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53 dead as car bombs target Iraqi police

EAST ASIA | Page 24



Carter in North Korea on rescue mission



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GULF TIMES



THURSDAY Vol. XXXI No. 7998

August 26, 2010
Ramadan 16, 1431 AH

www.gulf-times.com 2 Riyals

Published in QATAR since 1978

In brief

BUSINESS | Initiative
Dubai World selling assets to cut debt
Dubai World is prepared to sell prized assets including previously ringfenced ports firm DP World in a bid to raise as much as \$19.4bn to repay creditors, a document obtained by Reuters showed. The document, presented on July 22 to creditors at Dubai's lavish Atlantis Hotel, also revealed that the state-owned conglomerate's debt stood at \$39.9bn, higher than the widely expected mid-\$20bn range. **Page 33**

REGION | Telecom
Qtel subsidiary eyes \$1bn from its IPO
Oman's Nawras, a subsidiary of Qtel, is looking to raise up to 400mn Omani rials (\$1.04bn) from its initial public offering (IPO), a source said yesterday. The source, familiar with the IPO planned to be launched on September 20, also said Nawras had made a net income of 42mn Omani rials in 2009 and expected to earn a net income of 53mn Omani rials this year.

ARAB WORLD | Energy
Egypt decides on nuclear plant site
Egypt yesterday announced it would build its planned nuclear power plant on the Mediterranean coast of el-Dabaa which it hopes will start production in 2019, the state news agency Mena reported. **Page 15**

PHILIPPINES | Probe
Suspensions over bus hostage crisis
The Philippines yesterday suspended four police officers over a hostage crisis that left eight Hong Kong tourists dead, amid outrage over a myriad of mistakes in the chaotic end to the stand-off. **Page 23**

Supplement
Today's issue of Gulf Times includes an eight-page broadsheet Eid supplement.

Ramadan thought					
Verily, when He intends a thing, His Command is 'Be' and it is!					
Ya-Sin, 36:82					
Fasting timings					
Iftar today ----- 6:01					
Suhoor tomorrow ----- 3:53					
Prayer timings					
Fajr	Zuhr	Asr	Maghrib	Isha	
3:52	11:36	3:05	6:01	7:31	



Iftar banquet



HH the Heir Apparent Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani hosted yesterday evening an Iftar banquet in honour of scholars, judges and sheikhs. **Page 8**



Kenya to open Doha embassy

Kenya is set to open an embassy in Doha by September middle, Kenya Broadcasting Corp reported yesterday. A team of senior officials from the ministry of foreign affairs is already in Doha to finalise technical and logistical arrangements. Kenya and Qatar established diplomatic relations on December 28, 2003 but the two countries have not established diplomatic missions. The opening of a Kenyan embassy in Doha is seen as the first step in enhancing diplomatic engagements between the two countries. Once operational, the new embassy in Doha is expected to facilitate trade and investment between the two countries and market Kenyan

tea, coffee, horticultural, beef and dairy products in Qatar and the Gulf region. It will also bring consular services closer to the over 2,500 Kenyans living in Qatar who have in the past faced various challenges. Once the embassy opens, Qatari nationals wishing to visit Kenya will get visas faster as well as first-hand information on business and investment opportunities in Kenya. The Kenyans in Qatar, mainly employed in the hotel and aviation industries, remit a substantial amount of money to their country. Kenyan President Mwai Kibaki recently appointed Galma Mukhe Boru, a career diplomat as the ambassador of Kenya to Qatar.

Millennium goals success for Qatar

The millennium development goals, which were set by the UN member states in 2000, include combating poverty, hunger, illiteracy and under-five mortality rates

By Anwar Elshamy
Staff Reporter

Qatar has achieved most of the Millennium Development Goals (MDG) targets ahead of the 2015 deadline, a report prepared by the Qatar Statistics Authority showed. Qatar Statistics Authority (QSA) chief Sheikh Hamad bin Jabor al-Thani, who released the report yesterday, said that all the development goals that required particular steps by the government had been met five years before time. However, the QSA chief said the challenges facing Qatar in achieving all the MDGs were mainly in women empowerment and gender equality. "Qatar has met most of the development goals set in 2000 thanks to the full support of the state leadership. But, it was the goals that needed a significant change in the social traditions and customs like women empowerment and gender equality which still need more time," Sheikh Hamad bin Jabor told reporters at a press conference held at the QSA office. The millennium development goals, which were set by the UN member states in 2000, include combating

poverty, hunger, illiteracy and under-five mortality rates. The report, which was prepared by the QSA in association with the Population Permanent Committee and the regional office of the UNDP, indicated that Qatar has been a key player in promoting development around the world through its assistance to the poor countries as well as its contribution to development-related initiatives. Giving figures of the development assistance given by Qatar from 2005 to 2009, the report pointed out that the assistance totalled more than \$2bn. "Qatar has met most of the development goals set in 2000 thanks to the full support of the state leadership" About poverty and hunger eradication targets, the report said the high living standards in the country dismissed the possibility of finding persons with "one-dollar income or suffering from hunger". About efforts to combat illiteracy, it said Qatar's literacy rates touched 99% among males and females in 2009. It showed that the gender gap in education has been bridged as the male to female ratio in pre-university education was found to be equal, while the gap was found to be in favour of females in university education. About women empowerment, it said women contribution to the economic activities was on rise as their

participation in workforce rose from 30% in 2004 to 36% in 2009. For women's political participation, the report cited the high turnout of women during the third elections to the Central Municipal Council, pointing out that a woman candidate also won a seat in the election. "The Qatari society is heading towards more awareness on the importance of women's political participation: the Constitution gives women equal rights," the report added. About "under-five mortality", it said death rates among children below five decreased from 16% in 1990 to less than 9% in 2009, while newborn babies deaths declined from 8.5 for each 10,000 to 4.8 during the same period. The number of children receiving the measles vaccination totalled 100% in 2009. The report concluded that Qatar's achievements were very close to the economically advanced states. About environment sustainability, the report said the natural reserves area increased from 11% of the country's total area to touch 29%, which the report said, was higher than the world standard of 10% of the state's total area. It also added that the number of Internet users increased from 24.7% for each 100 in 2005 to 43% in 2009. The press conference was attended by Dr Hassan al-Mohannadi who is the deputy chairman of the Population Permanent Committee (PPC), among others.



Qatar Statistics Authority (QSA) chief Sheikh Hamad bin Jabor al-Thani and the Population Permanent Committee deputy chairman Dr Hassan al-Mohannadi at the press conference.

Saudi store breaks new ground with women cashiers

AFP
Riyadh
Saudi Arabia's leading supermarket chain has broken the country's strict taboo on women working in public with a pilot programme of women cashiers, a company official said. Panda hypermarkets has put 16 Saudi women to work at one store in the Red Sea city of Jeddah to test the concept in a country where conservatives

have prevented women from working in gender-mixed environments. "The women, compared to men, are really hard workers," Panda spokesman Tarik Ismail said. "If everything goes okay, then we will expand the programme (in) the kingdom," he said. Ismail said the company had been quiet about the move due to the sensitivity of the issue. Operating more than 100 retail stores across the country, the United Azizia

Panda Company, owned by publicly-listed foods giant Savola, already employs women sales clerks in its hypermarket in Dubai in the United Arab Emirates. "If everything goes okay, then we will expand the programme (in) the kingdom" But inside Saudi Arabia, conservatives have for decades enforced a prohibition against unrelated men and women mixing in the workplace. The

result is that nearly all retail sales are conducted by men. A Jeddah University business professor, Reem Asaad, has been campaigning since 2008 to force the labour ministry to allow women sales clerks in lingerie shops, but with little success. The pilot programme by Panda hypermarkets was permitted by the local labour office in Jeddah. Inside the HyperPanda market in the Roshan mall in a wealthy area of Jeddah, the female cashiers are sectioned

off in check-out lanes "reserved for women and families". That models Saudi restaurants, which have separate sections for men and for women and families. Unlike their male counterparts, the new cashiers are not in Panda uniforms, instead wearing abayas and veils. Ismail stresses that the company has mainly hired "needy" women, those who lack other sources of income. "We want to help them," he said. Still, Ismail said the company

planned to expand the programme nationwide, if the labour ministry gives the go-ahead. "We are waiting for permission." But opposition to Panda's move has already materialised. Last week, Sheikh Yussef al-Ahmad, a professor at Riyadh's Imam University, called on a television programme to boycott Panda. Ahmad said mixing was against Islamic tenets and an aspect of the Westernisation of Islamic culture.