

Lekhwiya drill



The Internal Security Forces (ISF) Lekhwiya conducted the final rehearsal on Wednesday of their joint training with American forces. As part of the exercise that concluded yesterday, the joint forces "protected a foreign embassy in Doha from potential rioters and attackers" as part of the drill.



Studies focus on children's safety

By Noimot Olayiwola
Staff Reporter

Two of the studies presented during the recent Hamad Medical Corporation's third annual Child Health Research day have suggested making road safety part of school curricular requirements and making homes safer for children in Qatar.

The overall aim of the research day was to continue to build child health research capacity in Qatar and the region aside hoping for new collaborative relationships from the event.

The day featured high quality scientific presentations from HMC and The Hospital for Sick Children, Toronto (SickKids) as well as local and international poster presentations.

The event also highlighted research issues relevant to child health and gave researchers an opportunity to share their work and to communicate with one another.

The two studies titled 'Childhood Injuries in Qatar: Evidence for Focused Prevention' and 'Making Homes in Qatar Safer for Children: Specific Hazards to Address', were conducted by Hamad General Hospital's Surgery Department Trauma section staff comprising Rafael Consunji, Peralta R al-Thani, Hepp H, Mollazehi M and Latifi R.

Data for the studies done among children aged 0-18 years, were obtained from the HGH



Trauma Registry (2009/2010) and analysed.

It is estimated that a total of 40,000 emergency room consults for child home injuries occur annually in Qatar.

The objective of the first paper was to describe the epidemiology of injured paediatric trauma patients in Qatar and to make recommendations for focused injury prevention programmes.

Out of a total of 985 paediatric patients admitted during the period, mortality was 2.2% with some 86% of the deaths occurring due to road traffic injuries (RTIs).

Falls were the predominant etiology (causes) among those aged 0-9 years while RTIs were the leading cause of injury in those aged 10-18.

According to the study, most common victims were pedestrians, comprising children of age five-nine; bicyclists and all-terrain vehicle (ATV) driver victims were aged 10-14.

Majority of all injuries in children at home occurred among those aged 0-5 years while injuries on the street happen to children aged 10-18 years.

However, the study concludes that the epidemiology of severe paediatric trauma in Qatar differs significantly by age, mechanism and location while also advising that interventions to prevent paediatric trauma should be tailored to their highest risks and to reinforce the proper safety behaviours for the age of the victims.

"Families with infants and young children must focus on falls prevention in the home," the study suggests, adding that pedestrian's safety must be taught in schools to children aged five-nine.

"Older children, aged 10-14 must undergo safety training before driving bicycles and ATVs while for adolescents (15-18) seat belt use and proper driving practices must be emphasised," the study also advised.

The second study on making homes safer described home injuries in Qatar and also made recommendations for focused home safety programmes.

The study reveals that of the 176 child home injury admissions in 2009/2010, mortality was 2.3% with 75% of the deaths happening due to falls.

Most of the children were 0-4 years (66%) with falls the leading etiology at 68% and falling objects (FO) were the second leading cause of home injuries (11.4%).

Only 12% of victims were older children aged 10-18 years.

The study finds that for infants, falls and burns were the leading mechanism; for those aged one-four years, it was falls and FO; five-nine years - falls and bicycle; and 10-14 years - falls; intentional injuries were common among 10-18 years old (19%).

The study suggests that interventions to keep children safe at home must focus on the greatest risks and reinforce the proper safety equipment and practices for their age.

Families with young children must modify their homes to prevent injuries from falls, burns and falling objects while home safety awareness of caregivers and parents in Qatar must be surveyed in order to identify information gaps that must be addressed by future home safety education campaigns, the study concludes.

Law forum hosts top Rwanda judge

Rwanda's Chief Justice Prof Sam Rugege spoke on his country's legal transformation at a Qatar Law Forum (QLF) event held at the London Muslim Centre.

Less than two decades after around 800,000 people were killed in the Rwandan genocide in a single year (1994), Prof Rugege delivered a message on the steps the country has taken to promote and observe the rule of law.

The QLF event, which is held under the patronage of HH the Emir, Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa al-Thani, brings together legal luminaries from around the world to discuss the challenges of achieving a global commitment to the rule of law and related issues of international legal and economic significance.

In recognition of the need to move beyond dialogue and bring about change on the ground, the QLF co-ordinates a practical rule of law programme and Prof Rugege's lecture was one among a series of events being held outside Qatar.

Justice is thriving in the East African republic now, with a new constitution, supreme court and a high court. These institutions are underpinned by high levels of public support for the rule of law and confidence in the judiciary.

"Justice was not in a good place - there was no respect for human rights and the rule of law. We started afresh," said Prof Rugege.

The transformation started at the ground level,

with a network of village 'gacaca' courts bringing together old enemies and providing community justice for the accused as well as the relatives of victims.

The West was concerned, said the chief justice, over the absence of lawyers and "judges without wigs". These local courts processed 1.2m cases and promoted reconciliation in the process - a new philosophy for a post-genocide society.

Nineteen years later, Rwanda has a highly-developed court system and infrastructure, with sophisticated judicial training and complaint systems. The chief justice said this has been most marked in the level of public confidence in the judiciary - the second highest rating in Africa, eclipsing a number of developed countries.

The basis of such confidence must be in large part due to Rwanda's 'zero tolerance' of corruption. "Justice is not for sale," Prof Rugege said, citing a culture where judges report bribes and the public is encouraged to act as whistleblowers if judges seek bribes.

The system is firmly enforced - judges are disciplined or dismissed if proven to have offended. In the wider society, there have been prison sentences for public officials found guilty of corruption.

Closing the event, Robin Knowles of the Qatar Law Forum said: "I have taken away two simple messages from this inspiring speech by the chief justice: hope and hopes realised."

Karwa taxi driver is assaulted

A Karwa driver was attacked by two persons while he was buying a newspaper from a stand near the Central Bus Station on Tuesday afternoon. According to a witness, the assailants approached the Filipino driver from his behind and asked him about a certain route. "He told them to go to the information office. However, the men got angry and started to shout at him and hit him on his forehead causing him injury," said the witness.

The off-duty driver wanted to defend himself

but was overpowered by the two persons, who kept on punching him. Other passengers and drivers broke up the fight and eventually, the attackers and the victim were taken to the Smart Card office. The two attackers were arrested while the victim was transferred to Hamad Hospital for treatment.

Qatari eyewitness Nasser Mohamed al-Qahtani identified the attackers as two Arabic-speaking men, denouncing the incident as alien to Qatari culture and demanded more security presence at such crowded places to enforce public order.

Qatar-French ties praised



Qatar and France yesterday signed the minutes of the 15th meeting of the Qatari-French Joint Higher Military Committee. The minutes were signed for the Qatari side by HE Chief of Staff of the Qatari Armed Forces Major General Hamad bin Ali al-Attiyah, and for the French side by Admiral Edward Guo Chief of Staff of the French Army. HE Maj Gen al-Attiyah praised the relations between Qatar and France. He added that the two sides hold annual meetings to review the military co-operation, especially in areas of training.

Survey seeks to gauge 'mood' of top executives

By Salman Siddiqui
Staff Reporter

A survey to gauge the 'mood' of top executives at more than 280 companies in Qatar has been launched and the findings of the study will be sent to the World Economic Forum (WEF) by May 1, the organisers yesterday said.

The Qatari Businessmen Association (QBA) in collaboration with Qatar University's Social Economic Survey Research Institute (SESRI) announced the launch of the 'Executive Opinion Survey' at a press conference yesterday. The QBA and SESRI will send the results of the survey to Geneva by May 1, and the WEF would release the findings later in September.

Al Faisal Holding vice chairman Sheikh Mohamed bin Faisal bin Qassim al-Thani said that the QBA and SESRI are strategic partners of the WEF for the second time in a row.

He said the 'Competitiveness Report' studies the 12 competitive pillars for 144 countries and provides a comprehensive picture of the competitiveness in countries around the world at all stages of its development. These pillars include institutions, infrastructure, macroeconomic environment, health and primary education, higher education and training, in addition to the goods market efficiency and the labour market efficiency and other pillars.

Currently, Qatar leads the Arab world and the Middle Eastern countries for the third



Sheikh Mohamed bin Faisal bin Qassim al-Thani and SESRI director Dr Darwish al-Emadi announcing details of the survey.

consecutive year to rank 11th on the Global Competitiveness Index that is declared in the World Economic Forum's annual report for this year.

According to the report, the competitive advantage of Qatar depends on the strong foundations of institutional frameworks, stable economic environment and an effective goods market, in addition to the absence of corruption, presence of security and financial stability.

SESRI director Dr Darwish al-Emadi said that about 280 companies will be approached, out of which 100 companies are expected to respond to the survey. An effort to include executives of big and small, old and new companies is being made.

When asked whether this would again paint a rosy picture of the business environment without taking into account the facts and ground realities, the director said the survey was about gauging the 'mood' of the executives.

"(In business,) perception is reality, it defines the business climate and is very important information (for stakeholders)," he said.

Questions in the survey will include whether the infrastructure built by the state is helping the businessmen; whether the rules and regulations of business help or hinder the executives, etc.

QBA deputy general manager Sarah Abdullah said the survey is not an attempt at making a detailed analysis, but only an effort at data collection which will be sent to the WEF. "This is not a fact collection exercise. It's an assessment of the opinions of executives, which we don't alter in any way and forward it to the WEF," she said.

When asked why the ministry of trade or finance is not carrying out the survey, Abdullah said it was one of the requirements of WEF that the survey be carried out by a non-governmental body such as the QBA in order to avoid conflict of interests.