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Vodafone leverages emerging tech to push Qatar’s digital future

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Media City Qatar, Commercial Bank sign SLA to enhance investor support

QCB introduces Apple Pay to Himyan cardholders in Qatar



Media City Qatar and Commercial Bank have signed a service level agreement (SLA) to provide “streamlined banking support” for Media City Qatar’s investors, and licensed companies.

Media City Qatar and Commercial Bank have signed a service level agreement (SLA) to provide “streamlined banking support” for Media City Qatar’s investors, and licensed companies. This collaboration is designed to facilitate the seamless setup and operational success of companies within Media City Qatar’s ecosystem, reinforcing Qatar’s position as a hub for media and technology. By partnering with Commercial Bank, one of Qatar’s leading financial institutions, Media City Qatar continues to enhance its financial support framework, ensuring that its licensed partners receive expedited banking services, dedicated support, and strategic incentives to foster growth and innovation. The agreement simplifies establishing business and personal banking services, underscoring Media City Qatar’s dedication to attracting international invest-

ment and strengthening its growing ecosystem of media and technology companies. Media City Qatar CEO Jassim Mohamed al-Khori commented: “Industry leaders choose Media City Qatar for its customer-focused approach and fast setup process. Qatar continues to attract companies from around the globe, as seen during the Web Summit Qatar 2025, where Media City Qatar received an unprecedented number of companies looking to set up and grow their presence in Qatar and beyond. “As a catalyst for next-generation media, it is our responsibility to ensure that our growing ecosystem of licensed partners has the right infrastructure and support to thrive. This collaboration with Commercial Bank strengthens our ability to provide seamless business setup solutions, aligning with Qatar National Vision 2030’s goal of economic diversification and fostering a world-class media and technology landscape.” Commercial Bank Group CEO Joseph Abraham added: “Qatar’s media and technology sectors continue to see remarkable growth, and as businesses look to establish themselves, having the right financial infrastructure is important. “Through our agreement with Media City Qatar, we are ensuring that companies have access to efficient, tailored banking solutions that support their expansion from day one. By facilitating a seamless financial setup, we are reinforcing our commitment to fostering innovation and supporting Qatar’s long-term economic development.” The agreement marks another step in Media City Qatar’s mission to support media expansion and strengthen its role as a key player in shaping the future of the industry.

The Qatar Central Bank has announced introduction of ‘Apple Pay’ to its Himyan cardholders in Qatar. This, the QCB said, is in line with the Third Financial Sector Strategy and the Third National Development Strategy 2024-2030. Apple Pay is an easy, secure and private way to pay in-store, in-app and online. To pay in-store, customers simply double click the side button, authenticate and hold their iPhone or Apple Watch near a payment terminal to make a contactless payment. Every Apple Pay purchase is secure because it is authenticated with Face ID, Touch ID, or device passcode, as well as a one-time unique dynamic security code. Apple Pay is accepted in grocery stores, pharmacies, restaurants, coffee shops, retail stores and many more places that accept contactless payments. HE the Qatar Central Bank Deputy Governor Sheikh Ahmed bin Khalid bin Ahmed al-Thani underscored the QCB’s unwavering commitment to embracing cutting-edge digital transformation within the financial sector. He highlighted the QCB’s ongoing efforts to deliver innovative banking services and advanced payment solutions that uphold the highest standards of security and customer protection across all segments of society. He added: “At Qatar Central Bank, one of our foremost priorities is investing in transformative technologies that yield tangible benefits and drive greater efficiency within the national financial ecosystem, which is why we’re so excited to bring Apple Pay to our customers in Qatar. By building a world-class financial infrastructure aligned with leading international benchmarks, we aim to bring banking services closer to every member of our community.” Customers can also use Apple Pay on iPhone, iPad, Apple Watch and Mac to make faster and more convenient purchases in apps or on the web without having to create accounts or repeatedly type in contact information, card details, or shipping and billing information. Security and privacy are at the core of Apple Pay. When customers use a credit or debit card with Apple Pay, the actual card numbers are not stored on the device, nor on Apple servers. Instead, a unique Device Account Number is assigned, encrypted and securely stored in the Secure Element, an industry-standard, certified chip designed to store the payment information safely on the device. Apple Pay is easy to set up. On iPhone, simply open the Wallet app, tap +, and follow the steps to add Himyan credit or debit cards. Once a customer adds a card to iPhone, Apple Watch, iPad, and Mac, they can start using Apple Pay on that device right away. Customers will continue to receive all of the rewards and benefits offered by Himyan cards.

Dukhan Bank ranks 62 on Forbes Middle East’s Top 100 listed firms

‘GWC invests heavily in creating seamless, integrated network for GCC businesses’

GWC has invested heavily in creating a seamless, integrated network that connects businesses across the GCC, noted Acting Group CEO Matthew Kearns.

GWC takes pride in being at the forefront of the transformation of cross-border logistics throughout the GCC and beyond. And the heart of this operation lies in Qatar – an increasingly important logistics hub with unmatched strategic advantages.

In today’s fast-paced global economy, logistics plays a critical role in connecting markets, enabling trade, and unlocking growth. Kearns noted that thanks to Hamad Port and Hamad International Airport, Qatar boasts some of the most modern and advanced logistics infrastructure in the world. These state-of-the-art gateways serve as powerful enablers for international trade, providing seamless access to global markets and streamlined routes into the heart of the GCC. Hamad Port is one of the largest greenfield

port developments in the world, offering deep-water access, advanced customs clearance capabilities, and connectivity to key maritime trade routes. Combined with Hamad International Airport – recently ranked among the best airports globally for both cargo and passenger services – Qatar has become an ideal launching point for fast, reliable, and efficient cross-border movement.

He noted “At GWC, we have built on this national advantage by creating a logistics ecosystem that spans the entire region. Our extensive land transport fleet, comprising specialised trucks and trailers, provides consistent and reliable cross-border service. Whether it is large-scale freight operations or last-mile delivery, GWC ensures that goods move with speed and efficiency.”

He emphasised that Qatar’s Free Zones further enhances GWC’s ability to serve regional and international clients. These zones offer attractive regulatory and tax benefits, with GWC

providing dedicated warehousing, distribution, and customs clearance solutions directly from these hubs.

Kearns highlighted that the importance of resilient, reliable cross-border logistics has never been more evident than during periods of heightened uncertainty. Recent developments in the region – including the need for agile emergency cross-border movement – have underscored the strategic value of robust logistics infrastructure and trusted supply chain partners.

GWC’s capacity to quickly adapt and respond to evolving client and market needs ensures that the services remain uninterrupted, even amid geopolitical challenges.

He stressed that cross-border logistics is more than just infrastructure – it’s about reliability, compliance, and partnership. GWC’s integrated systems, experienced professionals, and in-house customs clearance teams ensure every shipment is handled with the highest level of

care and in full compliance with international standards.

What sets GWC apart is its ability to tailor end-to-end solutions that align with its clients’ strategic goals – whether they are expanding into new GCC markets, managing complex supply chains, or optimising trade flows between Asia, Africa, and Europe.

Kearns concluded: “Qatar’s vision for economic diversification and global connectivity aligns perfectly with GWC’s mission. Together, Qatar and GWC offer the perfect formula for businesses looking to expand regionally and globally. With advanced infrastructure, regional integration, and a commitment to excellence, we are proud to be building the backbone of the region’s logistics future.

“As we continue to expand our footprint across borders, one thing remains constant: our commitment to delivering world-class logistics solutions that connect, empower, and grow businesses across the GCC and beyond.”

QSE enters 6th day of gains as M-cap adds QR5.62bn

By Santhosh V Perumal
Business Reporter

The Iran-Israel truce and the US rate cut expectations yesterday led the Qatar Stock Exchange to gain more than 83 points, with capitalisation gaining in excess of QR5bn.

Bullish for the sixth straight session, the 20-stock Qatar Index rose 0.78% to 10,768.19 points, recovering from an intraday low of 10,684 points.

An across the board buying interests - notably in insurance, industrials and banks - was visible in the main market, whose year-to-date gains improved further to 1.86%.

About 89% of the traded constituents extended gains to investors in the main bourse, whose capitalisation added QR5.62bn or 0.89% to QR636.66bn mainly on account of mid and small cap segments.

The Arab retail investors were seen increasingly net buyers in the main market, which saw 0.05mn exchange traded funds (sponsored by AlRayan Bank and Doha Bank) valued at QR0.13mn trade across 27 deals.

The foreign individual investors turned bullish in the main bourse, whose trade turnover and volumes were on the decline.

The Islamic index was seen gaining slower than the other indices of the main market, which saw no trading of treasury bills.

The local retail investors' weakened net profit booking had its influence on the main bourse, which saw no trading of sovereign bonds.

The Total Return Index rose 0.78%, the All Share Index by 0.89% and the All Islamic Index by 0.72% in the main market.

The insurance sector index shot up 2.7%, industrials (1.15%), banks and



Bullish for the sixth straight session, the 20-stock Qatar Index rose 0.78% to 10,768.19 points, recovering from an intraday low of 10,684 points.

financial services (0.83%), consumer goods and services (0.78%), telecom (0.63%), transport (0.6%) and real estate (0.06%).

Major movers in the main market included Mannai Corporation, Qatar General Insurance and Reinsurance, Qatar Insurance, Gulf Warehousing, Baladna, Leshia Bank, Medicare Group, Industries Qatar, Gulf International Services, Qatar Electricity and Water and QLM.

In the junior bourse, Techno Q saw its shares appreciate in value.

Nevertheless, Al Mahhar Holding, Qatar German Medical Devices, Al Faleh Educational Holding and Ezdan were the shakers in the main market.

The Arab individual investors' net buying increased notably to QR6.98mn compared to QR1.5mn last Thursday.

The foreign retail investors turned net buyers to the tune of QR1.19mn against net sellers of QR8.2mn the previous trading day.

The Arab institutions were net buyers

to the extent of QR0.08mn compared with no major net exposure on June 26.

The local retail investors' net selling decreased substantially to QR26.38mn against QR46.07mn last Thursday.

The domestic funds' net selling weakened drastically to QR3.56mn compared to QR21.15mn the previous trading day.

The Gulf institutions' net profit booking shrank significantly to QR2.11mn against QR12.75mn on June 26.

The Gulf retail investors' net selling eased perceptibly to QR1.27mn compared to QR4.13mn last Thursday.

However, the foreign institutions' net buying weakened drastically to QR25.15mn against QR90.79mn the previous trading day.

The main market saw a 6% fall in trade volumes to 182.76mn shares, 15% in value to QR404.07mn and 29% in deals to 14,455.

In the venture market, a total of 0.92mn equities valued at QR2.62mn changed hands across 193 transactions.



The strategic partnership is set to unlock exclusive privileges across Doha Oasis destination portfolio of luxury, entertainment, sports and culinary experiences.

Doha Oasis and Ahlibank in strategic partnership

Doha Oasis and Ahlibank have joined hands in a strategic partnership that brings together two leading Qatari institutions in a collaboration designed to elevate the lifestyle experiences of Ahlibank credit card holders. The strategic partnership will unlock exclusive privileges across Doha Oasis destination portfolio of luxury, entertainment, sports and culinary experiences. At the heart of this offering is the 5-star Banyan Tree Doha Hotel by la Cigale Msheireb, the iconic Doha Quest - Qatar's first indoor theme park and home to two Guinness World Record-breaking rides - and Printemps Doha, the largest luxury department store in the Middle East, as well as access to Doha Oasis Padel, featuring world-class indoor courts.

The collaboration will also offer in the near future special offers at Novo Cinemas at Doha Oasis which include Novo Signature, Novo 7-Star, Imax, Novo Kidz, Novo Bowling and more. This initiative reflects a shared commitment to curating bespoke, high-end experiences for Ahlibank loyal customers.

Under this new partnership, eligible Ahlibank Visa Infinite and Signature credit card holders will enjoy a range of privileges across Doha Oasis destination. These benefits have been designed

to offer memorable and convenient access to the iconic venue attraction and experiences, reinforcing both partners' commitment to quality unique customer-centric experiences.

Victor Agha, Chairman, Doha Oasis, stated, "Across our destination experiences, from luxury hospitality to immersive entertainment, wellness and global culinary experiences, we've curated offerings that reflect the highest standards of excellence in Qatar. This strategic partnership with Ahlibank brings those experiences closer to their valuable customers. By aligning with a leading financial institution, we're reinforcing Doha Oasis as the premier lifestyle and leisure destination in the region."

Hassan Ahmed AIEfrangi, CEO, Ahlibank, added, "This strategic partnership with Doha Oasis underscores Ahlibank's commitment to building meaningful alliances that enrich the lifestyle of our customers. By joining forces with one of Qatar's most iconic destinations, we're able to offer our Visa Infinite and Signature Credit Card holders access to exceptional experiences that reflect the quality and exclusivity they expect. Together, we are elevating what it means to bank with Ahlibank - combining financial value with premium lifestyle rewards.

AI transforming gas value chain: GECF

Artificial Intelligence (AI) is transforming the gas value chain - from seismic data interpretation and geological modelling to real-time drilling optimisation, advanced reservoir simulation, enhanced production management, and predictive maintenance, according to GECF.

"The outcomes are compelling: higher exploration success rates, faster and safer drilling, increased recovery rates, enhanced production, and reduced operational costs.

"AI also plays a critical role in improving safety and reducing environmental impacts, particularly in terms of emissions. These gains are further enhanced by the deployment of digital twins and robots," noted Hichem Kimouche, DISD Head at the Gas Exporting Countries Forum.

Delivering a speech on behalf of GECF Secretary-General at Sonatrach's 12th Scientific and Technical Days (JST12) he said, "However, the journey from pilot projects to full-scale deployment is not without challenges. Nearly 86% of AI initiatives in the energy sector never progress beyond the pilot phase. Overcoming this inertia demands organisational alignment, robust data governance, specialised talent, and clear success metrics.

"Moreover, AI adoption carries inherent risks - operational, cybersecurity, financial, regulatory, and reputational. These must be proactively managed to safeguard the long-term viability of AI integration.

"At the GECF, we recognise the many benefits that AI may provide. Just last week, we organised a workshop to discuss the current state of play of AI in the oil and gas industry.

"We are also aware that AI may widen the digital divide between companies and between nations, particularly between developing and developed countries. We are committed to helping the oil and gas industries of our Member Countries benefit from this transformation."

Kimouche noted, "At the Gas Exporting Countries Forum, we are equally committed to promoting technological advancement and capacity building across our Member Countries. The recently established Gas Research Institute, headquartered in Algiers, is mandated to strengthen scientific and technological collaboration among Member Countries through joint research, knowledge exchange, and capacity building. It supports innovation across the gas value chain by anticipating emerging technologies, fostering partnerships, and promoting best practices and training."

"Technology and innovation have long underpinned the success of the gas industry - but as we look to the future, their role will become even more decisive in securing its relevance, sustainability, and competitiveness.

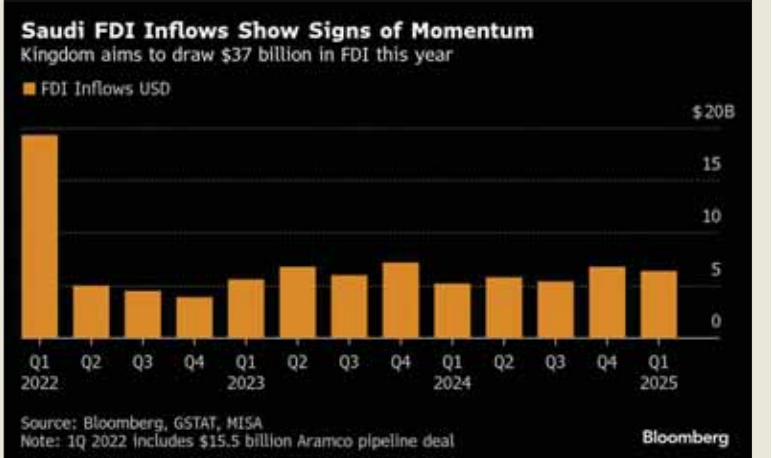
"This is precisely what makes gatherings like the Journées Scientifiques et Techniques so important. There is no better place to affirm this than here in Oran - just a few kilometres from Arzew, where the world's first commercial LNG plant was built.

"For decades, Sonatrach has demonstrated leadership in advancing gas technologies. I commend its enduring commitment to excellence across the entire gas value chain - from exploration and production to liquefaction, transport, and processing," he added.

Saudi FDI inflows signal momentum amid drive to attract foreign cash

Bloomberg
Riyadh

Saudi Arabia saw its strongest start to a year for foreign direct investment since 2022, in an early signal the kingdom is gaining some traction in its push to attract overseas capital to support its economic ambitions. FDI inflows amounted to \$6.4bn in the first quarter, according to preliminary data released yesterday by the General Authority for Statistics. That's up 24% from a year earlier and down only slightly from the prior quarter, when inflows reached a one-year high. Saudi Arabia has made FDI a key focus as it aims to draw in foreign capital to help support the heavy investment needed for Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman's multi-trillion dollar economic diversification program. But the kingdom has faced challenges in doing so, with inflows stagnating until recently amid investor challenges and a lack of mega deals. The need for FDI is becoming increas-



ingly more acute as Saudi Arabia faces deeper budget deficits due to a combination of low crude prices, falling oil export revenue and elevated investment. While the past two quarters indicate progress on FDI, the kingdom will need a record haul this year to meet its annual target of drawing in \$37bn. It fell short of its 2024 goal by several billion dollars,

according to preliminary data. In other economic figures released on Sunday, the Saudi unemployment rate fell to a historic low of 6.3% in the first quarter. The International Monetary Fund recently highlighted continued strength in the labour market and said it expects the Saudi economy to grow by 3.5% this year, up from a prior 3%.

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War economies are different

Armed conflicts have bankrupted major economies and caused the collapse of empires. But can there be an economic stimulus from a war economy?

By Fahad Badar

A factor in the collapse of the Roman and Spanish empires, and of the French revolution, was the ruinous cost of military expenditure. Fighting, and often losing, endless military campaigns can come at enormous cost. Prior to the 20th Century governments would typically run out of gold reserves, plunging the state into crisis. In the age of fiat currencies and mature bond markets, larger economies have extensive – though ultimately not infinite – capacity to borrow to fund wars. Following the second world war, Germany and Japan faced restrictions on their armed forces imposed by the allies, but as a consequence they enjoyed a post-war peace dividend with their export-focused manufacturers

profiting enormously as consumer markets became globalised in the 1970s, 1980s and 1990s. The profile of a war economy is different yet it can be beneficial for economic activity, although this depends on the starting point, and is possibly only for the short term. Arguably, the outbreak of the Second World War did much to end the deep recession and high unemployment of the 1930s. Huge increases in government expenditure across western economies spurred factory output and unemployment fell, although economies had begun recovering before the war, and government debt rose sharply during the conflict. Russia has faced a much longer and more expensive military campaign in Ukraine than it anticipated in 2022, and has faced strict sanctions from western powers. Yet while its economy has suffered in some respects, it has proved to be resilient. Dr Richard Connolly, a specialist on the Russian economy and author of Russia's Response to Sanctions, noted in an article for the UK think

tank the Royal United Services Institute earlier this year that there are certain strengths to Russia's economic position – also that it does not have all the features of a war economy, having not been compelled to introduce price controls or central control of the economy. It has maintained strong revenues from oil, and debt is just 15% of GDP, the lowest of the G20 economies. Inflation and interest rates are high, but many businesses and households have access to subsidised loans. There are labour shortages, but consequent wage increases, and high payments to families of army recruits, have boosted domestic demand and reduced regional economic inequalities. Imposition of capital controls has encouraged domestic investment. Russia's GDP growth was 3.6% in 2023, confounding anticipation of a fall in output, and growth continued through 2024. By mid2025, however, growth had stalled, with some features of stagflation. In political terms, Russia's invasion of Ukraine has prompted several

European nations to increase military expenditure. The most significant development is in Germany. For decades following the hyper-inflation of the 1920s and the Nazi regime that followed, Germany's political leaders were committed to fiscal conservatism and limited military spending. That has now changed. The new Chancellor Friedrich Merz secured Congress approval for a relaxation on constitutional borrowing limits before he took office. Defence expenditure above 1% of GDP will be exempt from the debt brake, and there will be a fund for infrastructure of €500bn. These measures are having the effect of a stimulus. Goldman Sachs has raised its projected GDP growth by 0.2% this year, and by 0.5% to 1.5% for 2026. The economy has been flat for the past few years. Germany has attracted investors. It has not had to set high yields for bond issuance, because of high credit rating and the switch away from US dollar assets under the Donald Trump regime. The country's traditional strength in manufacturing has been coming

under pressure as economic growth in the EU's largest economy has stalled. Chinese manufacturers of EVs have taken market share in the European car market. Some German vehicle manufacturers have announced factory closures – but at a time of limited labour supply many of the skilled workers laid off are likely to be hired by defence companies. Another by-product of the war economy is the stimulus from reconstruction. An end to the conflict in Syria presents such an opportunity. US President Donald Trump met the new Syrian President Ahmed al-Sharaa in May, shortly after announcing the end of economic sanctions, effectively normalising relations with the west. Turkish construction companies in particular are set to profit, helped by the geographic proximity and the fact that many Syrian refugees had settled in Turkiye. The share prices of Turkish construction and cement companies soared in December, following the end of the Assad regime. In 2023 the World Bank estimated that the cost of damage to the built environment



in Syria as a result of the civil war that erupted in 2011 was \$11.4bn. Volkan Bozay, CEO of the cement industry association TurkCimento, said following the regime change that, while there could be political and logistical challenges in rebuilding Syrian infrastructure, 'the potential is significant'. The economics of conflict can be complex. The state will inevitably grow in size and influence, but there can be economic opportunities extending beyond the defence sector.

■ *The author is a Qatari banker, with many years of experience in the banking sector in senior positions.*

Vodafone leverages emerging tech to push Qatar’s digital future, says executive

By Peter Alagos
Business Reporter

Vodafone Qatar is leveraging emerging technologies, stated chief technology officer Ramy Bector, citing the wide range of vast opportunities that technology presents and the significant impact that digitalisation has in driving the country's economic growth. “We are conscious of the limitless potential of technology and the crucial role digitisation plays in Qatar’s national strategy. Vodafone Qatar is continually leveraging the latest technologies and identifying ways to incorporate digital tools to add value to consumers and businesses,” Bector told *Gulf Times* in an interview.

Earlier, Vodafone Qatar forged a strategic partnership with Nokia, marking a significant step towards deploying emerging technologies as a part of its commitment to driving the country's digital transformation.

Bector said both companies have developed a plan for a nationwide network infrastructure modernisation to enhance Vodafone Qatar's network capabilities and ultimately lead to the deployment of advanced 5G services in Qatar. This will allow Voda-



Ramy Bector, Vodafone Qatar chief technology officer.

fone Qatar to deliver faster, more efficient, and more secure telecommunications services to businesses and consumers, he noted. Bector described Vodafone Qatar's infrastructure modernisation with Nokia as “necessary” to ensure the seamless incorporation of upcoming technologies by providing the necessary framework to support all upcoming technologies.

He explained that faster Internet speeds, higher data rates, and lower latency are necessary to support ambitious projects, such as the development of smart cities and large-scale integration of IoT applications.

Bector said: “IoT is pivotal in developing smart cities in Qatar. By connecting devices and systems, IoT enables better management of urban services such as traffic con-

trol, waste management, and energy consumption.”

He also acknowledged that artificial intelligence (AI) is at the forefront of Qatar's digital agenda, driving innovations across various sectors, including healthcare, transportation, and education.

Figures from the Tasmu Digital Valley website show that the AI market size in Qatar was estimated at “\$31mn in 2022,” and is expected to grow by “17.4%” annually to reach “\$58.8mn in 2026.”

According to Bector, AI applications are expected to enhance efficiency, decision-making, and service delivery, but will require adjacent network capabilities and digital infrastructures to support the technologies’ implementation in Qatar.

He said, “Likewise, as digital adoption increases, so does the need for robust cybersecurity measures. Qatar is investing heavily in cybersecurity to protect its digital infrastructure and ensure data privacy.”

Bector added: “Cloud services are essential for scalable and flexible IT infrastructure. Infrastructure reforms such as ours with Nokia provide the necessary storage, processing power, and accessibility needed to establish cybersecurity measures to buttress Qatar's digital strategy.”

\$200mn Fiera Qatar Equity Fund to enhance liquidity and free float, attract new funds: QSE

By Santhosh V Perumal
Business Reporter

The Qatar Stock Exchange (QSE) yesterday welcomed the proposed \$200mn Fiera Qatar Equity Fund, a joint initiative of Qatar Investment Authority (QIA) and Fiera Capital.

In a communique, the QSE said the initiative will enhance market liquidity, increase the free float of Qatari equities, and attract new institutional capital to the Qatari market.

Moreover, the QSE said, it will also play a critical role in diversifying the investor base, supporting sustainable, high-quality capital inflows, and reinforcing Qatar's position as a leading regional financial hub. This initiative reflects QIA's continued commitment to advancing Qatar's economic diversification and strengthening key sectors, notably financial markets and asset management.

The engagement of active fund managers represents a significant step in broadening the investor base and boosting free float shares in the market.

As the anchor investor, QIA will convert a portion of its long-term strategic holdings in listed Qatari companies into assets managed actively within the fund. This approach is expected to inject substantial new liquidity into the market, facilitate greater institutional participation, and attract a wider range of global investors to Qatar's evolving financial landscape.

Fiera Capital is a leading independent asset management firm with a growing global presence and \$161.6bn in assets as at March 31, 2025. The company delivers customised and multi-asset solutions across public and private markets asset classes to institutional, financial intermediaries and private wealth clients across

Canada, the US, Europe, Middle East, Africa and key markets in Asia.

QSE considers this fund a strategic addition to the suite of specialised investment products in the local market. It also reaffirmed its commitment to continued collaboration with QIA on initiatives that contribute to the objectives of the Third Financial Sector Strategy and Qatar National Vision 2030.

QIA has been instrumental in strengthening Qatar's capital markets through a series of targeted programmes, including the market making initiative, the securities lending and borrowing framework, and the active asset management initiative launched in 2024.

These efforts have already delivered tangible results, including the \$200mn Qatar-focused equity fund launched in partnership with Ashmore Group.

The newly announced collaboration with Fiera Capital marks another important milestone in expanding market participation and supporting the long-term growth of Qatar's financial ecosystem.

Quoting Bloomberg's analysis that showed foreign investors' purchases of listed equities in the three largest Gulf countries (Saudi Arabia, the UAE and Qatar) accounted for \$750mn of average daily value trading (ADVT) in 2024, up 57% on 2023; analysts are of the view that Doha is fast becoming an investment magnet.

According to Qatar's Third Financial Sector Strategic Plan, the vision is to create a financial and capital market that leads the region in innovation, efficiency and investor protection and positions Qatar to unlock its full economic potential in line with the National Vision 2030.

Based on the vision, one of the outcomes is attractive and innovative capital market with extended range of products, services and participants.

Business roadshow to be held in China, Japan to promote Qatar’s diverse investment opportunities

QNA
Doha

Invest Qatar, the Investment Promotion Agency of Qatar, is set to organise a high-level business roadshow across key Asian markets, including China and Japan, in collaboration with Qatar Free Zones Authority (QFZ). According to Invest Qatar's press release issued yesterday, the roadshow aims to showcase Qatar's diverse investment opportunities and foster direct engagement with international investors, business leaders and key stakeholders.

It added that the business roadshow will host a series of engagements, designed to deepen economic ties, promote Qatar's business-friendly ecosystem and foster sustainable international partnerships aligned with the long-term development goals under the Third National Development Strategy (NDS3).

Through curated B2B meetings, sector-specific briefings and targeted roundtable discussions, the roadshow will enable Asian investors to explore the array of opportunities across key sectors.

The press release indicated that Qatar recorded over \$1.4bn in foreign direct investment (FDI) from China and Japan in 2024, contributing to the creation of more than 600 jobs across key sectors such as automotive, consumer electronics, business services and IT. According to Invest Qatar's 2024 Annual Report, China ranked among the top five source countries by project volume, with 12 investment projects, while Japan emerged as the leading contributor

to FDI capital expenditure (capex), accounting for \$1.38bn, representing 50.2% of total FDI, underscoring its strong commitment to Qatar's economic growth and expanding presence in priority sectors. The press release pointed out that leading Chinese and Japanese companies, including Hisense, Shenzhen Airlines, Midea Group, BYD, Mitsubishi Electric and Sumitomo Group, have already established a strategic footprint in Qatar, reinforcing the country's position as a regional investment hub.

It said that the roadshow will enable Asian investors to explore promising prospects in strategic sectors, including ICT, logistics, manufacturing, and financial services, adding that in line with Invest Qatar's efforts to strengthen international strategic partnerships, it has been partnering with key Asian businesses and entities, supporting their business launch and growth in Qatar and the region.

According to the press release, recent partnerships included Level Infinite, Tencent's global games brand, aimed to grow the local gaming ecosystem and share global best practices by facilitating Level Infinite's entry into the Qatari market. Similarly, Kingdee International Software Group Company Ltd announced the opening of its regional headquarters, marking its official entry into the Middle East market, facilitated through the support of Invest Qatar, QFZ and Qatar Investment Authority (QIA).

All this comes as a testament to the effectiveness of joint national efforts in attracting major global companies and to Qatar's position as a leading regional hub for technology and innovation.

