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Amir to embark on Rwanda, Nigeria visits today

QNA/ THE PENINSULA DOHA

Amir H H Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani will embark on state visits to the Republic of Rwanda and the Federal Republic of Nigeria, today.

HH the Amir will hold talks with the leaders of the two countries and senior officials on bilateral relations and means of enhancing them in various

fields, in addition to a number of issues of common interest.

The visits will also witness the signing of a number of agreements and memoranda of understanding in a number of areas of cooperation.

HH the Amir will be accompanied by an official delegation.

The visit will further enhance the relation of Qatar with Nigeria and Rwanda.

The relationship between Nigeria and Qatar spans over several decades. Both countries are active members of various international organizations such as the United Nations (UN), the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) and many more.

Diplomatic relations between the two countries were established in 2010. The Embassy of the State of Qatar in Abuja was opened on December

16, 2013. Nigeria as well opened its diplomatic mission in Qatar with the arrival of Ambassador Shuaibu Ahmed in 2013.

The two countries hold similar views on international and regional issues and believe as well as advocate for peaceful means of resolving international disputes.

There are over 10,000 Nigerian expatriates living in Qatar who are working

in different sectors including construction, energy, hospitality and health.

The high-level visits of officials from Qatar and Rwanda has strengthened relations between the two countries. The President of Rwanda and Chairman of the current session of the African Union, Paul Kagame, visited Doha in November 2018 for an official visit to the country. Several

agreements were signed during the visit.

Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of State for Defence Affairs, H E Dr Khalid bin Mohamed Al Attiyah, met with Minister of Defence of the Republic of Rwanda, Albert Murasira, and his accompanying delegation in March 2018. The meeting focused on military ties and the ways to enhance them.

EAA Foundation launches 'Dynamic Futures Qatar'

FAZEENA SALEEM THE PENINSULA

Education Above All (EAA) Foundation, for the first time in Qatar, has launched one of the most innovative and comprehensive scholarship programme in the region. The first edition of the 'Dynamic Futures Qatar' programme awarded 32 scholarships to students in Qatar on Thursday.

The scholarship is offered under EAA Foundation's programme Al Fakhraa, with the support of the Ministry of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs. The 'Dynamic Futures Qatar' scholarship programme aims to provide young adults who have spent most of their formative years in Qatar, with access to higher education.

The awarding ceremony held at the Qatar Faculty of Islamic Studies (QFIS) auditorium at Education City was attended by representatives from EAA Foundation, Dr Sheikh Khalid bin Mohammed Al Thani, Director General of the General Department of Awqaf, Dr Alsha Al Mannai, from Hamad Bin Khalifa University, a member of the Shura Council, Director of the Muhammad Bin Hamad Al Thani Center for Muslim Contribution to Civilization and several other guests.

"We believe that, by investing in human capital, we enable young people to play a key role in building their communities and unlocking their full potential. The uniqueness of the Dynamic Futures Qatar scholarship programme lies in its focus on civic engagement, and Qatar's role in investing in expatriates and valuing their

"The uniqueness of the Dynamic Futures Qatar scholarship programmes lies in its focus on civic engagement, and Qatar's role in investing in expatriates and valuing their potential contribution to Qatar's future."

potential contribution to Qatar's future," said Fatima Al Khater, President of the Dynamic Futures Qatar programme, EAA Foundation.

"We are delighted to have four of the most acclaimed institutes coming forward to support us in this noble endeavour, and we are especially grateful to Awqaf officials for bestowing tremendous trust upon us and supporting us in working to enhance the access to education for these exceptional youth," she added.

"Dynamic Futures Qatar" is a comprehensive programme and it offers recipients the opportunity to gain civic engagement skills, as well as benefit from economic empowerment activities. This holistic scholarship design supports students throughout their studies and prepares them to become productive citizens who can contribute in meaningful ways to the community, both during their studies and after graduation.

The programme is sponsored together with the General Department of Endowments at the Awqaf and includes four prominent universities and colleges in Qatar. ➔P3



MoPH signs pact with University Hospital of Heidelberg

Minister of Public Health H E Dr Hanan Mohamed Al Kuwari with officials from the University Hospital of Heidelberg and Hamad Medical Corporation during a ceremony to sign an agreement, which aims at promoting cooperation, sharing knowledge and sharing experiences in health-related fields as well as treating patients, in Germany. ➔P3

Katara Hospitality's Bürgenstock expects 100% rise in Qatari tourists

SACHIN KUMAR THE PENINSULA

Katara Hospitality owned The Bürgenstock Selection, Switzerland's largest deluxe hotel group, is expecting the number of tourists from Qatar to double this year compared to previous year. The group has launched summer offer that is expected attract more tourists this year.

"Last year we had over 3,000 people from Qatar visiting the hotel and this summer we are expecting to have 100 per cent more. I am expecting 6,000 people from Qatar. I am confident that we can achieve these many tourists," Saïd Heidari, Managing Director of The Bürgenstock Selection told *The Peninsula* speaking on the sidelines of event held the residence of the Ambassador of Switzerland to Doha.

During the event, guests were introduced to the three luxury properties of Switzerland's largest deluxe hotel group that are united under The Bürgenstock Selection brand: the Royal Savoy Hotel & Spa Lausanne, the Hotel Schweizerhof Bern & THE SPA and the Bürgenstock Hotels & Resort Lake Lucerne.

Edgar Doerig, the Ambassador of Switzerland to Qatar, Qatari Government representatives and business-leaders and members of media were present during the event.

Ambassador Doerig said that the important investment and presence of Katara Hospitality in Switzerland stands as a key-element of the excellent bilateral relations between the two countries. The participation of Sheikh Nawaf bin Jassim bin Jabor Al

Thani and then Swiss Federal Councillor Johannes Schneider-Ammann, Minister of the Economy, at the Bürgenstock Resort Lake Lucerne official opening ceremony on September 28, 2018 was a strong symbol of this joint project.

"Katara Hospitality invested 1bn Swiss francs in renovating three iconic properties in Lausanne, Bern and Lucerne and created 1,100 new jobs in doing so. Thanks to this substantial investment, The Bürgenstock Selection became one of Switzerland's largest hotel operators redefining luxury hospitality in Switzerland.

All three welcome guests to properties with dramatic contemporary design, award-winning restaurants and world-class spa facilities," said Heidari during the event. ➔P2

Kahramaa sees 3,000 violations and warnings in two years

SANAULLAH ATALLAH THE PENINSULA

Fahad Saud Al Hanzab, Head of Monitoring section at Conservation and Energy Efficiency Department at Qatar General Electricity and Water Corporation (Kahramaa) has said that leaving outdoor lights switched on during day is among most common violations of the conservation law.

He said that the Department recorded about 3,000 violations and warning of the Law No. 20 of 2015 for the conservation of electricity and water consumption during last two years.

Leaving outdoor lights switched on from 7am to until 4:30pm is against the conservation law. Al Hanzab said that most of the violators were issued warning to rectify the situation by using photocells or timers to control outdoor lights, repairing water leakage and fixing other errors.

He said that the conservation law was amended two years ago which increased the fine for violation of wasting water QR2,000 which is reduced with reconciliation QR10,000. "The fine for the wastage of electricity is QR10,000 which is reduced with reconciliation QR5,000 and fine for not fixing water leakage is QR10,000 and with reconciliation it reached QR5,000." ➔P3

MOTC launches govt cloud, media analytics services

THE PENINSULA DOHA

The Ministry of Transport and Communications (MOTC) has launched the Government Cloud Service in association with MEEZA and Media Analytics Service, adding both of them to a list of shared services MOTC provides to government entities within the framework of Qatar Digital Government 2020.

The first is a government cloud based Infrastructure as a Service (IaaS). It utilises dedicated government network and focuses on delivering the service over a private and highly secure environment for government entities. This helps those entities to reduce cost on connectivity as well as improve agility. Through the cloud self-service portal, IT administrators can create virtual servers in minutes in conjunction

with MOTC to be compliant with global systems and standards.

Media Analytics Service allows government entities to monitor, follow and analyse what is being published about them on social media and traditional electronic media, thus helping them monitor information and relevant published topics, follow up their indicators, measure public opinion, interact with them and identify potential

crises for action. It will also help them in the preparation of the necessary reports in this regard easily and through dashboards provided by MOTC to service subscribers.

"We are glad to launch these two new services as part of MOTC's plans for achieving the strategic objectives of the Qatar Digital Government 2020 Strategy, which aims to create efficiency in government

administration, maximize opportunities to make better use of public funds in accordance with the Qatar National Vision 2030 that aims to ensure fast and reliable accessibility to information technology with reduced operational and capital expenditures," said MOTC Assistant Undersecretary of Government Information Technology Sector, Hassan Jassim Al Said. ➔P3

Sheikha Hind attends QF's autism awareness event

THE PENINSULA
DOHA

The Vice-Chairperson and CEO of Qatar Foundation (QF), H E Sheikha Hind bint Hamad Al Thani, yesterday attended the World Autism Awareness Day event organised by Renad Academy, part of QF's Pre-University Education in Collaboration with QF's Community Development, at Al Shaqab.

The event was also attended by members of QF's senior leadership. A number of QF entities and community centres participated in the family-oriented event, each providing fun activities for children and families to enjoy. The day kicked off with an Autism Awareness Walk, followed by a variety of sport and

recreational activities, including horse-riding, storytelling sessions, an obstacle course, football games, and craft centres.

Sherri Miller, Director, Renad Academy, said: "This is our third year hosting this event, and each year it continues to grow in size and popularity. The community partners who provide the activities are truly invested in ensuring people with autism are given the same respect and access as everyone in Qatar."

"Because of the attention this event draws, we have seen awareness and acceptance of autism develop at a quick pace. We are proud to support Qatar in developing and embracing a more diverse community."

Awareness Day celebration forms part of a month-long calendar of events held throughout April. Other activities included autism-friendly movie screenings at Education City's Oxygen Park, as well as informative sessions at the 2015 building (QF Headquarters), Multiqa (Education City Student Center), Qatar National Library, and Sidra Medicine, a member of QF.

World Autism Awareness Day was first proposed by Her Highness Sheikha Moza bint Nasser, Chairperson of Qatar Foundation, to the United Nations in 2007, and was adopted without a vote by the UN General Assembly. The first World Autism Awareness Day was celebrated on April 2, 2008.



The Vice-Chairperson and CEO of Qatar Foundation, H E Sheikha Hind bint Hamad Al Thani, sharing a light moment with a child during the World Autism Awareness Day event at Al Shaqab yesterday.

Need to preserve Arabic language highlighted

FAZEENA SALEEM
THE PENINSULA

The law introduced recently for the protection of the Arabic language has highlighted the responsibility Qatar has in preserving the language, said a senior official at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, yesterday.

The Spokesperson for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, H E Lolwah Rashid Alkhatir, shed light on the challenges, policies and opportunities Qatar has in preserving the Arabic language, while delivering the keynote speech at an event held at the Qatar National Library.

Qatar National Library, in collaboration with the Qatari Literature Initiative, hosted a lively public event yesterday, which discussed 'The Law on the



H E Lolwah Rashid Alkhatir speaks during an event at QNL yesterday. PIC: ABDUL BASIT / THE PENINSULA

Protection of the Arabic Language.'

A public event on 'The Law on the Protection of the Arabic

Language' focused on the new law passed earlier in 2019, which establishes measures to increase the use of Arabic in

Qatar's professional and public life as a national language.

"The role of a language remains rooted in your own culture. Same time we have to aspire for modernity which play part in the present world," said Alkhatir while speaking on the sidelines of the event.

The law and policy we have in Qatar reflect the responsibility we have to protect the Arabic language," she added.

Alkhatir also said that traditional capitals of Arabic Culture and Arabic language such as Bagdad, Beirut and Damascus are going through difficult times. "So it's our responsibility to kind of bear the burden of preserving the Arabic language," she added.

Dr Ali Al Kubaisi, Director General of the World

Organization for the Renaissance of Arabic Language, and Azudin Al Boshikli, Head of Doha Historical Dictionary of Arabic, were also among the speakers of the event. The event featured two panel discussions on 'language and identity' and 'language policy and its procedures'.

"The library is promoting Arabic language in many ways, firstly, through our extensive collection of Arabic books available to the community, which is continuously expanding. Our efforts to promote literacy among future generations are also reflected in our support to Arabic writers and publishers," said Dr Sohair Wastawy, Executive Director of the Library.

"Another important focus area is to increase the range of Arabic content available on the

web, and we do this through a process where we digitise and use optical character recognition methods to make the Arabic text accessible and searchable online. In this way, we are using our digital resources to facilitate a wider use and understanding of the language," she added.

The vital task of protecting the role of the Arabic language in Qatar's educational, cultural, economic, and media sectors began with an initiative launched by H H Sheikha Moza bint Nasser, Chairperson of Qatar Foundation, in 2013, which established the World Organisation for the Renaissance of Arabic Language. The law is a continuation of those efforts to raise awareness of the importance of Arabic as a national language.

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Edgar Doering (third right), Ambassador of Switzerland to Qatar, with Bettina Haerberle, (second right) Area Director of Sales and Marketing; Saïd Heidari (second left), Managing Director of The Bürgenstock Selection Katara Hospitality Switzerland AG; Alain Kropf (left), General Manager, and Robert Herr (right), General Manager of The Bürgenstock Selection Switzerland AG, during the reception at the Ambassador's residence on Wednesday. PIC: ABDUL BASIT / THE PENINSULA

Katara Hospitality's The Bürgenstock Selection expects 100% rise in number of Qatari tourists

FROM PAGE 1

The Bürgenstock Selection has launched attractive summer offers which offer a perfect post-Ramadan vacation.

With the brand-new 'Swiss Escape' offer guests will discover the country's most sought-after and attractive destinations through the luxury properties of The Bürgenstock Selection, which are renowned for their strong heritage, contemporary design and impeccable Swiss traditions of hospitality, service and discretion.

The 'Swiss Escape' offer is available when staying at two or more hotels of The Bürgenstock Selection in a single trip throughout Switzerland. Guests may book a five-night stay for the price of four or eight nights for the price of six, with centralised reservations made via happenings@buergenstock-selection.ch.

Between June 17 and September 17, 2019, guests at the Waldhotel Health & Medical Excellence will enjoy a 20 percent discount on all 3- to 14-day prevention & health programmes. The five-star hotel also offers medical check-ups, weight-loss, detox, beauty and healthy-ageing programmes.

During the event, Alain Kropf, General Manager of the Royal Savoy Hotel & Spa Lausanne presented the facilities of this stunning 5-star hotel with its 196 rooms and suites overlooking Lake Geneva. According to Kropf, his guests have the opportunity to enjoy experiences such as a visit to the Olympic Museum, a boat cruise on Lake Geneva or a visit to a local farm's petting zoo. Other guests can opt for a yoga class in the hotel's expansive garden.

Many of the guests at the event had already heard of the renowned Bürgenstock Resort

situated 500 meters above Lake Lucerne. The resort's General Manager Robert P. Herr introduced Switzerland's largest resort with its four hotels (including the Bürgenstock Hotel & Alpine Spa, the Palace Hotel and Taverne 1879), 10 restaurants, two spas as well as its medical center in the fourth property, the Waldhotel Health & Medical Excellence, Switzerland's newest place devoted to health and medical well-being.

Bettina Haerberle, Area Director Sales & Marketing of The Bürgenstock Selection noted the many reasons why the Hotel Schweizerhof Bern & The SPA is the perfect location to discover Switzerland's capital. Guests are only a few steps away from the Old Town, a UNESCO World Heritage site and the Albert Einstein museum. Others might enjoy an excursion to the nearby Jungfrau Mountain.

QNTC backs UNWTO contest to boost tourism

THE PENINSULA
DOHA

Akbar Al Baker, Secretary-General of Qatar National Tourism Council (QNTC), and Zurab Pololikashvili, Secretary-General of the World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO), have signed an agreement that will see QNTC becoming a sponsor of the first UNWTO Sports Tourism Start-Up Competition, which will be carried out in collaboration with Futbol Club Barcelona (FCB). The competition aims to promote and strengthen the tourism and sports sectors while enhancing the entrepreneurial ecosystem and boosting innovation in sports tourism.

The winners of the competition will be incubated in the Barca Innovation Hub and their concepts will also be considered for implementation in Qatar, which is gearing up to host the FIFA World Cup 2022.

Al Baker commented: "Qatar has a longstanding tradition of supporting entrepreneurship in sports. We believe sporting events have a unique power to

QNTC becomes a sponsor of the first UNWTO Sports Tourism Start-Up Competition, which will be carried out in collaboration with Futbol Club Barcelona. The competition aims to promote and strengthen the tourism and sports sectors while enhancing the entrepreneurial ecosystem and boosting innovation in sports tourism.

bring people of the world together, and that is also why sports tourism is one of six key sub-sectors we are investing in as part of our national tourism strategy. We look forward to seeing the innovative ideas that will come through the inaugural Sports Tourism Start-Up Competition and hope that one of them will come to life in Qatar."

UNWTO's Zurab Pololikashvili added: "As host of the 2022 FIFA World Cup, Qatar is the natural driver for this significant endeavour. Joining forces with a global sports leader such as Futbol Club Barcelona brings all key players on the same page, underscoring that tourism and sports are two leading sectors, and proving that international understanding and cooperation

generate opportunities and benefits for all."

The agreement was signed as Pololikashvili began his first mission to Doha since taking office in 2018. A dinner was held to welcome Pololikashvili and his delegation, and to discuss the latest developments in Qatar's tourism sector, and the ongoing implementation of the National Tourism Sector Strategy: The Next Chapter 2018-2023.

During their visit, the UNWTO delegation will be visiting tourism landmarks in Qatar and holding discussions with QNTC and other representatives of the public and private sector, exploring other ways the two organisations can exchange expertise and resources to support various programs that



Akbar Al Baker, Secretary-General of Qatar National Tourism Council, with Zurab Pololikashvili, Secretary-General of the World Tourism Organisation, and other officials during the signing of the agreement.

aim to enhance the end-to-end visitor experience in Qatar, as well as boost the global tourism industry. QNTC previously collaborated with UNWTO to conduct studies around the

impact that visa facilitation can have on Qatar's tourism industry and economy. Following a series of measures implemented between 2016 and 2018, including waiving entry visas for

nationals of nearly 90 countries, Qatar now stands as the most open country in the Middle East and the 8th most open in the world, according to UNWTO rankings.

Kahramaa sees 3,000 violations and warnings in two years

FROM PAGE 1

"The violations with majority of warnings reached about 25,000 over past seven years, since the launch of the National Program for Conservation and Energy Efficiency (Tarsheed) by Kahramaa in April 2012," said Al Hanzab.

According to a report released by Kahramaa recently, the violations and warnings reached 892 and 910 for wastage of water and electricity respectively in 2018.

Al Hanzab said that the Department dedicated 15

inspectors who with the inspectors of other departments and tips off call centre visit households across the country to catch the violations and create awareness.

"Speaking about the actions of the Department to curb the violation, Al Hanzab said: Tarsheed SMS initiative run under Tarsheed has emerged as most effective tools to deter the wastage of electricity and water," said Al Hanzab.

He said that SMS initiative helped to increase the awareness about 60 per cent among the

users as it was noted that majority of the violations were committed due to lack of knowledge about the law and punishments.

"There are pretty good response by the users for the Tarsheed SMS initiative. The SMS initiative was launched in July 2016 to inform all customers with the highest consumption in the residential sector with their monthly consumption of electricity and water and the value of the relevant invoice," said Al Hanzab. According to a report released by Kahramaa recently,



the most effective initiatives in 2018 was 'Tarsheed SMS' which helped save about QR45m by reducing 850.43 MCF natural gas consumption through conservation the uses of electricity by over 84 Gwh.

2018 sees over 13,000 real estate transactions

THE PENINSULA
DOHA

The total number of transactions related to real estate registration in all service centres amounted to 13,554 in 2018, of which 10,218 transactions were executed, according to the annual statistics of real estate registration and documentation transactions.

These transactions include all real estate registration transactions, whether related to sales transactions or other services, and also include transfer of ownership of real estate, while the number of authentication transactions for the same year reached to 83,434 transactions.



This came in the framework of the Ministry of Justice efforts of to bring the services closer to the citizens and facilitate access to them from various services outlets in the ministry, whether through the ministry's external service centres or through the electronic portal of the ministry's website.

About 49 per cent transaction through SAK web portal for digital documentation didn't take more than 15 minutes, and 11 per cent of transaction took less than one hour.

This achievement coincided with the start of the work of the Committee for the Development of Information Systems for Real Estate Registration and Documentation, which issued by the Minister of Justice and Acting Minister of State for Cabinet Affairs H E Dr Issa bin Saad Al Jafali Al Nuaimi in line with the strategy

of Qatar e-Government 2020 aimed at improving the level of government services for individuals and companies and raising the efficiency of administrative processes governmental organizations.

In a statement about this statistics, Saeed Abdullah Al Suwaidi (pictured), Assistant Under-Secretary at the Ministry of Justice for Real Estate Registration and Documentation, said that these data published at the Ministry's website confirm the progress made in facilitating services and obstacles face visitors.

The minister's directives to the committee were clear and focused on preparing and implementing a practical plan to bring the services of the ministry closer to the public and avoid any disruption that may be caused by the administrative procedures.

Al Suwaidi expressed the hope that these measures will achieve aspirations to improve the performance of the service sectors and increase the country's ranking in the World Bank Group's indicators.

MOTC launches govt cloud services

FROM PAGE 1

"The Government Cloud Service will provide a standardized virtual server that takes responsibility for configuration and operations of government entities' operating system (OS), software, and databases," he noted. Processing, storage, networks, and other fundamental computing resources are now provided where entities can deploy and run arbitrary software, which can include operating systems and applications.

"MOTC also provides the Media Analytics Service to government entities," he said, "to allow them to follow up and analyze what's being published about them on media, social media and the traditional electronic media, thus helping them to have instant follow-up of public opinion and deal with it properly. This, eventually, helps

enhance interaction and online engagement between the public and government entities."

MEEZA CEO Eng. Ahmad Mohamed Al Kuwari said: "We are glad to be a part of this launch. Among the main business benefits of Government Cloud —just as in other cloud offerings—is that it enables a level of agility not possible with traditional IT infrastructures that rely on in country datacenters. Further, being multitenant, this is both highly efficient and scalable, as well as cost-effective. Cloud computing services are compatible with MOTC's national information assurance policies. They also follow governance mechanisms based on highest world standards such as ISO certifications for quality management and information defense, as well as the ISO20000, which is the international IT service



MOTC Assistant Under-Secretary of Government Information Technology Sector, Hassan Jassim Al Sayed.

management (ITSM) standard that enables IT organizations; whether in-house, outsourced or external, to ensure that their ITSM processes are aligned with business needs and world best practice. It also provides guidance on cloud computing services deployment and application." In

February last year, MOTC and MEEZA signed an agreement per which MEEZA will provide government cloud and infrastructure services for government entities within the framework of achieving the goals and objectives of the Qatar Digital Government 2020 Strategy.

EAA Foundation launches 'Dynamic Futures Qatar'

FROM PAGE 1

Each institution (Qatar University, College of North Atlantic (CNAQ), Stenden University, and University of Calgary in Qatar) has vetted candidates using their own admissions requirements, and thus eligible beneficiaries for the scholarship programme had their application approved by these institutions accordingly. In addition, Al Fakhoora conducts its own stringent "Selection for Success" process, ensuring the chosen recipients are capable of maximizing the opportunities this unique programme presents to them.

Dynamic Futures Qatar is modelled after Al Fakhoora's Dynamic Futures Scholarship and Empowerment programme, which originated in Gaza and is currently active in seven regions (Gaza, West Bank, Turkey, Lebanon, Jordan, Syria and Iraq). It works to enable marginalized Palestinian and Syrian refugees and IDPs to make meaningful contributions to their host and home communities, as well as become economically self-reliant.

MoPH, HMC sign pact with University Hospital of Heidelberg

THE PENINSULA
DOHA

The Ministry of Public Health (MoPH) and Hamad Medical Corporation (HMC) have signed agreements with the University Hospital of Heidelberg in Germany aimed at promoting cooperation, sharing knowledge and sharing experiences in health-related fields as well as treating patients.

The agreements were signed by the Minister of Public Health H E Dr Hanan Mohamed Al Kuwari; Medical Chair and Chairman of the Heidelberg Hospital, Dr Annette Grotters Kieslich, and Managing Director and Vice-Chairman of the Heidelberg Hospital, Ermaut Jorkan.

Dr Al Kuwari said that the agreements come within the

The agreements were signed by the Minister of Public Health H E Dr Hanan Mohamed Al Kuwari; Medical Chair and Chairman of the Heidelberg Hospital, Dr Annette Grotters Kieslich, and Managing Director and Vice-Chairman of the Heidelberg Hospital, Ermaut Jorkan.

framework of the MoPH's keenness to establish distinguished partnerships with the best medical institutions and centres in the world to exchange experiences and treat patients in various disciplines and knowledge transfer.

"The agreements with Heidelberg University Hospital in Germany will strengthen the relations between our institutions and our two countries, and in the

service of many high-quality health fields, which will contribute to the development of quality health services provided to patients," said the Minister of Public Health H E Dr Hanan Mohamed Al Kuwari.

She also praised the excellent collaboration with Heidelberg Hospital two decades ago, which resulted in special partnerships such as cooperation in the establishment of the National Center for

Cancer Treatment and Research (formerly Al Amal Hospital), the Early Detection of Neonatal Diseases and the Declaration of Cooperation for the establishment of the National Center for Rare Diseases.

The Doha-Heidelberg Research Conference, which will serve as an annual forum, was launched in 2018 and expressed its hope for enhanced cooperation.

Medical Chair and Chairman of the Heidelberg Hospital, Dr Annette Grotters Kieslich, expressed her pleasure to sign the agreements which contribute to enhancing the great cooperation between the two sides, especially through the establishment of joint programmes upon common interest.

QFFD team reviews arrangements in Za'tari camp

QFFD support comes from a \$50m grant made by Amir H H Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani, to the benefit of his Syrian brothers. QFFD programmes provide primary, secondary and tertiary health care facilities.

THE PENINSULA
DOHA



Qatar Fund for Development officials during the visit.

A high level delegation from Qatar Fund for Development (QFFD), visited the Za'tari camp in Jordan to oversee the situation in the camp and QFFD funded health programmes. Through the funding, QFFD aims to facilitate the inclusion of Syrian refugees and reduce pressure on services to host communities and increase capacity of health providers.

The delegation was accompanied by representatives from Qatar Charity (QC), Qatar Red Crescent society (QRCs) and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and were briefed on the latest developments regarding health

centres, how they work in the camp and the coordination between Qatar Charity and Qatar Red Crescent with the UNHCR and the most important aspects of the work they are doing in Jordan for Syrian refugees.

With the increasing pressure on health systems due to large influx of refugee populations, it has become a priority to support the capacity of health care services in host countries. The funded programmes provide primary health care services and, where possible secondary and tertiary care, which is specialised

referral from primary and secondary care, to both Syrian refugees and host communities. This support comes in various forms, including direct support through the provision of equipment and supplies, capacity-building and the strengthening of health system.

With the support from QFFD, Qatar Charity is operating the Comprehensive Qatari Centre at village number 12 in Za'tari camp. This project aims to contribute to improving the living conditions of the Syrian refugees in Za'tari camp in Jordan.

The Centre seeks to increase the coverage of vaccination services for children and women of childbearing age within the camp and to provide reproductive health services including family planning, counselling and care of pregnant women. It also contributes to awareness raising and health education of refugees in the camp, as well as providing diagnosis and treatment services to patients coming to the centre. QFFD support comes from a \$50m grant made by Amir H H Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani, to the benefit of his Syrian brothers.

Meet debates factors behind increase in thyroid cancer cases

QNA
DOHA

The two-day Thyroid Cancer Conference, which was organised by Qatar Cancer Society (QCS) under the theme "Present Standards and New Perspectives", concluded yesterday. The participants at the conference discussed reasons for the marked increase in the incidence of thyroid cancer in the last three years, as the number of infected in 2015 did not exceed 51 patients, while about 110 cases were recorded in 2018, an increase of more than 100 per cent.

The participants agreed on establishing a plan to implement the program of early detection of thyroid cancer in cooperation with the health authorities in Qatar. Thyroid Cancer Conference witnessed the participation of 1,200 specialists in various areas that have to do with thyroid cancer from a number of Arab and foreign countries such as Austria, Oman, Kuwait, in addition to the participation of a number of

authorities in Qatar including the Ministry of Public Health, Hamad Medical Corporation and Qatar Doctor's Society. The conference is part of QCS' keenness to keep abreast of the global medical developments in order to reduce the spread of the disease in Qatar and to provide all necessary resources and support to combat them. Dr Osama Al Homsi, Hamad Medical Corporation's National Center for Cancer Care and Research, Hematology and Oncology Chairman, said that the conference discussed the important issue of increasing the incidence of thyroid cancer, which came at a very important time as Qatar seeks to intensify its efforts in the health sector to control the incidence of cancer in general.

In remarks to reporters, He pointed out that the health authorities in Qatar have provided all the diagnostic and treatment methods of surgical and pharmacological adding that there are efforts for the reduction of cancer diseases, whether by prevention or treatment.

QatarDebate team participates in meet at Harvard

THE PENINSULA/DOHA

QatarDebate, a member of the Qatar Foundation, recently participated for the first time at the twelfth annual Arab Conference at Harvard, titled (Re)Imagining Home, held on Harvard University's campus.

QatarDebate delegates travelled to the US in order to enhance the role of QatarDebate as a supporter of the conference and to complement cooperation with the American universities, in addition to presenting a debate workshop and booth to highlight QD activities and events.



Abdulrahman Al Subate (pictured), Head of Outreach Programme at QatarDebate, said, "The partnerships with American universities have been fruitful and they have begun to teach

QatarDebate's educational sources among their syllabus." He praised the conference importance, which increased the participants' desire to see what QD offered and facilitated future partnerships in America. QD Centre has taken a global approach in promoting the Arabic language.

Al Subate stressed the importance of participating in the conference and he said, "We have met with great personalities from various cultural backgrounds. The attendees were briefed on QD initiatives to spread Arabic among Arabs and other nationalities in general."



The officials during the event.

Koora Time wins the 'Best Community Programme Award'

THE PENINSULA
DOHA

Koora Time, a sustainable initiative created and designed by Qatar Shell and Qatar Football Association (QFA) to improve the health and well-being of young people in Qatar through football, has added a new accolade to its growing list of awards.

Koora Time won the 'Best Community Programme Award' at the 11th Global CSR Summit & Awards in Malaysia this April, bringing the total number of local and international honours received to 10, since the initiative was launched in 2012.

The award, which was presented at The Global CSR Awards 2019, Asia's most prestigious recognition programme for corporate social responsibility, bears testament to the successful partnership between Qatar Shell and QFA.

Khalid Mubarak Al Kawari, QFA Director of Marketing and Communication, noted that the association's social responsibility program is an essential part of its Vision 2021.

"The success of Koora Time, which has gained an international reputation, motivates us to further expand the initiative to reach more of our youth. There is no doubt that the latest award comes within the framework of our renewed efforts since the beginning of this season, to effectively engage the local community and achieve our objectives, in cooperation with our partners at Qatar Shell," he explained.

Al Kawari also added that this award represents another incentive to pursue further achievements, both locally and internationally.

"We are working hard towards achieving new accomplishments after the expansion of the Koora Time initiative in the local community and with our participation in events such as Qatar National Day, the National Sport Day, as well as the Emir Cup."

"I would like to thank Koora Time team members from the Qatar Football Association, Qatar Shell, and QFA's executive board members, as well as QFA President, Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa bin Ahmed Al Thani, for his support and for prioritising social responsibility initiatives within the framework of our Vision 2021," Al Kawari said.

"I would also like to highlight the pivotal and strategic role that the Ministry of Education and Higher Education and Aspire Academy play in promoting Koora Time, which seeks to improve the health of youth through football."

Commenting on the award, Rashid Majed Al Sulaiti, Deputy General Manager of Qatar Shell Companies, noted that "Qatar Shell's Social Investment initiatives are an integral and vital part of our business, which aim to build national capabilities, and reflect our unwavering commitment to promoting Qatari values and working to transform Qatar into a self-sustaining nation in line with the National Vision 2030."

"Since the launch of Koora Time, we have proudly benefited over 100,000 youth across Qatar. And this latest award recognises the tangible contribution of our partnership with QFA in this regard," Al Sulaiti added.

Qatar Shell and QFA have recently wrapped up the seventh season of Koora Time, which attracted a weekly average of 3,500 participants, who had access to 30 venues for football and sports-related activities compared to eight venues when Koora Time launched in 2012.

The initiative's undisputed success was evident in numbers, with a significant number of participants having improved their Body Mass Index (BMI). The latest season further contributed to empowering women in Qatar, with girls accounting for half of the participants.

The initiative is based on FC Barcelona Foundation's FutbolNet methodology and provides children with an extra 72 hours of extra-curricular physical education per year.

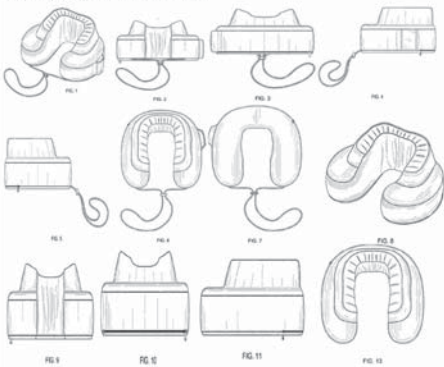
In recognition of its positive impact on the health of youth, Koora Time has won 10 CSR awards over the past years, including the Asian Football Confederation's Dream of Asia Award in the area of social responsibility in 2014 and 2016.

CAUTIONARY NOTICE IN QATAR

Notice is hereby given that David Bret Sternlight and Kyna Rose Sternlight, located at "22339 Hart Street, Canoga Park, California, U.S.A." are the sole owners and proprietors of the design entitled:

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Such design is used in respect of:



DESCRIPTION OF FIGURES

- 1 - is a perspective view of a first embodiment of a travel pillow, showing the new design.
- 2 - is a front elevational view thereof.
- 3 - is a rear elevational view thereof
- 4 - is a left-side elevational view thereof.
- 5 - is a right-side elevational view of thereof.
- 6 - is a top plan view thereof
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- 8 - is a perspective view of second embodiment thereof
- 9 - is a front elevational view thereof
- 10 - is a rear elevational view thereof
- 11 - is a left-side elevational thereof
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- 13 - is a top plan view thereof
- 14 - is a plan view thereof

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Visitors throng National Museum of Qatar; films major attraction

RAYNALD C RIVERA
THE PENINSULA

Since its spectacular launch last month, the National Museum of Qatar (NMoQ) has become the nucleus of tourism in the country, being the most visited cultural destination with the influx of visitors every day. The long queues of museum-goers especially on weekends are evident of the popularity of the Jean Nouvel-designed innovative museum.

From the outside, the stunning desert rose structure is a magnet for visitors but upon

entry into the building, museum-goers are even more awed with its rich and immersive content.

Having probably the largest permanent video installation in the world, NMoQ has much of its indoor space made of cinematic display zones where specially-commissioned films are projected on.

It has close to 3,000sqm of projection surfaces for screening films including 120 custom 4K and 8K video projectors. Nine commissioned films are projection mapped in high resolution on the surfaces of each gallery creating an immersive

audio-visual experience and bringing to life the narratives of the collections on display in an extraordinary and stunning way.

The first gallery features the four-minute film *The Beginnings* by French filmmaker Christophe Cheysson which takes the visitor on a journey through the marvels of space and time, revealing Earth as it was hundreds of millions of years ago and the origins of Qatar today.

In the second gallery is *Land and Sea* – a kaleidoscopic 18-minute nature film like no other by Cheysson and legendary natural history filmmaker

Jacques Perrin. Shown on the largest single projection surface at the high resolution employed anywhere in the world, the film takes visitors on a magical adventure across Qatar's changing environment.

A large-scale film by Jananne Al-Ani, *Archaeology*, is about Qatar's archaeological sites, which through beautiful aerial shots moves through periods of pre-history into the Bronze Age and beyond.

Directed by Oscar-nominated filmmaker Abderrahmane Sissako, the film *Life in Al Barr (Desert)* fascinates visitors as it highlights the close relationships between families and communities in the Northern Desert of Qatar in 1950s and 1960s, by re-imagining a day in the life of a Qatari family.

The next gallery features another Sissako film *Al Zubarah* which tells the story of life in the old coastal city of Al Zubarah, one of Qatar's most significant historical sites.

Critically acclaimed filmmaker Mira Nair tells visitors the story of pearl divers and the hardships they endure to bring home a seasonal income in the film *Nafas (Breath)* – a story beautifully told through the parallel journey of a couple brought



Visitors wait for their turn at NMoQ. PIC: ABDUL BASIT / THE PENINSULA



A large video projection in the first gallery of National Museum of Qatar. PIC: QASSIM RAHMATULLAH / THE PENINSULA

together on land and separated for months by the sea.

In a poetic manner, *'Shadows of History'* by British director Peter Webber awakens figures of the past to re-capture a story that contributed to the founding of Qatar depicting the story of a man who united tribes under one flag to create a nation.

The *'Coming of Oil'* is a multi-channel installation by renowned video artist Doug

Aitken that explores the layered geological depths of the land and the historical legacy brought by the discovery of oil, a turning point in the history and development of present day Qatar.

Veteran video art star John Sanborn's *Alchemy* celebrates the remarkable daring and enormous benefits of Qatar's development of Liquid Natural Gas as a resource for the world.

Ooredoo unveils promotion for prepaid customers

THE PENINSULA
DOHA

Ooredoo announced yesterday an exciting new offer for its prepaid customers, offering them free data with purchases of its Hala Flexi Packs.

The new promotion – which makes the already great value Hala service an even better proposition – sees customers receiving up to 12 GB data absolutely free when they subscribe to a Hala Flexi Pack 100 or above, which allows them to choose which services they need.

Hala Flexi Packs give customers points which they can then use for the services they choose: local calls, international calls, SMSs and data.

Points available and bonus free data will depend on the pack chosen. The QR100 Flexi Pack includes 1,000 points, with up to 7 GB data as standard and an extra 5GB data free valid for 30 days while QR150 Flexi Pack includes 2,100 points, with up to 14GB data

as standard and an extra 8GB data free valid for 30 days.

The QR200 Flexi Pack includes 3,100 points, with up to 22GB data as standard and an extra 12GB data free valid for 30 days

Not only that, this free data will be available for customers up to six months upon every successful renewal of their Flexi Pack.

Manar Khalifa Al Muraikhi, Director PR and Corporate Communications at Ooredoo, said of the offer: "Complete customer satisfaction is of the utmost importance to Ooredoo, in line with our corporate vision, and we know our customers expect value for money and competitive products and services from us. We're delighted to be able to offer this special promotion to our Hala customers, as it will ensure we are competitive within the market and offering our customers the best deal."

Hala customers can subscribe to Flexi Packs by dialling *121* or via the Ooredoo app.

HMC's surgical team grows in strength and capacity

THE PENINSULA
DOHA

According to data from the Qatar National Cancer Registry (QNCR) at the Ministry of Public Health, brain cancer is the eighth most common male malignant cancer in Qatar, accounting for 4.48 percent of total cancer cases.

In 2015, 48 people were diagnosed with malignant brain cancer in Qatar, with around 60 percent of these cases requiring surgery.

Brain cancer is an overgrowth of cells in the brain that form masses called tumours. Cancerous or malignant brain tumours tend to grow very quickly. While the primary brain tumour can begin directly in the brain, the secondary brain tumour, often called a metastatic brain tumour, starts in other parts of the body and spreads to the brain. Brain tumours disrupt the way the body works and can be life-threatening.

The neurosurgical team from Hamad Medical Corporation's

At HMC, each brain tumour case is discussed individually, with each patient receiving their own treatment plan created by a multidisciplinary team composed of healthcare professionals from different specialties, including oncologists, pathologists and radiologists.

(HMC) Neuroscience Institute performed around 140 brain surgeries in 2018, many of which were for brain tumours. Commenting on the treatment options available at HMC, Dr Ahmed Own, Head of the Neuroscience Institute at HMC, said surgery remains the most common treatment for brain cancer.

"Patients with brain tumours have several treatment options,



Dr. Ahmed Own, Head of the Neuroscience Institute at HMC

including chemotherapy, radiotherapy, and surgery. However, surgery remains the most common treatment option with around 60 percent of cases undergoing surgical intervention. For higher-grade tumours, treatment usually begins with surgery and is followed by both radiation therapy and chemotherapy," said Dr Own.

"To meet the high demand for surgery and to ensure a

high-quality service for brain cancer patients, the surgical team at HMC has expanded its capacity, adding three more surgeons to the existing four, all with strong experience from the United States, Canada, and Germany.

The number of surgeries for brain tumours has increased significantly but the outcomes are remarkably successful," he added.

Dr Own further said that each brain tumour case is discussed individually, with each patient receiving their own treatment plan created by a multidisciplinary team composed of health care professionals from different specialties, including oncologists, pathologists, and radiologists.

In line with its mission to deliver the safest, most effective and most compassionate care to each and every one of patients, HMC is raising awareness about brain cancer to mark Brain Cancer Awareness Month during April.

Non-profit organisations should lend helping hand to translators

MOHAMMED OSMA
THE PENINSULA

Arab translators are facing several challenges today and non-profit organisations should come forward to help them, said winner of the 2018 edition of Sheikh Hamad Award for Translation and International Understanding, Indifference of Arab universities towards translators is another big challenge, he said.

"Arab translators face many financial and subjective challenges and issues related to the cultural industry in general, such as access to translation, publishing, printing, editing, etc. Therefore, I believe that large non-profit institutions are primarily qualified to take responsibility of such great job," said Ibrahim Abu Hashash, translator and winner of Sheikh Hamad Award for Translation and International Understanding in an exclusive interview with The Peninsula.

In addition to these challenges, most of the Arab universities do not recognise translation as part of the important scientific disciplines which requires promotion of its faculty members, although I can claim that the effort to translate a book such as "The Philosophy of the Enlightenment" is equal to two



Dr Ibrahim Abu Hashash, the winner of the 4th Sheikh Hamad Award for Translation and International Understanding for his translation of *'Die Philosophie der Aufklärung'* by Ernst Cassirer.

times of researches which gets promotion said Dr Ibrahim Abu Hashash, lamenting the apathy of Arab universities towards the field of translation.

Asked how he sees the role of such awards in encouraging translation between Arabic and other languages, he said there was no doubt that "such award has an important role in stimulating translation and appreciation to translation works

Giving reason for choosing "Die Philosophie der Aufklärung" for translation, Dr Abu Hashash said the book has great importance in Western philosophical culture in general, and German in particular.

as cultural creativity which is indispensable for renaissance and intellectual process. Intellectual and cognitive development, and communication between cultures," he said. In addition to the award's very positive role in valuing the translators and rewarding their efforts financially and morally, this will improve the level of translation, starting with the selection of suitable materials for translation and its quality.

"No doubt that the Sheikh Hamad's award seeks to restore the scientific and historical status of translation and translators in the Arab region," said Dr Abu Hashash, adding this is clear from the remarkable interest in encouraging translation and professionalism, which puts translation in its proper place as a lever of advancement in the general sense.

Asked about the future of translation in light of the proliferation of artificial intelligence and online translations, he said translation was a

creative, intellectual, linguistic and comprehensive cultural process, which cannot be done by the artificial intelligence, no matter how it evolves, especially in the fields of literature and various fields of humanity, such as philosophy, thought, aesthetics and sociology etc. "Translation is one way or another rewriting, and this can only be done by humans," he added.

According to Dr Ibrahim, the book which he translated and which won the Sheikh Hamad's Award "Die Philosophie der Aufklärung" derives its importance from the field of philosophy," noting that the author of the book, Ernst Cassirer, is one of the most important philosophers of the 20th century renowned for his depth of analysis, insight and knowledge mastering philosophical methods.

Giving reason for choosing "Die Philosophie der Aufklärung" for translation Dr Abu Hashash said the book has great importance in Western philosophical

culture in general, and German in particular. There is personal reason that, "I prefer to do such hard work that translation requires to convey valuable books with profound contents important to the readers. Translators generally like to present to readers what they love or believe, it is important contents but in another languages," he explained. Arab readers need any book whatever its subject is about, he said highlighting the importance of the book for Arabic readers, adding "I think readers of Arabic are the most needy for such books in particular at this time under the Arab renaissance that experiencing a great setback or relapse, or indulge in overflowing, consumption and flattening. Therefore we need such intellectual works published and the book is in a central position of this field; it is a great lesson in respecting the mind that represents power, he said pointing out that enlightenment is a continuous mental intellectual act, not an end of era in the history of human thought.

Regarding his other translations from German to Arabic or vice versa, he has published five books of intellectual and literary books, in addition to eight books

for children, all of them translated from German language he said. He added "I participated in the translation of two works from Arabic to German".

"It is difficult to answer such question" he said when asked about the reason for selection of his book whether it is because of its content or accuracy of the translation? The Steering Committee of the Award and the Juries have their rules and conditions and their decision is based on the reports of specialized arbitrators consisting of top professional translators and experts mastering both languages. After the winners' names were revealed I came to know competitors can see the assessment reports on their works which is available at the headquarters of the Sheikh Hamad Award. Personally I did not read it because I trust the integrity of Juries regardless of the outcome said Dr Hashash, noting that mechanism of arbitration and its objectivity in this award or similar Arab awards are almost same. Most of the works that won this year were related to German language is because the 5th edition of the award was dedicated to German language and every year there is a different main language in addition to Arabic and English.

ORYX GTL supports Qatari Autism Society

THE PENINSULA
DOHA

Qatari Autism Society (QAS) in co-operation with ORYX (GTL) has signed an agreement to achieve QAS's vision, which aims to integrate people with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) into the community since they are an integral part of it.

This agreement contributes to support "You Complete Us" programme hosted by QAS.

QAS hosted the programme for children with Autism ranging

(3-14 years). It aims to qualify, rehabilitate and train the children with ASD so that they can rely on themselves to meet their daily needs and develop their abilities as well as provide support and guidance to their families.

ORYX (GTL) is providing the needed support towards the success and sustainability of "You Complete Us" programme. The programme consists of individual sessions in Arabic and English covering Speech-Language Therapy, Occupational Therapy, Special Education

(Behavior Modification) and Family Advisory Services.

Mohamed Faisal, Executive Director of QAS, expressed his pleasure in signing this agreement of partnership. ORYX (GTL) provides support to QAS in line with its commitment to Corporate Social Responsibility.

Mohamed Al Enazi, Chief Administration Officer at ORYX GTL, has expressed his pleasure at this partnership that will contribute to raising awareness about autism disorder. Al Enazi

praised all the employees of the QAS for their tremendous efforts, and their relentless endeavours to integrate them with their peers in the community to overcome this disorder.

QAS hopes to get technical and financial support by signing such agreement with governmental institutions and civil society organisations to approach Qatar vision 2030 as well as the Qatari Autism Society vision, and to let the society contribute in completing (One piece of Autism puzzle).



The officials of QAS and ORYX GTL exchanging documents after signing the agreement.

Crowne Plaza Doha - The Business Park and Holiday Inn Doha win awards

THE PENINSULA/DOHA

Crowne Plaza Doha - The Business Park & Holiday Inn Doha - The Business Park recently received three awards in the People's Choice category during the annual FACT Qatar Magazine Dining Awards, a prestigious award-giving body in the region that recognises excellence in the F&B industry.

Outlets from the two hotels won the 'Favorite Latin American' for Rodizio Brazilian Churrascaria, 'Favorite Breakfast Restaurant' for Mesh Cafe and 'Favorite Pub in



The officials of Crowne Plaza Doha - The Business Park & Holiday Inn Doha with the awards.

Doha' for Stock Burger Co. Doha. Rohinton Bharucha, Director of Food & Beverage of the clustered properties, said: "It is with great honour that we accept these awards. All the hard work that our team consistently does are all worth it. We owe this People's Choice recognitions to our

loyal patrons. We will continue to provide the same high-quality food & beverages that we are known for and that our guests love."

Campaign raises anemia awareness

THE PENINSULA
DOHA

The College of Pharmacy (CPH) at Qatar University (QU) recently held a campaign to raise awareness about anemia among QU students.

The event was organised by members of the Qatar Pharmacy Undergraduate Society (QPHUS) who are students representing first professional year (P1) through fourth professional year (P4) pharmacy students, under the guidance and supervision of QU faculty members.

The aim of this campaign was to educate the public, particularly youth, about different types of anemias: screening and early

detection, signs and symptoms, myths and various treatment modalities.

CPH students set up a booth which included three main interactive stations. In the first station, CPH students simulated each person's 'blood sample' with the blood type labeled on it and then briefed visitors on the major principles of anemia.

In the second station, students interacted with visitors by giving them general information about anemia, its signs and symptoms, and testing them through trivia. The third station was intended to assess the basic knowledge of visitors by asking them multiple choice questions. Then explaining the correct answers.

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	40001749	Pre-qualification tender for "Provision of Specialized Media Monitoring", Interested participants are requested to send an Expression of Interest (EOI) by email to s.basheer@scd.gov.qa latest by 24 April 2019. The last date to issue the PQQ document is 25 April 2019	Not applicable	Not applicable	One Envelope	05-May-19
	Ministry of Interior Purchase Department	572/2019	Tender Supply, Installation, Testing and Commissioning of electric Type Pool Boiler for PTI	500 credit card	50,000	Single Envelope	29/04/2019 Monday
	Ministry of Interior Purchase Department	570/2019	Bidding Lease (1) office at Mesalmeer Services center to provide car Insurance Services for (3) years	500 credit card	1,000	Single Envelope	06/05/2019 Monday
	Ministry of Interior Purchase Department	592/2019	Tender Supply of paper and printing press materials	500 credit card	8,000	Single Envelope	13/05/2019 Monday
	Ministry of Interior Purchase Department	591/2019	Tender Design and build of Proposed Police Station and Cell Block at Al Saliya	7500 credit card	750,000	Single Envelope	27/05/2019 Monday
	Qatar General Electricity & Water Corporation - Kahramaa	LTC/1444/2019	SUPPLY/ INSTALLATION AND MAINTENANCE OF SERVICE CABINETS AND ACCESSORIES* Purchase of Tender Documents through KM website km.qa Electricity Distribution Department	1,300	130,000	Two Envelopes	26/05/2019
	Qatar General Electricity & Water Corporation - Kahramaa	LTC/1400/2018	PHYSICAL SECURITY INFORMATION MANAGER (PSIM) - MAINTENANCE AND REMOTE SITES INTEGRATION WORKS WITH SECURITY CENTRAL MONITORING STATION Purchase through Kahramaa website Km.qa	4000	400,000	Two Envelopes	19/05/2019
	Ministry of Municipality and Environment Major Tenders & Auctions Committee	Bid No. TC/B/36-602/2019	Purchase of livestock production requirements for (Livestock Department)	1,400 Qatari Riyals	140,000 Qatari Riyals	Two envelopes (Technical / Financial)	12/05/2019
	Ministry of Municipality and Environment Major Tenders & Auctions Committee	Bid No. TC/B/27-607/2019	Renting 2 sites for erecting an ATM at Dhakhira Market, Al Khor Park for (Al Khor and Al Dhakhira Municipality)	500 Qatari Riyals	4,000 Qatari Riyals	One envelope (Technical / Financial)	12/05/2019
	Ministry of Municipality and Environment Major Tenders & Auctions Committee	Bid No. TC/B/38-606/2019	Maintaining and caring for plantations and irrigation networks of the Fourth Group at Al Rayyan Municipality for (the Public Parks Department)	3,500 Qatari Riyals	350,000 Qatari Riyals	Two envelopes (Technical / Financial)	12/05/2019
	Ministry of Municipality and Environment Major Tenders & Auctions Committee	Bid No. TC/B/39-608/2019	Electrical and plumbing maintenance works at the Complex of Public Cleanness in the Industrial Area, Road (52) for (Department of Administrative Services)	1,200 Qatari Riyals	120,000 Qatari Riyals	Two envelopes (Technical / Financial)	12/05/2019
	Ministry of Municipality and Environment Minor Tenders & Auctions Committee	Bid No. QMM/68/2019	Purchase, supply and install 5 motors of marine boats	500 Qatari Riyals	12,500 Qatari Riyals	One envelope (Technical / Financial)	13/05/2019
	Ministry of Public Health (MOPH)	576-2019	PROVISION OF CONSULTANCY SERVICES TO ESTABLISH VARIOUS FUNDING PRINCIPLES FOR HEALTHCARE SYSTEMS TO SUPPORT THE PRIVATE SECTOR PARTICIPATION IN HEALTH - For more information: www.MOPH.gov.qa Announcement.	2000.00 (Two Thousand Only)	200,000.00 (Two Hundred Thousand Only)	Two Envelopes	Sunday, 05th of May 2019 12:00 hrs

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



61 regime fighters dead in Syria attacks

AFP
BEIRUT

Militants have killed almost 60 Syrian regime fighters in 48 hours, a monitor said yesterday, in some of the deadliest attacks on pro-Damascus forces in recent weeks.

Kurdish-led forces in March announced the defeat of the Islamic State group's "caliphate" in eastern Syria, but the militants have retained hideouts there and in other parts of the country as well as the ability to carry out deadly assaults.

Since Thursday, IS militants have killed 35 pro-Damascus fighters in regime-held parts of central and eastern Syria, the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights said.

Observatory chief Rami Abdel Rahman described those attacks as producing "the highest death toll among regime forces since the caliphate was declared defeated" in the eastern village of Baghouz last month.

Meanwhile, regime fighters also came under attack on another front of Syria's grinding eight-year war, the Britain-based monitor added.

Yesterday, militants linked to Syria's former Al Qaeda

Kurdish-led forces in March announced the defeat of the Islamic State group's "caliphate" in eastern Syria, but the militants have retained hideouts there and in other parts of the country as well as the ability to carry out deadly assaults.

affiliate attacked loyalist checkpoints and positions on the western edges of the northern city of Aleppo, killing 26 more pro-Assad fighters, it said.

It was the latest death tally in a civil war that has killed more than 370,000 people since starting in 2011 with the brutal repression of anti-government protests. President Bashar Al Assad has managed to claw back about 60 percent of the country with Russian military backing since 2015, but several regions remain beyond its control.

These include a large swathe of northeastern Syria held by Kurdish-led forces who have been fighting IS with the support

of a US-led coalition, as well as the militant-held region of Idlib west of Aleppo city.

Regime forces in theory control the vast desert that stretches from the capital Damascus to the Iraqi border, but IS is still present there.

Attacks by the militants have killed 27 troops and allied militiamen, including four senior Syrian army officers, in the desert east of Homs province since Thursday, the Observatory said. The propaganda arm of IS said its fighters carried out the operation. The Observatory also said IS fighters killed another eight soldiers and militiamen, including two officers, in the eastern province of Deir Ezzor on Thursday night.

That attack targeted a desert village south of the city of Mayadeen on the Euphrates River, upstream from the village of Baghouz where IS made a desperate last stand in March.

IS swept across a large swathe of Syria and Iraq in 2014, declaring a cross-border "caliphate" in areas it controlled. At the height of its rule, the extremist group imposed its brutal ideology on millions in territory roughly the size of the United Kingdom.



Kosovar children made crown of flowers with Kosovar police officers in the compound of the foreign detention centre in the village of Vranidoll, Kosovo, yesterday.

Kosovo repatriates 110 citizens from Syria

AFP
PRISTINA

Kosovo yesterday repatriated 110 of its citizens from Syria, mostly mothers with their children having followed their partners who went to join militant groups in the war-torn country. The

group also included four men suspected of having fought for the IS group, who were charged upon arrival in Pristina with participating in a foreign conflict, chief prosecutor Aleksander Lumezi said. The US embassy in Kosovo welcomed the move, calling it an example for others.

"With this repatriation, Kosovo has set an important example for all Members of the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS and the international community to follow," the embassy said.

Some 300 Kosovars joined militants in Syria and Iraq, according to the ministry.

Rebel dead in DR Congo hospital attack

AFP
BUTEMBO, DR CONGO

The DR Congo army fought off an attack on a hospital by a rebel group, killing one militiaman, police said yesterday, in the latest assault on medical staff trying to rein in an Ebola outbreak in the east of the country.

Armed rebels from the Mai-Mai militia attacked Katwa hospital near the city of Butembo at around 3.40am, officers said.

"We have resisted and repelled the attack even though these 'Mai-Mai' had a PKM machine gun," said Butembo police chief Colonel Paul Ngoma.

He said one rebel was killed and four captured.

The attack came a day after a WHO doctor, Richard Valery Mouzoko Kiboung, was shot dead in an assault by armed militiamen on Butembo University Hospital, according to the World Health Organisation.

The WHO said the epidemiologist had been deployed to help combat Ebola in the region.

Iraq keen on security of its neighbours

QNA
BAGHDAD

The Speaker of the Iraqi Council of Representatives Mohammad Al Halbusi has underlined that his country is keen on the security and stability of its neighbours and the region and looks forward to building good partnerships with all surrounding countries.

This came during his speech at the opening of the Baghdad Conference of parliaments of neighbouring countries of Iraq, under the slogan 'Iraq, stability and development / in the presence of the heads of parliaments of a number of countries in the region. Al Halbusi said that "Iraq today stands strong again after its heroic fight against terrorism and achieved great victory by the unity of its people." He noted that Iraq had suffered from difficult circumstances, and today regain its position among the countries of the region, which supported it in its historic confrontation against terrorism.

'Turkey determined to continue fight against terror'

ANATOLIA
ANKARA

Turkey's Parliament speaker reiterated Ankara's relentless struggle against terrorism yesterday.

"Turkey is determined to continue its fight against terrorists and their supporters by making no compromises on its attitude that embraces the whole

of Turkish citizens," said Mustafa Sentop at a news conference ahead of his departure to Iraq.

Sentop visited Iraq yesterday to attend "the Baghdad summit of parliaments of neighbouring countries", along with a delegation to meet their counterparts from Iraq, Iran, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Turkey, Jordan and Syria. He expressed his deep sorrow over the martyrdom of

four Turkish soldiers and injuring of six others on Friday during operations against terrorists.

He offered his condolences to the families of the martyrs and to the Turkish nation, and wished the injured soldiers a quick recovery.

On Friday, at least four Turkish soldiers were martyred during operations against terrorists in the Turkey-Iraq border

area. According to a statement by the Defence Ministry the terrorists came under heavy fire from Turkish air operations and fire support.

The statement did not specify the name of the terrorist organisation, but the Turkish military frequently conducts operations against the PKK terrorist group in the area.

In its more than 30-year

terror campaign against Turkey, the PKK — listed as a terrorist organisation by Turkey, the US and the EU — has been responsible for the deaths of nearly 40,000 people, including women and children.

On the Baghdad summit, Sentop said: "The developments in Iraq have direct effects not only on Iraq itself but also on the countries of the region."



People attend a protest against Libyan military commander Khalifa Haftar's offensive to seize Tripoli, Libya, yesterday.

Heavy clashes in Libyan capital

REUTERS
TRIPOLI

Heavy clashes broke out in the southern districts of the Libyan capital Tripoli yesterday, with shelling audible in the city centre, residents said, as the death toll from two weeks of fighting between the country's rival governments rose to 220.

The spike in violence happened after the White House said on Friday that President Donald Trump spoke by phone earlier in the week with Libyan commander Khalifa Haftar, who started an offensive against

Tripoli on April 3. The disclosure of the call and a US statement that it "recognised Field Marshal Haftar's significant role in fighting terrorism and securing Libya's oil resources" has boosted the commander's supporters and enraged his opponents.

Western powers and the Gulf have been divided over a push by Haftar's forces to seize Tripoli, undermining calls by the United Nations for a ceasefire. Despite the offensive, Haftar's Libya National Army (LNA) force has not been able to breach the southern defences of forces allied to the interna-

tionally recognised administration based in the city.

Yesterday, shelling was louder and more frequent than in previous days and audible even in central districts more than 10km away from the frontline, residents said.

Both sides claimed progress in southern Tripoli, but no more details were immediately available. On Friday, two children were killed in shelling in southern Tripoli, residents said. The fighting has killed 220 people and wounded 1,066, the World Health organization (WHO) said.

South Sudan President urges rebel chief to join unity government

AFP
JUBA

South Sudan President Salva Kiir yesterday urged opposition leader Riek Machar to return home "urgently" to help form a government of national unity.

A failure by the former vice-president to do so would destroy any hope for peace in the war-torn country, he said.

"Even now, it's not too late," Kiir told reporters. "I am inviting Dr. Riek Machar to urgently return to Juba so that we can work together to expedite the process of forming the revitalized Transitional Government of National Unity".

A peace deal signed by the parties of the country's six-year-old conflict calls for the formation of a government of national unity on May 12.

Machar, who is a signatory of the agreement, on Thursday asked for a delay of six months, saying it was not safe for him to return to Juba. According to leaders of his party he is in Khartoum, the Sudanese capital.

Machar "will not come to Juba without security arrangements," said Puot Kanga Chol, representing Machar's SPLM-IO rebel group at the National Pre-transitional Committee (NPTC).

the body charged with implementing the peace agreement.

But Kiir said that "we should hold the interest of our people above and beyond any personal fears, resentments and interests. "Any delay to the formation of the government would crush the hopes of our people for peace," he warned.

Machar fled Juba in 2016 under fire from Kiir's troops after a previous peace deal fell apart. The September peace deal has ended most of the fighting, but progress towards a unified army and the security of the capital have been slow.

The deal is the latest effort to end years of conflict between both men that has plunged their country into a civil war marked by atrocities, including murder and rape, motivated by ethnic differences.

Predominantly Christian, South Sudan is the world's youngest country, gaining its independence from Sudan in 2011 after 22 years of conflict.

Kiir and Machar were allies in the struggle for statehood, but their subsequent rivalry turned into war from December 2013.

The government has asked foreign donors to fund much of its \$285m budget to implement the peace deal.

Sudan protest leaders, army rulers to talk on power transfer

AFP
KHARTOUM

Protest leaders were to hold talks with Sudan's military rulers who have so far resisted calls to transfer power to a civilian administration, leading figures in the protest movement said.

The talks come on the eve of the protest leaders' planned announcement of a ruling

civilian council that they say will replace the military body.

"The military council will hold talks with the Alliance for Freedom and Change at 8:00 pm (1800 GMT)," Siddiq Yousef, a senior member of the umbrella group leading the protest movement, said.

Since the removal of veteran president Omar Al Bashir by the army on April 11, Sudan has been ruled by a

10-member military council. But protesters, who have camped outside the army headquarters in central Khartoum, demand that the council hand over power swiftly to a civilian body.

Another member of the Sudanese Professionals Association (SPA) that launched the initial campaign against Bashir confirmed that talks would take place. "Five representatives

from the alliance will go to the military council to discuss with them the transfer of power to civilian rule," Ahmed Al Rabia said.

He said if the military rulers refused to hand over power, then the protest leaders would go ahead with their planned announcement of a "sovereign civilian council" today.

"If they are willing to negotiate, then there is a chance that

tomorrow's announcement could be postponed," Rabia said. "What we want from them is a timetable to hand over power, so things don't drag." He said that since the ouster of Bashir, the military council has held two rounds of talks with the protest leaders.

"During these talks we've felt that the military council has no desire to hand over power," Rabia said.

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EDITORIAL

UAE destabilising region

United Arab Emirates (UAE) is spearheading the plans to undermine stability and security of different countries in the region. The growing economic influence, military presence of UAE and Saudi in the Horn of Africa and their War in Yemen, will without a doubt, create further instability in the region than bringing peace.

Contrary to their evil intentions, these two countries try to present themselves as a regional stabilizing actor and peace-broker in the region.

UAE does not care about its international obligations as its financial sector has become a haven for money laundering and illegal financial transactions, and its current attempt of meddling in Libya and Sudan is a glaring examples of interfering and undermining sovereignty of other countries.

On Friday, Turkish authorities announced that they had arrested men suspected of spying for the United Arab Emirates and it is probing whether these two men have relation with the brutal murder of the Saudi journalist Jamal Khashoggi. Anadolu news agency reported.

Turkish official told Reuters "We are investigating whether the primary individual's arrival in Turkey was related to the Jamal Khashoggi murder," adding: "It is possible that there was an attempt to collect information about Arabs, including political dissidents, living in Turkey." According to the reports the men admitted they had recruited and paid informants, and the suspects were referred to court on charges of political, military and international espionage.

Citing Turkish a senior official, Reuters said one of the two men had arrived in Turkey in October 2018, days after Khashoggi was murdered inside Saudi Arabia's consulate in Istanbul. The second man arrived later to help his colleague with the workload, and the two men were under surveillance for six months.

The two states have seen any country not consisting authoritarian, military rulers as a potential threat to their regimes inspiring change and challenge their own political status quo.

Therefore Saudi and UAE have provided a wide range of military supports to Khalifa Haftar to launch assault on Tripoli where the UN-backed Government of National Accord, and internationally recognized government of Al Sarraj is based in a clear and direct violation to the international law, as Libya is still under an international arms embargo. UAE and Saudi's interference has been observed in all countries of the region whose people fought for democratic change and positive reforms since the 2011 Arab Spring uprisings.

Due to this counter-revolutionary agenda of these two governments and their efforts to undermine public demands for reforms and peaceful democratic changes, transformations hopes have faced setbacks and even some have turned into full scale violence, in Syria, Yemen, Libya and no one knows about their next targets in the region.

QUOTE OF THE DAY

Nobody knows how Brexit will end. This is creating great uncertainty. There is still a fear that there will be a hard Brexit without any withdrawal treaty arrangements.

Jean Claude Juncker
European Commission President

What Sudan tells us about 21st century coups



PETER APPS
REUTERS

Barely a week before Zimbabwe's military ousted President Robert Mugabe in November 2017, its top commander visited Beijing. Exactly what he discussed with his People's Liberation Army counterparts has never been disclosed. But the conclusion General Constantino Chivwenga reached seemed clear - that the 93-year-old leader was losing his grip, and that the only way to save the broader regime was to get him out.

Now it has been the turn of Sudanese President Omar Hassan Al Bashir to be ousted by the military that had kept him in power for almost 3 decades. That followed a similar cycle of protest in Algeria earlier this year that also concluded with President Abdelaziz Bouteflika's removal by an army he once led. Both countries are now entering a messy period of transition - but the lesson from similar events elsewhere would be that while the figure at the top might change, the military-dominated power structures beneath may prove much harder to shift from power.

The 2011 "Arab Spring" that toppled strongmen in Egypt, Tunisia, Libya and Yemen - and brought catastrophic war to Syria - largely



The transition from one strongman to another suits not just those in charge, but also the two nations that have since 2011 emerged as much more powerful supporters of autocratic systems - Russia and China.

hoped for. In Yemen and Libya, the removal of a dictator was followed by outright war and chaos - while Syria demonstrates just how much brutality and energy such regimes can exert to survive. In Egypt, a period of rule by the Muslim Brotherhood was followed by another military takeover.

The transition from one strongman to another suits not just those in charge, but also the two nations that have since 2011 emerged as much more powerful supporters of autocratic systems - Russia and China. Events in Sudan, Zimbabwe and Syria in particular have shown both countries capable of subtly shaping events,



Sudanese protesters sit during a protest outside the Army headquarters in the capital Khartoum, yesterday.

even if they cannot outright control them.

Indeed, in some respects, perhaps amongst the most interesting lessons of these most recent coups is what they may tell us about future leadership change in Russia and China, the world's two most powerful autocratic states.

Neither Chinese President Xi Jinping nor Russian counterpart Vladimir Putin appears at any immediate risk - indeed, having eradicated rivals and pushed their personalities on their countries like no one since Mao or Stalin, they are arguably at the peak of their powers. But that, of course, could equally have been said of Zimbabwe's Mugabe, Sudan's Bashir, Egypt's President Hosni Mubarak and a host of other ultimately deposed leaders. Xi and Putin are aged 65 and 66, respectively, a decade younger than Bashir, and almost a quarter of a century more youthful than Mugabe when he was forced from power. The lesson for both, however, is that age and opposition will catch up with them eventually.

Both Moscow and Beijing found the 2011 "Arab Spring" alarming, not least because of fears that Western-backed unrest might threaten them at home as well. Putin's Syria intervention showed just how much effort Moscow was willing to make to shore up its allies and interests, demonstrated once again with more limited support in Venezuela. China, meanwhile, has continued to bolster its ties to often corrupt and autocratic regimes in sub-Saharan Africa and beyond, including the provision of surveillance technology seen as an attempt to export the kind of authoritarianism increasingly seen in mainland China.

What events in Zimbabwe showed particularly graphically, however, was the limits of that support to any individual. While Putin's support for Syria has been very much based around keeping Bashar Al Assad in power, the Chinese state appears to be signalling that it sees its relationships much more with institutions and systems

than with individuals.

That's somewhat ironic, given the increasing personalisation of Xi's rule in China. Still, the fall of Bashir has given even Chinese government newspapers the opportunity to publicly discuss the challenges of succession planning in an autocracy. A column in China's state run "Global Times" newspaper described the recent coups as symptomatic of the "collective dilemma" of countries in Asia, Africa and Latin America.

Perhaps unsurprisingly, the column criticized Western efforts to export democracy, saying it had simply led to instability, conflict, communalism and secession. The writer in particular blamed the internationally backed breakdown of South Sudan, which took oil revenue from the government in Khartoum, for helping produce the current crisis. But it offered little in the way of alternative models to replace and refresh falling or simply ageing leaders.

Part of managing that process, of course, may be simply offering a way out. While Mubarak, Bashir and others have often found themselves imprisoned, their eventual fate can be rather more comfortable. Mugabe, for example, has clearly maintained his expensive medical privileges - he is currently reported to be undergoing treatment in Singapore, something out of reach for almost all his compatriots.

One model might be that offered to former Russian President Boris Yeltsin, whose departure from office and replacement with Putin were widely rumoured to have come with safeguards for his personal welfare. While ousted leaders have often faced the loss of much of their wealth, they remain relatively comfortable.

Where this leaves wider populations with clear demands for change is a very different matter. Ousting an ageing leader, with or without the support of the military, clearly acts as something of a safety valve. But if it is seen to have changed nothing at all, it may simply be storing up trouble for the future.

Tracing spoof calls

THE WASHINGTON POST

Last fall, renowned economist Paul Romer got an early-morning call from an unfamiliar number. It was the Swedish Royal Academy of Sciences, informing him he had won the Nobel Prize - but he let it go to voicemail, because he had been inundated with robocalls lately and assumed this was only more unwanted ringing.

Americans, whether they are prize-winning academics or everyday citizens, should not have to be wary of answering their phones. But the 60 billion to 75 billion spam calls they are expected to receive this year give them little choice. New technologies allow telemarketers and fraudsters alike to ping thousands of phones for less than a penny a call, and while the Federal Communications Commission has been vowing to step up its game against the scourge, the agency has been slow to

adopt the necessary measures. The good news is Congress may finally have decided to do something about the problem. The bad news is that something may not be enough.

The Senate Commerce Committee has advanced a bipartisan bill that scales up fines against illegal robocallers and requires service providers to adopt authentication systems that could root out spoofed numbers - the source of many of Americans' woes. The Traced Act, introduced by Sens. John Thune (R-S.D.) and Edward J. Markey (D-Mass.), would also give the FCC more time to catch bad actors and punish them without issuing a warning first. It's a smart step in scaring off and shutting down scammers, though even better would be requiring companies not only to tell consumers that a call comes from a fake number but also to offer them free blocking services.

Then there's an issue the Traced Act wouldn't solve: the telemarketers and others using real numbers who also

cause consumers a headache. Some of these are clear violations of the Do Not Call Registry. Others come from debt collectors, political parties and others who are exempt from those rules but who still are not supposed to dial Americans en masse without their express consent. Many of these pests get away with it because of an outdated definition of an auto-dialer. A court ruled that the Obama-era FCC's attempt to beef up the standard was overboard; the current FCC has sought comment on the question, but advocates worry the loopholes will become only larger. Congress has an opportunity to step in here, too, with a definition such as the one Rep. Frank Pallone Jr., D-N.J., offers in a House bill. Congress is right to take on the robocalling contagion, and fraudsters are a sensible place for lawmakers to start. But it can't be where they end if the aim is for Americans to be able to pick up their phones again without concern.



Justice must be done for victims of Ethiopia plane crash



NANJALA NYABOLA
AL JAZEERA



Boeing is a flagship US company, which has sold over 300 737 Max planes so far. It appears that international airline regulators deferred to the findings of the FAA on the 737 Max, while the FAA, in turn, deferred to Boeing itself. Where the potential impact goes far beyond borders, this approach clearly has risks, which domestic regulators in other industries should be paying attention to.

On Monday, March 11, John Quindos Karanja went to Nairobi to pick up his wife, their daughter and three grandchildren from the airport. He had prepared a small celebration for them back home, since he was to meet his youngest granddaughter for the first time.

Instead of celebrating that day, however, he had to mourn their deaths. All five were on board Ethiopian Airways' Boeing 737 Max which had crashed, killing all 157 passengers and crew on board. The youngest victim was his nine-months-old granddaughter, Rubi.

It is important to begin any conversation about the aftermath of the ET 302 tragedy with stories like these because they are likely to get lost amid discussions about aviation technology and regulatory frameworks.

When the tragedy hit, I was struck the most by the speed at which both Boeing and the Federal Aviation Agency (FAA) in the US took to defending their planes and shifting blame to Ethiopian Airlines, as well as the number of international public relations willing to go along with that story.

One article in the New York Times even suggested that the cause of the crash might have been a terrorist attack, since the flight ET 302 originated in Ethiopia and was meant to land in Kenya – the two countries currently being involved in the fight against al-Shabab in Somalia. Another NYT piece scrutinised the training the ET 302 captain received

and questioned Ethiopia Airlines' procedures. After all, it's easier to believe that an aeroplane belonging to an African airline was bombed or mishandled than to imagine that an American company could produce faulty aircraft.

The FAA eventually quietly backed-tracked on its defensiveness and grounded all the 737 Max planes flying in the US, putting to rest speculations that this was somehow a problem of poor countries and their low safety standards.

On April 4, Ethiopia's transportation ministry told the media that the plane most likely crashed due to a mechanical problem with the new plane.

The same day, Ethiopia Airlines released a preliminary report which alleged that the MCAS system, designed to stabilise the plane and prevent stalling, was activated repeatedly minutes before the crash. In their last moments, the pilots had tried to switch the system off, following emergency procedures but had failed to take control of the plane. This was exactly the same situation the Lion Air pilots had faced in October just before the crash.

The US media also reported that the tragedy might have been prevented if the plane had been equipped with two additional indicators. These tools, which could have helped with the type of software problem the ET 302 pilots faced, were optional and Boeing charged additional money for installing them, since the FAA had not set them as a

mandatory safety feature. Both Ethiopia Airlines and Lion Air apparently had decided to opt out, perhaps not knowing that the indicators were, in fact, be a "life-saving" feature, and might cast doubt over Lion Air's safety standards as a low-cost airline, the track record of Ethiopia Airlines has been sterling and its pilots – well-trained. Thus, important questions are now emerging about whether Boeing had briefed companies and their crews sufficiently on the dramatic changes it introduced to the 747 series and whether its pursuit of profit margins had come at the expense of the safety of its aircraft.

Broadly speaking, these two tragedies should be a wake-up call for all of us to finally register the major holes in ethics and regulation which capitalism has poked in order to enable the world's largest corporations to profiteer with impunity.

On March 28, lawyers for the family of Jackson Musoni, a Rwandan victim of the plane crash, filed a wrongful death claim against Boeing, alleging that the firm failed to warn of the defect in the plane's flight control system, which eventually led to the crash.

On April 5, the family of American citizen Samya Stumo, who died in the crash, followed suit, saying in a statement: "Blinded by its greed, Boeing haphazardly rushed the 737 MAX 8 to market, with the knowledge and tacit approval of the United States Federal Aviation Administration".

And on April 16, family members of Kenyan victim George Kabau also announced they are filing a wrongful death lawsuit against Boeing. What happens next with these and other cases that might be filed should concern us all.

This is also a moment to reflect on the role of regulatory agencies, and what happens when they give too much trust and autonomy to the entities that they regulate. What should effective domestic regulation of an industry with international reach look like? The same question is pertinent to the regulation of social media, mining and other sectors.

Boeing is a flagship US company, which has sold over 300 737 Max planes so far. It appears that international airline regulators deferred to the findings of the FAA on the 737 Max, while the FAA, in turn, deferred to Boeing itself. Where the potential impact goes far beyond borders, this approach clearly has risks, which domestic regulators in other industries should be paying attention to.

As a person who flies frequently, this story has been chilling: 189 people died on board the Lion Air plane, another 157 on ET 302 less



No amount of money can address this tragic loss of human life, but those responsible must be held to account. As we enter the contentious phase of determining liability and accountability, these are the human stories that should guide the conversation.

than six months later. I keep coming back to what John Quindos Karanja might have been doing today if regulators had listened to past prejudices about different parts of the world.

He might have been out in his backyard playing with his nine-month-old granddaughter that he had never met, marvelling at the smooth curve of her cheek and the growing alertness in her eyes. He might have been listening to his daughter, in awe of how this person he had helped raise, was coming into her own as a human being. He might have been laughing at something the love of his life had said to one of the children.

No amount of money can address this tragic loss of human life, but those responsible must be held to account. As we enter the contentious phase of determining liability and accountability, these are the human stories that should guide the conversation.



Family members of the Ethiopian Airlines Flight ET302 plane crash walk near the accident site during the mourning day to mark the 40th day in Gara Boka village, near Bishoftu town, southeast of Addis Ababa.



JAMES STAVRIDIS
BLOOMBERG

China is joining the rush for Arctic riches



With all the rising security tensions across the globe, the last thing we need to be worrying about is true military conflict in the polar regions, north and south. But keeping that peace means working with allies to keep an eye on what China and Russia are up to on the Arctic ice.

I recently wrote a column on the challenges posed by China both on the South China Sea and globally on the deep seabed. But there is another element to the maritime "Great Game" China is playing: the Arctic Ocean. This may seem counterintuitive – last time I looked at a map, China did not have any Arctic

a seat as an observer on the influential Arctic Council, composed of nations that have territory in the northern latitudes – Canada, Denmark (by virtue of Greenland), Iceland, Norway, Russia and the US – plus Sweden and Finland. China has been a vocal member of the group, when I was with Nato and attended several Arctic Council gatherings (including one all the chiefs of defense with forces there). I was surprised to see the high level of the Chinese delegations attending.

The Chinese are also building nuclear-powered icebreakers, something the US has not even contemplated. At more than 30,000 tons, the Chinese ships will outpace any other nation's capability with the exception of Russia (which operates the world's largest fleet of icebreakers, including several huge nuclear-powered models), and will join a fleet of six conventionally powered ships. The US, on the other hand, has only three active Coast Guard icebreakers, two of which are quite small.

Icebreakers are key to two crucial elements of what makes the Arctic so strategically vital. The first is the enormous store of hydrocarbons that will be uncovered as the ice melts. Some estimates approach 2 trillion cubic feet of natural gas and nearly 100 billion barrels of oil. Icebreakers open the logistics paths for placement of the necessary oil and gas rigs. Additionally, the melting Arctic ice will create shipping routes that could be geopolitically central for China's One Belt, One Road global development strategy.

But the centerpiece of China's

Arctic ambitions is its increasing military, political and economic alignment with Russia. For several years, the two superpowers have been conducting a military exercises both at sea (including in the Baltic Sea, in the heart of European waters) and Siberia. They see working together as a hedge against the US, and their cooperation will create significant challenges for the Nato nations with Arctic territory.

How can the US prepare to face a rising Chinese challenge in the Arctic? First, by working with the Nato allies in improving wide-area surveillance and situational awareness of both Russian and Chinese operations. Second, the Pentagon should build at least a half-dozen icebreakers capable of operating year-round. Third, the US military should exercise more routinely in the region alongside its Canadian partners. And finally, Washington must better integrate government efforts with a focus on the Arctic – the Department of Defense and Department of Homeland Security (where the Coast Guard resides) must work together of course, but also the Department of Energy (hydrocarbon development), the EPA (environmental studies) and the State Department (coordinating with allies, partners and friends).

With all the rising security tensions across the globe, the last thing we need to be worrying about is true military conflict in the polar regions, north and south. But keeping that peace means working with allies to keep an eye on what China and Russia are up to on the Arctic ice.

The Peninsula

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BJP will get more seats than in 2014: Modi

IANIS
NEW DELHI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi yesterday said the BJP will win the Lok Sabha elections with full majority, and with more votes and seats than in 2014.

"BJP will win with full majority and with more votes and seats than we won earlier. Even our alliance partners will get greater number of seats and our vote share will increase in different states. The country has decided to elect a strong government with full majority. The country has decided to elect BJP again," he said in an interview with Times Now news channel.

Modi referred to an old brainstorming meeting of the Congress and said unlike the opposition party which had said they are not real allies, the BJP is not arrogant.

Answering a question on Jammu and Kashmir, he said there can only be hitting touch for terrorists. "We will have to make a clear demarcation that hitting touch is for the citizens and hitting touch for the terrorists." Replying to a query on the Citizenship bill, he said some hyper-sensitive people "give communal colour to every issue."

He said Congress had promised National Citizenship Register (NCR) but did not fulfil the promise for 30 years.

"There should be a debate over NRC. Can any country in the world be a 'dharma-shala'? Is there any country in the world which doesn't have a register of citizens," he asked.

Answering a question on jobs, Modi said record loans have been taken under Mudra scheme to boost employment and self-employment and infrastructure was being developed at fast speed "Is it happening without jobs," he asked.

Answering a question on Rafale deal, he said for the Congress, "defence deals have been an ATM".

He said the CAG had rejected "lies" of the opposition and these had also been rejected by the Supreme Court rejected it. "But keeping elections in mind, they are dragging the matter." Answering a query on jobs, Modi said record loans have been taken under Mudra scheme to boost employment and self-employment and infrastructure was being developed at fast speed "Is it happening without jobs," he asked.

Modi said more than 80 percent of informal economy and informal employment exists. Only 15-16 percent is formal for which new mechanism is needed to arrive at employment data.

He also rejected allegations of political vendetta by the opposition.

"The biggest fact is that the money that was recovered in Madhya Pradesh was meant for the care and nutrition of

children, which was for poor pregnant women. They are eating off those funds.

The country must debate on why even today the Congress fails to commit such sins as soon as they come to power. It's barely been a few months since they came to power in Madhya Pradesh. And to stifle debates on these issues, they keep crying foul over the raids," the Prime Minister said.

He said that the government has brought the corrupt to the door of jails and will work to get them inside if he comes to power again.

Attacking Congress, he said many of its leaders were facing cases. "Congress, which has ruled for four generations, could they have ever fathomed that today their leaders would be out on bail. The man who used to be their finance minister, every second day he goes to the court to get a date," he said.

Meanwhile, Modi, while addressing an election rally yesterday said that the BJP stood for 'desh bhakti', while the Congress stood for 'vote bhakti' because of which the previous United Progressive Alliance (UPA) government refused to retaliate after Pakistani terrorists attacked Mumbai in November 2008.

Modi reminded the people that the Congress leaders also insulted the martyrs of the 2008 Barfa House encounter in New Delhi because of their 'vote bhakti'.

"The country is divided by 'vote bhakti' and 'desh bhakti'. It was 'vote bhakti' that prevented the Congress from acting tough on Pakistan."



Travails of life in high-altitude village

A man carries an elderly sick woman to hospital for medical treatment at the remote high altitude village, Srikhola, in the Darjeeling district in West Bengal. Srikhola village, situated at an altitude of 2,800M above sea level, has no hospitals and there is no other mode of transport than going by foot or horse as roads were washed away by landslides.

Modi govt didn't keep promises: Priyanka

IANIS
WAYANAD

Congress General Secretary Priyanka Gandhi yesterday hit out at the Narendra Modi government for making false promises to people and ignoring the country's farmers.

Campaigning in Wayanad for her brother, Congress President Rahul Gandhi who is also contesting the Kerala seat in addition to his traditional Amethi constituency, she told a gathering that the Modi government has ditched the farmers but the Congress-led UPA government, if it comes to power, will take

care of all their needs.

"In the five years, Modi has divided the country. He takes care of the rich and the mighty but ignores the needs of the huge farmer community in the country."

"The BJP said they will double the income of the farmers and would deposit Rs15 lakh into the bank account of every person, but for Rahul Gandhi, justice and truth matters," she said in Mananthavayur, where she arrived in a helicopter after landing at Kannur airport.

She later met the family members of CRPF trooper Vasanth Kumar who was killed

in the February 14 Pulwama terror attack.

From there, Priyanka Gandhi went to Pulpalay where a mammoth gathering was waiting for hours to see her.

"The Modi government has dashed the hopes of the farmers and has taken from the people who fought for their rights. The Congress will empower all of you and will never create any difficulty for you all," she said at her public meet there.

After winding up her day, she will rest at a resort at Vythiri near here, and will leave Kerala today. This is her second visit to Wayanad.

CJI rubbishes harassment charges, says judiciary under threat

IANIS
NEW DELHI

Rubbishing allegations of sexual harassment against him, Chief Justice of India Ranjan Gogoi yesterday said the independence of the judiciary is under threat and there was a "larger conspiracy" to destabilise it.

At an urgent hearing of the matter related to the allegations, a three-member Supreme Court bench, headed by the Chief Justice and including Justice Sanjeev Khanna, asked the media to "exercise restraint, responsibility and wisdom so that the image of the judiciary is not tarnished by these baseless allegations."

Justice Gogoi asserted, "I will sit on this bench and discharge my duties without fear and favour till my tenure is over."

Commenting on the allegations which were reported in a section of the media, he said:

"Things have gone too far. Judiciary cannot be made a scapegoat... There is some bigger force behind the woman, with criminal track record."

Observing that "there is a larger conspiracy to destabilise the judiciary which has remained independent", the Chief Justice asked, "in view of such baseless charges, why would any person want to become a judge as reputation is all that the judges have, and that too, under attack?"

The apex court authorities said these allegations were "completely and absolutely false and scurrilous and are totally denied."

The top court conducted the hearing at 10.30am after Solicitor General Tushar Mehta urgently mentioned the matter.

Manmohan defends Nyay, says it won't entail new taxes

IANIS
NEW DELHI

Former Prime Minister Manmohan Singh yesterday said that Nyay scheme of the Congress will usher in an era of minimum income guarantee in India, end poverty and restart the economic engine which has "come to a stop" under the Narendra Modi government.

In a statement, Singh said that implementation of Nyay, which envisages to provide Rs 72,000 per family every year to the poorest 20 percent of population, would not entail any new tax on the middle class.

He said that the Congress is committed to fiscal discipline and Nyay would cost between 1.2 percent and 1.5 percent of the

Gross Domestic Product (GDP) at its peak.

"Our nearly \$3-trillion economy has the fiscal capacity to absorb this expenditure. There will be no need for any new taxes on the middle class to finance Nyay. The economic stimulus that Nyay will provide will further help in fiscal discipline. It has been conceptualised after much thought and consultations with experts," Singh said.

He said Nyay is a powerful idea with dual objectives.

"On March 25, 2019, Congress President Rahul Gandhi unveiled Nyay — Nyuntam Aay Yojana — to wipe out the last remnants of poverty and to restart stalled economic activity in our nation," he said.

Singh said that Nyay has been received with tremendous enthusiasm by people and discussed widely across the nation.

"Nearly 70 percent of Indians were poor when India attained independence in 1947. With sound policies adopted by successive governments over the last seven decades, poverty levels have been brought down from 70 percent to 20 percent now. It is time now to renew our pledge to wipe out the last remains of poverty," he said.

Singh said Nyay would ensure a basic level of dignity and respect for every Indian family.

"By providing direct income support, Nyay will empower our poor with economic freedom and choice. With Nyay, India

will usher in an era of a minimum income guarantee and help create a new social contract for a new welfare state."

Nyay will also help restart our economic engine that has come to a stop today. Money in the hands of the needy will stimulate demand in the economy which can then lead to increased economic activity and job creation, referred to as the Keynesian effect by economists. At a time when private investment and industrial production are low, Nyay can help bring our economy back to life and create new factories and jobs," he added.

Singh referred to the economic reforms when he was the Finance Minister in 1991 and to

the rural employment guarantee scheme brought by the UPA government led by him.

"Just as we brought in a new paradigm for India's development regime in 1991 — a rights-based approach to governance including the Right to Work under MGNREGA, I am confident a Congress party-led government in 2019 will implement Nyay successfully and usher in a new model for social justice and prudent economics," he said.

"It is my sincere belief that Nyay has the potential to catapult India into the club of 'poverty-free' nations in the world and I hope to be able to live to see our nation achieve this historic milestone," Singh said.

Joyalukkas opens new showroom in Hyderabad

THE PENINSULA
DOHA

The world's favourite Jeweller, Joyalukkas, with further expansion in India inaugurated their new showroom in A S Rao Nagar, Hyderabad.

Joyalukkas Brand Ambassador, Bollywood actress, Kajol Devgan inaugurated the showroom on April 17. Kajol also unveiled the much awaited Akshaya Tritiya Collections.

"Hyderabad is special for us. Our customers' support and patronage has encouraged us to expand our presence here" said Joy Alukkas, Chairman & MD, Joyalukkas Group.

Kajol Devgan said, "I am extremely excited to be a part Joyalukkas. I am not only honoured to inaugurate the new showroom but also unveiled the auspicious Akshaya Tritiya collections. Other than this, I had the pleasure of meeting thousands of jewellery lovers who come for the grand opening."

The new showroom offer customers the same world-class jewellery shopping experience expected from brand Joyalukkas. For diamond lovers, the new showroom has a dedicated floor



Bollywood actress Kajol Devgan opening the Joyalukkas A S Rao Nagar showroom in the presence of Joy Alukkas (CMD, Joyalukkas Group), Jolly Joy Alukkas (Director, Joyalukkas Group) and other dignitaries.

for diamond jewellery, covering the latest in trend, style and design. To celebrate the opening, Joyalukkas has a 'Free Sure Gifts' offer to reward every customer for their purchase.

Joy Alukkas said: "The brand-new showroom in A S Rao Nagar, Hyderabad is a step further to our vision 2020 of having 200 showrooms across

the world. Our vision is to ornament the world and hence we are spreading our presence to make Joyalukkas accessible to every jewellery lover around the world. I cordially invite all the residents in and around A S Rao Nagar to visit our new showroom, explore our exclusive traditional Hyderabad jewellery collection and take advantage of

our best in products, services and our 'Free Sure Gifts' offer."

During the Inaugural 'Free Sure Gifts' offer period, customers will also be presented with free home appliances on every purchase. Apart from the above offer, patrons can also enjoy free maintenance and a one-year free insurance on all jewellery purchased at Joyalukkas.

IS case: Four detained in Hyderabad, Maharashtra

IANIS
HYDERABAD

The NIA yesterday carried out searches at four places in Hyderabad and Maharashtra's Wardha and detained four people for questioning in connection with its investigation into the Abu Dhabi Islamic State module case, officials said.

According to a senior NIA official related to the probe, the agency carried out searches at early in the morning on the outskirts of Hyderabad and took three persons into custody for questioning.

The searches came after information from three youths arrested in August last year for alleged links with the IS, the official said, adding it was found that a person from Hyderabad was in touch with Mohammed Abdullah Basith and Mohammed Abdul Qadeer, who were among the three. Both are currently lodged in jail.

Iran-based groups behind April 18 attack: Qureshi

INTERNEWS
ISLAMABAD

Pakistan's Foreign Minister Shah Mehmood Qureshi yesterday said the terrorists behind the attack in Balochistan province's coastal town of Ormara last week came from Iran and that Islamabad has decided to set up a border fence with Iran.

Addressing a press conference in Islamabad, Qureshi said Baloch terror groups were behind the terrorist attack on Makran Coastal Highway and that an alliance of three Baloch terrorist organisations have claimed responsibility for the act.

"Fifteen terrorists entered Pakistan on April 18. They camouflaged themselves in Frontier Corps uniform, barricaded the road and stopped four buses travelling from Ormara to Gwadar on the coastal highway. The terrorists then identified passengers and shot 14 of them dead," he said.

"Among those killed were ten members of the Pakistan Navy, three Pakistan Air Force and one belonged to the Coastal Guard," Qureshi said.

"We have lodged a strong protest with Iran for not taking action against the group behind the killing of 14 passengers," he asserted.

The Foreign Minister further said, the alliance of three terror groups has training and logistical bases across the border.

"We have identified these locations. Pakistan awaits

Foreign Minister says 14 victims of the April 18 terror attack in Balochistan included 10 Pakistan Navy personnel, three officials of Pakistan Air force and one member of the Coastal Guard.

Iran's response to our request for action against these groups based in Iran."

"We are hopeful Iran will take action against these terrorists," he added.

Moreover, Qureshi said he spoke to his Iranian counterpart earlier in the day and had a detailed discussion with him on the issue.

"Javed Zarif condemned the terrorist incident and reassured me that Iran will act on the information provided by Islamabad," he said.

Speaking about the border fence, Qureshi said, "Pakistan will set up a 950km long border fence with Iran as we have with Afghanistan."

He added Pakistan has set up a new Southern Command Force that is based in Balochistan's Turbat area.

"The Frontier Corps force has also been raised to increase border patrolling and we have decided to carry out aerial surveillance of the country's border with Iran," the Foreign Minister added.

Militants attack Afghan Ministry in Kabul, 7 dead

REUTERS
KABUL

At least seven people were died in an attack on the Afghan communications ministry in central Kabul yesterday, breaking months of relative calm in the capital and underlining the continued security threats despite efforts to open peace talks with the Taliban.

The attack began shortly before midday when a suicide bomb was detonated at the entrance to the multi-storey building housing the Ministry in a busy commercial area of the city, followed by gunfire which could be heard over a mile away.

Among the dead were four civilians and three police officers, while another eight civilians were wounded, a government official said.

"We saw a gunman trying to break open an office door and as we were running out, he was trying to shoot us and he started shouting 'I will kill everyone here,'" said Syeda Rashid, an office administrator in the Ministry who escaped with several of her colleagues. She said at least six women had been wounded.

Television images showed people fleeing after gunfire and explosions began near the 18-storey government tower.

The area around the building was sealed off by police as at least three attackers battled security forces for several hours before the attack was finally suppressed in the late afternoon, Interior Ministry spokesman Nasrat Rahimi said.

The Interior Ministry said in a statement that more than 2,800 employees of the Ministry of Communications and



Afghan security forces take guard after an explosion followed by gunfire at the Ministry of Information and Technology of Afghanistan's main building, in Kabul, yesterday.

Information Technology and the Ministry of Information and Culture were evacuated during the clearance operation.

Several young children and staff at a childcare centre for Ministry employees were also evacuated.

"We were having lunch when we heard the explosion," said Rabia, who worked at the childcare centre.

"We grabbed the children together into the safe room and just waited till the security forces arrived," she said.

The blast, which security officials said appeared to have been caused by a suicide bomber, was also close to the

heavily fortified Serena Hotel, one of the very few Kabul hotels still used by foreign visitors. The operation marked a return to the kind of complex attacks in an urban centre that have killed hundreds of people in Kabul and other Afghan cities over recent years.

There was no claim of responsibility but the Taliban issued a statement denying any involvement. Many such attacks have been claimed by the radical Islamic State group.

Prior to yesterday's attack, Kabul had been relatively calm as US officials have held a series of meetings with representatives from the Taliban to try to agree the basis for a

peace settlement and an end to more than 17 years of war.

While heavy fighting has carried on across Afghanistan and Taliban militants have announced their new customary spring offensive, it had been months since the last major attack on civilian targets in the capital.

The attack, just days after a planned meeting between Taliban officials and Afghan politicians and civil society representatives in Qatar was cancelled, underlined the hurdles facing efforts to reach a peace settlement.

Officials have said they hope to hold a meeting soon but no date has been set.

Pakistan-funded hospital opens in Afghan capital

ANATOLIA
KABUL

A Pakistan-funded newly-built hospital in the Afghan capital Kabul, was inaugurated yesterday.

Built with an estimated cost of \$2.4m, the 200-bed Mohammad Ali Jinnah Hospital in the western part of the Afghan capital has been dubbed as a "symbol of lasting peace" between the two neighbours.

The hospital was jointly inaugurated by Pakistan's Minister of State for Parliamentary Affairs Ali Muhammad Khan and Afghan Minister of Public Health Dr Ferozuddin Feroz.

Speaking at the ceremony, Feroz thanked Pakistan for its generous support in the health sector.

He called for mutual cooperation in the health sector, particularly in combating the polio virus that is still endemic in Afghanistan and Pakistan.

He also called for timely completion of two other ongoing projects - the Naeb Aminullah Khan Hospital in Logar province and Nishar Kidney Centre in Nangarhar province - funded by Pakistan.

According to a statement issued by the Embassy of Pakistan in Kabul, Minister of State for Parliamentary Affairs Ali Muhammad Khan conveyed the message of Pakistan's Prime Minister Imran Khan that his country would continue to take all possible measures for the welfare of the people of Afghanistan and that he wished to see a stable, secure, peaceful, prosperous and sovereign Afghanistan. Zahid Nasrullah Khan, Pakistan's Ambassador to Afghanistan, said the hospital is a flagship project of Pakistan's \$1bn development assistance to Afghanistan in pursuance of Pakistan's "policy objective of deepening and broadening people to people connections between the two countries", the statement added.

Pakistan SC overturned death penalty in 78% cases: Report

INTERNEWS
ISLAMABAD

A UK-based non-governmental organisation in a report submitted to the Minister for Law and Justice has disclosed that the Supreme Court (SC) of Pakistan over the last few years has overturned the death penalty in 78 per cent cases.

Timothy Moloney, a criminal law barrister at Doughty Street Chambers, and NGO Reprieve's Director Maya Foa met Law Minister Barrister Farogh Naseem and presented the report.

Shahzad Akbar, Special Assistance to the Prime Minister on Accountability, was also present during the meeting.

The report revealed that 78 per cent of the death penalty cases out of the 310 reported capital judgements between 2010 and 2018 had been overturned by the Supreme Court of Pakistan acquitting, commuting the sentence, or ordering a review.

The study revealed that the Supreme Court frequently cited unreliable witness testimonies, involuntary or retracted

confessions, insufficient or manipulated evidence and lack of motive of the accused as the primary reasons for overturning death sentences.

Additionally, the Supreme Court, while exercising its capital jurisdiction, had raised serious doubts about the reliability of police investigation, particularly where there was an unexplained delay in the registration of the First Information Report (FIR) and where the evidence appeared to be planted, manipulated or otherwise doubtful.

The apex court had upheld

death sentences for lethal offences only, and every judgement of a non-lethal offence ended with the Supreme Court overturning the conviction or commuting the death sentence.

Despite this, lower courts continued to regularly impose death sentences for non-lethal offences, it added.

The Supreme Court had now recognised a growing number of mitigating factors which counsel against a death sentence.

These included the type and gravity of the offence, lesser

participation by the accused, lack of premeditation, provocation, social and familial circumstances, partial compromise with the victim's family, age of the accused, whether the accused was acting under the influence of an elder, mental state of the accused, capacity for reform and time spent on death row.

The apex court had recognised that even a "single mitigating instance, available in a particular case, would be sufficient to put on guard the judge not to award the penalty of death but to life imprisonment".



A floating home, lived in by an American man and a Thai citizen, is pictured in the Andaman Sea, off Phuket Island in Thailand, yesterday.

Thai Navy boards cabin of fugitive 'seastealers'

REUTERS
BANGKOK

The Thai Navy yesterday boarded the floating cabin of a fugitive US citizen and his Thai girlfriend, both prominent members of the "seasteading" movement who possibly face the death sentence for setting up their offshore home.

Thai authorities have revoked the visa of bitcoin trader

Chad Elwartowski and charged him and his partner with violating Thai sovereignty by floating the cabin 14 nautical miles off the west coast of the Thai island of Phuket.

The cabin had been promoted as the world's first seasteading by the group Ocean Builders, part of a movement to build floating communities beyond the bounds of nations as a way to explore alternative

societies and governments. Elwartowski, 46, was not on board having apparently fled after a surveillance plane flew overhead the previous day, along with his partner Supranee Thepdit whose Facebook page describes her as a "Bitcoin expert, Trader, Chef, seasteading Pioneer". The US Embassy in Bangkok said Elwartowski had engaged a lawyer and was being provided with appropriate assistance.

N Korea slams Bolton for denuclearisation demand

AP
SEOUL

North Korea yesterday issued a relatively mild criticism of White House National Security Adviser John Bolton for calling on North Korea to show more evidence of its disarmament commitment before a possible third leaders' summit.

North Korea's criticism appears to be a continuation of its frustration at deadlocked nuclear negotiations with the United States. Earlier in the week, the North tested a new weapon and demanded that a US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo be removed from the nuclear negotiations. But the country is still avoiding directing harsh rhetoric toward the US and directly criticising President Donald Trump in an apparent effort to keep diplomacy alive.

North Korea's State media yesterday cited First Vice Foreign Minister Choe Son Hui as criticising Bolton over his recent interview with Bloomberg News. In the interview, Bolton said the US would need more evidence that North Korean leader Kim Jong Un is ready to give up his nuclear weapons before Trump would meet with him for a third summit.

Choe described Bolton's comments as having "no charm" and being "dim-sighted," and said the United States has nothing to gain with such remarks. But she stopped short of asking Washington to remove Bolton from the nuclear talks.

Her criticism was much softer than the North's past fiery rhetoric directed at the US and South Korea in tense times. Earlier this week, North Korea test-fired what it called a new type of "tactical guided weapon," but many foreign experts say it wasn't a prohibited test of a medium- or long-range ballistic missile that could scuttle the nuclear negotiations.

In her statement yesterday, Choe said Bolton "should at least have understood about what kinds of substantive communications are made between the top leaders concerning the third round of summit before he had ever opened his mouth." South Korean media quickly speculated that there might be some sort of communication between the US and North Korea over a third Trump-Kim summit. Kim and Trump had two summits - the first in Singapore in June last year and the second in Vietnam in February. The second summit collapsed due to disputes over US-led sanctions on the North.

Ukrainians vote in runoff today to elect President

AFP KIEV

Ukraine yesterday readied for a change in leadership as a young comedian appeared set to crush his incumbent rival in presidential polls, delivering a stinging rebuke to the old elite.

The 41-year-old TV star Volodymyr Zelensky's bid to lead Ukraine began as a long shot but all polls show him defeating President Petro Poroshenko in a second-round of vote today.

His victory would open a new chapter in the history of a country that has gone through two popular uprisings in two decades and is mired in a five-year conflict with Moscow-backed insurgents in the east.

Despite mounting uncertainty Ukraineans are fed up with corruption, poverty, and the war that has claimed some 13,000 lives over the past five years.

"There is a hope that a simple man will better understand us and dismantle the system that we have in our country," Yuliya Lykhot, 29, said in Kiev.

"It is very important to raise our people's spirits."

Others said they doubted the political novice's ability to enact real change as Ukraine's sixth president.

"I do not believe he will last long once he's elected," said Sergiy Fedoret, 62.

"He has no support in parliament. He'll be eaten alive."

Poroshenko came to power after a bloody 2014 uprising ousted a Kremlin-backed

All polls show Volodymyr Zelensky defeating President Petro Poroshenko in a second-round of vote today.

regime, triggering Moscow's annexation of Crimea.

But many in the country of 45 million people feel the promises of the uprising have not been fulfilled.

Zelensky has capitalised on popular anger as well as his popularity as the star of the sitcom "Servant of the People", in which he plays a school teacher who becomes a President.

Analysis says his political programme is vague at best and it remains unclear who will fill key positions in his government.

Ahead of the vote a popular news website, Ukrainska Pravda, published an interview with a therapist who pointed to severe anxiety in the country.

"There is not a single person who would not be discussing the situation in the country," said Oleg Chaban.

"People are more tense because they are paying with their lives and expect real change quickly."

Poroshenko, 53, has fought hard to secure re-election but his pleas to forgive him for past mistakes and give him a second chance have fallen on deaf ears.

A survey by the Rating pollster showed Zelensky winning 73 percent of the vote against 27 percent for

Poroshenko.

Poroshenko once again called on Ukrainians yesterday to think twice before casting ballots for his rival.

"A five-year presidential term is not a comedy that you can easily switch off if it is no longer funny," he wrote on Facebook.

"Neither is it a horror movie that can be easily stopped."

The West has closely watched the race amid concern a new government might undo years of reforms it has backed.

US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo called both Zelensky and Poroshenko on Friday.

He "reiterated our commitment to working with whomever the Ukrainian people choose to ensure the success of a secure, prosperous, democratic, & free (country)." Washington's special envoy Kurt Volker said on Twitter.

On Friday, the two rivals traded insults in the first and only debate of the campaign at Kiev's 70,000-seater Olympic Stadium in front of thousands of spectators.

Ukrainians said the head-to-head was more about political theatrics and a battle of wits than a much-needed policy debate.

Zelensky accused Poroshenko - a tycoon who made a fortune in chocolate before taking office - of enriching himself and failing to end the war in the east.

The Ukrainian leader attacked the inexperience of the untested Zelensky.



Police officers in riot gear run during a demonstration of the yellow vests movement in Paris, yesterday.

Clashes break out in Paris protests

REUTERS PARIS

Clashes broke out between dozens of demonstrators and police in Paris on the 23rd Saturday of yellow-vest protests yesterday.

Dozens of black-hooded demonstrators threw rocks at police and some set fire to scooters and trash cans in the centre of the French capital, according to Reuters TV footage.

Police responded by firing tear gas and stun grenades. Some officers also marched toward demonstrators to control the crowd and funnel it to Paris' Place de la Republique, where most of the demonstrators were contained in the late afternoon.

As of 1200GMT, a total of

9,600 people were demonstrating across France, including 6,700 in Paris, the Interior Ministry said.

This is more than last week's protest, which drew 7,500 demonstrators, but represents only a fraction of the record 282,000 estimated on November 17, the first day of the protests.

As of 1300 GMT, 110 people had been arrested and placed in custody, the Paris prosecutor's office said.

Several demonstrators clearly alluded to the catastrophic fire at Notre-Dame cathedral on Monday, which prompted an outpouring of national sorrow and a rush by rich families and corporations to pledge around 1bn euros (\$1.2bn) for its reconstruction.

"Millions of Notre-Dame, what about for us, the poor?" read a sign worn by a demonstrator. "Everything for Notre-Dame, nothing for the miserable," evoked another sign that read Victor Hugo's well-known novel.

The city was on high alert after Christophe Castaner, the Interior Minister, said domestic intelligence services had informed him of a potential return of rioters intent on wreaking havoc in Paris, Toulouse, Montpellier and Bordeaux, in a repeat of violent protests on March 16.

Large portions of the Paris metro network were closed and about 60,000 police personnel were deployed across France, authorities said.

Czech PM says won't resign if indicted over EU fraud

AFP PRAGUE

Czech billionaire Prime Minister Andrej Babis yesterday said he would not resign if indicted for his alleged role in a two-million-euro EU subsidy fraud.

Police this week recommended that Babis be indicted over the case which could see him and several others, including family members, spending five to ten years in prison.

"I would not resign because I have been saying from the beginning that this is a political process," Babis told the DNES broadsheet which he owns.

The 64-year-old agro-chemicals mogul pegged by Forbes as the second-wealthiest Czech is suspected of abusing EU funds to build the luxury Stork Nest resort and farm near Prague in 2007.

He allegedly took the farm out of his sprawling Agrofert food, chemicals and media holding to make it eligible for a subsidy awarded to small companies before eventually putting it back.

Charged by police in 2017, Babis and several others - including his wife, brother-in-law and daughter - are suspected of subsidy fraud and harming the EU's financial interests.

"If I weren't in politics, nobody would have heard about the Stork Nest," Babis told DNES.

"People keep plotting affairs against me, delving into the past. This affair is 12 years old," he said, calling charges against his family "incredible filth".

President Milos Zeman, who could remove the embattled Prime Minister, said on Thursday that he would not do so.

"An indicted prime minister is not a sentenced prime minister," said the 74-year-old, who is a staunch Babis ally.

Northern Ireland police arrest two for murdering journalist

AP LONDON

Police in Northern Ireland yesterday arrested two teenagers in connection with the fatal shooting of a young journalist during rioting in the city of Londonderry.

The men, aged 18 and 19, were detained under anti-terrorism legislation and taken to Belfast for questioning, the Police Service of Northern Ireland said.

The men have not been identified or charged. Police had said earlier that one gunman had pulled the trigger during the

rioting but was backed by an "organisation," and said they were searching for multiple suspects.

Lyra McKee, 29, a rising star of investigative journalism, was shot and killed, police say probably by a stray bullet aimed at police, during rioting on Thursday night. Police said the New IRA dissident group was most likely responsible and called it a "terrorist act."

The use of a firearm apparently aimed at police marks a dangerous escalation in sporadic violence that continues to plague Northern Ireland 21 years after

the Good Friday peace agreement was signed. The New IRA rejects the peace agreement.

Chief Detective Jason Murphy warned yesterday that the situation had become more dangerous, even though community attitudes had changed since the peace agreement and the use of violence was viewed as abhorrent by the vast majority.

"What we are seeing is a new breed of terrorist coming through the ranks and that for me is a very worrying situation," he said.

Assistant Chief Constable Mark Hamilton said earlier that

a gunman fired a number of shots at police during the unrest that began on Thursday. Police on Friday night released closed-circuit TV footage showing the man suspected of firing the shots that killed McKee and appealed for help from the public in identifying the suspect.

The footage shows police facing a barrage of gasoline bombs before the shots were fired by someone wearing a balaclava. The rioting started after police moved into the Creggan housing complex to search for weapons.

The killing was condemned

by all the major political parties as well as the Prime Ministers of Britain and Ireland.

The European Union's chief Brexit negotiator, Michel Barnier, said the killing was "a reminder of how fragile peace still was in Northern Ireland" and called for work to preserve the Good Friday peace agreement.

Some politicians believe uncertainty over Britain's impending departure from the EU and the possible re-introduction of a "hard border" between Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland are stoking tensions in the region.



Police officers arrest and carry away a climate change activist from a demonstration blocking the Waterloo Bridge in London, Britain, yesterday.

Over 700 protesters arrested in London

REUTERS LONDON

More than 700 climate change activists blocking roads at some of London's most famous landmarks have been arrested over the last six days, police said yesterday, up from a total given on Friday of more than 682.

The protests, organised by climate group Extinction Rebellion, have for several days disrupted travel through parts

of central London, including at Oxford Circus, Marble Arch and Waterloo Bridge.

Extinction Rebellion has called for non-violent civil disobedience to force the British government to reduce net greenhouse gas emissions to zero by 2025 and stop what it calls a global climate crisis. "As of 10:00am on Saturday... more than 718 people have been arrested since Monday. Twenty-eight people have been charged."

London's Metropolitan Police said in a statement.

The police reiterated that protests were only allowed to continue at Marble Arch, but have not said if or how they will clear the hundreds of demonstrators from other locations.

On Friday star Emma Thompson joined activists at Oxford Circus, at the heart of one of the capital's most popular shopping districts, to read poetry praising Earth's bounties.

There is still a risk of no-deal Brexit: Juncker

REUTERS BRUSSELS

There is still a concern that Britain may leave the European Union without a deal to smooth the way, the bloc's chief executive said yesterday, urging Britain to take advantage of a six-month delay to work out the details of its departure.

European Commission President Jean-Claude Juncker made the comments in an interview with German newspaper FUNKE Mediengruppe, a week after EU leaders gave Britain six months more to exit the EU.

"Nobody knows how Brexit will end. This is creating great uncertainty. There is still a fear that there will be a hard Brexit without any withdrawal treaty arrangements," Juncker said, citing the long-term negative impact on Europe's economy.

Even though the extension to October 31 offers little clarity on when, how or even if Brexit will happen, Britain should use the time wisely, he said.

"I hope that the British will make use of this time and not waste it again. We cannot keep on putting off the withdrawal date indefinitely. The best solution would be for the British to adopt the Withdrawal Agreement during the extra time that has been agreed," Juncker said. The

withdrawal deal negotiated by Prime Minister Theresa May with the EU has been rejected three times by the British parliament.

Juncker, who is scheduled to meet US President Donald Trump at the G20 meeting in Osaka in June, predicted a "lively discussion" ahead. "The last discussion lasted 6 hours and it is good that you were not there," Juncker said, referring to raised voices at his last talks with Trump.

Trade relations between the United States and the EU have soured in recent months after Washington hit the bloc with tariffs and threatened more. Asked about possible new tariffs ahead of the G20 meeting, Juncker counselled patience.

He called on Germany and other countries to spend more to boost growth in the bloc, which is expected to see a slowing economy, a day after German Finance Minister Olaf Scholz ruled out taking on new debt to stimulate his country's anaemic growth. "However, Germany should use its financial leeway to further reduce public debt and boost investment. This also includes eliminating bureaucratic hurdles," Juncker said. He also cautioned there was a risk of foreign manipulation around next month's EU Parliament elections where eurosceptic groups are expected to gain ground.

Warren wants House to begin impeachment of Trump

BLOOMBERG/REUTERS
WASHINGTON

Democratic presidential candidate Elizabeth Warren late on Friday called for President Donald Trump's impeachment, saying the country can't afford to ignore the obstruction uncovered by Special Counsel Robert Mueller's investigation.

"The severity of this misconduct demands that elected officials in both parties set aside political considerations and do their constitutional duty," the Massachusetts senator wrote in a series of tweets. "That means the House should initiate impeachment proceedings against the president of the United States."

Mueller's report released on Thursday identified at least 10 instances of obstruction of justice by the President, including discouraging others from cooperating with the Russia probe and dangling possible pardons.

Warren's impeachment calls come as House Speaker Nancy Pelosi and her top lieutenants have been trying to tamp down calls from progressive lawmakers in that chamber to begin impeachment proceedings.

Up until now, Mueller's investigation has caused barely a ripple on the presidential campaign trail. Voters rarely mention it in questions to the candidates, and the contenders themselves have focused more on pocketbook issues like wages and health insurance. Since Mueller's report was released, several of the Democratic presidential contenders have suggested that impeachment should be under discussion, and some have urged further investigation. Warren's

Since Mueller's report was released, several of the Democratic presidential contenders have suggested that impeachment should be under discussion, and some have urged further investigation. Warren's comments appear to be the most direct call for the House to act.

Some of the other Democratic candidates such as Senator Kamala Harris of California and South Bend Mayor Pete Buttigieg stepped short of calling for impeachment when asked about it after the release of the Mueller report. Warren decided to call for Trump's impeachment after reading the Mueller report while on a campaign trip to Denver and Salt Lake City, according to an aide to the senator.

"Mueller put the next step in the hands of Congress. Congress has authority to prohibit a President's corrupt use of authority in order to protect the integrity of the administration of justice."

The correct process for exercising that authority is impeachment," Warren tweeted. Around the same time as her announcement on Twitter, Warren sent an email to her list endorsing House impeachment proceedings against the president, which ended with: "I want to make sure you know where I stand." But the Warren aides said

Warren will continue to focus on her policy proposals and not on impeaching Trump when campaigning before voters.

Meanwhile, former Republican presidential candidate Mitt Romney said he was "sickened" by the dishonesty of Trump and people around him as portrayed in a report on Russia's attempts to influence the 2016 election.

Romney, now a US senator from Utah, was responding to the report by Mueller, who described how Trump sought to disrupt the probe into ties between his presidential campaign and Russia.

Mueller did not establish that Trump's campaign team colluded with Moscow and he did not charge the president with obstructing justice, but the report provided extensive details of Trump's efforts to thwart the probe. Romney said it was "good news" that there had been sufficient evidence to charge Trump with conspiring with a foreign adversary or obstructing justice, which he said could have triggered a constitutional crisis.

"Even so, I am sickened at the extent and pervasiveness of dishonesty and misdirection by individuals in the highest office of the land, including the President," Romney said in a statement posted on Twitter. "I am also appalled that, among other things, fellow citizens working in a campaign for president welcomed help from Russia — including information that had been illegally obtained; that none of them acted to inform American law enforcement; and that the campaign chairman was actively promoting Russian interests in Ukraine," he added.



Blaze at Madison Avenue

Firefighters converge on one of Manhattan's busiest shopping street as a fire shut down a part of Madison Avenue, in New York City. One person was seriously burned and a firefighter suffered minor injuries in the blaze which was quickly brought under control.

American arrested for death threats to three Democratic lawmakers

AFP
MIAMI

Police arrested a Florida man on suspicion of threatening to kill three Democratic lawmakers and expressing his hatred for controversial Muslim Congresswoman Ilhan Omar, prosecutors said.

John Kless, 49, of Broward County, is accused of leaving explosive-strewn voicemail death threats at the Washington offices of California Representative Eric Swalwell, Detroit Congresswoman Rashida Talib and New Jersey Senator Cory Booker.

He allegedly said in his message to presidential hopeful

Booker that "you government officials will be in the graves where you... belong".

Kless is said to have racially abused Omar, a Somali-American former refugee, referencing a recent controversy in which she was accused — falsely, according to her defenders — of downplaying the September 11, 2001 attacks. The freshman congressman has found herself in hot water since arriving in Washington for comments seen by critics as anti-Semitic.

Kless, who reportedly defended Donald Trump in the messages and warned the lawmakers to stop criticizing the

president, has been charged with making threatening communications.

Trump recently tweeted out a video of Omar featuring footage of the World Trade Center burning juxtaposed with her comments, taken out of context to portray her attitude to the 9/11 attacks as glib.

The President's language was also criticised following an anti-Semitic massacre in Pittsburgh last year — and during a week-long mail bombing spree that saw another Florida man target high-profile liberal political figures, Trump critics and the news outlet CNN.

US prosecutors seek 18-month prison term for Russian Butina

AFP
WASHINGTON

US prosecutors are seeking an 18-month jail sentence for a Russian gun-rights activist who pled guilty to conspiring to act as a foreign agent by infiltrating conservative American groups on behalf of her government.

Maria Butina, who is 30, has cooperated with prosecutors since pleading guilty in December to working as an undeclared agent of Russia. She is the first Russian convicted in the sprawl of cases arising from Moscow's interference in the 2016 presidential election.

But while she was interviewed by Robert Mueller, the special counsel investigating Russian meddling, her case arose from an earlier operation and was handled by the US attorney for the District of Columbia.

In a court filing on Friday, prosecutors said that they were lowering their sentencing recommendation by six months "based on (Butina's) substantial assistance to law enforcement." But her lawyers argued in their own filing that the young woman deserves credit for the nine months she has already spent in detention. Upon her sentencing, which is set for April 26, she should be immediately deported to Russia, the lawyers said.

Butina had predicted early in the last presidential campaign that Donald Trump would be the next US President, and she sought ways to gain influence through conservative groups with the ultimate goal of influencing US foreign policy.

She supported Trump and associated with other Republican candidates. Butina was even photographed with Donald Trump Jr., the president's eldest son. The Kremlin has called the accusations against Butina "absolutely unfounded".



Measles epidemic spreads

A sign warns people of measles in Williamsburg, in New York City. As a measles epidemic continues to spread, New York City Mayor Bill de Blasio recently announced a state of emergency and mandated residents of the ultra-Orthodox Jewish community in Williamsburg at the center of the outbreak to get vaccinated for the viral disease. Those who choose not to will risk a \$1,000 fine.

British cybersecurity expert pleads guilty to US hacking charges

AP
MILWAUKEE

A British cybersecurity researcher credited with stopping a worldwide computer virus has pleaded guilty to developing malware to steal banking information.

Federal prosecutors in Wisconsin and Marcus Hutchins' attorneys said in a joint court filing that the 24-year-old agreed to plead guilty to developing malware called Kronos and conspiring to distribute it from 2012 to 2015. In exchange for his plea to those charges, prosecutors dismissed eight more.

"As you may be aware, I've pleaded guilty to two charges related to writing malware in the years prior to my career in security," Hutchins said in a statement on his website. "I regret these actions and accept

full responsibility for my mistakes. Having grown up, I've since been using the same skills that I misused several years ago for constructive purposes. I will continue to devote my time to keeping people safe from malware attacks."

Hutchins faces up to 10 years in prison but could receive a more lenient sentence for accepting responsibility, the court filing said. Attorneys said Hutchins understands he could be deported. Sentencing has not been scheduled.

Hutchins' arrest in Las Vegas in August 2017, as he was about to board a flight to England, came as a shock. Just months earlier he was hailed a hero for finding a "kill switch" to the WannaCry virus that crippled computers worldwide.

At the time, he said that he

didn't consider himself a hero but that he was combating malware because "it's the right thing to do". Prosecutors said Hutchins made incriminating statements during a two-hour interrogation, and later during a jailhouse phone call that Hutchins was told was being recorded, he told an unidentified person that he "used to write malware" years before.

Prosecutors said in court filings that Hutchins sold the Kronos software to someone in Wisconsin and that he "personally delivered" the software to someone in California.

The malware was designed "to intercept communications and collect personal information, including usernames, passwords, email addresses, and financial data" from computers, prosecutors said.

20 years on, Columbine massacre remembered

AFP
LITTLETON

Dozens of people gathered for a vigil on Friday on the 20th anniversary of the Columbine high school massacre, laying flowers at a memorial for the victims.

Twelve students and a teacher were killed on April 20, 1999, when two teenagers armed with an assortment of weapons and home-made bombs went on the rampage at the school, whose name has become synonymous with school shootings. There have been more than a dozen other shootings at schools across the US since Columbine.

Only last year, 17 students and staff were killed when an ex-pupil went on the rampage at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Florida, while 27 people, mostly children, were killed at Sandy Hook elementary school in 2012 and 32 at Virginia Tech university in 2007.

On Friday, survivors of the Columbine massacre and families and friends of the victims gathered in Littleton, Colorado.

They lit candles and prayed at a memorial in the town, and laid flowers on plaques bearing the names of victims.

An inner circular wall bears biographies of the victims carved into marble, while an outer wall lists those injured in the attack.

13 shot dead at Mexican party

AFP | MINATITLAN

Thirteen people, including a child, were killed when a group of unidentified gunmen opened fire on a party in the violence-wracked eastern Mexican state of Veracruz, officials said.

The Secretariat of Public Safety said the gunmen arrived at a family reunion in Minatitlan asking to see someone named "El Becky" — the owner of a local club — before opening fire. It said seven men, five women, and a child were killed, and four others injured in the attack. There was no known motive for the shooting, but Veracruz is plagued with organised crime and bloody gun battles frequently erupt between rival drug gangs.

Survivors described how the gunmen forced their victims to look them in the face before shooting them.

QLC, MoPH sign pact on training & research capabilities

THE PENINSULA
DOHA

Qatar Leadership Centre (QLC) and the Ministry of Public Health (MoPH) signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with the aim of strengthening the Ministry's training and research capabilities. Qatar's future as the region's foremost healthcare center relies on investments in high-quality training and modern data-driven diagnostics, research and digital solutions. This agreement mirrors a national commitment to human development as prescribed within the pillars of Qatar National Vision 2030 (QNV2030).

As the world's first bilingual online survey tool for the promotion of scientific research, www.QSurvey.qa will be used by the Ministry to ensure its research and survey competencies are of the highest standards. The survey tool and its corresponding mobile app were launched in April 2018 under the patronage of H E Sheikha Al Mayassa bint Hamad bin Khalifa Al Thani.

As the world's first bilingual online survey tool for the promotion of scientific research, www.QSurvey.qa will be used by the Ministry to ensure its research and survey competencies are of the highest standards.

Chairperson of the QLC Board of Directors, as a free platform for efficient data storage and processing.

Commenting on the importance of investing in human capacity building in public health as well as the online survey tool's applicability for Qatar's healthcare sector, Sheikh Dr Abdulla bin Ali Al Thani, Managing Director and Member at QLC, said, "Due to our wise leadership's visionary investments in the medical sector, Qatar continues to make significant strides towards its national healthcare aspirations. As such, we proudly enter into a new partnership with the Ministry of Public Health – the



Acting Managing Director at QLC, Dr Ali J Al Kubaisi, and Director of the Public Health Department at the Ministry of Public Health, Sheikh Dr Mohammed bin Hamad Al Thani, during the signing ceremony.

leading force behind the country's progressive health strategy and its transformative effect on our healthcare sector over recent decades.

"As ultramodern technologies and cutting-edge research alter the medical

sector every day, efficient healthcare services continue to rely on state of the art training techniques and accurate research methods. The training is expected to strengthen the capacity of both ministry officials as well as

members within their network of associated healthcare bodies, such as hospitals and clinics.

In support of this, QSurvey will provide innovative data-collection facilities that can record and analyse vast amounts of data for decades to come," he added. As part of its mandate, QLC seeks to help improve institutional performance at an organisational level through high-quality leadership training for Qatari organizations.

Specifically designed for professionals working within the partner organization, the programs include specialized training courses, seminars, and executive mentoring and coaching that are tailored according to the needs of their specific sector – in this case: the ministry of public health.

Sheikh Dr Mohammed bin Hamad Al Thani, Director of the Public Health Department at the MoPH, stressed that the Ministry will work with QLC in various fields of research and training in a mutually beneficial partnership.



Ambassador of India, P Kumaran (right), during a visit to the free medical camp organised by the AMU Alumni Association in Qatar, at Asian Town.

About 250 expatriates benefit from free medical camp of AMU Alumni Association

THE PENINSULA
DOHA

The AMU Alumni Association Qatar (AMUAAQ) alumni of Allgarh Muslim University in Qatar conducted its 1st free medical camp in association with IMARA Medical Centre Qatar at Imara Medical Centre, opposite Grand Mall, in Asian Town on Friday.

The expatriates including family, kids, executives and workers were offered free general consultation and other consultations in general physician, family medicine, gynecology, pediatric, cardiology, radiology, ophthalmology, dental check-up, dietetic, blood pressure, blood sugar, BMI, cupping therapy (Hijama) and physiotherapy by the team of dedicated doctors and medical field professionals.

The camp also created awareness about organ donation among the participants by HMC team. This free medical camp benefited nearly 250 expatriates. There were also awareness briefing by experts on various topics.

According to AMU Alumni Association President Jawed Ahmad, Qatar's elite state medical institutions like Sidra Medicine, Hamad Medical Corporation (HMC), Imara Medical Centre and prominent private centres offered their services at the medical camp including with AMU Alumni Doctors from said organisations.

Ambassador of Indian P Kumaran inaugurated the AMU Alumni Association Free Medical Camp. The Ambassador visited each section and met with Doctors and team and asked about any major findings and

also met with patients.

The Ambassador highlighted the importance and benefit to the community. He appreciated the efforts of AMU Alumni Association Qatar and all those who are supporting it. He also witnessed the cupping therapy (Hijama) and considered it to be very unique & distinctive. Wet cupping (Hijama) requires a skin incision. The skin incision can be made either before or after cupping treatment. The cup is meant to suck out any impurities in the body which may include blood, toxins, fragmented blood cells, and tissue fluid.

Patients were also given discount coupon for eye glass and gifts from HMC Organ donors awareness team. Jawed Ahmad -AMU Alumni Association Qatar President said that the Association plans to organise more similar medical camps in future.

Carnegie Mellon University in Qatar welcomes Class of 2023

THE PENINSULA
DOHA

Carnegie Mellon University in Qatar (CMU-Q) welcomed more than 80 new students and their parents at the Marhaba Tartans event recently. The evening was an opportunity for incoming students to meet their professors and future classmates, and learn more about studying at CMU-Q.

Michael Trick, Dean of CMU-Q, welcomed the Class of 2023 and reminded each of them that they have earned a place at the university.

"When we selected you, we looked at your academic accomplishments, your extracurricular



Students during the Marhaba Tartans event.

interests, and your plans for the future.

We chose you because you want to learn, and you are curious and forward-thinking. We have every confidence that you will be excellent Tartans," he said.

Carnegie Mellon University in Qatar offers undergraduate programs in biological sciences, business administration, computational biology, computer science and information studies. Nearly 400 students from 38 countries call CMU-Q home.

HBKU student wins gold medal for innovation

THE PENINSULA
DOHA

Muhammed Al Housaini, a student enrolled in the PhD in Sustainable Energy program at the College of Science and Engineering (CSE), part of Hamad Bin Khalifa University (HBKU), earned a gold medal at the 47th International Exhibition of Inventions in Geneva. Al Housaini was part of a delegation of representatives from Qatar and the region who engaged with more than 800 exhibitors across 45 countries.

The annual convention brings in industrial and commercial entities, higher education institutions, private and state sectors to



Muhammed Al Housaini

demonstrate the latest in the fields of technological invention and market commercialisation. Muhammed Al Housaini completed his MS at HBKU with

a thesis on drone-based cleaning technology and strategies for solar PV farms in desert climates, including that of Qatar.

His PhD dissertation research at HBKU aims to address entrepreneurial ecosystem capacity development and put forth potential solutions for economic diversification and sustainable development.

CSE offers 12 graduate degrees at the master's and PhD levels, each catering to a sub-set of critical challenges facing the region and beyond. Its Sustainable Development Division places special emphasis on energy and the environment – areas deemed as instrumental for the continuity of generations to come.

MENA Dojo's third edition under way in Kuwait

THE PENINSULA
DOHA

Qatar Science & Technology Park (QSTP), part of Qatar Foundation Research, Development, and Innovation (QF RDI) – in partnership with global venture capital firm 500 Startups, launched the third edition of the MENA Dojo Series A Program in Kuwait recently. This edition sees the participation of 14 of the most promising technology startups from across the MENA region, including two from Qatar.

MENA Dojo is a regional spin-off of the internationally-coveted 500 Startups Series A Accelerator Program.

Technology startups participating in this program must have previously raised funding from other investors, and are now preparing to scale-up and raise their Series A round – a startup's first significant round of venture capital funding that enables its rapid growth and development.

Over the course of the program, the startups will be provided with intensive, one-on-one training and mentorship in developing a mindset for accelerated growth.

The two Qatari-founded startups



Mentors and participating teams of the third edition of the MENA Dojo Series A Program, organised by Qatar Science & Technology Park and 500 Startups.

participating this year are ADGS and MaktApp. ADGS sells a suite of products that use artificial intelligence (AI), behavioural biometrics, and emergent behaviour. Founded by Hassan Al Ansari, President, Christophe Billiotet, CEO, and Nahuel Gonzalez, CTO, the startup is a recipient of QSTP's Product Development Fund, which is dedicated to funding SMEs and startups that develop products and services relevant to local market needs. Yosouf Abdulrahman Saleh, Executive

Director of QSTP, said, "QSTP's ongoing partnership with 500 Startups has placed regional technology development on the global map. Our joint hosting of the MENA Dojo enables QSTP to promote Qatar's techpreneurs on the regional stage, and provides 500 Startups with the opportunity to identify and help realise the region's startup potential.

Over the course of the five-week program, which will run until May 1, participating startups will be trained on how

to grow their businesses through different methodologies, including customer acquisition, growth-hacking, distribution, referral marketing and re-targeting, content marketing and search engine optimisation (SEO), user experience (UX) and conversion optimisation, as well as pitching to investors.

Dr Richard O'Kennedy, Vice-President for Research, Development, and Innovation, Qatar Foundation, said, "Qatar's burgeoning innovation ecosystem is driven by people with a passion for harnessing the power of technology to develop solutions aimed at addressing local and regional needs. MENA Dojo provides a robust platform for these entrepreneurs to fine-tune their ideas under the tutelage of industry experts and unleash the potential of their businesses, making impactful contributions to Qatar and beyond."

On May 1, all participating startups will pitch their businesses and growth models to a global audience of industry leaders and potential investors in the hope of securing significant later-stage funding to fuel their growth ambitions. This 'Investor Day' will mark the culmination of this year's comprehensive accelerator program.

Qatar takes part in GCC cultural symposium

QNA / KUWAIT

Qatar, represented by the Ministry of Culture and Sports, has participated in the intellectual symposium "Restructuring the Cultural Strategy of the Gulf Cooperation Council", organised by the Kuwaiti National Council for Culture, Arts and Letters. The symposium discussed a new strategy to keep up with the visions of the future, taking into account the technical developments of the new media and changes, challenges and priorities and the intensification of cultural activities and programs that have a positive impact in this aspect.

Mohammed Saeed Al Baloushi, Advisor to H E the Minister of Culture and Sports, participated in the symposium, which ended yesterday evening with a paper titled "Cultural Heritage and its Role in Promoting Gulf Identity".

PRAYER TIMINGS	
FAJR	03.48 AM
SHOROOK	05.07 AM
ZUHR	11.33 AM
ASR	03.02 PM
MAGHRIB	06.01 PM
ISHA	07.31 PM



Blind Japanese sailor completes non-stop Pacific voyage

AFP
TOKYO

A blind Japanese sailor completed his non-stop Pacific voyage yesterday, local media reported, becoming the first sightless person on record to navigate a vessel across the vast ocean.

Mitsuhiko Iwamoto arrived at port in Fukushima in his 12-metre (40-foot) sailboat yesterday morning, around two months after he left California.

Iwamoto, a 52-year-old San Diego resident, sailed from the US city on February 24 with Doug Smith, an American navigator who verbally helped him by offering information such as wind directions.

This was his second attempt after his initial voyage was cut short six years ago when his yacht hit a whale and sank.

"I'm home. Thank you," Iwamoto told the welcoming party after his yacht sailed into Fukushima, ending a journey of some 14,000 kilometres (8,700 miles). "I didn't give up and I made a dream come true," Iwamoto was quoted by Japan's Kyodo News as saying.

It was the first Pacific crossing by a blind sailor, Kyodo News said. Iwamoto, who lost his sight at the age of 16, made the voyage to raise funds for charity, including efforts to prevent blinding diseases, according to his website.

Third Oud Festival opens on Tuesday at Katara

Over 35 prominent Oud players and manufacturers from Qatar, Iraq, Kuwait, Jordan, Turkey, Lebanon, Tunisia, Oman, Greece, Yemen, Syria and Iran will participate in the four-day festival.

THE PENINSULA
DOHA

The Cultural Village Foundation - Katara will host the third Annual Katara Oud Festival from April 23 to April 26 under the theme 'Al Kindi the Muslim Thinker and Scholar'.

The festival will feature Oud performances along the four days at the Opera House in Katara where Oud maestros from across the globe will enchant the audience at Katara, with an extraordinary mix of the East and the West in Oud tradition.

Over 35 prominent Oud players and manufacturers from Qatar, Iraq, Kuwait, Jordan, Turkey, Lebanon, Tunisia, Oman, Greece, Yemen, Syria and Iran will participate in the four-day festival.

Al Kindi, a connecting link between different cultures across the Muslim world, has important contributions to culture, philosophy and music.

Katara's First Oud Festival, held in March 2017, was dedicated to Ziryab, the legendary musician of the Arab and



The exhibition will showcase antique Oud instruments made by legendary luthiers, and will also feature workshops on Oud manufacturing.

Islamic world, while the second was under the theme of Al Farabi.

A documentary will be screened on the opening day about Yacoub bin Ishaq Al Kindi who, besides his important contributions in mathematics and science, played a big role in enriching the traditional music.

The Oud performances will begin at 8pm every day at the Opera House in building 16 with a workshop on Oud manufacturing held in building 19 in between

Gifted Oud makers from across the globe will display their skills and craftsmanship on the sidelines of the Festival.

The exhibition will showcase antique Oud instruments made by legendary luthiers (makers of stringed instruments).

In addition, the Festival will feature lectures, forums on Oud making. The four-day Festival will conclude with an amazing musical show dedicated to Al Kindi.



Scattered clouds with chance of rain maybe thunder at times and slight dust at places.

HIGH TIDE 05:07-10:20 LOW TIDE 0:44-12:49

Courtesy: Qatar Meteorology Department



Today in History

April 21, 2016
▲ Pop superstar Prince died at 57 after an accidental drug overdose. Record sales of hits like Purple Rain and Sign o' the Times topped 100 million over his career

1989: More than 100,000 students poured into Beijing's Tiananmen Square, ignoring government warnings

1999: Three days of rioting in Jamaica following a hefty rise in fuel tax claimed at least nine lives

2009: An extrasolar planet, Gliese 581e, with a mass relatively close to that of Earth, was discovered

2009: Argentina formally laid claim to a vast expanse of ocean, including lands disputed by Britain and Chile

Picture: Associated Press © GRAPHIC NEWS

Latin music, pop stars growing in popularity in US

AFP
INDIO, CALIFORNIA, USA

Just two years after the lilting mega-hit "Despacito" captivated the globe, Latin stars are cementing their place in the US mainstream, moving beyond scoring a one-off smash to headline festivals and permeate the charts.

An unprecedented number of Spanish-language acts are performing at this year's Coachella festival, where a second weekend of shows began on Friday - a sure-fire sign of their mounting influence in a country where 41 million people claim Spanish as their mother tongue.

They are not just guests of top-billed acts or appearing on lesser stages - stars like reggaeton revolutionary J Balvin and Puerto Rican trap artist Bad Bunny are winning key time slots on their own.

And they are singing in Spanish,

eschewing the "crossover" label often slapped on their A-list predecessors like Ricky Martin, Shakira and Gloria Estefan.

Bad Bunny - the 25-year-old face of Latin trap, a genre that fuses reggaeton with elements of hip hop from the US south - lit up Coachella's top stage during week one and is set to perform again today.

"I'm very proud of what I represent, of the Latino community that has come far speaking the language they speak," he said in Spanish to the throng gathered to see him.

Colombia's J Balvin brought his unique version of reggaeton - a massively popular Puerto Rican-born amalgam of Caribbean beats and hip-hop influences - to the California festival's main stage, the genre's first ever full showcase there.

"It took 15 years for reggaeton to get to Coachella. We are here!" the

boundary-pusher shouted to launch his history-making performance, as the crowd waved flags representing countries from throughout Latin America.

In another landmark moment, the 33-year-old Balvin will in August headline Chicago's Lollapalooza festival, becoming the first Spanish-language act to nab one of the coveted spots.

Many experts attribute the US Latin music industry's rapid growth to a parallel streaming explosion.

According to the Recording Industry Association of America, Latin music saw its second consecutive year of double-digit growth statistics in 2018, jumping 18 percent from the year prior to rake in \$413m. Paid subscription platforms like Spotify's premium service meanwhile saw nearly 50 percent growth in revenues.

The trends are feeding off each other, according to RIAA chief

operations officer Michele Ballantyne: "Any conversation about the Latin music market starts with one word: streaming." "Latin music's transformation from a physical-based business to a streaming-driven one is even faster than the overall US music market's turnaround," she said.

Indeed, YouTube said last December that in 2018, eight out of its top 10 most-viewed music videos worldwide belonged to Latino artists. Afro-Latino star Ozuna appearing in four of them.

The Dominican-Puerto Rican recently vowed to continue performing in his native Spanish, telling Billboard that "all the time, it's English, English, English." "If I have the opportunity of having so many followers, and helping to take Latino artists and culture to the mainstream, I'm not going to selfishly throw it away because I learned English and I can't cross over."

Cooling-off process at Notre-Dame over, all relics saved

AP
PARIS

Architects and construction workers have stabilised the damaged structure of Notre-Dame cathedral, four days after a fast-spreading fire ravaged the iconic Paris building, and firefighters left the site on Friday night, a fire service official said.

"There is no more risk the edifice's walls could fall down," Lieutenant Colonel Gabriel Plus, chief spokesman for the Paris fire service, said. Plus said firefighters have been able to cool down the walls and debris from the roof inside the cathedral, and there are no more "hot points" inside.

"It's a miracle that the cathedral is still standing, and that all the relics were saved," he said.

Investigators believe the fire was an accident and are studying multiple factors that could have contributed.

The cathedral's rector said a "computer glitch" may have played a role in the rapidly spreading blaze that devastated the 850-year-old architectural masterpiece.

Rector Patrick Chauvet did not elaborate on the exact nature of the glitch. "We may find out what happened in two or three months," he told local business leaders and construction

workers. Newspaper Le Parisien reported that a computer bug could have misdirected firefighters responding to the initial fire alarm. The unsourced report said investigators are also looking into whether the fire was linked to temporary elevators being used in a renovation that was underway at the time the cathedral caught fire.

The fire burned through the network of enormous centuries-old oak beams supporting the monument's vaulted stone ceiling, dangerously weakening the building. Chauvet said there were fire alarms throughout the building, which he described as "well protected." Firefighter spokesman Plus said there could have been "a smouldering fire inside the frame" of the Notre Dame roof that was fuelled by the wind. Paris police investigators said they believe an electrical short-circuit most likely caused the fire. It's believed to be one of multiple leads being investigated.

"Is it linked to the renovation work? A human error? The investigation will say," Plus said.

He warned that "the central nave remains dangerous" but said the stones are drying out from the water sprayed from hoses during nine hours of firefighting efforts.

The last artworks were taken out of the cathedral on Friday



People look at the Notre-Dame Cathedral in central Paris, days after a fire engulfed the 850-year-old Gothic masterpiece, destroying the roof and causing the steeple to collapse.

and taken to the Louvre for safe-keeping pending renovation, he said.

Judith Gagan, a conservation official at France's Culture Ministry, said on Friday the artworks inside Notre-Dame had suffered no major damage from the fire.

French President Emmanuel Macron on Friday met with officials from the United Nations'

cultural agency, UNESCO. UNESCO representatives have offered their technical expertise to help with the reconstruction.

Macron is moving quickly on the fire-ravaged monument's reconstruction, which is being viewed both as a push to make it part of his legacy and a way to move past the divisive yellow vest protests over social

inequality in France. Notre Dame's reconstruction is prompting widespread debate across France, with differing views over whether it should involve new technologies and designs.

Macron has named a general, Jean-Louis Georgelin, former Chief of Staff of the armed forces, to lead the reconstruction effort.

Couple to wed at Ohio airport baggage claim area

AP
CLEVELAND

Proving life and love can be a carousel, a couple is marrying at the Ohio airport baggage claim where they met 12 years ago.

Michelle Belleau's boss sent her to pick up Ron Peterson at Cleveland Hopkins International Airport in 2007.

A long-distance relationship developed, with Belleau in Cleveland and Peterson in Los Angeles.

Now they were to get married at a spot Belleau says "couldn't be more perfect," The Plain Dealer newspaper has reported.

Belleau says airports became happy and sad places for the couple as they'd reunite and then too quickly have to depart. She has since moved to California.

Southwest Airlines has agreed to move arriving bags to another carousel to make way for the ceremony.

Michelle Belleau said it took them some time to convince authorities at the Hopkins International Airport to let the two hold their wedding ceremony there.