The Peninsula

Local focus, Global vision





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Amir to visit Latin American countries from tomorrow



THE PENINSULA

H H the Amir will discuss with the presidents of the countries and senior officials ways of promoting the bilateral relations and cooperation in all fields, and will exchange views on various regional and international issues of mutual concern.

DOHA: Amir H H Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani will pay a state visit from tomorrow to a number of friendly countries in Latin America, including the Republic of Ecuador, the Republic of Peru, the Republic of Paraguay and the Argentine Republic, at the invitation of their respective presidents.

During the tour, H H the Amir will discuss with the presidents of the countries and senior officials ways of promoting the bilateral relations and cooperation in all fields, and will exchange views on various regional and international issues of mutual concern, QNA reported.

The decades-old friendly relations between Qatar and the Argentine Republic encompass all dimensions from economy to politics and they are growing to new heights with every passing day.

The history of the bilateral relations between Qatar and the Argentine Republic began when the two countries issued a joint declaration on June 15, 1974 in New York, where the pillars of the diplomatic relations between Doha and Buenos Aires were set up.

Both countries have signed a number of bilateral agreements in the past that provide foundation for solid future growth of multi-dimensional relations.

Argentine government inaugurated its Embassy in Doha in 2012, and the State of Qatar did the same in Buenos Aires in 2013.

The cooperation between Qatar and Paraguay is increasing day by day in various fields. Qatar has always maintained contacts with Paraguayan leadership to enhance bilateral relation though making new agreements. Qatar and Paraguay signed an agreement on mutual promotion and protection of investments between the two countries in February this year. Both countries have signed agreements in the past in the field of economic, commercial and technical cooperation.

The Embassy of the State of Qatar was opened in Asunción, the capital of Paraguay, on December 7, 2012 and the relations began to take its first steps after the ambassador was officially accredited to Paraguay on November, 10, 2013. The government of Paraguay appointed its first ambassador to Doha by opening of a resident embassy in September 2014.

The bilateral relations between Qatar and Peru are strong.

→CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

Wisdom of leadership, people's steadfastness helped beat siege

THE PENINSULA

DOHA: Lulwah Rashid Al Khater, spokesperson for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, has said that the State of Qatar has been able to overcome the siege imposed against it on June 5, 2017, thanks to the steadfastness of its people and the wisdom of its leadership.

Commenting on the speech of Amir H H Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani at the 73rd session of the UN General Assembly, she said: "This is the second time since the beginning of the siege, when H H the Amir addressed the UNGA. His Highness addressed the United Nations while the leaders of the blockading countries did not address the United Nations. The question is who is under the siege and besieged?"

"There is no doubt that the State of Qatar has been able to overcome this siege thanks to the steadfastness of its people and the wisdom of its leadership," Khater said in an interview with Al Jazeera which she posted on her official Twitter account.

She explained that the speech of H H the Amir "has many indications, especially that the speech touched a number of issues, not only the issue of the blockade but also on other important regional issues."

"There is no doubt that there are problems and crises accumulated of which the international community is suffering. Unfortunately, the institutions of the international community have sometimes stood helpless against such challenges."

She said that Qatar today is present at this international forum and Qatar is involved in resolving a number of other issues. "His Highness the Amir, for example, announced an initiative with the United Nations to solve the problem of cholera in Yemen. This is a proof of Qatar's humanitarian commitment towards its brothers' issues and humanity in general."

She said that Qatar's initiative to provide quality education to another one million girls by 2021 is another proof or its humanitarian commitment and to its international responsibility.

Regarding Qatar's cybersecurity and Qatar's vision on the subject, Lulwah Al Khater said: "The truth is that in the State of Qatar we have suffered from the issue of cybersecurity. It is worth mentioning that the siege of Qatar started with misinformation attributed to His Highness the Amir, and the virtual world is suffering from the crisis we see in our real world."

Separately, responding to the speech of Saudi Foreign Minister at UN General Assembly, Talal Rashid Al Khalifa, Second Secretary at Qatar's Permanent Mission to the United Nations has said that terrorism found its incubator in the religious extremism that was employed by Saudi Arabia to achieve its political goals to serve certain interests.

→CONTINUED ON PAGE 3

Qatar's non-oil export value doubles in July

THE PENINSULA

DOHA: The combined value of Qatar's non-oil exports in July 2018 reached QR2.66bn registering an increase of 100.3 percent, compared to QR1.32bn reported in the corresponding month last year.

On month-on-month basis, the non-oil exports in July increased by 60.7 percent against QR1.655bn in June 2018.

According to the monthly report by Qatar Chamber (QC) on the foreign trade of the private sector, Sri Lanka emerged as Qatar's top non-oil exports destination in July, accounting for QR771.1m or 29 percent of the total exports in the month.

The report was prepared based on certificates of origin issued by the Chamber's Research & Studies Department and Member Affairs Department. QC issued 3,843 certificates of origin in July 2018 distributed to 60 markets worldwide compared to 58 markets last month.

Sri Lanka was followed by Oman with about QR446.8m or 16.8 percent, and Singapore with QR296.7m, or 11.2 percent of the total value of exports in July.

Hong Kong stood at fourth place with QR244.1m, or 9.2 percent, followed by Turkey with QR112.3m, or 4.2 percent.

July's statistics shows that Qatar's exports reached to 60 destinations including 13 Arab and GCC countries, 13 European countries including Turkey, 16 Asian countries (excluding Arab countries), 13 African countries (excluding Arab countries) , four countries of North and South Americas and Australia.

The report showed that Asian countries, excluding Arab countries, topped the economic blocs that received Qatar's non-oil exports with QR1.51bn. When compared on regional basis, the GCC (Oman and Kuwait) countries stood at the second place, with the combined value of QR 468.4m.

→CONTINUED ON PAGE 3

QFFD signs pact to open UN centre for children

THE PENINSULA

DOHA: Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs H E Sheikh Mohamed bin Abdulrahman Al Thani attended yesterday the signing of an agreement between Qatar Fund For Development (QFFD) and the Office of the Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict to open and finance a centre for children and armed conflict in Doha, on the sidelines of the meetings of the UN General Assembly in New York.

The agreement was signed by Director-General of Qatar Fund for Development Khalifa bin Jassim Al Kuwari and Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict Virginia Gamba.

→SEE PICTURE ON PAGE 3

Katara Hospitality made major deals during siege: Sheikh Nawaf

THE PENINSULA
LUCERNE, SWITZERLAND

SHEIKH NAWAF bin Jassim bin Jabor Al Thani, Chairman of Katara Hospitality, has said that Katara Hospitality is not affected by siege and would continue investing in the hospitality sector around the world.

"Everyone was affected by the siege, but Qatar is the least affected due to its strong wealth. The biggest response to the blockade is the fact after the siege we bought the Plaza Hotel, for around $600m (one of New York's most iconic buildings)," Sheikh Nawaf bin Jassim said while talking to media in Lucerne, Switzerland, after the official launch of the legendary Bürgenstock Resort Lake Lucerne in Switzerland.

"Our plan is to enter all markets and we want our flag to fly in all countries. The size of current investment of Katara Hospitality is estimated by QR160bn," he said.

Under the patronage of Sheikh Nawaf bin Jassim bin Jabor Al Thani, the Bürgenstock Resort hosted over 1,000 highly esteemed guests, graced by the presence of Swiss Federal Councillor Schneider-Ammann, Hamad Abdullah Al Mulla, Chief Executive Officer of Katara Hospitality, Bruno Schöpfer, Managing Director of Katara Hospitality Switzerland AG, state counsellors and officials from Switzerland.

Talking to media, Sheikh Nawaf said that Katara Hospitality's plan on investments in the sector were not changed due to siege. "Investments have become stronger and we are going to according to pre-blockade plans. The only change is regarding imports. Instead of being imported from the siege countries, Qatar is importing things from other countries ," he added.

Replying to a question about Katara hospitality investment in Europe, he said: "In Europe, we have 17 hotels with about 3,500 rooms and 20 percent of these rooms are in Switzerland. Most of the investments are long-term investments therefore they are savings for future generations and the countries in which we have invested enjoy security and political stability."

Sheikh Nawaf said that investment appetite existed anywhere in the world. "But things to see are good return and absence of big risk." He said a large number of projects will be opened soon and opportunities will also be announced in the hotel sector on time.



Sheikh Nawaf bin Jassim bin Jabor Al Thani (left), Chairman of Katara Hospitality, and Federal Councillor Johann Schneider Ammann during the opening ceremony of Bürgenstock Resort Lake Lucerne in Switzerland.

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Qatar condemns repression in Gaza Strip

QNA

DOHA: The State of Qatar voiced its strong condemnation of the bloody repression and the use of live fire by the Israeli occupation forces at the Marches of Return on the eastern border of the Gaza Strip on the anniversary of Al Aqsa Intifada, which left several martyrs and hundreds of injured Palestinians.

In a statement yesterday, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs considered the dangerous Israeli military escalation a flagrant violation of international conventions and laws.

The Ministry called upon the international community and the Security Council to shoulder their responsibilities and to put an end to the Israeli war machine.

→CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

Qatar took great measures to fight corruption: UNODC

THE PENINSULA

DOHA: The Administrative Control and Transparency Authority (ACTA) said that it has an integrated plan to prepare stakeholders in Qatar to review the implementation of the United Nations Convention against Corruption in 2020, as Qatar has made great strides in legislative and executive aspects in achieving and applying the UN standards to combat corruption.

The ACTA is working in cooperation with other departments in the country to propose some legislative amendments and other regulatory matters that enhance the compatibility of the State with the requirements of the United Nations Convention against Corruption, QNA reported.

The ACTA held a training course for government experts participating in the review of the implementation mechanism of the UN Convention against Corruption, with the participation of about 35 government experts from various State's bodies concerned with reviewing the mechanism.

The three-day course aimed at developing the capacity of participants to contribute to the UNCAC Review Mechanism by providing them with the necessary expertise in terms of the provisions of the UN Convention for conducting and performing the review and the methodology of the review by States of the Convention.

"The State of Qatar, which ratified the United Nations Convention against Corruption in 2007, has made a quantum leap in adopting legislative and enforcement measures to combat corruption," said Ibrahim Ali Abdullah, Director of transparency at the ACTA.

He also pointed out that the ACTA is working in the field of combating administrative corruption, which is a supervisory body and not the body that carries out the punishment, so that it monitors and verifies any administrative corruption and submits it to the concerned authorities to take the necessary measures.

Amal Al Kuwari, Director of Supervision and Development at ACTA, said that the training course contributed to preparing the governmental experts for the review process of the implementation of the United Nations Convention against Corruption, which Qatar will subjected to it in 2020. She praised the cooperation and fruitful efforts made by all participants in the training course, who represented several various State's departments.

The ACTA is working in cooperation with other departments in the country to propose some legislative amendments and other regulatory matters that enhance the compatibility of the State with the requirements of the UN convention against corruption.

She added that the review of the implementation of the agreement would be held every five years, and the review, which would be in 2020 covering the quarterly preventive measures and asset recovery, noting the need to coordinate efforts between government departments , as the review of the United Nations Convention against Corruption includes most government departments in the State .

For his part, Bader Al Banna, Head of Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice at the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), praised Qatar's political commitment to fighting corruption. He said that the outcome of the first review of the implementation of the United Nations Convention against Corruption, which was carried out by the State of Qatar in 2015, was positive and specifically related to the third chapter on criminalisation and law enforcement and the fourth chapter on international cooperation in the fight against corruption.

He said that Qatar had taken great measures to improve its Legislative and institutional system and in the fight against corruption. He added that the second review of the State of Qatar, in 2020 will be related to chapters II and V of the United Nations Convention on the prevention of corruption and asset recovery.

He said that the training course focused on the mechanism of reviewing the implementation of the UN Convention in theory and practice, where the participants showed a positive interaction, which means their readiness to review the implementation mechanism in 2020.

PM takes stock of Al Rayyan Road development



Prime Minister and Interior Minister H E Sheikh Abdullah bin Nasser bin Khalifa Al Thani yesterday paid a field visit to the development of Al Rayyan Road, where he inspected the progress of the work and heard a presentation about the project stages on the ground. The Prime Minister and Interior Minister stressed the necessity of completing the development of Al Rayyan Road by the end of 2018 meeting required quality, Ashghal reported on its official Twitter account.

Katara Hospitality made major deals during siege: Sheikh Nawaf

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

To another question about Katara Hospitality listing on the stock market, he said: "The plan of listing Katara Hospitality on the stock market exist but we don't know when. May be after three years or four years and may be no. The problem is that the investment program is still going on, therefore it is not good for us to list it now, so the listing plan is available."

Regarding question about when Katara Hospitality started its investments, he said Katara started its investment in three hotels only and currently it had 39 hotels. "Our plan is to enter all markets and we want our flag to fly in all countries. The size of current investment of Katara Hospitality is estimated by QR160 bn."

He also said that Katara Hospitality is a supporter of the Qatari economy because it invests abroad. In terms of investment in the Arab region, he said there is an economic recession unlike other countries. "This recession came from the political differences between these countries."

To another question, Sheikh Nawaf said, "Despite the returns of three and four star hotels are more as compared to 5 stars but Katara Hospitality always wants the best. Maybe in future plan we will invest in three and four stars hostels."

About investments related to hosting the World Cup, he noted that: "There are about 46,000 new room facilities in Qatar and Katara Hospitality will contribute by a number of hotels, around 1500 to 2000 rooms. There is also a new plan to develop some of our hotels in Doha." He also thanked the government to recent measures regarding the visa policy that allowing citizens of 80 countries to get visa on arrival. "With that announcement, Qatar became the highest in the region in terms of number of nationalities eligible to enter visa-free, making it the most open country in the region." Regarding question about the projects of 2019, he said: "We are going to open new projects among them Al Masila Spa Resort."

Sudan team visits Joaan Bin Jassim Joint Command & Staff College

Joaan Bin Jassim Joint Command & Staff College received a delegation from the Sudanese Armed Forces' War College, which is visiting the country. The visit focused on enhancing bilateral cooperation in the military academic field. The Sudanese delegation also toured the Qatari college, to view its facilities and lecture halls. They also listened to an overview provided from the college's officials on the academic programmes it offers.



EAA & ISFD sign education pact for out-of-school children

THE PENINSULA

DOHA: Education Above All (EAA) and the Islamic Solidarity Fund for Development's (ISFD)out-of-school programme set to transform the way that low-income countries can access loan funding to invest in enrolling out-of-school children in primary education.

During the United Nations General Assembly, at an event co-hosted with Unesco, and the World Bank, EAA and the ISFD signed this important partnership agreement. The Government of Mali also announced they would be one of the first countries to sign up to the programme with a $31m loan. This will support trilateral funding partnership with EAA and the Qatar Fund for Development, along with the Education Development Centre (EDC). Mali's project will have an emphasis on the most marginalised out-of-school children across the country, as the nation looks to continue its recovery from the 2012 political and security crisis.

With the world struggling to come to terms with the global education funding crisis it is facing, this new programme will help qualifying countries overcome a lack of access to credit on the international financial market. The ISFD, of the Islamic Development Bank (IsDB), financing programme will be available to low-income IsDB member countries on a concessionary loan basis, for education projects which are co-financed with NGOs, the Government, or private sector.

Education Above All, the global foundation that has advocated for this approach, will also be responsible for monitoring and evaluation of projects in line with its world-leading out-of-school processes that, together with partners, have commitments to provide primary education to over 10 million children so far.

Mali is set to benefit through the Education Development Centre led Programme, Access to Education for All Children in Mali (PACETEM), which aims to reach almost 600,000 out-of-school children with quality primary education. The project trains teachers, provides learning materials, works within communities to engage parents, and tracks attendance records, as part of its aim of increasing student retention.



The panellists at a meeting.

Commenting, the Ministry of National Education, representing the Government of Mali, said: "The implementation of this project is of the upmost importance since the programme will accelerate the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals in Mali. It constitutes one of the main indicators of the Human Sustainable Development Index, without which Mali cannot benefit from the increased support of the international community. This program, with the recruitment of teachers, will contribute to reducing youth unemployment. Mali is grasping the financing opportunity put forward by the ISFD-EAA funding programme, a support that is sorely needed in Mali's education system."

Representing the Islamic Solidarity Fund for Development, Director-General Dr Waleed Al Wohaib said: "We can see that many of our member countries struggle to access finance on the global credit market; with our mandate to promote growth and development for our member countries, we are launching this dedicated fund, with the support of all our members, to finance educational initiatives that will help to improve educational outcomes for the next generation. It is only by giving children access to education that we can truly help lift more families out of poverty and encourage sustained economic growth for our member nations." Education Commission data estimates that every $1 invested in primary education generates $10 in economic returns, and Unesco has found that every extra year of schooling can add 0.37 percent to a country's GDP, and 10 percent on average to an individual's earnings.

Amir condoles with President of Indonesia

QNA

DOHA: Amir H H Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani sent yesterday a cable of condolences to the President of the Republic of Indonesia, Joko Widodo, on the victims of the quake and tsunami that hit Palu, praying to Almighty Allah to grant the injured a speedy recovery. Deputy Amir H H Sheikh Abdullah bin Hamad Al Thani and Prime Minister and Interior Minister H E Sheikh Abdullah bin Nasser bin Khalifa Al Thani also sent cables of condolences to the President.

Amir to visit Latin America

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Several MoUs and deals signed between the two countries in the past have paved the way for stronger relations between the two friendly countries. The diplomatic relations were established in 1989. The Qatar Embassy was opened in Lima in 2012 while the Peru Embassy was opened a year earlier in Doha in 2011.

The ties between Qatar and Ecuador have grown stronger over the past years. However, the current year has been particularly important as the senior officials from both countries have expressed strong desire to promote cooperation in various sectors.

There were several high profile meeting during the year, including meetings of Ecuador's Defence Minister, Patricio Zambrano Restrepo, and Minster of Foreign Trade and Investments, Pablo Campana Saenz.

Qatar condemns repression in Gaza Strip

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The Ministry called upon the international community and the Security Council put an end to Israel's policy of collective punishment carried out by the occupation forces against the Palestinian people, and to provide protection to the innocent civilians.

The Ministry reiterated the firm and permanent position of the State of Qatar in support of the Palestinian cause and the steadfastness of the brotherly Palestinian people to ensure the establishment of its independent state on the 1967 border with Jerusalem as its capital.

QFFD signs pact to open UN centre for children



Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs H E Sheikh Mohamed bin Abdulrahman Al Thani and Qatar's Permanent Representative to the United Unations, Sheikha Alia Ahmed bin Saif Al Thani, witnessing the signing of an agreement between Qatar Fund For Development and the Office of the Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict to open and finance a centre for children and armed conflict in Doha, on the sidelines of the meetings of the UN General Assembly in New York. The agreement was signed by Director-General of Qatar Fund for Development, Khalifa bin Jassim Al Kuwari, and Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict, Virginia Gamba.

Qatar and Italy discuss ways to develop defence cooperation

QNA

DOHA: The Commander of the Amiri Air Force, Major General (Pilot) H E Mubarak Mohammed Al Kumait Al Khayarin met with the Chief of Staff of the Italian Air Force, Lieutenant General (LG) Enzo Vecciarelli.

They discussed a number of issues of joint interest, in addition to reviewing bilateral relations and the means to enhance cooperation between the Qatari Air Force and its Italian counterpart.



The Commander of the Amiri Air Force Major General (Pilot) H E Mubarak Mohammed Al Kumait Al Khayarin with the Italy's Commander of the Air Force, Enzo Vecciarelli.

Al Marri criticises insistence of siege countries to violate human rights

QNA

DOHA: Chairman of the National Human Rights Committee (NHRC) Dr Ali bin Smaikh Al Marri strongly criticised yesterday the insistence of the blockading countries to violate human rights, deepening the struggle of peoples by completely ignoring international human rights law.

He called on the international community, human rights organisations, and international parliaments to exert more pressure and prevent these countries' governments from pursuing with their violations.

Al Marri was speaking in a seminar organised in New York by the NHRC on the challenges and opportunities facing human rights field as a result of the Qatar blockade. Assistant Professor for International Law at Qatar University, Dr Ioannis Konstantinidis, participated in the talk along with Deputy United Nations Director at Human Rights Watch, Akshaya Kumar.

The talk was moderated by Peter Coharis, who is one of the leading American legal experts. A number of representative of UN international missions, human rights activists, and representatives of international legal organisations attended the seminar.

Al Marri called on the international community to hold those responsible for the blockade accountable for their human rights violations, and for their statements the challenges the call of the international community, humanitarian organizations, and the decisions of international legal bodies such as the International Court of Justice.

Al Marri stressed that they were not concerned with cutting diplomatic ties for years, but rather they were concerned with ending the struggles of the GCC peoples. During the seminar, the NHRC Chairman gave an overview of the latest ramifications and effects of the blockade. He highlighted the violations documented by the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights and international human rights organisations, in light of the insistence of the blockading countries to ignore the calls of the international community to stop their violations.



NHRC Chairman Dr Ali bin Smaikh Al Marri and other officials at the event.

He highlighted the emergence of other types of violations against Qatari citizens in the blockading countries, such as enforced disappearance, arbitrary detention, piracy and espionage.

Al Marri strongly condemned the Egyptian authorities' harassment of Qatari citizens and officials of official Qatari delegations, pointing out that the committee received documented complaints from citizens who were denied entry visas to Egyptian territories. The decision to ban members of official Qatari delegations in the Arab League was also a violation of Arab League agreements.

He stressed that the National Committee will move urgently using international mechanisms to stop such violations and obstacles. He added that the Egyptian authorities' did not just affect Qatari citizens, revealing that the National Committee for Human Rights has recently received numerous complaints from Egyptian residents in Qatar about the harassment they receive at Cairo airport, for no reasons other than being residents of Qatar.

Wisdom of leadership, people's steadfastness helped beat siege

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Al Khalifa said that after more than a year of unjust siege imposed on Qatar, Saudi Arabia led alliance failed to achieve its goals or convince anyone about false allegations levelled against Qatar.

"The fabricated allegations were aimed to harm the reputation of my country but the record of Qatar in international cooperation speaks for itself and we do not need to refute the allegations," he added. "We reiterate that the repetition of these allegation by the same parties only serves to undermine the credibility of those who repeat them without evidence or facts," he added.

He said: "We must look into real causes and roots of terrorism, which Qatar has repeatedly stressed at various forums as a first step to eradicate the scourge of terrorism."

He said that the world has witnessed the wisdom and self-restraint of the leadership of Qatar in dealing with the fabricated crisis and their efforts to alleviate the effects of the unjust siege. "However, the humanitarian consequences of the blockade can only be addressed through proving justice to the victims of the blockade."

He said that the blockade caused major violations of the rights of citizens and expatriates including separation of families, denial of students from completing their studies among many others.

Al Khalifa said that in addition to these action of Saudi Arabia, what is worse is depriving Qatari citizens and residents from performing their religious duties of Hajj and Umrah on false pretexts for the second year in a row.

"Despite these one sided actions which deprived Qatari people of many rights, as evidenced by the reports of the UN bodies, the Government of Qatar did not take any action which led to harm the brotherly Saudi people."

He said that Qatar will continue to make constructive partnerships with the United Nations and countries from around the world for practical results to consolidate security and sustainable peace, alleviate human suffering, strengthen the policy of law, protect human rights and develop relations between nations and peoples.

Qatar's non-oil export value doubles in July

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In the third place, European countries, including Turkey, imported Qatari non-oil goods worth QR340.2m. Arab countries, excluding GCC countries, came in the fourth place with total exports of QR106.8m, according to the QC's monthly report. They were followed by North America, Australia, African countries, excluding Arab countries, and South America.

Commenting on the report, Qatar Chamber Director General Saleh bin Hamad Al Sharqi said that the great increase in July's exports, which grew 100 percent compared to July 2017, represented a real indicator on the development of non-oil productive sectors thanks to the facilitation provided by the government to the industrial sector.

Al Sharqi noted that the increasing demand on Qatari products which are of high quality and comply with all international standards, affirming that this has increased confidence on Qatar's products in the international markets. He praised the development of the national industry sector, expressing his gratitude to all companies operating in producing aluminum, iron and steel, chemical fertilisers, chemicals, industrial gases and other petrochemical industries. He also expressed the hope to see Qatar's food products among non-oil exports, especially in light with the significant interest and support from all entities in over the past period. Al Sharqi affirmed the chamber's continuous support to the country's efforts which aim to encourage and boost the industrial sector in a bid to achieve the economic diversification which represents a key pillar of the Qatar National Vision 2030.

HMC laboratories get international reaccreditation

THE PENINSULA

DOHA: Hamad Medical Corporation (HMC) has again been recognised on the international stage with the reaccreditation of its extensive laboratory network by the College of American Pathologists (CAP). The international body provides the world's most recognised laboratory accreditation program, which is considered the global gold standard for laboratory management.

HMC's Department of Laboratory Medicine and Pathology (DLMP) first received the prestigious accreditation in 2014, the re-accreditation marks the first time the Point of Care Testing Services (POCTS) across HMC were inspected. Dr Ajayeb Al Nabet, Chairperson of the DLMP, commended her team and colleagues on the successful collaboration that resulted in the reaccreditation.



The Department of Laboratory Medicine and Pathology team after the recognition.

"The CAP laboratory accreditation program checklists contain over 3,000 standards that are used during laboratory accreditation inspections to help laboratories stay in compliance with internationally set standards," said Dr Al Nabet.

The DLMP is located in nine facilities across Qatar and provides services to HMC's network of twelve hospitals.

The DLMP not only serves the patients of HMC but also provides referral services to over 135 customers across Qatar. This includes the military, police, embassies, international schools, banks, private hospitals, and national and multinational companies.

The DLMP performs over 17 million tests per year, including tests for the Blood Bank Service, and provides a comprehensive range of specialised laboratory services for the people of Qatar. The Blood Bank Service is the sole source of blood and blood products for the country and Qatar depends on the service for a safe and adequate supply of blood and blood products.

This year has been particularly notable for the DLMP as the Department has also achieved recognition as a National Influenza Center by the World Health Organization (WHO). This reflects the mandate given by the Ministry of Public Health to the DLMP to collect virus specimens for Qatar and to perform preliminary analysis that is then shared with the WHO's Global Influenza Surveillance and Response System (GISRS).

The GISRS monitors the evolution of influenza viruses and provides recommendations in areas including laboratory diagnostics, vaccines, antiviral susceptibility, and risk assessment. It is the global alert mechanism for the emergence of influenza viruses with pandemic potential.

Dr Abdulla Al Ansari, Acting Chief Medical Officer at HMC said, "Accreditation is an important metric of a laboratory's quality standard and by pursuing accreditation with the CAP, HMC has benchmarked their laboratory and pathology services alongside leading laboratory and medical facilities worldwide, solidifying their position as a leader in the region."

The CAP accreditation is founded on the most exacting standards in clinical diagnostic laboratories and is designed to provide assurance to the public and patients that the laboratory services are safe and that the public can have full confidence in the results and interpretative advice provided.

Qatar Charity launches 'Competitors' program

THE PENINSULA

DOHA: Qatar Charity, in partnership with Al Quran Al Kareem Radio, launched the third season of its radio program entitled "Competitors" to promote charity work in the country in a ceremony held here.

The "Competitors" program aims at involving the Qatari community with new and innovative ways in charitable work through competition and spreading the culture and values of charitable work. It is also through the media associated with such type of events and competitions held within the community in addition to increasing community solidarity in various fields and sectors to support humanitarian and charitable work, said a release.

The "Competitors" program aims at involving the Qatari community with new and innovative ways in charitable work through competition and spreading the culture and values of charitable work.

The partners and supporters of the program and participants in its previous seasons have been honoured at the ceremony. In this season, many employees from several ministries and governmental entities will compete in charity and humanitarian work in innovative ways under social responsibility.

The activities of the season will continue for the next seven months starting from October this year and ending in April next year. This season is divided into three competitive rounds. Two teams, each representing a local body, institution, or initiative, will participate in each round. Some 6 teams are expected to participate during this season.

Addressing the ceremony, Ahmed Saleh Al Ali, Director of Media and Communication at Qatar Charity, talked about the most important achievements made during the previous seasons of the program, and the impact it left on the participants and beneficiaries.

He pointed out that many development projects across the world have been funded and implemented through this program, its participants and supporters, considering all those who supported it as a partner in this achievement.

Speaking at the ceremony, Ezzedine Al Sada, assistant monitor of Al Quran Al Kareem Radio, called on the public to listen to the third version of the program.

Al Sada confirmed that Al Quran Al Kareem Radio would continue to support the program in view of its role in supporting humanitarian work.

Al Sada also noted that Al Quran Al Kareem Radio has allocated 60 episodes for the program during its previous seasons, which resulted in the implementation of more than 30 charitable projects in the fields of education, health, sustainable development, poor and needy relief and orphan sponsorship.



The QC officials with partners of the program at the launch ceremony.

QATAR FERTILISER COMPANY
INVITATION TO TENDER

QAFCO
شركة قطر للأسمدة الكيماوية
QATAR FERTILISER COMPANY

QAFCO ANNOUNCES THE FOLLOWING TENDER

TENDER NO.	DESCRIPTION OF WORKS	TENDER FEE (QAR)	TENDER BOND (QAR)	TENDER COLLECTION DATES	TENDER CLOSING DATE
RFQ-352307	Long Term Frame Contract for GRP Repairs / Services in Qafco	500/- (non-refundable)	155,000/- (One Hundred Fifty Five Thousand Only)	30.09.18 01.10.18 02.10.18 03.10.18 04.10.18 07.10.18 08.10.18	12.11.18

GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS

- Technical & Commercial details and Submission Procedures are specified in the Tender Documents.
- The Company will not consider any offer without the enclosure of the Tender Bond.
- Tender Documents may be collected between 0930 – 1130 hours and 1230 – 1400 hours on the dates indicated above, after payment of Tender Fee (nonrefundable), from the QAFCO Housing Section, relocated to Training Center Building (near Al Banush Club) at Mesaieed Residential Area, Tel. 44760093 / 44770330.
- During the period this tender is offered, the interested bidders shall first deposit appropriate Tender Fee amount in cash (Cheque will not be accepted) into Company's following Account at any QNB branch:
  - Account Name : **QATAR FERTILISER COMPANY (QAFCO)**
  - Account Number : **0013-025828-058**
  - IBAN : **QA51QNBA000000000013025828058**
  - Bank Name : **QATAR NATIONAL BANK**
- The interested Bidders shall mention their companys' name and Tender number on the payment receipt provided by the bank and produces it during tender collection as Tender Fee receipt.
- Besides the Tender fee receipt (which should have the Tender number and bidder's name clearly mentioned on it), interested bidders shall also bring a copy of the valid Commercial Registration, an authorization letter from his company with the name, telephone, fax and e-mail ID of the focal point for this tender, while collecting the Tender Document.
- Bids shall be submitted at QAFCO Housing Section, between 0930 – 1130 hours and 1230 – 1400 hours, of any working day of the Company, on/before the "Tender Closing Date".

NAMA to launch campaign to make youth choose skill-matching disciplines

THE PENINSULA

DOHA: The Social Development Center-NAMA is set to launch its "My Decision" campaign, which aims to make local youth aware of the importance of choosing disciplines that match their ambitions and skills.

By selecting academic and professional paths that best suit them, they will be more likely to have stable, fulfilling careers that also benefit Qatar, in line with the Qatar National Vision 2030. The campaign will be launched tomorrow at 10am, and will start with an overview of the campaign and its objectives. The event will take place at Qatar National Library (QNL), the campaign's main partner.

Dr Sohair Wastawy, Executive Director, QNL, said: "The 'Qarari' program will help young adults in Qatar make career choices that fulfil their own interests and passions, offer them a stable professional future, and contribute to the growth and development of the country. At Qatar National Library, we strive to support building an exceptional educational environment that will help the nation's young adults as they explore their passions and make their ambitions a reality."

Commenting on that, Amal Al Mannai, Executive Director of Social Development Center-NAMA, said: "My Decision" Campaign is committed to stand for the problems of youth to help them make the right decision. To do that, several goals should be achieved including getting youth aware of the importance of choosing scientific majors that fit their interests as well as their awareness of the needs of the labour market."



The invitation announcing the program.

"The campaign is a new step towards enhancing the role of young people in the process of building the future through direct action based on innovative ideas, conscious planning and organised collective effort, whose steps are defined with precision, supported by experience, credibility and fruitful cooperation with various parties," she added.

The two-week campaign targets 15-25 years old young people and aims to develop their skills to contribute to Qatar's future and help them overcome the challenges and hesitations they may face as they choose a discipline.

The campaign also introduces the "My Decision" mobile app. Students can use the app to seek answers to many challenges they face as they choose their academic and professional tracks. The app features personality tests to match students to an area of study, a search engine for local universities and their programs, direct applications to academic and professional courses, and opportunities for experience in the local job market.

The campaign will include a number of awareness workshops for schools and universities that will emphasize to students the importance of selecting an appropriate major, as well as discussions and posts on social media and the "NAMA Empowerment and Entrepreneurship" mobile app.

"My Decision" comes after thorough research conducted by the NAMA Center, as well as direct interactions with youth, which resulted in the campaign's objectives and details.

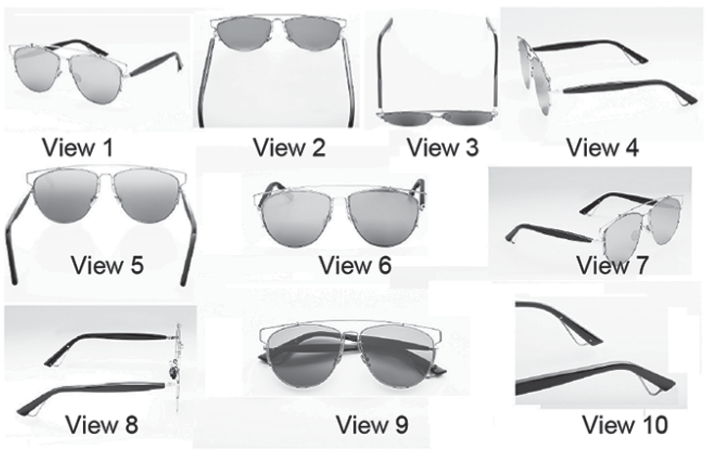
The Center discovered that local students often do not choose a major that aligns with their interests, and the campaign is committed to addressing this issue in order to help young adults overcome the obstacles to their ambitions.

The campaign will be launched in collaboration with the Ministry of Administrative Development, Labour and Social Affairs; Qatar University; the Ministry of Education and Higher Education; the Ministry of Development Planning and Statistics; the Ministry of Culture and Sports; and Qatar National Library.

CAUTIONARY NOTICE

Notice is hereby given that **CHRISTIAN DIOR COUTURE**, a French Company, manufacturers and merchants located and doing business at 30, Avenue Montaigne, 75008 Paris, France is the sole owner and exclusive proprietor in Qatar of the Industrial design of the Sunglasses illustrated by the drawings shown herein:

Sunglasses DIOR TECHNOLOGIC



For which a design application was filed at the WIPO office under No. DM/084489 dated September 25, 2014.

A copy of the specification of the aforesaid design may be obtained upon application to the abovementioned owners.

Above notice is published in confirmation of the previous cautionary notice published in the Peninsula Issue No. 6380 on March 25, 2015.

It is hereby declared that the aforenamed **CHRISTIAN DIOR COUTURE** claim for themselves, their successors and assigns, the full sole and exclusive rights, power and authority by themselves, their agents, or their licensees to make, use, exercise and vend in Qatar the aforesaid design, and that they will take all legal steps against any person or persons infringing such rights.

CAUTIONARY NOTICE

Notice is hereby given that **CHRISTIAN DIOR COUTURE**, a French Company, manufacturers and merchants located and doing business at 30, Avenue Montaigne, 75008 Paris, France is the sole owner and exclusive proprietor in Qatar of the Industrial design of the Hand bag illustrated by the drawings shown herein:

Hang bag DIORAMA



For which a design application was filed at the WIPO office under No. DM/084488 dated September 24, 2014.

A copy of the specification of the aforesaid design may be obtained upon application to the abovementioned owners.

Above notice is published in confirmation of the previous cautionary notice published in the Peninsula Issue No. 6380 on March 25, 2015.

It is hereby declared that the aforenamed **CHRISTIAN DIOR COUTURE** claim for themselves, their successors and assigns, the full sole and exclusive rights, power and authority by themselves, their agents, or their licensees to make, use, exercise and vend in Qatar the aforesaid design, and that they will take all legal steps against any person or persons infringing such rights.

Ooredoo launches Hala Flexi 10 card

THE PENINSULA

DOHA: Ooredoo announced yesterday the launch of the brand-new Hala Flexi 10 Card, the latest and smallest denomination ever added to the company's popular Flexi Cards.

The new Hala Flexi 10 Card offers 70 Flexi Points, valid for two days including the day of activation, and costs just QR10. Flexi Points can be used for local data, or to make international calls, local calls and SMS.

With a Hala Flexi 10 Card, local calls and SMS cost just one Flexi Point per minute/message, local data costs just 0.14 Flexi Points per MB, and international minutes start from one Flexi Point to call India, two Flexi Points to call Bangladesh, and two Flexi Points to call Nepal.

Manar Khalifa Al Muraikhi, Director of PR and Corporate Communications, Ooredoo, said: "The Hala Flexi 10 Card is the most affordable Flexi Card yet and will provide our valued pre-paid customers with a "one-stop-shop" for topping-up and offer some of Ooredoo's most affordable rates. We believe in giving our customer full control of what they spend their points on, meaning they're not paying for, or are stuck with, allowances they don't need."

Other Flexi Card denominations include — QR20 (with 200 Flexi Points),QR60 (with 500 Flexi Points), QR100 (1,000 Flexi Points), QR150 (2,100 Flexi Points) and QR200 (3,100 Flexi Points).

New eco-friendly waterproofing products hit local market

SANAULLAH ATAULLAH
THE PENINSULA

DOHA: 'Doha Engineering Services Company (DESCO)' has launched eco-friendly waterproofing products designed specially for desert like climate, at competitive prices in Qatar.

"The new products are based on Supershield Crystalline Technology (SCT) which makes it different from other products available in the market," Pietro Bertone, the Director-General of 'Supershield Italia', the partner of DESCO in Qatar told *The Peninsula* at the pavilion of the company in 'The Big5 Qatar Exhibition' held recently at Doha Exhibition and Convention Center (DECC).

"Supershield has introduced a new 'Liquid Crystalline Technology (LCT)' that is a chemical water based treatment which is added to the concrete-mix as additive or used as a coating and increases the durability of concrete by sealing its pores and capillaries," said Bertone.

He said that Supershield designs and manufactures a complete range of waterproofing products, including additives, mortars, plasters and paints. Speaking about Supershield Deep Penetrating Crystalline (DPC) and LCT, Bertone said: "Both products are based on Crystalline waterproofing technology for concrete. Both technologies are eco-friendly and LCT is water based."



The officials at The Big5 Qatar Exhibition. PIC: BAHER AMIN / THE PENINSULA

He said that DPC technology was developed by Supershield in 1998 and LCT was developed in 2015. Both technologies are being introduced in the Qatar market by Supershield in partnership with DESCO.

Bertone said that the new products are important for buildings in Qatar under a peculiar hot and humid climate near the sea. "Crystalline products are the best solution for protecting concrete when there is humidity, moisture, water and chemical aggression from salt of the sea. They are penetrating products that waterproof the entire mass of concrete, not only its surface and lasts as long as concrete itself," said Bertone.

Paul Ittoop, Director of DESCO, said: "Crystalline admixture and our Drybox system for waterproofing construction joints and expansion joints are a cost-saving solution and will not increase the cost of construction. They simply will take the place of other waterproofing systems but are less costly and give a permanent waterproofing."

"We are just entering the Qatar market, thanks to our partnership with DESCO, we have set up a sales and technical support team to support customers. Supershield products are used since many years in Europe, India, South East Asia and South America. Qatar is our first presence in the Middle East," Ittoop added.

Premraj Velayudhan, Marketing Manager at DESCO, said: "Other water proofing solutions for concrete waterproofing are bituminous membranes, bentonite sheets, PVC sheets."

"LCT water based range of products puts Supershield a step forward against competitors because it is environment friendly, and easier to use than the old cementitious products," said Velayudhan

Nehmeh first Qatari company to get Eurovent Certification



Hassan Sultan (right), former President of Ashrae Qatar Oryx Chapter, giving a Certificate to Simon A Nehme, Chief Business Development Officer of Nehmeh, during the press conference in Doha yesterday. PIC: ABDUL BASIT / THE PENINSULA

THE PENINSULA

DOHA: Established in 1955, Qatar-based leading industrial solutions provider Nehmeh, is recognised for many industry firsts, locally, regionally and internationally.

As well as being the first and only Air Handling Units manufacturer in Qatar, it further added another milestone as its units were officially crowned with the coveted Eurovent Certification, placing the Qatari manufacturer in par with world-leading brands in the manufacturing, sales and service of Air Handling Units worldwide.

The Eurovent Certificate Performance mark was presented to Nehmeh at a glittering conference in Doha yesterday. Among the attendees included senior government representatives from various ministries, media and leading HVAC body heads.

The announcement was made by Eric Foucherot, International Affairs Senior Manager, Eurovent, who presented the official certificate to Simon A Nehme, Chief Business Development Officer, Nehmeh.

Speaking at the conference, Simon A Nehme briefed the media on current state of ventilation technologies in Qatar and Nehmeh's contribution along with being Qatar's only manufacturer and only certified brand of Air Handling Units. "It is crucial and uttermost importance of valued based HVAC technology to be brought to Qatar. Nehmeh is at the forefront on this with our Eurovent Certified Air Handling Unit's among others in our portfolio of Ventilation Solutions," said Simon A Nehme.

An Air Handling Unit (often abbreviated as AHU) is a component of central air conditioners that handles the air that usually will be supplied into the buildings through ceiling vents which is connected by ductwork that is in turn connected to the AHU. Nehme stressed on the importance of Eurovent coming to Qatar and Nehmeh's membership to Eurovent is a very big step forward for the general HVAC industry in Qatar.

"We are honoured and privileged to be the first Qatari company in history to achieve this international certification. We are proud to wave Qatar's flag ever higher and stand as equals to worldclass leading manufacturers." said Simon A Nehme. "The 'Made in Qatar' AHU manufactured by Nehmeh now has the highest quality and certified to abiding to world-class standards," he said.



Borgward BX5 launch at Mall of Qatar

Hani M Mohsen (centre), Sales Advisor; Roc Hu (second right), Borgward's Vice-President for Branding; and Frances Paul Yuboco (second left), Sales and Brand Manager; with other officials during the Borgward BX5 launch at Mall of Qatar on Thursday. PIC: ABDUL BASIT / THE PENINSULA

Qatar Chemical Company Limited
Al Dafna – Amwal Tower – First Floor
P.O. 24646 Doha / Qatar – Tel. 44847111 – Fax 44847695

ANNOUNCEMENT FOR TENDERS

No.	Document No.	Description	Tender Bond	Bid Closing Date
1.	QC/TC/M/64/18	MAINTENANCE OF EARTHING AND LIGHTNING PROTECTION SYSTEM AT Q-CHEM, Q-CHEM II AND RLOC	QR 136,500	12.00 hrs. on 11th Nov.2018
	Brief scope: Preventive Maintenance on Earthing System, Metallic and Non-Metallic Structures Lightning Protection System and installation of new earth pits at Q-Chem, Q-Chem II and RLOC.			
2.	QC/TC/T/65/18	ENCLOSURE OF Q-CHEM MATERIAL WAREHOUSE	QR 500,500/-	12.00 hrs. on 20th Nov.2018
	Brief scope: Contractor's Scope of Work covers design, procurement, installation, construction and commissioning of the modification works to enclose materials storage building in to a material warehouse at Q-Chem.			
3.	QC/TC/ENV/67/18	HYDROCARBON WASTE DISPOSAL & TREATMENT ON CALL OFF BASIS FOR Q-CHEM, Q-CHEM II AND RLOC	QR 227,500	12:00 hrs. on 12th Nov.2018
	Brief scope: Contractor's Scope of Work to treat, recycle and dispose as per the requirement of Ministry of Municipality and Environment (MME). The CONTRACTOR must to have authorization from the competent authorities such as MME, affected municipality, MIC, RLC and/or Civil Defence whichever is applicable.			
4.	RL/TC/T/65/18	DESIGN , FABRICATION AND SUPPLY OF U-STAMPED CONDENSATE / POLISHED WATER EXCHANGER E- 1210	QR 45,500/-	12:00 hrs. on 11th Nov.2018
	Brief scope: Contractor's Scope of Work covers design, fabrication, testing, inspection and supply of one number of ASME U-stamped Condensate/Polished Water Exchanger.			
5.	PUR/18/12/PACKMT	FIVE YEARS STOCKING AND SUPPLY AGREEMENT FOR STRETCH WRAP & TOP SHEET FOR Q-CHEM AND Q-CHEM II ON CALL OF BASIS	QR 137,000/-	12:00 hrs. on 31st Oct. 2018
6.	PUR/18/14/LINERS	FIVE YEARS STOCKING AND SUPPLY AGREEMENT FOR SEA BULK LINERS FOR Q-CHEM AND Q-CHEM II ON CALL-OFF BASIS	QR 150,000/-	12.00 hrs. on 21st Oct.2018
7.	PUR/18/15/STBARS	FIVE YEARS STOCKING AND SUPPLY AGREEMENT OF STEEL BARS FOR Q-CHEM & Q-CHEM II ON CALL-OFF BASIS	QR 125,000/-	12.00 hrs. on 21st Oct.2018
	Brief scope: STEEL BARS (made of Hollow Square Section) to support the Sea Bulk Liner in 20 feet containers.			

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 30 September 2018 to 04 October 2018 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.**

مناقصة
Tender

مناطق manateq
شركة المناطق الاقتصادية، قطر
ECONOMIC ZONES COMPANY, QATAR

تدعو شركة المناطق الاقتصادية (مناطق) الشركات المحلية والعالمية للاشتراك بالمناقصة الآتية

MANATEQ (Economic Zones Company) would like to invite competent local and/or international Contractors for the following Open Tender.

رقم المناقصة Tender No.	موضوع المناقصة Tender Subject	قيمة التأمين الابتدائي Tender Bond	رسوم المناقصة غير مستردة/ Tender Fee / Non-refundable	موعد الإغلاق Closing Date
GTC/06/2018	خدمات إدارة المرافق في المكتب الرئيسي (مول السلام) ومكاتبها في راس ابو فنطاس وام الحول Facilities Management Services for QEZ1 & QEZ3 site offices and Head Office	75,000.00 QR	1000.00 QR	16 Oct 2018 9:00am-12:00pm

Description of work :
- Monthly Preventive & Routine Maintenance of HVAC, Electrical, Plumbing, Fire Alarm and Fire Fighting.
- Portable Water Supply.
- Waste Management Services.
- On Call basis emergency Services.

Collection Date and Location:
Starting: 30 Sep 2018 (8:00am-2:00pm)
MANATEQ Head Offices, The Gate Mall,
Tower2, 10th Floor -
Fax: + 97444077349.
Email: gs@manateq.qa

وصف العمل:
- صيانة دورية و وقائية شهرية لكل من انظمة التكييف «HVAC» الانظمة الكهربائية، السباكة، انظمة مكافحة الحرائق و انذار الحريق، و انظمة ري الحدائق.
- امدادات المياه المحمولة.
- خدمة التخلص من النفايات.
- خدمات الطوارىء.

موعد ومكان استلام وثائق المناقصة
بدءاً من (٣٠)سبتمبر ٢٠١٨ - (٨ صباحاً الى ٢ ظهراً)-
مكتب مناطق الرئيسي، ذا جيت مول،
البرج ٢، الطابق العاشر
فاكس: +٩٧٤٤٤٠٧٧٣٤٩
البريد الإلكتروني: gs@manateq.qa

Tender Document Collection
A copy of the Company Registration and a company authorization letter, against a non-refundable fee paid to:
Account Name : Economic Zones Company - Manateq
Bank : Qatar National Bank
Account No. : 0013-026499-001
IBAN No. : QA19QNBA000000000013026499001
SWIFT CODE : QNBAQAQA

استلام وثائق المناقصة
تقديم نسخة سارية من السجل التجاري وبطاقة المنشأة للشركة المتقدمة وذلك مقابل رسم غير مسترد يدفع بالحساب التالي

Eligibility of Tenders:
- A Tender Bond must accompany each Tender as stipulated in the Instructions to Tenderers (ITT).
- Tender shall be delivered to Manateq Gate office at the above-mentioned address - General Tenders Committee (GTC) as specified in the Tender Documents no later than 12:00 pm on the above-mentioned Tender Closing Dates.
- International Participants must have a local office here in Qatar.

مؤهلات المناقصة
- يشترط تقديم تامين العطاء في صورة ضمان بنكي كما هو مذكور بتعليمات المتقدمين.
- يتم تقديم العطاءات بمكتب «شركة مناطق» الكائن بالعنوان أعلاه، اللجنة الرئيسية للعطاءات كما هو منصوص عليه بوثائق المناقصة في موعد اقصاه الساعة ١٢ظهراً بالتاريخ المشار إليه أعلاه.
- يجب على الشركات العالمية ان يكون لها مكتب محلي بالدوحه

تحتفظ شركة المناطق الاقتصادية بكامل حقها في تعديل شروط المناقصة في أي وقت بدون إبداء أسباب و/ أو إلغاء المناقصة بدون إبداء أسباب وبدون أدنى مسئولية عليها في هذا الصدد أياً كان نوعها او مصدرها

Economic Zones Company reserves its right in modifying terms of the tender at any time and\or cancelling the tender at any time without need of providing reasons and without any responsibility on its part whatever its kind

QRCS marks International Day of Peace

As part of the celebrations, a lecture titled "International Humanitarian Law in the Service of Peace and Security" was delivered to 50 volunteers by Dr Fawzi Oussedik, Head of International Relations and International Humanitarian Law at QRCS.



QRCS officials at a programme held to mark International Day of Peace.

THE PENINSULA

DOHA: Qatar Red Crescent Society (QRCS) has celebrated the International Day of Peace, under the theme of "The Right to Peace: 70 Years Universal Declaration of Human Rights".

Titled "International Humanitarian Law in the Service of Peace and Security", a lecture was delivered to 50 volunteers by Dr Fawzi Oussedik, Head of International Relations and International Humanitarian Law at QRCS, said a release.

The lecture gave an overview about the definitions, historical background, and legal power of human rights. Dr Oussedik also introduced the Red Cross and Red Crescent concepts as the product of political and historical events, designed to protect civilians and paramedics at times of war.

The work of humanitarian organisations is governed by seven fundamental principles: Humanity, impartiality, neutrality, independence, voluntary service, unity, and universality.

As the world's biggest network of humanitarian providers, the International Red Cross and Red Crescent comprises the International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), and 190 National Societies representing almost all countries of the world.

The mandate of the Movement is to help the vulnerable and victims of conflict, disaster, or poverty, with no discrimination on the basis of nationality, ethnicity, beliefs, or political background.

The International Humanitarian Law, Dr Oussedik explained, is part of the International Law, consisting of a set of rules and conventions that apply to international and non-international armed conflicts. Their aim is to put an end to conflict and minimise the impact on civilians at the one hand, and to protect the affected populations against legal and human rights violations on the other.

He highlighted intrinsic links between the provisions of the modern International Humanitarian Law and the noble Islamic teachings, which emphasize respect for the rights and dignity of each and every person.

In 1981, the General Assembly of the United Nations adopted the International Day of Peace, as a day devoted to strengthening the ideals of peace, both within and among all nations and peoples.

Oryx GTL's road safety plans a success

DOHA: Hundreds of youth in Qatar are gaining valuable road safety knowledge and helping to create a culture of road safety, thanks to a programme sponsored by Oryx GTL and endorsed by the General Directorate of Traffic.

Students for Road Safety aims to turn 10 to 21 years old into road safety ambassadors through interactive presentations and practical training in the programme's advanced driving simulator.

This month, Students for Road Safety visited Jassim Bin Hamad Independent Secondary School for Boys, where a total of 137 students participated in two interactive sessions aiming to raise awareness of the dangers of reckless driving and to encourage positive behaviour change. Sheikh Abdullah bin Mubarak Al Thani, Acting Head of Public Relations, Oryx GTL Ltd, said: "As part of our continued commitment to support the Qatar National Vision 2030, we aim to bring meaningful benefits to Qatar and its people."

Tenders and Bids of Government Organizations subordinate to the Law of Organizing Tenders and Bids no. 24 for the Year 2015

Logo	Organization	Tender No.	Subject	Tender Fees (QR)	Tender Bond Amount (QR)	Tender System	Closing Date
	Supreme Committee for Delivery & Legacy	TDO-18-TTC-0122	Supply and Installation of Mock-up Steel Shades with GRP Unit for Public Pathways	1,200	120,000	Two Envelopes	21-Oct-18
	Ministry of Public Health (MOPH)	1506-2018	AUDITING AND CONSULTANCY SERVICES FOR MINISTRY OF PUBLIC HEALTH (MOPH) For more information: www.MOPH.gov.qa Announcement	500.00 (Five Hundred Only)	20,000.00 (Twenty Thousand Only)	Two Envelopes	Sunday, 21st. of October 2018 12:00 hrs
	Ministry of Municipality and Environment Central Tender and Auction Committee	Auction No. TC/B/121-46/2018	Leasing of Advertising Platforms Sites for 5 Years for (Doha Municipality)	76,100 Qatari Riyal	7,600,000 Qatari Riyal	One Envelope (Technical/ Financial)	21/10/2018
	Ministry of Municipality and Environment Central Tender and Auction Committee	Tender No. TC/B/122-148/2018	Organization of the Seventh Qatar International Agricultural Exhibition for (Public Parks Department)	5,000 Qatari Riyal	500,000 Qatari Riyal	Two Envelopes (Technical/ Financial)	21/10/2018
	Ministry of Municipality and Environment Central Tender and Auction Committee	Tender No. TC/B/123-1515/2018	Carrying Out Operating Maintenance Work to the Surveillance Cameras in 5 Locations for 3 Calendar Years for (Environmental Operations Department)	750 Qatari Riyal	75,500 Qatari Riyal	Two Envelopes (Technical/ Financial)	21/10/2018
	Ministry of Municipality and Environment Central Tender and Auction Committee	Tender No. QMM/225/2018	Printing Models of Different Shapes to be Supplied on Demand for Two (2) Years	500 Qatari Riyal	20,000 Qatari Riyal	One Envelope (Technical/ Financial)	22/10/2018
	Ministry of Municipality and Environment Central Tender and Auction Committee	Tender No. QMM/226/2018	Supply and Installation of Partitions & Doors at Planning Tower for (Six (6) Months)	500 Qatari Riyal	20,000 Qatari Riyal	One Envelope (Technical/ Financial)	22/10/2018
	Ministry of Municipality and Environment Central Tender and Auction Committee	Tender No. QMM/227/2018	Supply and Installation of Devices & Equipment for the ICT Network at the New Umm Salal Park	500 Qatari Riyal	19,000 Qatari Riyal	One Envelope (Technical/ Financial)	22/10/2018
	Ministry of Municipality and Environment Central Tender and Auction Committee	Tender No. QMM/228/2018	Repair and Maintenance Work for Automatic Doors and Barriers at 4 Locations for (Three (3) Years and Three (3) Months)	500 Qatari Riyal	16,000 Qatari Riyal	One Envelope (Technical/ Financial)	22/10/2018
	Ministry of Municipality and Environment Central Tender and Auction Committee	Tender No. QMM/229/2018	Preparing and Equipping the Cinema Theater at Al Khor Park Museum	500 Qatari Riyal	10,000 Qatari Riyal	One Envelope (Technical/ Financial)	22/10/2018
	Ministry of Municipality and Environment Central Tender and Auction Committee	Tender No. QMM/230/2018	Maintenance & Technical Support Services for the Equipment at the Computer Rooms at the Ministry for One (1) Calendar Year	500 Qatari Riyal	12,000 Qatari Riyal	One Envelope (Technical/ Financial)	22/10/2018
	Qatar General Electricity & Water Corporation - Kahramaa	LTC-1358/2018	Three Years Price Agreement for Supply of IT Hardware (LCDs, Screen Dashboards, Zebra Printers, Video Wall Displays) Materials Department Km.qa	1000	100,000	Two Envelopes	28/10/2018
	Qatar General Electricity & Water Corporation - Kahramaa	LTC/1383/2018	KAHRAMAA National Day Ceremony Event Purchase of Tender Documents through KM website: km.qa Public Relations & Communication Department	500	20,000.00	Two Envelopes	21/10/2018

For more details, please refer to the unified website of government procurement **http://monaqasat.mof.gov.qa**

Social Responsibility Awards 2018

On the occasion of the International Social Responsibly Day, the organising committee of the Corporate Social Awards (CSR) is pleased to announce the awards of 2018 in the following categories:-

- The best bank or financial institution
- The best institution or government entity
- The best company in private sector
- The best company in real estate sector
- The best company in energy sector
- The best company in tourism and hospitality sector
- The best institution in communityservices
- The best report or article in CSRfield
- The best national initiative CSR
- The best idea
- Distinguished social figure
- Best student's or school initiative



AWARD'S TIME FRAME

November 15, 2018
Deadline for submitting registration forms and associated materials

December 16, 2018
jury hold meeting to take decision on applications

January 6, 2019
Announcement of nominees for each categories of awards

January 25, 2019
Announcement of winners

Interested people or companies are requested to send their nominations with reasons to one of the following addresses:

P. O. Box 3488 E-Mail: **info@csrqa.com** Fax: **44557838**

For further information contact us through the above addresses or call **44557650**
Additional information is also available at our website **www.csrqa.com**
Awards winners will be announced during the annual ceremony coinciding with the annual conference of CSR in January 2019.

Terms and conditions

The Organising Committee is keen to involve maximum number of companies, institutions and individuals to come forward for a noble deed of social responsibility with full transparency and morality. Following are the terms and conditions for participating in the award:

1. All companies and institutions participating in the Social Responsibility Award should be working and based in Qatar.
2. Bodies and entities can participate in more than one category but they must apply separately for each category.
3. All participations and ideas must be new and should not have participated in any similar event.
4. The details of the entry should not exceed 10 pages (A4 measure), and include a summary (of one page).
5. The entry should include name of the company and the person who will be responsible for answering queries, in addition to contact numbers and mailing address.
6. The participants must respect the deadline of submission dates.
7. In cases two entities participate in one social project, then they have to mention that in the project.
8. The entity or body which has won award in a same category earlier, then it will not be allowed to apply for the same category again, unless it provides a new and different project.
9. Submitting entries to the Committee by the participants will be considered deemed as acknowledgement that the given information is correct
10. The Committee can call participants if it needs any explanation regarding the participation.
11. The jury can declare more than one winner in a category.
12. The jury can restructure the category in case of not receiving entry, if the jury thinks that it is good to do so.
13. The jury can disqualify its member if it is found that he has connection with the participants.
14. The decisions of jury will be final and binding which cannot be challenged for any reason
15. The Organising Committee and jury can make changes in terms and conditions or cancel a category if it thinks that it will serve the general interests of social responsibility

The evaluations will be as per the following requirements :

1. Clear vision and message for social responsibility at the leadership of the firms.
2. Contribution of the firms must show connection with the needs of the society.
3. Plans and projects implemented by the firm in the community.
4. Actions and mechanism to encourage saving energy and protecting environment.
5. Implementing laws to protect workers' rights and launching programmes for the development of workforce.
6. Cooperation and response of the firm with other institutions and entities supporting the social responsibility.

‘Nursing Now Qatar’: WISH & HMC aim to boost healthcare

THE PENINSULA

Nursing Now Qatar, which was launched earlier this year at the Middle East Forum for Quality and Safety in Healthcare, in Doha, supports the global ‘Nursing Now’ campaign.

DOHA: The World Innovation Summit for Health (WISH), an initiative of Qatar Foundation (QF), and Hamad Medical Corporation (HMC) have partnered to hold the first board meeting of ‘Nursing Now Qatar.’ The initiative is part of a global campaign run in collaboration with the International Council of Nurses and the World Health Organisation (WHO).

Nursing Now Qatar, which was launched earlier this year at the Middle East Forum for Quality and Safety in Healthcare, in Doha, supports the global ‘Nursing Now’ campaign. The overarching goal of the campaign is to improve healthcare globally by raising the profile and status of nurses worldwide; influencing policy-makers; and supporting nurses to lead, learn, and build a global movement.

The ‘Nursing Now Qatar’ board brings together senior representatives of HMC, WISH, Primary Health Care Corporation, QF member Sidra Medicine, Al Ahli Hospital and the University of Calgary in Qatar. During its inaugural meeting, which was held at the Qatar Rehabilitation Institute within Hamad bin Khalifa Medical City, board members received an update on the ‘Nursing Now’ global campaign, set terms of reference for ‘Nursing Now Qatar’, and set goals and timescales for initiatives and events to promote nursing in Qatar over the coming year.

Among those initiatives are public awareness campaigns, and a ‘Nursing Now’ empowerment training programme for Qatari nurses that will be delivered during Doha Healthcare Week, which will take place this November in the lead up to the WISH 2018 summit.

Sultana Afdhal, CEO, WISH, said, “We are delighted to co-organise the inaugural meeting of this important initiative, which is the first of its kind in the Arabian Gulf region.



The board members of ‘Nursing Now Qatar’ campaign during its inaugural meeting.

“Our goal is to empower nurses in Qatar, and ultimately everywhere in the world, to take up more leadership roles, and we hope that a larger number of Qataris choose nursing as a profession in the future.”

Dr Nicola Ryley, Chief Nursing Officer, HMC, and Co-chair of the ‘Nursing Now Qatar’ Board, said, “Nurses and midwives have a long tradition of leading change across health services, demonstrating a passion for leadership and innovation to drive quality and performance improvements.

“While these abilities are increasingly recognized across Qatar’s health sector, we need a concerted effort to ensure greater inter-professional respect and collaboration. We have an amazing cadre of nursing and midwifery professionals working in Qatar, and the ‘Nursing Now’ campaign will help to harness their wide range of experiences and skills more effectively.”

WISH 2018, set to take place on November 13 and 14 at Qatar National Convention Centre, will include a focus on nursing. The summit will include panel discussions on nursing, host Chief Nursing Officers from around the world, and also host the global board meeting of ‘Nursing Now’ on its sidelines.



The Qatari professionals, who are undertaking Qatar Leadership Centre’s Executive Leaders Program, during the Learning Journey in North America.

QLC’s learning journey takes Qatari professionals to global institutions

THE PENINSULA

DOHA: Qatari professionals currently undertaking Qatar Leadership Centre’s (QLC) Executive Leaders Program — one of the three National Programs available — have just completed their two-legged, intercontinental Learning Journey in North America and Europe.

This annual journey, venturing to varying countries, forms a fundamental part of participants’ year-long programme. From September 9 to 28, participating executive leaders visited Boston, USA and Stockholm, Sweden gaining extensive insight into innovation, change and entrepreneurship. Regarded as a much anticipated excursion, participants have the unique opportunity to explore hubs for leadership excellence, and expand their already-established executive repertoire.

“A core objective at QLC is to foster an environment of positive leadership and change for our participants, alumni and country,” said Sheikh Dr Abdulla bin Ali Al Thani, Board Member and Managing Director of QLC.

“Through visiting Sweden and the USA in their Learning Journey — two exceptionally thriving business environments — Qatari professionals can hone a vast array of applicable, real-world, leadership capabilities. In turn, this supports the development of strong individuals, and works to secure Qatar’s developmental goals,” he added.

During the first leg in Boston, QLC Executive Leaders spent their time at Harvard Business School of which the establishment has a long-standing and prosperous relationship. Commencing their stay with a guided campus tour of the facilities, allowing participants to get a feel for their temporary home, they were then welcomed by module lead and Adjunct Professor of Business Administration, Alan MacCormack.

Predominately exploring several case studies, participants completed a six-day module on Innovation and Change, focusing on its importance in building a fruitful business model. The attendees explored topics relating to digital strategies, business challenges, design thinking, and collaborative techniques.

The leaders visited Swedish Institute and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Stockholm. There, they met with the ambassador of Sweden to Qatar, who accompanied the groups for the first two days of the programme. Participants gained insight into Sweden’s past, present, and future plans regarding innovation and developing a thriving business environment.

Ras Laffan Power Company completes 12 years of operation without accident

THE PENINSULA



The officials and staff of Ras Laffan Power Company during the event marking 12 years of operation without any accident.

DOHA: Ras Laffan Power Company, the first independent power and water producing company in the State of Qatar commercially operating since 2003, has completed 12 years of operation without any Loss Time Injury for Employees and Contractors.

The milestone was achieved on August 21 this year. A celebration was arranged in the company located inside Ras Laffan Industrial City on September 25. The programme was attended by all the Board of Directors, employees and contractors.

During the event, Managing Director of Qatar Electricity and Water Corporation (QEWC), Fahad Al Mohannadi, stated that every worker is important for his family and hence all measures should be taken to ensure safety of the workers. He expressed his happiness on the milestone achieved by Ras Laffan Power Company and wished for many such milestone in future.

Mubarak Al Nasr, CEO of Ras Laffan Power Company, said on the occasion, “Twelve years back it would have looked like a distant dream but today it is a sense of accomplishment and matter of pride for all of us. Coming years will continue to bring new challenges from yet unidentified hazards and unique situations. Many organisations fail to carry through the same awareness level of safety and become victim of complacency and this is an area where we need to strengthen ourselves.”

Ras Laffan Power Company also received Gold Medal from Royal Society for Prevention of Accidents (RoSPA) during a ceremony at the Glasgow, United Kingdom on September 13, 2018. The award was received by CEO Mubarak Al Nasr.



The officials and staff of Ras Laffan Power Company during the event marking 12 years of operation without any accident.

QIC Insured partners with Ooredoo to reward Nojoom members

THE PENINSULA

DOHA: QIC Insured — the personal insurance division of Qatar Insurance — has partnered with Ooredoo to make its customers’ journey even more rewarding.

Through this new partnership, customers who are members of Ooredoo’s Rewards Programme, Nojoom, can earn loyalty points when purchasing comprehensive car, annual travel, Personal Accident Benefit (PAB) and home insurances.

Now Nojoom members simply need to inform QIC staff when purchasing insurance from any of the branches of QIC. For those purchasing insurances online at qic-insured.com, the Nojoom Points will automatically get added to their Nojoom account.

QIC has always focused on meeting the direct and indirect needs of its customers. In order to build a culture of continuous improvement that uplifts customers’ experience, QIC has consistently deployed state-of-the-art technology and metrics that measure both customers’ satisfaction with journeys and the operational indicators that underlie each journey.

At the signing ceremony, which was held at Qatar Insurance Headquarters in West Bay, Deputy Group President & CEO of QIC MENA region Salem Al Mannai stated, “QIC is pleased to partner with Ooredoo. Through this distinctive partnership, we have taken a further step towards extending our range of benefits to enhance customers’ experience for being insured with us. It is our way of rewarding them for selecting QIC as their trusted insurance partner.”

He further added, “QIC has been very successful at aligning its efforts in matching the pace of change in customer loyalty programmes. We are confident that this new tie-up will be well received and bring a host of benefits for our customers. As we continue to embed design thinking in our business model and co-create solutions with our partners, we aspire to introduce more exclusive offers and privileges for our customers.”

Ooredoo Chief Operating Officer, Yousuf Al Kubaisi commented: “Ooredoo is delighted to partner with QIC. Nojoom is our way of saying thank you to our customers and through this exclusive partnership, Ooredoo continues to add more benefits than ever for choosing Qatar’s biggest and fastest network”

Every Ooredoo residential customer with a QID can enrol into Nojoom, which enables members to earn Nojoom Points each time they use an Ooredoo service or shop at Nojoom’s earn partners or use their services. Points can be redeemed for a host of shops and services across Qatar and internationally.



The officials of QIC Group & Ooredoo during the signing of the partnership agreement at QIC headquarters in West Bay.

Palestine takes US to ICJ over embassy move

QNA

RAMALLAH: The State of Palestine has filed a lawsuit against the United States at the International Court of Justice (ICJ), the main judicial body of the United Nations, for violating international law by moving its embassy in Israel to the occupied city of Jerusalem, Foreign Minister Riyad Malki said yesterday.

Malki added in a statement that the case was based on Palestines membership in the 1961 Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations that defines a framework for diplomatic relations between independent countries, specifically the Optional Protocol concerning the Compulsory Settlement of Disputes.

He said the foreign ministry, in preparing its case, submitted a declaration recognising the jurisdiction of the ICJ to settle all disputes that have come up or may come up as per the decision of the United Nations Security Council and the procedures and statute of the Court.

Malki said that based on the procedures to file a lawsuit with the ICJ, he sent a letter last May to the US State Department asking it not to move its embassy to Jerusalem because this step would violate the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations and Security Council resolutions.

He explained that due to failure of the US to respond to the letter and its non-compliance with international law, it was informed in a written memorandum dated July 4 of the existence of a legal dispute as per the rules and procedures of the ICJ.

With the passage of the legal period and after meeting all conditions to file a lawsuit against the US, the lawsuit has been formally filed with the ICJs Registrar to prosecute the United States, said Malki.

The Foreign Minister said that in the lawsuit against the US, the ICJ was asked to declare that moving the embassy to occupied Jerusalem constituted a violation of the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations and to order the United States to take its diplomatic mission out of Jerusalem and comply with its international obligations in accordance with the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations, as well as taking the necessary measures to comply with its obligations and refrain from taking any future steps that may violate its obligations and provide the necessary guarantees for non-repetition of its unlawful action.

Malki stressed that taking this step is an exercise of the sovereign right of the State of Palestine as a member state of the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations and other related conventions.

Malki stressed that taking this step is an exercise of the sovereign right of the State of Palestine as a member state of the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations and other related conventions, which is another legal right used by Palestine to defend its rights and interests against illegal actions and measures.

"We defend our rights and our people without hesitation and reject all forms of political and financial extortion," he said, expressing his belief that it is now possible to use the legal tracks that have been denied to the Palestinian people for decades. He pointed out that Palestine has taken many important steps to address the recent illegal measures taken by the current US Administration.



A Palestinian woman waves a flag of Palestine on the Israel-Gaza border near Jabalia Refugee Camp in Gaza City.

Palestinians bury 7 dead in latest flare-up in Gaza Strip

AP

GAZA STRIP: Thousands of Gazans yesterday thronged the funerals of seven people killed by Israeli troops during mass protests the previous day, chanting anti-Israel and anti-US slogans and calling for revenge.

The coastal strip's ruling Hamas group, meanwhile, dispatched a delegation to Egypt in a desperate new attempt to ease a crippling blockade on the Palestinian territory. Friday's violence was the deadliest day of protests in nearly four months. Among the dead was an 11-year-old boy, believed to be the youngest of 144 Palestinians killed by Israeli fire during the protests. Another boy, a 14-year-old, was also among the seven killed.

The Hamas-backed protests were launched last March in large part to press for an end to the blockade, imposed by Israel and Egypt after Hamas took control of Gaza in 2007. The blockade has ravaged Gaza's economy, and with Egyptian-mediated cease-fire efforts deadlocked, Hamas has vowed to step up the protests. About 1,000 mourners attended the funeral of the 11-year-old victim, Nasser Musabeh, whose body was wrapped in a white shroud and carried on an orange stretcher. In an ancient Islamic custom, bundles of basil were thrown on the coffin.

Nasser was the brother of Duaa Musabeh, an 18-year-old volunteer paramedic who attends the weekly protests in the southern town of Khan Younis to treat the wounded. She said she would take her brother with her each week, ordering him to stay back in a safer space, about 300 metres from the fence where crowds typically gather. Believing he was in a safe area, she approached the fence to help evacuate wounded protesters. But when she returned after dark, her brother was missing. As she frantically searched for him, a man showed her a picture of a dead boy released by a nearby hospital that was trying to identify him. Nasser had been shot in the head.

"I did not believe it. I felt unable to move an inch, I fell on the ground," she murmured slowly.

Iraqi Kurds vote in parliamentary elections today

ANATOLIA

ERBIL: Voters in northern Iraq's Kurdish region will cast ballot in the region's parliamentary elections today in which 29 parties and coalitions are vying for seats.

The High Election Commission in the Kurdish region has established some 5,933 voting stations in the cities of Erbil, Sulaymaniyah, Dohuk and Halabja for the polls.

Around 3.8 million voters are eligible to cast ballot in the vote to elect 111 members of parliament.

Voting will begin at 8am local time and end at 18pm.

Electronic vote counting, which has caused uproar during Iraq's May 12 parliamentary election, will not be used in the Kurdish polls. Votes, instead, will be counted manually.

Leading parties vying for seats in the parliamentary polls include Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP), Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK), Gorran Movement, Kurdistan Islamic Party (Yekgirtu), Kurdistan Islamic Group (Komal), Kurdistan Islamic Movement (Bizutnava) and the Iraqi Turkmen Front (ITF).

Iraq 'regrets' US move to close Basra consulate

AFP

BAGHDAD: Iraq's foreign ministry voiced "regret" yesterday over a US decision to shut its consulate in the southern city of Basra which has been rocked by weeks of deadly protests, while Iran accused Washington of making "false accusations" to pressure Baghdad.

"The ministry regrets the American decision to pull its staff out of Basra," a statement said. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo ordered all but emergency staff to leave Basra, with consular duties to be taken over by the embassy in Baghdad.

He blamed Iranian militias for "indirect fire" against the US consulate.

The State Department also sent out a renewed advisory urging Americans not to travel to Iraq.

Iran, for its part, rejected what it called the US "propaganda and false accusations", insisting it condemned any attacks on diplomatic sites.

"Iran sees the absurd US justification which follow weeks of propaganda and false accusations against Iran and Iraqi forces as playing a blame-game," said the country's foreign ministry spokesman Bahram Ghasemi.

"The Islamic Republic condemns any aggression against diplomats and diplomatic sites," he added.

Ghasemi charged that the US move was a pretext for promoting "insecurity in Iraq" and to "pressure the country's government." Basra has been at the centre of protests that broke out in the southern province in July before spreading to other parts of the country, as demonstrators railed against poor services and condemned corruption among government officials.

Protesters have set fire to several government buildings as well as headquarters of political parties and militias backed by Iran, which saw its consulate in Basra burnt to the ground.



Syrian trucks stuck in Jordan since 2015 are seen on a parking lot in the city of Mafraq, yesterday.

Syria to reopen vital border crossing with Jordan

AP

DAMASCUS: Preparations to reopen a vital border crossing between Syria and Jordan have been completed, setting the stage for its reopening next month, Syria's state-run news agency said yesterday.

Earlier, the agency reported that the Naseeb crossing had reopened and that the flow of trucks and transit across the border had begun.

But Jordan's government spokeswoman Jumana Ghunaimat denied the report, saying in a statement that the crossing border has not opened yet and that technical committees from both sides were still meeting to deal with logistics, technical and infrastructure issues. Shortly afterward, SANA said the border crossing would formally reopen on October 10.

The reopening of the Naseeb crossing would bring major relief to President Bashar Assad's government by restoring a much needed gateway for Syrian exports to Arab countries.

'Negligence led to Iran parade attack'

AP

TEHRAN: A prominent Iranian lawmaker said an attack on a military parade in the southwestern city of Ahvaz that killed 24 people was the result of negligence by security forces, semi-official ISNA news agency reported.

The report quoted the head of Iran's parliamentary committee on national security and foreign policy, Heshmatollah Falahatpisheh, as saying a video shot by the Intelligence Ministry and the Army makes this clear.

"The cameraman begged a sniper to shoot the attackers, but the sniper waited for his commander's order," he said, describing the video. Ninety-two lawmakers and intelligence and interior ministers reviewed the video.

White Helmets 'first witness' to Syria massacres: Chief

ANATOLIA

ANKARA: The head of the White Helmets civil defence agency said his organisation has been subject to false charges and allegations because of its role as a witness to ongoing massacres in war-torn Syria.

In an interview, Raed Salah said the White Helmets welcomes financial support from any country or organisation provided that the funds were not politically-driven. "By the end of 2012, some regions in Syria began to fall out of the regime control. As regime forces began to shell civilian settlements and carry out attacks, there was a need for a group to save civilians from these attacks," he said.

According to Salah, the name of the civil defence agency was derived from the helmets worn by its members during rescue operations. He said members of the White Helmets have reached 4,300 volunteers by the end of 2017. Nevertheless, they can only operate in certain areas where they are allowed to.

"As the regime designates us as a terror group, we cannot operate in areas under its control. We have been repeatedly threatened [by the regime]," he said.

"Also, we cannot operate in YPG/PKK-held areas," he said, adding that White Helmets volunteers were arrested by YPG/PKK in 2015. "They seized our ambulances and rescue equipment in Afrin," he said. "Due to similar reasons, we cannot operate in IS-held areas." Salah said the civil defence agency can only operate in opposition-held areas in northern Syria, the Euphrates Shield zones and Oil Branch Operation zones.

"In addition to rescue operations, the White Helmets also intervene to extinguish fires, solve water and electricity problems and help with rubble cleaning," he said. Established in 2013, the White Helmets was nominated for the 2016 Nobel Peace Prize. In 2013, the civil defence agency members were trained by Turkey's Search and Rescue Association, AKUT. The White Helmets accepts financial support from any country or organisation on the condition that the funds were not politically-driven.

The Peninsula
Local focus, Global vision

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EDITORIAL

Global LNG leader

The world is witnessing a new wave of Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) demand boom. LNG is being promoted as the fossil fuel of the future thanks to its relatively low carbon emissions. Qatar Petroleum's recent announcement to increase the capacity of Qatar's LNG production by adding a fourth liquefaction train, will further boost Qatar's leading position as the world's largest LNG producer and exporter.

Eng Saad Sherida Al Kaabi, President & CEO of QP, said: "We believe that LNG has bright prospects, and that the new expansion project reflects QP's commitment to meeting its worldwide customers' growing needs for this reliable and environmentally-friendly fuel. This production addition will have a great impact on Qatar's economic growth and will help stimulate our local economy."

When the expansion project is completed, Qatar's LNG production capacity will reach 110 million tonnes per annum (MTPA), an increase of around 43 percent from its current production capacity of 77 MTPA. With the addition of the fourth train, the new project will produce about 32 MTPA of LNG, 4,000 tonnes per day of ethane, 260,000 barrels per day of condensate, and 11,000 tonnes per day of LPG and approximately 20 tonnes per day of pure helium.

Qatar Petroleum's announcement to increase the capacity of Qatar's LNG production by adding a fourth liquefaction train, will further boost Qatar's leading position as the world's largest LNG producer and exporter.

Global LNG consumption is expected to rise by more than a third over the next decade to 416 million tonnes a year, according to Bloomberg New Energy Finance.

At the Gastech 2018 Conference & Exhibition held in Barcelona, Spain recently, Al Kaabi said that natural gas is playing an increasing key role, not as a transition fuel, but rather as a destination fuel due to its environmental qualities as the cleanest fossil fuel. "At the same time, many countries around the world are placing greater emphasis on natural gas as a strategic source of energy and an important element of its national energy security," he said.

Early this month, Qatargas announced a 22-year Sale and Purchase Agreement with PetroChina International Company Ltd, a unit of PetroChina, to supply China with around 3.4 million tonnes of LNG per annum. In addition, QP concluded a three-year agreement to supply India's Haldia Petrochemicals Ltd, with a total of 600,000 tonnes of Light Naphtha starting this year.

Qatar already has strong and good relations with major LNG consumers in the world such as Japan and South Korea. Imports from China, India other Asian and African countries, as well as Europe are helping the increase in demand for LNG. All in all, the demand for LNG is bound to rise in the coming years as it is the cleanest of hydrocarbon fuels and Qatar is well-placed to meeting world's energy demand in environment-friendly way.

QUOTE OF THE DAY



We will not allow a handful of PKK and FETO sympathiser incompetents to disturb our people and harm Turkish-German friendship.

Recep Tayyip Erdogan
Turkish President

'Amir's speech stressed need to overcome crises in accordance with international law'

QNA



Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs H E Sheikh Mohamed bin Abdulrahman Al Thani said that the Amir H H Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani, in his address to the 73rd session of the UN General Assembly, touched on several important issues. The most important of which was the need to go beyond the phase of crises management to the pursuit of comprehensive and just solutions, guided by international law and standards.

In a press conference held in New York, the Deputy Prime Minister said that H H the Amir announced the agreement of the State of Qatar and the United Nations to support long-term and sustainable development projects to combat cholera in Yemen. H H the Amir also stressed the importance of combating digital piracy and digital espionage because of its impact on security and stability in the region.

H E the Deputy Prime Minister added that H H the Amir, in addition to the UN General Assembly meeting, co-hosted with the Prime Minister of Canada the "Leaders Dialogue" on providing education for girls in the context of conflict and fragile conditions, where H H the Amir announced Qatar's pledge to provide good education for 1 million girl by 2021.

He underlined that the election of Qatar as Vice-President of the 73rd session of the UN General Assembly affirms the active role of Qatar in the international community, noting that the delegation of Qatar participated in raising the issue of combating terrorism, where it stressed the importance of the international cooperation in combating terrorism and providing a cure for the root causes of violent extremism.

During the meeting, the State of Qatar stressed the importance for the initiative to be based on clear principles and to work on the basis of a dialogue characterised by transparency and credibility, as the current situation among the member countries requires addressing the challenges between these countries first before any collective movement to address the regional challenges as a whole.

He added that the delegation of Qatar also took part in the "Asia Cooperation Dialogue" where Qatar took over the presidency of the Asia Cooperation Dialogue (ACD) for 2019. H E the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of State for Foreign Affairs noted that the vision of Qatar this year focuses on achieving an economic integration among the Asian countries. He noted that Qatar affirmed that it will work on achieving Asian consensus and the development of the inter-Asian working mechanisms to achieve economic integration and promote the economic competitiveness of the countries of Asia.

Meanwhile, H E Sheikh Mohamed bin Abdulrahman Al Thani noted that the delegation of the State of Qatar discussed during the bilateral meetings, held on the sidelines of the current session of the UN General Assembly, a number of key regional issues, mainly the Palestinian cause.

He noted that Qatar's present at the UNRWA side event as one of the largest donors and supporters of this foundation, stressed states' firm position on the importance of continued support for the foundation for its vital role in support of the brotherly Palestinian people, especially the refugees.

The Deputy Prime Minister noted that the situation in Afghanistan was also discussed during the visit, referring to his meetings with his Afghan counterpart and the US delegation on Afghanistan during which they discussed means of supporting the political solution in Afghanistan.

Regarding the Syrian crisis, H E the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs said that Qatar took part in the high-level meeting organised by the European Union on the Syrian crisis. He noted that Qatar affirmed its support for a political solution in Syria in accordance with the resolutions of the UN Security Council and the Geneva 1 communique. In addition, the State of Qatar co-hosted with the Principality of Liechtenstein a meeting on the international independent mechanism to investigate and prosecute the persons responsible for the war crimes committed in Syria.

On Yemen, Qatar signed with the UNICEF an agreement on implementing development projects that provide sustainable solutions to the Yemeni villages hit by Cholera.

The Qatari delegation also addressed the developments in Somalia, where Qatar underlined its support for the Somali government.

Regarding Iraq, H E Sheikh Mohamed bin Abdulrahman Al Thani noted that discussions were held with the United States to consider providing a solution for the water problem in Al-Basra.

On the fight against terrorism, the Deputy Prime Minister underlined that Qatar has partnership with the various UN institutions in this regard, noting his meeting with UN Under-Secretary-General for Combating Terrorism where Qatar affirmed its continued support for the UN efforts and relevant projects that address root causes, particularly in the area of education and youth empowerment.

Regarding the meeting held between the Gulf Cooperation Council, the United States, Egypt and Jordan, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs said that the United States succeeded in bringing together the GCC countries, something that the Council has failed to achieve over the past year and a half during the Gulf crisis. He noted that the meeting discussed several issues, mainly the security and regional challenges and the "Middle East Strategic Alliance" initiative.

During the meeting, the State of Qatar stressed the importance for the initiative to be based on clear principles and to work on the basis of a dialogue characterised by transparency and credibility, as the current situation among the member countries requires addressing the challenges between these countries first before any collective movement to address the regional challenges as a whole, which represents a true test of the credibility of this collective action, H E the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs said.

He underlined that there are key principles that must be an integral part of any coalition, which are the respect for the sovereignty of states and the independence of their policy; the realisation of the collective interests of the peoples gathered by this alliance; and to be based on clear and neutral criteria. He added that the meeting also touched on the importance for the coalition to be based on "clear strategies" and to be created in an integrated manner that is not "fragile".

Responding to a question on a statement by an Emirati official that the Gulf crisis is no longer a priority, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs H E Sheikh Mohamed bin Abdulrahman Al Thani said that the crisis was created at first without reasons and began with an cyber crime committed by known perpetrators. Nowadays, there are regional challenges and greater priorities facing the region, but the paralysis of the GCC prevents any progress on regional issues such as Syria, Yemen and Libya.

He underlined that the State of Qatar only demands that the siege countries retreat from the illegal measures they carried out against the Qatari people, and this is a priority for the State of Qatar, adding: "The political crisis can be solved by dialogue, not by stubbornness. We are countries not children".

On the fight against terrorism, the Deputy Prime Minister underlined that Qatar has partnership with the various UN institutions in this regard, noting his meeting with UN Under-Secretary-General for Combating Terrorism where Qatar affirmed its continued support for the UN efforts and relevant projects that address root causes, particularly in the area of education and youth empowerment.

On the efforts of the US mediation to resolve the Gulf crisis, H E the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs expressed the appreciation of the State of Qatar for the efforts made by US President Donald Trump in this context, noting that he had made several attempts in this regard but they were not responded positively by the siege countries. He expressed the hope that the wisdom would prevail and that these countries would emerge from the stage of denial, and to hold a clear dialogue to discuss the causes of this crisis.

He said that Qatar has social and cultural links and joint borders with the GCC countries, however these countries keep saying that they do not need Qatar and that they are ready to continue on Qatar siege for 50 years. He wondered: "Is this how politics is practiced, Is this how priorities are determined, Is this how the issues affecting people's destinies are dealt with. It is up to them because Qatar does not receive aid from these countries and does not rely on them in anything, and from this superficial perspective, we can tell them, "We also do not need you."

He noted that the meeting of the foreign ministers of the GCC countries, Egypt and Jordan on the Strategic Alliance is an opportunity provided by the United States. He said that the United States has succeeded in bringing together the GCC countries in a joint military meeting, and joint meeting on countering terrorism financing, and this time a meeting at the level of foreign ministers, noting that it is a good opportunity to come up with a plan leading to a solution to this blockade.

Asked about an American or Gulf mediation to solve the crisis, the Deputy Prime Minister said that there is currently no mediation on this crisis with the UAE and Saudi Arabia. He noted that the US President had sent several messages to the leaders of the GCC countries to retreat from the measures they carried out against the State of Qatar but there were no positives responses from the Saudis or Emiratis. However, the State of Qatar remains open to dialogue to understand the reasons for the blockade, H E said, noting that the United States has affirmed the importance of the unity of the GCC to be more successful.

On the role of the State of Qatar on the Palestinian issue, he stressed that the Palestinian issue is at the center of the concerns of the State of Qatar and all Arab countries. It is in the hearts of the Arab peoples and everyone is looking for a just and sustainable solution to restore the rights of the brotherly Palestinian people.

How East Germany became a stronghold of the far right



DENIJAL JEGIC
AL JAZEERA

In late August, a German citizen was stabbed to death in the East German town of Chemnitz. As the police launched an investigation into the murder, it announced that it had arrested two suspects, identifying them by their nationalities.

Although subsequently, investigators reported that the true identities of the two could not be immediately verified and one of them was released for lack of evidence, the damage had already been done. The public opinion blamed the murder on refugees.

Far-right groups were quick to exploit public anger and organised large anti-immigration protests. Some 7,000 joined the demonstrations, which were marked by hate speech and violence against non-Germans. Meanwhile, the Christian Democratic Union (CDU), the ruling party in the East German state of Saxony, where Chemnitz is located, did little to calm down the public and confront hate-mongering by the far right.

Neither the Chemnitz protests, nor the timid reaction of the political elite are surprising. In Germany's recent history, right-wing violence has been often officially condemned, but rarely taken seriously enough. This has allowed right-wing groups to grow and flourish,particularly in East Germany.

Although political parties and groups were banned in East Germany during the communist era, after reunification in 1990, the far right found fertile ground in the less developed east. Over the 1990s, the eastern states struggled with losing a significant chunk of their workforce to internal migration to the west and with adjusting to the new political and economic system.

The lack of serious action against the far right has enabled the current xenophobic surge in East Germany. More recently, the far-right was strengthened by the rise of xenophobic groups which combine traditional German ethnocentrism with racist sentiment against the more than 1 million newly arrived refugees.

At the same time, the immigration that had supported West Germany's manufacturing industry started trickling into East Germany as well. Within the context of a difficult political and economic transition, public dissatisfaction started expressing itself in resentment towards these newcomers. Whereas many urban parts of West Germany became more diverse in the 1970s and 1980s, the East was rather homogenous and remains largely so until today.

In the early 1990s, Germany witnessed a wave of far-right violence, with major incidents happening in the eastern states. In September 1991, the East German town of Hoyerswerda, witnessed a week of racist riots in which neo-Nazis targeted asylum seekers and Vietnamese and Mozambican temporary workers, who had been brought years earlier by the communist government to work in the nearby coal mine.

A violent mob besieged and attacked the hostel where the workers were staying, as local residents looked on and cheered. As the attacks persisted, the local authorities were forced to evacuate the foreigners. The neo-Nazis then focused their efforts on a dormitory housing asylum seekers from Eastern Europe, Asia and Africa. They besieged the building and threw Molotov cocktails at it until the local authorities decided to also bus out its more than 200 inhabitants.

Although over 80 people were arrested in the riots, just 4 were convicted. The "success" of the neo-Nazi pogrom in Hoyerswerda then inspired similar attacks on foreign workers and asylum seekers across the country.

More recently, the far-right was strengthened by the rise of xenophobic groups which combine traditional German ethnocentrism with racist sentiment against the more than 1 million newly arrived refugees.

The political party AfD (Alternative for Germany), founded in 2013, has also been quite popular among East German voters. In Saxony, it even emerged as the strongest party in the 2017 federal elections, outperforming the CDU. NSU-style groups have also appeared; earlier this year eight people weresentenced to prison for organising a "defence group" which targeted refugees in the Saxony town of Freital.

As a result of the continuing and strong neo-Nazi presence and the emergence of these new xenophobic groups, violence against foreigners and asylum seekers is quite common in East Germany. Saxon towns like Leipzig, Dresden, and Bautzen, have witnessed neo-Nazi marches, attacks on refugee housings and individual hate crimes. While hate attacks have gradually decreased in western states, in the east, their number remains significantly high.

In 2017, the East German states of Branderburg had the highest number of attacks per capita — 85 per million residents — followed by Saxony — 61 and Saxony-Anhalt — 51. By comparison, the western states of Hamburg, North Rhine- Westphalia and Bremen had respectively 7, 5 and 3 per million inhabitants.

Instead of taking serious measures to counter the dangerous rise of the far right in East Germany, the ruling party, CDU, has been in a state of denial of years. Saxony's Prime Minister Michael Kretschmer's reaction to what happened in Chemnitz is a good illustration of that. Although Kretschmer admitted that right-wing extremism is the greatest threat to German democracy and that it was, so far, not effectively countered in Saxony, he said there were no mobs and no pogroms in Chemnitz. Instead, he criticised the media for depicting Saxony unfavourably.

Indeed, the CDU, which has ruled over Saxony since reunification, has traditionally downplayed the presence of neo-Nazi communities."Saxons are immune to right-wing extremism," Kurt Biedenkopf, who served as Saxony's prime minister between 1990 and 2003, once said. In 2015, he brushed off far-right attacks against refugees, claiming they had no political importance and seemed to show understanding for Pegida's protests.

This public denial by the ruling party that the far-right presence and strength in Saxony and beyond is real and that its actions are indeed serious is what has enabled it to grow. There has also been hardly any serious action taken to counter and prosecute hate speech by organisations like the AfD. Few have condemned their toxic rhetoric about the need for "self-defence" against what they call "knife migration" (a term suggesting all migrants are potential criminals).

In Saxony, the CDU has shown a rather accommodating attitude towards far-right groups and has even taken to adopting their rhetoric. Stanislaw Tillich, a leading CDU politician and Saxony's prime minister until 2017, responded to AfD's success in the 2017 elections by syaing: "The people want Germany to remain Germany. They do not want refugees to engage in religious and political disputes here."

As German expert on right-wing extremism Robert Claus told me, in dealing with the AfD, "the CDU is trying to adopt some of the AfD's demands in order to attract some of the AfD's voters." This means that the CDU "is constantly reiterating the position of the AfD and strengthening it."

In this way, centrist political forces have allowed AfD and other far-right groups to join Germany's mainstream politics. As a result, their racist populism has become part and parcel of the political discourse in Germany and has started to dominate public debate well beyond Saxony and East Germany.

Historically, this type of appeasement of far-right groups has had disastrous consequences. It is time for Germany's centrist political forces to recognise that and to take urgent action.

The writer is a postdoctoral scholar. He holds a PhD from the Institute for Transnational American Studies.



People attend a far-right demonstration in Chemnitz, Germany. The banner reads: 'We are the people'.



NOAH SMITH
BLOOMBERG

The promise and peril of South African land reform

Right-wing groups have been sounding the alarm about proposed land reforms in South Africa, where the ruling African National Congress party is preparing to amend the country's constitution to make it easier for the government to redistribute farmland without compensation. On August 22, President Donald Trump caused a stir with a tweet on the subject: "I have asked Secretary of State @SecPompeo to closely study the South Africa land and farm seizures and expropriations and the large scale killing of farmers."

The tweet, possibly intended to capitalize on racial tensions, was in part inaccurate — there is no large-scale killing of farmers going on. But the part about plans to make land seizures easier is accurate.

The move is ostensibly about racial justice — white farmers own about 72 percent of the country's individually owned farmland, which they wouldn't own if not for colonialism and apartheid. The idea is to take some of that land and give it to black farmers.

This is, naturally, a morally contentious issue — opponents will argue that since the current owners didn't do the seizing, they're entitled to compensation. But the policy is also about economics — South Africa's unemployment rate has been rising and now is more than 27 percent, a rate higher than anything suffered by the US during the depths of the Great Depression.

The government has been trying to put people to work by employing them in community and social services, but there's only so much that can do. It might also be a good idea to consider sending restless unemployed people out into the countryside to farm.

There are good reasons to believe that this might work — not only to absorb the country's surplus labor force, but to increase the country's agricultural output as well.

The reason is a curious fact about farming that defies the trend for many other industries: negative economies of scale.

In most industries, bigger is better; a huge factory can usually produce cars or computer chips more efficiently than a small one, while a large national chain store can optimise its purchasing and logistics more efficiently than a mom-and-pop shop. In agriculture, that's also true in terms of overall productivity — a large mechanised farm doesn't use much labor, allowing it to produce lots of food cheaply. But small farms, especially in developing countries, tend to be more efficient in their use of land.

Growth economist Dietrich Vollrath has a blog post summarizing the relevant academic literature. An inverse relationship between land yield and farm size — meaning smaller farms making more intensive use of each acre — was recorded in India by the Nobel Prize-winning economist Amartya Sen in 1962. Many subsequent papers and books have confirmed this observation. The relationship doesn't hold for commercial farms in developed countries like the US, but it seems like a universal feature of developing economies, including South Africa.

Theorists have struggled to explain this strange phenomenon — if large commercial farms are less productive than small family farms, it should make sense for the owners of the big farms to just rent some of their land to family farmers, increasing output and splitting the proceeds. But for some reason that doesn't work — when small farmers manage their own land, they work harder and get more out of the land.

So if South Africa decides to go through with extensive land reform, it will be important to get things right. Farmers should only be given as much land as they're willing and able to use, and they should be supported by high-quality training and agricultural extension services.

Crucially, the government should allow the market to dictate what crops the new small farms grow, rather than issuing orders about what to plant. These policies will help make land reform a success, hopefully alleviating South Africa's unemployment and setting it on the road to economic development.

The author is a Bloomberg opinion columnist. He was an assistant professor of finance at Stony Brook University, and he blogs at Noahpinion.

If South Africa decides to go through with extensive land reform, it will be important to get things right. Farmers should only be given as much land as they're willing and able to use, and they should be supported by high-quality training and agricultural extension services.

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Risk of Ebola's spread from Congo now very high: WHO

AP

JOHANNESBURG: The risk of the deadly Ebola virus spreading from Congo is now "very high" after two confirmed cases were discovered near the Uganda border, the World Health Organization says.

The outbreak of the hemorrhagic fever in northeastern Congo is now larger than the previous one in the northwest and more complicated to contain because of a dense, highly mobile population and the threat from rebel groups.

A deadly attack in Beni, the heart of Ebola containment efforts, forced the work to be suspended for two days earlier in the week.

That led the WHO's emergencies chief, Peter Salama, to warn that insecurity, public defiance about vaccinations and politicians fanning fears ahead of elections in December could create a "perfect storm" leading the outbreak to spread.

This is the first time an Ebola outbreak has occurred in this part of Congo, affecting the provinces of North Kivu and Ituri.

As of Friday the outbreak had 124 confirmed Ebola cases, including 71 deaths. The previous outbreak in Congo's Equateur province, declared over just a week before the current one was announced, had 54 confirmed cases, including 33 deaths.

This is the first time an Ebola outbreak has occurred in this part of Congo, affecting the provinces of North Kivu and Ituri. Health workers have had to combat various rumors and fears about the disease, which spreads via the body fluids of those infected, including the dead.

Some patients have left health facilities to seek alternative care, WHO said in a statement. One infected person moved into a "red zone" where security is poor and carrying out Ebola response efforts is "extremely difficult, if not impossible." The virus moved near the Uganda border after a woman who had participated in burials of Ebola victims refused a vaccination in Beni and disappeared, local officials have said. She died on September 20 at a hospital in Tshomia on Lake Albert, which separates the countries.

The second confirmed Ebola case in Tshomia was the woman's partner, WHO said.

The UN refugee agency on Friday said it was "gravely concerned" for civilians' safety in North Kivu, which has the highest number of displaced people in Congo with an estimated more than 1 million. In August about 13,000 people fled their homes in the Beni area alone because of insecurity, the refugee agency said. Meanwhile some 200 refugees from Congo are arriving each day in Uganda, a "tiny fraction" of the everyday flow of traders and others between the countries, it said.

"While substantial progress has been made, the situation is precarious," WHO said of overall Ebola containment efforts. It continues to recommend against any travel restrictions.

Uganda has said it is preparing to begin vaccinations as needed. Congo's health ministry says more than 12,000 people have been vaccinated so far.



A health worker getting ready to perform medical checks inside an Ebola Treatment Centre run by the Alliance for International Medical Action in Beni.



Tribute to 'Madiba'

Concluding the celebrations of Heritage month dancers from the Youth Wing of the South African Indian Dance Alliance perform "Madiba Magic" dance extravaganza at the Natal Playhouse Theatre in Durban yesterday, which traces the legacy of the late former president Nelson Mandela also known by his clan name of "Madiba" as a tribute during the centenary birth celebrations of Mandela.

Libya seeks UN support to ensure security, stability

AFP

UNITED NATIONS: After a month of militia clashes that left more than 100 people dead, Libya's UN-backed foreign minister called for the country's United Nations' political mission to transform into a "security and stability" support role.

Mohamed Siala, foreign minister of the United Nation-backed Libyan unity government, did not specify if he had in mind a United Nations peacekeeping mission.

"Priority must be given to security, to stability," he told the United Nations General Assembly.

"We call for conversion of UNSMIL, which is a special political mission, into a mission of support for Libya's security and stability," he said without providing further detail.

The United Nations Support Mission for Libya (UNSMIL), led by Ghassan Salame, was set up in 2011 to assist the country's new authorities after the Nato-backed revolution which ousted Libyan dictator Moamer Kadhafi.

UNSMIL has focused on fostering political dialogue to help the North African country's transition to democracy.

Under a United Nations-brokered agreement, the unity government was set up in Tripoli but it is not recognised by a rival administration supported by military strongman Khalifa Haftar in Libya's east.

Tripoli itself has been at the centre of a battle for influence between armed groups with shifting allegiances.

Going by the information provided by an official concerned, a month of clashes left more than 100 dead south of the city before the unity government on Wednesday announced a ceasefire deal between rival militias.

According to the available reports, Siala welcomed the efforts of UNSMIL which he said enabled the conclusion of the ceasefire.

"We ask concerned parties to respect it. National and international legal bodies will pursue the authors of these tragic attacks," he said.

17 Boko Haram members dead in Lake Chad attacks

AFP

N'DJAMENA: Six people, including two soldiers, died in an overnight Boko Haram attacks near Lake Chad, security and army sources said yesterday, saying Chadian troops had killed 17 assailants in a counter-offensive.

Three forestry officials and a customs officer and two soldiers were killed in attacks on Moussarom and Ngueleya located in the Lake Chad region, south of Baga Sola, a security source said.

"The attackers were later repelled," the source said.

Chadian army spokesman Colonel Azam said "17 Boko Haram members have been killed" although he put the civilian death toll at three instead of four.

The last Boko Haram attack on the Chadian side of the lake happened on July 22 in which 18 people were killed in a village south of Daboua near the border with Niger.

Boko Haram's Islamist insurgency has devastated the region since it took up arms in 2009 in Nigeria, leaving at least 20,000 people dead, displacing more than two million others and triggering a humanitarian crisis.

Hutu rebels attack army position, 4 dead

AFP

GOMA, DR CONGO: Two soldiers and two women died overnight in attacks in DR Congo's war-torn North Kivu province, the army and a local official said yesterday.

Rwandan Hutu rebels attacked an army position at Mutabo killing the Congolese soldiers, local military spokesman Major Guillaume Djike said. And the Allied Democratic Forces (ADF), a militia rooted in Ugandan Islamism that has killed hundreds of people since 2014, was blamed for a raid on Mukoko village where two women died and hostages were taken, a local administrator said. Witnesses said a group of people had gathered in Beni town when the women's bodies were brought in but police dispersed them to head off any protests.

"They killed two women," Beni administrator Donat Kibwana said, saying it was not immediately clear how many people had been kidnapped by the militia.

Candidates vie for Governor's post in Borno; polls next March

AFP

KANO, NIGERIA: Borno state in northeast Nigeria has been devastated by Boko Haram's Islamist insurgency but candidates are lining up to become governor at elections next year.

At least 21 politicians have thrown their hat in the ring to try to secure the nomination for the ruling All Progressives Congress (APC) at party primaries this weekend.

Whoever emerges as winner will contest for the governorship at elections in March next year and likely succeed Kashim Shettima, who steps down after a maximum two four-year terms.

Muslim-majority northeast Nigeria is an APC stronghold and in 2015 an overwhelming 94 percent of voters chose Muhammadu Buhari in Borno state, securing his victory for the presidency.

APC governorship primaries are being held in most of Nigeria's 36 states but the crowded field for the Borno ticket is unusual, not least because of the huge challenges it faces.

More than 27,000 people have been killed in Borno and two neighbouring states since 2009, in one of the world's most violent conflicts that has destroyed homes and infrastructure.

Suicide bombings and attacks against both civilians and the military remain a constant threat, despite official claims that the militants are weakened to the point of defeat.

Aid agencies are meanwhile grappling with the humanitarian fall-out from the conflict, not least providing 1.8 million homeless people with food, shelter and life-saving healthcare.

Since 2016, more than $10bn in state and federal government funding has been ploughed into northeast Nigeria to improve security and help the relief effort.

On top of that has come international donor funding of emergency and humanitarian projects from tackling severe acute malnutrition to sanitation and food security.

Earlier this month, a conference in Berlin saw pledges of $2.52bn to help Nigeria and its neighbours Cameroon, Chad and Niger fight Boko Haram and deal with the aftermath of violence.

Shettima, who has been governor since 2011, is expected to contest for a seat in the Senate but has complained "Abuja-based politicians" were trying to impose their own candidate in the remote region.

The governor last month said he had no preferred candidate of his own "and no power to elect or impose a governor". He has said only God would decided his successor.

Divinely chosen or not, at the very least it can be said that Shettima has political links to many of the candidates: eight of the 21 are members of his cabinet.

Khalifa Dikwa, from the University of Maiduguri, said that was "a political strategy by Shettima to dominate the contest against the Abuja bloc and ensure only his preferred candidate wins".

The APC in Borno has opted for indirect primaries in which delegates vote for candidates on behalf of blocs of local party members.

In Nigeria, state governors control enormous financial resources and are also in charge of local political party structures and officials.

"The reason why Shettima flooded the contest with his men is to allow him to have the highest number of delegates," said political analyst Modu Mustapha.

"It is a strategy used in indirect primaries where delegates decide." Mustapha said he would not rule out a mass last-minute withdrawal from Shettima-backed candidates to make way for the preferred candidate and ask delegates to vote for him.

"Since the governor controls the party in Borno, the delegates will do as he says," he added.

Local media have said Shettima has settled on his commissioner for reconstruction, resettlement and rehabilitation, Babagana Umara, as his successor.

Umara has spearheaded a controversial policy of returning tens of thousands of displaced people from makeshift camps in the state capital Maiduguri.

Aid agencies have said basic services and infrastructure were still lacking in many towns outside the state capital. Dikwa said the struggle for power was largely about control of resources rather than any desire to bring about "meaningful improvement" to the embattled, impoverished population.

Second Nigerian minister quits

AFP

ABUJA: Nigeria's women's affairs minister yesterday handed in her resignation to President Muhammadu Buhari in the latest setback for his party before presidential polls in February.

Aisha Alhassan is the second minister to quit this month. Kemi Adeosun stepped down as finance minister over the alleged forgery of a document exempting her from compulsory national service.

"Today, I wish to transmit to the President my decision to resign as the Minister of the Federal Republic of Nigeria and withdraw my membership of the All Progressive Congress (APC)," Alhassan tweeted. In an earlier letter to Buhari, Alhassan said she was resigning from the ruling party because had been disqualified from running for governor in the eastern Taraba state.

India lambasts Pakistan at UN for supporting terrorism

IANS

UNITED NATIONS: "If we do not act now, we will have to deal with conflagration later," India's External Affairs Minister warned yesterday as she renewed India's calls for international action against terrorism with a scathing attack on Pakistan's support for terror.

Speaking in Hindi at the UN General Assembly, Swaraj said: "The demon of terrorism now stalks the world, at a faster pace somewhere, a slower pace elsewhere, but life-threatening everywhere. In our case, terrorism is bred not in some faraway land, but across our border to the west," she added.

"The killers of 9/11 met their fate; but the mastermind of 26/11 Hafiz Saeed still roams the streets of Pakistan with impunity." She accused Pakistan of "duplicity" and "hypocrisy," citing the shelter it gave Osama bin Laden.

"What America perhaps could not comprehend was that Osama would get sanctuary in a country that claimed to be America's friend and ally: Pakistan. Eventually, America's intelligence services discovered the truth of this hypocrisy, and its special forces delivered justice," she said.

Speaking at the UN General Assembly, the External Affairs Minister said: "The demon of terrorism now stalks the world, at a faster pace somewhere, a slower pace elsewhere, but life-threatening everywhere. In our case, terrorism is bred not in some faraway land, but across our border to the west."

She called for going beyond listing terrorists for sanctions by the UN and taking on their protectors, a direct reference to Pakistan.

Calling for international action against terrorists and nations protecting them, she said, "Each year, for last five years, India has been arguing from this podium that lists are not enough to check terrorists and their protectors. We need to bring them to accountability through international law."

She called for the early adoption of "one of the necessary measures in a long running war," the Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism, which was proposed by India in 1996 and has been stalled because of UN members can't agree on a definition of terrorism.

The convention would outlaw terrorism under all guises and legally require nations to not aid terrorists.

Swaraj said, "On the one hand, we want to fight terrorism; on the other, we cannot define it. This is why terrorists with a price on their head are celebrated, finances and armed as liberation heroes by a country that remains a member of the United Nations. Cruelty and barbarism are advertised as heroism."

She drew attention to Pakistan, printing postage stamps glorifying terrorists - one of the factors that led to India calling off a meeting between her and Pakistani Foreign Minister Shah Mehmood Qureshi.

Swaraj called accusations by Pakistan that India was "sabotaging the process of talks" between them "a complete lie." "We believe that talks are the only rational means to resolve the most complex of disputes," she reiterated.

Many Indian governments under different parties tried to hold talks and pursue a peace process, but "if they stopped, it was only because of Pakistan's behaviour," she said.

She recalled that in December 2016, "I personally went to Islamabad and offered a comprehensive bilateral dialogue. But soon after, Pak-sponsored terrorists attacked our air force base in Pathankot on 2nd January." "Please explain to me how we could pursue talks in the midst of terrorist bloodshed," she asked.

In a reply to Pakistan's accusations of human rights violations by India, she asked, "Who can be a greater transgressor of human rights than a terrorist?" She said, "Those who take innocent human lives in pursuit of war by other means are defenders of inhuman behaviour, not of human rights. Pakistan glorifies killers; it refuses to see the blood of innocents."

"It has become something of a habit with Pakistan to throw the dust of deceit and deception against India in order to provide some thin cover for its own guilt," Swaraj said, recalling last year's embarrassing episode for Pakistan when its Permanent Representative Maleeha Lodhi displayed a picture at the General Assembly of an injured Palestinian girl claiming she was a Kashmiri.



India's Foreign Minister Sushma Swaraj addresses the 73rd United Nations General Assembly at the United Nations in New York, yesterday.

UP cop held for shooting Apple executive to death

IANS

LUCKNOW: An Uttar Pradesh constable was yesterday arrested and booked for murder after he shot and killed a young Apple executive from close range, an official said. The state government has ordered a probe and the Union Home Minister has sought a report on the incident.

The constable and his colleague have been dismissed from service and sent to jail, the police said.

Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath said if needed a CBI inquiry would be ordered. According to a colleague of the Apple sales manager, the constable, Prashant Chowdhary, had shot at Vivek Tiwari after chasing the SUV he was driving. He had apparently failed to stop Tiwari during a late-night checking.

The incident happened around 1.30am, when Tiwari was heading home after the launch of iPhone XS and XS Max along with Sana Khan, his colleague. Khan said that after they were fired at, Tiwari got scared and drove the SUV into an underpass pillar, further sustaining injuries.

Director-General of Police O P Singh, has formed a Special Investigation Team (SIT) headed by Inspector General (Lucknow) to probe the case. Superintendent of Police (SP) crime and rural will be part of the team which has been asked to submit its report at the earliest.

Lucknow's Senior Superintendent of Police met District Magistrate Kaushalraj Sharma requesting a simultaneous magisterial inquiry. The autopsy revealed on Saturday that the bullet had hit Tiwari in the chin and got stuck between the neck and the head, leading to his death due to "profuse bleeding".

The SSP Lucknow, Kalanidhi Naithani, said the constable had been booked for murder after Khan filed an FIR.

The police said when the constable at Gomtinagar extension signalled Tiwari to stop for checking, "he tried to flee". Police sources said Tiwari sped away and his car hit a bike on which two constables were riding, "who then chased and shot him".

A police officer, not wanting to be named, said "the constable fired in self-defence."

The Additional Director General of Police (Law and Order), Anand Kumar, however, conceded that "law has been violated in the incident". He also punctured the self-defence theory floated by his own men and said that had this been the case, the policeman could have fired at the tyre of the SUV rather than directly shoot at the man.

Kumar added that this was a "shameful incident for the police force". Police had initially claimed that the bike was hit by the deceased and the constables were injured.

Muslim groups urge govt to withdraw instant divorce ordinance

IANS

HYDERABAD: Various Muslim socio-religious and political organisations came together on a common platform here on Friday night to demand the central government to withdraw the ordinance on triple talaq as it is unconstitutional.

Muslim groups representing various sects urged the government to ensure that the religious and cultural rights and freedom guaranteed to Muslims by the Constitution are implemented in letter and spirit and not tampered in any manner.

A resolution passed at the public meeting organised by the United Muslim Forum (MUF), an umbrella group of different Muslim organisations, condemned the ordinance issued last week, criminalizing triple talaq. It said the piece of legislation was enacted through backdoor.

Majlis-e-Ittehadul Muslimeen (MIM) president and Hyderabad MP Asaduddin Owaisi, Jamaat-e-Islami's president of Telangana and Odisha unit Hamid Mohammed Khan, MUF president Raheemuddin Ansari and leaders of various organisations addressed the public meeting at MIM headquarters Darussalam.

"The present government seems to be conspiring to take away the religious identity of Muslims. When it failed to get the triple talaq Bill passed in the Parliament, the government has chosen to get an ordinance promulgated in an undemocratic manner," the resolution said. It hoped that better sense would prevail and the government would reconsider its decision.

Asauddin Owaisi, in his speech, demanded that Muslims should be allowed to practice their religion as the Constitution of India has given them this right. Referring to Supreme Court judgements on Articles 377 and 497, the MP said Muslims also want to live with freedom to practice their religion.



A closer look at battle tank

Indian army officers watch as school students check a Main Battle Tank (MBT) during a display of arms and military equipment at the Polo Ground in Secunderabad, yesterday. Regiment of Artillery displayed weapons to general public marking the second anniversary of the surgical strikes.

Congress spreading lies to mislead innocent: PM

IANS

NEW DELHI: Reaching out to his party cadre in poll-bound Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan and Chhattisgarh, Prime Minister Narendra Modi yesterday accused the Congress of speaking "lies" to mislead "innocent and naive" people and insulting Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel by calling his "Statue of Unity" as one 'Made in China'.

He also alleged that the Congress was playing the role of a "failed" opposition and has now adopted the strategy of spreading fake news about the government and repeating it every day so as to mislead people.

Addressing party workers in select constituencies of the three states and in Uttar Pradesh and Jharkhand through video conferencing, he asked every BJP worker to fight against Congress' tactics and expose its lies.

"The Congress as government was corrupt and a failure, which is known to every citizen. In the last four years, the Congress has only spread lies, it has become arrogant, it has drifted away from the people, it has become insensible and it has failed to perform as an opposition," Modi said.

He was asked what the party workers should do to deal with the false and baseless allegations being made by the opposition. The Prime Minister said the Congress' only agenda is to throw muck on others, spread lies and repeat them loudly and mislead people.

Free expression deteriorated under Modi: PEN International

IANS

PUNE/NEW DELHI: India has witnessed a rising tide of violence, impunity, extended pre-trial detentions, and surveillance under the Prime Minister Narendra Modi-led NDA government, PEN International, said yesterday as it wound up the 84th PEN International Congress with representation from 80 countries in Pune. The International writers body called upon the Indian government to safeguard freedom of expression in the country.

It released a report "India: Pursuing truth in the face of intolerance" that outlines how dissenting voices, by journalists, writers, academics or students "face intimidation, harassment, prosecution, online abuse, and physical violence." The report brings together voices of writers, journalists, lawyers and academics, illustrating the varied ways in which critical voices are targeted and silenced.

It highlights "the use of overbroad laws; directed attacks online and offline; the systematic stifling of academic research and freedom; and the continued marginalisation of and hostility towards women's voices." "Laws that stifle speech; an environment hostile to dissenting views; and emboldened critics online and in the real world have cast a chill over free expression in India. Journalists and writers have been sued, intimidated, threatened, and sometimes murdered. There is little political will to amend the laws that prevent free expression or to enforce laws that protect the writer," said Salil Tripathi, Writers in Prison Committee Chair.

PEN International said in an official statement that it "calls on the Indian authorities to protect its writers, journalists and all others exercising their right to free expression" and to "bring its legislation in line with its obligations under international law".

"While this gathering has been about the promotion of peace-building and celebrating the power of the written word, it is also about protecting free expression and remembering those of us who pay the ultimate price for exercising this fundamental right. Today we honour Gauri Lankesh, who was shot to death outside her home a year ago. Even though we welcome the progress that has been in the investigation, we're still waiting for justice. Unless the cycle of impunity is broken, those who want to use violence to silence will be embolden to do so," said PEN International President Jennifer Clement.

Clement unequivocally said there has been "a rising tide of violence, impunity, extended pre-trial detentions, impunity and surveillance".

Pakistan rejects IMF request for CPEC contract details

INTERNEWS

ISLAMABAD: The International Monetary Fund (IMF) is looking for contract details of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) projects amid the West's deepening interest in the strategic arrangement between the two "all weather" friends.

The visiting IMF delegation raised the issue of CPEC deals during a meeting with the officials of the Ministry of Planning and Development, according to the sources.

The Pakistani side was led by Federal Minister for Planning, Development and Reform Makhdoom Khusro Bakhtiar.

"The ministry gives an overview of the macroeconomic outlook and progress on the CPEC initiative to the IMF team," said the sources.

The IMF staff-level delegation is visiting Pakistan to assess the country's macroeconomic situation. Its Washington-based Mission Chief, Harald Finger, is leading the delegation that comprises officials from the fund's Lending Policy Division.

The sources said the IMF delegation inquired about the contract agreements of the energy projects of CPEC. However, the ministry did not provide any information, arguing that only the Ministry of Energy has the details.

The sources said the government was under no obligation to provide details of the CPEC contracts to a third party, particularly when there was no formal arrangement with the IMF at this stage.

"The disclosure of Chinese financing deals under CPEC has been described as one of the disadvantages of going for an IMF bailout programme during a briefing to Prime Minister Imran Khan," said the sources.

CPEC has remained a matter of interest for international financial institutions and the western countries since its launch in 2014. Initially, the size of the CPEC portfolio was $46bn which, after the inclusion of some new projects, has grown to $60bn.

The PTI government is currently assessing its options to arrange about $11bn loans to deal with the external-sector problems. Among the options are IMF programme, Chinese financial assistance and oil on deferred payments from Saudi Arabia.

The issue of the progress on CPEC projects and official bilateral flows from China also came up for discussions during the plenary meeting between the IMF and Finance Minister Asad Umar, which was held on Thursday, the sources said.

CPEC has remained a matter of interest for international financial institutions and the western countries since its launch in 2014. Initially, the size of the CPEC portfolio was $46bn which, after the inclusion of some new projects, has grown to $60bn.

The US embassy officials also raised the issue of transparency in CPEC deals during their interaction with the Ministry of Finance officials on Saturday.

Pakistan has already brushed aside criticism on growing indebtedness of the country due to CPEC, saying the share of the CPEC loans was only $6bn or 6.3 percent in total outstanding external debt of $95 billion as of end June this year.

"The CPEC deals are open and transparent," said Noor Ahmad, a spokesman for the Ministry of Finance.

"The IMF delegation was informed that at present, 22 projects worth $28.6bn were under various phases of implementation in CPEC," said Hasaan Daud Butt, the CPEC project coordinator.

The planning minister informed the IMF delegation that Pakistan was exploring the possibility of completing the $9bn mainline project of Pakistan Railways on the build-operate-transfer (BOT) basis.

Over a year ago, the IMF had done an in-depth analysis of CPEC as part of Article-IV consultations.

The IMF report has then stated that the CPEC infrastructure and transport projects are financed by long-term concessional government borrowing from China.

It adds that the CPEC projects in the energy sector involve foreign direct investment and commercial borrowing from Chinese financial institutions, either by majority foreign-owned joint ventures or Chinese investors.

But the fund's report has mentioned risks to Pakistan's debt sustainability It underlines that the CPEC-related outflows would peak at about $3.5bn to $4.5bn per annum by fiscal year 2024-25.

More than one and half years ago, the Ministry of Energy had provided financing details of eight energy projects having cumulative generation capacity of 7,880 megawatts and being set up at a cost of $12.54bn.



Sharing the joy of freedom

A Pakistani fisherman, who was released by the Indian government, kisses his son as he arrives in the port city of Karachi, yesterday. The Indian government released 14 Pakistani fishermen held for violating its territorial waters as a goodwill gesture.

CPEC to be made demand-driven programme

INTERNEWS

ISLAMABAD: In a strategic decision, China has decided to pull out Pakistan from its economic morass by making the China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) a demand-driven programme, a top official at the commerce ministry revealed.

To this end, it would extend significant unilateral trade concessions to Pakistan, to be announced in the presence of Prime Minister Imran Khan at the First China International Import Expo in Shanghai in early November, the official said on condition of anonymity.

"So far, the CPEC was supply-driven and, to this effect, the top Chinese authorities have decided to make it based on Islamabad's priorities and demands, so as to make the CPEC project more favourable towards Pakistan," he said.

The official said the Chinese leadership in Beijing had realised that Pakistan was badly mired in debt, and record trade and current account deficits.

If it was not bailed out in time, another major economy could misguide the authorities in Islamabad and blame Beijing for the economic mess. "Keeping this factor in mind, Beijing has decided to be part of the solution to the fiscal mayhem Pakistan is facing," he said.

Moreover, China was determined to make the CPEC — the showcase project of the Belt and Road Initiative a success story at any cost.

This is why further investment on the CPEC project would be made keeping in view the priorities and demands of the Pakistan government, so as boost the industrial sector, the official said.

He said the anticipated unilateral Chinese trade concessions would help to reduce the bilateral trade deficit of more than $14bn. Pakistan's exports to China stood at about $2bn in the financial year which end in June, whereas Chinese imports topped $16bn.

Afghan policeman shoots 2 officers to death in latest 'insider attack'

AP

KABUL: Two Afghan police officers were gunned down by a fellow policeman in southern Kandahar province, the latest in so-called "insider" attacks in the war-battered country, a spokesman said yesterday.

According to Aziz Ahmad Azizi, the provincial governor's spokesman, three other policemen were wounded in the attack late on Friday night.

The incident took place at a remote police outpost in Raghistan district. Azizi said the attacker, who had joined the police force around a year ago, was able to flee the area.

A police investigation has been launched into the attack. No militant group immediately claimed responsibility but blame is likely to fall on the Taliban.

In the past, perpetrators of insider attacks — either members of the Afghan forces or assailants wearing uniforms of various Afghan troops — would turn the gun on their fellow soldiers or policemen and would later flee the scene of the attack to join the Taliban.

In other developments, six Afghan soldiers were injured when a military helicopter crash-landed in northern Parwan province yesterday afternoon, Ghafor Ahmad Jawed, spokesman for the Afghan defence ministry, said.

Jawed said the crash, which occurred in Koh-e Safi district, was caused by a technical malfunction and was not the result of enemy fire.

PML-N awaits PPP's reply on electoral alliance

INTERNEWS

LAHORE: The Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) optimistically awaits the Pakistan Peoples Party's (PPP) reply on its offer for a 'limited' electoral alliance whereas the latter is said to be deliberating on different proposals within the party for a 'full scale' by-election association,.

PML-N Chairman Raja Zafarul Haq said, "We have not yet heard from the PPP regarding the offer to forge a limited by-election alliance."

The PML-N chairman said they would wait for a definitive answer from the PPP before drawing any conclusion, adding that they were aware of the pressures PPP was in due to financial inquiries against their leaders.

"PML-N presented this offer to the PPP after assessing that it was unable to find suitable candidates for the NA-53 Islamabad and NA-60 Rawalpindi seats," said Haq.

On September 23, Haq along with other party leaders met PPP Secretary General Nayyar Bukhari to seek support for the upcoming by-election.

In the meeting, Bukhari sought time from Haq to talk to PPP's senior leadership for a possible alliance.

The instructions to talk to PPP for an alliance were given directly by PML-N supremo Nawaz Sharif, according to a senior party leader.

The leader further revealed that the content of forging a full-scale alliance by asking for only a limited alliance was to give the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf a tough time not only in the by-election but also in both the houses.

Senator Mushahidullah Khan said, "With both the parties supporting each other in the by-elections, chances of winning will increase."

The senator said one option that was discussed in the first All Parties Conference was to allow the runners-up of those constituencies to contest the by-election.

Mushahid said the second option could be to support PPP in Sindh and in return ask for its support for the remaining constituencies. He said the union for by-election would have a healthy impact on voters.

On who ordered to make another alliance with the PPP, he said to make such an offer, approval has to be sought from Sharif first.

Another senior party leader Rana Sanaullah surprisingly ruled out the option of any alliance with the PPP. Sanaullah said: "Who needs an alliance with PPP."

He said discussion between the two (abovementioned) leaders was limited to twin cities, adding that it should not be seen as both parties forging any alliance.

On the other hand, he also criticised the PTI's Punjab government for deciding to remove government servants accused in the Model Town carnage case from their seats. "The decision will create unrest among the bureaucrats working in the Punjab government," said Sanaullah.



Celebration of a utility vehicle

A driver takes part in the annual Deni Ute Muster in Deniliquin yesterday. This year marks the 20th anniversary of the Deni Ute Muster where people gather to celebrate the ubiquitous Australian utility (ute) vehicle.

Maldives election body endorses Solih's victory

REUTERS

MALE: The Elections Commission of Maldives yesterday officially declared opposition leader Ibrahim Mohamed Solih winner of the country's national election, defeating president Abdulla Yameen who had sought a delay in publication of the final results.

The Election Commission Secretary-General Salah Rasheed said Solih's Maldivian Democratic Party had won by a 16.8 percentage margin, with an 89.2 percent voter turnout.

Election Chief Ahmed Shareef said the commission had received 423 complaints about the election by Thursday, of which 194 were outstanding.

"The Complaints Bureau and the Commission have decided that none of the complaints filed with the commission will affect the outcome of the election," Shareef told reporters in Male.

He said all five election commissioners had received threatening telephone calls after Sunday's election.

"We also received several phone calls in which we (the commissioners) were threatened with physical harm. We did not respond to it because the state's security services were providing security arrangements for all the commissioners."

The police and military have said they will uphold the result of the election.

Yameen conceded defeat on Monday, but his party later requested a delay in announcing the official result, which some in the opposition believed may have been an attempt to have the election resulted annulled





A man looks for his belongings amid the debris of his destroyed house in Palu in Central Sulawesi yesterday, after a strong earthquake and tsunami struck the area. RIGHT: Cracks on a road in Palu after the earthquake and tsunami struck the area.

Over 380 dead in Indonesian quake, tsunami

Hundreds had gathered for a festival on the beach in the city of Palu on Friday when waves as high as six metres smashed onshore at dusk, sweeping many to their death and destroying anything in their path, following a 7.5 magnitude earthquake.

PALU, INDONESIA: At least 384 people were killed, many swept away as giant waves crashed onto beaches, when a major earthquake and tsunami hit the Indonesian island of Sulawesi, authorities said yesterday.

Hundreds had gathered for a festival on the beach in the city of Palu on Friday when waves as high as six metres smashed onshore at dusk, sweeping many to their death and destroying anything in their path, following a 7.5 magnitude earthquake.

"When the (tsunami) threat arose yesterday, people were still doing their activities on the beach and did not immediately run and they became victims," Sutopo Purwo Nugroho, the spokesman for Indonesia's disaster mitigation agency BNPB said in a briefing in Jakarta.

"The tsunami didn't come by itself, it dragged cars, logs, houses, it hit everything on land," Nugroho said, adding that the tsunami had travelled across the open sea at speeds of 800kph before striking the shoreline.

Some people climbed six metre trees to escape the tsunami and survived, he said.

Amateur footage shown by local TV stations showed waves crashing into houses along Palu's shoreline, scattering shipping containers and flooding into a mosque in the city.

Around 16,700 people were evacuating to 24 centres in Palu.

Aftershocks rocked the coastal city until Saturday afternoon following the massive earthquake on Friday, which triggered the tsunami. The series of earthquakes were felt in an area with 2.4 million people.

Nugroho described the damage as "extensive" and said thousands of houses, hospitals, shopping malls and hotels had collapsed. A bridge washed away and the main highway to Palu was cut off due to a landslide.

Bodies of some victims were found trapped under the rubble of collapsed buildings, he said, adding 540 people were injured and 29 were missing. Dozens of injured people were being treated in makeshift medical tents set up outdoors, TV images showed.

Photos confirmed by authorities showed bodies being lined up along the street on Saturday, some in bags and some with their faces covered with clothes.

Nugroho said the casualties and the damage could be greater along the coastline 300 km (190 miles) north of Palu, an area called Donggala, which is closer to the epicentre of the quake.

Communications "were totally crippled with no information" from Donggala, Nugroho said. More than 600,000 people live in Donggala and Palu.

"We're now getting limited communications about the destruction in Palu city, but we have heard nothing from Donggala and this is extremely worrying. There are more than 300,000 people living there," the Red Cross said in a statement, adding that its staff and volunteers were heading to the affected areas.

"This is already a tragedy, but it could get much worse," it said.

Vice-President Jusuf Kalla said the death toll could rise to thousands.

Indonesia's meteorological and geophysics agency BMKG issued a tsunami warning after the quake, but lifted it 34 minutes later.

The agency on Saturday was widely criticised for not informing that a tsunami had hit Palu, though officials said waves had come within the time the warning was issued.

The quake and tsunami caused a major power outage that cut communications around Palu making it difficult for authorities to coordinate rescue efforts.

The military has started sending in cargo planes with aid, authorities said, from Jakarta and other cities, but evacuees still badly need food and other basic necessities.

The city's airport has been reopened only for relief efforts and will remain closed until Oct. 4 for commercial flights, Nugroho said. The airport's runway and air traffic control tower were damaged in the quake, authorities said.

President Joko Widodo is scheduled to visit evacuation centres in Palu on Sunday.

Indonesia sits on the Pacific Ring of Fire and is regularly hit by earthquakes.

In August, a series of major quakes killed over 500 people in the tourist island of Lombok and destroyed dozens of villages along its northern coast.

Palu was hit by tsunami in 1927 and 1968, according to BNPB.

Four ministers from Thai govt form party ahead of polls

REUTERS

BANGKOK: Four ministers from Thailand's military government launched a new political party yesterday, amid speculation they will back Prime Minister Prayuth Chan-ocha to remain in power beyond a general election promised by May.

May next year is the most recent deadline Prayuth's junta has set for a vote its critics hope will return Thailand to civilian rule after more than four years of military government, although it has repeatedly extended the timeline.

The Palang Pracharat party, whose name is an echo of the military government's economic and social development policy, will be led by Industry Minister Uttama Savanayana, who vowed to help Thailand overcome its political divide.

"We have wasted enough time and opportunity to develop our country," Uttama told reporters and party members at the launch, referring to decade-long political conflicts between supporters of ousted premiers Thaksin and Yingluck Shinawatra and the pro-military royalist establishment.

The announcement came days after Prayuth said he was "interested in politics." The four ministers are the first of Prayuth's cabinet members to form a political party, possibly to support his role in the next election. Like Prayuth, the ministers said they would not resign from their current posts.

Typhoon batters Okinawa, churns towards mainland

AFP

SHIBUSHI, JAPAN: A powerful typhoon pummelled Japan's southern island of Okinawa yesterday, injuring at least 17, as weather officials warned the storm would rip through the Japanese archipelago over the weekend.

Typhoon Trami, packing maximum gusts of 216km per hour near its centre, was forecast to hit the mainland early today and cause extreme weather across the country into Monday.

Television footage showed branches ripped from trees by strong winds blocking a main street in the regional capital Naha, as well as torrential horizontal rain and massive waves splashing over breakwaters on a remote island in the area.

Local policemen in rain jackets wielding chainsaws were battling the furious wind to remove fallen trees. The gusts were strong enough to overturn a truck and smash the glass windows of a bank.

Some 700 people were evacuated to shelters in Okinawa and electricity was cut to nearly 200,000 homes, public broadcaster NHK said.

At least 386 flights were cancelled, mainly in western Japan, according to NHK.

West Japan Railway said it would suspend all services in the Osaka region and cancel some Shinkansen bullet trains by noon today.

Seventeen people suffered minor injuries in storm-related accidents in Okinawa and several houses suffered some damage but no one was feared dead, local officials said.

"The number may rise further as we are in the middle of sorting out figures," said Masatsune Miyazato, an official at the island's disaster-management office. "People in Okinawa are used to typhoons but we are strongly urging them to stay vigilant," he said.

The weather agency warned people across Japan to be on alert for strong winds, high waves and heavy rain.

"The typhoon is feared to bring record rainfalls and violent winds over large areas," agency official Yasushi Kajiwara told reporters.



A vehicle damaged by heavy rain and wind caused by Typhoon Trami along a road in Uruma, Japan, yesterday.

"Please stay on alert, evacuate early and ensure your safety," the official said.

After raking the outlying islands, the typhoon is forecast to pick up speed and approach western Japan on Sunday "with a very strong force" as it barrels over the mainland, he added.

There have already been heavy downpours in large areas of western and eastern Japan, including the capital, as the storm spurred a seasonal rain front.

The weather agency issued a warning of landslides in Wakayama, western Japan, where local authorities separately announced that a local river had reached "dangerous levels".

Fishermen in Kagoshima bay, where the typhoon is expected to make landfall, were already making preparations, tying down their boats as Trami approached — even as forecasters warned that another typhoon was following in its course.

Angler Masakazu Hirase said: "It's dreadful because we already know there's another typhoon after this one but you cannot compete with nature. We do what we can to limit the damage." If the forecast holds, it will be the latest in a series of extreme natural events to strike Japan.

Western regions are still recovering from the most powerful typhoon to strike the country in a quarter of a century in early September. Typhoon Jebi claimed 11 lives and shut down Kansai Airport, the main regional airport.

Malaysia's Anwar in multi-cornered race for Parliament seat

AP

PORT DICKSON, MALAYSIA: Malaysia's prime minister-in-waiting Anwar Ibrahim yesterday kicked off his campaign for a by-election in coming weeks but faces a multi-cornered fight in his bid to return to active politics.

The by-election followed the resignation of a lawmaker to make way for Anwar's comeback. Escorted by scores of supporters including some cabinet ministers, Anwar submitted his nomination papers at the town hall in the southern coastal town of Port Dickson.

He faces six other candidates including a former aide who had accused Anwar of abusing him a decade ago, leading to Anwar's conviction in 2015. Anwar, who has said his conviction was politically motivated, was freed and pardoned by the king shortly after his alliance won a stunning electoral victory in May that led to the first change of power since independence.

"This is a sure win for Anwar. Port Dickson voters will want a heavyweight to represent them," said James Chin, head of Asia Institute in Australia's University of Tasmania.

Anwar, 71, who earlier shook hands with Saiful in the hall, told local media he wasn't bothered with Saiful contending and that he would focus on convincing the 75,770 voters in Port Dickson to win the Oct. 13 poll.

Saiful, 33, reportedly said he would not raise the case in his campaigning as he wants to move forward and see more young leaders in the political arena. Other candidates include a former chief minister and a military veteran.

Anwar is the designated successor to Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad, currently the world's oldest leader at 93.

Anwar was once a high-flyer in the former ruling coalition but was convicted in the abuse case and of corruption after a power struggle in 1998 with Mahathir, who was prime minister for 22 years until 2003. Anwar was freed in 2004 and convicted again in 2015, which he said was concocted to destroy his political career.

Russia slams US, says vote meddling claim baseless

AP

UNITED NATIONS: Russia's foreign minister trashed accusations of Russian meddling abroad as "baseless" and used the podium at the UN's biggest event to tear into US policies in Iran, Syria and Venezuela. He later declared that US-Russian relations "are bad and probably at their all-time low."

In a rapid-fire, unforgiving speech yesterday, Sergei Lavrov pounded away at "self-serving" unilateral moves by US President Donald Trump and assailed crippling Western sanctions against Russia as "political blackmail."

Lavrov deflected accusations of Russian interference in the 2016 US presidential election, a nerve agent attack in Britain and other meddling abroad — despite mounting evidence of a broad, coordinated influence campaign.

He criticised "baseless accusations of interference in the internal affairs of certain countries" and turned it around against the West, accusing unnamed forces of "overt endeavors to undermine democratically elected governments," in an apparent reference to US and EU support for Russia's neighbors and the Syrian opposition.

He expanded on that at a news conference later, giving examples of US interference that included the US envoy for

Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov declared that US-Russian relations "are bad and probably at their all-time low".

Ukraine, Kurt Volcker, promoting efforts to replace the 2015 agreement reached by leaders of Russia, Ukraine, France and Germany to end the violence in eastern Ukraine.

He also cited the case of Maria Butina, who has pleaded not guilty to US charges that she tried to infiltrate US political organizations as a covert Russian agent. Russia has called her jailing "preposterous."

In his UN address, Lavrov was particularly angry over US and EU sanctions over Russia's actions abroad, saying, "We see the desire of several Western nations to preserve their self-proclaimed status as world leaders ... and do not hesitate to use any methods including political blackmail, economic pressure and brute force."

He defended the 2015 deal aimed at curbing Iran's nuclear programme and said "we will do everything possible" to preserve it. Lavrov called Trump's decision to pull out of the deal part of a dangerous trend of unilateral measures that risk damaging the post-World War II world order.

Later, at the press conference, he welcomed Monday's agreement by the five powers still supporting the nuclear agreement — Russia, China, Britain, France and Germany — to establish a financing facility in the European Union to facilitate doing business with Iran, a key part of the deal which is threatened by US sanctions.

"All avenues, all ways are being discussed for Iran to receive what was promised by the Security Council," he said, including a barter system for oil.

Lavrov defended the United Nations — where Russia holds veto power on the Security Council — as the only legitimate place to resolve international issues and disputes.

Russia is framing itself as a counterweight to US power around the world, and Lavrov has been manoeuvring in talks at the UN this week to shape the future of Syria, influence non-proliferation negotiations with North Korea and bolster Venezuela's embattled president.

Lavrov met on Friday with Syrian Foreign Minister Walid Al Moallem at the UN Russia is rebuilding trade and military ties with Syria as it looks to a postwar future. While tensions linger over the last rebel stronghold of Idlib, Russia is determined to keep Syria solidly anchored in its sphere of influence over the long term, as a foothold in the Middle East and as a warning to the US and its allies against future interference.



Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov addressing the 73rd session of the United Nations General Assembly at UN headquarters, in New York, yesterday.

Lavrov said talks have begun between US national security adviser John Bolton and his Russian counterpart who are planning their third meeting since June. He said this was at least an effort to maintain relations and "to roll back and lower" tensions.

He appeared to accuse unnamed Trump officials of purposely getting in the way of improved US -Russia relations, claiming that Trump and Russian President Vladimir Putin held "quite constructive" meetings in Germany and Finland, but those responsible for implementing the agreements that were reached "are in no hurry to do that." He cited the absence of any US-Russia talks on important issues including counter-terrorism, cyber-security, strategic stability and major arms control agreements. He said meetings of foreign affairs and defense officials, intelligence and security agencies are also on hold.

"The time for the negotiations is ripe, or I would say overripe," he said. "The dialogue right now is in limbo."

Three injured in eastern Ukraine blast

AFP

DONETSK: Three people were injured in an explosion in rebel stronghold Donetsk, in east of Ukraine, including a candidate for the post of the self-proclaimed republic's leader.

The incident took place just four weeks after the head of the Donetsk People's Republic (DPR) Alexander Zakharchenko was killed in a bombing at a cafe in broad daylight.

Yesterday's explosion happened near the local communist party's offices as the last participants of a party congress were leaving the building, a DPR police officer said.

Igor Khakimzyanov, the party's candidate for the post of the DPR leader, was among the wounded.

"According to reports, Igor Khakimzyanov suffered burns when he was collecting signatures near the entrance," Boris Litvinov, the head of the communist party said.

Bulgaria seizes 712kg of heroin bound for Austria

AP

SOFIA: Bulgarian customs officials say they have seized 712kg of heroin found in two Iranian trucks entering Bulgaria from Turkey.

Officials yesterday valued the record heroin haul at $27m.

The drugs were found in two Iran-registered trucks at the Kapitan Andreevo checkpoint on the Turkish border. They were carrying construction materials and were bound for Austria.

Haskovo regional prosecutor Ivan Stoyanov said that the heroin was hidden in sealed bags stashed between the officially declared goods.

The two drivers, both Iranian citizens, were detained and could face up to 20 years in jail, if convicted on drug trafficking charges.



Separatist protesters throw coloured powder towards Mossos d'Esquadra officers, in Barcelona, yesterday.

Six arrested in Catalonia clash

REUTERS

BARCELONA: Six people were arrested in Barcelona yesterday as protesters for and against independence scuffled with police, two days before the first anniversary of a vote on secession that polarised the Spanish region.

Two people were arrested after separatist protesters threw powder paint at riot police who were keeping them apart from a rival unionist demonstration.

Another four were arrested later yesterday.

Fourteen people received treatment for injuries sustained in the protests, all of them minor, local press reported.

Tensions remain high in the independence-minded region a year after the October 1 vote deemed illegal by Madrid but celebrated by separatist Catalans.

Pro-independence groups had camped out overnight on Friday to prevent a demonstration in support of police deployed in Catalonia during last year's failed bid to split from Spain.

The demonstration went ahead but was forced to take a different route.

Voters chose overwhelmingly to become independent, though turnout was low with those against secession largely boycotting the vote.

According to Catalan authorities almost 1000 people were injured last year after police tried to stop voting at polling stations across the region.

Despite managing a vital if narrow victory in regional elections last December, Catalan pro independence parties have struggled to retain momentum this year with many of their best known leaders either in self imposed exile or in detention awaiting trial or charges for their role in organising last year's vote and subsequent declaration of independence.

Yesterday, Oriol Junqueras, one of nine Catalan leaders in pre-trial jail since late last year, announced he would run in European Parliament elections next year.

"Standing as a candidate for the European elections is the best way to denounce the regression in democratic values and repression we have seen from the Spanish government".

Serbia-Kosovo land swap plan sparks protest

AP

PRISTINA: Tension flared in a familiar section of the Balkans as thousands of people marched yesterday in Kosovo's capital against a possible territory swap with former war foe Serbia, while the Serbian government put its troops on alert after special police were deployed to Kosovo's Serb-dominated north.

Serbia reacted after Kosovo's special police moved into an area around the Kosovo side of the strategic Gazivode Lake, Marko Djuric, director of Serbia's Office for Kosovo and Metohija, said.

Kosovar President Hashim Thaci visited the area yesterday. Djuric said special troops must not be deployed unannounced to northern Kosovo, where the country's Serbian minority population is concentrated.

Serbian media said Belgrade complained to Nato Secretary-General Jens Stoltenberg about the incident.

Serbia does not recognise Kosovo's 2008 declaration of independence, but their governments have been in European Union-mediated negotiations for seven years. The two sides have been told they must normalise relations as a precondition to EU membership.

Thaci has mentioned a "border correction" being part of the discussions. Serbian President Aleksandar Vucic has suggested an exchange of territories could help end the dispute.

One idea that has been floated by politicians in both countries involves exchanging predominantly ethnic Albanian Presevo Valley in Serbia with Kosovo's Serb-populated north.

However, the idea has faced opposition from Germany and other EU nations, which have said they fear a Kosovo-Serbia trade could trigger demands for territory revisions in other parts of the volatile Balkans.



Supporters of Kosovo's opposition party Vetevendosje take part in an anti-government protest, in Pristina, yesterday.

Call for food label changes after sandwich death in UK

AFP

LONDON: The family of a British teenager who died from an allergic reaction to a sandwich called for a change in the law on food labelling, as an inquest into her death ended.

Natasha Ednan-Laperouse, 15, who suffered from numerous allergies, went into cardiac arrest on a 2016 flight from London to Nice after eating a baguette containing sesame seeds from sandwich chain Pret A Manger.

There was no allergen information on the packaging or the store's food display cabinet, but this is not required by British law.

A coroner concluded the teen had been "reassured by that" and said he would advise the government on whether food labelling regulations should be tightened.

Nadim Ednan-Laperouse, the victim's father, said the inquest "should serve as a watershed moment to make meaningful change to save lives".

"If Pret A Manger were following the law, then the law was playing Russian Roulette with our daughter's life," he said in a family statement.

"It's clear that the food labelling laws as they stand today are not fit for purpose and it is now time to change the law."

Natasha Ednan-Laperouse had the fatal reaction aboard a British Airways plane in July 2016 after buying the baguette, which had sesame seeds inside its dough, from a Pret outlet at London Heathrow airport.

At the time, the company relied on stickers on food display units highlighting that allergy information was available by asking staff or visiting its website.

During the hearing it emerged the chain had received a "specific warning" the previous year about the dangers of not signposting the allergen after multiple sesame-related incidents.

Erdogan opens mosque in Cologne amid protests

AFP

COLOGNE: Thousands of demonstrators have hit the streets of Cologne yesterday as Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan opened one of Europe's largest mosques at the end of his visit to Germany, with police out in force to manage rival rallies.

The inauguration capped a controversial three-day state visit aimed at repairing frayed ties with Berlin after two years of tensions.

During his stay in Berlin, Erdogan met twice with Angela Merkel for talks, with both leaders signalling their interest in a cautious rapprochement.

But the German chancellor stressed that "deep differences" remained on civil rights and other issues.

Before returning home, Erdogan travelled to the western city of Cologne where several thousand critics turned out to protest everything from Turkey's record on human rights to press freedom.

At one of the rallies on the bank of the Rhine, demonstrators waved banners reading: "Erdogan not welcome".

Erdogan supporters meanwhile gathered near the Cologne Central Mosque, an imposing dome-shaped building commissioned by the shadowy, Turkish-controlled Ditib organisation.

In his speech at the mosque inauguration, Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan said his visit to Germany had been "successful" and strengthened German-Turkish ties at "a critical period".

Cologne police cordoned off a large area around the mosque for safety reasons, but thousands of Erdogan supporters spilled into the side streets, hoping for a glimpse of the Turkish leader.

Many waved Turkey's red and white flag or held up pictures of Erdogan, with crowds cheerfully breaking into regular chants of the president's name or shouting "Who is the greatest? Turkey".

Both Cologne mayor Henriette Reker and the state's premier Armin Laschet declined to attend the mosque ceremony.

The snubs echoed the lukewarm welcome the Turkish leader received at a state dinner on Friday evening hosted by German President Frank-Walter Steinmeier, which several opposition politicians boycotted. Merkel also skipped the banquet.

Ties between the two Nato countries soured after Berlin criticised Ankara's crackdown on opponents following a failed 2016 coup, which saw tens of thousands arrested.

Tensions eased somewhat after several high-profile German-Turkish nationals were released this year, but five remain behind bars.

Merkel, whose country is home to more than three million ethnic Turks, stressed the need for continued dialogue to overcome disagreements.

But she also highlighted Germany's interest in a "stable" Turkey, which she relies on to help stem the flow of migrants to Europe.

Erdogan, seeking international allies as he spars with US President Donald Trump and the Turkish economy is in turmoil, likewise struck a conciliatory tone.

In his speech at the mosque inauguration, he said his visit to Germany had been "successful" and strengthened German-Turkish ties at "a critical period".

But he again lashed Germany for not taking stronger action against "terrorists" like supporters of the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK) or followers of Fethullah Gulen, whom he blames for the coup attempt.

He also said he wished Germans had shown more support for Turkish-origin footballer Mesut Ozil, who recently quit the Germany team over perceived racism and discrimination.

Cologne is located in North Rhine-Westphalia state which is home to significant numbers of ethnic Turks, many of whom moved to Germany as so-called "guest workers" from the 1960s.

The giant Cologne Central Mosque opened its doors in 2017 after eight years of construction and budget overruns, but had yet to be formally inaugurated.





Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan attends the opening ceremony of new Cologne Central Mosque, in Cologne, Germany, yesterday. BELOW: Police stand guard as people gather around the new Cologne Central Mosque.

Danish police free kidnap suspects

REUTERS

COPENHAGEN: Danish police said yesterday they had questioned and later released two suspects who were found travelling in the Swedish-registered black Volvo that sparked a major crime search on Friday.

Police briefly shut bridges and ferry links to Sweden and Germany as they hunted for the car, which Sweden's *Aftonbladet* newspaper said was wanted in connection with a kidnapping.

The two suspects, who police said were thought to be linked to a "serious crime," were later freed. The pair were detained after being seen acting suspiciously near the scene of the potential attack.

The investigation continues, police said, but gave no further details.

"The Volvo was located nearby, and its behaviour close to the people under threat ... indicated that an attack was about to happen," chief police inspector Jorgen Bergen Skov said.

Friday's search, in which the country's armed forces also took part, briefly shut the Oresund bridge and tunnel, a near 16km road and rail link with Sweden. Other bridges, ferry services and Copenhagen's main railway station were also temporarily shut.

Security flaw hits UK Conservatives' conference app

REUTERS

BIRMINGHAM: British Prime Minister Theresa May's Conservative Party apologised after releasing a phone app for the annual party conference that let members of the public log in as senior government ministers and view their personal details.

Dawn Foster, a columnist with the *Guardian* newspaper, discovered that a flaw in the app allowed users to log in as anyone attending the party conference, simply by entering an email address.

It meant the mobile phone numbers of all those attending the four-day event - journalists, party members and lawmakers, including senior government ministers — could be accessed.

On Twitter, Foster showed how she had been able to log into the system as former foreign secretary Boris Johnson.

"It's let me login as Boris Johnson, and just straight up given me all the details used for his registration," she wrote. "I'm the most tech illiterate person alive, and I've done this, imagine there are plenty more security bugs."

The loophole in the app was closed after the security breach was pointed out to the party but not before the details of some politicians had been accessed and in some instances changed.

A journalist from the BuzzFeed website said at least two cabinet ministers had received prank calls from the public as a consequence.

"The technical issue has been resolved and the app is now functioning securely," a Conservative spokesman said. "We are investigating the issue further and apologise for any concern caused."

Last year, May's major conference speech descended into chaos after she suffered a coughing fit, a prankster gained access to the stage to hand her the form given to sacked employees, and some letters of her party's slogans dropped to the ground from a sign on the stage behind her as she spoke.

"I think people will see a really impressive conference all round this year," Conservative Party Chairman Brandon Lewis told Sky News before news of the security breach was revealed yesterday.



Anti-nuclear protest

Protesters from Belgium, The Netherlands and Germany gather at the nuclear power plant to claim the immediate shutdown of the nuclear power plants Tihange 2 and Doel3, in Tihange, Belgium, yesterday.

Powerful storm brings heavy rain to Greece

AP

ATHENS: A powerful Mediterranean storm brought torrential rain to southern Greece as civil protection services remained on alert across most of the country yesterday despite word that the turbulent weather had lost force as it moved east.

Winds of up to 90 kph were reported as the storm moved past the southwestern tip of the Peloponnese. It then lashed the northeastern part of the peninsula and traveled closer to Athens, the Greek capital.

People were evacuated from the eastern Peloponnese seaside village of Nea Kios, which was partly flooded and without electricity. Elsewhere in the Peloponnese region, rivers overflowed and some damage has been reported.

The Hellenic Fire Service reported that calls had come in from towns near the city of Corinth requesting help rescuing people from cars trapped in flooded streets and evacuating residents from homes.

The powerful storm — which was being called Zorba locally — was expected to bring heavy rain to the greater Athens area yesterday as it rolled toward islands in the Aegean Sea and along Turkey's coast. All ferry service from mainland ports near Athens was cancelled.

Police said traffic on the main highway between Athens and the Peloponnese was closed some 54 km west of the capital due to flooding.

A flight from London to the southwestern city of Kalamata was diverted to Athens, but weather-related flight delays were limited.

Heart attacks account for 12% of deaths in EU

ANATOLIA

ANKARA: Heart attacks caused 12 percent of all deaths in the European Union in 2015, Eurostat revealed yesterday on the World Heart Day.

Among the Member States, the highest rate of deaths caused by heart attacks were seen in Lithuania (38 percent), followed by Latvia (29 percent) and Slovakia (27 percent).

In these countries, more females died of heart attacks than males.

Meanwhile, the lowest share of deaths caused by heart attacks were registered in France and the Netherlands (both 6 percent), followed by Portugal (7 percent). In these countries, more men than women die of heart attacks.

Among all registered death cases, 53 percent of men and 47 percent of women suffered the coronary heart diseases with lethal ending.

Around 643,000 people died from ischaemic heart diseases out of over 5.2 million death cases (excluding injury, poisoning and certain other consequences of external causes).

In Turkey, the report revealed, around 64,700 people died from ischaemic heart diseases out of around 397,000 total death cases (excluding injury, poisoning and certain other consequences of external causes) in 2015.

Between 2005 and 2015, deaths from ischaemic heart diseases fell by 30.3 percent for men and 34.3 percent for women, the Eurostat said.

Every year, an estimated 17 million people die of cardiovascular diseases, particularly heart attacks and strokes, according to the World Health Organization.



Waves hit the cliffs in front of the ancient Temple of Poseidon during bad weather at Cape Sounion, in southern Athens, yesterday.

Trump orders FBI probe of Kavanaugh

AFP

WASHINGTON: US President Donald Trump yesterday ordered a new FBI investigation into sexual assault allegations against his Supreme Court pick, as the Senate delayed a vote on Brett Kavanaugh's nomination to make way for the probe.

After a dramatic day-long hearing at which a university professor accused Kavanaugh of pinning her down and assaulting her at a party in the 1980s, the Senate Judiciary Committee earlier on Friday approved his nomination in a preliminary vote along party lines.

But committee chair Chuck Grassley, a Republican, then bowed to intense pressure from inside and outside Congress and announced he was asking Trump to order the new background review that "must be completed no later than one week from today."

The Kavanaugh nomination has turned into a political firestorm ahead of November congressional elections — in which Republicans will battle to keep control of Congress — and is threatening to derail Trump's push to get a conservative-minded majority on the top court ahead of the vote.

Trump tweeted support for Kavanaugh, saying "Just started, tonight, our 7th FBI investigation of Judge Brett Kavanaugh. He will someday be recognised as a truly great Justice of The United States Supreme Court!"

Trump, who repeatedly blasted Democratic opposition to Kavanaugh as a political "conjob," agreed to the investigation.

"I've ordered the FBI to conduct a supplemental investigation to update Judge Kavanaugh's file. As the Senate has requested, this update must be limited in scope and completed in less than one week," the president said in a statement.

He later tweeted support for Kavanaugh, saying "Just started, tonight, our 7th FBI investigation of Judge Brett Kavanaugh. He will someday be recognised as a truly great Justice of The United States Supreme Court!"

Trump's order and the decision to put off a final vote came after a key Republican senator, Jeff Flake, threatened to break ranks with his party because of the clouds hanging over Kavanaugh.

At least three women have now accused the 53-year-old conservative judge of misconduct, as a high school and later a university student.



Demonstrators hold anti-Kavanaugh banner outside City Hall, in Los Angeles, yesterday

Democrats have repeatedly demanded those charges be assessed by the Federal Bureau of Investigation to determine if he is suitable for the lifetime high court appointment.

Flake's 11th-hour move played out on national television amid heated partisan debate and raucous protests in the halls of the Capitol, where several women cornered the Arizona senator in an elevator demanding he oppose Kavanaugh.

"This country's being ripped apart," said Flake. "And we have to ensure that we do due diligence here."

"There's lingering doubt out there among a lot of people that we haven't taken every measure that we should to make sure that these allegations are dealt with, and so that's what this effort is about," he said.

His move earned the endorsement of another Republican seen as wavering on the nomination, Lisa Murkowski.

With the Republicans holding a narrow 51-49 majority in the Senate, that placed pressure on Trump to order the FBI probe.

Republicans see Kavanaugh as pivotal to their gaining control of the nine-member Supreme Court bench.

Trump nominated him to replace Anthony Kennedy, who for years was a swing vote between four conservative and four liberal justices.

California governor extends Trump's border mission

AP

SAN DIEGO: California Gov Jerry Brown yesterday extended the state National Guard's participation in President Donald Trump's border deployment by six months, a low-key announcement that was made without any of the acrimony that characterized his early negotiations with the federal government.

The California National Guard said in a press release that the mission will now run until the end of March. It had been scheduled to expire today.

In April, Brown and Trump clashed fiercely and publicly over whether the Guard would participate and under what terms. Brown insisted that troops have no involvement in immigration enforcement or construction of any border barriers — a condition that the California Guard said will continue during the six-month extension.

The Republican governors of the three other border states with Mexico — Arizona, New Mexico and Texas — quickly signed up for the Guard's third major border deployment since 2006 and without the conditions that Brown insisted on.

The California Guard currently about 400 troops assigned,

Jefferson Airplane co-founder dead

AFP

LOS ANGELES: Marty Balin, co-founder of the 1960s California rock group Jefferson Airplane, has died aged 76, US media reported.

Born Martyn Jerel Buchwald, Balin was a folk guitarist in San Francisco when he founded Jefferson Airplane with guitarist Paul Kantner.

The group released its first album in 1966, but achieved its breakthrough a year later with "Surrealistic Pillow," which went gold.

Balin, a tenor, wrote several songs for that album which also featured the singer Grace Slick. The group cemented its reputation with a performance at the 1969 Woodstock festival.

His family did not specify the cause of death, but Balin had undergone open heart surgery in 2016. He later sued the New York hospital where he underwent the procedure, alleging he suffered multiple complications.

50 million Facebook accounts affected by security breach

AP

NEW YORK: Facebook reported a major security breach in which 50 million user accounts were accessed by unknown attackers.

The attackers gained the ability to "seize control" of those user accounts, Facebook said, by stealing digital keys the company uses to keep users logged in. They could do so by exploiting three distinct bugs in Facebook's code.

The company said it has fixed the bugs and logged out the 50 million breached users — plus another 40 million who were vulnerable to the attack — in order to reset those digital keys. Users don't need to change their Facebook passwords, it said.

Facebook said it doesn't know who was behind the attacks or where they're based.

In a call with reporters, CEO Mark Zuckerberg **(pictured)** — whose own account was compromised — said that attackers would have had the ability to view private messages or post on someone's account, but there's no sign that they did.

"We do not yet know if any of the accounts were actually misused," Zuckerberg said.

The hack is the latest setback for Facebook during a tumultuous year of security problems and privacy issues . So far, though, none of these issues have significantly shaken the confidence of the company's 2 billion global users.

This latest hack involved bugs in Facebook's "View As" feature, which lets people see how their profiles appear to others. The attackers used that vulnerability to steal the digital keys, known as "access tokens," from the accounts of people whose profiles were searched for using the "View As" feature.

The attack then moved along



from one user's Facebook friend to another. Possession of those tokens would allow attackers to control those accounts.

One of the bugs was more than a year old and affected how the "View As" feature interacted with Facebook's video uploading feature for posting "happy birthday" messages, said Guy Rosen, Facebook's vice president of product management.

But it wasn't until mid-September that Facebook noticed an uptick in unusual activity, and not until this week that it learned of the attack, Rosen said.

"We haven't yet been able to determine if there was specific targeting" of particular accounts, Rosen said in a call with reporters.

"It does seem broad. And we don't yet know who was behind these attacks and where they might be based."

Neither passwords nor credit card data was stolen, Rosen said yesterday. He said the company has alerted the FBI and regulators in the United States and Europe.

Jake Williams, a security expert at Rendition Infosec, said he is concerned that the hack could have affected third party applications.

Williams noted that the company's "Facebook Login" feature lets users log into other apps and websites with their Facebook credentials.

"These access tokens that were stolen show when a user is logged into Facebook and that may be enough to access a user's account on a third party site," he said.

Facebook confirmed yesterday that third party apps, as well as its own Instagram app, could have been affected.

"The vulnerability was on Facebook, but these access tokens enabled someone to use the account as if they were the account-holder themselves," Rosen said.

News broke early this year that a data analytics firm once employed by the Trump campaign, Cambridge Analytica, had improperly gained access to personal data from millions of user profiles.

Teen attacked by shark at California beach

AP

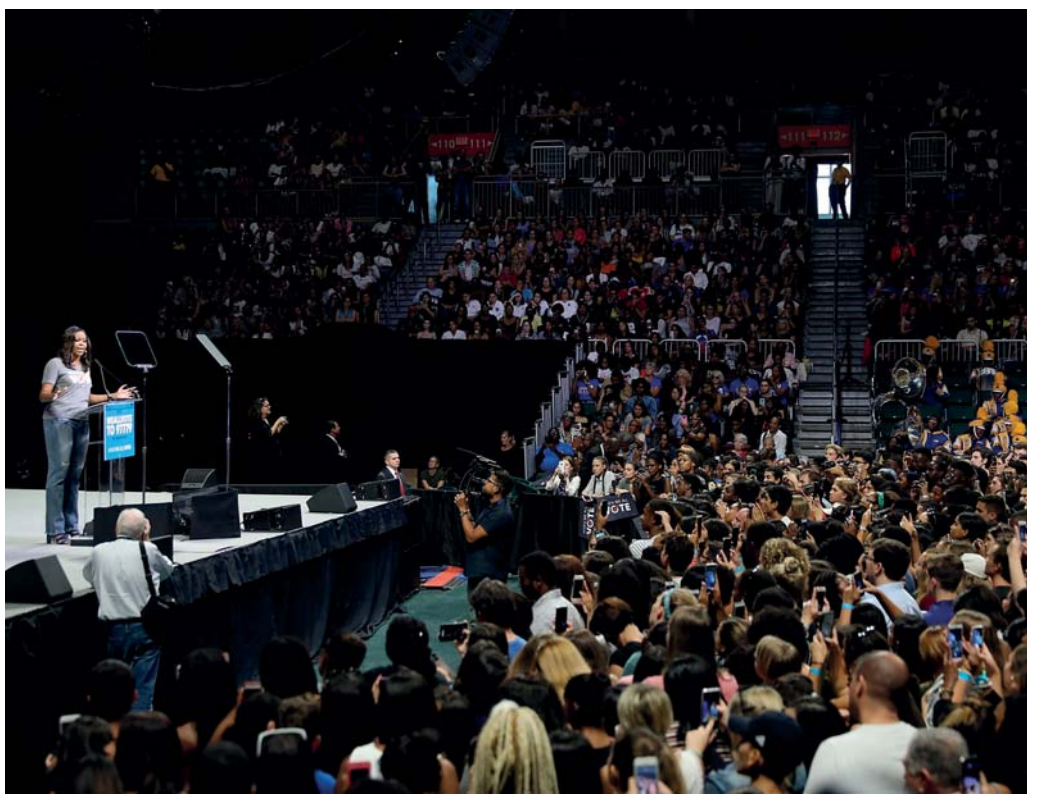
ENCINITAS: A teenage boy has been bitten by a shark at a Southern California beach.

Fox 5 San Diego reports the attack occurred around 7am yesterday at Beacon's Beach in Encinitas, north of San Diego.

Witness Chad Hammel tells the TV station the victim was lobster diving.

Hammel sid he heard screaming and then realised the boy was yelling, "I got bit!" Hammel was also lobster diving with a group, and they pulled the boy onto a kayak and headed to shore as the shark followed.

The group applied pressure to the wounds while beachgoers called paramedics, who put the victim in a helicopter.



Michelle Obama speaks

Former first lady Michelle Obama speaks during a 'When We All Vote's National Week of Action' rally at the Watsco Center at the University of Miami, in Coral Gables, Florida, yesterday. Michelle is the founder and a co-chairwoman of the organization that aims to help people register and to vote.

Oklahoma links robbery suspect to 4 murder cases

AP

OKLAHOMA CITY: A man suspected in nearly a dozen armed robberies is now facing murder charges in connection to four deaths in Oklahoma, including two people who investigators initially thought died in a traffic accident, Oklahoma City police said.

Mario Normore, 27, has been jailed for almost a year on 10 counts of robbery with a firearm involving several businesses and two banks, according to court records. Yesterday, police announced that prosecutors have agreed with a police recommendation that Normore also be charged with four counts of murder.

Formal murder charges had yet to be filed as of Friday afternoon, a delay that isn't unusual in Oklahoma.

Normore's attorney said that he didn't yet know whether Normore would face more charges.

Normore has pleaded not guilty to the robbery counts and is being held in the Oklahoma County Jail without bond.

Normore has been in custody since October on the robbery charges. He was later linked to four deaths dating back to last year, according to Oklahoma City Police Officer Megan Morgan.

"He's the only suspect right now," said Morgan, a spokeswoman for the police department.

Morgan said the cases include the July 2017 deaths of Bashar Burks, 27, and his girlfriend, Ashley Easton, 30.

Police said Normore worked with Burks, whose body was found inside a burning vehicle that had been involved in a crash. At the time, police said his body showed signs of trauma that occurred prior to the crash. Easton's body also showed signs of trauma when it was discovered later in a nearby ditch.

Police haven't released details about the injuries or the case, including what allegedly linked Normore to the deaths.

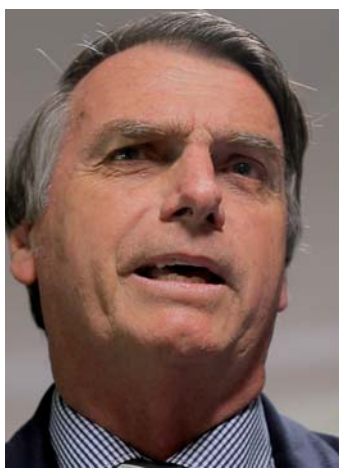
Stabbed Brazil candidate leaves hospital

REUTERS

SAO PAULO: Brazil's far-right presidential frontrunner left the hospital where he has been recovering from a stab wound yesterday, as tens of thousands of women took to the streets in nationwide protests against his divisive candidacy.

Jair Bolsonaro suffered the near-fatal injury earlier this month and had been confined to Sao Paulo's Albert Einstein hospital ever since, keeping off the campaign trail ahead of the October 7 first-round vote in one of the country's most divisive elections in a generation.

Angered by Bolsonaro's history of making offensive comments female protesters have used the hash tag #EleNao or #NotHim to drum up support for protests against him.





Jair Bolsonaro and Fernando Haddad

The hospital said in a statement yesterday that Bolsonaro had been discharged at 10am. Bolsonaro's team said he was taking an afternoon flight to Rio de Janeiro, where he has served as a federal congressman for nearly three decades.

Angered by Bolsonaro's history of making offensive comments female protesters have used the hash tag #EleNao or #NotHim to drum up support for protests against him.

Yesterday's demonstrations took place in multiple Brazilian cities, from Manaus in the Amazon jungle to bustling Sao Paulo in the southeast.

There were also rival protests in support of the right-winger across the country.

"I never heard him say anything wrong about women," said Alessandra Sampaio, 39, at a pro-Bolsonaro rally in Rio de Janeiro. "He's against abuse, drugs and in favour of the family. I have two daughters and want the best for them."

He stirred fresh controversy on Friday night, when he said in a local media interview that he would not accept the result of next month's election if he loses, adding that he could not "speak for the armed forces commanders."

His biggest rival and likely opponent in an expected October 28 runoff is leftist candidate and former Sao Paulo Mayor Fernando Haddad.

Haddad is running for the Workers Party, whose jailed founder, former President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva, was barred by a corruption conviction. Haddad has surged in recent polls with support from the working class and voters who cannot stomach Bolsonaro.

According to a recent survey by pollster Ibope, 18 percent of women plan to vote for Bolsonaro in the October 7 first round, versus 36 percent of men. In an October 28 second round scenario, among those who expressed a preference, women favoured Haddad over Bolsonaro by 47 to 30 percent.

Among men 47 percent favoured Bolsonaro versus 37 percent for Haddad.



Supporters of Brazil's presidential candidate Jair Bolsonaro holding flags with his picture stand outside Congonhas Airport, in Sao Paulo, yesterday.

Mexico volcano spews ash

AP

MEXICO CITY: Ash spewing from the Popocatepetl volcano has reached the southern neighbourhoods of Mexico's capital.

The National Center for Disaster Prevention warned Mexicans yesterday to stay away from the volcano after activity picked up in the crater and it registered 183 emissions of gas and ash over 24 hours.

The centre is monitoring multiple rumblings and tremors. Images on social media showed thin layers of ash coating car windshields in neighbourhoods of Mexico City such as Xochimilco.

Geophysicists have noticed an increase in activity at the volcano that sits 72 km southeast of the capital since a 7.1-magnitude earthquake rocked central Mexico in September 2017. The volcano known as "Don Goyo" has been active since 1994.

Hurricane Rosa weakens; heads for California

AFP

MEXICO CITY: Hurricane Rosa rapidly lost strength off the coast of Mexico yesterday as it moved towards Baja California, the US National Hurricane Center said.

"Additional weakening is forecast," the Miami-based agency said, with Rosa expected to become a tropical storm by early Monday as it approaches central and northern Baja California, which adjoins the US state of California.

Heavy rainfall is expected across the Baja peninsula as well as the southwestern United States, with the potential for life-threatening desert flash flooding and mountain landslides, the hurricane center said.

Early yesterday, Rosa was about 1,005km south-southwest of Punta Eugenia with maximum sustained winds of around 100 miles per hour. Rosa is now a Category 2 hurricane, down from Thursday's ranking of Category 4 on the Saffir-Simpson scale which has a maximum of five.

Maduro says he wouldn't miss 'chance' to meet Trump

AFP

CARACAS: Venezuela's embattled President Nicolas Maduro **(pictured)** said that he would not pass up a chance to meet with his US counterpart Donald Trump, if that meant ironing out the countries' many disagreements.

Just back from his UN General Assembly trip, Maduro was speaking in response to remarks made by the US leader at the meeting that Venezuela was a "mess" that had to be "cleaned up".

"I'm told that the United States president once again mentioned me. My response is that I am brave enough, decisive enough and forceful enough to meet President Trump, greet him with respect and establish a high-ranking dialogue... If such an opportunity were to arise, I would not miss it," said the socialist leader, whose country is in an economic mega-crisis.

"I would be ready to meet any time, any place, extend my hand, speak, see him face to face and look in his eyes. And I know that if that were to happen, a lot of things would change," Maduro said at the international airport in Maiquetia, near Caracas.

While at the UN General Assembly, Trump also remarked that all options were on the table in the case of Venezuela. Thousands have fled hunger and economic collapse in the state-led economy.

On whether he would meet Maduro, Trump kept his cards close to his vest, saying only that he'd see what happens.

On Tuesday, the US Treasury announced new sanctions against Venezuelan first lady Cilia Adela Flores de Maduro, an attorney and the president's wife, as one of the figures who has helped Maduro retain his grip on power, along with Vice President Delcy Rodriguez.

He said Maduro's socialism "has bankrupted the oil-rich nation and driven its people into abject poverty."





Paying gratitude

Mexican President-elect Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador greets people during his national tour to thank those who supported him in the July 1 elections, in Mexico City, yesterday. Anti-establishment leftist Lopez Obrador, who won a landslide election victory in July by pillorying the crime and corruption he blamed on President Enrique Pena Nieto and Mexico's ruling "mafia of power", will take office on December 1.

Emolument case against Trump to proceed

BLOOMBERG

WASHINGTON: Almost 200 Congressional Democrats got a go-ahead from a judge to pursue a lawsuit claiming that Donald Trump is violating a Constitutional ban on receiving benefits from foreign governments without their permission while he's president.

US District Judge Emmet Sullivan in Washington denied a Justice Department request to dismiss the lawsuit, filed last year by Connecticut's Richard Blumenthal and other members of the House and Senate. The judge ruled they have legal standing to pursue their claim, while deferring his decision on the merits of the dispute.

It's another loss for the president who is fighting claims in three courts that he's illegally profiting from his position. He twice failed to have a Maryland federal court lawsuit thrown out, where the state's attorney general and his District of Columbia counterpart claim Trump is illegally taking payments from foreign and state governments at his Washington hotel.

The congressional Democrats are seeking an order compelling Trump to notify Congress when he's offered an emolument, giving them the option to vote on whether he can accept it. Blumenthal has called the emoluments clauses the Constitution's 'premier anti-corruption provision.'

Justice Department spokeswoman Kelly Laco said, "We believe this case should be dismissed, and we will continue to defend the president in court.'

Blumenthal called the judge's ruling a "a triumph for the rule of law" during a conference call with reporters and said it would prove that no president is above the law. New York Congressman Jerrold Nadler, who joined in the suit, also praised the court's decision.

Suspect in California homeless beatings faces probe

AP

LOS ANGELES: A man arrested on suspicion of beating a Southern California homeless man into unconsciousness and suspected in six other attacks — three of them fatal — also was being investigated in the disappearances of two of the suspect's Texas relatives, officials said.

Ramon Escobar, 47, is a person of interest in the disappearances late last month of 60-year-old Dina Escobar and her brother, 65-year-old Rogelio Escobar, Houston police said in a statement.

Dina Escobar's burned van was found in Galveston a few days after she went looking for her brother, who was missing. She was last seen Aug. 28, two days after her brother disappeared, the statement said.

Ramon Escobar is their nephew, and Texas authorities said they want to talk to him.

The Southern California beatings happened in Los Angeles and suburban Santa Monica, where Escobar was arrested Monday. It wasn't clear whether Escobar had an attorney who could speak on his behalf.

Police from both cities planned to discuss the case at a press conference Tuesday.

Escobar was arrested after a homeless man was bludgeoned unconscious and some of his possessions taken as he sat or leaned against a pole or wall. The man was hospitalized in critical condition with head injuries, Santa Monica police Lt. Saul Rodriguez said.

Escobar was arrested about 30 minutes after the victim was discovered, Rodriguez said.

Dina Escobar's daughter, Ligia Salamanca, said the family was surprised to learn that Ramon Escobar was in California.

"We wouldn't know why he would be out there," she told reporters in Houston.

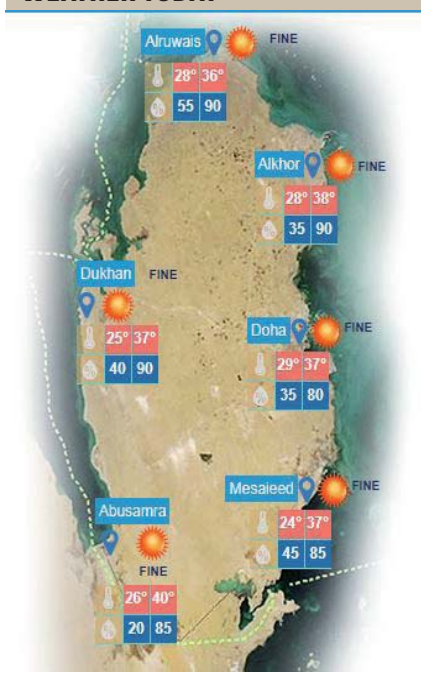
Investigators believe Escobar was the man who used a baseball bat to bash the heads of three homeless men sleeping on downtown Los Angeles streets before dawn on September 16, police said in a statement. Two died. Police had said they believed the attacker also was homeless and wanted to rob the men. He was recorded on surveillance video ransacking their pockets and belongings.

PRAYER TIMINGS



FAJR	04. 09 AM		
SHOROOK	05. 25 AM		
ZUHR	11. 24 AM	MAGHRIB	05. 24 PM
ASR	02. 48 PM	ISHA	06. 54 PM

WEATHER TODAY



29°C Minimum | **37°C** Maximum

Misty to foggy at places by early morning, becomes hot and relatively humid daytime with chances of local thundery rain at places.

HIGH TIDE 08:30 - 19:30 LOW TIDE 01:30 - 14:45

Courtesy: Qatar Meteorology Department



September 30, 1938

▲ British prime minister Neville Chamberlain declared there would be "peace in our time" after the signing of the Munich Agreement with Adolf Hitler in Germany

1902: "Artificial silk", a cellulose-based fibre made from wood-pulp, also known as rayon or Viscose, was patented

1949: Mao Zedong was elected Chairman of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China

2003: President Paul Kagame won Rwanda's first parliamentary elections since the 1994 genocide

2003: Air France and Dutch rival KLM joined forces to create Europe's largest airline

Picture: Getty Images © GRAPHIC NEWS

Women achievers inspire audience at DWF

AMNA PERVAIZ RAO
THE PENINSULA



Sheikha Asma Al Thani (second left), Director of Marketing and Communications at Qatar Olympic Committee and the keynote speaker at Doha Women Forum 2018, receives an award from Julie Amey (second right), Vice-President of Finance at Qatar Shell, at the Westin Hotel and Spa. Inspire Me Founder, Elizabeth Wood (right) and Conchita Ponce of Future 318 were also present. PIC: QASSIM RAHMATULLAH / THE PENINSULA

DOHA: Featuring 12 speakers, Doha Women Forum (DWF), recently held its second edition DWF 2018 under the title 'Press for Progress' at the Westin Hotel and Spa.

The event presented eight panellists and 12 speakers including Olympic Committee Marketing and Communications Director, Sheikha Asma Al Thani, who gave the keynote speech.

Sheikha Asma spoke about her experience getting into sports, climbing Mount Kilimanjaro and skiing at the North Pole with women from across Europe and the Arabian Peninsula. She encouraged all women "to work on your strengths, participate, not to be afraid, challenge yourself, make mistakes but learn from them."

She also said that no idea was too small and no challenge was too difficult. "Most importantly, through your journey, build friendships and family. Let's go out there and change the world."

The discussions were divided into seven segments. First session was based on 'create your own success'. During this session, Susanna Ingalls, Urban Point Co-founder discussed about 'How to switch career', Eman Abdullah Al Sulaiti, Qatar Foundation Quality and Service Design Manager, talked about creating your success and Assil Diab, Graffiti Artist discussed about graffiti art as a medium for social change.

The second session was themed 'becoming a leader in your workplace'. During this session, life coaches talked about different aspects on how to strengthen the skills. Marie Quigley, Empower World Director discussed about "leading with authenticity: strategies for success with your own leadership style'. Dr. Clare Becket-McInroy, Qatar Financial Centre Executive Coach spoke about how to swim with sharks.

Third session was based on 'the impact of media on women's image and freedom'. This topic was covered by Lulu Mohammed Ali, Social Media Strategist where she discussed about leveraging social media as a means to success. Founder of Whatsup Doha, Zunira Malik, talked about responsible use of social media and Rawan Al Nassiri, Qatari Filmmaker talked about 'finding and owning your voice through film'.

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Talking to *The Peninsula*, Lulu said: "Due to Doha Women Forum I have got to know many entrepreneurs residing in Doha. This platform has become an eye-opener for me and for others to know each other better. It inspires me to be around such people from which I get to hear their experiences and get a positive impact on my life."

"I never spoke in front of so many people before but I said yes this time. I am learning new things with every session which is being held at DWF. This platform understands me without giving any justification about filmmaking as everyone here is very open-minded," said Rawan.

Sehar Bano Rizvi, lifestyle blogger and photographer told The Peninsula: "It is amazing to witness all women under one roof coming together and supporting one another. Only one empowered woman can empower other women. The activities which were hosted tonight made us look into each other. Embracing and strengthening each other on one platform is something amazing being done at DWF."

Comedian and Muscular Dystrophy Qatar Founder, Nawal Akram and Glam Your Image Founder, Elisabete Reis talked about commitment as a courageous act in the fifth segment followed by Qatar Shell VP-Finance, Julie Amey who spoke about gender parity.

An oath to press for progress was conducted before the event was concluded with the awarding of plaques in appreciation of the contributions of the speakers and panelists. Future 318 (Faisal Al Suwaidi For Events) Founder Conchita Ponce said, "Taking the oath was an important part of the event because declaring something out loud strengthens the commitment to oneself to press for progress."

The event was made possible through the help of its partners such as Inspire Me as its host partner, Westin Doha Hotel & Spa as its official hotel partner, Society Magazine, Ginger Camel, I Love Qatar, Empower World and Turkish Airline.

Bad food habits can lead to cancer: Nutritionist

IANS

MEXICO CITY: Enrich your diet with green tea, curcumin, pomegranate, and broccoli — rich in polyphenol — to keep cancers at bay, a nutritionist said, cautioning that unhealthy eating habits leads to cancer.

"The key could be in the food we eat and in its antioxidant properties, especially regarding polyphenols," head of clinical nutrition of Mexico's General Hospital Vanessa Fuchs told EFE.

"It has been scientifically proven that foods rich with polyphenol content have antioxidant and anti-inflammatory effects, which lead to less neurodegeneration, slower ageing, anti-carcinogenesis, among other benefits," she said. She said that is why a diet poor in polyphenol is related to a higher risk of cancer including breast cancer, pancreatic, ovarian, skin, prostate, intestine and esophagus cancer. "Green tea inhibits spread of breast and prostate cancer cells, while curcumin and pomegranate slow the growth of cancer cells," she said. As for broccoli, the specialist said that it is rich in isothiocyanate and sulforaphane, which inhibit the growth and promote the apoptosis of cancer cells.

Banned Kenyan film allowed limited showings

AP

NAIROBI: The first Kenyan feature film to premiere at the Cannes Film Festival has received overwhelming audience support since a court temporarily lifted a ban imposed by censors over the film's content, a lawyer said.

"Rafiki" went from being screened once a day in one theatre in Nairobi on September 22 to three daily screenings at theatres in three of Kenya's largest cities as of Friday, said Sofia Leteipan, who represents director Wanuri Kahiu.

The court ruled that the film, a story featuring two women, could be viewed locally for one week to make it eligible for Oscar contention. The ban will resume after showings.

Ezekiel Mutua, the head of the Kenya Film Classification Board, has said that only "a small portion" of the country's population has seen it. Leteipan said that although "Rafiki" in the end wasn't nominated for an Oscar, its screening across Kenya is a "huge win for the articulation of freedom of expression." She said that after the ban resumes, "we'll still be in court pursuing the original petition to have the ban permanently lifted and strike out provisions of Films and Stage Plays Act which restrict freedom of expression and constrain creativity."

After watching the film, activist Immah Reid called it a "well-structured conversation starter for relationship in Kenya.



Artistes perform during the concert organised by Cultural Village Foundation at the Opera House.

Concert highlights Qatar-El Salvador ties

THE PENINSULA

DOHA: With a large number of visitors, the Cultural Village Foundation held the international concert "From Latin America to Europe" for the famous on Friday evening at the Opera House in building 16.

The Concert was organised in cooperation with the Embassy of El Salvador as the famous Salvadoran maestro Napoleon Dominguez was performing with his band.

Many Ambassadors and diplomats from different countries attended the concert, in addition to a big number of visitors from different communities in Doha filled all the seats of the Opera House to watch the performance.

Alfredo Samayoa, the Salvadoran Ambassador to Qatar, delivered a speech at the outset of the concert and highlighted the strong ties between El Salvador and Qatar in many fields of cooperation.

The renowned maestro Napoleon Dominguez had performed in many operas around the world such as "La Traviata", "Madama Butterfly", "Rigoletto", "Pagliacci", "Carmen" in Portugal and Spain.

In 2012 he began his studies in Canto's professional career in Madrid, Spain, being one of the most outstanding tenors of his generation. During career journey, he created his own band from Latin America and from Europe.

He has also represented his country El Salvador in various cultural festivals in Spain, highlighting his participation in the Festival of the Nations of Seville, receiving a special congratulation from Mayor Juan Espadas.

The audience enjoyed the performance which included many famous music tracks and ones of world-class composers.

Virtual reality unleashes full power of top UK orchestra

AFP

LONDON: London's Royal Festival Hall is putting visitors centre-stage with one of the world's top orchestras, using cutting-edge technology amid claims it will transform the arts and entertainment industries.

Virtual-reality (VR) headsets and a cylindrical bank of speakers deliver the full force of the Philarmonia Orchestra's performance of Mahler's Third Symphony, Visitors can turn their head and focus on any musician, or toe-tapping members of the audience, from their vantage point in-front of Finnish conductor Esa-Pekka Salonen.

A performance of Beethoven's Fifth Symphony moves in between each section of the orchestra, giving close-up views of musicians as the conductor brings them in.

"It allows you to step inside the orchestra," said Luke Ritchie, Head of Innovation at the Philharmonia. "People who are new to orchestras, it totally changes their preconceptions. "They are insanely loud and the dynamics are incredible," he added. Although only temporary, the project serves up a taste of how the "transformational" technology could be used in the not-too-distant future.

The set-up can be recreated off-site, meaning live performances could be potentially beamed into cinemas, while schoolchildren could wander through world-class orchestras and watch maestros at work.

"We could pack it into a van, take it to a school and build it in a couple of hours, then a class of 30 kids have a group experience." explained Ritchie.

"It's all about getting the orchestra out of the usual places." The immersive audio and visual technologies developed by the Philarmonia also have the potential to transform the creative process itself. "It's about being inside music, and having agency and being able to travel around — a composition you can travel through, or that responds differently to how you are behaving," said Ritchie. "You already see it in the evolution of video games."

The technology could eventually be combined with playing live instruments, promising wide-ranging consequences for education and the entertainment industry.