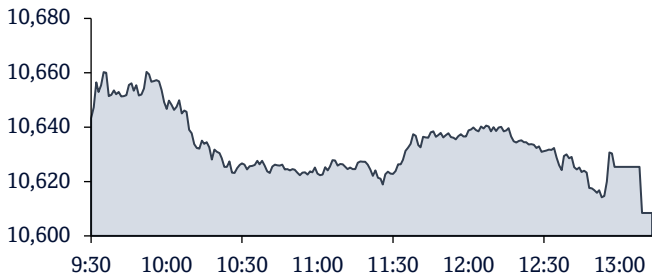


### QSE Intra-Day Movement



### Qatar Commentary

The QE Index declined 0.3% to close at 10,608.4. Losses were led by the Banks & Financial Services and Insurance indices, falling 0.7% and 0.3%, respectively. Top losers were Damaan Islamic Insurance Company and Inma Holding, falling 7.1% and 4.8%, respectively. Among the top gainers, Qatar German Co for Med. Devices gained 10.0%, while Dlala Brokerage & Inv. Holding Co. was up 7.9%.

### GCC Commentary

**Saudi Arabia:** The TASI Index fell 0.5% to close at 11,275.8. Losses were led by the Health Care Equipment & Svc and Banks indices, falling 1.0% and 0.9%, respectively. AYYAN Investment Co. declined 6.7% while Fawaz Abdulaziz Alhokair Co. was down 4.0%.

**Dubai:** The DFM Index fell 0.5% to close at 3,533.2. The Materials index declined 2.1%, while the Real Estate index fell 1.8%. Al Mal Capital REIT declined 9.8% while Al Firdous Holdings was down 6.4%.

**Abu Dhabi:** The ADX General Index fell 0.4% to close at 9,489.9. The Real Estate index declined 1.8%, while the Industrial index fell 1.5%. Gulf Cement Company declined 5.7% while United Arab Bank was down 4.7%.

**Kuwait:** The Kuwait All Share Index fell 0.1% to close at 6,758.0. The Industrials and Telecommunications indices declined 1.0% each. Wethaq Takaful Insurance Co declined 9.4%, while Hayat Communications was down 8.4%.

**Oman:** The MSM 30 Index fell 0.4% to close at 4,686.3. Losses were led by the Industrial and Services indices, falling 0.7% and 0.5%, respectively. Barka Water and Power declined 9.7%, while Voltamp Energy was down 6.3%.

**Bahrain:** The BHB Index gained 0.6% close at 1,961.3. The Materials index rose 1.8% while the Communications Services index gained 1.0%. GFH Financial Group rose 3.9%, while Arab Banking Corporation was up 2.6%.

QSE Top Gainers	Close*	1D%	Vol. '000	YTD%
Qatar German Co for Med. Devices	2.277	10.0	33,986.2	81.1
Dlala Brokerage & Inv. Holding Co.	1.564	7.9	8,148.1	37.0
Widam Food Company	2.175	6.1	6,426.0	7.0
Qatari Investors Group	1.789	3.5	19,801.3	6.1
Al Khaleej Takaful Insurance Co.	2.929	2.7	565.4	27.3

QSE Top Volume Trades	Close*	1D%	Vol. '000	YTD%
Qatar German Co for Med. Devices	2.277	10.0	33,986.2	81.1
Mazaya Qatar Real Estate Dev.	0.811	0.4	22,969.8	16.5
Ezdan Holding Group	1.229	(1.2)	20,774.3	22.8
Qatari Investors Group	1.789	3.5	19,801.3	6.1
Estithmar Holding	2.239	2.3	19,572.4	24.4

Regional Indices	Close	1D%	WTD%	MTD%	YTD%	Exch. Val. Traded (\$ mn)	Exchange Mkt. Cap. (\$ mn)	P/E**	P/B**	Dividend Yield
Qatar*	10,608.44	(0.3)	(0.3)	4.2	(0.7)	177.88	172,021.5	12.7	1.4	4.7
Dubai	3,533.23	(0.5)	(0.6)	(0.3)	5.9	91.62	168,507.7	8.6	1.2	5.0
Abu Dhabi	9,489.89	(0.4)	(0.2)	(3.1)	(7.1)	292.08	707,629.7	29.0	2.6	1.9
Saudi Arabia	11,275.77	(0.5)	(0.6)	(0.3)	7.6	1,771.11	2,880,088.8	17.5	2.2	3.0
Kuwait	6,757.99	(0.1)	(0.6)	(5.4)	(7.3)	170.88	141,317.2	16.6	1.5	4.2
Oman	4,686.26	(0.4)	(0.2)	(0.7)	(3.5)	5.64	22,318.9	15.2	1.1	4.5
Bahrain	1,961.33	0.6	0.9	3.0	3.5	11.51	65,241.3	6.8	0.7	8.8

Source: Bloomberg, Qatar Stock Exchange, Tadawul, Muscat Securities Market and Dubai Financial Market (\*\* TTM; \* Value traded (\$ mn) do not include special trades if any #)

Market Indicators	23 May 23	22 May 23	%Chg.
Value Traded (QR mn)	643.9	853.9	(24.6)
Exch. Market Cap. (QR mn)	629,193.6	630,989.4	(0.3)
Volume (mn)	253.3	451.6	(43.9)
Number of Transactions	20,328	25,699	(20.9)
Companies Traded	46	49	(6.1)
Market Breadth	23:18	23:23	-

Market Indices	Close	1D%	WTD%	YTD%	TTM P/E
Total Return	22,767.20	(0.3)	(0.3)	4.1	12.7
All Share Index	3,578.20	(0.3)	(0.2)	4.8	138.1
Banks	4,417.25	(0.7)	(0.9)	0.7	13.6
Industrials	4,104.07	0.1	(0.1)	8.5	13.7
Transportation	4,710.14	(0.0)	1.2	8.6	13.4
Real Estate	1,644.45	(0.2)	4.7	5.4	19.7
Insurance	2,261.76	(0.3)	0.7	3.4	178.0
Telecoms	1,624.99	0.1	(1.5)	23.2	14.4
Consumer Goods and Services	8,014.48	0.1	0.8	1.3	23.0
Al Rayan Islamic Index	4,746.71	(0.0)	0.5	3.4	8.9

GCC Top Gainers**	Exchange	Close*	1D%	Vol. '000	YTD%
GFH Financial Group	Bahrain	0.27	3.9	850.3	10.2
National Marine Dredging Co	Abu Dhabi	19.76	3.8	1,627.3	(19.3)
Jabal Omar Dev. Co.	Saudi Arabia	24.04	2.8	10,471.0	45.5
Fertiglobe PLC	Abu Dhabi	3.22	1.9	9,347.3	(23.9)
Aluminum Bahrain	Bahrain	1.11	1.8	619.7	1.8

GCC Top Losers**	Exchange	Close*	1D%	Vol. '000	YTD%
Riyad Bank	Saudi Arabia	34.05	(3.4)	1,376.0	7.1
Abu Dhabi Commercial Bank	Abu Dhabi	8.18	(2.4)	3,745.2	(4.4)
Emaar Properties	Dubai	5.82	(2.2)	7,561.1	(0.7)
Saudi British Bank	Saudi Arabia	37.60	(2.1)	590.8	(3.5)
Ahli United Bank	Kuwait	0.26	(1.9)	26.8	(9.5)

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

QSE Top Losers	Close*	1D%	Vol. '000	YTD%
Damaan Islamic Insurance Company	3.690	(7.1)	28.6	0.0
Inma Holding	6.010	(4.8)	4,811.6	46.2
Qatar Islamic Insurance Company	8.582	(3.1)	2.6	(1.4)
Qatar Islamic Bank	18.09	(1.4)	1,443.5	(2.5)
Ezdan Holding Group	1.229	(1.2)	20,774.3	22.8

QSE Top Value Trades	Close*	1D%	Val. '000	YTD%
Qatar German Co for Med. Devices	2.277	10.0	74,869.4	81.1
Dukhaan Bank	3.759	2.0	58,462.3	0.0
Estithmar Holding	2.239	2.3	43,535.9	24.4
Masraf Al Rayan	2.720	0.0	40,371.3	(14.2)
QNB Group	16.73	(1.1)	39,719.3	(7.1)

### Qatar Market Commentary

- The QE Index declined 0.3% to close at 10,608.4. The Banks & Financial Services and Insurance indices led the losses. The index fell on the back of selling pressure from Qatari and Foreign shareholders despite buying support from GCC and Arab shareholders.
- Damaan Islamic Insurance Company and Inma Holding were the top losers, falling 7.1% and 4.8%, respectively. Among the top gainers, Qatar German Co for Med. Devices gained 10.0%, while Dlala Brokerage & Inv. Holding Co. was up 7.9%.
- Volume of shares traded on Tuesday fell by 43.9% to 253.3mn from 451.6mn on Monday. However, as compared to the 30-day moving average of 198mn, volume for the day was 27.9% higher. Qatar German Co for Med. Devices and Mazaya Qatar Real Estate Dev. were the most active stocks, contributing 13.4% and 9.1% to the total volume, respectively.

Overall Activity	Buy %*	Sell %*	Net (QR)
Qatari Individuals	42.81%	41.93%	5,644,209.80
Qatari Institutions	19.22%	21.12%	(12,236,958.91)
<b>Qatari</b>	<b>62.03%</b>	<b>63.06%</b>	<b>(6,592,749.11)</b>
GCC Individuals	0.38%	0.53%	(917,495.84)
GCC Institutions	7.95%	1.43%	42,022,643.25
<b>GCC</b>	<b>8.34%</b>	<b>1.95%</b>	<b>41,105,147.41</b>
Arab Individuals	14.42%	13.54%	5,686,579.80
Arab Institutions	0.00%	0.00%	-
<b>Arab</b>	<b>14.42%</b>	<b>13.54%</b>	<b>5,686,579.80</b>
Foreigners Individuals	3.88%	3.59%	1,899,602.61
Foreigners Institutions	11.33%	17.87%	(42,098,580.71)
<b>Foreigners</b>	<b>15.21%</b>	<b>21.45%</b>	<b>(40,198,978.10)</b>

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

### Earnings Releases and Global Economic Data

#### Earnings Releases

Company	Market	Currency	Revenue (mn) IQ 2023	% Change YoY	Operating Profit (mn) IQ 2023	% Change YoY	Net Profit (mn) IQ 2023	% Change YoY
Saudi Fisheries Co.	Saudi Arabia	SR	11.60	-31.7%	2.1	N/A	0.9	N/A
Al Gassim Investment Holding Co.	Saudi Arabia	SR	2.65	-2.2%	N/A	N/A	0.6	N/A
Kingdom Holding Co.	Saudi Arabia	SR	0.67	49.3%	0.5	-91.5%	0.2	-97.1%
National Gypsum Co.	Saudi Arabia	SR	13.36	-8.4%	(0.5)	N/A	0.5	-83.2%
Arabian Centres Co.	Saudi Arabia	SR	576.80	11.1%	490.1	65.8%	388.0	125.7%
Seera Group Holding	Saudi Arabia	SR	794.00	61.1%	78.0	N/A	57.0	N/A
BinDawood Holding Co.	Saudi Arabia	SR	1381.16	17.5%	76.2	4.7%	52.2	-20.2%
Abdulmohsen Alhokair Group for Tourism and Development	Saudi Arabia	SR	163.84	-5.0%	(17.2)	N/A	(34.3)	N/A
Naqi Water Co.	Saudi Arabia	SR	59.34	-1.5%	12.1	13.4%	11.2	12.3%
Al Abdullatif Industrial Investment Co.	Saudi Arabia	SR	140.28	-22.8%	(11.9)	N/A	(20.0)	N/A
Basic Chemical Industries Co.	Saudi Arabia	SR	177.78	6.7%	12.3	-50.7%	5.4	-77.7%

#### Global Economic Data

Date	Market	Source	Indicator	Period	Actual	Consensus	Previous
05-23	US	Markit	S&P Global US Manufacturing PMI	May	48.50	50.00	50.20
05-23	US	Markit	S&P Global US Services PMI	May	55.10	52.50	53.60
05-23	US	Markit	S&P Global US Composite PMI	May	54.50	53.00	53.40
05-23	US	U.S. Census Bureau	New Home Sales	Apr	683k	665k	656k
05-23	US	U.S. Census Bureau	New Home Sales MoM	Apr	4.10%	-2.60%	4.00%
05-23	US	Richmond Fed	Richmond Fed Manufact. Index	May	-15.00	-8.00	-10.00
05-23	UK	Markit	S&P Global/CIPS UK Manufacturing PMI	May	46.90	48.00	47.80
05-23	UK	Markit	S&P Global/CIPS UK Services PMI	May	55.10	55.30	55.90
05-23	UK	Markit	S&P Global/CIPS UK Composite PMI	May	53.90	54.60	54.90
05-23	EU	Markit	HCOB Eurozone Manufacturing PMI	May	44.60	46.00	45.80
05-23	EU	Markit	HCOB Eurozone Composite PMI	May	53.30	53.50	54.10
05-23	EU	Markit	HCOB Eurozone Services PMI	May	55.90	55.50	56.20
05-23	Germany	Markit	HCOB Germany Manufacturing PMI	May	42.90	45.00	44.50
05-23	Germany	Markit	HCOB Germany Services PMI	May	57.80	55.00	56.00
05-23	Germany	Markit	HCOB Germany Composite PMI	May	54.30	53.40	54.20
05-23	Japan	Markit	Bank Japan PMI Composite	May	54.90	NA	52.90
05-23	Japan	Markit	Bank Japan PMI Mfg	May	50.80	NA	49.50
05-23	Japan	Markit	Bank Japan PMI Services	May	56.30	NA	55.40

## Qatar

- Al Mahhar Holding shares to be listed on Qatar Stock Exchange on Wednesday 7 June 2023** - Qatar Stock Exchange (QSE) is pleased to announce that the shares of Al Mahhar Holding will be admitted to trading on QSE's Venture's Market (QEVM) as of Wednesday 7 June 2023, after obtaining the QFMA's and the QSE's boards approvals thereon, and after completing all necessary technical, regulatory, and administrative procedures. With the listing of Al Mahhar Holding, the number of companies listed on QSE's QEVM market will increase to two. All Al Mahhar Holding share capital, amounting to 207mn shares, will be listed through direct listing without offering shares for public subscription. Companies applying for listing in the QEVM are required to have at least 20 non-founding shareholders who own no less than 10% of the company's capital upon listing. The founders will also be allowed to sell and trade no more than 30% of their shares in the company's capital upon listing, provided that they retain 60% of their shares in the company's capital. The shares of Al Mahhar Holding will be listed with the symbol "MHAR". The reference price for the share was set at 2 Qatari riyals (1 Qatari riyal nominal value + 1 Qatari riyal issuance premium) based on the documents submitted by the company. On the first day of listing, the company's price will be floated, while starting from the second day, the price will be allowed to fluctuate by 10%, up or down, as is the case for other companies listed on the market. There will be no change in the time of the trading session during the first day of listing and the pre-open phase will remain at 9:00 am as usual. The data of the company's shareholders will be available to the brokerage firms as of Sunday 4 June 2023, so the shareholders will be able to submit their buy/sell orders directly to the brokers as of that date. The Qatar Stock Exchange would like to draw the attention of investors to the importance of reviewing listing prospectus of Al Mahhar Holding, which is available on QSE's and the company's websites. It is noteworthy that Al-Mahar Holding Company has been operating in the Qatari market since 1989 through its wholly owned subsidiary, (Petrotec Group) W.L.L. to enhance the level of support provided to the energy sector. Since then, the group's activity has evolved into diversified activities through eleven subsidiaries, in the State of Qatar and Kuwait, through the sale of equipment and spare parts, the provision of leased equipment for the energy and infrastructure sectors in Qatar, in addition to the provision of maintenance, repair and renewal services for the energy and infrastructure sectors. (QSE)
- Commercial Bank to hold its EGM on June 14 for 2023** - Commercial Bank announces that the General Assembly Meeting EGM will be held on 14/06/2023, Commercial Bank Plaza, Al Markhiyah Street, Al Dafna and virtually using the ZOOM application and 06:30 PM. In case of not completing the legal quorum, the second meeting will be held on 18/06/2023, Commercial Bank Plaza, Al Markhiyah Street, Al Dafna and virtually using the ZOOM application and 06:30 PM. Agenda of the Extraordinary General Meeting 1) To approve the amendment of Article (20) of the Company's Articles of Association to comply with the amendments to the Governance Instructions for Banks issued by the Qatar Central Bank by virtue of Circular No. 2 of 2023 as follows: "The Company shall be managed by a Board composed of eleven members elected by the General Assembly by secret ballot." 2) To authorize the Chairman and/or Vice Chairman of the Board of Directors or any other person authorized by the Chairman of the Board from among the Board members or the Senior Executive Management separately to take the required actions concerning the mentioned amendments to the Articles of Association, including signing the amended Articles of Association before the competent official authorities, including the Authentication Department at the Ministry of Justice of Qatar, subject to obtaining all necessary approvals from the competent regulatory authorities. (QSE)
- Medicare Group Co.: Discloses the judgment in the lawsuit appeal of cassation No. 213/2023 and 318/2023** - Medicare Group Co. discloses the judgment in the lawsuit no 213. 213/2023 filed by Medicare Group against the National Health Insurance Company SEHA (under liquidation) & others and appeal of cassation No. 318/2023 filed by the National Health Insurance Company - SEHA (under liquidation) against Medicare Group & others. The Court of Cassation decided in the hearing on Tuesday, May 16, 2023: 1) In the appeal filed by Medicare Group Expiration of Litigation 2) In the appeal filed by Health Insurance Company – SEHA Accepting the appeal, Referring the case to the court of appeal and obliging the respondent to pay the expenses. Accordingly, the case will be considered again before the Court of Appeal, and the company will disclose the judgment of the Court of Appeal once issued. It is worth to be mentioned that the judgment of the Court of Appeal had upheld the judgment of the Court of First Instance issued on 30/09/2020 with the following: 1) Inadmissibility against both implicated litigants due to lack of capacity. 2) Oblige the first defendant (National Health Insurance Company) to pay the Medicare Group an amount of QR 125,683,595 which is the company's due amount in addition to the amount of QR 5,000,000 as comprehensive compensation and reject the other demands. It is worth mentioning that the operative judgement is issued today 23/5/2023. (QSE)
- QNCC selects SAP, Google Cloud to power digital transformation journey** - Qatar National Cement Company (QNCC), a key player behind the nation's construction industry boom, has signed a partnership agreement with global technology company SAP SE and implementation partner Mannai ICT that will enable it to leverage the benefits of cloud computing, with data securely hosted on Google Cloud. The partnership will see QNCC automate and streamline business processes, while increasing the agility of its operations and enhancing the services it delivers to its customers and employees. "In undertaking this end-to-end digital transformation, our aim is to modernize and streamline our systems, increase efficiencies, and enhance the services we deliver to our customers and employees," says QNCC Chief Executive Officer, Engineer Essa Mohammed Ali A M Kaldari. "After implementation, our operations will be more agile and scalable, enabling us to capitalize on future opportunities in the market and region." Alaa Jaber, Managing Director for SAP Qatar and Fast Growth Markets, said, "Through this digital transformation, QNCC is aligning itself with Qatar's 2030 National Vision and supporting its sustainability plans. It is also ensuring its future success by increasing its visibility over all operations, enabling it to react in an agile way to changes in the market and expected rise in demand for its products. Moreover, QNCC will be able to make decisions informed by real-time insights and data analytics. "In implementing the SAP solutions, Mannai ICT, a division of Mannai Corporation, will take a greenfield approach to streamline and optimize QNCC's digital landscape. Khalid Al Mannai, CEO of Mannai Corporation, says, "Having operated for more than 30 years in Qatar, supporting public institutions and private businesses in finding tailored technology solutions, Mannai Corporation is ideally placed to implement this project. "Also commenting on his company's role in the project, Ghassan Kosta, Qatar General Manager, Google Cloud announcing the partnership during the launch event for Google Cloud Doha region, he said, "The collaboration with Qatar's largest cement manufacturer is a demonstration of our commitment to help develop Qatar's digital future and drive digital transformation through our expertise." "Google Cloud provides innovative tailor-made solutions to customers across all sectors that accelerate their digital transformation, while empowering them to become more sustainable," he added. (Peninsula Qatar)
- Amir opens Qatar Economic Forum 2023** - The Amir HH Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani inaugurated the Qatar Economic Forum 2023, in cooperation with Bloomberg, which is being held under the slogan "A New Story of Global Growth", at Katara Towers, Fairmont and Raffles Hotels Tuesday morning. Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs HE Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman bin Jassim Al-Thani, and Michael Bloomberg, the founder of Bloomberg LP and Bloomberg Philanthropies, made the opening addresses. The Amir attended the inaugural panel discussion with HE President of the Republic of Rwanda Paul Kagame, and another panel discussion themed "The New Energy Model". The opening was attended by President of Republic of Rwanda HE Paul Kagame; President of the Republic of Paraguay HE Mario Abdo Benitez; President of the Republic of Armenia HE Vahagn Khachatryan; President of the Republic of Ghana HE Nana Akufo-Addo; President of Zanzibar HE Dr. Hussein Ali Mwinyi; Prime Minister of the People's Republic of Bangladesh HE Sheikh Hasina Wazed; Prime Minister of the Republic of Kazakhstan HE Alikhan Smailov; Prime Minister of Georgia HE Irakli Garibashvili; and Prime Minister of Hungary HE Viktor Orban. The opening was also attended by HE Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman bin Jassim Al-Thani, a number of Their Excellencies the minister's representatives of sisterly and

friendly countries, heads of the diplomatic missions accredited to the State, high-ranking policymakers, parliamentarians, thinkers, economists, businessmen, media, and representatives of regional and international organizations. (Peninsula Qatar)

- Bloomberg underlines QEF's role in proposing solutions to global economy challenges** - Michael Bloomberg, the founder of Bloomberg LP, underscored the importance of the Qatar Economic Forum (QEF) in proposing solutions to all the challenges facing the global economy and the current stage of "exceptional change". In his speech during the opening session of the 3rd QEF, Michael Bloomberg pointed out that more than 100 countries participated in the 3rd QEF activities, which is titled "A New Global Growth Story," including heads of state and government, especially from countries in the South, and hundreds of business leaders, innovators, and global influential companies. He expected that based on the large participation, it is expected that it will be held annually. He underlined the importance of QEF dialogue and discussion sessions and their role in consolidating and strengthening joint action between decision-makers in the public and private sectors to face these challenges, highlighting that the forum is a hub for discussing global risks and challenges and also the right place to discover opportunities, highlight them and maximize their benefit. "This continues to be a turbulent time for the global economy. We've seen some of the biggest bank failures since the Great Recession. Credit is tightening. Inflation is running high. Russia's war on Ukraine continues. And the climate crisis will continue to grow worse without a bolder, faster energy transition," Bloomberg said. "So I think it's fair to say that we are living in a time of extraordinary change and the recent developments in artificial intelligence help make that more clear," he added. He pointed out that the State of Qatar, with its location between Europe and Asia and its growing strategic importance, is the best place to hold the forum, which discusses geopolitical issues and global trade from the point of view of economically influential countries. Bloomberg stressed that Qatar will remain the world's first source of liquefied natural gas, while investing billions of dollars in renewable energy and developing countries, adding that this leadership and ambition are necessary to create more growth and cooperation that the world needs today. (Qatar Tribune)
- PM: Qatar continues to enhance status as trusted international partner, source of energy** - HE the Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman bin Jassim Al-Thani, affirmed that the State of Qatar is continuing to strengthen its position as a reliable international partner, source of energy, and destination for investments and tourism, in order to achieve its National Vision 2030, the most important of which is the transition to a diversified and innovative economy. HE Sheikh Mohammed said in a speech during the opening session of the third edition of the Qatar Economic Forum, that this approach requires everyone to plan, be flexible, responsive, and show perseverance, especially after Qatar presented the best version of the FIFA World Cup on all levels, and for the first time in an Arab country. He added that moving forward will require learning lessons from the past, highlighting that this approach was a strategic choice the State of Qatar follows nationally and developmentally. He highlighted that the resilience of the Qatari economy despite international crises, and the strength of the health system during the pandemic (Covid-19), and the role the country plays in the global energy market are not by chance, but were a result of a wise vision from the leadership, years of planning, and belief in the country's human capital of citizens and residents and providing them with the necessary capabilities to unleash their abilities to the benefit of diversifying the economy and the advancement of the country. HE the Prime Minister noted that the policies and projects adopted by the State of Qatar over the past two decades have contributed to the establishment of a strong, stable and solid infrastructure in a strategic location that combines the East and West. It is home to the best airport and best airlines in the world, one of the largest green ports in the world, and the first super speed 5G network commercially available, with one of the most flexible and adaptive sovereign funds. He said that the non-oil sector in Qatar achieved a growth of 9.9%, and the oil sector recorded an increase of 4.8% in the fourth quarter of 2022, and that Qatari efforts led to the establishment of strong financial institutions and the creation of the foundations for a work environment that encourages the

growth of business, and the increase in the volume of domestic and foreign investment significantly. In terms of diversification in the field of energy, the country inaugurated the first solar power station in Qatar. This station is set to provide about 10% of the energy used in the national electricity grid at peak times. His Excellency stressed that Qatar has been keen to ensure energy supplies and the stability of its global market in light of international crises, due to its international responsibility in that regard. He also highlighted the country's interest in promoting the important role of Small and Medium Enterprises in achieving prosperity, noting that the country constantly works on launching initiatives to support these companies with the aim of enhancing entrepreneurship. In this context, His Excellency said that Qatar Investment Authority contributes significantly to achieving economic stability for future generations, and to work with the private sector to bridge the gaps in the local market, by investing in companies and sectors that support Qatari local industries and contribute to their transfer to global markets, while also seeking to attract high-quality investments that supports the community locally and internationally. He explained that these achievements, which the State of Qatar is proud of, are at the same time an incentive for it to continue working hard to maintain its position in the global markets, and to continue to offer innovative solutions to enhance it. HE Sheikh Mohammed addressed the audience, saying that the world suffered over the past few years, with the pandemic and its economic impact, as well as with armed conflicts around the world, in addition to the climate change crisis. His Excellency stressed that people have grown accustomed to rising to the challenge to create opportunities, stressing that people will be capable of overcoming these challenges and achieve comprehensive economic growth to advance the world, which is going through a knowledge and technological revolution that governments and companies have a responsibility towards their society in managing these resources and knowledge. He explained that the Qatar Economic Forum is an important platform for discussing the most important economic issues and challenges facing the world today, and for discussing ways to address them in a spirit of cooperation and innovation, expressing his hope that the presence of its participants will constitute an important opportunity that helps in looking forward to a better future, indicating at the same time that supporting the economy, investment and innovation, while promoting common human values and preserving peace, is the way to build the capabilities needed to overcome crises and overcome the challenges facing the world today. HE Sheikh Mohammed said that the world can build a global economy that achieves common aspirations through joint action and the exchange of expertise and knowledge. His Excellency expressed his hope that the forum will build new paths that enhance business and investment climate towards promising avenues of growth, development, enhancement of understanding and cooperation between states, international institutions, private companies, and NGOs, while also finding economic solutions that help the world achieve its desired transformation. His Excellency expressed his hope that the forum can be an opportunity for dialogue and building partnership that enhance that transformation and economic progress towards a more prosperous future, given challenges create opportunities and cooperation makes change. (Gulf Times)

- Qatar interested in developing Iraqi energy projects** - Minister of Oil of the Republic of Iraq HE Minister Hayan Abdel Ghani confirmed yesterday the State of Qatar's interest in participating in obtaining rights for oil and gas exploration in his country, which were announced today at Qatar Economic Forum. The Minister told Qatar News Agency (QNA) that the forum was an opportunity to announce a number of energy projects that Iraq wants to develop in the coming period, especially the fifth and sixth round that include 19 blocks in the Western side in the country. He said that he discussed activating a number of projects in Iraq with Minister of State for Energy Affairs, HE President and CEO of QatarEnergy Eng. Saad bin Sherida Al Kaabi, calling on international companies to participate in these rounds, given the role these investments play in generating electricity and securing financial resources to Iraq. Qatar Energy had agreed to own a 25% stake in the Gas Growth Integrated Project in Iraq (GGAT), which aims to develop natural gas resources in the country. The project's coalition is 30% owned by Basra Oil Company, with 45% owned by TotalEnergies, and QatarEnergy with 25%. This was achieved after

wrapping up all contractual requirements and obtaining regulatory approvals. (Peninsula Qatar)

- Al-Kaabi: Qatar sees 'very big demand' for North Field expansion gas** - HE the Minister of State for Energy Affairs Saad bin Sherida al-Kaabi said Qatar potentially will run out of gas for supplies from the North Field expansion by the year-end, because of "very big demand" for long-term contracts. "We have signed a large contract with China. We have other deals that we are working on. With so many deals lining up, we will potentially run out of gas from the North Field – both North Field East and North Field South. There is a very big demand. Additional gas from the North Field will be available by 2026; all contracts have been awarded," al-Kaabi said at a ministerial session at the Qatar Economic Forum Powered by Bloomberg in Doha Tuesday. The expansion project will increase Qatar's liquefied natural gas (LNG) production capacity from 77mn tonnes per year (MTPY) to 126 MTPY, through the North Field East (NFE) and North Field South (NFS) expansion projects, with first LNG expected by 2026. Qatar will add 65mn tonnes per year of LNG to meet the growing needs of the world from its North Field expansion and its project in the United States, al-Kaabi said. "We don't follow what others say we should do...we do what is technically possible with our fields. When it's the right time and technically we can do it, we'll definitely do more," the minister said. Talking about the gas supply and demand situation in future, al-Kaabi said, "There is going to be a shortage in oil and gas in future, predominantly due to the push on (energy) transition. It is really aggressive without studying it. If you look at economic and environmental stability, these are not mutually exclusive... we have to have both. "And if you push some countries into doing that, that doesn't help humanity in general. The only thing that saved humanity and Europe this year was a warm winter and the slowdown in the economy worldwide. If the economy comes back in 2024, the worst is yet to come," said al-Kaabi. "If you look at future, whether it is oil or gas, because of decade-long lack of investments, due to the push to transition of energy, there is going to be shortage for both." Al-Kaabi emphasized the need to have a "mix" of all energy resources and said, "You need a mix of all energy sources and people need to realize that you need oil, gas and renewables. People talk about renewables as if it's a fix-all. "If you look at renewables you can generate electricity from wind and solar, but you can't make plastics or any sort of such products. So by saying renewables generate electricity does not solve the problem, you need a proper energy mix. And it can't be driven by politics and politicians wanting to get in the seat to say this is the solution. It's a nice pitch to say energy transition, but when you dig down and look at the reality, it's not achievable." Al-Kaabi said he was "thrilled" that the G7 final communique spoke about the need for more LNG for the world and warned the world would face a shortage of oil and gas due to a lack of investment. "I am thrilled that finally the G7 in their final communique said they need more LNG to be supplied to the world. We've been saying this for the last 10 years," al-Kaabi noted. (Gulf Times)
- IPA Qatar CEO: Qatar has a stronger pipeline of FDI inflows** - Doha, which saw foreign direct investments (FDI) inflow of QR30bn in 2022, has a stronger pipeline of projects and the country could potentially become hub for the FDI into high growth Central and South Asian and African markets, according to a top official of the Investment Promotion Agency Qatar (IPA Qatar). "The (FDI) pipeline is stronger than ever," IPA Qatar chief executive officer Sheikh Ali Alwaleed al-Thani told a panel session at the third Qatar Economic Forum, powered by Bloomberg. It is understood that IPA Qatar will sign three memoranda of understanding with Siemens, Emerson, and Luxoft. Google Cloud on Monday officially opened its new Doha cloud region, which will meet the growing demand for cloud services in Qatar and the Middle East. Doha cloud region is expected to drive increased economic activity and is estimated to contribute a cumulative \$18.9bn in higher gross economic output to Qatar's economy between 2023 and 2030 and support the creation of 25,000 jobs in 2030 alone. Highlighting that the GCC or Gulf Co-operation Council has been the bright spot, especially when it comes to FDI, he said Qatar last year reported \$29.78bn inflows into 135 projects, creating employment around 14,000 jobs. "What is really interesting to notice is that across the 135 projects, oil and gas make up around 9% and the majority went into business services such as information, communication and technology (ICT), healthcare and different diversified sectors," he

said. Within the business services, software and IT services and financial services followed with each attracting 27% and 12% of the total projects, respectively. Sheikh Ali said the FIFA World Cup in 2022 had acted as a heavy lifting for the country's stature in the international markets in terms of recognition, attractiveness and ease of doing business. "This (\$29.78bn FDI) inflows that came into Qatar seek to establish hub for the region and to serve the local economy. Qatar, like any other small country, needs to have outbound approach to FDI. Qatar has a great market but there is an ability to scale it partnerships whether in the buy or sell side," he said. The IPA Qatar chief said Qatar should be viewed as a launching pad (for FDI) as the country is in the midst of high growth regions such as Central and South Asia, Africa, and Gulf, which itself is a "stable neutral platform for trade and investments". Investments originating from the US accounted for almost 44% of the total FDI in 2022, with projects valued at \$13bn; followed by those from the UK, Italy and France, with each accounting for 21.7% (\$6.47bn), 21.2% (\$6.32bn) and 11.8% (\$3.51bn), respectively. In 2022, projects from these four countries constituted nearly 98% of total FDI projects recorded, Sheikh Ali said Qatar's growth story encompasses development of its oil and gas sectors to infrastructure such as airports, ports, road and telecommunications but the next phase is on the development of human capital and the country's policies regarding this has started bearing fruits. "Businesses come here not just because of energy competitiveness but because of the human capital and that builds on our value proposition," he said. (Gulf Times)

- Al-Baker: Travel demand to stay; no alternative to airplanes** - The airline industry's impact on global economy and people's lives is huge, Qatar Airways Group Chief Executive HE Akbar al-Baker said Tuesday. Participating in a panel session at Qatar Economic Forum powered by Bloomberg he said: "People will travel and are still dependent on aviation because it plays such a large part of our life for leisure, business, trade and economic development. There is no alternative to airplanes," al-Baker noted. Referring to the debate on sustainability, especially in Europe, al-Baker said: "In one of the climate conferences a young girl wanted to prove to the world that they do not need planes and they can use the boat and she arrived at this conference in a boat. But where did she start the journey on the boat? How did she get there? "Majority of the distance she covered was on the airplane because she could not cover that distance on the boat for the time she wanted to be at the conference. I don't want to criticize her, but we have to be realistic," al-Baker said. Asked whether the aviation industry will be able to achieve net-zero emission by 2050, al-Baker noted: "I don't think we will be able to achieve net zero emission by 2050. Everybody is talking about it. But let us be realistic. There is not enough production of SAF. The hydrogen project is in its infancy. People also do not know what hydrogen will generate when it flies at a high altitude. "The hydrogen technology is expected to mature by the second half the century. Which means, after 2050. So, I am skeptical about this." In an interview with Bloomberg TV, al-Baker said Qatar Airways is ramping up routes to Europe, Africa, Asia, and big time in to China. Our fleet is already very young, so we can extend their operations further and when new technology that will be introduced, we will then place orders for airplanes." "In relation to China, not only are our airlines are packed. Now that the lockdown has ended in China there is a huge appetite for the Chinese to travel out of China. The amount of money they spent at our duty-free shops is more than any other nationality. So, you can see the potential Chinese market holds for the international aviation industry, and at the same time, for the retail trade around the world," al-Baker told the Qatar Economic Forum. (Gulf Times)
- Kaabi warns of gas shortages in switch to renewables** - Minister of State for Energy Affairs and QatarEnergy President and CEO HE Saad bin Sherida Al Kaabi has warned that 'the worst is yet to come' for Europe in terms of oil and gas shortages if the region didn't have a 'proper plan' for a 'mix of all energy sources. Speaking during a panel discussion on the first day of the Qatar Economic Forum (QEF) in Doha on Tuesday, Kaabi said, "People talk about renewables as if it's the 'fix all'. If you look at renewables, you can generate electricity from wind and solar but you can't manufacture plastics and things that you have in this room that are all manufactured." He warned that governments' energy transition policies will discourage investment in fossil fuels and lead to natural gas scarcity in the next decade, including in Europe. In the "Energy Minister

Outlook” session at the Qatar Economic Forum on Tuesday, Kaabi expected a large shortage of gas in the future, mostly due to the energy transition, which is very aggressive. He said, “The only thing that saved humanity and Europe this year was the warm winter and the slowdown in the economy around the world. If the economy starts churning in 2024, and you have a reasonable, just a regular winter, I think the worst is yet to come if they don’t realize that and have a proper plan and sit down with producers and oil and gas companies and not demonize them.” He added that he did think ‘reality will kick in’, after outlining his view that oil, gas and renewables were all part of the future. “Economic stability and environmental responsibility are not mutually exclusive, everyone has to have both,” he said. He expressed his happiness at the G7 final statement on the need for more liquefied natural gas for global consumption. He pointed out that the demand for gas from the expansion projects in the North Field East and the North Field South is very large. He said that Qatar is on the verge of producing 126mn tonnes by 2026, stressing the need to carefully study matters regarding future energy supplies to achieve economic stability in light of the crises experienced by some countries of the world. On the possibility of Qatar increasing its capacity to more than 126mn tonnes annually, the minister said that when the right time comes and Qatar can do it technically, it will definitely do more. In the same context, Saudi Energy Minister Prince Abdulaziz bin Salman affirmed the continuation of work with the OPEC + deal, in accordance with the proactive, preventive and precautionary measures taken by OPEC and its allies, regardless of any criticism. He said that they deal with matters realistically and have a proactive view of what might happen in the future in the global economy. Iraq’s Oil Minister Hayan Abdel Ghani affirmed commitment to the OPEC+ deal, despite the economic difficulties that Iraq is going through. Commenting on the resumption of pumping Iraqi oil through Turkey, he said that Baghdad is waiting for a final response from Turkey before pumping oil through the port of Ceyhan. He added the Turkish government has informed Iraq that it is assessing whether the pipeline was damaged as a result of the devastating earthquake that occurred in February, and that a technical team is assessing the whole situation. (Qatar Tribune)

- **Orban: Qatar is a promising energy partner** - Prime Minister of Hungary Viktor Orban affirmed that Qatar is a promising partner for his country in the field of energy in terms of future, pointing out that there are many countries seeking to establish such partnerships and to sign agreement with Doha in this regard. In his speech during a dialogue session within Qatar Economic Forum, Powered by Bloomberg, Prime Minister of Hungary commended the bilateral relations between Doha and Budapest over the part years, pointing out that Qatar helped Europe with the issue of exports and imports of gas and oil, as well as other arrangements related to information systems and security issues. Qatar is interested in investing in the Hungarian market, he said, expressing Hungary’s respect for Qatar, as well as its openness to sign agreements between the two countries. Some of those agreements will enter into force in 2026 and discussions are ongoing between the two countries, he added, expressing his country’s aspirations to become a partner with Qatar based on a strategic view. The prime minister said that his country relies on exports of gas and oil and that, to Hungary, energy sources are indispensable. There are ongoing discussions between Qatar and Hungary about an agreement related to the field of energy, he added, expressing his country’s dependence on such exports. He addressed the relations between his country and the European Union countries, as well as other countries, in the economic aspect, noting that Hungary is strong and can rely economically on its domestic resources. In this regard, he pointed out that 85% of Hungary’s exports go to the European Union, and therefore Hungary must always consider its interests without compromising regional interests at the same time. (Qatar Tribune)
- **Wealth Fund QIA Joins SoftBank, BlackRock in Private Credit Push** - Qatar’s sovereign wealth fund sees growing investment opportunities in the world of private credit, joining the likes of SoftBank Group Corp. and BlackRock Inc. in touting the \$1.5tn market. The \$450bn Qatar Investment Authority has been “very active in the credit space” over the past two years and is keen to do more as companies with good business models struggle with the double whammy of high interest rates and low liquidity,” Chief Executive Officer Mansoor Al Mahmoud said in a panel at

the Qatar Economic Forum in Doha on Tuesday. “Normally, an institution like us, who are very liquid, have a very long-term risk appetite for these types of investments,” he said. “I would advise for the next one year that the credit space is an interesting place to deploy some investments.” Private lending has been gaining traction over the past few years as investment banks and traditional debt investors pulled back from leveraged debt amid fears around rate rises and an economic slowdown. Investors seeking higher yields have poured money into the asset class, turning private credit into a thriving market. More recently, the industry has been booming as lending conditions became even tighter in the wake of Silicon Valley Bank’s failure and the Credit Suisse Group AG crisis. In the US, some of the biggest names in private investing including Apollo Global Management Inc., Blackstone Inc. and Carlyle Group Inc. have angled for openings as regional lenders came under pressure. In Japan, SoftBank is working on plans to become a lender in the world of private credit, Bloomberg reported this week. In the oil-rich Gulf region, sovereign wealth funds — like the QIA — have also been increasingly looking at private credit, providing further evidence of the market’s rapid growth. Apollo in January formed a joint venture with Abu Dhabi sovereign wealth fund Mubadala Investment Co. to lend about \$2.5bn over the next five years. It also provided \$750mn of senior secured private debt for Mumbai International Airport Ltd. last year. Separately, Al Mahmoud said he’s not concerned about the fund’s exposure to the global financial sector after the turmoil at Credit Suisse and the collapse of four US lenders. The QIA, a long-term backer of the Swiss bank, saw the value of its holding crash just months after upping its stake. “The banking sector is based on confidence. Whatever you do to your balance sheet, if you lose that confidence you can collapse,” he said. “Just because of what happened with Credit Suisse it doesn’t mean that all banks will have that issue. We are a very mature institution and managing the risk and expecting the risk is part of our job and part of our bread and butter.” The government of the State of Qatar is the underwriter of the Qatar Economic Forum, Powered by Bloomberg. (Bloomberg)

- **QIA Leads \$250mn Funding Round for App Platform Builder.ai** - The Qatar Investment Authority is leading a series D funding round of more than \$250mn for Builder.ai, the mobile app development startup backed by Microsoft Corp. The sovereign wealth fund was joined by existing and new investors including Iconiq Capital, Jungle Ventures and Insight Partners, London-based Builder.ai said in a statement Tuesday. That takes the total amount raised by the company to more than \$450mn. Builder.ai offers a platform for businesses to create custom smartphone apps while requiring little or no coding. Its tools help pull an app together with reusable components which can then be customized further by Builder.ai’s developers, allowing a faster turnaround than traditional outsourcing of software projects. The company, started in 2016 by serial entrepreneur Sachin Dev Duggal, raised a \$100mn series C funding round in March last year led by Insight Partners. The World Bank Group’s International Finance Corp., Hollywood mogul Jeffrey Katzenberg’s WndrCo, Lakestar and SoftBank Group Corp.’s DeepCore incubator have also invested in the company. Builder.ai said earlier this month that Microsoft will make an investment in the company as part of a strategic partnership. The startup’s customers include the British Broadcasting Corp., NBCUniversal and Thai retailer Siam Makro Pcl, its website shows. QIA manages about \$475bn, according to the Sovereign Wealth Fund Institute. It’s been plowing more money into tech startups and healthcare companies across the globe, participating in funding rounds for everything from Indian food-delivery platform Swiggy to US genomic medicine company Ensoma. (Bloomberg)
- **Saudi investment minister hails Qatari achievements** - Minister of Investment of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia Eng. Khalid bin Abdulaziz Al Falih praised the achievements made by the State of Qatar over the past decades. In his speech during a dialogue session, titled “Reengineering Globalization,” within Qatar Economic Forum, Powered by Bloomberg, on Tuesday at the Katara Towers: Fairmont and Raffles Hotels, His Excellency said, “In every time you come - to Doha - you see an amazing new development. Last year was the apex of that, when Qatar set a new standard for hosting a global event of the scale of the 2022 FIFA World Cup, and it was not only the infrastructure and facilities but also the quality with which it was organized. We are seeing it again today with

convening global leaders of governments and business.” He thanked the State of Qatar for providing the opportunity to participate in this important global forum, which comes at a time when the world is witnessing further disturbances and divisions in the global system, including geopolitical ones such as the Ukrainian war, and the accompanying disruption in supply chains, that could get worse, especially given restrictions on global trade. He described the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) states as bright, because of their political and economic stability, and the stability of their currencies, in addition to their possession of energy (oil and gas) and capital, and thanks to that they are growing faster compared to other countries of the world, adding that the GDP of these countries is also growing strongly, for example, the Saudi economy has registered 31% growth in capital formation, and the Saudi GDP growth was significantly higher than the G20 average and the fastest growing the G20 countries. He added the region possesses important capitals, Gulf growth is a factor of stability for the world, and the city of Riyadh is considered the economic capital of the region, adding, “Within the GCC, we see ourselves as a common market.” He pointed out that the competition between GCC states is good and for the benefit of all. He looked forward to building long strategic relations with various partners, especially in light of the interest of many countries wishing to invest in the region, which has visions, quality, manpower, and a lifestyle that is constantly improving, and this will undoubtedly reflect positively on the entire Arab region. In the session, which was moderated by Stephanie Flanders, Head of Economics & Government, Bloomberg, Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy of United Kingdom Kemi Badenoch focused on the issue of diversifying sources, and the need to help countries that suffer from weak growth rates around the world. She added that the UK has long-standing cooperation and extended relations throughout history with the Arab Gulf countries. “I want to thank everyone for the very warm welcome that I had on my first visit to the region. I’m very privileged to be here and also just post the World Cup, thanking you for hosting a fantastic event,” she added. She said, “The world is changing and I think it would have been wrong for anyone to assume that the way the world was in 1880 or 1980 is the same way it’s going to look for the future.” “What we are doing in the UK is making sure that we’re able to adapt to the changing circumstances.” She added, “Our strategy is not entirely about China. (Qatar Tribune)

- Sheikh Ali: QEF on agenda of world’s leading decision-makers** - Chairperson of the Supreme Committee Organizing the Qatar Economic Forum (QEF) and CEO of Media City Sheikh Ali bin Abdullah bin Khalifa Al-Thani said that the number of participants in the third edition of the Forum has increased, stressing the readiness of the organizing body to host the economic event in Doha from May 23-25, under the theme “A New Global Growth Story.” In a press conference on Sunday, he said that the QEF’s attraction of leaders and global economic and political decision-makers is evidence of the Forum’s success in setting its agenda on the map of the largest global economic events. Chairperson of the Supreme Committee Organizing the Qatar Economic Forum pointed out the importance of the Qatar Economic Forum, Powered by Bloomberg, as a global platform for dialogue, discussion, and proposing positive solutions to various issues, including inflation, investment in emerging markets, transformation in the energy, trade, sports fields, and other files. He said that the establishment of the Qatar Economic Forum came to be a media platform with a diverse agenda that brings together global business leaders to formulate actionable steps to achieve economic growth, pointing out that the Forum was able in each edition to achieve this goal, and it became a destination for dialogue and exchange of views by a group of distinguished speakers. He pointed out that the Forum is witnessing a great turnout by global leaders and political and economic decision-makers from different countries, noting that the number of participants exceeds 2,000, of whom 1,000 are from outside Qatar. He expected that the Forum will witness seven agreements between Qatari public and private sectors and foreign entities. Executive Director of the Permanent Committee for Organizing Conferences at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Mubarak Ajlan Al Kuwari, who is a member of the organizing committee of the Forum, said that the organizing committee seeks to provide all facilities to the guests of Qatar, relying on the great experience it has accumulated during the past years from organizing major international events in various fields. He pointed to the increasing participant’s number

in the Qatar Economic Forum every edition. He said that the Permanent Committee for Organizing Conferences provided the participants with a platform that enables them to carry out various procedures smoothly and easily, in addition to providing all forms of logistical support to the guests of Qatar. Vice-Chairperson of the Supreme Committee Organizing the Qatar Economic Forum, and a representative of the Ministry of Commerce and Industry, Nasser Al Taweel, confirmed that among the participants in the Forum are the CEOs of major international companies, including CEO of Boeing Dave Calhoun, Managing Director of the International Monetary Fund Kristalina Georgieva, Former United States Secretary of the Treasury Steven Mnuchin, economist Nouriel Roubini, Chairman of the KKR Global Institute General David Petraeus, CEO of TikTok Shou Zi Chew, and other economic leaders. (Qatar Tribune)

- Experts discuss on strategically investing for resilient economies** - The first day of the Qatar Economic Forum (QEF) 2023 witnessed an eye-opener into several industries including banking, investments, and fostering the global economic outlook. During the session entitled ‘Creating a Long-Term Investment Strategy’, experts discussed the evolving market trends, the crisis in the banking industry, and investment strategies among others. The panelists included HE Mansour Al Mahmoud, CEO of Qatar Investment Authority (QIA), Dina Powell McCormick, Global Head of Sustainability & Inclusive Growth, Global Head of Sovereign Business at Goldman Sachs, and Bill Winters, Group Chief Executive, Standard Chartered, and was moderated by John Micklethwait, Editor in Chief at Bloomberg. HE Al Mahmoud stressed the rapidly changing markets globally, which is a significant issue that needs to be considered while investing, and the pivotal role QIA as an institution plays in supporting firms worldwide. He said: “The regional investment that we have is governed by a long-term vision that we have whether it’s the US market or Europe. When I say America, we also talking about China, India, and Brazil for example. For each one of them, you need to have your source of a process and assessment to identify opportunities. So, for example the rhythm that we are investing in technology in China and India would be a little more with than the rhythm we are investing in technology in Brazil. So, each market will have its characteristic to identify some of the opportunities that you will deploy. “Having invested in organizations such as the Adani Group, HE Al Mahmoud said that although there has been a continuing crisis and struggles in the global market, he believes that the group will come through all the challenges. He also noted that QIA has been investing in Artificial Intelligence (AI) in addition to the latest technologies that have propelled. Speaking about Qatar as a progressive and developing country in the region, HE Al Mahmoud remarked that “For hosting the World Cup, we have built an infrastructure that wasn’t planned 30 years before and we built it in 10 years. Now the mindset is about how to utilize the infrastructure. QIA as an institution can play in the local market strengthening and contributing towards the growth of the economy.” (Peninsula Qatar)
- Media City Qatar, Bloomberg Media sign new agreement** - Media City Qatar (MCQ), an emerging, collaborative global home for media and creative talent in Doha, has signed a new multi-year contract with Bloomberg Media, securing the annual ‘Qatar Economic Forum, Powered by Bloomberg’ (QEF) until 2027. An official signing ceremony took place at QEF Tuesday. The contract was signed by Sheikh Ali bin Abdullah bin Khalifa al-Thani, CEO of Media City Qatar, and M Scott Havens, CEO, Bloomberg Media. The forum, now in its third edition, showcases Qatar’s position within the global business world and serves as a platform for exchange and dialogue to bolster economic opportunities locally and globally. Hosted for the first time at the ‘Katara Towers’ in Lusail Marina District and under the theme “A New Global Growth Story,” the forum offers a spacious environment, allowing attendees to move around comfortably during networking sessions. It also features a diverse lineup of more than 1,000 participants and over 50 main stage speakers. Sheikh Ali said, “We are eager to expand our relationship with the Bloomberg Media Group and the platform we have built together in the form of the ‘Qatar Economic Forum, Powered by Bloomberg.’ Our commitment to global dialogue contributes to the economic and social aspirations that have defined Qatar’s positive trajectory over the years. “Entering into a new collaborative contract will further cement the country’s position as a global hub for business, dialogue, and investment.” Havens commented:

"We are excited to continue our work with Media City Qatar, delivering the Qatar Economic Forum to regional and global business leaders through 2027. Since its debut in 2021, the forum's interviews and connections have proven critical to expanding the global business dialogue, and we welcome the opportunity to extend and expand this important event in Doha." The forum has been growing in scope since its inaugural edition in 2021. Last year, the successful event brought together over 500 leading policymakers and global thinkers, with over 75 main stage speakers, such as Elon Musk, founder of Tesla; Patrick Pouyanné, chairman and CEO of TotalEnergies; and Ben van Beurden, CEO of Shell, amongst many others, including government ministers from across the world. (Gulf Times)

- CEO: QIA sees AI as 'wonderful' technology in some applications** - The Qatar Investment Authority (QIA) is examining artificial intelligence (AI) as a theme of investments and sees it as a "wonderful technology" in some applications, CEO Mansoor Ebrahim al-Mahmoud said Tuesday. Participating in a panel session at Qatar Economic Forum powered by Bloomberg he said, "From time to time we tell our teams to look at those things that are important and are coming. Make sure we build a portfolio that tap into this field. For example, the same thing for climate change, digitalization, life science. These are long term themes." In terms of AI, al-Mahmoud said: "We have been investing there. I think the level of using the AI in terms of extreme in that the machine will do everything...personally I have a mixed feeling about it. I feel we need some sort of legislation that could manage this. "But it is a wonderful technology in some applications such as marketing or understanding businesses. "We (Qatar) are one of the leading countries in the region in terms of digitalization and connectivity infrastructure that we have. We would like to really tap into this as a strength of the country to make sure that we can attract and invest in technologies such as Fintech." QIA, al-Mahmoud said, has been very active in private and public credit over the past two years. "Companies that have been feeling the tide have good business models but they have an issue with their balance sheet because of this acceleration of hikes of interest rates," al-Mahmoud noted. "So normally institutions like us, which are very liquid, very long term, have a risk appetite in these types of investment. I would advise that for the next maybe one year, the credit space would be an interesting space to deploy some investment," al-Mahmoud said. Al-Mahmoud also expects the Adani Group to get through "smoothly". Earlier, the Indian conglomerate was pummeled by a US short seller (Hindenburg Research) critical report and lost billions of dollars in market value. (Gulf Times)
- Hungary's Orban looks to Qatar for help to buy Budapest Airport** - Qatar may help Hungary purchase Budapest Airport Zrt., a multi-billion dollar endeavor that has been stalled for two years because of a ballooning budget deficit, Prime Minister Viktor Orban said. Hungary has continued to search for financing or partners in its quest to regain ownership of the Budapest hub, with a senior government official saying last month that the government was targeting a deal by year-end. The government is in talks with Qatar to provide financing or be an investor in Budapest Airport, Orban said in an interview with Bloomberg Editor-in-Chief John Micklethwait on Tuesday at the Qatar Economic Forum. He said talks are ongoing and no decision has been made. "We would be happy to welcome them," Orban said in reference to Qatar. "We are ready to be involved as well, strategic investment is what we need in Budapest Airport, it's not just to buy out but to have a big scheme to develop it." Hungary was in advanced talks to purchase Budapest Airport for a reported €4.44bn (\$4.8bn) in 2021 from the consortium of current owners led by AviAlliance, a Germany-based airport management company and the hub's biggest shareholder. "We are in the middle of Europe, all the roads run through Hungary," Orban said. "The airport has a strategic importance to us." Record pre-election spending ahead of the 2022 general elections forced Orban to put the project on hold. The budget continues to be under strain after a record \$8bn deficit through April, the widest shortfall in the first four months of the year. That hasn't dissuaded the nation's premier from big-ticket purchases, which have been part of a drive to boost local ownership in a widening circle of economic sectors that includes energy, telecommunications, retail and banking. Orban's critics have alleged that taxpayer money has ended up enriching the premier's family and closest political and business allies. In January, the government helped 4iG Nyrt., a local firm Orban is grooming to be a

national telecommunications champion, gain a majority stake in Vodafone Plc's Hungarian business in a \$1.9bn deal. The government of the State of Qatar is the underwriter of the Qatar Economic Forum, Powered by Bloomberg. (Bloomberg)

- AAB advances initiative by partnering with talabat for e-bike integration** - Abdullah Abdulghani & Bros. Co. W.L.L (AAB) is launching an innovative testing program with talabat, aiming to introduce electric bikes (e-bikes) as an eco-friendly transportation solution within Qatar. A joint event was held at AAB tower where talabat was presented with a customized e-bike tailored to their specific needs. The collaboration emphasizes both organizations' commitment to sustainable solutions and environmental stewardship in Qatar. Abdulghani Nasser Al Abdulghani, CEO of Abdullah Abdulghani & Bros. Co., expressed his enthusiasm during the event: "Our partnership with talabat aligns perfectly with our shared vision for a cleaner, more sustainable Qatar. The incorporation of e-bikes into our operational landscape offers an environmentally-friendly, efficient option for last-mile delivery, contributing significantly to the reduction of carbon emissions and noise pollution. "Echoing these sentiments, Francisco Miguel Condeco Caetano De Sousa, Managing Director of talabat in Qatar, highlighted the significance of the partnership: "Joining forces with Abdullah Abdulghani & Bros. Co. W.L.L propels our commitment to logistics electrification. Integrating e-bikes into our operations signifies a step forward in sustainable innovation and provides our customers with efficient, eco-friendly delivery solutions." As Qatar Vision 2030 propels the nation towards a diversified and sustainable economy, AAB is devoted to developing tailored mobility solutions for various industries in line with their unique requirements. (Peninsula Qatar)

### International

- US Treasury asks federal agencies for payments clarity as debt ceiling default looms** - The US Treasury said on Tuesday it is asking other federal agencies for greater clarity and communication on the payments they expect to make and receive in the coming days to more accurately forecast when the government will run short of cash without an increase in the federal debt ceiling. A Treasury spokesperson said the department is not asking agencies to delay any payments past their due dates, but for increased communication about upcoming payments and receipts. To produce an accurate forecast around the debt limit, it's critical that Treasury have updated information on the magnitude and timing of agency payments," the spokesperson said in an emailed statement. "As in prior debt limit episodes, Treasury will continue to regularly communicate with all aspects of the federal government on their planned expenditures." The outreach comes as the Treasury is searching for ways to conserve the government's dwindling cash resources as a June 1 deadline for possible default looms and tense negotiations drag on between the White House and Republicans in Congress over raising the \$31.4tn borrowing cap. The Washington Post earlier reported that Treasury has asked agencies whether some forthcoming payments could be made on later dates, quoting two people familiar with the matter. It also quoted a memo that said Treasury sent to federal agencies asking for agencies to notify Treasury at least two days in advance about all deposits and disbursements of \$50mn to \$500mn and five days in advance on all payments above \$500mn. (Reuters)
- No signs of progress from White House, Republicans in 'tough' debt ceiling talks** - Representatives of President Joe Biden and congressional Republicans ended another round of debt ceiling talks on Tuesday with no signs of progress as the deadline to raise the government's \$31.4tn borrowing limit or risk default ticked closer. The two parties remain deeply divided about how to rein in the federal deficit, with Democrats arguing wealthy Americans and businesses should pay more taxes while Republicans want spending cuts. White House negotiators Shalanda Young, director of the Office of Management and Budget, and senior White House adviser Steve Ricchetti, met with their Republican counterparts for about two hours. They left without making substantive comments to media. "We had very good discussions," McCarthy told reporters. Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen has warned that the federal government could no longer have enough money to pay all its bills as soon as June 1, which would cause a default that would hammer the US



economy and push borrowing costs higher. The two sides still disagree on spending and it was not clear when talks would resume, said Republican Representative Patrick McHenry, who chairs the House Finance Committee. White House spokesperson Karine Jean-Pierre called the talks "incredibly tough." "Both sides have to understand that they're not going to get everything that they want," Jean-Pierre said at a briefing. "And what we're trying to get to is a budget that is reasonable, that is bipartisan, that Democrats and Republicans in the House and Senate will be able to vote on and agree on." (Reuters)

- US new home sales, business activity rise to 13-month highs** - Sales of new US single-family homes jumped to a 13-month high in April, boosted by a persistent shortage of previously owned houses on the market and a sharp decline in prices from last year's lofty levels. The report from the Commerce Department on Tuesday followed on the heels of data last week showing a surge in permits for future single-family housing construction. With confidence among homebuilders rising to a 10-month high in May, there are no signs yet that a recent tightening in credit conditions are weighing on the housing market, the sector hardest hit by the Federal Reserve's fastest interest rate hiking cycle since the 1980s. "The evidence continues to accumulate that the housing market may have largely adjusted to the higher level of mortgage rates but the decline in the median home price is consistent with the hypothesis that home builders may be tailoring the construction of new homes towards first-time buyers," said Conrad DeQuadros, senior economic advisor at Brean Capital in New York. New home sales increased 4.1% to a seasonally adjusted annual rate of 683,000 units last month, the highest level since March 2022. March's sales pace was revised lower to 656,000 units from the previously reported 683,000. The government revised the sales, inventory and months' supply data going back to January 2018. New home sales are counted at the signing of a contract, making them a leading indicator of the housing market. They, however, can be volatile on a month-to-month basis. Economists polled by Reuters had forecast new home sales, which account for a small share of US home sales, would fall to a rate of 665,000 units. Sales rebounded 11.8% on a year-on-year basis in April. The median new house price in April was \$420,800, an 8.2% drop from a year ago. Home sales last month were concentrated in the \$300,000 to 499,000 price range. The inventory of existing homes remains 44% below its pre-pandemic levels, according to data from the National Association of Realtors, which also last week reported price rises in roughly half of the country, multiple offers and many homes being sold above list price.
- IMF: Britain no longer faces recession this year** - The International Monetary Fund no longer expects a recession in Britain this year, it said on Tuesday, praising steps taken by the government to stabilize the economy and fight inflation and warning against pre-election tax cuts. The IMF said gross domestic product now looks set to grow by 0.4% in 2023 rather than contracting by 0.3% as it had predicted in April. The earlier forecast was the weakest for any major economy this year, but the new growth projection would see Britain edge ahead of some rich world peers including Germany. While the IMF warned the outlook remains subdued, it said Prime Minister Rishi Sunak's government was on the right track, in contrast to its concerns about the direction of economic policy under former premier Liz Truss. "The UK authorities have taken decisive and responsible steps in recent months," IMF Managing Director Kristalina Georgieva told a press conference on Tuesday. "What we see is that the government is prioritizing, and rightly so, the fight against inflation." Sunak and finance minister Jeremy Hunt took over in October, after Truss's brief term sowed chaos in financial markets. The IMF said Britain's improved outlook reflected the unexpected resilience of demand, helped in part by faster than usual pay growth, higher government spending and improved business confidence. The fall in energy costs after sharp rises last year and the normalization of global supply chains also helped, it said. Georgieva said the current government's prioritization of fiscal prudence was admirable and warned Hunt against allowing budget policy to be overtaken by political priorities. "Of course, it is attractive to look into ways in which the tax burden is lighter, to inject more investment opportunity, but only when it is affordable," Georgieva said. "And at this point of time, neither is it affordable, nor is it desirable." With the opposition Labor party far ahead in opinion polls, Hunt is likely to

come under increasing pressure from within his Conservative Party to cut taxes in time for an election expected in late 2024. British inflation is likely to fall to around 5% by the end of this year from more than 10% in March and should return to its 2% target by the middle of 2025, the IMF said - broadly in line with forecasts from the Bank of England earlier this month. It said the economy would grow by 1% in 2024 and 2% in the following two years, before returning to a long-run growth rate of around 1.5%. Britain's growth potential could be improved by measures to tackle the impact of long-term illness on the labor force, and by reducing policy and regulatory uncertainty which harms business investment, the IMF added. A recently revised agreement with the European Union on post-Brexit trade involving Northern Ireland and a "more measured" approach to scrapping EU law should encourage investment, it said. The IMF said further persistence in inflation and accompanying unsustainable increases in wages were the biggest near-term threats to Britain's economic outlook and that the BoE should ensure monetary policy remained tight. "This said, elevated uncertainty about the macroeconomic outlook and inflation persistence merits continuous review of the pace and magnitude of monetary tightening," the IMF added. The BoE has raised borrowing costs at 12 consecutive meetings, taking rates to 4.5% this month, and financial markets see them peaking at 5% later this year. (Reuters)

- Kantar: UK grocery inflation edges lower to 17.2% in May** - British grocery inflation eased slightly for the second month in a row in May but remained close to record highs, industry data showed on Tuesday, providing little comfort for consumers grappling with a cost-of-living crisis. Market researcher Kantar said annual grocery inflation was 17.2% in the four weeks to May 14, and while that was down from 17.3% in its April data set, it was the third fastest rate it has recorded since 2008. It said UK households now face an additional 833 pounds (\$1,051) on their annual shopping bills if they do not change their behavior to cut costs. It said prices are rising fastest in products such as eggs and ambient cooking sauces. The Kantar data for May provides the most up to date snapshot of UK grocery inflation. Official UK data published last month showed overall consumer price inflation fell to 10.1% in March. However, prices of food and non-alcoholic drinks were 19.1% higher in March than a year earlier, the biggest such rise since August 1977. Official data for April will be published on Wednesday. The Bank of England said earlier this month it expected overall inflation to fall more slowly than it had hoped, mostly due to unexpectedly big and persistent rises in food prices. Food retailers have said they expect prices to rise in 2023 overall but with the rate of inflation declining throughout the year. Prices for some products that had seen the sharpest rises, such as milk, butter, bread, pasta, vegetable and sunflower oil, have started to fall. Kantar said the average cost of four pints of milk has come down by 8 pence since last month, but noted prices are still 30 pence higher than this time last year. (Reuters)
- High inflation helps to swell UK budget deficit in April** - Britain borrowed more than expected in April as high inflation pushed the government's debt interest bill to a new record for the month, even before expected tax cuts by Finance Minister Jeremy Hunt ahead of the next election. Public sector net borrowing, excluding state-owned banks, rose in April to 25.56bn pounds (\$32.26bn) - almost 12bn pounds more than in April 2022, the Office for National Statistics said. A Reuters poll of economists had pointed to public sector net borrowing, excluding state-owned banks, of 19.75bn pounds. "April's public finances figures got the new fiscal year off to a shaky start," said Ruth Gregory, economist from consultancy Capital Economics. "But we doubt this will prevent the Chancellor from embarking on a fiscal splurge ahead of the next election, due to take place before January 2025." British borrowing hit levels not seen since World War Two during COVID-19, taking debt to almost 100% of gross domestic product. Hunt and Prime Minister Rishi Sunak have raised taxes in response but are under pressure from within their Conservative Party to cut taxes before the election, with the opposition Labor Party far ahead in opinion polls. "It is right we borrowed billions to protect families and businesses against the impacts of the pandemic and Putin's energy crisis," Hunt said after Tuesday's data. "But debt and borrowing remain too high now - which is why it's one of our priorities to get debt falling." Britain added 9.8bn pounds to its debt interest bill in April - the highest total for the month since comparable records started in 1993, reflecting interest

payable on inflation-linked government bonds. Britain's rate of consumer price inflation was the highest in Western Europe in March, remaining above 10%. Data on Wednesday are expected to show a drop in April to around 8.2%, according to the Reuters poll consensus. The government spent 3.9bn pounds on energy support payments in April, the first month of the 2023/24 financial year, up 1.8bn pounds from a year ago. That figure is likely to recede sharply with falling energy costs, as well as an expected reduction in the regulated price cap for consumer energy bills. On top of higher spending, April's budget deficit reflected weaker receipts collected by the government at 69.7bn pounds, down from 72.4bn pounds in April 2022. The ONS revised down its estimate for the budget deficit in the 2022/23 financial year that ended in March to 137.1bn pounds, from 139.2bn pounds previously. In March, the Office for Budget Responsibility (OBR) forecast that borrowing in 2022/23 would settle at 152.4bn pounds, 15.3bn pounds more than the ONS estimate. For the current 2023/24 financial year, the OBR's forecast of 131.6bn pounds still looked about right, said economist Samuel Tombs from consultancy Pantheon Macroeconomics. "We doubt, however, that public borrowing will fall to the low levels in the medium term predicted by the OBR last month. The OBR is too upbeat about the economy's medium-term economic outlook," Tombs said. (Reuters)

- Japan manufacturers' mood turns positive as economy recovers** - Business sentiment at big Japanese manufacturers turned positive for the first time this year and service-sector morale hit a five-month high, the Reuters Tankan poll showed, as the economy continued to improve from a COVID-led recession. Wednesday's monthly poll, which tracks the Bank of Japan's closely watched quarterly tankan survey, found that manufacturers are also upbeat about the coming three months, while service-sector morale was seen down a tad. The solid reading may further fuel speculation that the BOJ will embark on normalizing its easing policy sooner rather than later. However, Governor Kazuo Ueda has repeatedly said that inflation, supported by wage hikes, needs to track at a sustainable rate of 2% before the bank could consider any exit. "Given Governor Ueda's cautious stance on global economy, it still takes time for the BOJ to embark on normalizing monetary policy," said Yoshimasa Maruyama, chief market economist at SMBC Nikko Securities. "Big manufacturers' sentiment rose on improvements in the auto industry and it's likely to stay in positive territory, although the pace of recovery will be moderate." The sentiment index for big manufacturers reached +6, up from April, the survey of 493 firms, of which 241 responded during May 10-19, showed. (Reuters)

## Regional

- UK Business and Trade Secretary Kemi Badenoch visits Gulf to boost trade ties** - British Business and Trade Secretary Kemi Badenoch will hold talks to encourage the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) Ministers to advance the UK's ambitions for a modern, comprehensive trade deal as she visits Qatar, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates this week, according to a press release issued by the UK Embassy in the UAE. Meeting her ministerial counterparts in each nation and new Secretary General of the GCC Jassem Al-Budaiwi, Badenoch will also speak with senior business leaders and investors to build on inward investment to the UK - currently worth more than £15.7bn - delivering on the UK government priority to grow the economy. Ahead of her visit, Kemi Badenoch said, "We already have a strong trade and investment relationship with the Gulf nations, but I am determined to strengthen this even further. The GCC represents an enormous opportunity for UK firms, whether it's selling brilliant British food and drink products into new markets or offering new consumers for our flourishing digital trade and renewable energy sectors." She added, "I know my counterparts are as ambitious for this deal as I am, and I'm ready to match their ambition." The trip comes as the total trade between the UK and GCC reached a record high of £61.3bn in 2022. The UK began negotiations with the six-country bloc in 2022 and has completed three rounds of talks so far. Collectively, the GCC is equivalent to the UK's seventh largest export market. Their demand for goods and services is expected to grow rapidly to almost £1tn by 2035 - an increase of over 75%. This will open huge new opportunities for UK businesses, from food and drinks to cars and clothes - removing these types of tariffs as part of a trade deal will help to increase choice for GCC consumers, giving them access to a greater range of UK

products. This will help to create jobs across the UK, support businesses to expand and grow the economy. A deal with the GCC will also play to the UK's strengths as a global services superpower. Of the total, UK exports to GCC amounted to £36bn, with more than half being services. Pioneering green technology firms based across the UK are already taking advantage of the Gulf region's pivot away from fossil fuels. (Zawya)

- Saudi warns speculators of more pain as OPEC+ meeting looms** - Saudi Arabia's Energy Minister Prince Abdulaziz bin Salman said on Tuesday he would inflict more pain on short sellers and told them to watch out just days before a planned OPEC+ meeting to decide on future oil policy. "Speculators, like in any market they are there to stay, I keep advising them that they will be ouching, they did ouch in April, I don't have to show my cards I'm not a poker player... but I would just tell them watch out," he told the Qatar Economic Forum organized by Bloomberg. Short sellers are investors that bet on oil prices falling, and hence when an unexpected move by OPEC+ to cut production causes a rally, they are forced to close their positions at a loss. Saudi Arabia, the world's largest oil exporter, and other OPEC+ producers announced surprise voluntary cuts in April that lifted prices after a slump driven by concerns that a banking crisis could impact demand. Analysts at Standard Chartered bank said in a note this week that short speculative positions are now as bearish as they were at the start of the pandemic in 2020. "We think the latest build-up in short positions significantly increases the probability of further production cuts when OPEC+ meets," the analysts said. Brent prices were trading 1.3% higher at just under \$77 a barrel at 1300 GMT, about \$10 below their peak after OPEC+ announced the additional cuts in April. OPEC+ members are due to meet on June 4 in Vienna to decide on their next course of action. The April cuts were described as "inadvisable" by Washington, which had also been critical of the group's decision to cut production in October. The minister said the alliance would continue to be proactive, preemptive and hedge against what may come in the future, regardless of any criticism. "We should be brave enough to attend to the future without continuing the so-called 'kicking the can' policies, those policies that may allow us to fend the situation for this month, next month or the month after but with that we are losing sight of our intentions and our more important objectives," he said. The Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) and its allies, including Russia, known as OPEC+, would continue to be a responsible market regulator, the minister added. He again blamed the Paris-based International Energy Agency (IEA) and its initial predictions for a 3mn barrel per day (bpd) fall in Russian production on the back of the Ukraine war for misleading the market. "Look who did the most in trying to bring forecasts and data and projections that really created most of the volatility that we have had in 2022 and continue to do so?" Prince Abdulaziz said. "There is an organization called the IEA, I think they have proven that it really takes special talent to be consistently wrong." The IEA did not immediately respond to a request for comment. In its monthly oil market report last week, the agency upgraded its forecast for 2023 oil demand by 200,000 bpd to 102mn bpd, adding that the oil market faces a supply crunch in the second half of the year. (Reuters)
- Saudi Arabia and Sri Lanka agree to strengthen cooperation in several sectors** - Saudi Arabia and Sri Lanka have agreed to strengthen bilateral cooperation in several sectors of common interests. The two countries have reached agreements after discussing 65 items related to the fields of security, justice, labor, trade, industry, investment, energy, finance, economy, transportation, communication, agriculture, education, health, sport, culture, tourism, religious affairs, media, and work. This came during the conclusion of the work of the Saudi-Sri Lankan joint committee, which was held in Riyadh and chaired by Abdullah Abu Thanain, vice minister of human resources and social development for labor, and Tharaka Balasuriya, the minister of state for foreign affairs of Sri Lanka. Abu Thanain has praised the efforts made by the two parties during the technical meetings which were held within the work of the joint committee, which contributed to building an optimal path to enhance the joint cooperation between the two countries. He also confirmed Saudi Arabia's aspiration for the second session of the committee which will be held in the Sri Lankan capital, Colombo. On his part, Balasuriya thanked Saudi Arabia for hosting the first session of the Saudi-Sri Lankan joint committee, confirming the importance of continuing the joint efforts and cooperation between the two sides to

follow up on the recommendations of the first session and build on these efforts during the second session in Sri Lanka. Saudi Arabia and Sri Lanka have signed the minutes of the joint committee and affirmed the necessity of following up on the recommendations contained, in order to ensure enhancing bilateral cooperation in different fields of common interests. The work of the Saudi-Sri Lankan joint committee in its first session started on Sunday 21 of May with several workshops that aimed at enhancing bilateral relations in a way that achieves the directions of the leaders of the two countries and the aspirations of its two peoples, and to realize sustainable development in vital sectors. (Zawya)

- Saudi real estate 'booming' on big office space demand** - Saudi Arabia's multi-faceted real estate market is currently experiencing a dynamic expansion across all sectors, a positive trend backed by compelling recent data and expert insights, according to global property consultancy, Knight Frank. The office sector, notably in the commercial hub, Riyadh, is witnessing an unprecedented surge in demand with occupancy levels soaring to a record 97% for Grade A office spaces, it stated. The residential sector, on the other hand, appears to be facing growing affordability pressures, according to Knight Frank's analysis. Saudi Arabia's office sector sees a consistent strengthening of demand across its three primary cities - Riyadh, Jeddah, and Dammam Metropolitan Area (DMA). With Riyadh, the commercial hub, witnessing unprecedented demand and occupancy levels for Grade A and B office spaces reaching 97% and 85% respectively, the office sector is the real star of the market, stated the expert. Faisal Durrani, Partner – Head of Middle East Research, said: "The real star of the market remains the office sector. With business continuing to flock to the kingdom from the world over – the number of business licenses issued increased by 54% during 2022 – prime rents remain under upward pressure and have climbed by 19% in Riyadh over the last year and by about 9% in Jeddah. Vacancy rates also remain marginal at 6% in Jeddah and just 3% in Riyadh." "The strong economic growth last year of around 9% - the highest level for any major economy – is driving job creating rates in key centers such as Riyadh, which is resulting in rapidly diminishing stock," stated Durrani. "What's more, the pipeline of supply remains slim, with around 800,000 sq m of new offices planned in Riyadh by 2025, for instance. We expect demand to far outstrip this, particularly as businesses remain focused on best-in-class space, which is likely to drive a bigger delta in the performance of Grade A and Grade B rents," he explained. "For now however, the shortage of space means some businesses are left with no option but to consider Grade B options, which has driven rents for more secondary offices up by 15% in Riyadh and 6% in Jeddah over the last 12-months," said Durrani. On the retail sector, Knight Frank said it was undergoing an exciting transformation as it pivots towards a more experiential model, with a particular focus on Food & Beverage (F&B) and lifestyle retail developments. These changes are reflected in the growing footfall and increased dwell times, which are the highest within the F&B focused lifestyle retail establishments. This transformation is not signaling the end of traditional brick-and-mortar retail; rather, it indicates an adaptation to evolving consumer preferences and market dynamics, it added. According to Knight Frank's Saudi Report, younger respondents (aged below 35 years) are more likely to favor lifestyle retail centers (33%) and online shopping (22%) compared to 5% for those aged 45+. This generational shift in retail attitudes is indicative of the need for traditional retail centers to reinvent themselves and enhance the in-store experience, thereby blending the lines between physical and digital retail landscapes, he added. Jonathan Pagett – Head of Retail Advisory (KSA) said: "Saudi Arabia's retail sector is witnessing a clear evolution towards an experiential model. As the younger demographic grows, the demand for retail centers offering a diverse blend of shopping, entertainment, and culinary experiences will skyrocket." "While the future is very much digital, our data suggests there is still a significant place for physical retail, given it can adapt and offer consumers an enhanced, multi-faceted shopping experience," noted Pagett. On the hospitality sector, the property expert said the recent unveiling of the year-round Saudi Calendar marks a significant milestone for the kingdom's hospitality sector. This comprehensive calendar, teeming with an array of diverse cultural, musical, and entertainment events, caters to an expansive audience, from local residents to international tourists. The intent is not merely to entertain, but to foster a rich cultural exchange that illuminates the vibrancy of the Saudi cultural landscape. "The Saudi

Vision 2030 plan's innovative initiative is a game-changer for our hospitality sector. Over 400 events, from concerts to entertainment pop-ups held across the nation on one of the occasions such as Eid Al Fitr, appeal to a broad demographic, driving significant domestic tourism growth," stated Durrani. "This increase in activity isn't just a temporary boost; it ensures a continuous influx of tourists throughout the year. We anticipate a positive impact on hotel performance, particularly with the projected supply increase by 2025: 27% in Riyadh, 7% in Jeddah, and 21% in DMA," he added. (Zawya)

- Malaysia, UAE to start talks on bilateral trade deal** - Malaysia and the United Arab Emirates have agreed to negotiate a Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement, a type of bilateral trade deal the UAE has been pursuing with various countries since 2021, the two countries said on Tuesday. The agreement will cover trade in goods and services, investments, economic cooperation, Malaysia's trade ministry said in a statement. "The UAE is Malaysia's 17th trade partner globally and the second in the Middle East, accounting for 32% of Malaysia's trade with Arab countries. The UAE is also the first destination for Malaysian merchandise exports to Arab countries," UAE Trade Minister Thani Al Zeyoudi said in a statement on state news agency WAM. The announcement came during a high-level visit by the UAE to Malaysia led by the Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi Sheikh Khaled bin Mohamed Al Nahyan. During the visit, the UAE's energy minister and Malaysia's natural resources minister discussed strengthening cooperation in energy, especially clean energy, UAE state news agency WAM said on Monday. Zeyoudi said the UAE and Malaysia had seen strong growth in bilateral trade and investment over recent years. Malaysian investments in the UAE stand at \$150mn, and UAE investments in Malaysia stand at \$220mn, he said. The UAE has so far signed four CEPAs with India, Israel, Indonesia and Turkey and had previously said it wants to sign around 26. (Reuters)
- Al Marri: UAE economy to grow faster than global average in 2023** - The UAE's economic growth has exceeded expectations as the country joined the 7% growth club, said Abdullah bin Touq Al Marri, UAE Minister of Economy. The UAE's economy expanded at 7.6% last year, which was among the highest anywhere in the world, including a 6.6% expansion in the non-oil sector. "Our goal is to double the economy by 2031 in line with 2031 Vision. In 2023, IMF forecast economy will grow by 3.5%, higher than the global average of 2.8%," Al Marri said during the inauguration of the Harvard Business School Club – The House. According to GlobalData, a leading data and analytics company, the year 2022 witnessed a significant economic upturn, with a growth rate of 7.6%, the highest since 2007, primarily fueled by surging oil and gas prices. "To make the economy less vulnerable to external shocks, it remains crucial for the government to persist in its endeavor to diversify the economy. Abu Dhabi's plan to invest \$2.7bn to double the size of the manufacturing sector by 2031, and the adoption of UAE Circular Economy Policy 2031 which focuses on manufacturing, food, green infrastructure, and sustainable transport, reflects the government's urge to transform to a more diversified economic base," said Indrajit Banerjee, economic research analyst at GlobalData. Banerjee added that even though the UAE's economic growth outlook for 2023 faces challenges, the ongoing diversification efforts and development projects aimed at strengthening the economy will play a vital role in reducing its vulnerability to external shocks. While talking about the Harvard Business School think-tank, he said, "The House embodies the spirit of entrepreneurship and leadership that is the heart of UAE's economic vision. It will serve as a thriving ecosystem where remarkable individuals can come together and connect and learn from one another and contribute to the economic development of the UAE and the region. The House is a symbol of commitment to fostering collaboration, nurturing talent and driving innovation. It will be a platform for knowledge exchange, mentorship, the partnership." (Zawya)
- Fast-paced diversification lowers UAE's risk to external shocks** - Fast-paced diversification efforts and development projects underway in the UAE play a vital role in strengthening the economy by reducing the nation's vulnerability to external shocks, a UK-based consultancy firm said on Tuesday. Despite key challenges posed by a decline in oil output resulting from Opec-agreed production cuts, a slowdown in the non-oil

sector due to higher interest rates, and subdued external demand, the country's real GDP will still expand at 3.0% in 2023, GlobalData said in its Macroeconomic Outlook Report: UAE. "To make the economy less vulnerable to external shocks, it remains crucial for the government to persist in its endeavor to diversify the economy," said Indrajit Banerjee, economic research analyst at GlobalData. "Abu Dhabi's plan to invest \$2.7bn to double the size of the manufacturing sector by 2031, and the adoption of the UAE Circular Economy Policy 2031 that focuses on manufacturing, food, green infrastructure, and sustainable transport, reflects the government's urge to transform to a more diversified economic base," he added. The UAE has undertaken several development projects with an investment of \$23bn in July 2022 to significantly boost construction and allied activities and create job opportunities. Some of the ongoing projects include the railway network project under Etihad Rail's supervision of Dh40bn by 2024, the construction of Dubai urban tech district by 2024, the expansion of the capacity of the Mohammed bin Rashid Solar Park by 2025. These projects are expected to drive the construction activities, which GlobalData forecasts to rise by an average of 2.0% over 2023-2025. The report reveals that the oil and gas industry, which accounts for around 30% of the country's GDP and 13% of total exports, plays a crucial role in the UAE's economy. "The year 2022 witnessed a significant economic upturn, with a growth rate of 7.6%, the highest since 2007, primarily fueled by surging oil and gas prices. However, the decline in oil and gas prices since the beginning of 2023 is expected to persist throughout the year, directly impacting the UAE's economic growth prospects for the current year." The UAE holds 7.2% of oil reserves and 4.0% of the natural gas reserves in the world in 2021. In May 2022, Adnoc made a significant discovery in Abu Dhabi, uncovering 650mnbn barrels of onshore crude oil reserves. This discovery has further augmented the UAE's hydrocarbon reserves base. As a result, the country is expected to maintain its prominent position as a major producer and exporter of hydrocarbons in the foreseeable future, GlobalData said. Mining, manufacturing and utilities activities contributed 31.2% to the UAE's gross value added (GVA) in 2022, followed by financial intermediation, real estate, and business activities (22%), and the wholesale, retail, and hotels sector (15%). In nominal terms, these three sectors are forecast to grow by 2.9%, 3.7% and 2.5%, respectively, in 2023 as compared to 9.6%, 12.4% and 8.4% in 2022, according to GlobalData. While the exports growth is projected to slow down from 4.0% in 2022 to 2.6% in 2023, real household consumption expenditure is projected to grow at a slower pace at 4.0% in 2023, compared to 8.4% in 2022, said the report. (Zawya)

- UAE jobs: 3,000 employees to work out of Expo City Dubai** - Multiple pavilions from Expo 2020 Dubai will be repurposed, as local and international businesses, organizations, and educational institutions set up shop at its legacy site. About 3,000 employees will be working out of offices at Expo City Dubai by September. Anchor tenants and new businesses setting up their operations include DP World, Emirates Airline, Siemens Energy, Siemens Industrial, Terminus Group, Engie, and Gratiya Consultancy. Expo City Dubai offers an enabling free zone environment and digital platforms. Designed as a blueprint for 'green' urban planning, it retains 80% of Expo 2020's infrastructure. (Zawya)
- UAE issues three decisions on corporate tax** - The UAE Ministry of Finance has announced three new Ministerial Decisions for the purposes of Federal Decree-Law No. 47 of 2022 on the Taxation of Corporations and Businesses. These include Ministerial Decision No.114 of 2023 on the Accounting Standards and Methods; Ministerial Decision No.115 of 2023 on Pensions and Social Security Funds; and Ministerial Decision No.116 of 2023 on Participation Exemption. Younis Haji Al Khouri, Undersecretary of the Ministry of Finance, said, "The three new decisions aim to enhance the flexibility of UAE's Corporate Tax regime and ensure a supportive business environment for all sectors. The decisions cover several important aspects related to private regulated pension funds and social security funds normally exempt from corporate tax in other countries. "Designating International Financial Reporting Standards as the applicable accounting standards and further simplifying accounting processes for SMEs reflects the Ministry of Finance's commitment to imposing a minimal compliance burden for businesses in scope of the Corporate Tax regime. In addition, the participation exemption will

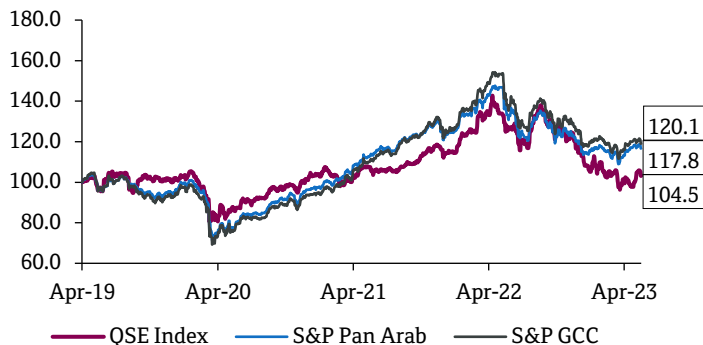
prevent double corporate tax on the profits of one entity and eliminate international double taxation." The decision on Pensions and Social Security Funds sets out further conditions for private regulated pension funds and social security funds in the UAE to be exempt from Corporate Tax. The decision ensures alignment with international tax practices so that UAE private pension or social security funds exempt status is also recognized when investing internationally, and double tax treaty benefits can be obtained. In addition, the decision sets out details of maximum contributions per beneficiary and the annual confirmation of compliance by a statutory auditor to ensure integrity of the exemption. The decision on Accounting Standards and Methods provides clear guidelines for businesses preparing their Financial Statements that will be used as the starting point to calculate taxable income for corporate tax purposes. The decision confirms that International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS) are the applicable accounting standards in the UAE and must be used by larger businesses that have revenues of more than AED 50,000,000. The decision provides small and medium businesses that have revenues of less than AED50,000,000 with the option of applying IFRS for SMEs. To reduce the compliance burden even further, the decision confirms that the cash basis accounting may be used by businesses that have less than AED3,000,000 in revenue. The decision also provides clarity on what is meant by consolidated financial statements for tax grouping purposes. Where, such financial statements will be the aggregation of the parent company and each subsidiary's (that is a member of the tax group) standalone financial statements once intra-group transactions are eliminated. The decision on Participation Exemption provides for Corporate Tax exemptions on dividends, profit distributions, and capital gains from a Participating Interest, which is defined as a 5% or greater ownership interest in another entity's shares or capital, held for at least 12 months. The exemption applies if the subsidiary is in a jurisdiction with a Corporate Tax rate of at least 9% or can demonstrate an effective tax rate of at least 9% on profits, income, or equity. The decision also clarifies that the relief will apply to various ownership interest types, including preferential shares, ordinary shares and redeemable shares and membership and Partner Interest, where the aggregated acquisition cost of the ownership interests is equal to or exceeds AED4,000,000. This ensures UAE-based companies with specific investments in foreign entities that meet the required conditions do not suffer any UAE Corporate Tax on such investments. (Zawya)

- S&P: Robust growth to bolster Dubai's balance sheet** - Dubai's well-diversified and service-oriented economy is on course to a robust economic growth of 3.0% in 2023 on the back of continued strong momentum in most key sectors as the government looks to strengthen its balance sheet with a sharp reduction in debt, analysts at a leading global rating agency said. Providing tailwind to Dubai's medium- and longer-term growth are the UAE-wide structural and social reforms and programs that are underpinned by the sustained momentum in the hospitality, real estate, trade, and financial services sectors, analysts at S&P Global Ratings said in a report. They argued that Dubai's reputation as one of the safer, more liberal, and accessible destinations in the GCC supports population and capital inflows from other regions in times of political turmoil. Its resident population is projected to cross 4.0mn by 2026. In addition, the Russia-Ukraine war has also led to large inflows of Russian nationals and capital to the emirate. "We also believe that the government's announcement of the Dubai Economic Agenda D33 (D33) earlier this year is an important step toward achieving sustainable and diversified economic growth in the long run," Juili Pargaonkar and Trevor Cullinan wrote. Key goals include doubling the size of Dubai's economy by the next decade along with an almost similar magnitude of growth in foreign direct investment and trade, they said. "The authorities aim to achieve these objectives by, among other things, increasing trade with nontraditional markets, attracting the world's best universities, supporting small and midsize enterprises, and launching a plan for green and sustainable manufacturing. These projects are expected to provide the necessary impetus to increase foreign direct investment to Dh60bn annually from Dh32bn currently and increase private sector investment to up to DhD1tn in the next decade." The D33 plan will run alongside the federal government's "We The UAE 2031" plan and the "Dubai 2040 Urban Master Plan." "In our view, even if all of the ambitious targets included in the plans are not achieved, they provide an impetus to support

economic activity in Dubai over the medium term,” they said. According to official data, Dubai received 14.4mn international overnight visitors in 2022, narrowing the gap with the 16.7mn pre-pandemic in 2019. “This robust performance continued in 2023, with 4.7mn international visitors recorded in the first quarter versus close to 4.8mn in the same period of 2019. Average hotel occupancy also stood at 81% in the first quarter 2023. In addition to hospitality, residential real estate transactions increased 45% by volume and 77% by value to Dh528bn in 2022,” they said in the report. On the outlook for corporates in Dubai, S&P expects resilient performance despite mounting global economic pressures — such as high inflation and interest rates — even as global debt capital markets remain challenging. “We don’t think that the introduction of a corporate tax from June 2023 will significantly deter the establishment of new businesses. The announced 9.0% tax rate will remain competitive for the region and globally, and many companies will benefit from recently announced exemptions. At the same time, free zones will continue to offer tax-free operations, while we do not expect personal income, capital gains, or dividend taxes to be introduced in the short term.” S&P said the government’s debt stock could fall even faster if the reduction in nominal debt, which occurred in 2021 and to a more significant extent in 2022, continues over the coming years to about 51% of GDP in 2023 from a cyclical high of 78% in 2020, said the analysts. (Zawya)

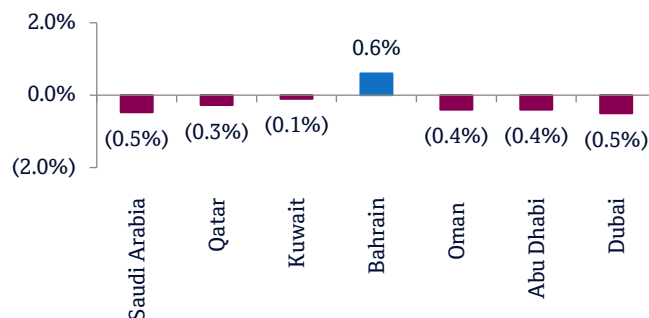
- **Oman, Egypt sign MoU and agreement** - The Sultanate of Oman and the Arab Republic of Egypt signed an agreement and a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) in Cairo on Monday. The agreement is related to the elimination of double taxation with regard to taxes on income and the prevention and avoidance of tax evasion. As for the MoU, it is related to cooperation in areas relevant to financial policies and developments. (Zawya)
- **Bahrain imports rise 3% to \$1.38bn in April** - The value of imports by Bahrain increased 3%, reaching BD523mn (\$1.387bn) during April 2023 in comparison with BD505mn for the same month in 2022. The top 10 countries for imports accounted for 72% of the total value of imports, said the foreign trade report of April 2023, published by Information & Government Authority (iGA). The report covers data on the trade balance, imports, exports of products with national origin, and re-exports. According to the report, Brazil ranked first for imports to Bahrain, with a total of BD79mn, followed by China with BD61mn, and then Australia with BD54mn. Non-Agglomerated iron ores and concentrates was the top product imported to Bahrain with a total value of BD94mn, while aluminum oxide came second with BD48mn, followed by gold ingots valued at BD16mn. The value of exports of national origin products marked a decrease of 37% to BD303mn during April 2023, compared to BD478mn for the same month in 2022. The top 10 countries accounted for 73% of the total value. Saudi Arabia ranked first on the list of countries importing Bahraini national origin products with a value of BD88mn. The US was second with BD32mn and the UAE third with BD29mn. Unwrought aluminum alloys topped the products exported during April 2023 with BD96mn, followed by agglomerated iron ores and concentrates alloyed with a value of BD50mn and aluminum wire not alloyed BD16mn. The total value of re-exports increased by 30% to reach BD67mn during the month, compared to BD51mn for the same month in 2022. Bahrain’s trade deficit amounted to BD152mn in April. (Zawya)

### Rebased Performance



Source: Bloomberg

### Daily Index Performance



Source: Bloomberg

Asset/Currency Performance	Close (\$)	1D%	WTD%	YTD%
Gold/Ounce	1,975.23	0.2	(0.1)	8.3
Silver/Ounce	23.45	(0.8)	(1.7)	(2.1)
Crude Oil (Brent)/Barrel (FM Future)	76.84	1.1	1.7	(10.6)
Crude Oil (WTI)/Barrel (FM Future)	72.91	1.3	1.9	(9.2)
Natural Gas (Henry Hub)/MMBtu	2.22	(3.5)	(6.3)	(36.9)
LPG Propane (Arab Gulf)/Ton	63.80	0.5	0.8	(9.8)
LPG Butane (Arab Gulf)/Ton	59.50	0.0	0.8	(41.4)
Euro	1.08	(0.4)	(0.3)	0.6
Yen	138.59	(0.0)	0.4	5.7
GBP	1.24	(0.2)	(0.3)	2.7
CHF	1.11	(0.4)	(0.2)	2.6
AUD	0.66	(0.6)	(0.6)	(3.0)
USD Index	103.49	0.3	0.3	(0.0)
RUB	110.69	0.0	0.0	58.9
BRL	0.20	(0.1)	0.5	6.3

Source: Bloomberg

Global Indices Performance	Close	1D%*	WTD%*	YTD%*
MSCI World Index	2,816.85	(1.0)	(0.9)	8.2
DJ Industrial	33,055.51	(0.7)	(1.1)	(0.3)
S&P 500	4,145.58	(1.1)	(1.1)	8.0
NASDAQ 100	12,560.25	(1.3)	(0.8)	20.0
STOXX 600	466.10	(1.0)	(1.1)	10.3
DAX	16,152.86	(0.8)	(1.2)	16.6
FTSE 100	7,762.95	(0.1)	(0.3)	6.9
CAC 40	7,378.71	(1.7)	(2.0)	14.6
Nikkei	30,957.77	(0.5)	(0.1)	12.1
MSCI EM	978.60	(0.5)	0.1	2.3
SHANGHAI SE Composite	3,246.24	(1.8)	(1.8)	2.8
HANG SENG	19,431.25	(1.3)	(0.4)	(2.2)
BSE SENSEX	61,981.79	0.0	0.4	1.7
Bovespa	109,928.53	(0.1)	(0.3)	6.8
RTS	1,038.00	0.2	0.1	6.9

Source: Bloomberg (\*\$ adjusted returns if any)

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