



HE Sheikh Hamad bin Jassim bin Jabor al-Thani speaking at the Qatar Law Forum 2012 yesterday.



Panels discussing law-related issues at the forum.

PM calls for focusing on the plight of Palestinians

HE the Prime Minister and Foreign Minister, Sheikh Hamad bin Jassim bin Jabor al-Thani, yesterday called upon delegates to the Qatar Law Forum 2012, "not to lose sight of the tragic reality of the situation faced by the Palestinian people, who are subjected to flagrant violations of their international legitimacy and human rights."

In his keynote speech on the final day of the forum, the Prime Minister said that there was no need to formulate "new provisions of international legality, but rather to develop mechanisms

to activate charters, treaties and institutions" that already exist in order to "stop the crimes that violate the rights of the Palestinian people."

He also reaffirmed the importance of "legal know-how" in furthering "consultations, dialogue and formulation of viable solutions" for the political upheaval across the Middle East as well as the global economic crisis, which looks set to drag into 2013.

The Prime Minister affirmed that Qatar strongly believes that the rule of law and an effective legal setting are essential to up-

grade the position of "economic institutions, international financial markets, and international organisational bodies of these markets. It also thinks alternative approaches are necessary for settling conflicts, especially within the framework for international arbitration and mediation. We are confident that holding such a forum in the State of Qatar will contribute effectively in reaching the legal setting, as law has become an indispensable tool for progress and development, as well as communication with the nations of the world."

The Prime Minister stressed that the topics being discussed at the forum were of the utmost importance, including the rule of law, economic, political and social development, as well as the role of international tribunals, arbitration mechanisms and freedom of communication in times of change.

"The State of Qatar confirms through this platform the need to support the development witnessed by the countries in the region, in order to respect the will of the people and achieve empowerment of democracy, up-

holding sovereignty of law," said HE Sheikh Hamad bin Jassim bin Jabor al-Thani.

"That requires the international community to combine efforts to provide political, economic and legal support, in addition to the provision of information and media support, to achieve the aspirations of the people and to help realise stability, security, international peace and end regional conflicts through free political will."

Masoud bin Mohamed al-Amri, Chief Justice of Qatar, highlighted Qatar's commitment

to a constitutionally-mandated independent judiciary, as well as adherence to the highest international standards of human rights protection.

"The judicial authority in Qatar is totally independent, and the Supreme Judicial Council is represented by its judges," said Justice al-Amri.

"It is in charge of overseeing the courts and the work of the courts, and works for the independence of the judicial system, and to develop, practice and implement legislative instruments. The Constitution of the State of

Qatar stipulates that adjudication is a right for all citizens and residents," said the Chief Justice.

"The state provides for each citizen and resident easy access to the courts so as to get protection of rights, and also to observe the guarantees to justice according to international standards in this regard."

He emphasised that non-citizens are protected through the observance UN declarations, guaranteeing their right to live in freedom, safeguarding their dignity and honour, freedom of belief and personal liberty.



An interior view of the new parking building.

A new parking building with spaces for 1,001 cars

Public Works Authority (Ashghal) has completed a multi-level parking building with a capacity of 1,001 cars at Dafna Towers Area, behind the Urban Planning & Development Authority building.

The area in question, which has a number of major offices,

is facing an acute shortage of parking spaces and the new facility is expected to bring some relief.

The parking building has seven floors. The ground floor can accommodate 124 vehicles and the remaining six floors have a capacity of 137 parking slots each.

There are parking bays adjacent to the elevators and stairs for vehicles driven by people with special needs.

An important feature of the parking facility is a business centre on the top floor, which includes a multi-purpose conference hall that can accommodate 250 people and another

meeting hall for workshops and small level meetings.

The two halls together can be combined to a big conference hall. In addition, there is a reception area with cafeteria and latest technical services such as Internet. More than 60 parking slots are provided at the reception area.

Barwa Bank hails its marathon man

Barwa Bank has welcomed back its head of market risk, Ziyad Rahim, who returned from the Sahara Desert in Morocco after participating in the 250km Marathon Des Sables (Mds).

Ziyad was the only representative from Qatar to take part in the seven-day event.

In March, Ziyad also completed the Antarctica Marathon and became the first person to run these two extreme marathons in one month.

MdS is a gruelling ultra-marathon and is considered to be the toughest footrace on Earth. Participants cover 250km of the Moroccan Sahara desert over six stages, in temperatures averaging 50C throughout the day. To compound the physical challenge, the wilderness venue means that competitors have to carry everything they need to survive the event, including all personal belongings and food.

Commenting on the challenge, Ziyad said: "This was by far the most intricate race I have ever participated in. We had to run over varied terrain; consisting mainly of rocky mountains, vast sand dunes and salt flats. Over the seven days, we survived sandstorms, over 50C heat, bone-chilling nights and saw fellow competitors drop out



Ziyad Rahim, Barwa Bank's head of market risk, on a marathon run in the Sahara Desert.

through injury, exhaustion and one from cardiac arrest. The race tested me to the limit, both physically and mentally.

"Sandstorms posed the biggest challenge for the runners. There were days when the visibility was less than 2ft which not only hindered the course tracking but also affected our breathing. At times, the winds were so strong that it was impossible to light a fire for meal preparation. Moreover, blisters and sleep deprivation further compounded the challenges.

"Completing the MdS is extremely satisfying personally, and doing it in the name of such a worthwhile cause is all the more rewarding. Victims of Noma are

mainly children under the age of six, caught in a vicious circle of extreme poverty and chronic malnutrition."

Finally, Ziyad thanked his employer for sponsoring and supporting him in this challenge and also expressed his desire to work with the Qatari youth by engaging them into sports and a healthier lifestyle.

Steve Troop, CEO of Barwa Bank Group, said: "On behalf of everyone at Barwa Bank I want to wholeheartedly congratulate Ziyad for his outstanding achievements. Barwa Bank will continue to do all that we can to facilitate those who want to make a difference and play an active role in supporting humanitarian causes."

Qatar Olympic Committee promises to support rugby

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He explained that the sport would also be introduced into local schools, saying that he hoped to see rugby developed among Qatari as well as international students, as they would form the foundations of the sport's growth in the future. Rugby could be introduced as part of the school's

Olympic programme, he suggested.

Qatar Rugby Federation president Sheikh Mohamed bin Faisal al-Thani also pledged his commitment to the development of rugby in Qatar, saying that he had been pleased with the sport's growth in recent years. He noted that the federation had major goals

and ambitions that they hoped to achieve in the near future.

He confirmed that a piece of land close to Al Rayyan sports club had been identified as a potential location for a facility to be built, with space for a number of pitches to be built, as well as a clubhouse and other facilities. He was unable to provide details

about a possible opening date, but said that building a home for the QRF was a major priority for the organisation and one which was at the top of their agenda.

"The future of rugby here is bright - I promise it will continue to get better," he stated.

With the launch of the inaugural Qatar rugby league last year, a

large number of new players took up the sport in Doha, and this season more teams are expected to join, and discussions with military officials about entering a team are also underway.

Speaking more broadly, Sheikh Saoud said he was excited about the nation's bid to host the Olympic Games in 2020, not-

ing that everyone at QOC and throughout the city had "fulfilled their duties" related to the bid and promoting Qatar as a potential host.

The 7's format of rugby has recently been incorporated into the Olympics and will be involved in 2020, leading to the possibility of a Qatari team competing in the

sport at an Olympics on home soil.

However, Sheikh Saoud is hopeful for development even sooner than this, expressing his hope that a Qatari team could compete in Rio de Janeiro in 2016.

"I think we could have a Qatari rugby team in Brazil - why not?" he said.