

## **UAE, Qatar to restore diplomatic ties**

DUBAI: Qatar and the UAE agreed on Monday to restore diplomatic ties, Qatar's ministry of foreign affairs said in a tweet.

Embassies and consulates were due to resume work as of June 19.

The two countries issued statements saying Qatari Embassy in Abu Dhabi and a Qatari Consulate in Dubai, as well as a UAE Embassy in Qatar's capital, Doha, had resumed operations.

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## **Macron envoy heads to Lebanon in bid to end crisis**

Paris: President Emmanuel Macron's new special envoy for Lebanon heads to Beirut in the coming week as France seeks a new push to end a political crisis that has left the country without a president for over half a year, a diplomatic source said Sunday.

Former foreign minister Jean-Yves Le Drian, appointed by Macron to the role earlier this month, is to fly to Beirut on Wednesday, the source told AFP, asking not to be named.

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## **KSrelief extends mine clearance project in Yemen**

RIYADH: The King Salman Humanitarian Aid and Relief Center has extended Masam, the Saudi Project for Landmine Clearance in Yemen, another year to allow for the removal of the explosive devices planted by the Houthi militia, the Saudi Press Agency reported.

The \$33.29 million contract will ensure that Saudi and international experts can continue their work in several regions, especially Marib, Aden, Jouf, Shabwa, Taiz, Hodeidah, Lahij, Sanaa, Al-Bayda, Al-Dhale and Saada.

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## [Palestinian anger as Israeli minister gets a free hand over West Bank settlement policy](#)

RAMALLAH: Israel's nationalist-religious government on Sunday tabled plans to approve thousands of building permits in the occupied West Bank, despite US pressure to halt settlement expansion that Washington sees as an obstacle to peace with Palestinians.

The plans for approval of 4,560 housing units in various areas of the West Bank were included on the agenda of Israel's Supreme Planning Council that meets next week, although only 1,332 are up for final approval, with the remainder still going through the preliminary clearance process.

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## [Iraq unveils ancient stone tablet returned by Italy](#)

Baghdad: Iraq unveiled on Sunday a 2,800-year-old stone tablet returned by Italy, as the war-ravaged country works to recover from abroad antiquities looted from its territory.

The tablet – whose text is written in cuneiform, the Babylonian alphabet – bears the insignia of Shalmaneser III, the Assyrian king who ruled the region of Nimrod, in present-day northern Iraq, from 858 to 823 BC.