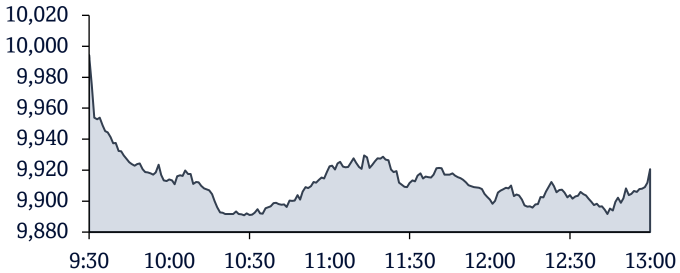
QNB FINANCIAL SERVICES

Daily Market Report

Sunday, 02 August 2026

الخدمات المالية
Financial Services

QSE Intra-Day Movement



Qatar Commentary

The QE Index declined 0.9% to close at 9,920.7. Losses were led by the Telecoms and Insurance indices, falling 3.9% and 1.4%, respectively. Top losers were Qatar General Ins. & Reins. Co. and Ooredoo, falling 6.8% and 4.2%, respectively. Among the top gainers, Dlala Brokerage & Inv. Holding Co. gained 4.0%, while Barwa Real Estate Company was up 2.5%.

GCC Commentary

Saudi Arabia: The TASI Index gained 0.4% to close at 10,589.7. Gains were led by the Telecommunication Services and Banks indices, rising 1.5% and 1.4%, respectively. Tabuk Agricultural Development Co. rose 10.0%, while Saudi Paper Manufacturing Co. was up 7.1%.

Dubai: The DFM Index gained 0.1% to close at 5,795.9. Gains were led by the Consumer Staples and Utilities indices, rising 0.8% and 0.7% respectively. Commercial Bank of Dubai rose 5.9%, while AL SALAM Sudan was up 4.7%.

Abu Dhabi: The ADX General Index gained 0.4% to close at 9,914.6. The Health Care index rose 1.4%, while the Industrial index gained 0.8%. E7 Group rose 12.9%, while Fujairah Cement Industries was up 5.2%.

Kuwait: The Kuwait All Share Index gained 0.2% to close at 8,756.7. The Banks and Industrials indices rose 0.6% each. Integrated Holding Company rose 1.7%, while Combined Group Contracting Co. was up 1.6%.

Oman: The MSM 30 Index fell 0.1% to close at 7,277.2. The Services index declined 0.5%, while the other indices ended flat or in green. SMN Power Holding declined 5.9%, while Oman Fisheries Company was down 4.3%

Bahrain: The BHB Index fell 0.2% to close at 1,956.3. The Materials and Financials indices fell 0.3% and 0.2%, respectively. Bank of Bahrain and Kuwait declined 0.9%, while Aluminum Bahrain was down 0.3%.

Market Indicators	30 July 26	29 July 26	%Chg.
Value Traded (QR mn)	368.9	379.6	(2.8)
Exch. Market Cap. (QR mn)	594,182.2	600,677.7	(1.1)
Volume (mn)	135.5	156.1	(13.2)
Number of Transactions	21,213	34,989	(39.4)
Companies Traded	52	52	0.0
Market Breadth	15:36	13:34	–

Market Indices	Close	1D%	WTD%	YTD%	TTM P/E
Total Return	24,515.29	(0.9)	(1.1)	(4.7)	11.3
All Share Index	3,884.03	(0.9)	(1.1)	(4.3)	11.2
Banks	4,966.64	(0.7)	0.0	(5.3)	9.7
Industrials	3,942.11	(1.3)	(2.8)	(4.7)	14.3
Transportation	5,172.91	0.8	0.4	(5.4)	12.4
Real Estate	1,404.70	0.9	(1.4)	(8.1)	22.9
Insurance	2,655.42	(1.4)	(2.2)	6.2	10.1
Telecoms	2,307.77	(3.9)	(6.1)	3.5	11.2
Consumer Goods and Services	7,941.37	(0.2)	(0.4)	(4.6)	17.0
Al Rayan Islamic Index	4,983.20	(0.9)	(2.1)	(2.6)	13.7

GCC Top Gainers##	Exchange	Close#	1D%	Vol. '000	YTD%
Riyad Bank	Saudi Arabia	20.34	3.4	3,917.6	(0.1)
The Saudi National Bank	Saudi Arabia	39.20	2.9	6,787.4	3.5
Saudi British Bank	Saudi Arabia	33.84	2.6	3,620.7	4.5
Aldrees Petroleum and Transport	Saudi Arabia	114.9	2.2	485.9	(10.2)
Modon Holding PSC	Abu Dhabi	2.85	2.2	2,517.9	(15.2)

GCC Top Losers##	Exchange	Close#	1D%	Vol. '000	YTD%
Co. for Cooperative Ins.	Saudi Arabia	122.60	(10)	1,248.3	4.8
Saudi Industrial Inv. Group	Saudi Arabia	11.95	(4.4)	2,339.2	(3.8)
Ooredoo	Qatar	12.50	(4.2)	3,770.5	(4.1)
National Shipping Co.	Saudi Arabia	31.10	(3.6)	3,260.5	7.3
Asyad Shipping Co	Oman	0.235	(3.3)	12,756.4	31.3

Source: Bloomberg (# in Local Currency) (## GCC Top gainers/ losers derived from the S&P GCC Composite Large Mid Cap Index)

QSE Top Gainers	Close*	1D%	Vol. '000	YTD%
Dlala Brokerage & Inv. Holding Co.	1.522	4.0	2,410.2	55.5
Barwa Real Estate Company	2.329	2.5	14,812.1	(11.0)
Al Mahhar	2.060	2.0	1,397.1	(5.9)
Al Meera Consumer Goods Co.	13.41	1.9	60.4	(8.0)
Meeza QSTP	3.189	1.2	781.4	(6.2)

QSE Top Volume Trades	Close*	1D%	Vol. '000	YTD%
Mazaya Qatar Real Estate Dev.	0.550	0.7	16,312.6	(4.0)
Barwa Real Estate Company	2.329	2.5	14,812.1	(11.0)
Baladna	1.228	(0.3)	13,859.4	0.2
AlRayan Bank	1.990	1.0	11,836.4	(9.3)
United Development Company	0.798	(0.7)	9,544.3	(12.6)

QSE Top Losers	Close*	1D%	Vol. '000	YTD%
Qatar General Ins. & Reins. Co.	2.051	(6.8)	91.4	32.6
Ooredoo	12.50	(4.2)	3,770.5	(4.1)
Mannai Corporation	4.880	(3.2)	1,183.7	8.8
Salam International Inv. Ltd.	0.736	(3.2)	984.7	1.4
Vodafone Qatar	2.581	(2.8)	1,931.2	6.0

QSE Top Value Trades	Close*	1D%	Val. '000	YTD%
Ooredoo	12.50	(4.2)	47,622.4	(4.1)
QNB Group	16.57	(1.4)	41,896.2	(11.2)
Barwa Real Estate Company	2.329	2.5	34,039.5	(11.0)
Qatar Islamic Bank	21.66	(0.6)	24,380.3	(9.6)
AlRayan Bank	1.990	1.0	23,411.5	(9.3)

Regional Indices	Close	1D%	WTD%	MTD%	YTD%	Exch. Val. Traded ($ mn)	Exchange Mkt. Cap. ($ mn)	P/E**	P/B**	Dividend Yield
Qatar*	9,920.69	(0.9)	(1.1)	(3.1)	(7.8)	101.4	162,805.9	11.3	1.3	5.1
Dubai^	5,795.93	0.1	0.2	(2.7)	(4.2)	160.1	259,299.9	9.2	1.7	5.5
Abu Dhabi^	9,914.62	0.4	0.9	1.1	(0.8)	324.4	757,931.3	19.5	2.3	2.5
Saudi Arabia	10,589.72	0.4	(2.0)	(1.9)	0.9	1,225.6	2,552,257.6	16.5	2.1	3.6
Kuwait	8,756.68	0.2	1.1	0.6	(1.7)	234.2	169,206.5	17.9	1.8	3.8
Oman	7,277.20	(0.1)	2.2	(3.1)	24.0	143.3	54,998.1	13.1	1.6	4.2
Bahrain	1,956.33	(0.2)	(0.5)	(4.2)	(5.3)	0.7	20,086.9	16.2	1.3	4.5

*Source: Bloomberg, Qatar Stock Exchange, Tadawul, Muscat Securities Market and Dubai Financial Market (** TTM; * Value traded ($ mn) do not include special trades if any, ^ Data as of 31 July 2026)*

Qatar Market Commentary

- The QE Index declined 0.9% to close at 9,920.7. The Telecoms and Insurance indices led the losses. The index fell on the back of selling pressure from GCC and Foreign shareholders despite buying support from Qatari and Arab shareholders.
- Qatar General Ins. & Reins. Co. and Ooredoo were the top losers, falling 6.8% and 4.2%, respectively. Among the top gainers, Dlala Brokerage & Inv. Holding Co. gained 4.0%, while Barwa Real Estate Company was up 2.5%.
- Volume of shares traded on Thursday fell by 13.2% to 135.5mn from 156.1mn on Wednesday. However, as compared to the 30-day moving average of 134.3mn, volume for the day was 1.0% higher. Mazaya Qatar Real Estate Dev. and Barwa Real Estate Company were the most active stocks, contributing 12.0% and 10.9% to the total volume, respectively.

Overall Activity	Buy%*	Sell%*	Net (QR)
Qatari Individuals	23.45%	25.48%	(7,482,804.57)
Qatari Institutions	29.58%	23.70%	21,687,728.32
Qatari	**53.03%**	**49.18%**	**14,204,923.75**
GCC Individuals	0.41%	0.51%	(348,236.67)
GCC Institutions	0.97%	1.43%	(1,700,884.81)
GCC	**1.38%**	**1.93%**	**(2,049,121.48)**
Arab Individuals	6.56%	6.16%	1,461,076.34
Arab Institutions	0.00%	0.00%	0.00
Arab	**6.56%**	**6.16%**	**1,461,076.34**
Foreigners Individuals	2.37%	1.75%	2,271,138.95
Foreigners Institutions	36.67%	40.97%	(15,888,017.57)
Foreigners	**39.03%**	**42.72%**	**(13,616,878.62)**

*Source: Qatar Stock Exchange (*as a% of traded value)*

Global Economic Data and Earnings Calendar

Global Economic Data

Date	Market	Source	Indicator	Period	Actual	Consensus	Previous
07/31	US	Bureau of Labor Statistics	Employment Cost Index	2Q	0.90%	0.80%	--
07/31	UK	Nationwide Building Society	Nationwide House PX MoM	Jul	0.10%	0.10%	--
07/31	UK	Nationwide Building Society	Nationwide House Px NSA YoY	Jul	1.80%	1.90%	--
07/31	EU	Eurostat	CPI Estimate YoY	Jul P	2.90%	2.90%	--
07/31	EU	Eurostat	CPI YoY	Jul P	2.90%	2.90%	--
07/31	EU	Eurostat	CPI MoM	Jul P	0.20%	0.20%	--
07/31	EU	Eurostat	CPI Core YoY	Jul P	2.50%	2.40%	--
07/31	Germany	Deutsche Bundesbank	Unemployment Change (000's)	Jul	6.0k	5.0k	--
07/31	Germany	Deutsche Bundesbank	Unemployment Claims Rate SA	Jul	6.40%	6.30%	--
07/31	Japan	METI	Retail Sales YoY	Jun	0.50%	3.10%	--
07/31	Japan	METI	Retail Sales MoM	Jun	-4.10%	-1.60%	--
07/31	Japan	METI	Dept. Store, Supermarket Sales YoY	Jun	-1.00%	--	--
07/31	Japan	Ministry of Economy Trade and Industry	Industrial Production MoM	Jun P	1.30%	1.00%	--
07/31	Japan	Ministry of Economy Trade and Industry	Industrial Production YoY	Jun P	4.20%	3.20%	--
07/31	Japan	Bank of Japan	BOJ GDP Current Forecast	3Q	0.60%	--	--
07/31	Japan	Bank of Japan	BOJ Core CPI Current Forecast	3Q	2.50%	--	--
07/31	China	China Federation of Logistics	Manufacturing PMI	Jul	49.2	50.1	--
07/31	China	China Federation of Logistics	Non-manufacturing PMI	Jul	49	50	--

Earnings Calendar

Tickers	Company Name	Date of reporting 2Q2026 results	No. of days remaining	Status
QEWS	Nebras Energy	02-Aug-26	0	Due
MFMS	Mosanada Facility Management Services	03-Aug-26	1	Due
QNNS	Qatar Navigation	03-Aug-26	1	Due
QIGD	Qatari Investors Group	04-Aug-26	2	Due
MHAR	Al Mahhar Holding	05-Aug-26	3	Due
DOHI	Doha Insurance Group	05-Aug-26	3	Due
QAMC	Qatar Aluminum Manufacturing	06-Aug-26	4	Due
WDAM	Widam Food Company	10-Aug-26	8	Due
MPHC	Mesaieed Petrochemical Holding Co	10-Aug-26	8	Due
MRDS	Mazaya Real Estate Development	10-Aug-26	8	Due
NLCS	National Leasing Holding	10-Aug-26	8	Due
QCFS	Qatar Cinema & Film Distribution Co	10-Aug-26	8	Due
QLMI	QLM Life & Medical Insurance Company	11-Aug-26	9	Due
SIIS	Salam International	12-Aug-26	10	Due
IQCD	Industries Qatar	12-Aug-26	10	Due
IGRD	Estithmar Holding	12-Aug-26	10	Due
GISS	Gulf International Services	13-Aug-26	11	Due

MERS	Al Meera Consumer Goods Company	13-Aug-26	11	Due
ZHCD	Zad Holding Co	13-Aug-26	11	Due
QGMD	Qatari German Co. for Medical Devices	13-Aug-26	11	Due

Qatar

- **Shell Expects to Complete Qatar Pearl GTL Plant Repairs in 1Q27 -** Shell Plc expects repairs on train two of its 140k b/d Pearl GTL plant in Qatar to take until the first quarter of 2027, according to details in a presentation for its quarterly results on Thursday. Shell said in March that train two would take about a year to repair. Train one was not impacted and "will be ready to restart operations as soon as geopolitical developments and the ability to safely export products allow": presentation. (Bloomberg)
- **Technip CEO Says NFE LNG Project in Qatar Is 'Advancing Well' -** The construction of the "North Field East" liquefied natural gas export terminal in Qatar is "advancing well after the obvious disturbances" tied to the Middle East conflict, Technip Energies CEO Arnaud Pieton said on a conference call. "We're very close from the startup of the first of the four trains," Pieton said. All equipment required for the project is now in Qatar It's up to the owner of the project to announce a start date. (Bloomberg)
- **Qatar Official Reserves Rise to Record in June -** Official reserve assets of Qatar were little changed from the previous month at QR262.1b in June, according to Qatar Central Bank figures. Reserves up 1.2% from the same period last year. Gold down 11% M/m, up 23% Y/y to QR54.6b. Other reserves assets unchanged M/m, up 0.4% Y/y to QR59.5b. (Bloomberg)
- **QIMD's net profit declines 80.9% YoY and 76.9% QoQ in 2Q2026 –** Qatar Industrial Manufacturing Company's (QIMD) net profit declined 80.9% YoY (-76.9% QoQ) to QR5.8mn in 2Q2026. The company's sales came in at QR73.0mn in 2Q2026, which represents a decrease of 36.3% YoY (-46.8% QoQ). EPS amounted to QR0.012 in 2Q2026 as compared to QR0.064 in 2Q2025. (QSE)
- **Mannai Corporation will hold its investors relation conference call on 13/08/2026 to discuss the financial results -** Mannai Corporation announces that the conference call with the Investors to discuss the financial results for the Semi-Annual 2026 will be held on 13/08/2026 at 03:00 PM, Doha Time. (QSE)
- **Mannai Corporation: Board of directors meeting on 12/08/2026 -** The Mannai Corporation has announced that its Board of Directors will be holding a meeting on 12/08/2026 to discuss the half-yearly financials of the company for this year. (QSE)
- **Zad Holding Co. will hold its investors relation conference call on 17/08/2026 to discuss the financial results -** Zad Holding Co. announces that the conference call with the Investors to discuss the financial results for the Semi-Annual 2026 will be held on 17/08/2026 at 12:30 PM, Doha Time. (QSE)
- **QA extends suspension of flights to Kuwait, Bahrain & Iraq's Erbil -** Qatar Airways announced on Thursday the extension of its temporary flight suspensions to the Kingdom of Bahrain, the State of Kuwait, and Erbil in Iraq, until August 7. The airline published the announcement on its official website on Thursday. The extension follows an earlier decision announced by Qatar Airways on July 24 to suspend flights to the three destinations through Friday. (Qatar Tribune)
- **Qatar's transport infrastructure market to reach QR47.8bn in 2026 -** Qatar's transportation infrastructure construction industry is entering a new phase of long-term, strategy-led growth, with the sector projected to expand to $13.12bn (QR47.82bn) this year from $12.48bn (QR45.48bn) in 2025, according to a recent market analysis by Mordor Intelligence. The report notes that it is expected to amount to $16.85bn (QR61.41bn) by 2031, reflecting a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 5.14% between 2026 and 2031, as a major catalyst for this transition is the Ministry of Transport's 2025-2030 Strategy which outlines 125 projects across 42 initiatives, backed by investments exceeding $330m (QR1.2bn). The strategy also seeks to increase private sector participation in transport development to 40%, highlighting Qatar's efforts to broaden project delivery beyond traditional state-funded execution while expanding the transport sector's contribution to the national economy. Infrastructure spending continues to receive strong government support as Ashghal's $22.2bn (QR80.91bn) five-year development plan for 2025-2029 is sustaining construction activity across roads, drainage systems, tunnels, and public buildings throughout both urban centers and emerging districts. Meanwhile, the data highlights that construction sector momentum remains robust, with value-added growth reaching 9.1% year-on-year in the third quarter of 2025, following growth of 8.7% in the second quarter and 4.4% in the first quarter. The country's logistics ambitions are also strengthening transportation infrastructure demand. Qatar's ports handled 1.46mn twenty-foot equivalent units (TEUs) in 2025, while imports of building materials through the nation's three commercial ports increased 106% year-on-year, supporting continued investment in freight corridors, port access roads, and intermodal transport Infrastructure. In November 2025, the Ministry of Communications and Information Technology and the Ministry of Transport launched the 'Transport and Logistics Digital Transformation Roadmap', featuring 39 strategic initiatives expected to contribute approximately $76.4m (QR278.45m) to the country's non-hydrocarbon information and communications technology output. The roadmap aims to improve freight visibility, strengthen logistics efficiency, and enhance integration between roads. ports, and future rail networks. Urban expansion beyond central Doha is also broadening construction opportunities as Lusail continues to serve as Qatar's flagship transit-oriented city, with its tram network surpassing 10mn cumulative passengers since operations began. The launch of the turquoise tram extension in 2025 further reinforced the city's integrated mobility network. At the same time, Ashghal reported 67 infrastructure projects underway during the first quarter of 2026, covering roads, intersections, and drainage systems across residential communities and developing districts. The wider geographic distribution of projects is creating additional opportunities for domestic contractors and specialized suppliers as transportation investment extends beyond large-scale flagship developments. The growing adoption of intelligent transportation systems (ITS) and smart mobility technologies is also reshaping project requirements. In September 2025, Ashghal awarded contracts worth $3.3bn (QR12.03bn) covering roads, drainage, public buildings, and ITS infrastructure. The projects incorporate artificial intelligence-powered traffic management, autonomous survey vehicles, laser-based road defect detection, and advanced monitoring technologies. As Qatar shifts toward long-term economic diversification, transportation infrastructure is evolving into a central pillar supporting urban development, logistics competitiveness, and smart mobility. The market's next growth phase is expected to be driven by sustained public investment, expanding private-sector participation, and the integration of digital technologies across the nation's transport network. (Peninsula Qatar)
- **Qatar real estate trade tops QR805mn in two weeks -** The volume of real estate trading in sales contracts at the Department of Real Estate Registration at the Ministry of Justice during the period from July 12 to July 23, 2026, reached QR 748,483,214. Meanwhile, the total sales contracts for residential units in the Real Estate Bulletin for the same period reached QR56,955,573. The weekly bulletin issued by the Department shows that the list of real estate properties traded for sale included vacant land, residences, a commercial administrative building, residential buildings, commercial shops, and residential units. Sales were concentrated in the municipalities of Doha, Al Rayyan, Al Daayen, Al Wakrah, Umm Salal, Al Khor and Al Thakhira, and Al Shamal, in addition to areas of Lusail 69, The Pearl, Leqtaifiya, Al Kharaej, Ghar Thuaib, and Al Wukair. The volume of real estate transactions in sales contracts registered with the Real Estate Registration Department between June 28 - July 2 exceeded QR 565mn. The latest figures reflect continued momentum in Qatar's real estate sector, with total trading volume

exceeding QR805mn over the two-week period when residential unit sales are included. The sustained activity underscores healthy demand across a broad range of property categories and locations, highlighting the resilience of the country's real estate market. (Qatar Tribune)

- **Microdrama users in Qatar to double by 2030, says Media City report -** The number of microdrama users in Qatar is expected to double by 2030, says a report 'Microdrama in the GCC Region', developed by Media City Qatar in partnership with technology research group Omdia, a market-leading data, research, and consulting business. Microdramas are short-form vertical video series optimized for mobile consumers. Originating in China, the microdrama industry has grown rapidly worldwide since 2022 and is set for sustained global growth. "The Qatari market is currently home to 700,000 microdrama users, and this number is set to more than double by 2030, when there will be an estimated 2mn microdrama users in the country," says the report. The new report examines the emergence of microdramas as a new content format and their growth potential across the GCC media landscape. The report analyses market trends, audience behavior, platform dynamics and opportunities for regional content development. According to the report, the GCC microdrama market is projected to reach $73.7mn in 2026, up from $38.9mn in 2025. As mobile-first content consumption continues to evolve, the research highlights opportunities for Arabic-language storytelling, local content production, and strategic partnerships to support the sector's growth. The report also explores how localized narratives, culturally relevant content and emerging regional platforms could shape the future of the microdrama ecosystem across the GCC. In 2025, the microdrama market in the GCC was estimated to be worth $38.9mn, and the report forecasts strong growth for it until 2030. Though none of the GCC markets are among the 10 largest in terms of user base worldwide, the size of the user bases is increasing rapidly. Overall, the advertising-supported business for microdramas is challenging due to the high costs associated with customer acquisition. This means that most platforms are focused on finding customers who are willing to spend on maximizing total audience. At present, the range of advertisers available on most microdrama platforms remains relatively low, but this is set to increase, which will mean that the total share of advertising revenue increases, especially as the total user base in the GCC region grows. In turn, there will also be a greater possibility of generating revenue from product placement in GCC-specific microdramas and microdrama apps as the region's industry develops. The largest GCC market in terms of users is Saudi Arabia, which has an estimated 2.2mn microdrama consumers as of 2025. This number is forecast to increase to 20.9mn by 2030. The second largest GCC market is the UAE, which currently has an estimated 1.4mn microdrama users. This number is again set to increase rapidly in 2026, but current forecasts suggest the country will reach around 4.1mn users by 2030. The GCC microdrama landscape remains highly competitive, and no single platform has achieved a dominant market position. DramaBox currently holds pole position in Saudi Arabia, but the race for market supremacy is far from decided. Unlike the subscription video-on-demand market, where clear leaders such as Netflix and Shahid maintain substantial gaps over competitors, the microdrama sector shows much tighter competition, and month-to-month leadership has shifted over the past 15 months. The report highlights that the geographical fragmentation, combined with low user loyalty and tight competitive gaps, suggests the GCC microdrama market remains wide open. The platform that can successfully build strong brand recognition while maintaining content appeal across several markets will be best positioned to emerge as the regional leader. According to the report, the growth prospects for the microdrama industry in the GCC region through 2030 remain strong. However, the pace of growth is likely to slow slightly in the coming years because many of the most susceptible audiences have already been acquired for the microdrama user base. (Gulf Times)
- **New model lets Qatar SMEs scale without owning logistics -** Small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in Qatar are gaining access to enterprise-grade logistics without owning any of the underlying infrastructure themselves, through a shared-service model addressing three interlinked barriers that have long held smaller businesses back. This is according to Sheikh Khalifa bin Salman al-Thani, co-founder and CEO of WareOne, a Qatar-based logistics platform that told Gulf Times how it is addressing these challenges for local SMEs. He said logistics is usually sold in large, fixed blocks, such as an entire warehouse, a full fleet of trucks or a 12-month lease, terms better suited to large companies than to brands processing a few hundred orders a month. Sheikh Khalifa noted that logistics services are often fragmented across multiple providers, with one company handling storage, another transport, a third customs clearance, and a fourth delivery, leaving business owners to absorb the blame when something goes wrong between them. "When something goes wrong between them, nobody takes responsibility. The owner does," Sheikh Khalifa explained, further pointing out that running such an operation also demands expertise that most small teams simply do not have. WareOne addresses this by operating its own fulfilment center for complex e-commerce work, supported by a network of partners handling storage, freight and delivery across Qatar and the GCC, Sheikh Khalifa noted. Customers get a single contract, one view of their operation and one accountable WareOne team, he also said, adding that businesses simply connect their Shopify store or marketplace account, select a delivery promise, and pay by the cubic meter, by the order or by the delivery. This, he said, allows businesses to focus on what they sell and how they grow, while WareOne manages the logistics behind it. Asked how WareOne measures its impact on SME competitiveness beyond cost savings, Sheikh Khalifa said cost remains significant and is the main reason most businesses approach the company, though he stressed it is not the only measure of success. He said WareOne instead tracks on-time delivery and order accuracy, the number of sales channels and markets a business operates in without needing to hire extra staff, and whether the business survives its busiest season, typically when small companies falter. "The best sign of our work is not what a customer saves. It is what they try next," Sheikh Khalifa pointed out. Sheikh Khalifa cited an unnamed Qatari brand that grew more than four times within a few months after moving its operations onto WareOne's platform. "They grew...in a very competitive market, without building a logistics team or any infrastructure of their own," Sheikh Khalifa emphasized. The brand, which sold across several channels simultaneously, needed product-level fulfilment on every channel, consistent delivery promises, multiple payment methods and service standards matching its brand, he said. WareOne brought the operation into its fulfilment center and connected the brand's orders, inventory and deliveries through a single system, according to Sheikh Khalifa. "Logistics should help a good business grow. It should not hold it back," he added. (Gulf Times)
- **Global and Domestic Minimum Tax registration now live on Dhareeba -** The General Tax Authority (GTA) has announced the launch of the Global and Domestic Minimum Tax (Pillar Two) Registration Service through the Dhareeba platform, marking another step in Qatar's ongoing efforts to modernize its tax system in line with the latest international standards and frameworks. The GTA has invited multinational enterprise (MNE) groups that fall within the scope of the Global and Domestic Minimum Tax rules to complete their initial registration within three months from the date the service is activated on the Dhareeba platform. Developed by the GTA, the registration service is designed to streamline the registration process for in-scope MNE groups through a centralized, user-friendly platform. The service enables entities to submit their core information, identify the Ultimate Parent Entity (UPE), and designate the local entities subject to the Pillar Two rules. Where more than one entity exists in Qatar, one local entity must be designated as the primary point of contact. The development follows the implementation of Law No (22) of 2024, which established the legislative framework for the Global and Domestic Minimum Tax (Pillar Two) in Qatar. The law forms part of Qatar's adoption of the OECD/G20 Inclusive Framework's Pillar Two rules, which introduce a global minimum effective tax rate of 15% for multinational enterprise groups with consolidated annual revenues of €750mn or more in at least two of the four fiscal years preceding the tested fiscal year. The initiative reaffirms Qatar's commitment to transparency, fairness, and the protection of its domestic tax base, while further strengthening its position as a trusted and competitive investment destination. (Gulf Times)
- **Doha Festival City announces QR400mn transformation to shape future of retail in Qatar -** Doha Festival City, Qatar's leading retail, leisure and lifestyle destination, has unveiled plans for a landmark transformation

program backed by a combined investment of up to QR400mn by the mall and its participating retail partners, marking its most significant upgrade since opening. The large-scale investment underscores long-term confidence in Qatar's economic growth and the resilience of its retail sector, while reinforcing the destination's commitment to enhancing customer experience and shaping the future of retail in line with the country's evolving consumer landscape. The comprehensive transformation will modernize the mall environment through upgrades designed to improve visitor comfort, accessibility and convenience. The initiative also includes a significant evolution of the mall's retail, dining and technology offerings, positioning Doha Festival City as a next-generation lifestyle destination. A major highlight of the program is the expansion of the mall's retail portfolio with several first-to-market international brands. Among the key additions will be Primark's first store in Qatar, alongside the arrival of Ulta Beauty and the expansion and refurbishment of Zara's flagship store. These will be complemented by a pipeline of new international and regional retailers, further strengthening Doha Festival City's position as one of the country's premier shopping destinations. The development reflects Al-Futtaim's long-term strategy to continuously enhance the destination and introduce innovative retail concepts that respond to changing consumer preferences. Dining will also play a central role in the transformation. Doha Festival City plans to introduce a new generation of food and beverage offerings, including casual dining venues, cafés and premium culinary concepts. The revamped dining strategy aims to create vibrant social spaces that encourage visitors to spend more time at the destination while catering to the lifestyle expectations of both residents and tourists. Alongside its physical upgrades, the mall will integrate a suite of artificial intelligence-powered technologies to improve operational efficiency and elevate the visitor experience. Planned innovations include an AI Concierge, AI-enabled Computer-Aided Facilities Management (CAFM), intelligent environmental monitoring and climate optimization systems, as well as a smart parking management platform offering real-time guidance to improve traffic flow and streamline arrivals. The transformation also introduces "Festival Touch," a new hospitality philosophy focused on delivering personalized service, meaningful interactions and memorable experiences for every visitor. Commenting on the investment, Hayssam Hajjar, Executive Director – Malls & Retail Assets at Al-Futtaim Real Estate, said the initiative represents much more than a refurbishment program. "The combined investment by Doha Festival City and participating retail partners represents far more than a refurbishment program. It reflects the destination's long-term belief in Qatar's economy and the continued strength of its retail and tourism sectors," he said. "As consumer expectations evolve, our responsibility is to continue leading the market by creating destinations that inspire people to visit more often, stay longer and enjoy richer experiences." Hajjar added that the transformation would redefine every stage of the customer journey by introducing new retail concepts, world-class dining, intelligent technologies and enhanced hospitality. "Through this transformation, we are redefining every stage of the customer journey, introducing new retail concepts, world-class dining experiences, intelligent technologies and enhanced hospitality that will set new benchmarks for destination retail in Qatar. Doha Festival City has always been at the forefront of innovation, and this investment reinforces our commitment to shaping the future of retail while supporting Qatar National Vision 2030 and the country's continued economic growth," he said. The initiative further highlights Al-Futtaim's broader strategy of developing and managing leading retail destinations across the region by aligning them with emerging retail, leisure and lifestyle trends. The announcement follows another successful year for Doha Festival City. In 2025, the destination welcomed 20mn visitors and received the Premier Shopping Mall Experience award at the Qatar Tourism Awards for the second time, reinforcing its status as one of the country's leading lifestyle and retail destinations. With the new investment program, Doha Festival City aims to build on that momentum by delivering innovative retail experiences, advanced technologies and sustainable design features that will help maintain its position at the forefront of Qatar's rapidly evolving retail landscape while contributing to the objectives of Qatar National Vision 2030. (Qatar Tribune)

- **Qatar, India have strategic opportunity to build partnership beyond energy, say economic experts -** India and Qatar are entering a new phase in their economic relationship, with analysts on Asian and Gulf economic affairs saying the two countries have an unprecedented opportunity to diversify ties beyond their long-standing energy partnership through greater cooperation in investment, technology, infrastructure, food security and financial services. According to economists and regional trade experts, while Qatar remains one of India's largest suppliers of liquefied natural gas (LNG) and liquefied petroleum gas (LPG), bilateral trade, estimated at around $14bn annually, continues to be heavily dominated by hydrocarbons, which account for nearly 80% of total trade. While the energy partnership has remained resilient for decades, experts argue that expanding cooperation into non-energy sectors would make the relationship more balanced and future ready. They note that the elevation of bilateral ties to a Strategic Partnership during the state visit of His Highness the Amir of the State of Qatar Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani to India in February 2025 marked a significant turning point. The joint target of doubling bilateral trade to $28bn by 2030 and Qatar's commitment to invest $10bn in India across infrastructure, manufacturing, fintech and clean energy are being viewed as key milestones in broadening economic engagement. Trade analysts believe the proposed Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA), currently under negotiation, could significantly accelerate investment flows, reduce trade barriers and encourage greater private-sector participation between the two countries. Economic observers also point to the growing role of the Qatar Investment Authority (QIA) in India's expanding economy. Its investments in leading Indian consumer and technology companies are seen as reflecting confidence in India's long-term growth prospects, driven by rapid urbanization, a growing middle class and continued infrastructure expansion. Experts say India's ambitious infrastructure pipeline, semiconductor manufacturing plans and renewable energy transition present attractive opportunities for long-term Qatari investment. They add that closer collaboration between the Qatar Financial Centre and India's GIFT City could further strengthen cross-border financial services and facilitate capital flows. Analysts also identify financial technology as an emerging area of cooperation. The rollout of India's Unified Payments Interface (UPI) across several payment points in Qatar has improved payment convenience for residents and visitors while opening the door for broader fintech collaboration between the two countries. Regional economists believe joint investment platforms supporting fintech innovation could encourage partnerships between startups, financial institutions and sovereign investors in both markets. Food security has emerged as another strategic area for cooperation. Experts note that Qatar imports the vast majority of its food requirements, while India has established itself as one of the world's leading agricultural producers and food exporters. They say stronger collaboration in agricultural investment, food processing, cold-chain logistics and long-term supply agreements would benefit both economies. Analysts further stress that the Indian community in Qatar—comprising more than 830,000 people—remains one of the strongest pillars of bilateral relations. They suggest that deeper cooperation in education, professional qualifications, skilled mobility and social security arrangements would complement the expanding economic partnership. According to experts on Gulf and Asian economies, the foundations for a broader strategic partnership have already been laid through high-level political engagement, growing investment commitments and expanding business cooperation. They believe sustained implementation of these initiatives, coupled with greater private-sector participation, will determine whether India and Qatar can transform a traditionally energy-driven relationship into a diversified and resilient economic partnership. With both countries pursuing ambitious economic diversification agendas, analysts say the coming years present a unique opportunity to build stronger collaboration across multiple sectors, creating long-term benefits for businesses, investors and people in both nations. (Qatar Tribune)
- **Investors laud initiative to simplify business formation -** The Ministry of Commerce and Industry (MOCID recently announced the launch of the Business Guidance and Establishment Office, an initiative aimed at simplifying the business setup process and providing investors and entrepreneurs with dedicated support throughout their investment

journey. Business leaders have welcomed the move, saying that having a dedicated guidance office could significantly reduce uncertainty, particularly for first-time entrepreneurs and foreign investors navigating regulatory procedures. "For anyone starting a business, understanding the right procedures is often one of the biggest challenges," said a tech startup founder. "Having a dedicated office where investors can receive guidance and ask questions directly should make the process more transparent and efficient. It demonstrates the government's commitment to improving ease of doing business." The According to information shared by the Ministry on X, the office will serve as a central point of contact for investors seeking guidance on company formation procedures, responding to inquiries related to business establishment, directing customers to the appropriate government services, and providing support throughout various stages of business establishment and development. Foreign Investor Kavya V, who is exploring opportunities in Qatar's professional services sector, said centralized guidance would make Investment decisions easier. "One of the most important factors for international investors is knowing where to go for accurate Information" she said. "A single office that provides direction and connects investors with the right government services can save valuable time and increase confidence during the early stages of establishing a company." The Initiative comes as Qatar continues to strengthen Its business environment by streamlining government services and improving accessibility for investors seeking to establish new ventures or expand existing operations. Doha based entrepreneur Mohammed who recently expanded his small business. underscored that the initiative could particularly benefit startups." Many entrepreneurs have strong business ideas but are unfamiliar with licensing requirements or the sequence of approvals needed," he said. "Receiving practical guidance from a specialized office could help businesses avoid unnecessary delays and focus more on growth." Among the services offered by the office are guidance on company establishment, answering Investors' inquiries, providing ongoing support during different phases of business development, and directing clients to the relevant services needed to complete licensing and registration. requirements efficiently. The launch aligns with Qatar's broader efforts to foster entrepreneurship, encourage private sector participation, and attract both domestic and international investment. By providing personalized guidance and directing Investors to the appropriate government services, the Business Guidance and Establishment Office is expected to make the process of starting and developing businesses more accessible and efficient. MoCl has invited Investors and entrepreneurs to visit the new office in Lusail for guidance and support on establishing their businesses and to receive answers to inquiries related to company formation procedures. (Peninsula Qatar)

International

- **US embassies urge citizens to ‘consider departing’ Mideast -** US embassies in capitals across the Middle East yesterday warned their citizens to beware of “unforeseen escalation” in the regional conflict and urged them to be ready to leave. The warning, posted online by US embassies in Bahrain, Egypt, Iraq, Israel, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates, came a day after US President Donald Trump threatened to hit Iran “very hard”. Iran and the United States have been at war since February 28. A period of calm followed a ceasefire, though that collapsed with a return of strikes. With no end in sight, the war has for months upended the lives of people across the Middle East and rattled global energy markets. “Americans in the region should consider departing, or be prepared to depart should there be escalation,” said the security alert. The messages urged citizens to check flight details and to follow safety advice from local authorities. “Americans currently in the Middle East should exercise caution and heightened vigilance and should be prepared for flight cancellations, periodic airspace closures, and potential travel disruptions,” it said. US citizens in Jordan were told not to visit military bases in the country, which have recently come under Iranian missile attack, and in Israel they were urged to seek the location of the nearest bomb shelter. “The Iranian regime is unpredictable, as seen by its recent decisions to attack areas in the region without warning or provocations as well as to expand attacks to areas not previously targeted (such as Egypt),” said a post on the US embassy Jerusalem site. The US embassy in Beirut said the mission remained on “ordered departure status”, meaning that family members and non-essential US government personnel were still relocated outside of Lebanon. Iran’s military yesterday accused Washington of “escalating tensions” in the region. “Any country serving as defensive shield for criminal and aggressive America will be engulfed by the flames of war,” Ali Abdollahi, head of Iran’s military central command, said in a statement read on state television. Mohammad Mokhber, adviser to Iran’s supreme leader, also warned against any attacks on Iranian infrastructure. “You calculate through military equations, but we respond with the logic of history,” he wrote on X. “Attacking Iran’s infrastructure directly awakens the fault lines on which 250 years of your hegemonic architecture have been built.” Iran and the US resumed overnight exchanges of fire last month after a days-long lull in fighting, although there were no reported strikes overnight Friday to yesterday. Meanwhile an “unknown projectile” struck a tanker off the coast of Oman, a British maritime agency said yesterday, as the United States and Iran vie for control of the Strait of Hormuz. Iran has effectively maintained control over navigation through Hormuz since the outbreak of the war on February 28, requiring vessels to obtain permission and pay transit fees before using the waterway. Maritime trade tracking firm Kpler said on Friday that traffic through the Hormuz strait has dropped “sharply”. “With US and Iranian public positions still at odds, operators are closely monitoring traffic volumes, routing behavior and any diplomatic developments that could reshape risk across regional shipping lanes in the days ahead,” the firm said on X. (Gulf Times)
- **Major central banks steer a cautious hiking path -** The bond market selloff after this week's Federal Reserve meeting highlights the challenge policymakers face as they grapple with what higher energy prices and the uncertain consequences of AI advances will mean for their economies. The Fed left interest rates unchanged on Wednesday, even as chief Kevin Warsh pledged an unwavering commitment to bring inflation down, confusing traders and triggering heavy selling in longer-dated bonds. The Bank of England held rates steady on Thursday, and the Bank of Japan faces its own dilemma on Friday. Here's where central banks in the Group of 10 developed economies stand, ranked from the highest policy rate to the lowest. 1/ AUSTRALIA The Reserve Bank of Australia has raised interest rates three times this year to 4.35%, the highest in the G10, fully reversing last year's cuts. It now looks on hold for a while after Wednesday's inflation data undershot forecasts, though the RBA chief says policy makers are prepared to raise rates again. Markets see a further hike later this year as likely but not certain. 2/ NORWAY Norges Bank meets in mid-August. It's already in hiking mode after a surprise move in May to curb inflationary pressures fueled by the Iran war, but left rates unchanged at 4.25% last month. August is looking like a hold after core inflation slowed in June, helped by the short-lived decline in oil prices. 3/ BRITAIN The Bank of England kept interest rates on hold at 3.75%, as expected on Thursday, but a third of its nine rate setters backed a hike. The rest appear in no rush to raise rates, however, sticking with the wait-and-see approach of Governor Andrew Bailey which he hopes will ensure inflation does not overshoot its 2% target by too much this year. 4/ UNITED STATES A divided Fed left rates unchanged on Wednesday and Warsh declined to offer any clues about the rate path. The lack of clarity heightened investor concerns about whether the Fed needs to do more to rein in inflation and steepened the U.S. bond yield curve as 30-year yields hit 19-year highs. President Donald Trump, who hand-picked Warsh and called him "brilliant" following the Fed meeting, has made no secret in the past of his desire to see rate cuts. 5/ NEW ZEALAND The Reserve Bank of New Zealand raised its benchmark rate to 2.5%, its first hike in three years earlier in July. With second-quarter inflation hitting a 2-1/2-year high, markets see the RBNZ tightening once more in September and again by year-end. 6/ EURO ZONE The European Central Bank left rates unchanged last week and traders still price two more hikes by early 2027. President Christine Lagarde held the door open to a rate increase in September on top of a June hike, which left the deposit rate at 2.25%. The euro zone is vulnerable to higher energy prices, but Thursday data showed its economy grew faster than expected last quarter as surging investment in AI and ample government spending helped offset a drag from high energy costs. 7/ CANADA The Bank of Canada, this month, left its key policy rate unchanged for a sixth consecutive meeting, following an aggressive easing cycle last year that lowered borrowing costs to 2.25%

by October 2025. Its rate outlook will hinge largely on energy prices and the evolution of trade relations with the United States, the two main risks to the inflation outlook. 8/ SWEDEN Sweden's Riksbank is in the dovish camp, and in June kept its policy rate unchanged at 1.75%. Sweden's fossil-free energy mix has muted the impact of higher oil prices on inflation, though markets see one rate hike by year-end. 9/ JAPAN The Bank of Japan is expected to keep rates steady at 1% on Friday. After raising rates in June, a second successive hike would be unusual. But given mounting inflationary pressure from the Middle East war, a weak yen and robust global AI demand, investors will be watching to see how hawkish Governor Kazuo Ueda sounds at his press conference. Dovishness could weigh on the yen, already around a 40-year low on the dollar. 10 / SWITZERLAND The Swiss National Bank's key rate is at 0%, the lowest among developed markets, but a steady policy stance could prove enough to tame inflation, after the ECB has embarked on a tightening cycle. While acknowledging inflation risks from higher energy prices, policymakers argued at their last meeting inflation was unlikely to rise rapidly above the 2% target. (Reuters)

- **US economic growth slows in second quarter, missing expectations -** The US saw slowing growth in the second quarter, the Commerce Department said Thursday, with fallout from President Donald Trump's Iran war weighing on the world's largest economy. GDP grew at a sluggish annualized rate of 1.5% in the second quarter, the Bureau of Economic Analysis said, missing analyst expectations of around 2.0%. It had grown by 2.1% in the previous quarter, BEA data showed. "Compared to the first quarter, the deceleration in real GDP in the second quarter reflected a downturn in government spending and decelerations in investment and exports that were partly offset by an acceleration in consumer spending," the BEA said in a statement. The bureau also cited an increase in imports — which are subtracted from GDP — as a factor in Thursday's data. The US economy has displayed robust growth in recent quarters despite headwinds from a turbulent tariff policy and the Iran war, which has seen energy and fertilizer prices skyrocket. Economic growth has been buoyed by investments in the AI boom, but consumption has been hit by years of high prices, compounded by the effects of the war. The economic health of US households is a key issue in November midterm elections, which will see Democrats attempt to wrest control of Congress from Trump's Republicans. The White House praised the latest GDP figures, with spokesman Kush Desai saying "the core drivers of economic growth continue to surge." On Thursday, BEA data showed that Personal Consumption Expenditures (PCE) inflation had slowed to 3.7% in June, from 4.1% the month before. The indicator is the US Federal Reserve's preferred gauge of inflation, as it takes into account a broader swath of spending than the Consumer Price Index (CPI) data. The Fed has a long-term 2% target for PCE inflation, but prices have surged in recent months and have remained above target for more than five years, since the pandemic. On Wednesday, the Fed chose to keep interest rates steady despite those push factors, although three policymakers dissented and called for an immediate rate hike. Core PCE inflation, which strips out volatile food and energy prices, came in at 3.3%. PCE inflation is expected to pick up again in July on the back of Trump renewing the military offensive on Iran, which has driven energy prices back up. Democratic Senator Elizabeth Warren was scathing in her criticism of Trump over the persistently high prices, citing how inflation has increased since he took office. "Trump promised to lower costs 'on day one' — instead, his failed economic agenda, from his chaotic tariffs to his illegal war in Iran, has fueled higher costs and eaten away at paychecks," she said. Chris Zaccarelli of Northlight Asset Management said the lower inflation figure may give the Fed room to continue holding rates, but the GDP figures could be a warning that the economy "is slowing too quickly." Michael Pearce, chief US economist at Oxford Economics, said the GDP figure was not entirely negative, as it showed non-AI investment had posted its biggest increase in three years. "We expect that recovery to broaden in the coming quarters, driven by tax cuts and lean inventories," he said. "The subdued 1.5% annualized rise in GDP in Q2 underplays the economy's strength as it reflects a drag from rising imports and falling inventories that won't be sustained for long." Kathy Bostjancic, chief economist at Nationwide, offered a similar assessment of Thursday's sluggish figure. "The softish headline Q2 GDP reading masks strength in the core private domestic sector that expanded by a vibrant 3.9%," she said. "This underscores the resiliency of the economy in the face of the energy price shock emanating from the war in the Middle East." (Gulf Times)

- **US Treasury intervenes to support yen after Japan steps in, FT reports -** The U.S. Treasury bought yen on Friday to support the battered Japanese currency, the Financial Times reported, marking Washington's first yen-buying intervention with Tokyo in more than a decade as it languishes near 40-year lows. The Federal Reserve Bank of New York sold euros for yen on behalf of the Treasury through Goldman Sachs (GS.N), and Morgan Stanley (MS.N), the FT said, citing people familiar with the matter. The report did not indicate any amounts of yen purchased. Earlier on Friday, the Treasury informed a number of banks that it might intervene in the yen market and that they should "stand ready for future action," a source familiar with the matter told Reuters. A Reuters photo of Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent's notepad during a cabinet meeting at Camp David in Maryland showed the words "To Do," followed by "Buy Japanese Yen (JPY) $5-10 bil." The Treasury did not immediately respond to requests for comment on the FT report and the Bessent notepad photo. The New York Fed and Morgan Stanley also did not immediately respond to requests for comment outside regular business hours. Goldman Sachs declined to comment. Japan and the United States may unveil a policy as early as next week to address the yen's weakness, Kyodo News reported on Saturday, citing informed sources. The announcement would serve as a warning against speculative bets that have pressured the Japanese currency, with the aim of stabilizing markets, the report said. The U.S. last directly supported the yen in 2011, coordinating with fellow Group of Seven nations to stabilize markets after Japan's earthquake and tsunami disaster. News of the potential intervention by the Treasury helped boost the yen , with a notable jump during late afternoon trading. The dollar dropped to about 157.6 yen just before 5 p.m. EDT (2100 GMT) from about 158.9 yen around 4:14 p.m., LSEG data showed. The U.S. currency had risen in recent weeks to nearly 164 yen, its highest since 1986. Japan may have sold as much as $58.97bn to buy yen on Thursday, central bank data indicated on Friday, signaling its repeated efforts to stem the yen's weakness. Tokyo intervened again in New York trading hours on Friday, the Nikkei reported on Saturday. Finance Ministry officials could not immediately be reached for comment outside working hours, but the ministry, in an apparent effort to soothe market worries about the limits of Japan's firepower for large-scale intervention, posted on X that Japan's monetary authorities have "a broad range of tools, to address market liquidity needs." "We remain prepared to use available tools as necessary to support orderly market functioning," including potential access to the Federal Reserve's standing Foreign and International Monetary Authorities (FIMA) Repo Facility, the ministry said. The FIMA repo facility, introduced in 2020 to steady markets during the COVID-19 pandemic, allows Japan to raise dollar liquidity without outright sales of U.S. Treasuries, potentially easing funding pressures on Tokyo for intervention. (Reuters)

- **China's factory activity shrinks in July as demand falters, fueling slowdown concerns -** China's factory activity unexpectedly slipped into contraction in July, pressured by shrinking new orders that reinforced concerns over slowing economic growth, weak demand at home and elevated production costs. Strong manufacturing and goods exports in the first half of the year have somewhat cushioned the Chinese economy from the Middle East oil shock and helped offset weaknesses in the property market and employment, but economic data released earlier this month showed that growth had lost steam. The official manufacturing purchasing managers' index (PMI) fell to 49.2 from 50.3 in June, below the 50 mark separating growth from contraction and hitting a five-month low, according to a survey by the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) released on Friday. It missed the median forecast for 50 in a Reuters poll. The non-manufacturing PMI, which includes services and construction, also declined below the 50 mark from 50.2 the previous month. At 49, the measure in July was the weakest since December 2022. The grim readings underscore the headwinds confronting the economy with growth already slowing in the second quarter despite solid external demand. The PMI data showed that downward pressure on the economy had increased, said Zhang Liqun, an analyst with the China Federation of Logistics & Purchasing. "The constraint from weak domestic demand on the release of production and supply capacity has become a prominent problem, and industries and companies are facing considerable challenges," Zhang said. China's gross domestic product growth in the second quarter slowed to 4.3% from 5.0% in the first three months, below the official annual target of 4.5%-5%, adding pressure on policymakers to deliver stronger stimulus measures to shore up domestic demand and investment. ECONOMIC IMBALANCES DEEPEN The PMI data showed a sharp drop in demand, with the subindex for new orders sinking to 48.5 from 51.2 the previous month. The gauge for new export orders also contracted, coming in at 49.6 in July compared with 50.1 in June. Dan Wang, China director at Eurasia Group, said demand from major markets such as the European Union had been affected by the conflict in the Middle East, as European buyers, fearing a possible recession, turned cautious. The latest factory surveys also underlined the deepening imbalances in the economy. Although the subindex for production also contracted, the 49.9 reading suggested firmer supply compared with demand. Moreover, the gauges for equipment manufacturing and high-tech manufacturing were in expansionary territory, while those for consumer goods and energy-intensive sectors shrank. The divergence highlights a two-speed economy, with high-tech industries riding the wave of the global AI spending surge even as traditional, domestically focused manufacturers struggle against sluggish consumer demand and mounting cost pressures. The composite PMI came in at 49.3 compared with a 50.6 reading the previous month. The NBS attributed the weak factory performance to a high base and a traditional off-season for some manufacturing industries. The Politburo, China's top decision-making body, pledged in a meeting on Thursday to "attach great importance" to the difficulties and challenges in the economy, and said the government would leverage existing policies and roll out new policies in a timely manner. It reiterated policy pledges for expanding domestic demand but did not unveil specific new measures. "We believe that the main area that could provide support might be on the fiscal side, where there was a commitment to accelerate fiscal expenditures," said Lynn Song, chief economist of Greater China at ING. (Reuters)

- **German inflation rises in July, economy grows more than expected in Q2 -** German inflation rose in July on higher energy prices due to the Iran conflict, threatening the long-awaited recovery of Europe's biggest economy. Germany's gross domestic product grew more than expected in the second quarter, but risks loom as hostilities flares up again between Iran and the U.S. and prices could stay high for longer than initially expected, taking a toll on investment and consumption. Inflation accelerated to 2.8% year-on-year, in line with forecasts, preliminary data from the federal statistics office showed on Thursday. Analysts polled by Reuters had forecasted the EU-harmonized consumer price index to come in at 2.8% in July, compared with 2.4% the month before. MIDDLE EAST TRENDS DICTATE SHORT-TERM INFLATION OUTLOOK Energy inflation drove the increase, rising to 8.3% in July from 3.4% in the previous month, as the government’s tax rebate on fuel expired. "The short-term trend in the inflation rate clearly depends heavily on further developments in the Middle East," said Commerzbank economist Ralph Solveen. Core inflation, which excludes volatile food and energy prices, fell to 2.4% from 2.5% in June. The German data came ahead of the euro zone inflation release on Friday. Inflation in the bloc is expected to come in at 2.9%, slightly above June's 2.8%, according to economists polled by Reuters. ECONOMY GREW MORE THAN EXPECTED IN Q2 German GDP expanded by 0.2% compared with the previous three-month period, preliminary data from the statistics office also showed on Thursday. Analysts polled by Reuters had forecast a rise of 0.1%. Separate data showed that GDP grew by 0.2% in France and Italy and by 0.7% in Spain, suggesting activity in the euro zone held up well in the second quarter. However, analysts cautioned that the geopolitical situation remains very uncertain, especially after the collapse of a temporary ceasefire agreement between Iran and the U.S. and the resumption of fighting over the Strait of Hormuz, a crucial waterway that Tehran says it now controls. Analysts also cited the risk posed to Germany's economic output by low water levels in the Rhine caused by an acute lack of rainfall during an exceptionally hot summer in Western Europe. The effects of these water levels alone could dampen GDP in the third quarter by between 0.1% and 0.2%, said economist Stefan Kooths of the Kiel Institute for the World Economy (IfW). BRIGHTER GERMAN GDP DATA Figures also showed the German economy grew by a revised 0.4% in the first quarter, up from the 0.3% previously announced. It has been expanding modestly for the last three quarters, following two quarters of stagnation in 2025. In response to the increase in the second quarter and the upward revision of the first quarter, Commerzbank has raised its growth forecast for this year to 1.0% from 0.6%. "The recovery of the German economy is more pronounced than previously thought," Commerzbank's chief economist Joerg Kraemer said. At the start of July, Chancellor Friedrich Merz outlined a package of pension, tax and labor reforms to boost growth, jobs and competitiveness after years of meagre GDP expansion. Economists say the reforms could lift Germany's sluggish growth rate, and German business morale improved more than expected in July, reflecting hopes for the reform package. "Some industrial sectors benefited from the fact that Asian competitors were hit harder by the closure of the Strait of Hormuz," said Carsten Brzeski, global head of macro at ING. Exports were up compared with the previous quarter, driving the increase, the statistics office said. However, against the backdrop of geopolitical uncertainties, front-loading effects may also have played a role, said Marc Schattenberg, economist at Deutsche Bank Research. Household consumption showed a subdued trend and investment declined compared with the previous quarter. (Reuters)

Regional

- **Saudi Arabia unveils plans for multinational maritime defense coalition -** Saudi Arabia on Thursday unveiled plans for a multinational maritime defense coalition aimed at protecting international shipping and energy supply routes in the Red Sea region after attacks by Yemen's Iran-aligned Houthis disrupted one of the world's busiest trade corridors. The Saudi defense ministry said representatives from 43 countries and the European Union attended an international meeting that discussed the proposed coalition, including Saudi Arabia serving as its founding and leading state and hosting its headquarters. The ministry said the coalition would strengthen maritime security, safeguard freedom of navigation, secure international trade routes and energy supply lines, and protect shared maritime interests in the Bab el-Mandeb Strait and the Gulf of Aden. It said 14 countries, including Turkey, Pakistan, Egypt, Sudan and Djibouti, issued a joint statement supporting the proposed coalition. Among the six Gulf Arab states, Oman and the United Arab Emirates were not listed among the countries backing the statement. The announcement comes a day after two sources familiar with the deliberations told Reuters that Saudi Arabia was seeking to build an international coalition to protect Red Sea shipping from Houthi attacks. The Houthis said on July 20 they would impose a naval blockade on Saudi Arabia in the Red Sea, and have since claimed a series of attacks on Saudi-linked shipping. Saudi Arabia has responded with air strikes on what it said were Houthi military facilities in Yemen's Hodeidah used to threaten commercial shipping. The Red Sea tensions mark the latest front in the wider Iran war, with attacks on shipping spreading beyond the Gulf and pushing oil prices higher. The Bab el-Mandeb Strait, linking the southern Red Sea with the Gulf of Aden and the Indian Ocean, is a key maritime chokepoint for global trade and energy shipments. The European Union launched a naval mission in the Red Sea in 2024 to help restore and safeguard freedom of navigation after the Houthis disrupted maritime traffic by attacking vessels in what they said was solidarity with Palestinians during the Gaza war. (Reuters)
- **Saudi Q2 GDP falls as oil activity contracts; budget deficit shrinks by more than 70% -** Saudi Arabia's real gross domestic product fell 4.8% in the second quarter compared to the same period a year earlier, preliminary government estimates showed on Thursday, as war in the Middle East impacts the world's top oil exporter and wider Gulf. The contraction was largely the result of a 24.7% drop in oil activity, showed data from the General Authority for Statistics (GASTAT). Non-oil and government activity ticked up 0.9% and 0.6% respectively. The US attacked Iran on Wednesday, intensifying a five-month-old war that has disrupted shipping and energy markets and affected countries in the region beyond the main fronts. Most Gulf economies will contract more sharply this year than expected three months ago before rebounding in 2027, a Reuters poll found this month. GASTAT said oil activity in the quarter contributed negatively to real GDP growth by 5.4 percentage points, while non-oil activity contributed positively by 0.4 percentage point. Saudi Arabia's budget deficit in the second quarter of the year went down by more than 70% compared to the previous quarter to 34.3bn riyals ($9.14bn), as

spending tightened and revenues rose. Total government spending went down by 3.4% to 373bn riyals in the second quarter compared to the previous one, Finance Ministry data showed on Thursday. Meanwhile, total revenues went up by more than 30% to 338.784bn riyals, propelled by a 28.5% increase in oil revenues to 185.1bn riyals. Non-oil revenues also increased by more than 30% to 153.7bn riyals. (Gulf Times)

- **Saudi PIF's $55bn EA deal gets EU approval under subsidy rules -** Saudi Arabia's Public Investment Fund and a group of investors have gained EU approval for their $55bn acquisition of video game developer Electronic Arts under the bloc's subsidy rules, a European Commission filing showed on Friday. In a regulatory filing on Thursday, Electronic Arts said it had received all regulatory approvals as of July 30 and that it expects to close the deal on August 4. The deal secured a green light under EU merger rules last week, but the review under the Foreign Subsidies Regulation (FSR) was seen as the bigger hurdle. The FSR aims to prevent unfair non-EU subsidies granted to companies looking to acquire rivals in the 27-country bloc. Reuters reported exclusively earlier this month that the deal would secure EU approval under the FSR. The deal is a major push by PIF in its efforts to become a global hub for games and sports, betting on the enduring value of blockbuster game franchises as the industry recovers from a prolonged downturn. It also underscores Saudi Arabia's diversification from oil into infrastructure, tourism, sports and gaming and other sectors. (Gulf Times)
- **High logistics costs, regional tensions to pressure Gulf corporate earnings: S&P -** High logistics costs and lingering geopolitical tension threaten to squeeze corporate earnings across the Gulf region through the end of 2026, according to a new report by S&P Global Ratings. "For most GCC corporates, we expect profitability will decline by end-2026 due to higher logistics costs, and we anticipate weaker discretionary capital expenditure and lower capital market debt issuance volumes," the report stated. The credit rating agency noted that businesses face unequal exposure to current regional risks. The nature of these challenges is moving away from immediate operational shocks toward prolonged uncertainty, noted the report. "Corporate sectors in Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries are unevenly exposed to Middle East war risks that are shifting from immediate operational disruption to prolonged uncertainty that could weaken confidence, delay investment, and slow the recovery to pre-war economic levels," it pointed out. The energy sector faces persistent operational pressure. Trapped crude and shut-ins have reduced oil supply by roughly 1.3bn barrels, though producers in Saudi Arabia and the UAE maintain some volume buffers through alternative routing options, stated the report, citing S&P Global Commodity Insights (SPGE). Chemical exporters also face severe disruptions, with plant closures and force majeure declarations impacting Qatar and Kuwait. Furthermore, metals production lost 3mn metric tonnes of aluminum capacity after regional strikes damaged two smelters. Maritime trade has slowed sharply as ship traffic through the Strait of Hormuz dropped from a pre-war average of 120-140 vessels daily to fewer than 40, stated the report. War risk insurance premiums spiked from 0.25% to between 3% and 4% of vessel value, forcing exporters toward regional road transport. Sectors tied to foreign investment are positioned as the most vulnerable, the report stated. Real estate developers in markets with high expatriate populations face specific headwinds because expatriates make up 80% to 90% of their resident bases. In a broader downside case, falling consumer confidence could trigger expatriate departures and push down property prices across both markets. Residential rentals in Dubai have already fallen 5% to 15%, while Qatar faces pre-existing oversupply, the report said. (Gulf Times)
- **Saudi food company Al Babtain to sell entire stake in Jordan's Chocolate Lake -** Saudi Arabia's Al Babtain Food Company has announced plans to sell its entire 3% stake in Jordan-based Chocolate Lake Company for Chocolate and Confectionery Manufacturing to Dubai International Financial Centre-registered Indulgent Food International Holding Company. The transaction forms part of Indulgent Food's acquisition of a 70% stake in Chocolate Lake from existing shareholders, stated Al Babtain Food in its filing to Saudi bourse Tadawul. The total equity value of Chocolate Lake was set at $171mn before adjustments under the sale agreement, it stated. According to Al Babtain, it is entitled to 4.29% of the total consideration allocated to the selling shareholders, with the final proceeds to be determined after completion adjustments, costs and other agreed items. Completion of the transaction is subject to regulatory and competition approvals, lender consents related to the change of control and other customary closing conditions. The agreement also provides for additional consideration linked to Chocolate Lake's financial performance in 2027 and 2028, based on adjusted ebitda targets. In addition, $5mn of the sellers' proceeds will be placed in escrow for three years to cover potential claims under the agreement. Al Babtain said it expects the transaction to have a positive financial impact, with the final capital gain to be determined upon completion. The proceeds would be used to strengthen its financial position and support its business activities and strategic plans, it added. (Zawya)
- **IMF says Saudi economy remains resilient amid regional geopolitical tensions -** Saudi Arabia's Ministry of Finance welcomed the International Monetary Fund's 2026 Article IV Consultation report, which said the Kingdom's economy has remained resilient despite geopolitical tensions in the Middle East. The IMF said Saudi Arabia entered 2026 with strong momentum after its economy expanded by 4.6% in 2025, driven by the gradual unwinding of OPEC+ production cuts and robust domestic demand. The report also noted an improvement in the Kingdom's fiscal position, with the non-oil primary deficit narrowing from 24.5% of non-oil GDP in 2024 to 23.3% in 2025. The report credited Saudi Arabia's long-term planning and strategic infrastructure investments for helping mitigate the impact of regional tensions. It highlighted the East-West pipeline, which can transport around 7mn barrels of crude oil per day to Yanbu Port, as a key factor in maintaining export resilience. The IMF said Saudi Arabia has sufficient fiscal space to support the economy if regional tensions persist, citing low government debt, substantial financial reserves, significant sovereign assets and the role of the Public Investment Fund. It also noted that the Saudi Central Bank's net foreign assets stood at $437bn at the end of 2025 and assessed the Kingdom's public debt as sustainable, with overall sovereign risks remaining low. The report described the Saudi banking sector as well positioned to withstand external shocks, supported by strong capital and liquidity buffers and continued improvements in asset quality. Capital adequacy ratios reached 20.5% and 18.8% in 2025, while the ratio of non-performing loans fell to 1.0% of total lending, the lowest level recorded in a decade. The IMF also praised the Saudi Central Bank's efforts to safeguard financial stability through enhanced macroprudential measures. The IMF said Vision 2030 reforms have driven a decade of economic transformation by strengthening institutions, improving policy effectiveness, diversifying the economy and reducing dependence on oil. It added that Saudi Arabia has achieved several Vision 2030 targets ahead of schedule, while recording improvements in healthcare and education. The report also highlighted Saudi Arabia's leadership in adopting artificial intelligence across government services, healthcare, education and financial technology. It noted the Kingdom's strong performance in global rankings, including the United Nations E-Government Index and Oxford University's Government AI Readiness Index, and estimated that AI adoption could increase Saudi Arabia's real GDP by up to 6% over the next decade. The IMF concluded that Saudi Arabia continues to demonstrate economic strength and resilience in a challenging regional environment and said sustained structural reforms, together with prudent fiscal and monetary policies, will further strengthen the Kingdom's global economic position and support continued economic diversification. (Zawya)
- **CBUAE maintains base rate at 3.65% -** The Central Bank of the UAE (CBUAE) has decided to maintain the Base Rate applicable to the Overnight Deposit Facility (ODF) at 3.65%. This decision was taken following the US Federal Reserve's announcement today to keep the Interest Rate on Reserve Balances (IORB) unchanged. The CBUAE has also decided to maintain the interest rate applicable to borrowing short-term liquidity from the CBUAE at 50 basis points above the Base Rate for all standing credit facilities. The Base Rate, which is anchored to the US Federal Reserve's IORB, signals the general stance of monetary policy and provides an effective floor for overnight money market interest rates in the UAE. (Zawya)
- **Dubai population tops 4.58mln by end of 2025 -** Digital Dubai, through the Dubai Data and Statistics Establishment, announced that the population of the Emirate of Dubai reached 4.58mn by the end of 2025, an increase of

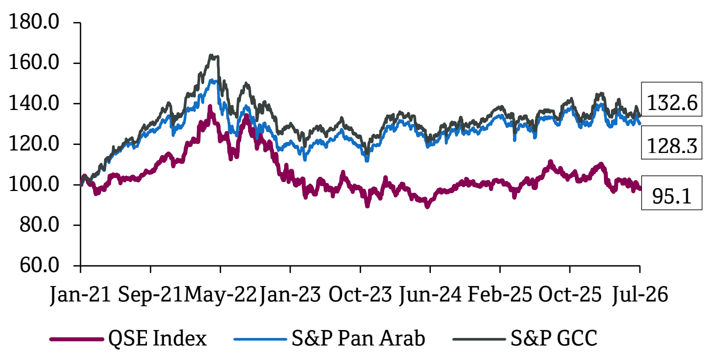
around 332,000 people compared with the end of 2024 and a growth rate of 7.5%. The average number of people present in the emirate during daytime hours rises to 6.392mn when temporary arrivals for work and tourism are included. The announcement coincided with the approval by H.H. Sheikh Hamdan bin Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Crown Prince of Dubai, Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Defense and Chairman of the Executive Council of Dubai, of the real-time census and population growth monitoring project in Dubai. The project is based on an advanced digital methodology relying on administrative records, smart systems and real-time data, representing a qualitative shift in measuring the population landscape and enhancing the ability of government entities to plan and make decisions more accurately and rapidly, away from traditional census methods. Hamad Obaid Al Mansoori, Director-General of Digital Dubai, said the project represents a new strategic milestone in Dubai's journey towards consolidating a global model for a data- and artificial intelligence-driven digital government. He affirmed that data has become a national asset and strategic infrastructure supporting decision-making, improving planning efficiency and strengthening the ability to anticipate the future. He added that the project embodies Dubai's vision of harnessing advanced technologies to build an interconnected digital ecosystem based on reliable and continuously updated real-time data, enabling government entities to develop more precise policies, more proactive services and more efficient investments, while enhancing the emirate's readiness to sustain growth across various sectors. Younus Al Nasser, Chief Executive Officer of the Dubai Data and Statistics Establishment, said the "Dubai Population Now" initiative goes beyond providing accurate and updated population data to become a strategic tool for understanding the population landscape, anticipating changes and supporting smarter decision-making. He explained that population growth reflects the vitality of Dubai's economy, which recorded real gross domestic product growth of 5.4% in 2025, alongside the emirate attracting 19.6mn international tourists and around 96mn passengers travelling through Dubai airports during the same year. He affirmed that the population increase reflects the expansion of the labor market, rising demand for services and improved quality of life. Al Nasser noted that Dubai attracts large numbers of workers and visitors every day from within and outside the country, raising the number of people present in the emirate during peak hours to 6.392mn. This includes more than 1.812mn people temporarily present for work, tourism, study or shopping, which represents a key factor in planning infrastructure, transport networks and public services. Digital Dubai affirmed that the project represents a new generation of population censuses, relying on the integration of government records, big data, artificial intelligence and machine-learning technologies. This enables data to be updated continuously, demographic trends to be forecast and planning to be improved across the housing, education, healthcare and transport sectors. The project was implemented through cooperation among several government entities in the emirate, including the General Directorate of Residency and Foreigners Affairs-Dubai, the Roads and Transport Authority, Dubai Electricity and Water Authority, Dubai Health Authority, Dubai Municipality, Dubai Land Department, the Knowledge and Human Development Authority, the Department of Economy and Tourism and the Dubai Government Human Resources Department. This model reflects the integration of government work in developing an advanced population data ecosystem. The shift to a real-time census reflects Dubai's progress in managing population data after conducting seven traditional censuses between 1975 and 2005. The emirate's population rose from around 12,000 people in 1881 to more than 4.58mn by the end of 2025, representing an increase of nearly 380-fold over 144 years. The current growth rate of 7.5% is among the highest recorded in the emirate's history, reaffirming Dubai's position as one of the world's fastest-growing cities and one of the most attractive destinations for residents, investment and talent. (Zawya)

- **ADNOC to change oil pricing benchmark to Platts Dubai from Murban futures -** Abu Dhabi National Oil Co said on Friday it will change the benchmark for monthly official selling prices for all its crude grades to prompt-month Platts Dubai pricing from Murban crude futures from November 1. The change, which applies to Abu Dhabi onshore and offshore crude grades, including Murban, Das, Umm Lulu and Upper Zakum, will align ADNOC's OSPs more closely with the month of loading, the company said in a statement. ADNOC will announce differentials to Dubai quotes for the grades in the month before cargoes load. "The new pricing mechanism reinforces ADNOC's commitment to pricing transparency for its growing customer and investor base," ADNOC said. The company added it will continue to meet all of its obligations with regard to delivery of its Abu Dhabi onshore and offshore crude grades. The move comes after the U.S.-Israeli war on Iran disrupted oil exports from the Middle East through the Strait of Hormuz and caused deep hedging losses among traders who deal with Abu Dhabi oil. The producer has been engaging customers about proposed changes for its OSPs since June. ADNOC has also been selling its crude cargoes via spot tenders since June at differentials to Dubai quotes. SUDDEN CHANGE, SAYS TRADER The announcement is a sudden change, a crude trader said on Friday. The change in pricing mechanism is not expected to have a material impact on any ADNOC listed instruments, including issuances completed under ADNOC Murban's GMTN or Sukuk programs, ADNOC said. Following ADNOC's announcement, ICE Futures Abu Dhabi, or IFAD, said it will continue trading for Murban crude futures contract months that have open interest while those without will be suspended from Friday. An ICE spokesperson did not immediately reply to a question about what would happen after. IFAD was created to turn ADNOC's Murban crude into a globally traded benchmark and to give Middle East producers a more transparent, exchange-based pricing mechanism. ICE also is home to the global Brent futures contract. (Reuters)
- **ADNOC buys tankers as Red Sea, Hormuz crisis reshapes oil trade -** Abu Dhabi National Oil Co (ADNOC) has bought five very large crude carriers (VLCCs) for about $590mn, three sources familiar with the matter said, expanding its fleet as conflicts in the Red Sea and the Strait of Hormuz tighten tanker supply. The acquisitions are part of a broader push by the UAE producer to control more of its supply chain, allowing it to move crude to customers even as geopolitical tensions disrupt two of the world's busiest maritime routes. ADNOC Logistics and Services (ADNOC L&S) recently bought the five VLCCs from tanker company Frontline Plc (HF6.F), the sources said. Of these, two 2012-built vessels were purchased for about $115mn each, and three built in 2015 cost about $120mn each, the sources said. "We do not comment on rumors or market speculation. ADNOC L&S continually reviews its fleet requirements and strategic growth opportunities," the company said in an emailed statement. "As a matter of policy, any announcements relating to potential transactions are made in accordance with the company's internal governance processes and applicable disclosure obligations." Frontline declined to comment. While producers such as Iraq, Qatar and Kuwait are struggling to place oil in the market due to the disruption from the war in the Middle East, former OPEC member United Arab Emirates has sold millions of barrels to refiners through direct sales and spot tenders. ADNOC has also acquired three very large gas carriers (VLGCs) for about $115mn each, one of the sources said. ADNOC L&S has also ordered another 25 to 30 new vessels, including crude tankers, LNG carriers and LPG carriers, from various shipyards, this source said. ADNOC L&S operates more than 900 vessels including seven VLGCs and eight VLCCs, according to a fact sheet posted on its website. The investment in new ships follows months of disruption to shipping through the Red Sea and the Strait of Hormuz. Besides expanding its owned fleet, the company also chartered about 25 crude tankers from South Korea's Sinokor after the regional crisis escalated, the source added. About 15 vessels were deployed as shuttle tankers to move crude from facilities inside the Strait of Hormuz to storage terminals in Fujairah and Oman, while the remaining vessels supplied customers directly, the source added. (Reuters)
- **$3.68bn in loans benefit from repayment deferrals in UAE -** The comprehensive proactive support package to enhance the resilience of financial institutions, adopted by the Central Bank of the UAE (CBUAE) in March 2026, enabled repayment deferrals on loans totaling AED13.5bn for affected bank customers. A total of 135,031 customers benefited from the measure, as part of the CBUAE's prudential approach to strengthening the resilience of the banking sector and proactively managing asset quality. According to data issued by the CBUAE today, the value of loans benefiting from instalment repayment deferrals as of 30th July was distributed as follows: AED9.1bn for large corporates, AED2.4bn for small and medium-sized enterprises, and AED2bn for individuals. The number

of beneficiaries included 127,753 individuals, 6,198 small and medium-sized enterprises, and 1,080 large corporates. The data confirmed the continued strength of the banking sector, with assets rising by 12.5%, loans by 18.1% and deposits by 14% as of 30th June, 2026, compared with the same period in 2025, reflecting the sector's continued resilience and growth. In a related context, the UAE banking sector achieved its best asset quality levels by the end of the second quarter of 2026, supported by a significant decline in the stock of non-performing loans as a result of targeted supervisory measures taken by the CBUAE, reflecting the strength of the financial system. The non-performing loan ratio declined to 2.8% by the end of the second quarter of 2026, its lowest level on record, compared with 8.2% in 2020, representing a decrease of 5.4 percentage points. The net non-performing loan ratio also fell to a record level of 1.3%, compared with 3.6% in 2020, a decrease of 2.3 percentage points. The stock of non-performing loans declined to AED76bn by the end of the second quarter of 2026, compared with AED84bn in the first quarter of this year and AED142bn in 2020. The CBUAE explained that this improvement resulted from a package of regulatory and supervisory measures, including intensive inspections and comprehensive asset quality reviews, enhanced dialogue with industry representatives and risk officers, and the implementation of credit risk management regulations and standards. The measures also included developing guidelines for the write-off and recovery of non-performing loans in line with international best practices and standards. (Zawya)

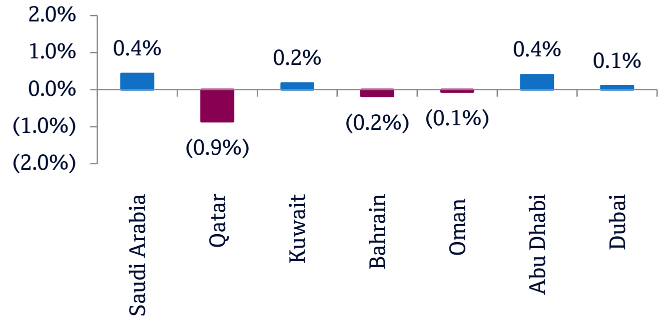
- **Bahrain keeps overnight deposit interest rate unchanged at 4.25% -** The Central Bank of Bahrain (CBB) announced its decision to maintain the overnight deposit interest rate unchanged at 4.25%. This decision was taken following the US Federal Reserve's announcement today to keep the Interest Rate on Reserve Balances (IORB) unchanged. This decision comes as part of the review conducted by the CBB to maintain monetary and financial stability in the Kingdom of Bahrain in light of global financial market developments, said the kingdom's Central Bank in a statement. UAE too decided to maintain the Base Rate applicable to the Overnight Deposit Facility (ODF) at 3.65%. The Central Bank of UAE (CBUAE) also decided to maintain the interest rate applicable to borrowing short-term liquidity from the CBUAE at 50 basis points above the Base Rate for all standing credit facilities. The Base Rate, which is anchored to the US Federal Reserve's IORB, signals the general stance of monetary policy and provides an effective floor for overnight money market interest rates in the UAE. (Zawya)
- **Fitch Affirms Gulf Cooperation Council Interconnection Authority at 'A+'; Outlook Stable -** Fitch Ratings has affirmed Gulf Cooperation Council Interconnection Authority's (GCCIA) Long-Term Foreign-Currency Issuer Default Rating (IDR) at 'A+'. The Outlook is Stable. (Bloomberg)

Rebased Performance



Source: Bloomberg

Daily Index Performance



Source: Bloomberg

Asset/Currency Performance	Close ($)	1D%	WTD%	YTD%
Gold/Ounce	4,046.15	(1.4)	(0.2)	(6.3)
Silver/Ounce	57.60	(2.4)	(1.0)	(19.6)
Crude Oil (Brent)/Barrel (FM Future)	90.12	1.2	(6.9)	48.1
Crude Oil (WTI)/Barrel (FM Future)	84.67	1.3	(5.2)	47.5
Natural Gas (Henry Hub)/MMBtu	2.59	(1.8)	(9.5)	(28.8)
LPG Propane (Arab Gulf)/Ton	68.60	(1.9)	(6.9)	7.7
LPG Butane (Arab Gulf)/Ton	104.00	0.7	(1.9)	34.9
Euro	1.15	(0.0)	1.4	(1.9)
Yen	157.40	(1.3)	(3.9)	0.4
GBP	1.35	0.1	1.2	0.1
CHF	1.24	(0.3)	1.3	(1.8)
AUD	0.70	(0.1)	0.6	5.2
USD Index	99.91	0.1	(1.5)	1.6
RUB	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
BRL	0.20	(0.3)	0.2	8.3

Source: Bloomberg

Global Indices Performance	Close	1D%*	WTD%*	YTD%*
MSCI World Index	4,847.88	0.5	1.2	9.4
DJ Industrial	52,485.03	0.5	1.0	9.2
S&P 500	7,489.72	0.7	1.0	9.4
NASDAQ 100	25,373.85	1.0	1.6	9.2
STOXX 600	649.19	(0.2)	2.0	7.6
DAX	25,629.24	(0.0)	3.4	2.5
FTSE 100	10,868.05	(0.3)	2.2	9.5
CAC 40	8,509.64	0.2	2.9	2.5
Nikkei	64,362.02	4.2	2.4	25.4
MSCI EM	1,665.89	6.6	2.3	18.6
SHANGHAI SE Composite	3,832.26	0.7	0.8	(0.1)
HANG SENG	25,884.43	0.1	3.7	0.2
BSE SENSEX	78,094.64	0.2	3.7	(13.6)
Bovespa	177,999.00	0.3	2.1	19.3
RTS	4,788.22	0.0	0.0	8.1

Source: Bloomberg ($ adjusted returns if any)*

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