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A high-level panel at the ICAO Facilitation Conference in Doha discussed ways to facilitate the future of air transport amid rising global passenger and cargo traffic.

# Global air passenger numbers expected to hit 12.4bn by 2050: Qatar's permanent representative to ICAO

**By Pratap John**  
 Business Editor

**Q**atar's Permanent Representative to ICAO Essa Abdullah al-Maliki said the global air transport sector faces numerous challenges including anticipated huge growth in passengers, which is expected to reach 12.4bn by 2050.

Hence, the industry requires to adopt strategic and practical steps to keep pace with this rapid growth, al-Maliki said at a high-level panel discussion at the ICAO Facilitation Conference now underway in Doha.

The session discussed ways to facilitate the future of air transport amid rising global passenger and cargo traffic. He noted Qatar was among the first countries to adopt ICAO recommendations, which has positively impacted the needs of citizens and enhanced the travel experience.

Al-Maliki stressed the importance of relying on digital systems, enhancing cybersecurity, and adopting technology and artificial intelligence at airports.

He said there is a unique opportunity to shape the future of air navigation and collaborate with various stakeholders to ensure a more efficient and enjoyable aviation sector, adding that this week's Doha Declaration will reflect this shared commitment.

Speakers at the session, chaired by director of ICAO's Air Transport Bureau, Dr Mohamed Khalifa Rahma, emphasised that passenger traffic is expected to double at an unprecedented rate in the coming years, which necessitates significant investment in the facilitation sector and improvements in service quality to keep pace.

Participants stressed that the future of air travel will be primarily digital, with a focus on digital identity as a top priority. This requires effective partnerships between governments and airlines to create a paperless travel experience and ensure the seamless and secure exchange of information.

ICAO's role is to establish global standards for data exchange to enhance sector efficiency.

They also highlighted the need to maximise the use of airline resources, adopt the latest technol-

ogies, and streamline operations to reduce costs and improve operational efficiency.

They noted that the aviation sector is facing a critical phase, marked by the complexities of travel and sustainability challenges. Following over 10% growth in the air transport (sector) in 2024, there is a pressing need for enhanced cooperation between government agencies and supply chain partners, infrastructure development, and the adoption of advanced technologies such as electronic gates and biometric identification to improve passenger experience and cargo efficiency.

The importance of investing in human capital through training and incentive programs was also emphasised, along with simplifying aviation and supply chain operations to build a more sustainable aviation sector.

The ICAO Facilitation Conference (FALC 2025) is hosted by the State of Qatar and organised by the Qatar Civil Aviation Authority (QCAA) in collaboration with the International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO).

## Qatar Airways pioneers seamless passenger journey via innovation and collaboration

**By Peter Alagos**  
 Business Reporter

On the back of multiple awards, including 'Best Airline of the Year' in 2024, Qatar Airways is at the forefront of revolutionising passenger travel by seamlessly integrating innovative technologies and fostering collaborative partnerships.

Speaking at 'SKYTALKS' on the sidelines of the four-day ICAO Facilitation Conference 2025 (FALC 2025) now underway in Doha, Qatar Airways SVP Ground Services Abdulla Ali emphasised the airline's commitment to enhancing passengers' overall travel experience, ensuring that every step of the journey - from booking to arrival - is smooth and efficient.

In his presentation, Ali shed light on several transformative passenger experience initiatives of Qatar Airways, in partnership with Hamad International Airport (HIA), emphasising the airline's commitment to setting new aviation industry benchmarks.

According to Ali, passengers flying through HIA can now expect a streamlined journey from the curbside to the gate, taking just 20-25 minutes. "This has been made possible through extensive teamwork and significant investments by both the airline and the airport," he noted. Some of the key highlights shared by Ali include Qatar Airways' focus on cutting-edge technological solutions - from pre-flight digital notifications to biometric advancements and seamless baggage tracking.

He also announced detailed groundbreaking initiatives, such as the Stopover Paid by Carrier (STPC) programme, which offers transit passengers with layovers exceeding



Qatar Airways SVP Ground Services Abdulla Ali. **PICTURE:** Shaji Kayamkulam

eight hours the opportunity to explore Qatar on a visit visa.

Citing Qatar Airways' collaboration with the Saudi Ground Services (SGS), Ali shared the airline's successful introduction of off-airport check-in services in Makkah during Ramadan, which saw zero mishandled bags and zero passenger disruptions among Haj and Umrah passengers.

"The collaboration with the teams in Saudi and Jeddah enabled us to deliver a unique operation throughout the Ramadan period. When we look at the baggage journey, bags are as important as the passengers, of course," he emphasised.

Ali also reaffirmed Qatar Airways' dedication to redefining air travel through innovation and teamwork, saying: "Only by replicating these initiatives globally can we create a passenger journey that is seamless and joyful."

## Qatar's North Field largest project to reach FID in 2024, says GECF

**By Pratap John**  
 Business Editor

Qatar's North Field Production Sustainability Offshore Compression Programme (COMP 3) was the largest project to reach Final Investment Decision (FID) in 2024, with an allocated investment of \$4bn, according to the Gas Exporting Countries Forum (GECF).

The programme aims to sustain and gradually increase gas production at the natural gas reservoir located off Qatar's northeast coast. GECF said in its 'Annual Gas Market Report 2025'.

The report noted that a total of 172 upstream gas projects reached FID in 2024. While still recovering from the low levels of 2020, this figure remains below the levels observed between 2017 and 2019. These projects are expected to achieve a combined plateau production of 112 bcm per year in the medium term, with the Middle East contributing nearly half of this total.

A total of 130 newly commissioned gas projects began production in

2024, with an anticipated combined plateau production of 60 bcm per year, unlocking a total of 1.2 tcm of technically recoverable gas resources over their lifetimes.

Regionally, Asia Pacific contributed one-third of this plateau production, driven mainly by new gas project startups in China and Malaysia. In the Middle East, Iran's South Pars Phase 16 expansion project and Iraq's associated gas recovery projects are key contributors.

In Africa, notable projects include Algeria's initiatives, the Mauritania/Senegal GTA project, and Côte d'Ivoire's Baleine oil and gas field. Of the total anticipated plateau production, 15% will come from associated gas projects, while offshore gas production will account for 55%.

Offshore gas production, including continental shelf, deepwater, and ultra-deepwater, rose by 1% to reach 1,187 bcm in 2024. This accounted for around 29% of global gas output, a share that has remained stable over the past decade, with increased investments in offshore gas development offsetting declines from major

offshore producing regions, such as the North Sea.

Meanwhile, onshore gas production, the traditional backbone of the industry, continued to play a dominant role, contributing approximately 71% of global gas production.

Regionally, the Middle East accounted for the largest share of offshore gas production, at 39%, driven mainly by Iran and Qatar. This represents a significant increase from a decade ago, due to the ongoing phased development of the massive South Pars gas field in Iran.

Asia Pacific followed with a 26% share, fuelled by growing offshore production in Australia and China, along with contributions from historical producers like Malaysia and Indonesia.

In contrast, the European share of global offshore gas supply declined to 15% in 2024, down from 25% in 2014. This drop reflects a reduction in output from key producers such as the Netherlands and the UK in the North Sea, though the decline was partially offset by increased gas production in Norway.

## IATA survey finds majority of passengers don't want to spend time in airports: Walsh

**Director general takes part in a high-level panel session at ICAO Facilitation Conference in Doha**

**By Pratap John**  
 Business Editor

An IATA survey has revealed that a majority of passengers don't want to spend time in airports, according to its Director General Willie Walsh.

Speaking at a high-level panel session at the ICAO Facilitation Conference in Doha, Walsh said: "74% (of passengers surveyed) don't want to take more than 45 minutes to get from curb to plane - faster if they don't have checked luggage.

"85% will share immigration data in advance if it helps them get through facilitation processes faster. 75% prefer to use biometric identification over traditional paper checks - although concerns remain about data security and, about half have experienced e-gates, of which 84% were happy with the experience."

He said facilitation is complex and getting more complex with each new rule or requirement that is added. Com-

plexity has a price—consuming time, adding costs, and limiting capacity.

"Our aim should be simplicity. The tool that will get us there is technology. And the measure of success is how efficiently processes do their job while meeting customer expectations."

Walsh noted: "The future that our passengers want is digital. And that expectation will only increase as digitally native generations travel in ever greater numbers.

"It should come as no surprise then, that our top priority for facilitation is digital identity. It is the core of building a modern process flow from booking to baggage claim. And we believe it should eventually be paperless."

He said there is no one stakeholder who can achieve this. It involves airlines, airports, security, immigration, ground handlers, and many more.

The only way to achieve a paperless future is to share information in a standardised way that every stakeholder can work with. The global standards that have helped the aviation industry grow to serve over 5bn people this year will become even more critical when it needs to serve 10bn or 20bn at some point in the future.

"So, the role of ICAO in bringing states together to set global



IATA Director General Willie Walsh.

standards - with input from the industry's experience - will only become more critical as we move forward.

"But, of course, setting standards is not enough. They must be implemented. There is an important point to make here on how standards are implemented. Using standards drives efficiency. Adding special requirements to standards does not. Every additional piece of data that needs to be collected, every non-standard format that is

required, every unique practice, adds complexity and is a step in the wrong direction."

Walsh noted: "It is important that we challenge our processes for unnecessary complexity. Having run an airline, I cannot tell you how many times I have heard the excuse 'but we have always done it that way' or 'it just works that way' when asking about odd or seemingly unusual requirements or practices.

The progressive digitalisation of aviation has been a great catalyst to cleaning up many practices that have lost their meaning or importance over the decades. And that is a good thing. As travellers, all of you will have witnessed the transformation of airlines since the turn of the century.

"If, somehow, a person missed the last 25 years, she or he would hardly recognise travel processes. They would not know what a smart phone is let alone that it could be used to shop for travel, check-in, store your boarding pass, manage your loyalty, or trace your baggage.

"And while facilitation has changed, with e-gates in some locations for selected categories of travellers and electronic customs declarations in some locations, the basic process of showing a paper passport to an immigration officer has not been revolutionised in the same way. It is changing, but I would argue that the pace of change needs to accelerate."

# Qatar Chamber joins webinar to boost investment, trade ties with Bosnia and Herzegovina

Qatar Chamber participated yesterday in a virtual seminar titled 'Investment and Trade with Bosnia and Herzegovina' together with several institutions from Bosnia, including the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Foreign Trade and Economic Relations, the Foreign Investment Promotion Agency, and the Foreign Investors Council.

Noora al-Awlan, director, Research and Studies Department, represented the chamber at the webinar, which focused on enhancing economic and commercial relations between the two countries and explored the investment climate and available opportunities.

She lauded the relations between

Qatar and Bosnia and Herzegovina, saying, "The webinar provided a valuable platform to deepen our understanding of the potential for expanding trade relations and investment partnerships with Bosnia and Herzegovina."

Al-Awlan highlighted the strong and friendly relations between the two nations, particularly in the commercial and economic fields, noting that their bilateral trade reached QR72mm in the previous year.

"There is significant room for further growth in economic and investment co-operation. This can be achieved by enhancing collaboration between the private sectors of both countries – especially in key areas such as industry, agriculture, trans-

portation, logistics, and other promising sectors," she noted. Al-Awlan emphasised the chamber's commitment to fostering co-operation between companies from both friendly nations, highlighting its encouragement for Qatari investors to explore the investment climate and opportunities available in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

She said Bosnia and Herzegovina holds a strategic location and a wealth of untapped potential, making it an ideal partner for Qatar in terms of trade and investment co-operation.

Adviser to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Bosnia Dino Selimovic said the webinar is part of the ministry's interest to strengthen economic and commercial co-operation and pro-

mote investment climate and opportunities with friendly countries. He highlighted the strong relations with Qatar and the promising sectors for co-operation with Qatari investors such as agriculture, industry, food security, halal, infrastructure, and tourism.

Slavica Korica, executive director, Promotion and Analysis at the Investment Promotion Agency, provided an overview of the agency that aims to promote investment opportunities and boost co-operation with local and international bodies. She noted that Qatar is one of the most important investors in her country, indicating that there are many Qatari companies in Bosnia operating in a variety of sectors.

# GCC banks face 'limited direct impact' from US tariffs, says Fitch

By Santhosh V Perumal  
Business Reporter

The US tariffs are likely to only have "small" direct effects on the banks in the Gulf Co-operation Council (GCC), but indirect impact on lower oil prices and weaker global growth, which could lead to lower sovereign spending, according to Fitch, a global rating agency.

The GCC exports to the US are dominated by hydrocarbons, which are exempt from tariffs, the rating agency said in its latest research note. Non-hydrocarbon exports, which face a 10% tariff, or 25% for aluminium and steel, are relatively low, which limits the direct impact of the tariffs on the GCC economies and bank operating environments, Fitch said.

Highlighting that lower oil prices and weaker global demand are the main risks for the GCC bank operating environments; it said government spending strongly affects bank operating conditions in most GCC countries, and a further drop in oil prices could weaken Fitch's lending growth forecasts.

Fitch reduced its forecast for global GDP (gross domestic product) growth in March 2025 to 2.3% in 2025 and 2.2% in 2026, and risks are tilted towards a sharper slowdown.

This could put pressure on global commodity prices, particularly for hydrocarbons, which account for most government revenues in the GCC and traditionally underpin economic activity and the banking sectors, through government spending, according to Fitch.

"We believe market balance and oil prices will chiefly be determined by global economic performance and Opec+'s supply management," it said, adding Opec+ had large spare capacity of over 6mn barrels per day in January and indicated plans to start unwinding its production cuts from April.

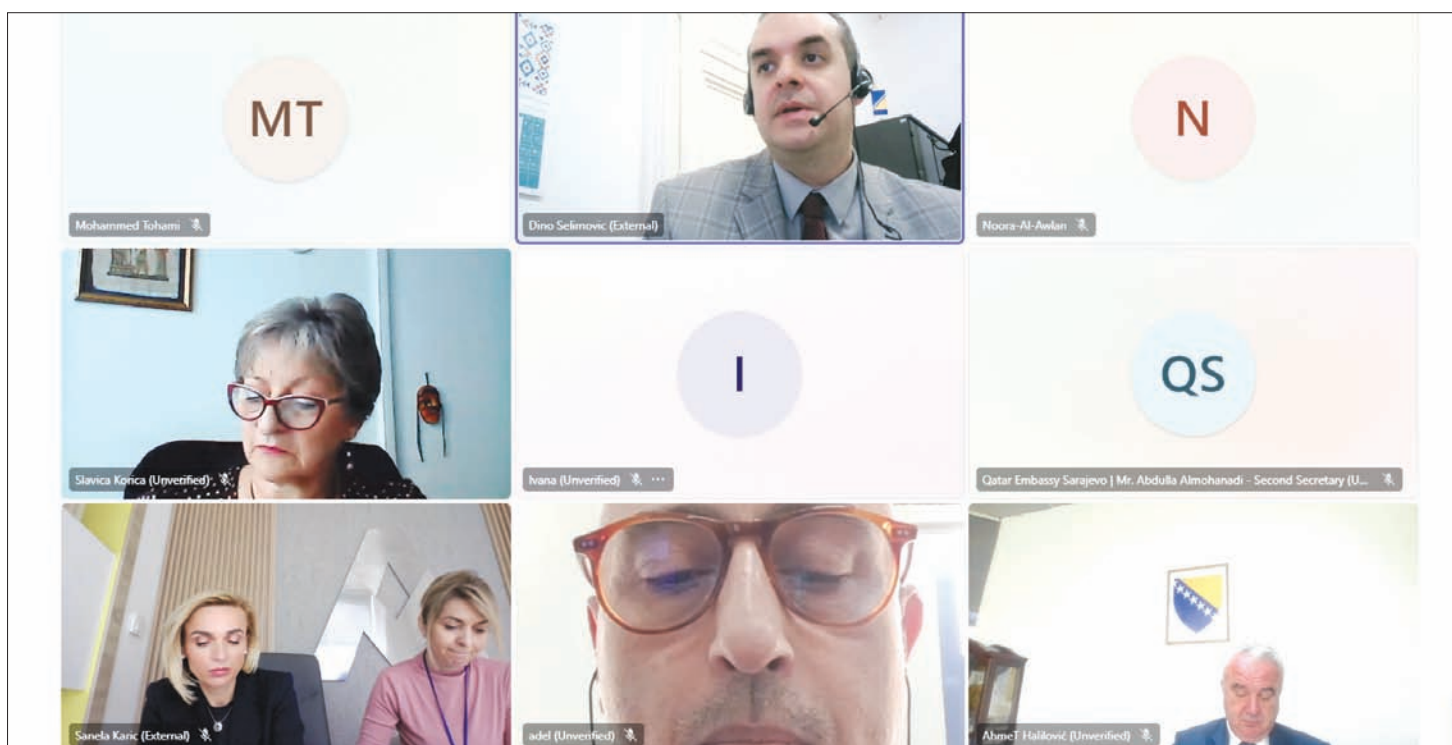
Fitch's pre-tariffs base case was that non-oil GDP for the GCC in aggregate would increase by over 3.5% in both 2025 and 2026.

However, lower oil prices and budget revenues could lead to a marked reduction in non-oil economic activity and government spending, which would weaken the GCC banks' lending growth prospects.

Credit conditions for the GCC banks could also deteriorate if corporates operating in affected sectors experience weaker profitability and cash flow due to higher operating costs and inflation resulting from the tariffs, it said.

Corporates could face higher debt costs due to uncertainty surrounding interest rates and potential delays in rate cuts, Fitch said. "Pressure on corporates could dampen overall credit demand and ultimately lead to higher credit risk for banks and an increase in problem loans," the note said.

However, the GCC banks are generally well placed to absorb deterioration in the operating environment. Many banks have strengthened their capital buffers in recent years, helped by solid earnings on higher oil prices and interest rates, good liquidity, strong economic activity and favourable credit conditions.



The webinar focused on enhancing economic and commercial relations between Qatar and Bosnia and Herzegovina.

# 'GCC has potential to become a trading hub for carbon'

By Santhosh V Perumal  
Business Reporter

The Gulf Co-operation Council (GCC) region, with its growing commitment to net zero, can become a carbon trading hub, even as it requires a common framework, pilot programmes, market readiness and public private partnership, according to experts. These views were aired at the EU (European Union)-GCC Co-operation on Green Transition Project, the first of a series of monthly webinars designed to deepen co-operation between Europe and the Gulf region on climate-related policy, innovation, and investment. This inaugural session focused on carbon markets – one of the most powerful mechanisms for reducing greenhouse gas emissions and accelerating green

economic development. Launched in August 2023, the EU-GCC co-operation on Green Transition project reflects the shared commitment to leveraging EU expertise to deepen co-operation and engagement, promote green policies and technologies, and create a conducive business environment for collaboration among energy-related and green tech companies in the Gulf. Experts from the European Commission, GCC Secretariat, ICE (Intercontinental Exchange), and ICAP (International Carbon Action Partnership) shared insights into the functioning of carbon markets, the role of emissions trading systems (ETS), and the challenges and opportunities facing the GCC region in establishing its own regional carbon pricing tools. Speakers also discussed the global policy landscape, EU carbon border mechanisms (CBAM), and the

potential for co-operation in Africa. "The GCC region, with its growing commitment to net zero, can become a carbon trading hub if it prioritises cross-border co-operation, market transparency and regulatory clarity and engagement with global financial players," said George von Waldburg, Director Environmental Markets, ICE. He encouraged regional policymakers to look at ICE's platforms and products as models for building market-based systems tailored to the GCC realities. At one of the panel discussions, Dr Mohammed al-Rashidi (via statement), Director of Energy, the GCC Secretariat, emphasised that successful carbon pricing in the GCC requires both policy innovation and cross-border collaboration. Suggesting shared regulatory principles, he said there was a need to develop a

common framework across the GCC that aligns national climate strategies with shared carbon market standards. He recommended pilot programmes with small – launch national or sector-specific pilots (as in power generation, cement or steel) to test systems before scaling regionally. Stressing on capacity building; al-Rashidi said there was a need to draw lessons from international best practices like the EU ETS and ICAP. Invest in training, MRV systems, and institutional readiness. He called for efforts to conduct structured reviews of legal, institutional, and technical capacities to set realistic and phased pathways as well as to strengthen public-private partnerships to engage with industry from the outset. "Their involvement is essential for building a market that is credible, efficient, and aligned with real economic

needs," he said, adding "at the (GCC) secretariat, we are actively working to foster dialogue and technical co-operation – including with the EU – to build momentum for regional carbon pricing initiatives." Stefano de Clara, Head of Secretariat, ICAP, suggested that a regional GCC ETS could be more effective than isolated national systems. Gilles Dufrasne, Policy Officer – Task Force for International Carbon Pricing and Markets Diplomacy, European Commission, said a GCC-wide market is likely more viable than fragmented national schemes; but it is much more difficult to implement. High-emitting sectors with many installations like the buildings sector may be strong candidates, he said, adding effective monitoring, reporting, and verification are foundational to success.

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## QCB governor meets senior US Treasury official



HE the Governor of Qatar Central Bank (QCB), Sheikh Bandar bin Mohammed bin Saoud al-Thani, met Anna Morris, US Department of the Treasury Acting Assistant Secretary for Terrorist Financing here yesterday. During the meeting, they reviewed relationship between the two countries, with focus on enhancing collaboration within the financial and banking sectors.

## Refugee and statelessness issues among top discussions at ICAO facilitation conference

QNA  
Doha

The issues of refugees and stateless persons occupied centre stage at the sixth plenary session of the ICAO Facilitation Conference (FALC 2025), held in Doha. Participants addressed the challenges associated with inadmissible persons and deportees, emphasising the importance of developing practical and humane solutions to ensure freedom of movement and respect for human dignity.

Speakers at the session, chaired by Representative of Romania on the ICAO Council, Maria Cristina Liliiana Ionita, emphasised that issuing travel documents to refugees and stateless persons contributes to regulating their legal movement and reducing human trafficking and transnational crime, calling for increased funding for relief and humanitarian agencies.

They pointed out that conflicts in some countries drive individuals to migrate in search of safety, while the difficulty of issuing paper documents and poor coordination between sys-

tems are challenges that face both countries and airlines, particularly given the high costs associated with returning people denied entry to their countries of origin and the impact this has on the reputation of both countries and airlines.

In this context, Assistant Director of Human Rights Department at the Ministry of Interior Brig Gen Saad Salem al-Dosari, stressed that Qatar's participation in the ICAO Facilitation Conference reflects its commitment to strengthening international cooperation to ensure the movement of individuals across borders while taking into account security and humanitarian conditions.

Brig Gen al-Dosari pointed out the need to develop advanced digital systems for information exchange and to support effective partnerships between the public and private sectors to address the issues of those denied entry, calling for innovative recommendations to ensure a safer and more humane travel environment.

Head of the Legal Identity Unit, International Organisation for Migration (IOM), Nelson Goncalves, emphasised

that the legal framework related to nationality often hinders the issuance of identity documents, pointing to the need to facilitate interstate systems and improve the efficiency of consulates. Goncalves emphasised the importance of supporting processes that preserve the dignity of individuals, highlighting the role of digitisation and partnerships with the private sector in expediting and ensuring the accuracy of procedures.

The second day's agenda included various discussion sessions on the integrity of travel documents and border control, combating human trafficking and irregular migration, providing assistance to victims of aircraft accidents and their families, capacity building, and countries' failure to implement standards.

The four-day conference, held this year under the theme: "Facilitating the Future of Air Transport: Co-operation, Efficiency, and Inclusivity", follows ICAO's designation of 2024 as the "Year of Facilitation", making it particularly significant as a starting point for a more advanced and responsive future for air travel.

## QSE enters sixth day of bull-run as key index surpasses 10,200 levels

By Santhosh V Perumal  
Business Reporter

The Qatar Stock Exchange (QSE) yesterday gained for the sixth consecutive day with its key index surpassing the 10,200 levels, on buying interests especially in the telecom and consumer goods sectors.

The local retail investors turned bullish as the 20-stock Qatar Index rose as much as 67 points or 0.66% to 10,213.33 points, recovering from an intraday low of 10,147 points.

The US-tariff relief continued to have its influence in the main market, whose year-to-date losses truncated further to 3.38%. As much as 53% of the traded constituents extended gains to investors in the main bourse, whose capitalisation added QR3.73bn or 0.63% to QR600.35bn on the back of large and small cap segments.

The domestic funds' weakened net profit booking had its influence in the main market, which saw as many as 0.03mn exchange traded funds (sponsored by AlRayan Bank) valued at QR0.07mn change hands across nine deals. The foreign retail investors continued to be bullish but with lesser vigour in the main bourse, whose trade turnover and volumes were on the decrease.

The Islamic index was seen gaining slower than the other indices of the main market, which saw no trading of treasury bills. The Arab retail investors were seen net profit takers in the main bourse, which saw no trading of sovereign bonds.

The Total Return Index rose 0.66%, the All Share Index by 0.6% and the All Islamic Index by 0.49% in the main market.

The telecom sector index soared 2.88%, consumer goods and services (1.03%), industrials (0.48%), banks and financial services (0.47%), transport (0.35%) and realty (0.34%); whereas insurance declined 0.27%. Major gainers in the main bourse included Ooredoo, Industries Qatar, Inma Holding, Medicare Group, Qatar



The local retail investors turned bullish as the 20-stock Qatar Index rose as much as 67 points or 0.66% to 10,213.33 points, recovering from an intraday low of 10,147 points

Islamic Bank and Woqod. In the venture market, Techno Q saw its shares appreciate in value.

Nevertheless, Al Meera, Zad Holding, Al Mahhar Holding, Al Faleh Educational Holding, Mesaieed Petrochemical Holding, QIIB and Qatari German Medical Devices were among the losers in the main market.

The Qatari individuals turned net buyers to the tune of QR2.73mn compared with net sellers of QR9.31mn on April 14.

The domestic institutions' net profit booking weakened markedly to QR1.56mn against QR9.28mn the previous day.

However, the Arab retail investors were net sellers to the extent of QR4.01mn compared with net buyers of QR4.07mn on Monday.

The Gulf institutions' net profit booking strengthened significantly to

QR3.7mn against QR0.65mn on April 14.

The Gulf individuals turned net sellers to the tune of QR0.5mn compared with net buyers of QR0.64mn the previous day.

The foreign institutions' net buying decreased noticeably to QR7.05mn against QR13.08mn on Monday.

The foreign individual investors' net selling eased marginally to QR0.01mn compared to QR1.45mn on April 14.

The Arab institutions had no major net exposure for the second straight session. The main market witnessed 48% plunge in trade volumes to 93.94mn shares, 35% in value to QR242.08mn and 35% in deals to 11,886.

In the junior bourse, trade volumes plummeted 93% to 0.06mn equities, value by 93% to QR0.18mn and transactions by 63% to 12.



Panel of experts discussing the issue of 'Addressing Human Trafficking and Irregular Migration' held on the sidelines of the ICAO Facilitation Conference 2025 (FALC 2025) held in Doha. PICTURE: Peter Alagos

## 'Digitalisation is critical to building robust identity ecosystems'

By Peter Alagos  
Business Reporter

In addressing the various challenges of human trafficking, digitalisation may offer a key opportunity to establish interoperable and secure ID systems, ensuring consistency and accuracy across essential sectors.

Speaking at the panel discussion titled 'Addressing Human Trafficking and Irregular Migration' held on the sidelines of the ICAO Facilitation Conference 2025 (FALC 2025) held in Doha until April 17, Bhaskar Mishra, Global Technical Lead, Legal Identity, United Nations International Children's Fund (UNICEF), emphasised the role of digitalisation in building robust identity ecosystems.

Moderated by Sergio Martes, Representative of Italy on the Council of ICAO Speakers, the panel also featured industry experts Simona Ardovino, head of Unit Migration Management Response and Counter Smuggling, Directorate-General for Migration and Home Affairs (DG HOME), European Commission; Dr Sabelo Mbokazi, head of Labour, Employment and Migration Division, African Union; and Luis Benavides, UN Security Council Expert on Haiti.

During the discussion, Mishra said: "Maintaining accuracy and consistency through basic characteristics of legal identity, such as name, date of birth, place of birth, sex, and parent's names, across fundamental systems like health, civil registration, ID, education, and social protection, is not a challenge, but an opportunity to explore a single source of truth in the era of digitalisation. This will certainly pave

the way for establishing safe, secure, interoperable, inclusive, and real-time verifiable ID systems, benefiting all sectors, including civil aviation."

Emphasising legal identity as a fundamental right, Mishra noted that 'Legal Identity for All' is a non-legal civil priority for UNICEF and aligns well with its 'Leaving No One Behind' agenda.

Highlighting the importance of birth registration and its impact, Mishra said birth registration establishes a child's existence under the law and is the fundamental means of confirming legal identity. "Over the past five years, more than 500mn children under five have been registered. Seventy-seven percent of all children are under five. However, 150mn remain unregistered and another 55mn are registered but they don't have a birth certificate."

"So, over 200mn children under five lack proof of identity. And if you add unregistered and uncertified children from five to 17 years, this number will go up by another 250 to 300mn," he said. Mishra also cited the critical role of ICAO in promoting verified identity for secure travel: "Birth registration establishes legal identity from both, and this aligns with ICAO's emphasis on verified identity for secure travel. Universal Birth Registration further supports ICAO's goals by creating a standardised approach to initial identity clothing."

He added: "On the other hand, ICAO contributes to a global legal identity ecosystem by endorsing both registration systems as a basis for evidence of identity. This supports the demand for birth certificates and sustainable development goals and enhances cross-border trust."

## Doha Bank updates corporate mobile app to include more services

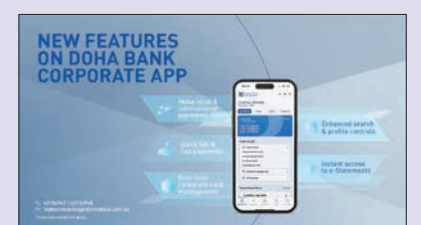
Doha Bank has made a significant update to its corporate mobile app, introducing a suite of new features aimed at delivering a more seamless and efficient digital banking experience for wholesale banking clients.

The enhancements reflect Doha Bank's commitment to supporting the evolving needs of corporate customers through cutting-edge, secure, and user-centric digital solutions.

"The new features introduced on our corporate mobile app mark an important step in empowering businesses with more control and agility in managing their financial operations. As a leading financial institution in Qatar, we are proud to be shaping the future of corporate banking by aligning innovation with the real needs of our clients," said Sheikh Abdulrahman Fahad al-Thani, Group chief executive officer of Doha Bank.

The upgraded app now allows businesses to initiate and manage transactions in real-time, moving beyond traditional inquiry and approval functions.

Clients can now execute local and international fund transfers, pay utility bills and taxes, and manage their corporate credit



cards; all from the convenience of their mobile devices.

These enhancements are designed to offer faster access, increased flexibility, and greater control over financial operations.

Other new features include the ability to inquire about special foreign exchange rates for global transfers, a streamlined dashboard for managing transaction approvals, and direct access to e-statements.

The app also introduces enhanced cash management tools, improved search functionality through Wild Card Search, and a personalised customer user profile interface.

The update aligns with the bank's vision to become a digital-centric institution, fostering innovation and financial inclusion in line with the goals of Qatar National Vision 2030.

