

6

WANT TO
SHOWCASE YOUR
BRAND/SERVICES HERE?

CALL: 444 666 21



DIGITAL ECONOMY | Page 4

MCIT signs MoU with Alchemist to enhance innovation and entrepreneurship ecosystem

TO ADVERTISE HERE

Call: 444 11 300

Tuesday, December 2, 2025

Jumada II 11, 1447 AH

GULF TIMES

BUSINESS

COMPREHENSIVE SUPPORT: Page 2

Media City Qatar, AlRayan Bank partner to facilitate banking services for licensed companies

Mortgage Loans with a Touch of Luxury

Obtain a mortgage loan now for a chance to win one of four Rolex watches

This campaign is valid from 12 October 2025 to 31 December 2025.

Draw date will be 5 January 2026

Terms and conditions apply.

QFZ signs strategic MoU with WuXi Biologics to bolster Qatar’s biopharmaceutical ecosystem

Qatar Free Zones Authority (QFZ) has signed a strategic memorandum of understanding (MoU) with WuXi Biologics, a leading global biologics Contract Research, Development and Manufacturing Organisation (CRDMO), to advance co-operation in biologics manufacturing, research and development and biopharmaceutical innovation.

The MoU was signed by Sheikh Mohammed bin Hamad bin Faisal al-Thani, chief executive officer of QFZ and Dr Chris Chen, chief executive officer of WuXi Biologics, in the presence of HE Sheikh Faisal bin Thani bin Faisal al-Thani, Minister of Commerce and Industry and Chairman of QFZ, on the sidelines of the Formula 1 Qatar Airways Qatar Grand Prix 2025.

The strategic collaboration paves the way for the establishment of WuXi Biologics’ first integrated CRDMO centre in the Middle East, located within Qatar’s free zones.

Under the MoU, the parties will collaborate on a programme for research, development, and innovation focused on biologics manufacturing and advanced bio-processing technologies in Qatar.

The partnership aims to strengthen the country’s biopharmaceutical ecosystem by attracting key suppliers, enabling clinical trial networks, and establishing world-class centres of excellence.

“This partnership strengthens Qatar’s position as one of the region’s most reliable locations for biopharmaceutical growth. By combining WuXi Biologics’ global biologics expertise with Qatar’s advanced healthcare eco-



Sheikh Mohammed bin Hamad bin Faisal al-Thani, chief executive officer of QFZ and Dr Chris Chen, chief executive officer of WuXi Biologics, sign the pact in the presence of HE Sheikh Faisal bin Thani bin Faisal al-Thani, Minister of Commerce and Industry and Chairman of QFZ.

system and unmatched logistics connectivity, we are creating an environment where breakthrough research and high-value manufacturing can thrive,” said Sheikh Mohammed.

This collaboration supports its ambition to build a resilient biomedical sciences landscape that contributes to national priorities under the Third National Development Strategy and Qatar National Vision 2030, according to him.

The MoU also outlines opportunities for collaboration with Qatar’s academic, medical, and research institutions to advance biopharmaceutical research and develop innovative solutions.

It further includes structured training programmes to develop a skilled local biologics workforce, while establishing a framework for long-term cooperation that enhances Qatar’s

biotechnology resilience and supports WuXi Biologics’ presence in the region.

“This partnership is a pivotal step for WuXi Biologics. It marks the beginning of our journey to build our presence in the region while extending our global network and capabilities. Qatar’s forward-looking vision for the biomedical sciences sector, underpinned by QFZ’s integrated ecosystem and reliable connectivity, provides a compelling platform for innovation and advanced manufacturing,” said Chen.

As Qatar and its free zones advance their vision to become a globally trusted hub for biomedical sciences, this collaboration reflects the nation’s commitment to attracting cutting-edge biopharmaceutical companies and developing competencies that support both domestic resilience and international healthcare needs.

Sheikh Faisal meets Netherlands minister for foreign trade and development



The Minister of Commerce and Industry HE Sheikh Faisal bin Thani bin Faisal al-Thani held a meeting yesterday with Aukje de Vries, the Minister for Foreign Trade and Development of the Kingdom of the Netherlands, who is currently visiting Qatar. During the meeting, the two sides discussed ways to deepen co-operation between Qatar and the Netherlands in the trade, investment and industrial sectors, as well as ways to further develop bilateral ties. Discussions also highlighted Qatar’s successful economic policies supporting the private sector, in addition to the country’s pro-investment legislation, incentives and expanding opportunities to attract investors and business leaders to the Qatari market.

Al-Kaabi meets Dutch minister of foreign trade and development



The Minister of State for Energy Affairs HE Saad bin Sherida al-Kaabi held a meeting yesterday with Aukje de Vries, the Minister of Foreign Trade and Development of the Kingdom of the Netherlands. Discussions during the meeting dealt with energy relations and co-operation between Qatar and Holland and means to enhance them.

Robust cargo movements keep Qatar’s maritime sector busy in November

The general and bulk cargo handled through the three ports amounted to 159,480 freight tonnes in November 2025, which soared 60.51% year-on-year but fell 26.33% month-on-month, according to Mwani Qatar.

By Santhosh V Perumal
Business Reporter

Indicating robust trade and growth in the maritime sector, Qatar reported strong year-on-year expansion in cargo and container movements through Mesaieed, Doha and Al Ruwais ports in November 2025, according to the official data.

The general and bulk cargo handled through the three ports amounted to 159,480 freight tonnes in November 2025, which soared 60.51% year-on-year but fell 26.33% month-on-month, according to figures released by Mwani Qatar. Hamad Port, whose multi-use terminal is designed to serve the supply chains for the RORO, grains and livestock, saw it successfully handle the heaviest cargo to-date (on November 1) as it saw discharging of a gas turbine weighing 316 tonnes from the vessel AAL Melbourne.

The general and bulk cargo amounted to a cumulative 1.72mn freight tonnes in the first 11 months of this year.

The container and cargo trends through the ports reflect the positive outlook for the country’s non-oil private sector.

The container movement through three ports amounted to 117,941 twenty-foot equivalent units (TEUs), growing 8.22% on an annualised basis but was down 0.89% on a monthly basis in the review period.

Hamad Port is the largest eco-friendly project in the region and internationally recognised as one of the largest green ports in the world.

The three ports together handled as many as 1.35mn TEUs in January-November 2025.

The container terminals have been designed to address the increasing trade volume, enhancing ease of doing business as well as supporting the achievement of economic diversification, which

is one of the most important goals of the Qatar National Vision 2030.

As many as 272 ships arrived in three ports, which reported 14.29% and 11.02% year-on-year and month-on-month respectively in November 2025.

Hamad Port’s strategic geographical location offers opportunities to create cargo movement towards the upper Gulf, supporting countries such as Kuwait and Iraq and south towards Oman.

As many as 2,793 vessel calls were reported through the three ports in the first 11 months of this year.

The three ports handled 8,475 RORO in November 2025, which registered 62.27% and 11.4% plunge year-on-year and month-on-month respectively.

Qatar’s automobile sector has been witnessing stronger sales, notably in heavy equipment, private motorcycles and private vehicles, according to the data of the National Planning Council.

The three ports handled as many as

109,307 RORO units in January-November this year. he three ports were seen handling 50,373 livestock heads this November, which surged 81.23% and 555.73% on yearly and monthly basis respectively in the review period.

The three ports together handled as many as 461,923 livestock heads during January-November 2025.

The building materials traffic through the three ports stood at 9,846 tonnes in November 2025, which plunged 29.79% and 13.34% year-on-year and month-on-month respectively. A cumulative 509,277 tonnes of building materials were handled during the first 11 months of 2025.

In line with the objectives of Qatar National Vision 2030, Mwani Qatar continues to implement its ambitious strategy to enhance the maritime sector’s contribution to diversifying the national economy and strengthening the county’s position as a vibrant regional trade hub.



Media City Qatar, AlRayan Bank partner to facilitate banking services for licensed firms



Jassim Mohamed al-Khori, CEO of Media City Qatar, and Fahad bin Abdulla al-Khalifa, Group CEO at AlRayan Bank, during the signing ceremony.

Media City Qatar and AlRayan Bank have signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) to enhance financial accessibility for Media City Qatar's licensed companies. The agreement aims to provide comprehensive banking support to the companies and professionals operating within Media City Qatar, ensuring efficient and tailored financial services that enable growth and collaboration. Under the agreement, AlRayan Bank will explore opportunities to establish banking services for more than 300 licensed companies operating within Media City Qatar. A dedicated point of contact will support companies and employees with onboarding and account-related matters. Beyond banking, both parties will collaborate on innovation and ESG initiatives, leveraging their industry expertise

to contribute to knowledge and thought leadership within Qatar's media and technology ecosystem. Engineer Jassim Mohamed al-Khori, CEO of Media City Qatar, said: "Our collaboration with AlRayan Bank reinforces Media City Qatar's commitment to building the right infrastructure and enabling environment for our licensed companies and professionals to succeed. "Strengthening access to financial services is a vital step in empowering businesses to grow and innovate, while contributing to Qatar's position as a regional hub for media, technology, and creative excellence." Fahad bin Abdulla al-Khalifa, Group CEO at AlRayan Bank, added: "This agreement reflects our ongoing commitment to supporting Qatar's economic development and fostering innovation across key sectors.

"Through our partnership with Media City Qatar, we aim to enhance access to efficient and secure banking solutions, strengthen collaboration within the business community, and contribute to the country's broader growth and diversification goals." The partnership builds on Media City Qatar's ongoing efforts to strengthen the financial and operational foundations of its growing ecosystem. By working with a range of financial institutions, Media City Qatar is ensuring that its licensed companies have access to banking solutions that address their diverse business needs. Media City Qatar continues to foster innovation, collaboration, and excellence across the media industry, contributing to the goals of Qatar National Vision 2030 and advancing the country's position as a regional hub.

Qatar bourse settles marginally higher; M-cap adds QR0.61bn

By Santhosh V Perumal
Business Reporter

The Qatar Stock Exchange (QSE) yesterday settled marginally higher despite losers outnumbering gainers by wide margin.

The real estate, banking and transport counters witnessed higher than average demand as the 20-stock Qatar Index rose 0.06% to 10,621.19 points.

The foreign funds turned net buyers in the main market, whose year-to-date gains improved to 0.47%.

The local retail investors were seen bullish in the main bourse, whose capitalisation added QR0.61bn or 0.1% to QR635.47bn, mainly on microcap segments.

The Gulf individuals were increasingly net buyers in the main market, which saw as many as 7,315 exchange traded funds (sponsored by AlRayan Bank and Doha Bank) valued at QR0.03mn trade across 10 deals.

The foreign individuals continued to be net buyers but with lesser intensity in the main bourse, whose trade turnover and volumes were on the rise.

The Islamic index was seen declining vis-à-vis gains in the other indices of the main

market, which saw no trading of treasury bills.

The domestic institutions turned net profit takers in the main bourse, which saw no trading of sovereign bonds.

The Total Return Index was up 0.06% and the All Share Index by 0.15%, while the All Islamic Index shed 0.22% in the main market.

The real estate sector index shot up 1.08%, banks and financial services (0.73%) and transport (0.21%); while insurance declined 1.74%, industrials (1.04%), consumer goods and services (0.34%) and telecom (0.27%).

As many as 11 stocks gained, while 37 declined and three were unchanged.

Major movers in the main market include Beema, Barwa, QNB, Nakilat and Dukhan Bank.

Nevertheless, about 73% of the traded constituents were in the red with major shakers being Qatar General Insurance and Reinsurance, Baladna, QLM, Aamal Company, Estithmar Holding, Dlala, Qatar German Medical Devices, Mannai Corporation, Qatar National Cement, Industries Qatar, Gulf International Services, Mesaieed Petrochemical Holding and Vodafone Qatar. In the junior bourse, Techno Q saw its shares depreciate in value.

The foreign funds turned net buyers to the

tune of QR5.57mn compared with net sellers of QR16.26mn the previous day.

The local retail investors were net buyers to the extent of QR2.22mn against net sellers of QR4.8mn on November 30.

The Gulf individuals' net buying increased marginally to QR0.83mn compared to QR0.54mn on Sunday.

However, the Arab individual investors turned net sellers to the tune of QR5.86mn against net buyers of QR0.16mn the previous day.

The domestic funds were net profit takers to the extent of QR4.97mn compared with net buyers of QR15.63mn on November 30.

The foreign individual investors' net buying declined perceptibly to QR1.69mn against QR2.75mn on Sunday.

The Gulf institutions' net buying weakened markedly to QR0.49mn compared to QR1.92mn the previous day.

The Arab institutions' net buying shrank marginally to QR0.02mn against QR0.04mn on November 30.

The main market saw a 16% jump in trade volumes to 110.6mn shares, 64% in value to QR344.03mn and 55% in deals to 16,428.

In the venture market, a total of 0.28mn equities valued at QR0.61mn changed hands across 71 transactions.

BCRC calls for boosting organisational resilience in Qatar

By Peter Alagos
Business Reporter

The recently held Business Continuity and Resilience Conference (BCRC) 2025 concluded with key recommendations to strengthen organisational resilience in Qatar, under the theme 'Business Continuity and Resilience - Smart Solutions and Artificial Intelligence'. Key recommendations of the conference included accelerating the integration of smart solutions and AI into continuity plans; emphasising adaptive, data-driven resilience powered by AI; using AI not only to forecast disruptions, such as cyber threats and supply-chain bottlenecks, but to automate crisis response; enhancing public-private collaboration to unify standards and share expertise; establishing specialised training programmes to improve team readiness; and building secure, resilient digital infrastructure to support sustainable transformation. Engineer Abdulatif Ali al-Yafei, BCRC chairman, said: "This conference reflects Qatar's steadfast commitment to fostering a dynamic business ecosystem, one that does not merely face challenges, but transforms them into drivers of innovation, growth, and competitive advantage. "This year's theme, 'Business Continuity and Resilience - Smart Solutions and Artificial Intelligence', embodies our ambitious vision for the future and presents a pivotal opportunity for collective progress." The event was attended by Hassan bin Sultan al-Ghanem, Assistant Undersecretary for Consumer Affairs at the Ministry of Commerce and Industry, along with CEOs from both the public and private sectors and senior representatives from various entities, underscoring the importance of strengthening institutional readiness to face challenges through the adoption of advanced technological solutions and artificial intelligence (AI). The conference also focused on the transformative role of AI and smart solutions in reshaping resilience strategies. These technologies have become essential tools for risk forecasting, crisis response, and accelerating disaster recovery, enabling Qatari organisations not only to withstand challenges but also to convert them into



Abdulatif Ali al-Yafei, chairman of the Business Continuity and Resilience Conference.

opportunities for growth and innovation. Al-Yafei said: "We stand at a defining moment in which AI, machine learning, and predictive analytics are revolutionising how institutions handle risks. These technologies empower organisations to move from reactive crisis management to proactive resilience, embracing change as a fundamental opportunity for advancement." According to al-Yafei, the conference highlighted the critical role of risk management, business continuity, resilience, and crisis management in an era shaped by technological transformation. "We explored how AI and tools ranging from predictive analytics to automated crisis responses are redefining readiness. Modern resilience is no longer reactive: it is intelligent, cognitive, adaptive, and analytics-driven. The event demonstrated how these powerful technologies equip companies to anticipate disruptions, such as cyber threats or supply chain issues, and automate crisis response to ensure faster recovery and a robust, monitored infrastructure," al-Yafei emphasised. He added: "Through this conference, the BCR Qatar network gathered industry leaders and experts in support of Qatar National Vision 2030. Our mission is to stimulate innovation, promote sustainable growth, and strengthen Qatar's global position as a resilient, future-ready economy. Together, we explore how to transform challenges into opportunities for innovation, collaboration, and strategic advantage – turning resilience into a critical strategic asset that drives our success."



The real estate, banking and transport counters witnessed higher than average demand as the 20-stock Qatar Index rose 0.06% to 10,621.19 points

Turkish growth slows, paving way for more interest-rate cuts

Bloomberg
Istanbul

Turkiye's economy slowed more than expected in the third quarter, providing fuel for the central bank to further cut interest rates. Gross domestic product expanded by 3.7% on an annualised basis, compared with the 4.2% expected by economists surveyed by Bloomberg and 4.9% growth in the second quarter. Turkiye's \$1.5tn economy still performed better than anticipated on a quarterly basis, growing 1.1% in the three months through September, compared with 1.6% in the previous quarter, according to data announced by the national statistics agency yesterday. Analysts were expecting the economy to grow 0.5% quarter-on-quarter, based on a separate Bloomberg poll. "We expect the central bank to read the overall slowdown in activity as support for its easing cycle, despite the strength over the quarter," Bloomberg Economics' Selva Bahar Baziki said in a note. The central bank resumed interest-rate cuts in July, after a two-month pause. In September, the bank slowed the pace of easing slightly in response to higher

inflation – though still imposed a more severe cut than Wall Street expected. Some analysts are forecasting more sizeable reductions based on price data for November, which is scheduled for release on Wednesday. "While a slowdown in the pace of growth was expected, annual growth came below forecasts," said Yasemin Basyigit, economist at Turk Ekonomi Bankasi, adding that contribution from inventory dragged down the figure. However, she added that an expected slowdown in domestic demand had not yet materialised. "We expect the central bank to preserve its tight stance," Basyigit said. Annual inflation slowed to 32.9% in October and is seen ending the year at between 31% and 33% – above the central bank's target – according to monetary policymakers. Central bank Governor Fatih Karahan said last week he expects an improvement in inflation readings from prior months. The monetary policy committee last lowered official borrowing costs in October to 39.5%. The International Monetary Fund said in a statement after an official staff visit last month that falling interest rates will support demand in 2026.

Ahlibank welcomes ICBC delegation following milestone corporate bond listing on QSE

Ahlibank recently hosted a high-level delegation from the Industrial and Commercial Bank of China, Doha (QFC) Branch, led by general manager, Wang Weichao, during a courtesy visit to Hassan Ahmed AlEfrangi, Ahlibank CEO. The visit recognises Ahlibank's recent successful issuance and listing of its inaugural QAR-denominated corporate bond on the Qatar Stock Exchange (QSE), a landmark moment for the bank and a significant contribution to the continued growth and diversification of Qatar's capital markets. It underscores Ahlibank's leadership in developing alternative financing tools and deepening the domestic debt market. During the meeting, Wang and the ICBC delegation congratulated Ahlibank on the successful listing, recognising it as a positive step for investor confidence and the local financial ecosystem. Wang said: "We extend our warm congratulations to Ahlibank on



Ahlibank CEO Hassan Ahmed AlEfrangi joins a high-level delegation from the Industrial and Commercial Bank of China, Doha (QFC) Branch, led by general manager, Wang Weichao, during a courtesy visit in Doha.

this important milestone. The listing reflects the growing maturity of Qatar's financial markets and Ahlibank's forward-thinking approach to diversified funding. ICBC is proud to support initiatives that contribute to capital market development and looks

forward to expanding our partnership with Ahlibank in mutually beneficial ways." The two institutions also discussed potential areas for enhanced co-operation across capital markets, trade finance, and treasury services, reaffirming their shared

commitment to deepening collaboration between Qatari and Chinese financial entities. AlEfrangi said: "The listing of our corporate bond is a significant achievement for Qatar's capital market landscape. It demonstrates our commitment to financial innovation, transparency, and contributing to the long-term sustainability of our sector. We look forward to building on this strong relationship with ICBC to unlock new areas of cooperation and cross-border growth." The visit reflects Ahlibank's strategic focus on fostering strong relationships with leading global financial institutions and driving innovation through effective partnerships. As the bank continues to grow its footprint in both domestic and international markets, it remains committed to supporting Qatar's financial sector development in line with the goals of Qatar National Vision 2030.

QFC Connect drives collaboration across business ecosystem



Yousuf Mohamed al-Jaida, chief executive officer of QFCA, addresses QFC Connect attendees.

The Qatar Financial Centre (QFC) recently hosted the 'QFC Connect', a flagship networking engagement that facilitates direct connection between QFC firms, key partners and national entities driving Qatar's business growth. The event, themed 'Empowering Growth through Collaboration', focused on strengthening cooperation across the innovation and technology landscape. Welcoming more than 400 participants - including those from Invest Qatar, Qatar Development Bank (QDB), the Qatar Research, Development and Innovation (QRDI) Council, and Qatar Manpower Solutions

Co (Jusour) - the event featured tailored sessions that examined growth opportunities, addressed shared challenges, and highlighted resources that enable businesses to expand across key markets. The QFC Connect forms part of its broader efforts to empower its growing community of firms through relationship-building, knowledge exchange, and greater ecosystem cohesion. By convening companies and national partners in one setting, it reinforced the collective ambition to advance innovation, attract global talent, and enable a more competitive and future-ready business environment in Qatar.

"Serving the needs of our clients is a priority for the QFC, and we are continuously exploring new ways to deepen the value we provide. QFC Connect demonstrates this commitment. As Qatar's economy continues to diversify, the QFC and its partners will keep opening doors to opportunities in investment, innovation, research, and talent development, enabling businesses to grow with confidence," said Yousuf Mohamed al-Jaida, chief executive officer of QFC Authority. The QFC Connect complements its ongoing initiatives to create a more enabling business ecosystem in Qatar, from launching a company to running it successfully.

The centre has introduced reforms to make doing business faster and more accessible, including a streamlined incorporation process, instant licensing for non-regulated activities and a 90% reduction in application fees. Most recently, QFC unveiled its platinum onboarding service, a new fast-track solution that enables one-hour incorporation for companies seeking speed and premium set-up experience. These initiatives lower entry barriers, strengthen the business environment, and underline QFC's commitment to enabling global and local firms to establish, grow, and thrive in Qatar.

MCIT signs MoU with Alchemist to enhance innovation and entrepreneurship ecosystem

QNA
Doha

The Ministry of Communications and Information Technology (MCIT) has signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with Alchemist Doha, the local branch of the global Alchemist Accelerator, which specialises in supporting business-to-business (B2B) startups.

This partnership aims to enhance Qatar's innovation and entrepreneurship ecosystem, attract high-growth technology companies, and further reinforce Qatar's efforts to build a knowledge-based, innovation-driven digital economy. This agreement establishes a strategic partnership between MCIT and Alchemist, opening global investment pathways for local startups and providing an attractive environment for international technology companies seeking regional expansion.

The collaboration supports Qatar's national ambitions to advance digital transformation, diversify the economy, and strengthen the country's competitiveness within the global technology and innovation landscape.

The MoU was signed by Director of Digital Innovation at MCIT, Eman al-Kuwari and CEO and founder of Alchemist Accelerator, Ravi Belani. Commenting on the agreement, Eman al-Kuwari affirmed that: "This partnership reflects Qatar's commitment to building a thriving digital economy powered by innovation, talent, and global collaboration. By attracting high-growth technology companies, we are creating



The MoU was signed by Director of Digital Innovation at MCIT, Eman al-Kuwari, and CEO and founder of Alchemist Accelerator, Ravi Belani.

new opportunities for local startups, strengthening our innovation ecosystem, and accelerating progress toward the goals of Digital Agenda 2030."

Under the MoU, the ministry will support the attraction and relocation of 12 high-growth technology startups from within the Alchemist network to Qatar. MCIT will provide the required facilitation and support, including the al-

location of five co-working spaces annually at the Digital Incubation Center, and will coordinate with the government entities to enable these companies to deploy their innovative digital solutions.

Meanwhile, Alchemist will assume full financial responsibility for the operational requirements of these startups. Extending over three years and renewable thereafter, the MoU establishes a

framework for joint governance that defines clear coordination mechanisms and responsibilities for both parties, ensuring effective collaboration and the achievement of shared objectives. The agreement is part of the ministry's ongoing efforts to strengthen Qatar's digital entrepreneurship landscape and foster a dynamic, future-ready innovation ecosystem.

GTA launches five-year strategy to strengthen modern tax system

QNA
Doha

The General Tax Authority (GTA) has launched its five-year strategy in a new step towards strengthening its role as a prudent and forward-looking tax system that aligns with national aspirations and supports the country's sustainable development.

In a speech delivered on the occasion, HE the President of GTA, Khalifa bin Jassim al-Jaham al-Kuwari, emphasised, during a ceremony attended by GTA employees and a number of partners, that the new strategy draws its vision from the directives of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani, who consistently underscores the importance of fostering innovation, embracing development, and shaping a new phase of national work where people are at the centre and creative ideas form the foundation.

HE the president of GTA noted that this strategy represents a pivotal turning point in the GTA's journey and embodies a practical response to the requirements of the coming phase, which calls for higher levels of efficiency, greater transparency, and stronger contributions to supporting the national economy.

He pointed out that over the past year, the GTA conducted a comprehensive review of its institutional landscape and built on the successes achieved to develop a future-oriented and ambitious strategic vision.

The new strategy is built on a set of core pillars, foremost among them enhancing taxpayer services by making them more accessible and transparent through simplified procedures, expanded digital

services, and proactive support that strengthens compliance and improves satisfaction.

Other key pillars include reinforcing compliance and oversight mechanisms through risk-based methodologies and modern technologies that ensure a fair and effective tax system.

The GTA also aims to solidify its position as a trusted national hub for economic and financial data by developing integrated databases and advanced analytical capabilities that support decision-makers, alongside improving operational efficiency and fostering innovation through digital transformation and procedural enhancements.

On the institutional level, the GTA places the development of its human capital at the forefront of its priorities through specialised training programs and the creation of a motivating work environment, while also strengthening transparency and trust in the tax system through clear guidelines, robust data protection, and transparent performance reporting.

Additionally, the GTA seeks to support economic diversification and business growth by facilitating compliance, reducing burdens on companies, and enhancing stakeholder engagement through regular consultations and advisory councils.

The strategy was launched under the theme "Bader" (Initiate), chosen by the GTA as a guiding message for its future direction, affirming that all employees are partners in driving the transformation journey.

Noteworthy, in a symbolic moment reflecting the empowerment of youth and their role in shaping the GTA's future, two newly-joined female employees were selected to unveil the strategy.

QIB wins 'Most Effective National Recovery 2025' award for exceptional organisational resilience

Qatar Islamic Bank (QIB) has been awarded the 'Most Effective National Recovery 2025' award in recognition of its outstanding ability in demonstrating sector-leading resilience, recovery capability, and operational discipline. The award was received by Rakesh Sanghvi, Group Chief Risk Officer, during the 2025 Business Continuity & Resilience Conference held in Doha.

The national recognition reflects QIB's robust crisis readiness, enhanced recovery mechanisms, and continued investment in resilient operations across the bank. Over the past year, QIB strengthened its enterprise-wide Business Continuity Management System, revamped its continuity governance model, advanced digital and payments resilience, integrated cyber and operational disruption readiness, expanded vendor continuity frameworks, and executed comprehensive recovery testing programmes. A key highlight of the year was the development of a comprehensive Geopolitical Response Plan, created in response to the evolving geopolitical environment in the region. QIB assessed multiple escalation scenarios, evaluated potential impacts on customer-facing services, digital channels, payments,



Rakesh Sanghvi, QIB Group Chief Risk Officer, receiving the award during the 2025 Business Continuity & Resilience Conference held in Doha.

and branch operations, and established tailored response and continuity plans for each scenario to ensure uninterrupted service to its customers. QIB's achievements also included major improvements to crisis leadership preparedness, such as enhanced incident escalation and crisis communication mechanisms, upgraded recovery strategies for critical functions, and strengthened collaboration with regulators and critical infrastructure partners. These initiatives collectively elevated the bank's resilience maturity and ensured a future-

ready capability to sustain operations under complex disruption conditions. Sanghvi said: "This recognition reflects QIB's strong commitment to safeguarding financial continuity in Qatar. Our Business Continuity and Operational Resilience teams have worked tirelessly to build a comprehensive, technology-enabled, and proactive resilience framework that protects our customers and supports national stability." QIB remains committed to strengthening its operational resilience capabilities and contributing to the security, stability, and continuity of Qatar's financial ecosystem.

UDC wins 'gold and silver' at Abu Dhabi Maritime Awards 2025

United Development Company (UDC), the master developer of The Pearl Island and Gewan Island, has won the Gold Award for 'Outstanding Marina' and the Silver Award for 'Sustainability' at the Abu Dhabi Maritime Awards 2025.

The recognition marks a major achievement for The Pearl Island Marina, inaugurated in 2007 along a 5km waterfront.

The award follows a rigorous and multi-layered evaluation process that included formal submissions, committee assessments, and a two-hour in-depth expert interview, underscoring the credibility and robustness of this recognition.

Today, the marina stands among the most advanced and vibrant in the Middle East, offering a dynamic marine lifestyle that combines high operational standards, hospitality excellence, and sustainable practices.

The Abu Dhabi Maritime Awards honour marinas that demonstrate excellence in safety, service quality, environmental practices, and innovation.

This year's win reflects how closely The Pearl Island Marina aligns with these principles by integrating advanced technologies, improving operational performance, enhancing visitor experiences, and strengthening customer loyalty.

Yasser al-Jaidah, president and CEO of UDC, said: "This recognition reflects the significant progress The Pearl Island Marina has made in delivering a world-class marine experience built on

operational excellence and a firm commitment to environmental sustainability. Our efforts to develop an advanced and responsible marine environment continue to elevate the experience for yacht owners and visitors alike.

"This achievement also reinforces our vision for The Pearl Island as a fully integrated and vibrant destination, and we remain dedicated to investing in sustainable marine infrastructure that supports Qatar's long-term development goals."

UDC continues to advance its environmental efforts through impactful initiatives, most notably the "Sea Bin" project and the CollecThor initiative, both designed to maintain clean waters and protect marine life.

To date, 20 water-filtration devices have been installed, successfully collecting over 150 kilograms of plastic waste and filtering more than 8mn litres of seawater from The Pearl Island Marina.

The company also organised a large-scale seabed cleanup campaign with the participation of 250 professional divers, who removed more than 800kg of plastic and metal waste from the seabed of Porto Arabia across an area of 30,000sq m, representing approximately 60% of the marina, making it one of Qatar's most significant marine environmental cleanup initiatives.

In addition to these efforts, The Pearl Island Marina operates the world's largest backwater management system for marina operations, collecting over 1mn litres annually and preventing pollution

caused by greywater and blackwater discharge, further reinforcing its commitment to environmental stewardship and marine sustainability.

In 2023, UDC introduced the innovative Smart Pedestal System, an advanced Internet of Things (IoT) solution that enables yacht owners to monitor their water usage, energy consumption, and overall environmental impact directly from their vessels.

In parallel, UDC continues to enhance its marine infrastructure through the inauguration of the Corinthia Yacht Club, which provides berths for yachts up to 40m in length, further positioning The Pearl Island as a premier destination for regional and international yachts.

The Pearl Island Marina, operated by Ronautica Middle East, also maintains its distinguished status as a recipient of the 'Gold Anchor' accreditation, one of the world's leading marina quality assessment programmes.

UDC's environmental agenda additionally includes comprehensive studies on marine biodiversity around the island, covering seagrass, algae, and reef habitats, to ensure ecological balance and long-term sustainability.

Reaffirming its strong commitment to social responsibility, UDC was recently awarded the 'Best CSR Initiative in the Real Estate Sector in Qatar' for the second consecutive year during the Qatar CSR Summit, recognising the company's ongoing contributions to social and environmental development.