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QSE sees 91% stocks gain as index surges 186 points; M-cap adds QR10.91bn



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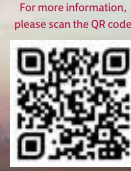


HORMUZ BLOCKAGE: Page 2

Saudi Arabia raises Asia oil to record premium as war upends market

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The Qatar Stock Exchange-listed insurance companies have delivered stronger than expected top-line growth and their sub-100% net combined ratio indicates sustained underwriting profitability in the medium term; even as external risks may exert pressure in the long term.

QSE-listed insurers record stronger than expected top-line growth in 2025

By **Santhosh V Perumal**
Business Reporter

The Qatar Stock Exchange-listed insurance companies have delivered stronger than expected top-line growth and their sub-100% net combined ratio indicates sustained underwriting profitability in the medium term; even as external risks may exert pressure in the long term.

In its latest report, Insurance Monitor, a research and consulting publication in the subject, said listed insurers in Qatar delivered solid, broad-based top-line growth in 2025, with insurance revenue rising 8.3% to \$4.46bn.

Overall net profit reached \$0.46bn, supported by a strong contribution from investment income, averaging returns of 4.3% (weighted average return on investment) for the year.

The QSE-listed insurance companies' net profit before tax growth was 21.8%; while net profit after tax was 14.6% in 2025. Insurance services (which include net finance income/expense from insurance/reinsurance contracts issued) constituted 20% of net

profit and investment management contributed the remaining 80% in 2025.

Qatar Islamic Insurance and Beema displayed higher than average growth in net earnings after tax, reporting 19% and 13% growth respectively. Qatar Insurance saw 10% year-on-year growth, while Al Koot and QLM witnessed 1% each in the review period.

As for revenue earnings, five of the seven insurance companies reported higher than average growth in net insurance revenues. Doha Insurance saw 43% year-on-year growth, followed by Beema 28%, QLM 23%, Al Khaleej Takaful 20% and Al Koot 12%.

"The (8.3%) growth (in insurance revenues) reflects high-quality expansion. The stronger-than-trend expansion in revenue earnings has been due to rising demand and strong underlying economy," an analyst with a leading investment house covering the sector told Gulf Times.

The listed insurance companies' net combined ratio -- a measure of underwriting profitability after factoring claims -- stood at 95.9% in 2025 compared to 96.3% the previous year.

"The persistence of sub-100%

combined ratios signals that insurers are likely to sustain underwriting profitability in the medium term," the analyst said.

Qatar Insurance reported 100% net combined ratio, QLM 99%, Doha Insurance 89%, Al Koot 86%, Al Khaleej Takaful 86%, Beema 854%, Qatar General Insurance and Reinsurance 81% and Qatar Islamic Insurance 63% in 2025.

Highlighting that the sector appears "structurally resilient," the analyst however, said going forward, external risks such as inflation, supply chain disruptions, and geopolitical uncertainty may exert pressure.

Overall, 2025 was a strong year for most listed GCC (Gulf Cooperation Council) insurers; however, its relevance has been overtaken by recent geopolitical developments since March 2026, which is expected to impact insurer balance sheets in the year ahead, said the report, which was prepared in association with Lux Actuaries and Consultants.

However, global credit rating agency Standard & Poor's says that the direct impact of war-related claims would remain limited due to exclusions and reinsurance protections.

Vodafone Qatar introduces new portfolio of business mobile and fixed plans

Vodafone Qatar has launched a new portfolio of Business Mobile and Fixed plans, designed to support organisations across Qatar with reliable connectivity, greater flexibility, and affordable, simplified choices. The new portfolio introduces Business Postpaid, Business Unlimited, and Business Broadband plans, tailored to meet the evolving needs of businesses of all sizes. The offering enables companies to enhance productivity, scale operations efficiently, and remain connected in an increasingly digital business environment. The Business Mobile plans provide seamless connectivity through unlimited local calls and messaging, alongside data

allowances. The plans also include access to essential communication tools, such as Microsoft Teams and WhatsApp, as well as enhanced roaming benefits for professionals operating across international markets. In parallel, Vodafone Qatar has strengthened its Business Broadband portfolio with expanded speed options and a new suite of value-added services, including fixed and landline connectivity, Microsoft licences, mesh Wi-Fi extenders, and built-in security features, enabling businesses to operate within secure, fully connected environments. Mohammed Mohsin Alyafei, Enterprise Business Unit

director at Vodafone Qatar, said: "Businesses today require more than just connectivity; they need reliable, flexible plans that support growth and enable them to adapt in a fast-moving digital landscape. This new portfolio reflects our continued commitment to delivering integrated connectivity plans that support how businesses operate and grow." The launch reinforces Vodafone Qatar's position as a trusted technology and digital enablement partner, supporting businesses across Qatar while contributing to the country's ongoing digital transformation in line with Qatar National Vision 2030.

New connectivity plans designed for every business



The offering enables companies to enhance productivity, scale operations efficiently, and remain connected in an increasingly digital business environment

QFCRA launches refreshed brand identity

The Qatar Financial Centre Regulatory Authority (QFCRA) has launched a refreshed brand identity, including a new logo that aligns with the updated visual identity of the Qatar Financial Centre (QFC). This update reflects the continued evolution and the commitment to reinforcing a unified and cohesive identity within the QFC ecosystem. It also underscores the QFCRA's role in supporting a robust, transparent and internationally aligned regulatory environment in Qatar. The QFCRA remains dedicated to upholding international best practices and contributing to the development



of Qatar's resilient, efficient and innovative financial sector. Early this year, the QFC had launched a refreshed brand identity and strategic campaign 'Grow with Confidence', setting the pace for how modern financial centres support

growth, resilience, and innovation. The campaign reflects the QFC's evolution into a long-term growth partner for businesses, supporting them not only at the point of entry, but throughout their full lifecycle of growth and expansion.

Sheikh Khalifa discusses trade ties with Tajikistan, Indonesia, Finland envoys

Qatar Chamber Chairman Sheikh Khalifa bin Jassim al-Thani held separate meetings yesterday with the top diplomats of Tajikistan, Indonesia, and Finland to discuss economic and trade cooperation.

Ambassadors Nurmurad Mohammed Ali of Tajikistan, Syahda Guruh Langkah Samudera of Indonesia, and Juha Mustonen of Finland also discussed ways to enhance and further develop their respective countries' relations with Qatar. The meetings also addressed the investment climate and available opportunities, in addition to the role of the private sector in promoting trade exchange and mutual investments.

Sheikh Khalifa received invitations to visit Tajikistan, Indonesia, and Finland, aimed at strengthening economic ties, boosting bilateral trade, and exploring opportunities for joint investments. He welcomed the invitations, highlighting the strong relations between Qatar and the three countries and noting the keen interest of Qatari businessmen in exploring investment



From left: Qatar Chamber chairman Sheikh Khalifa bin Jassim al-Thani during meetings with Finnish ambassador Juha Mustonen; Indonesian ambassador Syahda Guruh Langkah Samudera; and Tajikistan ambassador Nurmurad Mohammed Ali.

opportunities in these markets. During his meeting with the Indonesian ambassador, both sides emphasised the importance of signing a memorandum of understanding between Qatar Chamber and its Indonesian

counterpart to enhance cooperation between the two business communities. They also stressed the need to strengthen collaboration in the field of food security and increase trade exchange.

Meanwhile, during the meeting with the Finnish ambassador, discussions addressed cooperation between the business sectors of both countries in the field of the circular economy. The two sides also explored the possibility

of signing a memorandum of understanding to enhance cooperation between Qatari and Finnish businessmen and investors, and to support the establishment of joint investment projects in both countries.



LEGAL PERSPECTIVE

Legal platform for e-transactions

By Dr AbdelGadir Warsama Ghalib

Many e-transactions including e-banking, e-gov and e-commerce are tremendously growing worldwide. We could easily notice that it is happening and spreading everywhere every day and every hour.

Banks and other business companies and institutions, in many countries, are benefiting from this new atmosphere and are offering diversified e-transactions. The e-gov, projects likewise, as we see, are rapidly taking shape and started to pursue the performance of many essential government transactions that are needed as necessary and immediate services for any person in this e-era. Needless to say, that e-banking, e-transactions and e-gov services depend to a large extent on the output of electronic software and other media that requires proper utilization and implementation of the internet and its technological fields that has erupted as consequence to the new IT revolution.

The establishment and implementation

of e-companies and e-gov projects in many countries, will no doubt, give a great boost to all services, particularly it will enhance to a great extent, the new commercial and other investment activities. However, the potential of such electronic services are in need of certain infrastructure that should be put in place in order to give the necessary impetus to such important e-projects and necessary e-services.

One of the main infrastructures needed for the new technologies that came as a result of the IT revolution, is the legal platform and the legal framework that should be cemented carefully. This sensitive task should be shouldered with due diligence and professionalism, taking into account the experience of advanced jurisdictions in this respect. There is a great need, also, for cyber laws to combat e-crimes and e-criminals.

The internet and related software activities, as we know, is a sort of computer program primarily aimed at linking certain points electronically. Within this context, it is important to highlight some legal problems or issues that could affect

the e-transactions process unless certain legislations are put in order and properly maintained with the intention of developing such new advanced processes. The e-transactions and the e-projects will no doubt enhance the expansion of e-commerce with other business entities in all parts of the world. However, we have to admit that e-banking and e-commerce transactions are still facing some legal, commercial and logistical problems. Among other things, we mention that, payments systems worldwide are still facing some practical difficulties. Some companies may be out of competition because they don't have developed websites, or even if they have, are unable to display their products in an attractive marketing or informative way.

Some commercial entities or individuals are still facing computer literacy and part of e-commerce business is processed through some mediators and the mediation process requires legalization of the relationship between the parties concerned. Some of the main software companies, in the world, are regularly facing certain legal litigation among



themselves or with their governments. Such litigation or acute legal problems may affect the future of such programs or delay their start.

Above points explain that e-banking, e-transactions or e-commerce are not without their share of obstacles. No need for getting panicked, as this could happen to all other sectors and in all trades. However, some of mentioned obstacles raise an urgent call for clear positive legal steps to be taken, so as to prepare a healthy legal environment for all types of e-transactions, e-banking and e-gov projects to achieve complete and endless benefits to stakeholders in all communities.

■ Dr AbdelGadir Warsama Ghalib is a corporate legal counsel.
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Taiwan to ship oil from Saudi Red Sea ports

AFP
Taipei

Taiwan will redirect ships to bring crude oil from Saudi Arabian Red Sea ports, the government said Monday, as it seeks to avoid the disruption in the Strait of Hormuz.

Oil prices have soared due to the Middle East war. Iran has effectively closed the Strait of Hormuz – a critical route for global crude oil and gas – in retaliation for US-Israeli strikes.

Taiwan relied on the Middle East for nearly 70% of its oil imports in 2025, with Saudi Arabia accounting for almost 29%, official data show.

Other Middle East sources were the United Arab Emirates, Qatar, Kuwait, Oman and Iraq. The US supplied just over 28%.

"We have worked to adjust shipping routes so that shipments leave via the Red Sea, or we use spot purchases to make up the difference," Tsou Yu-hsin, deputy director general of the Industrial Development Administration in the Ministry of Economic Affairs, said.

"Of this adjustment, about 46% is handled by re-routing exports through the Red Sea, and 54% through spot purchases," Tsou said, referring to the oil exports that have been disrupted by the conflict. "Overall, through these efforts, our strategic safety stock is currently above 140 days."

Tsou added the government was "confident" it would have enough LNG supplies through to the end of June, with shortfalls made up on the spot market.

Economic Affairs Minister Kung Ming-hsin said "a major energy-producing country" had recently contacted him and offered to "fully support" Taiwan's LNG needs.

"He told us that they would fully support our natural gas needs, and that if we have any demand, we can let them know," Kung said at the weekend.

"In addition, another country even said that, as some countries have released strategic petroleum reserves, they could also help coordinate if Taiwan needs it," he said.

The government has sought to shield Taiwanese consumers from the full impact of higher energy prices, using a mechanism to absorb 75% of fuel increases.

Saudi Arabia raises Asia oil to record premium as war upends market

Bloomberg
Riyadh

Saudi Arabia raised the price of its main oil grade to Asia to a record high premium, as a widening conflict in the Middle East and Iran's near-closure of the Strait of Hormuz convulse energy markets.

State oil producer Saudi Aramco increased flagship Arab Light crude for sales next month to a premium of \$19.50 over regional benchmarks for refiners in Asia, according to a price list seen by Bloomberg. Still, it was about half the level anticipated in a survey compiled by Bloomberg, with this month particularly hard to gauge given volatile Middle East indexes since the war and a plunge in prices toward the end of the month, traders said.

The Dubai and Oman oil benchmarks – used by Saudi Arabia to price its oil – had become increasingly erratic last month as the war created a shortage of the barrels used to assess prices for the region. Refiners in Asia had floated other suggestions for indexing the kingdom's oil, including switching to the global benchmark Brent.

The war that's entered its sixth week has also forced a shift in oil flows as the vital Strait of Hormuz remains largely shut, blocking the usual route for millions of barrels of crude from Saudi Arabia and other major Arabian Gulf producers. Riyadh has since



Saudi Aramco increased flagship Arab Light crude for sales next month to a premium of \$19.50 over regional benchmarks for refiners in Asia, according to a price list seen by Bloomberg. Still, it was about half the level anticipated in a survey compiled by Bloomberg

shifted most of its shipments to the Red Sea port of Yanbu, which is about 1,200 kilometers from its usual loading port of Ras Tanura on the other side of the country.

But Saudi Aramco's official list stuck with the usual practice for pricing oil for loading at Ras Tanura, adding another layer of complexity on what buyers would pay for lifting crude. The company asked customers to submit separate requests for how much oil they'd like to receive from either port and said it would only supply the Arab Light grade from Yanbu.

The war and the closure of Hormuz have driven Brent crude up by more than 50%. Aramco raised prices of the Arab Light grade by \$17 a barrel for May, the biggest jump on record. It also increased pricing on all of its other crude grades to Asia by the same amount, even if those won't be offered with Hormuz closed. Supplies to other regions such the US and Northwest Europe were also raised to a record premium.

Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates are the only two Gulf producers with significant export al-

ternatives that circumvent Hormuz. Aramco has reached the maximum capacity of 7mn barrels a day on its pipeline running to the Red Sea coast, from where it is exporting close to 5mn barrels a day of crude, or about 70% of its prewar total shipments.

Aramco has shut most production of its Medium and Heavy crude grades and is instead focusing on selling its Light and Extra Light barrels from Yanbu, Chief Executive Officer Amin Nasser said on a conference call March 10.

Iraq urges customers to send oil loading plans after Hormuz exemption

Iraq's state oil marketer SOMO has asked its customers to submit crude oil lifting schedules within 24 hours, a document reviewed by Reuters showed, following media reports that Iran has exempted Iraq from any restrictions on transit through the Strait of Hormuz.

"In light of the above, and to ensure the continuity and stability of crude oil export operations, we urge your esteemed company to submit its lifting schedules within 24 hours to enable the timely processing of your lifting programs, including vessel nominations and the contractual volumes, in full alignment with the agreed terms and conditions," SOMO said in the document issued on April 5.

"We hereby reaffirm that all loading terminals, including the Basrah Oil Terminal (BOT) and associated facilities, remain fully operational, and SOMO is in a state of full readiness to execute all contractual lifting programs without any limitation," the document said. SOMO could not be immediately reached for comment outside of office hours.

A resumption of oil exports will help the Opec member lift production as its output collapsed to about 800,000 barrels per day last month. However, some market participants said it remains to be seen if any shipowners will allow their tankers to enter the Gulf to lift oil given that the US-Israeli war with Iran is ongoing.

Bloomberg QuickTake Q&A

How Iran war is fuelling wild swings in interest-rate bets

By Alice Atkins and James Hirai

The Iran war has clouded the outlook for inflation and economic growth across the globe and, in turn, where interest rates might be heading.

The uncertainty is stirring volatility in interest-rate swap markets, where traders wager on what central banks will do next. Rate bets in the US and Europe have been swinging wildly, changing by the minute as the conflict in the Middle East continues. A lot of attention is paid to swap markets as a gauge of rate expectations. When investors shifted their view from two quarter-point rate cuts from the Bank of England this year to as many as four such hikes, this was gleaned from swap market pricing. However, there's more nuance to swap market activity as traders aren't just placing purely directional bets; some are also hedging against swings in borrowing costs.

Fluctuations in swap markets have a broader significance as well. The movements ripple across asset classes, including stocks and bonds, and can also affect mortgages and government budgets.

What are interest-rate swap markets?

Traders are constantly trying to predict the path of central bank interest rates. One of the main ways to track those expectations is through interest-rate swaps that are tied to risk-free overnight borrowing rates – benchmarks that represent the cost of borrowing cash between banks overnight and move in line with central bank policy rates.

These swaps are linked to central bank decision dates and entail an exchange of interest payment streams between two

parties over a set period. If an investor agrees to pay a fixed rate while receiving a floating one that moves with daily borrowing rates, they're betting on a central bank rate increase. If they choose to receive a fixed rate while paying a floating one, they're betting on a central bank rate cut.

As traders take these positions, the fixed rate adjusts until supply and demand balance – in other words, buyers and sellers agree that this is where central bank rates will be over a specific period.

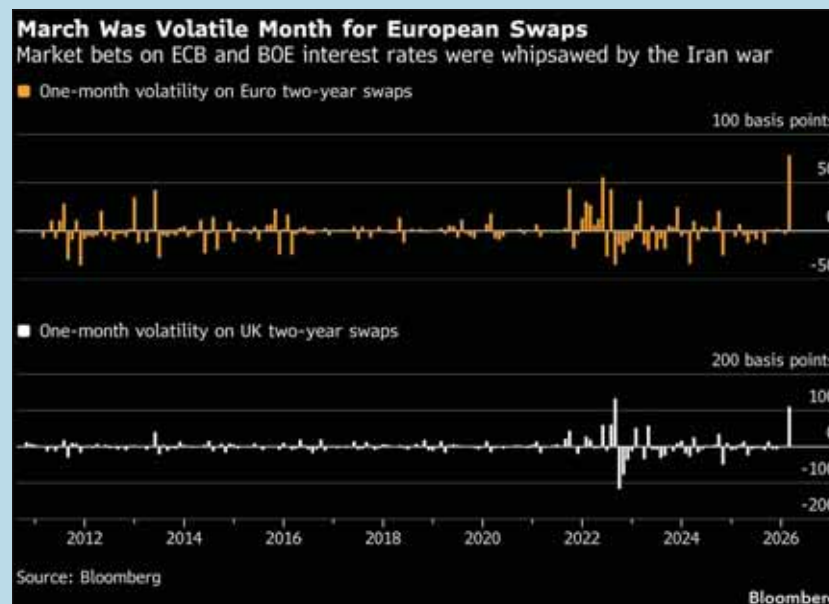
That doesn't mean this collective view should be taken as gospel. Swap market pricing often fails to accurately capture the full scale and speed of actual interest rate moves. Looking at the UK's response to the pandemic, for example, it's clear that traders were slow to bet on how many rate hikes would be needed to cool inflation, and then overshot with their expectations when rates stabilized.

Who uses swap markets?

Banks, asset managers, hedge funds and companies use swap markets to either make speculative bets on central bank policy, or to protect themselves against future interest-rate swings.

Take a company with a floating-rate loan, where its interest payments increase if central bank rates go up. To offset this risk, the firm can enter a separate interest-rate swap contract, typically with a bank, whereby it pays a fixed borrowing cost but receives a floating rate in return.

Similarly, an investor with a large portfolio of bonds may want to hedge themselves against the risk of higher central bank rates, as bond prices fall when interest rates rise. If they enter a swap contract to receive floating rates, they'll profit if interest rates move higher, offsetting the



losses on the bond portfolio. Hedge funds often operate with a much shorter time horizon than companies using swaps for hedging purposes. These funds may therefore seek to take advantage of the volatility in swap markets to place wagers on the speed and size of interest rate moves.

Why have US, UK and European rate bets been so volatile recently?

Since the Iran war began, some markets have swung from anticipating rate cuts to pricing in several hikes. The main driver has been uncertainty over how far central banks will need to go to tame inflation as the conflict disrupts the supply of energy and other commodities out of the Middle

East and pushes up prices. At the same time, some investors are starting to focus on whether the crisis might eventually slow economic growth and force central banks to reduce interest rates. European and UK swap rates have seen the most aggressive repricing as their economies are heavily dependent on energy imports and more vulnerable to big shifts in oil and gas prices. The European Central Bank and Bank of England also operate under a primary mandate to maintain price stability, whereas the US Federal Reserve has a dual mandate to promote both stable prices and maximum employment. Swings in interest rate bets are often exacerbated by traders getting caught on the wrong side of a wager, forcing them to liquidate their position, typically at a loss.

Why do swap markets matter?

Swings in rate expectations ripple across asset classes because interest rates are the foundation for how almost everything is valued.

For equities, valuations are often based on the present day value of expected future cash flows. If interest rate hikes are seen as likely, those future cash flows are worth less today.

Rate expectations also feed through to the real economy. If a central bank is expected to increase rates, investors will demand a higher yield on bonds to entice them to part with their cash, making it more expensive for governments to borrow and refinance their debt. That frequently translates to higher budget deficits and could prompt cutbacks in spending on public services.

In some countries, swap rates also affect the housing market. In the UK, fixed-rate mortgages typically hold the interest rate steady for two or five years, and swaps help determine the rates that banks offer. Volatility can make it difficult to accurately price loan offers. A spike in swap rates since the start of the Iran war has triggered a number of lenders to pull products from the UK market, reducing the choice for homebuyers.

Mortgages in the US work differently. Rather than being linked to swap rates, standard 30-year mortgages are closely aligned with the yield on 10-year Treasuries.

In general, volatility in swap markets makes it much harder for households, businesses and governments to plan. But central banks can benefit. If swap markets are priced efficiently, the changes they induce in the real economy can do some of a central bank's work for it, tightening or loosening conditions and reducing the need for policy action.

BlackRock files to challenge Invesco's ETF monopoly

Bloomberg
New York

BlackRock Inc is setting its sights on a corner of the \$13.7tn US exchange-traded fund (ETF) industry long controlled by Invesco Ltd: Tracking the Nasdaq 100 Index.

The iShares Nasdaq 100 ETF would follow the technology-heavy index and trade under the ticker IQQ, according to a Monday filing with the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC). Fees for the fund were not yet listed.

"As demand for Nasdaq 100 exposure continues to grow globally, Nasdaq is focused on extending international reach and deepening institutional access by working with a select set of partners in key markets," a Nasdaq spokesperson said in an emailed statement. "Nasdaq maintains a valuable, longstanding partnership with Invesco and remains



The BlackRock headquarters in New York. BlackRock is setting its sights on a corner of the \$13.7tn US exchange-traded fund industry long controlled by Invesco Ltd: Tracking the Nasdaq 100 Index.

committed to supporting the continued strength and success of the Invesco QQQ Innovation Suite as a cornerstone of the Nasdaq 100 ecosystem."

Should it launch, IQQ would become one of just a handful of

US-listed ETFs to solely track the Nasdaq 100, and the first one to not be managed by Invesco. Exchange-operator Nasdaq has been historically selective about licensing out its namesake index, comprising the 100 largest

non-financial companies listed on the Nasdaq exchange, since its creation in 1985. While other ETFs that add derivatives to the Nasdaq 100 stocks trade stateside, Invesco has enjoyed virtually exclusive access to the pure Nasdaq 100 in the US market. That relationship has produced the \$374bn Invesco QQQ Trust Series 1 fund (ticker QQQ), one of the largest ETFs globally, as well as the \$70bn Invesco Nasdaq 100 ETF (QQQM).

An Invesco spokesperson said: "Creating a foundational ETF ecosystem does not happen overnight, and Invesco has always taken a long-term view on building and facilitating its development. There is only one QQQ."

While IQQ would be its first in the US market, BlackRock manages four Nasdaq 100-tracking ETFs globally. Within the US, BlackRock is also behind Nasdaq-flavored funds including the iShares Nasdaq Top 30 Stocks ETF (QTOP) and the iShares Nasdaq-100 ex Top 30 ETF (QNXT).

Blackstone-backed QTS kicks off bond sale

Bloomberg
New York

Blackstone Inc-backed QTS kicked off the sale of a 10-year investment-grade green bond on Monday as the firm builds a major data center in the state of Georgia.

Initial price talk for the note is a spread of about 1.625 percentage points over Treasuries, according to a person familiar with the matter who asked not to be identified. Bloomberg News reported last week that QTS was looking to raise \$4.6bn, after having held investor calls.

QTS, which Blackstone purchased in 2021 for about \$10bn including debt, is building a massive data center in Fayetteville, Georgia that will house thousands of computers for companies such as Microsoft Corp.

The bond will be issued by QTS Fayetteville I DCI-2 LLC and QTS TRS Fayetteville I DCI-2 LLC, subsidiaries of QualityTech LP. Moody's Ratings gave a first-time credit score of Baa2 to the debut offering — two notches above

junk — and said proceeds would go toward refinancing credit facilities tied to the project, as well as other uses including payouts.

JPMorgan Chase & Co., Wells Fargo & Co, SMBC Nikko Securities Inc and Goldman Sachs Group Inc are managing the sale. The deal is one of two offerings in the US investment-grade primary market on Monday.

The boom in artificial intelligence and the buildout of infrastructure around it will require more than \$3tn of financing, according to Moody's Ratings. Debt markets of all kinds are providing the bulk of that.

In the past, QTS has tapped US private placements for borrowing through bonds that are typically bought by life insurers and asset managers. Just recently, it raised \$800mn in that format, with plans to raise more in the near future, according to one of the people. Other high-grade bond sales tied to AI, including those from big tech firms such as Alphabet Inc, have driven record issuance and attracted strong demand.

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INSURANCE COORDINATOR: Indian female, with 3 years of experience in Qatar healthcare. Ready to join immediately. Contact: 31092011, Email: kshuanasulthana@gmail.com

CUSTOMER SERVICE / RECEPTIONIST: A Nigerian female with over 10 years experience in customer service and front desk roles across Qatar and UAE. Skilled in client relations, communication, and administrative support. Currently in Qatar looking for job and available to start immediately with a transferable Qid. Contact: 55567971, email: adebolaadesina418@gmail.com

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ADMINISTRATIVE PROFESSIONAL with experience in admin, finance, and accounting tasks, plus preschool support. Skilled in documentation, data entry, and coordination. Reliable, organized, and detail-oriented. Available immediately. Contact 77846137, estabillio.iza@gmail.com

LABORATORY ENGINEER/Gas Specialist / Supervisor / Document Controller required Sri Lankan male, BSc (Physics Special) with 5+ years Qatar gas field experience. Expertise in laboratory testing, gas operations, administration, supervision, document control, and report review. Proficient in MS Word, Excel, Adobe PP/SAP/Dolphin systems. Transferable visa with NOC. Available for immediate joining. Contact no: +974 31584641, email: nawodmapitigama@gmail.com

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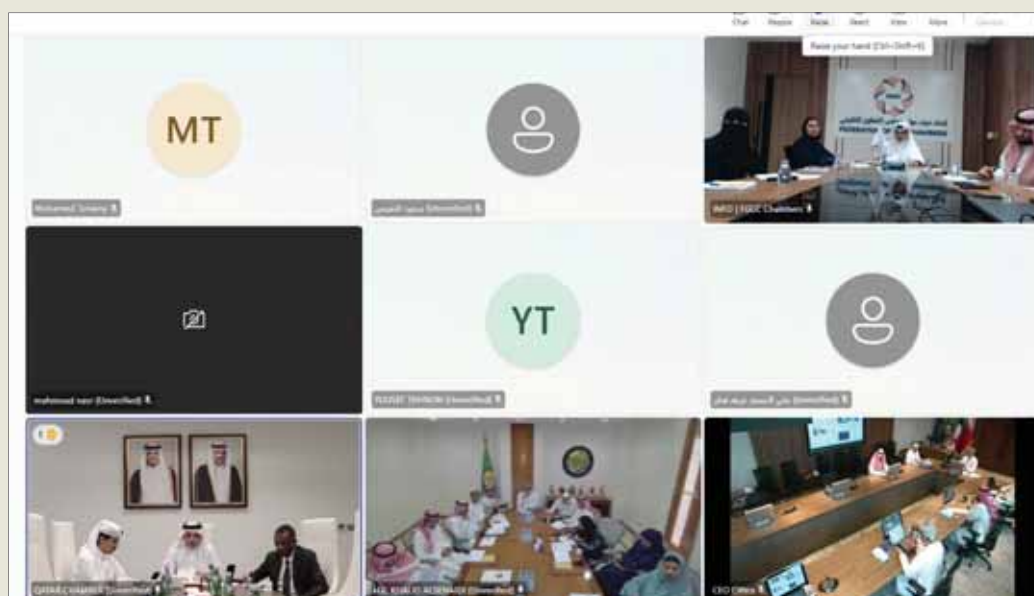
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Qatar Chamber participates in GCC seminar on private sector challenges

Qatar Chamber participated in a webinar organised yesterday by the Federation of Gulf Cooperation Council Chambers (FGCCC). Discussions focused on the key challenges and obstacles facing the Gulf private sector amid the current circumstances, while also addressing the views and concerns of private sector representatives. The seminar was led by FGCCC secretary general Saleh bin Hamad al-Sharqi and attended by representatives from the GCC General Secretariat and the GCC Customs Union Authority. Board members Ali bin Abdullah al-Misnad, chairman of the Services Committee; and Mohammed bin Ahmed al-Obaidli, chairman of the Food Security and Environment Committee, represented Qatar Chamber. The meeting also included the

participation of Khalid bin Ali al-Sunaidi, assistant secretary general for Economic and Development Affairs at the GCC General Secretariat, and Dr Sulaiman bin Masoud al-Ghafri, executive director of the GCC Customs Union Authority. During the meeting, al-Misnad commended the strong level of cooperation among GCC stakeholders, noting the impact of current developments on rising prices. He called for organising a dedicated seminar to explore practical solutions, emphasising the importance of involving international shipping and insurance companies in these discussions. For his part, al-Obaidli lauded the swift measures taken by Saudi Arabia to facilitate the movement of goods across GCC countries,

calling on other member states to adopt similar approaches. He also stressed the importance of strengthening public-private partnerships during the current phase. Al-Obaidli proposed several initiatives for GCC chambers in partnership with the public sector, including a unified electronic system to facilitate the movement of goods across internal borders without duplicate inspections, a GCC database linking exporters and importers to address supply shortages, and a Commercial Dispute Resolution Centre to support traders and ensure the smooth flow of services across the GCC. Al-Sharqi affirmed that the meeting reflects the commitment of the federation and GCC authorities to addressing private sector



Discussions focused on the key challenges and obstacles facing the Gulf private sector amid the current circumstances, while also addressing the views and concerns of private sector representatives.

challenges and facilitating trade among member states. Meanwhile, the participants also

praised the strong cooperation and solidarity among GCC countries and emphasised the need to

enhance joint efforts to resolve obstacles facing truck movement at ports.

QSE sees 91% stocks gain as index surges 186 points; M-cap adds QR10.91bn

By Santhosh V Perumal
Business Reporter

Talks of ceasefire on Iran war appear to have lifted the sentiments in the Qatar Stock Exchange (QSE), which yesterday witnessed 91% of the traded constituents make gains; leading to 186 points surge in key index and about QR11bn in capitalisation.

An across the board buying led to 1.83% jump in the 20s-stock Qatar Index to 10,346.22 points, although it touched an intraday high of 10,362 points.

The industrials and telecom sector saw higher than average demand in the main market, whose year-to-date losses truncated to 3.87%.

The foreign institutions turned bullish in the main bourse, whose capitalisation added QR10.91bn or 1.81% to QR612.56bn mainly on large and midcap segments.

The local retail investors were seen net buyers in the main market, whose trade turnover and volumes were on the rise.

The Gulf funds turned net buyers in the main bourse, which saw as many as 0.01mm exchange traded funds (sponsored by AlRayan Bank and Doha Bank) valued at QR0.04mm trade across 10 deals.

The Arab institutions were net buyers, albeit at lower levels, in the main market, which saw no trading of sovereign bonds.

The Islamic index was seen outperforming the other indices of the main bourse, which saw no trading of treasury bills.

The Total Return Index shot up 1.83%, the All Share Index by 1.67% and the Al Rayan Islamic Index by 1.86% in the main bourse.

The industrials sector index surged 2.73%, telecom (2.22%), transport (1.55%), banks and financial institutions (1.44%), consumer goods and services (1.31%), real estate (0.72%) and insurance (0.15%).

As many as 48 gained, while only three declined and two were unchanged in the main market.

Major movers in the main market included Qamco, Beema, Widam Food, Qatar Industrial Manufacturing, Industries Qatar, QNB, Medicare Group, Mesaieed Petrochemical Holding,



An across the board buying led to 1.83% jump in the 20s-stock Qatar Index to 10,346.22 points, although it touched an intraday high of 10,362 points

Gulf International Services, Estithmar Holding, Ezdan, Ooredoo, Gulf Warehousing and Nakilat. In the juniour bourse, Techno Q saw its shares appreciate in value.

Nevertheless, QLM, Qatar Islamic Insurance and Meeza were the shakers in the main market.

The foreign institutions turned net buyers to the tune of QR6.4mm against net profit takers of QR1.28mm the previous day.

The local retail investors were net buyers to the extent of QR2.22mm compared with net sellers of QR7.13mm on April 5.

The Gulf institutions turned net buyers to the tune of QR1.79mm against net sellers of QR2.37mm on Sunday.

The Arab funds were net buyers to the extent of QR0.04mm compared with no major net exposure the previous day. However, the do-

mestic institutions turned sellers to the tune of QR5.08mm against net buyers of QR9.35mm on April 5. The foreign individuals were net sellers to the extent of QR4.5mm compared with net buyers of QR0.16mm on Sunday.

The Arab retail investors turned net sellers to the tune of QR0.86mm against net buyers of QR1.24mm the previous day.

The Gulf individuals were net profit takers to the extent of QR0.01mm compared with net buyers of QR0.04mm on April 5.

The main market saw trade volumes more than doubled to 184.03mm shares, value more than double to QR410.55mm and deals more than double to 17,697.

In the venture market, a total of 1.27mm equities valued at QR3.28mm changed hands across 228 transactions.

New OBG platform explores Qatar, Mena region desalination challenges

A new Global Platform video by Oxford Business Group (OBG) examines how Qatar and the broader Mena region are confronting a stark paradox: World-class desalination infrastructure that is also a single point of vulnerability, and why diversifying into decentralised solutions is no longer optional. With the UN repeatedly ranking Qatar as the country most at risk of water scarcity globally, the Gulf's relationship with water has never been more urgent, OBG has stated.

The feature assesses how factors such as energy price volatility, supply chain considerations, and climate-related risks are influencing long-term planning. Growing geopolitical uncertainty across the region has further underscored the vulnerabilities inherent in centralised water infrastructure, reinforcing the strategic case for distributed, technology-driven alternatives. Within this context, atmospheric water generation is presented as a supplementary solution that can support more flexible and distributed water production, particularly in high-demand urban environments.

The video also highlights the potential for technology-led approaches, including AI-enabled optimisation and smart distribution systems, to enhance efficiency and reduce the carbon

intensity of water production. These developments are positioned within broader regional efforts to strengthen resilience and support sustainable growth. Rhana Kurdi, founder and CEO of Skydrops Sustainable Water Technologies, said while desalination remains the backbone of Qatar's water system, evolving demand patterns and environmental considerations are encouraging a more diversified approach.

"Decentralised technologies can help address gaps in distribution and improve system flexibility, particularly in fast-growing urban areas and locations where infrastructure expansion may be less efficient," she noted. Marc-André de Blois, OBG director of Video Content, said water security is increasingly being viewed through the lens of economic resilience and resource efficiency across the GCC. "Qatar's experience illustrates how established infrastructure can be complemented by emerging technologies, offering a more balanced and adaptive model that aligns with long-term sustainability objectives," he added.

The Global Platform video can be viewed and downloaded at <https://oxfordbusinessgroup.com/videos/global-platform/rhana-kurdi-ceo-skydrops-how-innovation-is-strengthening-water-resilience-in-qatar>.



Canadian consumer confidence hits 11-month low as Iran war drags on

Bloomberg
Ottawa

Canadian consumer confidence fell to its lowest level in almost a year as the war in Iran, which has sent energy prices soaring and stoked worries about persistent inflation, entered its sixth week.

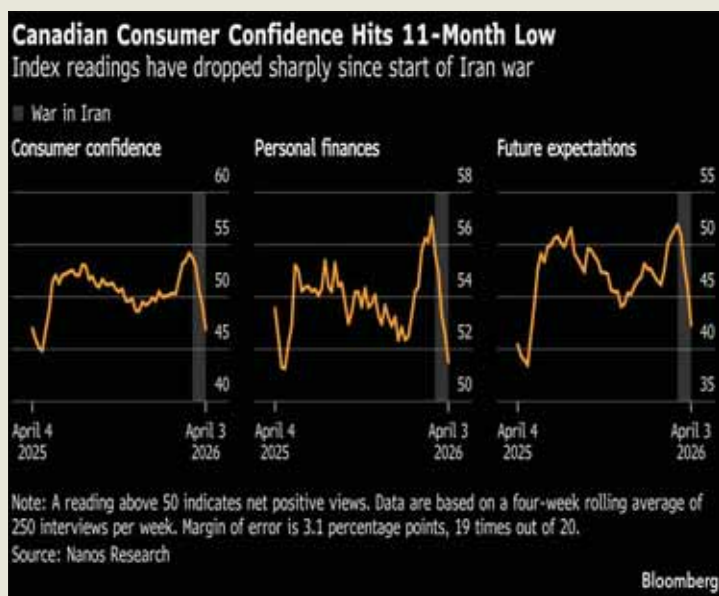
The Bloomberg Nanos Canadian Consumer Confidence Index fell to 46.93 in the week ended April 3, while the expectations index extended its four-week loss to almost 10 points. A reading below 50 indicates net negative views.

It was the lowest reading for both indexes since May 2025, when consumers and businesses were still digesting the initial shock of US President Donald Trump's "Liberation Day" tariffs.

"All indicators in the Bloomberg Nanos Index showed negative pressure," Nanos Research Chief Data Scientist Nik Nanos said. "The biggest drop in sentiment had to do with the proportion of Canadians who thought the economy would get stronger in the next six months."

Just 15% of Canadians see a stronger economy six months from now, compared with 27% four weeks ago.

The sharp drop in consumer senti-



ment over the last four weeks is a sign that the war in the Middle East may already be squeezing Canadians.

High oil prices risk hurting households and businesses, even while raising revenue from energy exports. The Bank of Canada said last week that the price shock creates "potential for weaker near-term growth and upside risks to inflation," but that it's too early

to assess the war's lasting impact on growth. Canada's labor market has also weakened, shedding more than 100,000 jobs in January and February, while the rate of food inflation was the highest among G-7 countries. The pending review of the US-Mexico-Canada trade agreement - a deal Trump has called "irrelevant" - is another risk to the economy.

US service economy expands in March at a slower pace

Bloomberg
Washington

The US service economy expanded in March at a slower pace as employment shrank by the most since 2023 and input prices accelerated sharply.

The Institute for Supply Management's gauge of prices paid for services and materials jumped to 70.7, the highest since October 2022, according to data released Monday. Readings above 50 indicate expansion.

The 7.7-point increase from a month earlier was the largest in nearly 14 years, comparable to the change seen in the group's manufacturing survey.

The ISM services index fell 2.1 points to 54, dragged down by weaker employment and less growth in business activity. Businesses are experiencing a sharp run-up in cost pressures for energy and other inputs due to the Iran war. The conflict has essentially closed the Strait of Hormuz, a key passage for oil and other critical products.

"The predominant com-

mentary this month was about impacts and adjustments due to the conflict with Iran and the expected flow through of higher oil prices at some point," Steve Miller, chair of the ISM Services Business Survey Committee, said in a statement.

"Companies across many industries reported seeing higher gas and diesel pricing, and inventories of multiple goods increased to withstand supply chain disruptions or short-term oil price impacts," he said.

The war is also fueling uncertainty about the economic outlook, which may be prompting more caution among companies. The ISM gauge of employment at service providers slumped 6.6 points, one of the biggest monthly declines since the pandemic, to 45.2.

Still, official jobs data from the government showed overall payrolls rose a larger-than-forecast 178,000 in March. The rebound in employment was helped by the return of more than 30,000 health care workers, who had been on strike.

Business activity, which parallels the group's factory output

index, slid 6 points - the most since mid-2024 - to 53.9.

Thirteen services industries reported overall growth in March, including wholesale trade, management of companies, finance and insurance as well as accommodation and food services. Retail trade was among the three sectors that shrank.

The supplier deliveries gauge climbed to the highest level since October 2024.

Accommodation & food services: "Tariff rollbacks are resulting in favourable price adjustments, but the news of new implementation is driving continued uncertainty. Snowstorms last month disrupted demand and supplier operations, mostly around the availability of labour."

Construction: "Transportation disruptions in the Middle East are inhibiting both incoming and outgoing cargoes from the region. While force majeure has been received from several Middle Eastern suppliers, business operations are generally at normal levels and no interruptions, except shipping."