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Qatar Tribune

WEDNESDAY
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 VOL.12 NO.4664 QR 2

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QA named world's best airline

Airline wins four prestigious prizes at 2019 Skytrax World Airline Awards

TRIBUNE NEWS NETWORK
 PARIS

QATAR Airways (QA) has won four prestigious prizes at this year's 2019 Skytrax World Airline Awards, including the highest accolade of 'World's Best Airline'.

QA also became the only carrier to win the best airline award five times (2011, 2012, 2015, 2017 and 2019) in the competition's history.

QA has been named the 'Best Airline in the Middle East' for the third successive year. The airline has also won the 'World's Best Business Class' accolade for the fourth year in succession. It also retained the World's Best Business Class Seat award for its patented Qsuite product.

Minister of Transport and Communications HE Jassim bin Saif al Sulaiti, who attended the Skytrax Awards ceremony, said: "This is a great day for Qatar, and I am delighted to have been here today to witness Qatar Airways being recognised as the 'Best Airline of the Year' for the fifth time."

QA Group Chief Executive Akbar al Baker said, "The Skytrax Awards are widely recognised as the most prestigious in the airline industry, so to have won so many prizes at the 2019 ceremony is a truly memorable experience for Qatar Airways."

"We are thrilled to be recognised by



Minister of Transport and Communications HE Jassim bin Saif al Sulaiti and Qatar Airways chief Akbar al Baker at the Skytrax Awards ceremony in Paris on Tuesday.

our customers by winning these four awards. Being the first airline to be named 'Airline of the Year' for the fifth time is a landmark achievement and, combined with three other major Skytrax awards, is testament to the tireless efforts of the entire Qatar Airways team. It is a proud moment for the airline as

our constant innovation and service standards set the benchmark in our industry," Baker added.

He said, "The fact that the Skytrax Awards are voted for by travellers makes them especially meaningful for all of us in the industry. Aviation is a competitive business, and to have received such recognition will spur us all at Qatar Airways to even greater heights and we look forward to delivering our world-class product to millions of passengers in the coming years."

"This is a great day for Qatar, and I am delighted to have been here today to witness Qatar Airways being recognized as the 'Best Airline of the Year' for the fifth time."

— HE Jassim bin Saif al Sulaiti, Minister of Transport & Communications

Skytrax CEO Edward Plaisted said: "To be named as the World's Best Airline is a great recognition of Qatar Airways' high standards, and recognises the hard work and dedication from every member of staff to satisfy customers. To achieve this accolade for a fifth time is a remarkable achievement, and we congratulate them for this unique success."

More than 100 customer nationalities participated in the survey with 21.65 million eligible entries counted in the results. Survey entries were screened by Skytrax to identify IP and user information, with duplicate, suspect or ineligible entries deleted.

HIA expansion plan firmly in place: Sulaiti

Tenders to be floated in two months

TRIBUNE NEWS NETWORK
 DOHA

THE Hamad International Airport's (HIA) expansion plans are firmly in place and a tender for the same will be floated in the next two months, Minister of Transport and Communications HE Jassim bin Saif al Sulaiti has said.

The minister dismissed reports on some social media platforms about halting of expansion works as false. He urged people to check the veracity of such information from the official site of the ministry or HIA.

He said, "The airport has won many awards. I am confident that in the coming years the airport will progress and reach a higher level."

On the Metro project, Sulaiti said, "We have started partial operation of the Red Line. By the end of the year, two additional lines, the Green Line and the Golden Line, will be operational."

He said the buses for transporting Metro passengers will be eco-friendly.

"We have launched several electric buses. This will be increased by 30% by 2022. Qatar 2030 will see Qatar as a pioneer in alternative energy sources," he said.

He said the blockade imposed on Qatar by some neighbouring countries has



HE Jassim bin Saif al Sulaiti.

given the impetus to move forward.

"Thanks to the wise leadership, most major projects were completed before the scheduled dates. The Doha Metro was supposed to officially open all lines in 2020, but we launched the Red Line two months ago and the rest of the lines will be opened before the end of the year."

Regarding Hamad Port, he said, "The volume of goods transiting through the port exceeded all our expectations. Looking at the huge traffic, the port will be expanded before the earlier scheduled date."

On Qatar Airways winning Skytrax Awards, he said, "In the past two years we have participated in the Paris Exhibition in the belief that Qatar Airways has reached the world stage. Qatar Airways has won many of Skytrax Awards."

GANHRI's new vision seeks to bolster rights bodies, says Marri

QNA
 NEW YORK

THE new Strategic Plan (2020-2022), which the Global Alliance of National Human Rights Institutions (GANHRI) is working on, aims to launch a vision that will have the power of influence and persuasion among governments, people and competent parties in various international platforms. This will strengthen the unity and effectiveness of national human rights institutions, National Human Rights Committee (NHRC) Chairman Dr Ali bin Smaikh al Marri has said.

Marri, who is also the Secretary-General and Vice President of GANHRI, said the new strategic plan would encourage and support the establishment of new national human rights institutions in countries where they do not exist.

The plan is also to urge governments and countries to strengthen the independence and functions of national human rights institutions and to remove various obstacles for the implementation of their tasks and visions, he added.

This came during a two-day consultative meeting of GANHRI in New York. The meeting aims to develop the new Strategic Plan (2020-2022), which will be submitted



Dr Ali bin Smaikh al Marri.

for adoption at the next General Assembly in spring 2020 in Geneva.

The meeting was also attended by GANHRI's Chairperson Dr Carlos Alfonso Negret Mosquera, who is also the Ombudsman of Colombia, and heads and coordinators of the regional networks of national human rights institutions across the world.

Discussions during the meeting focused on assessing the performance of the global alliance over the past period, identifying the restrictions and challenges facing it or impeding its goals in the past, and the goals that it aspires to achieve in the future, and then determining the strategy to be developed to achieve the goals in the coming period.

Continued on page 2

UN calls for independent probe into Morsi's death

AGENCIES
 CAIRO/ISTANBUL

THE United Nations has called for an "independent inquiry" into the death of former Egyptian President Mohamed Morsi, who died aged 67 after collapsing in a Cairo court on Monday, according to state media.

The United Nations human rights office has called for a "prompt, impartial, thorough and transparent investigation"



into Morsi's death. "Concerns have been raised regarding the conditions of Mr Morsi's detention, including access to adequate medical care, as well as sufficient access to his lawyers and family, during his nearly six years in custody," Rupert Colville, spokesman for the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, said. Morsi, who was buried on Tuesday, was a top figure in the Muslim Brotherhood and the first democratically elected president in Egypt's modern history. PAGE 7

QF initiative to support private sector

QATAR Foundation Research, Development and Innovation (QFRI) has marked the launch of its new funding initiative, 'Innovation Coupon', by signing an agreement with its first beneficiary, ADGS, a local private sector SME. ADGS sells a suite of products that utilise artificial intelligence (AI), behavioral biometrics, and emergent behavior. Innovation Coupon is aimed at Qatar-based SMEs or startups in all sectors and industries that are engaged in the development of new technology-rich products and services. PAGE 16

MME allocates QR750 million for two landscaping, beautification projects

TRIBUNE NEWS NETWORK
 DOHA

THE Ministry of Municipality and Environment (MME), represented by the Public Parks Department, has announced new projects for beautification and landscaping.

A total sum of QR750 million has been allocated for the two projects which will be used for landscaping and beautification. The two projects will be implemented in the coming years.

For the first project, a total of QR250 million has been earmarked for the beautification of seven main streets



QR500 million has been earmarked for renovation and opening of parks.

in Doha — Onaiza, Beheira, Jleiah, Khalifa, Marrakiah, Duhaal and Qutaifiya. These

streets will be beautified with landscaping, re-building of sidewalks, interlock, walkways

and other civil works. For the second project, the MME has earmarked QR500 million.

There are four public parks projects within the plan. The works include rehabilitation of Rawdat Al Khail Garden and Ras Abu Aboud Park. The project includes opening of new gardens in Al Garafat and Umm Al-Sinim.

A specialized team from the Public Parks Department has been formed to oversee the projects in coordination with the committee of supervising the beautification of roads and public places in the country.

Qatar first in ME to launch Aviation Cyber Security guidelines

TRIBUNE NEWS NETWORK
DOHA

THE Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) has released Aviation Cyber Security Guidelines in collaboration with the Cybersecurity Affairs Department of the Ministry of Transport and Communications (MoTC).

The guidelines include standards and principles for securing critical aviation systems, in addition to best practices in electronic security in the field.

This has made Qatar the first country in the Middle East to have released such guidelines that aim to face and mitigate electronic threats and attacks in the civil aviation industry.

The guidelines are expected to raise the awareness of all stakeholders in the industry in Qatar by guiding them in their cybersecurity best practices.

The issuance of the guidelines complies with the recommendations of the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) that has urged all member states to apply such standards and measures and continue cooperation and mutual support at the local and universal levels.

CAA has praised the efforts and support of the MoTC's Cybersecurity Affairs Department in releasing these guidelines.

SULAITI ATTENDS PARIS AIR SHOW OPENING CEREMONY, MEETS FRENCH OFFICIALS



MINISTER of Transport and Communications HE Jassim bin Saif Ahmed al Sulaiti attended the opening ceremony of the 53rd International Paris Air Show Le Bourget.

French President Emmanuel Macron inaugurated the air show in the presence of senior officials from several countries and top aircraft manufacturers of the world.

The aerospace industry's marquee event is a occasion to measure the pulse of the \$150-billion-a-year commercial aircraft industry.

On the sidelines of the show, Sulaiti met with French Minister for Transport Elisabeth Borne. They discussed cooperation in the fields of aviation and transport and a number of matters of common interest between the two countries and the means to further enhance them.

The meeting was attended by Qatar's Ambassador to France HE Sheikh Ali bin Jassim al Thani and Qatar Airways Group Chief Executive Akbar al Baker. (TNN)



Aiming to support SMEs and start-ups in the country

QF RDI launches 'Innovation Coupon' funding initiative

ADGS receives first grant to support development of its cyber security product



The fund is designed to benefit companies that have the needed capacity and technical knowledge to develop their products or services but require more support to resolve a specific technical or business problem.

TRIBUNE NEWS NETWORK
DOHA

QATAR Foundation Research, Development and Innovation (QF RDI) has marked the launch of its new funding initiative 'Innovation Coupon' by signing an agreement with its first beneficiary ADGS – a local private sector SME that sells a suite of products that utilise artificial intelligence (AI), behavioural biometrics and emergent behaviour.

The signing ceremony was held at the QF RDI offices, where Dr Richard O'Kennedy, vice-president for Research, Development and Innovation at QF, and Dr Salvino Salvaggio, senior director, Implementation and RDI Office Management, formalised the award with ADGS President Hassan al Ansari and General Manager Christophe Billottet.

Innovation Coupon is aimed at Qatar-based SMEs and startups in all sectors and industries that are engaged in the development of new technology-rich products and services. The fund is designed to ben-

efit companies that have the needed capacity and technical knowledge to develop their product or service but require more support to resolve a specific technical or business problem. The fund will award up to 50 percent of the problem-solving costs for a period of up to six months.

Dr Richard O'Kennedy said: "The development of the Innovation Coupon highlights our commitment to foster local product innovation and support the development of SMEs in Qatar. The initiative will support startup businesses to overcome many of the growth challenges they face and the fund can help them improve vital aspects of their business."

Beneficiaries must use at least 25 percent of the awarded amount to cover the contracting costs of a local research institute – such as QF research institutes and QF partner universities – or other local expert company or individual, thereby taking advantage of the local innovation ecosystem in developing new products and services.

Innovation Coupon will sup-

port ADGS by supplementing their capacity to further develop their cyber security product 'STROKK'. The software adds an organic security layer on any system, in any language, and renders stolen passwords useless to hackers by learning the way an individual types to clearly recognise the user. STROKK is currently being purchased by customers in highly cyber security sensitive industries, such as finance, banking, defence, the armed forces and intelligence services in several countries.

ADGS is working to port its security solution from a Windows to a Unix-based environment. The ADGS team will use QF RDI's award to employ external support in order to allow the company to continue its expansion.

Ansari said: "We are very proud to be the recipients of the very first coupon and it will allow us to resolve a process that will ensure we continue delivering our innovative product to local, regional and international markets."

QA flight touches down for the first time in Davao, Philippines



The Ambassador of the Philippines to Qatar HE Alan Timbayan and QA Senior Vice-President Asia Pacific Marwan Koleilat were on board the inaugural flight to Davao.

TRIBUNE NEWS NETWORK
DOHA

THE first Qatar Airways (QA) flight from Doha to Davao, Philippines, touched down on Tuesday at Davao International Airport, where it was welcomed with a celebratory water cannon salute.

QA flight QR936 departed Hamad International Airport (HIA) on Tuesday at 02:45 and landed in Davao at 17:20 local time.

The Ambassador of the Philippines to Qatar HE Alan Timbayan was joined by QA Senior Vice-President Asia Pacific Marwan Koleilat on board the flight to Davao.

QA Group Chief Executive Akbar al Baker said: "Qatar Airways is very proud to extend its reach into the Philippines by launching our third gateway into this beautiful country. The inclusion of Davao into our global network further demonstrates our commitment to the Far East region, a highly important market for Qatar Airways. With 50 weekly passenger flights to and from the Philippines, we take great pride in our role of enabling trade and connecting international businesses."



Davao International Airport Manager Engr Rex A Obcena said: "Davao International Airport is the main airport serving Davao City and Davao Region in the Philippines. It is the busiest airport on the island of Mindanao and one of the busiest in the Philippines. We look forward to welcoming all passengers on Qatar Airways' weekly return flights."

With numerous beaches and resorts, Davao City, on the southern Philippine island of Mindanao, is a coastal commercial centre near Mount Apo, the country's highest peak. Davao City is the largest city outside of Manila and the fourth largest in the Philippines in terms of population, with over 1.4 million residents.

The airline will operate its Davao service once a week with a Boeing 787-8 aircraft, featuring 22 seats in Business Class and 232 seats in

Economy Class. Passengers will be able to enjoy the airline's superior entertainment system, Oryx One, offering a wide variety of entertainment options.

The Philippines is an important air freight market for QA, with the carrier's cargo arm offering a weekly capacity of 350 tonnes each way on the Doha-Manila-Doha route and 70 tonnes on the Doha-Clark-Doha route. With the introduction of flights from Doha to Davao on the Doha-Clark-Davao-Doha route effective June 18, exporters in Davao will be offered direct connection to destinations in Europe, the Middle East and the Americas via Doha.

DOHA - DAVAO: Friday (QR936), departs Doha 02:45hrs, arrives Davao 20:50hrs;
DAVAO - DOHA: Friday (QR936), departs Davao 22:20hrs, arrives Doha 03:15hrs.

Grammy winner VM Bhatt, flute protege Shashank to mesmerise Doha with 'jugalbandi'

SATYENDRA PATHAK
DOHA

GRAMMY award winner Pandit Vishwamohan Bhatt and flute protege Shashank Subramanyam are all set to enthral the audience with their jugalbandi in Doha on Friday. Entitled 'Unison of Strings and Wind', the jugalbandi is being organised as part of the ongoing Qatar-India 2019 Year of Culture.

The launch event of Doha-based Beats and Tunes Events, the jugalbandi will see Vishwamohan Bhatt playing 'Mohan Veena' and Shashank playing the flute.

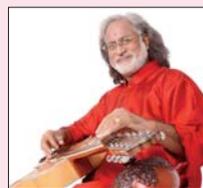
To be held at the Drama Theatre of Cultural Village Foundation (Katara), the show will also see Amita Dalal on sitar, Himanshu on tabla and Patri Satish Kumar on

mirdangam.

The foremost disciple of legendary Indian musician Pandit Ravi Shankar, Bhatt belongs to an elite body of musicians that traces its origin to the Mughal emperor Akbar's court musician Tansen and his guru the Hindu mystic Swami Haridas.

A Padma Bhushan and creator of the Mohan Veena, Bhatt will be performing after almost 18 years in Doha. With blending speed and faultless legato, Bhatt will present his pristine, pure, delicate yet fiery music in front of a select multicultural Doha audience.

While Bhatt will be performing for the second time in Doha, it will be the fourth performance for his jugalbandi partner Shashank in Qatar.



Pandit Vishwamohan Bhatt.



Shashank Subramanyam.

A Grammy award nominee, Shashank is arguably the best bamboo flutist in the world.

A first-of-its-kind jugalbandi in Doha, this Indian classical music show is conceptualised to justify Beats and Tunes Events' tag line of

"Since it's the launch event of Beats and Tunes Events, we wanted this to be considered as

part of India-Qatar Year of Culture 2019, and the Indian Ambassador to Qatar HE P Kumaran agreed to the idea and joined us for this," Beats and Tunes Events Director Varshini Gopal told Qatar Tribune.

Asked why a jugalbandi was preferred as a launch event for Beats and Tunes Events, Varshini said, "When we host events in Katara with a multicultural audience, it's better with instrumental music than vocal. When you bring in some musicians together to perform, then jugalbandi is the best."

"There cannot be a better timing for this bonding between a Qatari and an Indian national as 2019

is being celebrated by Qatar Government as the India-Qatar Year of Culture."

Formed with an objective to host Indian classical music (vocal and instrumental) events in Doha by bringing top-notch musicians from India to Qatar, Beats and Tunes Events will be hosting events on Friday evenings at reputed venues in Doha.

Apart from Indian expatriates, Varshini said, a cross section of mixed nationalities are also expected to attend these musical events.

Plans for our next two events for the year, Hindustani Music concert on September 27 by Sanjeev Abayankar and a Carnatic music concert on November 15 by Trichur Bros, are also finalised," Varshini said.