

Syrian crisis threatens region, says minister

Doha hosts Club de Monaco meet

DOHA: Qatar yesterday warned that the goings-on in Syria threatened the entire region and urged the international community to take immediate and effective steps to salvage the situation.

Qatar's Assistant Foreign Minister for International Cooperation said that in the 'light of the painful reality in Syria', Qatar believes that the Syrian regime should halt the killing machine and bloodshed of its own people complying with the Arab League initiative of January 22 that calls for a process to achieve peaceful solution to the Syrian crisis.

Addressing the meeting of Club de Monaco, H E Sheikh Ahmed bin Mohamed bin Jabor Al Thani, said that the Syrian regime should listen to the demands of its people and heed Arab and international calls and make serious endeavours of its own reforms aimed at achieving a peaceful transition of power and establishing a democratic system to ensure the participation of all the Syrian people, Qatar News Agency (QNA) reported yesterday.

Qatar is looking with a positive perspective at the radical transformations currently underway in the Arab world and reiterates its support for the changes in order to enhance the democratic process and support freedoms in the region.

Sheikh Ahmed is also the Chairman of the Standing Committee for Organising Conferences. The two-day Monaco Club meeting kicked off here yesterday and present were dignitaries and diplomats from a number of countries from across the world.

"Qatar cannot stand hand-folded while seeing peoples being brutally suppressed simply because they are demanding their legitimate rights. Therefore, it has begun to provide all forms of political and moral support," the minister said.

Qatar believes that the comprehensive political reform processes are a necessity for expediting the pace of participation of the popular majority in taking decisions concerning their lives.

These changes can only be achieved in the Arab region by starting the development of institutions guaranteeing such participation and the enhancement of areas of human development, especially young people.

The Assistant Foreign Minister described the younger people as "the new force on the Arab political landscape."

Qatar believes that atmospheres of genuine dialogue, based on the respect for peoples' freedoms and choices, must be available in the region and the whole world, Sheikh Ahmed said, according to QNA.

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The Assistant Foreign Minister for International Cooperation H E Sheikh Ahmed bin Mohamed bin Jabor Al Thani is flanked by Claude De Kemouria and Patrick Leclercq at the opening session of the Club de Monaco conference in Doha, yesterday.

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Europe, Arab states blamed for silence on Egypt

DOHA: A key speaker at the Monaco Club meeting here yesterday lambasted Europe and Arab countries and said they had failed to fulfil their promises of helping post-revolution Egypt.

No assistance has so far been forthcoming from any of these countries which had given big assurances of providing help to post-revolution Egypt, said Aly El Samman.

El Samman is president of the International Union for Inter-Cultural and Inter-Faith Dialogue and Peace Education and was addressing the Club de Monaco

convention, Qatar News Agency (QNA) reported.

He, however, lauded Qatar and said it had been helpful. El Samman said funds were, though, expected from the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank (WB).

The Egyptian economy was in a shambles, he said, adding that the reserves of the Egyptian central bank were fragile and the unemployment rate had soared to a high of 8.5 percent.

Talking of the pre-revolution Egypt, El Samman said that the constitution of the country was framed in such a way that all the

powers rested in the president and no one else could be nominated to the post except him (a reference to Hosni Mubarak).

He (Mubarak) had become a dictator and a tyrant. He had also not appointed any deputy to make sure that there would be no hindrance for his sons as his political heirs to grab the hot seat should the situation so demanded.

The people of Egypt eventually revolted and the army tried to suppress the rebellion but later refused to side with the regime and backed the people.

Addressing the meeting, Denis Bauchard, former president of

the Institute of Arab World Paris, said the pattern of revolutions taking place in the Arab states was not the same.

Participants of this convention must delve into the issue and find out the reasons why although the objective of the revolutions in some Arab states is the same—that of achieving freedom and democracy—their patterns are different.

The role of armies in these countries as also if they would hinder the democratic process, should also be discussed at length, said Bauchard.

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'Learn English' challenge from British Council

DOHA: The British Council recently held a LearnEnglish Challenge Competition in line with the launch of the Arabic version of the free access British Council LearnEnglish website <http://learnenglish.britishcouncil.org/ar/>.

This new aspect lets all Arabic-speaking learners of English, even beginners, access the wealth of materials and ideas available on LearnEnglish for no cost.

Over 11,500 people participated in the competition across the MENA region. Three winners were selected every month from Qatar.

Winners from Qatar included First place: Hagar Ali Mohammad Ali, Mohammad Ali Hosh, and Lobna Salah Moustafa who all received iPad2; Second place: Shadi Majid Barghouti, Salem Mahmoud Shibib and Alhassan Ali Mohamed Ali who received DELL Inspiron Laptop and Third place: Naglaa Mahmoud Mazed, Reem Hassan Al Shoora,

and Line Bahar who received NOKIA C7 phone.

"Around 1500 students of all levels study English with the British Council in our teaching centre and we reach hundreds more through special courses offered to different organisations on their premises, but there are thousands more in Qatar who can't find the time or the money to attend face to face classes at a set time every week," said Simon Winetroube, Director British Council Qatar.

For some years now the British Council Learn English website has offered free high-quality English language learning materials, giving all learners opportunities to access English language learning materials where they want, when they want.

"The British Council Learn English website encourages independent learning and shows that learning alone can be both fun and productive," Winetroube said.

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Thousands visit Spring Festival

BY RAYNALD C RIVERA

DOHA: The ongoing Spring Festival at Souq Waqif continues to attract thousands of visitors to one of Doha's leading tourist hubs with amazing performances from world-class entertainers nightly.

Since it opened in the middle of the month, the festival has proved a major attraction for people visiting the souq at night with simultaneous events held from 5pm till 10pm in four spots inside the souq.

In addition, there are also bouncy castles and a number of exciting rides for children and the entire family.

Last night the fun-filled programme included fire shows, death-defying flying acrobats act and water show.

The robot man's unique dance moves and magician Jay Mattioli's magic combined with humour also entertained visitors whose eyes were all glued to the performances held on three stages and one tent in Souq Waqif.

The acrobats show continues till the end of the festival from 6pm to 7pm and 8pm to 9pm. Also featured tonight are the water show, the robot man who will also perform tomorrow and comedian-magician Jay Mattioli who will keep bringing smiles on everyone's face until the end of the festival.

New shows that audiences can



A scene from the fire show of the Spring Festival at Souq Waqif.

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look forward to are the Russian Wheel by award-winning acrobats tonight and tomorrow, an exciting BMX show for lovers of bicycle stunts tomorrow until Tuesday and comedy shows by comic duo Alexei and Victoria Lunevogy from tomorrow till Wednesday.

Running in parallel with the stage shows are colourful and vivacious parades and live statues with which visitors excitedly have their photos taken.

Other performances that have entertained visitors at the festival were Arc Attack where music meets thunder;

Kai, a funny upside down show, Flash Show; Frog Man; Russian bar balancing act; martial arts combined with music; drummers parade onstage and 4D magic. One of the more fascinating and mind-boggling acts was by Stevie Starr of Britain's Got Talent fame who could swallow and regurgitate items from live fishes and billiard balls to mobile phones and Rubik's cube to everyone's amazement.

The packed shows nightly prove the success of the festival despite the cancellation of the song festival featuring Gulf artists in solidarity with the

Syrian people given the escalating events in Syria.

After it was renovated years ago, Souq Waqif has stood prominently as a major tourist hub in Doha with visitors increasing in number every year. Its unique architecture, art galleries, items sold and the line-up of restaurants and cafes have attracted thousands of visitors every day and adding to these attractions are events organised annually such as the Circus Festival, Eid Al Adha and Eid Al Fitr festivals and musical events.

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RasGas Company Limited
Business Support Department (SSG)
INVITATION TO TENDER

RasGas invites experienced Operations Support Services Contractors who can also meet the Mandatory Requirements listed below to collect the following Tender document:

TENDER NO.	DESCRIPTION
RLWM-50	Provision of Operations Support Services

Scope of work:

Provision of Personnel, Equipment/Vehicles and other services to support RasGas WMD, Offshore Asset and Supply department 24-hour x 7 day basic logistics operations at Shorebase and other locations.

The committed Initial Term is 3 years. An additional 1-year RasGas exercisable Optional Term will be included in the scope for extending the Agreement beyond the Initial Term.

Mandatory Requirements:

- Minimum 5 years of experience in providing logistics support services, including warehouse operations, in an oil and gas environment.
- Ability to provide experienced and qualified personnel.
- Ability to provide acceptable equipment/vehicles with in-country maintenance and service support.
- Ability to meet the required commencement date.
- Established Safety and Quality programs meeting high world-class standards (e.g. ISO 9001).
- Regional Organisation (plus in-country support prior to commencement).
- Provision, with Unpriced Tender, of a Bid Bond for the value of US\$ 100,000.
- Provision with Unpriced Tender a Bank Certificate, confirming agreement to furnish a Performance Bond amounting to 10% of the estimated contract value, if awarded the contract.

PROPOSED TENDER DOCUMENT COLLECTION TIME
9:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m., 26th February through 01st March 2012

Prospective CONTRACTORS may collect tender documents on successful completion of the following steps:

1. PLEASE VISIT RASGAS WEBSITE: <http://www.RasGas.com> TO REGISTER FOR THIS TENDER.
2. Return by fax a duly completed Confidentiality Agreement and a Mandatory Requirements Check List that are available ONLINE to the address below from the date of this advertisement.
3. Presentation of copy of Certificate of Incorporation/Commercial Registration (CR) of the CONTRACTORS (and agent if represented in Qatar) and ID of the person who will collect the tender document to the address below.

RasGas Company Limited, Business Support Department,
RasGas Headquarters, 14th Floor, West Bay, Doha Qatar.
Attn: Business Support Manager - Fax: (+974) 4485-7439

CURRENT CLOSING DATES FOR COMPLETED TENDER DOCUMENT SUBMISSION:
* UNPRICED TENDER (UPT): 11:00am, 25th MARCH 2012
* UPDATED UNPRICED TENDER PLUS PRICED TENDER: 11:00 a.m., 29th April 2012

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

Top thinkers gather at VCU-Q 'Road Design' meet

BY FAZEENA SALEEM

DOHA: 'Road Design' an event bringing together creative thinkers began at the Virginia Commonwealth University, Qatar (VCU-Q) on Thursday.

DarOtakwin Qatar a regional innovation agency recently started in Qatar, in association with the Creative Dialogue Association launched the first Design Road event in Qatar through a unique Prelude. The informal creative gathering was conducted in the Atrium of the University.

The Prelude featured keynote speeches by FaeqAlolaiwat on 'The Question of Identity,' and by Samer Yamani on

'Creative Dialogue.' Allyson Vanstone, Dean of Virginia Commonwealth University welcomed the international designers, guests and participants.

The three day event includes series of workshops seminars and exhibition designed to start a cultural dialogue between creative students, innovators and professionally placed practitioners in Doha and their European counterparts.

'Promote your City' is the proposed theme of the year and the event aims to support local designers and artists enabling them to develop their projects and to launch new initiatives for local cultural and creative life.

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Allyson Vanstone (right), Dean of Virginia Commonwealth University in Qatar, welcoming designers and guests.

SALIM MATRAMKOT