

Ashghal closes two roads for new work

DOHA: The Public Works Authority — Ashghal — has announced temporary closure of one lane at Al Aqsa street in Al Qurtubi/AI Bidda (zone number 12) near the Ministry of Interior building from today for one month.

The road has been closed for construction and development of the existing Doha and Rayyan Treated Sewerage Effluent Plant, Ashghal said yesterday, adding that work will be completed by early next month.

Ashghal also announced temporary closure at Karwa

Roundabout in the direction towards Karwa City in the south. Motorists have been advised to follow traffic signs at the new traffic control at Industrial Road (AI Muntazah), and use Barwa ring roads.

The road will be closed from January 5 until December 31. Motorists from the Industrial Road and driving north will not be affected.

Those driving towards Karwa City need to follow the new traffic control, and use the road adjacent to the Industrial Road.

THE PENINSULA

Malayalam dailies popular despite online editions

Continued from page 1

"There is no dearth of political issues and controversies in Kerala and readers here are more interested in them. This is one factor behind the increasing popularity of Malayalam dailies in the Gulf," says Ashraf Tooneri, Resident Editor of Middle East Chandrika.

All these newspapers have their online editions, but the news-hungry Malayalee would like to read them in print, even if they have access to the Internet, he said.

"In some shared accommodations, you would see all Malayalam dailies published here. Each Keralaite would have his preferred newspaper but he would also like to read other newspapers to understand the different angles (or versions) of a news," Harris added. This is how these newspapers have found a thriving market in the Gulf, despite the proliferation of Malayalam TV channels and the online media.

Ahmed Fathiripatta, a veteran expatriate and correspondent of *Mathrubhoomi*, another leading Malayalam daily, believes TV

channels and online media have a major negative impact on the readership of Malayalam newspapers here.

"The circulation of Malayalam dailies in Qatar has come down despite an increase in their number, after the arrival of Malayalam TV channels. There is a small market in Qatar which is getting shared by many," he said.

He felt that the prospects of getting more advertisement revenue from the booming Qatari market is the main factor prompting more dailies to launch their Doha editions.

"We have found that people from Kerala living abroad like to read Malayalam papers to know about their native place and what is happening there. Our Doha edition will meet their expectations," Anand Mathew, Senior General Manager for sales at *Malayala Manorama* had told this daily on Tuesday.

The Doha edition of *Manorama* is distinct with four editions representing the different regions of Kerala.

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New system to monitor trucks, protect bridges and tunnels

First Over-Height Vehicle Detection System set up at Duhail intersection



The OVDS is an integral part of the Intelligent Transportation Systems being introduced at several intersections in Qatar.

DOHA: The first Over-Height Vehicle Detection System (OVDS) in Qatar was launched at the Duhail intersection on Tuesday.

The new system will help impose greater control over trucks and protect bridges and tunnels, the Public Works Authority (Ashghal) said yesterday.

The OVDS detects vehicles that violate the maximum permitted height of 5.5m before entering tunnels, or passing under bridges.

Any violation turns on the warning sirens to avoid the risk of trucks damaging tunnels' roofs,

putting the security and safety of road users at risk and damaging the bridges.

The Road Operation and Maintenance Department at Ashghal is studying the possibility of introducing the OVDS at more intersections across Doha.

The launch ceremony was attended by senior officials of Ashghal and the Ministry of Interior. The system is operated and controlled by the Traffic Signal Control Room (TSCR) at Ashghal. It comprises a sensor or height detector, electronic board, and CCTV.

All components of the system work together to detect trucks that violate the legal height.

The system operates in such a way that in the event of any over-height vehicle trying to enter the interchange, the system will alert the vehicle through a siren audible at the site, followed by a multilingual text message that appear on the electronic board at the site.

At the same time, the traffic signal at the approach will turn red through the control room to prevent the vehicle from entering the interchange. If the vehicle is not following the warning orders,

the control room will immediately contact the Traffic Department to take steps to prevent the vehicle from entering the interchange.

The OVDS is implemented in cooperation with the concerned departments of the ministry. Ashghal is studying a number of interchanges to install the system.

The OVDS is an integral part of the Intelligent Transportation Systems being introduced at several intersections in Qatar. It has an added value because of its CCTV at the signalised intersections, which are controlled by the TSCR.

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