.

Union leaders say teachers "do not want to strike, but are concerned about threats to reduce their pay and benefits, as well as the overall impact of school-based cuts on their students," while Chicago Public Schools CEO Forrest Claypool has said teachers deserve a raise but that the district is facing massive financial challenges.

The cash-strapped school district wants to phase out the decades-old practice of paying most of teachers' pension contributions, replacing it with a total base wage increase in a four-year contract.

The union wants the district to keep up the pension payments and seeks raises at the end of a three-year contract.

The Peninsula
Local focus, Global vision

PRAYER TIMINGS

FAJR	04.13 am	ZUHR	11.21 am	MAGHRIB	05.15 pm
SHOROOK	05.29 am	ASR	02.43 pm	ISHA	06.45 pm

WEATHER Minimum: 26º C Maximum: 36º C

HIGH TIDE 09:45 - 20:00
LOW TIDE 02:00 - 17:15

Hazy at places at first becomes hot daytime and slight dust at places.



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TWEET OF THE DAY



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Fujifilm announces release of X-T2 camera

The Peninsula



Fujifilm and Techo Blue officials during the launch of the Fujifilm X-T2 camera at Westin Hotel.
Pic by: Qassim Rahmatullah / The Peninsula

DOHA: Fujifilm Corporation launched Fujifilm X-T2 – the ultimate mirrorless digital camera that uses advanced technologies to achieve premium image quality, outstanding operability and beautiful design reminiscent of traditional cameras.

This was announced by the officials of Fujifilm and Techo Blue in a press conference held here at the Westin Hotel.

The X-T2 combines the sensor and image processing engine developed by Fujifilm , with an ultra-sharp range of FUJINON lenses for excellent image resolution. Fujifilm 's color-reproduction technology, formulated over 80 years, delivers images of unparalleled quality and realism, records subjects' textures and gives three-dimensional feel and even of the atmosphere surrounding it.

The X-T2's compact and lightweight camera body is dust and water-resistant and capable of operating at temperatures as low as -10°C. Its autofocus and electronic viewfinder performance have both been substantially improved, making it more adaptable than ever before at shooting a moving subject under difficult conditions, such as sports or wildlife photography, which had previously been considered difficult with mirrorless cameras.

For the first time in the X Series, the X-T2 supports 4K video recording. The Film Simulation modes, used for still images, can be applied to video to easily produce premium-quality footage.

The X-T2's design is modelled after the "central viewfinder style" of the Fujifilm X-T1, which has been popular since its launch in 2014. This proven stable form factor provides a camera that is perfectly sized with ergonomic dials laid out exactly where they are needed for excellent, intuitive operability. Couple the X-T2 with the optional grip to provide a superior balance, especially when mounted with a telephoto lens. Immerse yourself in photography through the large viewfinder with the magnification ratio of 0.77x. The sense of perfect alignment from the center of your body to a subject through the lens creates an illusion that you have become one with the camera for the ultimate photographic pleasure.

The full lineup of 22 FUJINON lenses covers a wide range of focal lengths from ultra wideangle to ultra telephoto. The compact and lightweight lenses are all optimally designed for APS-C sensors and incorporate standout features including large maximum aperture and powerful image stabilisation to meet photographers' diverse demands.

The X-T2 is to become the X Series' flagship model along with Fujifilm X-Pro2, the world's only range finder-style camera with the Hybrid Multi Viewfinder, released in March this year.

The two models deliver unparalleled performance in their distinctive fields, with the X-T2 excelling in portraiture, nature and sports photography, and the X-Pro2 ideal for snapshots and discreet documentary photography.

RACA to make charity organisations aware of Qatari legislation

The Peninsula

DOHA: The Regulatory Authority for Charitable Activities (RACA) has begun holding a series of workshops to educate the charity organizations operating in the country about the law of the land.

A programme to create awareness about Qatari legislation to regulate humanitarian aid and charity works was held here yesterday. Legal experts were invited to address the representatives of charity organisations on the issue.

The forthcoming workshops will be organised inside the facilities of some charity organisations and outside. The workshop will address topics on technology and modern means of communication to humanitarian services, role of media to strengthen charity works and international humanitarian law among others. The programme will be concluded on mid December, *Qatar News Agency* reported.

Five seminars will be held under the programme for charity organisations and non-governmental organisations and those authorised to collect donations, said Mohamad Ghanam Al Mohannadi, Legal Affairs Department at RACA.

The programme aims to create awareness about Qatari legislations regulating humanitarian and charity works. Some proposals and recommendations could be made at workshops to amend some provisions of the law if required.



Officials of the Qatar Insurance Group and Asian Gymnastics Union (AGU) after signing the agreement.

QIC official sponsor of AGU

The Peninsula

DOHA: Qatar Insurance Group, Qatar's leading insurer, signed a two year agreement with the Asian Gymnastics Union (AGU) to become the official sponsor of the Federation.

The agreement was signed by Ali Al Fadala, Senior Deputy Group President and CEO of Qatar Insurance Group and Abdul Rahman Al Shathri, President of AGU at the QIC Headquarters in West Bay.

The Asian Gymnastics Union, which organises Asian Gymnastics Championships for the gymnastic disciplines, unites the Federations of the Asian continent and is practiced according to the statutes of the AGU.

Speaking on this sponsorship, Ali Al Fadala, Senior Deputy Group President and CEO of Qatar Insurance Group stated, "Being a national company, QIC extends full support to all initiatives related to promoting sports and developing gymnastics and other ancillary disciplines in the State of Qatar. Moving beyond being the official sponsor of the yearly activities of the AGU, we consider such initiatives as a way of demonstrating our commitment to the incredible sporting talent Qatar has."

Abdul Rahman Al Shathri, President of AGU commented, "We are delighted and grateful that a national company of the stature of QIC has agreed to be the official sponsor of this federation and for all our activities for the next two years. We would now be successful in achieving our goals towards organising different championships and international meetings to showcase the talent and sportsmanship of our youth."

Course to tackle disease outbreak starts today

The Peninsula

DOHA: The Ministry of Public Health, in collaboration with Institut Pasteur (IP), is organising a training course on 'Infectious Disease Outbreak Investigation' from today until October 15 at Marriot Marquis – City Center Doha.

Top officials from the Ministry and the French Embassy and other distinguished persons will attend the opening ceremony.

The course is the first to be held after a memorandum of understanding was signed with IP last January and addresses emerging and re-emerging infectious diseases such as SARS, MERS-CoV, Ebola and Zika.

It aims at strengthening the Ministry's comprehensive approach in preparing to tackle emerging diseases that occurs globally and more frequently and familiarising participants with new advances and diagnostic tools in outbreak investigation.

About 30 healthcare workers, including physicians, nurses, laboratory technicians and others, from the Ministry, Hamad Medical Cooperation, Primary Health Care Cooperation, Ministry of Municipality and Environment and Qatar Petroleum will attend.

They will be part of a National Rapid Response Team, which will enhance joint response to any infectious disease outbreaks.

The course features lectures by IP experts, discussions and practical training. Local trainers are also participating in some of the sessions to share Qatar's experiences and lessons learned in dealing with MERS-CoV infections.

This is the first of future collaborations between the Ministry and IP in infectious disease training, education and research.



Staff of the new Royal Grammar School, Guildford in Qatar, with Chairman of Al Qamra Holding, Hamad Al Qamra.

Al Qamra Holding Group hosts event

The Peninsula

DOHA: The staff of the Royal Grammar School, Guildford in Qatar (RGSGQ) and the visiting RGS Board of Governors from the UK enjoyed a splendid evening hosted by the Chairman of Al Qamra Holding Group, Mr Hamad Al Qamra at his villa in the Pearl-Qatar on October 5.

The Chairman was confident that the RGS outstanding academic excellence would play a main part in the success of Qatar's National Vision for education and that the school would quickly grow and develop to be a leading school in the Gulf region.

Sarah Creedy, member of RGS Board of Governors, thanked Mr Al Qamara for his kind hospitality and for giving RGS the opportunity to bring its successful, tailored brand of traditional British education to Qatar.

Principal, Paul Bridges, thanked Al Qamara and the assembled staff.