

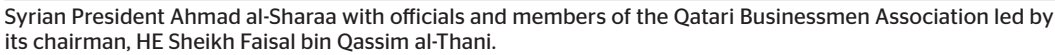
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US backs Iraq's plan to move Lukoil oil field to American firm



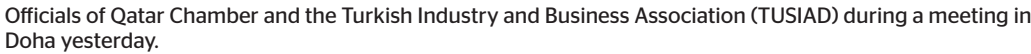
QCB activates Qatari riyal, foreign currency transfers via QA-RTGS

The move strengthens the country's financial infrastructure and supports digital transformation of the financial sector, according to the QCB

Qatar Chamber hosted a delegation from the Turkish Industry and Business Association (TUSIAD) to discuss trade and economic relations in a meeting held in Doha yesterday. The meeting was led by Qatar Chamber first vice-chairman Mohamed bin Towar al-Kuwari, alongside TUSIAD board member Cagatay Ozdoru. Also in attendance were Qatar Chamber second vice-chairman Rashid bin Hamad al-Athba and board members Dr Mohamed bin Jawhar al-Mohamed and Shaheen bin Mohamed al-Mohannadi. Officials from both sides also reviewed key areas of co-operation between the Qatari and Turkish private sectors. The meeting also highlighted the investment climate and opportunities available in both countries.

Al-Kuwari said Qatar and Turkiye witnessed rapid growth in bilateral

industrial and financial companies and business families. He highlighted the Turkish side's interest in forming commercial alliances with Qatari companies to establish investments in Türkiye, stressing that TUSIAD can serve as a key reference for information required by Qatari investors seeking to invest in the Turkish market. He also called on Qatar Chamber to send a Qatari business delegation to Türkiye to explore the available investment opportunities. Al-Athba said many Qatari investors own significant investments in Türkiye and are looking forward to further expanding them. He added that there are numerous investment opportunities in the Qatari market for Turkish businesspeople, considering the many advantages and incentives offered by Qatar to attract foreign investments.



The US-Qatar Business Council Doha (USQBC Doha) and the AI Trust Foundation recently hosted a reception in Doha to welcome a 15-member US delegation comprising AI startup and tech CEOs, technology and AI governance attorneys, and civil society leaders.

The delegation is in Doha as a planned initiative under the April 2025 Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between USQBC Doha and the AI Trust Foundation. The visit will also include the delegation's participation in the two-day World Summit AI MENA, which opens today (December 9) at the Doha Exhibition and Convention Centre (DECC).

The reception builds on joint programming developed under the April 2025 MoU between USQBC Doha and the AI Trust Foundation, which advances cross-border collaboration on AI, responsible innovation, and bilateral trade and investment. Through the partnership, both organisations have convened a series of engagements bringing together leaders from technology, policy, and civil society to

strengthen US-Qatar co-operation in emerging technologies.

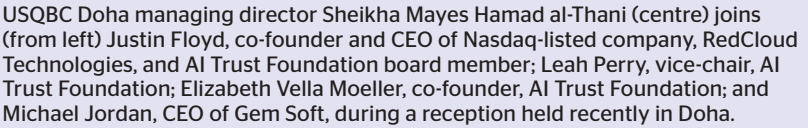
"The delegation's visit to Doha is emblematic of the ongoing commitment between USQBC Doha and the AI Trust Foundation to foster private-sector-to-private-sector exchanges in the areas of emerging technologies between Qatar and the US," said USQBC Doha managing director Sheikha Mayes Hamad al-Thani in her opening remarks at the reception.

Leah Perry, vice-chair of the AI Trust Foundation, added: "Our partnership with USQBC Doha is about building bridges across the global AI ecosystem – bridges that support research and development, workforce upskilling, and ethical standards that enable trade, innovation and investment. This reception follows multiple collaborative forums we've hosted together that have created momentum; now is the time to deliver concrete, meaningful outcomes."

Justin Floyd, co-founder and CEO of Nasdaq-listed RedCloud Technologies, as well as AI Trust Foundation board member, who supported the

reception as a strategic sponsor, emphasised Qatar's strategic appeal to US technology firms: "Qatar is future-ready. Its market clarity and long-term vision make it an ideal partner for American technology companies scaling responsibly. RedCloud's regional growth, including our recently announced AI-driven FMCG platform joint venture in Saudi Arabia, reflects the commercial opportunities we see across the Gulf." Michael Jordan, CEO of Gem Soft and reception strategic sponsor, emphasised its timeliness: "Qatar's Vision 2030 creates a decisive environment for responsible AI leadership, and Gem Soft is proud to contribute technologies that reinforce the nation's position as a regional hub for trusted digital infrastructure."

Supporting this vision, Gem Soft's AI-powered enterprise platform, Gem Team, delivers secure and scalable intelligence that strengthens operational performance across various sectors. The reception brought together policymakers, investors, entrepreneurs, and industry leaders to deepen private-sector collaboration on



responsible AI, explore pathways for bilateral investment, and showcase US technology leadership in the region ahead of World Summit AI MENA.

The USQBC Doha is a strategic platform for advancing bilateral commercial engagement between the US and Qatar. Positioned at the intersection of business, policy, and investment, USQBC Doha enables cross-border collaboration by providing institutional access, market

intelligence, and targeted facilitation to stakeholders operating across high-impact sectors. The AI Trust Foundation is a Washington, DC-based nonprofit that promotes and bridges tech innovation with responsible AI through cross-sector partnerships, standards development, and capacity building. It convenes industry, legal experts, and civil society to advance ethical, scalable AI solutions that support economic growth and public benefit.

US backs Iraq’s plan to transfer Lukoil oil field to American firm

Bloomberg
Baghdad

The US government is backing Iraq's plan to transfer Lukoil PJSC's stake in a giant oil field to an American company, days before a sanctions waiver on the Russian firm is set to expire.

Iraq's Oil Ministry last week said it's approaching US companies to take over the majority holding in West Qurna 2, which pumps about 10% of the country's crude. The Trump administration's preference is for the Russian firm's global assets to be taken over by a US entity, people familiar with the matter said last month.

The ministry didn't name any companies, but US firms including Exxon Mobil Corp and Chevron Corp have emerged as potential suitors for Lukoil's assets. For West Qurna-2, Iraq would prefer Exxon, which had previously operated the neighbouring West Qurna 1 oil field, one person said, asking not to be identified because the information is private.

Exxon recently returned to Iraq after a two-year absence, signing an initial agreement in October that could pave the way for developing the Majnoon field in the country's south. Chevron is in discussions to enter Iraq, Chief Executive Officer Mike Wirth said at the company's November 12 investor day.

“We are encouraged by the Iraqi Ministry of Oil's initial agreements with Exxon and Chevron, the recent commitment to transition West Qurna-2 to a US operator,” a State Department spokesperson said in answer to questions from Bloomberg. “The US will continue to champion the interests of American companies in Iraq.”



The logo of Lukoil is seen in West Qurna oilfield in Iraq's southern province of Basra (file). The US government is backing Iraq's plan to transfer Lukoil's stake in a giant oil field to an American company, days before a sanctions waiver on the Russian firm is set to expire.

'Iraq shuts down West Qurna 2 field due to leak'

Iraq has shut down the entire oil production at Lukoil's West Qurna 2 oilfield, one of the world's largest, due to a leak on an export pipeline, two Iraqi energy officials told Reuters on Monday. Lukoil declared force majeure last month at West Qurna 2 as it was hit with sanctions alongside Rosneft as part of US President Donald Trump's push to end the war in Ukraine.

The field, with output of around 460,000 barrels per day, accounts for about 0.5% of world oil supply and 9% of total output in Iraq. Opec's second-largest producer after Saudi Arabia.

Lukoil's 75% operational stake in the field is its largest foreign asset. Iraq has frequently produced above its output target agreed with Opec and allies including Russia, known as Opec+.

Exxon and Chevron didn't immediately respond to requests for comment. A call to Lukoil's press service went unanswered and the company didn't respond to an e-mail sent

outside of normal business hours in Moscow.

Iraq, the second-largest producer in the Organisation of the Petroleum Exporting Countries, has been seek-

ing to attract Western investment in its oil fields to bolster technical capabilities. Securing a US operator for West Qurna 2 would serve this goal while also dovetailing with Washington's strategic preferences.

After the US announced sanctions on Lukoil — intended to pressure Russia to reach a peace deal in Ukraine — Iraq's state oil marketing company SOMO took over sales of the company's share of crude from West Qurna 2, Ali Nizar al-Shatri, the company's general manager, told Asharq TV on Sunday evening.

SOMO was able to sell all the quantities available and production at the field will not be affected, al-Shatri said. His comments alleviated concerns about a possible supply disruption on global markets stemming from the sanctions.

Asset manager Guggenheim plans Saudi presence as part of Gulf investment push

Reuters
Abu Dhabi

US-based Guggenheim Investments, with assets of about \$357bn, is actively considering an office in Saudi Arabia and wants to capitalise on investment opportunities in infrastructure and transportation as part of its expansion in the Gulf region.

The firm has an office in Dubai, and is in the process of getting licensed in Abu Dhabi, the UAE's oil-rich capital city and home to sovereign wealth funds managing around \$2tn.

“We are very, very positive on the region,” Anne Walsh, chief investment officer at Guggenheim Partners Investment Management, told Reuters on the sidelines of the Milken Institute's Middle East and Africa summit in Abu Dhabi.

“And to be a leader in artificial intelligence and technology investment, which I see amongst the countries in the region, and the ability to harness energy, both fossil fuels and others, here in the region is going to be strong as well to support that technology business. So I see a great deal of opportunity.”

Asked whether Guggenheim was looking at Riyadh, Walsh said the company was in “active due consideration, yes.”

“And, you know, we are looking to deploy capital in Saudi Arabia as well. So not just with an office, but to actually make investments, and particularly from our transportation equipment and infrastructure investing. That makes a lot of sense to us.”

Saudi and US officials touted billions of dollars in new investments and growing financial ties between the two countries in November.

Gulf states have accelerated efforts to diversify their economies away from hydrocarbons for longer-term sustainable growth, investing heavily in non-oil sectors like financial services, tourism, technology and manufacturing.

Earlier this year, Guggenheim Investments became a strategic partner of the Future Investment Initiative Institute, which organises Riyadh's flagship annual investment conference.

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Second edition of ‘Doha Arbitration Day 2025’ Conference held



The event was held in the presence of HE the Minister of Justice and Minister of State for Cabinet Affairs, Ibrahim bin Ali al-Mohannadi.

The second edition of the Doha Arbitration Day 2025 Conference was held at The Ritz-Carlton, Doha, under the patronage of the Ministry of Justice and the Qatar International Court. The event was held in the presence of HE the Minister of Justice and Minister of State for Cabinet Affairs, Ibrahim bin Ali al-Mohannadi. The conference was hosted by the Chartered Institute of Arbitrators (CIARB) and organised in partnership with the Qatar International Centre for Conciliation and Arbitration (QICCA), the Qatar Lawyers Association, and the Qatari Experts and Arbitrators Association. The conference witnessed broad participation from representatives of judicial, governmental, academic, and legal institutions, in addition to a distinguished group of specialists and practitioners in the fields of arbitration and dispute resolution. The conference opened with

remarks by Saad Hegazy, CIARB Trustee and Head of the Organising Committee, followed by contributions from Sheikh Dr Thani al-Thani, Vice-Chair of QICCA; Mohammed Lahdan al-Muhannadi, Chair of the Qatari Experts and Arbitrators Association; and Mubarak al-Sulaiti, Chair of the Qatar Lawyers Association. The speakers highlighted the importance of capacity building, fostering shared expertise, and supporting the development of an effective and resilient arbitration ecosystem in the State of Qatar. A keynote address was delivered by Prof Dr Mohamed Abdel Wahab, Global President-Elect of CIARB for 2025, offering insights into global trends in international arbitration and their relevance to the evolving legal and commercial landscape. QICDRC CEO Faisal Rashid al-Sahouti emphasised the significance of the conference and its role in strengthening the culture of arbitration within the State of

Qatar. He noted that the Second Edition of Doha Arbitration Day reflects the collective efforts of the Ministry of Justice, QICDRC, and all partner institutions in developing a modern and advanced arbitration ecosystem that enhances confidence in the business and investment environment, and reinforces Qatar’s position as a leading regional and international hub for dispute resolution. The conference concluded with a formal honouring ceremony and the graduation of the first cohort of Ministry of Justice employees joining CIARB membership – marking an important milestone in advancing national expertise and strengthening Qatar’s capabilities in arbitration and alternative dispute resolution. The conference also followed the recent election of the new members of the CIARB Qatar Branch Committee, chaired by Dr Saad bin Ahmed al-Muhannadi.

Scale7 launches its new identity as a hub for creative, cultural industries

QNA
Doha

Scale7, supported by QDB, announced the launch of its newly expanded identity under the title “Scale7, the Creative and Cultural Industries Hub” to become a comprehensive national platform that brings together creators, innovators and experts in the creative and cultural fields under one roof and to provide them customised with support packages, which contributes to economic diversification and supports the Qatar’s position as a global centre for culture and creative industries.

The hub provides an interactive space for work and collaboration between entrepreneurs and provides them with advanced facilities and tools via the Digital Fabrication Lab to test their creative ideas and implement their innovative projects.

It also provides financial and advisory services and specialised programmes to incubate and accelerate businesses, contributing to the support of six different creative and cultural sectors, including advertising, digital product design and related crafts, fashion technology, the digital game industry, language technologies, and literature.

“Scale7, the Creative and Cultural Industries Hub” also offers Integrated programmes that include projects at various stages, from initial concept to global expansion, in addition to providing investment opportunities, capacity building, access to broad networks of local and international partners, and a range of other support services to facilitate the entry of com-



QDB continues to develop the support packages offered to the business sector across various fields, with the aim of strengthening the private sector, increasing its contribution to the national economy, and supporting the development of a resilient, knowledge-based economy.

panies and investors into the Qatari market and enable their regional and global growth and expansion.

This announcement builds on years of achievements and successes, as “Scale7” has collaborated with 88 startups to date, that worked with a network of more than 80 advisors and experts from Qatar and around the world, and providing support exceed-

ing QR13.5mn through investment, as well as advisory and in-kind support.

QDB continues to develop the support packages offered to the business sector across various fields, with the aim of strengthening the private sector, increasing its contribution to the national economy, and supporting the development of a resilient, knowledge-based economy.



Qatar Chamber first vice-chairman Mohammed bin Towar al-Kuwari held a meeting yesterday with Ville Skinnari, a member of the Finnish Parliament and chairman of the Qatar Finland Friendship Group, who participated in the recently concluded Doha Forum 2025.

Qatar Chamber discusses trade, economic ties with Finland

Qatar Chamber first vice-chairman Mohammed bin Towar al-Kuwari held a meeting yesterday with Ville Skinnari, a member of the Finnish Parliament and chairman of the Qatar Finland Friendship Group, who participated in the recently concluded Doha Forum 2025.

During the meeting, which was also attended by Com-

mercial Counsellor Kimmo Laaksonen, both sides discussed trade and economic co-operation and reviewed prospects for encouraging mutual investments and the pivotal role of the private sector in boosting trade exchange.

Al-Kuwari said Qatar-Finland trade stood at QR354mn last year, emphasising the mutual desire to increase this

to higher levels. Highlighting Qatar's interest in exploring investment opportunities in Finland, al-Kuwari affirmed the chamber's support in strengthening cooperation ties and readiness to assist Finnish investors seeking to benefit from Qatar's attractive investment climate, available opportunities, and the numerous incentives offered to investors.

MoCI enhances investors’ awareness of competition principles and sound commercial practices

QNA
Doha

The Ministry of Commerce and Industry (MoCI) organised an awareness event targeting investors and company owners on the occasion of World Competition Day, as part of the ministry’s ongoing efforts to entrench the principles of fair competition in the State of Qatar and to raise awareness of Law No 19 of 2006 on the Protection of Competition and the Prevention of Monopolistic Practices. The event featured an informative presentation outlining the ministry’s role in safeguarding competition and monitoring

the Qatari market, in addition to an explanation of the most prominent violations and behaviours that may adversely affect the business environment. Participants were also briefed on the services provided by the ministry, including awareness initiatives and the procedures followed in assessing potentially anti-competitive practices, as well as its role in promoting compliance with competition principles and encouraging sound commercial conduct. The observance of World Competition Day serves as an opportunity to reaffirm the importance of strengthening competitiveness and improving the business environment in the country.

IMF official stresses importance of AI, economic diversification for future

QNA
Doha

Deputy Managing Director at the International Monetary Fund (IMF) Bo Li stressed the importance of artificial intelligence (AI) and economic diversification as the two forces that safeguard the economic future of the State of Qatar, noting the growing impact of artificial intelligence on the paths of economic diversification and the future of labour markets.

This came during an event organised by the School of Economics, Administration and Public Policy at the Doha Institute for Graduate Studies entitled ‘Building tomorrow: artificial intelligence, economic diversification and the future of work’, within the framework of the IMF’s regional outreach programme, and the institute’s interest in researching the rapid transformations in the global economy.

Li indicated that the world today is witnessing a major shift toward new production models that require broader investments in knowledge and skills, along with more flexible government policies capable of absorbing successive technological and economic transformations. He



Deputy managing director at the International Monetary Fund Bo Li stressed the importance of artificial intelligence and economic diversification as the two forces that safeguard the economic future of the State of Qatar, noting the growing impact of artificial intelligence on the paths of economic diversification and the future of labour markets.

noted that the IMF is developing a readiness index linked to artificial intelligence.

He pointed out that the State of Qatar has invested in artificial intelligence, considering it an important tool in the education and health sectors, in addition to other sectors, noting the opportunities available to educational institutions in this context.

The IMF deputy managing director emphasised that smart technologies will reshape the structure

of work in the coming years, which requires developing countries and emerging economies to develop diversification strategies capable of enhancing productivity and mitigating the risks associated with technological changes. He stressed the importance of developing legislation that aligns with digital transformations and redirecting investment towards education, training, and capacity building to support the workforce in the face of labour market changes.

Divided Fed set for contentious interest rate meeting

AFP
Washington

While the US Federal Reserve’s final interest rate meeting this year could see an unusual amount of division, financial markets view a third straight interest rate cut as nearly certain.

When the Fed last met in October, Chair Jerome Powell asserted that another rate cut in December was “not a foregone conclusion”, pointing to “strongly differing views” within the central bank.

Minutes from the Fed’s most recent meeting showed many officials expect a further uptick in underlying goods inflation as President Donald Trump’s tariffs bite.

But recent comments from leading Fed officials also reflected support for cutting again because of a weakening labour market, even though inflation is still above the Fed’s two percent target.

This week’s outcome in the “deeply divided” Fed was “too close to call”, UniCredit said, also acknowledging that favourable comments from New York Fed

bank chief John Williams towards a cut were a notable “intervention.” “As one of the most senior members of the (Fed committee), it seems unlikely Williams would have said this without Powell’s prior approval,” UniCredit said.

Policymakers generally hold rates at a higher level to tamp down price increases, but a rapidly deteriorating jobs market could nudge them to slash rates further to boost the economy.

“Usually, as you get closer to a policy meeting, it becomes quite apparent and transparent what the Federal Open Market Committee is going to do,” said Nationwide Chief Economist Kathy Bostjancic, referring to the Fed’s rate-setting committee.

“This time is very different,” she told AFP late last month.

Financial markets rallied following Williams’ statement on November 21 that rates could go lower in the “near term.”

Futures markets currently show more than 87% odds that the Fed will cut rates to between 3.50% and 3.75%, according to CME FedWatch. The Fed moved into rate cutting mode this fall, with rate

cuts both in September and October.

But a government shutdown from October 1 through November 12 sapped the central bank of most of the key data points for assessing whether inflation or employment is now the bigger priority.

The latest available government data showed the jobless rate crept up from 4.3% to 4.4% in September, even as hiring beat expectations. While delayed publications on September’s economic conditions have trickled out, the US government has cancelled full releases of October jobs and consumer inflation figures because the shutdown hit data collection.

Instead, available figures will be published with November’s reports, but only after the Fed’s upcoming rate meeting.

The US personal consumption expenditures price index rose to 2.8% on an annual basis in September, from 2.7% in August.

The “Fed faces a bit of a paradoxical situation,” said EY-Parthenon Chief Economist Gregory Daco. “The Fed says these decisions will be data-dependent, but there isn’t a lot of data to go on.”