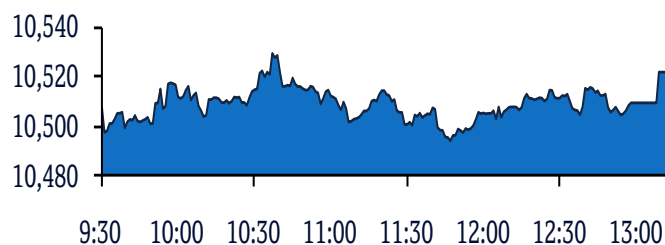


QSE Intra-Day Movement



Qatar Commentary

The QE Index declined 0.1% to close at 10,522.8. The Industrials index fell 0.4%. Top losers were Medicare Group and Qatar Electricity & Water Company, falling 1.5% and 1.0%, respectively. Among the top gainers, Al Khaleej Takaful Insurance Company gained 5.3%, while Qatari Investors Group was up 4.9%.

GCC Commentary

Saudi Arabia: The TASI Index gained 0.5% to close at 8,943.9. Gains were led by the Software & Serv. and Media & Telecom. indices, rising 2.6% and 2.0%, respectively. Arabia Insurance Coop. rose 9.9%, while Saudi Arabia Refineries Co. was up 7.9%.

Dubai: The DFM Index gained 0.1% to close at 2,633.5. The Insurance index rose 2.1%, while the Investment & Financial Services index gained 1.8%. Oman Insurance Company rose 7.7%, while Dubai Financial Market was up 3.8%.

Abu Dhabi: The ADX General Index gained marginally to close at 5,667.0. The Industrial index rose 1.4%, while the Telecommunication index gained 0.4%. Gulf Cement Company rose 5.1%, while Ras Al Khaimah Ceramics was up 4.3%.

Kuwait: The Kuwait All Share Index fell 0.1% to close at 5,695.6. The Technology index declined 10.9%, while the Basic Materials index fell 1.5%. Automated Systems Co. declined 10.9%, while Munshaat Real Estate Project was down 9.7%.

Oman: The MSM 30 Index fell marginally to close at 3,559.5. Losses were led by the Services and Industrial indices, falling 0.3% each. Dhofar Int. Development & Inv. Holding declined 6.6%, while Galfar Engineering & Contracting was down 3.8%.

Bahrain: The BHB Index gained marginally to close at 1,463.0. The Industrial index rose 0.6%, while the Commercial Banks index gained marginally. Khaleeji Commercial Bank rose 6.0%, while Aluminium Bahrain was up 0.6%.

Market Indicators	11 Feb 21	10 Feb 21	%Chg.
Value Traded (QR mn)	378.5	570.5	(33.7)
Exch. Market Cap. (QR mn)	606,972.6	607,093.3	(0.0)
Volume (mn)	183.5	202.6	(9.5)
Number of Transactions	8,508	10,178	(16.4)
Companies Traded	45	47	(4.3)
Market Breadth	25:15	26:18	-

Market Indices	Close	1D%	WTD%	YTD%	TTMP/E
Total Return	20,302.73	(0.1)	0.9	1.2	18.0
All Share Index	3,232.87	(0.0)	0.7	1.0	18.6
Banks	4,196.36	0.0	(0.0)	(1.2)	15.1
Industrials	3,277.45	(0.4)	2.5	5.8	26.3
Transportation	3,500.03	0.0	0.7	6.2	16.1
Real Estate	1,885.41	0.0	0.8	(2.2)	16.2
Insurance	2,461.87	0.3	1.0	2.8	N.A.
Telecoms	1,146.83	0.4	0.1	13.5	16.8
Consumer	7,929.97	0.2	0.8	(2.6)	28.6
Al Rayan Islamic Index	4,295.68	(0.0)	0.9	0.6	19.3

GCC Top Gainers**	Exchange	Close*	1D%	Vol. '000	YTD%
Saudi Arabian Mining Co.	Saudi Arabia	47.00	2.6	690.5	16.0
HSBC Bank Oman	Oman	0.08	2.6	124.1	(12.1)
Ethiad Etisalat Co.	Saudi Arabia	28.75	1.8	2,175.2	0.3
Banque Saudi Fransi	Saudi Arabia	31.95	1.4	188.9	1.1
Sohar International Bank	Oman	0.08	1.3	484.0	(16.5)

GCC Top Losers**	Exchange	Close*	1D%	Vol. '000	YTD%
Mabane Co.	Kuwait	0.66	(3.4)	437.9	0.6
Ahli Bank	Oman	0.10	(1.9)	423.2	(19.7)
Emaar Properties	Dubai	3.79	(1.3)	7,142.5	7.4
Boubyan Bank	Kuwait	0.55	(1.3)	1,297.6	(3.0)
Qatar Electricity & Water	Qatar	17.86	(1.0)	413.0	0.1

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%
Medicare Group	8.52	(1.5)	500.9	(3.6)
Qatar Electricity & Water Co.	17.86	(1.0)	413.0	0.1
Qatar International Islamic Bank	8.94	(0.8)	260.8	(1.3)
Qatar First Bank	1.84	(0.8)	3,688.3	6.9
Industries Qatar	12.20	(0.7)	1,228.0	12.2

QSE Top Value Trades	Close*	1D%	Val. '000	YTD%
QNB Group	17.02	(0.2)	42,356.4	(4.5)
Qatari Investors Group	2.00	4.9	29,338.4	10.4
Investment Holding Group	0.56	2.4	25,172.8	(7.2)
Gulf Warehousing Company	5.25	0.3	24,658.3	2.9
Al Khaleej Takaful Insurance Co.	2.83	5.3	24,038.6	48.9

Source: Bloomberg (* in QR)

QSE Top Gainers	Close*	1D%	Vol. '000	YTD%
Al Khaleej Takaful Insurance Co.	2.83	5.3	8,487.4	48.9
Qatari Investors Group	2.00	4.9	14,731.2	10.4
Investment Holding Group	0.56	2.4	45,302.7	(7.2)
Dlala Brokerage & Inv. Holding Co.	1.89	2.2	3,021.1	5.0
Aamal Company	0.85	1.9	8,995.9	(1.1)

QSE Top Volume Trades	Close*	1D%	Vol. '000	YTD%
Investment Holding Group	0.56	2.4	45,302.7	(7.2)
Salam International Inv. Ltd.	0.63	0.6	19,823.0	(4.0)
Qatari Investors Group	2.00	4.9	14,731.2	10.4
Gulf International Services	1.69	0.5	9,819.3	(1.5)
Aamal Company	0.85	1.9	8,995.9	(1.1)

Regional Indices	Close	1D%	WTD%	MTD%	YTD%	Exch. Val. Traded (\$ mn)	Exchange Mkt. Cap. (\$ mn)	P/E**	P/B**	Dividend Yield
Qatar*	10,522.78	(0.1)	0.9	0.5	0.8	104.53	165,703.5	18.0	1.5	3.6
Dubai	2,633.48	0.1	(1.4)	(0.8)	5.7	45.18	96,584.9	15.5	0.9	3.7
Abu Dhabi	5,667.03	0.0	0.1	1.3	12.3	268.68	216,693.7	23.1	1.6	4.3
Saudi Arabia	8,943.85	0.5	3.8	2.8	2.9	3,134.97	2,424,148.0	33.7	2.1	2.4
Kuwait	5,695.63	(0.1)	0.0	(1.5)	2.7	152.26	107,203.7	39.2	1.4	3.5
Oman	3,559.51	(0.0)	(1.3)	(2.6)	(2.7)	2.59	16,113.0	10.8	0.7	7.7
Bahrain	1,462.95	0.0	0.1	0.0	(1.8)	3.34	22,379.4	13.2	1.0	4.6

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

Qatar Market Commentary

- The QE Index declined 0.1% to close at 10,522.8. The Industrials index led the losses. The index fell on the back of selling pressure from Qatari shareholders despite buying support from GCC, Arab and Foreign shareholders.
- Medicare Group and Qatar Electricity & Water Company were the top losers, falling 1.5% and 1.0%, respectively. Among the top gainers, Al Khaleej Takaful Insurance Company gained 5.3%, while Qatari Investors Group was up 4.9%.
- Volume of shares traded on Thursday fell by 9.5% to 183.5mn from 202.6mn on Wednesday. However, as compared to the 30-day moving average of 177.0mn, volume for the day was 3.6% higher. Investment Holding Group and Salam International Investment Limited were the most active stocks, contributing 24.7% and 10.8% to the total volume, respectively.

Overall Activity	Buy %*	Sell %*	Net (QR)
Qatari Individuals	37.16%	43.77%	(25,013,329.7)
Qatari Institutions	19.20%	21.81%	(9,889,128.6)
Qatari	56.36%	65.58%	(34,902,458.3)
GCC Individuals	1.64%	0.84%	3,009,125.6
GCC Institutions	4.30%	2.05%	8,515,377.1
GCC	5.94%	2.89%	11,524,502.7
Arab Individuals	13.93%	13.91%	66,111.3
Arab	13.93%	13.91%	66,111.3
Foreigners Individuals	3.85%	3.36%	1,870,623.8
Foreigners Institutions	19.93%	14.26%	21,441,220.5
Foreigners	23.78%	17.62%	23,311,844.3

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

Earnings Releases, Global Economic Data and Earnings Calendar

Earnings Releases

Company	Market	Currency	Revenue (mn) 4Q2020	% Change YoY	Operating Profit (mn) 4Q2020	% Change YoY	Net Profit (mn) 4Q2020	% Change YoY
Abdullah Al Othaim Markets Co.*	Saudi Arabia	SR	2,044.8	-2.6%	183.1	11.6%	165.5	16.3%
Tihama Advt and Public Relations*	Saudi Arabia	SR	12.3	-28.9%	(16.2)	N/A	(16.8)	N/A
Dana Gas* Billion	Abu Dhabi	AED	1.3	-24.4%	-	-	131.0	-59.3%
Reem Investments*	Abu Dhabi	AED	21.7	11.5%	-	-	(125.8)	N/A
Abu Dhabi National Takaful Co.*	Abu Dhabi	AED	374.3	-19.9%	-	-	78.4	7.9%
AXA Green Crescent Insurance*	Abu Dhabi	AED	45.2	-2.3%	-	-	2.2	1295.7%
Ras Al Khaima Poultry*	Abu Dhabi	AED	17.8	-23.8%	3.3	N/A	0.8	N/A
Abu Dhabi National Hotels*	Abu Dhabi	AED	874.1	-37.7%	-	-	161.8	-36.0%
Ras Alkhaima National Insurance*	Abu Dhabi	AED	577.4	-0.9%	-	-	13.5	281.2%
Al Firdous Holdings*	Dubai	AED	-	-	-	-	(0.7)	N/A
Dubai National Ins. & Reinsurance*	Dubai	AED	317.3	-16.7%	-	-	55.1	-5.2%
Arabian Scandinavian Ins. Takaful*	Dubai	AED	109.0	-22.9%	29.2	768.6%	29.4	N/A
Amlak Finance*	Dubai	AED	282.8	1.5%	(339.4)	N/A	(438.0)	N/A
Amanat Holdings*	Dubai	AED	143.6	1.0%	8.3	-86.1%	8.3	-86.1%
Air Arabia*	Dubai	AED	1,851.0	-61.1%	-	-	(192.2)	N/A
Oman Insurance Company*	Dubai	AED	3,585.1	1.1%	-	-	194.3	3.9%
Aluminium Bahrain*	Bahrain	BHD	1,061.4	3.1%	-	-	9.8	81.4%

Source: Company data, DFM, ADX, MSM, TASI, BHB. (# - Values in Billions, *Financial for FY2020)

Global Economic Data

Date	Market	Source	Indicator	Period	Actual	Consensus	Previous
02/11	US	Department of Labor	Initial Jobless Claims	06-Feb	793k	760k	812k
02/11	US	Department of Labor	Continuing Claims	30-Jan	4,545k	4,420k	4,690k
02/12	UK	UK Office for National Statistics	Industrial Production MoM	Dec	0.2%	0.5%	0.3%
02/12	UK	UK Office for National Statistics	Industrial Production YoY	Dec	-3.3%	-3.7%	-3.9%
02/12	UK	UK Office for National Statistics	Manufacturing Production MoM	Dec	0.3%	0.7%	1.1%
02/12	UK	UK Office for National Statistics	Manufacturing Production YoY	Dec	-2.5%	-3.2%	-2.6%
02/12	UK	UK Office for National Statistics	GDP QoQ	4Q2020	1.0%	0.5%	16.0%
02/12	UK	UK Office for National Statistics	GDP YoY	4Q2020	-7.8%	-8.1%	-8.6%
02/12	India	India Central Statistical Organisation	Industrial Production YoY	Dec	1.0%	-0.1%	-2.1%
02/12	India	India Central Statistical Organisation	CPI YoY	Jan	4.06%	4.4%	4.59%

Source: Bloomberg (s.a. = seasonally adjusted; n.s.a. = non-seasonally adjusted; w.d.a. = working day adjusted)

Earnings Calendar

Tickers	Company Name	Date of reporting 4Q2020 results	No. of days remaining	Status
QAMC	Qatar Aluminum Manufacturing Company	14-Feb-21	0	Due
QATI	Qatar Insurance Company	14-Feb-21	0	Due
QEWS	Qatar Electricity & Water Company	14-Feb-21	0	Due
ORDS	Ooredoo	14-Feb-21	0	Due
QIMD	Qatar Industrial Manufacturing Company	14-Feb-21	0	Due
BRES	Barwa Real Estate Company	15-Feb-21	1	Due
QLMI	QLM Life & Medical Insurance Company	17-Feb-21	3	Due
GISS	Gulf International Services	18-Feb-21	4	Due
DOHI	Doha Insurance Group	22-Feb-21	8	Due
QNNS	Qatar Navigation (Milaha)	23-Feb-21	9	Due
AHCS	Aamal Company	23-Feb-21	9	Due
MCGS	Medicare Group	23-Feb-21	9	Due
MPHC	Mesaieed Petrochemical Holding Company	23-Feb-21	9	Due
MERS	Al Meera Consumer Goods Company	23-Feb-21	9	Due
QISI	Qatar Islamic Insurance Group	28-Feb-21	14	Due
WDAM	Widam Food Company	3-Mar-21	17	Due

Source: QSE

News

Qatar

- GWCS to hold its AGM on February 15** – Gulf Warehousing Company (GWCS) announced that the General Assembly Meeting (AGM) will be held on February 15, 2021, at Four Seasons Hotel Doha, Al Dibel Hall at 06:30 pm. In case of not completing the legal quorum, the second meeting will be held on February 22, 2021, Four Seasons Hotel Doha, Al Dibel Hall at 06:30 pm. The agenda includes (1) Hearing the report of the board of directors on the activity of the company and its financial status over the year and the auditor's report and approving them. (2) Discussing the balance sheet and profit and loss account of the company and approving them, of the year 31 December 2020. (3) Assign the external auditor and set their fees. (4) Considering discharging the members of the board of directors and determining their remuneration. (5) Approving the dividends distribution to shareholders 0,10 QR 10% and adopting it. (6) Discussing the Governance report and approving it. (7) Electing board members for 2021-2023. (QSE)
- GWCS changes venue of its AGM** – Gulf Warehousing Company (GWCS) announced that the location of the AGM has changed , and in view of the Ministry of Health's refusal to hold the meeting at the Four Seasons Hotel - Al Dibel Hall, due to the limited space and restrictions imposed by the Corona pandemic, we kindly inform you that the location of the general assembly of GWCS has changed to be held at the company's branch located in the free zone of Ras Bu-funtas on February 15, 2021, where the registration begins at 4:30pm. (in person) and the meeting begins at 6:30 pm (via Microsoft Teams app). In case the Quorum is incomplete, the second meeting will be held on February 22, 2021. (QSE)
- QATI to holds its investors relation conference call on February 15** – Qatar Insurance Company (QATI) announced that the conference call with the Investors to discuss the financial results for the Annual 2020 will be held on February 15, 2021 at 02:00 pm, Doha Time. (QSE)
- QGRI opens nominations for its board membership 2021** – Qatar General Insurance & Reinsurance Company (QGRI) announced the opening of nominees for the board memberships, years from 2021 to 2023. Applications will be accepted starting from February 14, 2021 till 02:30 pm of February 28, 2021. (QSE)
- Milaha opens nominations for its board membership 2021** – Qatar Navigation (QNNS, Milaha) announces the opening of nominees for the board memberships, years from 2021 to 2023. Applications will be accepted starting from February 15, 2021 till 03:00 pm of February 21, 2021. (QSE)
- IGRD to hold its investors relation conference call on March 18** – Investment Holding Group (IGRD) announces that the conference call with the Investors to discuss the financial results for the Annual 2020 will be held on March 18, 2021 at 01:30 pm, Doha Time. (QSE)
- UDCD to change the location of the AGM** – United Development Company (UDCD) announced the change of the location of the General Assembly meeting (AGM) to become electronic via ZOOM application at 4:30 pm on March 3, 2021, and in the event the quorum is not met, the alternative meeting will be on March 16, 2021 on same time. (QSE)
- QFBQ board of directors to meeting on February 25** – Qatar First Bank (QFBQ) has announced that its Board of Directors will be holding a meeting on February 25, 2021 to discuss the financial statements for the year ending on December 31, 2020. (QSE)
- Trade turnover of most brokerage firms on QSE rises substantially in January** – The Group Securities, a conventional brokerage firm, was seen substantially enhancing its share in the trade turnover on the Qatar Stock Exchange (QSE) in January this year, according to the bourse's data. The Group Securities' share stood at 41.91% at the end of January 2021, compared to 24.77% a year-ago period. Its trading turnover almost tripled

year-on-year to QR8.71bn in January this year. The deals through it more than doubled to 205,925 as on January 31, 2021. QNB Group's subsidiary QNB FS' trade turnover amounted to QR5.06bn, which constituted 24.35% of the total traded value in January 2021 against 42.69% the year-ago period. The turnover declined 2.32% YoY despite more than tripled transactions through it to 95,468 at the end of January 31, 2021. Qatar Securities accounted for 10.83% of trade turnover in January 2021 compared to 6.8% the previous year period. The broker's trading turnover more than doubled year-on-year to QR2.25bn. Deals through it reported a 47.77% increase on a yearly basis to 31,042 at the end of January 31, 2021. CBQIS, the stock broking arm of The Commercial Bank, accounted for 7.85% of trade turnover compared to 6.57% in the corresponding period of 2020. The brokerage's trade turnover saw more than doubling YoY to QR1.63bn in the review period. It witnessed a 43.6% expansion in transactions to 36,696 in the first month of 2021. The CBQIS early this year launched its margin trading product, becoming the first bank brokerage subsidiary in Qatar to launch such a product. The Qatar Financial Market Authority had approved the Group Securities and CBQIS as liquidity providers, while saying other licenses are on the pipeline. (Gulf-Times.com)

- QIBK completes a first Islamic trade facility with HSBC in MENAT** – Qatar Islamic Bank (QIBK), Qatar's largest Islamic institution, completed with HSBC Bank Middle East its first Islamic Trade Facility in MENAT valued at \$100mn, in January 2021. The Financial Institutions Refinance trade facility is a new addition to HSBC Bank Middle East's Islamic product suite. "This is a first-of-its-kind transaction for HSBC Bank Middle East within the MENAT region and we are very proud that Qatar was the first country where it was executed," said CEO of HSBC Qatar, Abdul Hakeem Mostafawi. "We are very optimistic about the different growth opportunities in Qatar that is driven by the expansion in gas production, final preparations for the FIFA 2022 World Cup and ongoing investment in infrastructure development. This transaction signals a strong start to the year." The fact that this transaction was first completed in Qatar demonstrates that the country has a number of market leading internationally recognized Islamic financial institutions with diversified product sets and a high demand for Sharia compliant banking products. Group CEO of QIBK, Bassel Gamal stated, "We are very proud that QIBK is the first Bank in the region to complete an Islamic trade facility with HSBC. The transaction has been executed efficiently, with the highest professional standards. We look forward to further cooperation in the future". Head of Global Banking in Qatar, Osama Ali said, "This transaction demonstrates our ability to identify and deliver unique solutions to our clients, by utilizing our extensive global network and applying our broad knowledge of the market in Qatar." (QSE)
- IGRD through its subsidiaries, signs contracts with value of QR200mn** – Investment Holding Group (IGRD) announced that its subsidiaries have signed contracts worth QR200mn, during the recent few months. Commenting on signing the contracts, Board of Directors' Chairman, HE Mr. Ghanim Sultan Al Hudaifi said: "We are pleased with signing these contracts which will strengthen the Group's profitability and financial position. We are hopeful to achieve further success as we witness gradual recovery from the negative impacts of the spread of COVID-19."

Group Chief Executive Officer, Mr. Samer Wahbeh noted that despite the extraordinary circumstances imposed by COVID-19, the Group displayed resilience in its performance by which it warranted business continuity. He added that the conclusion of the contracts marks a good beginning for 2021 and a significant boost to the growth aimed by the Group. Mr. Wahbeh reaffirmed that the Group will continue its businesses in a manner that ensures achieving the best returns to the shareholders. Through its subsidiaries, the Group enjoys an impressive record of delivering projects within the stipulated timelines, which demonstrates its expertise in the sectors in which it operates. (QSE)

- Ooredoo issues Managed Security Services whitepaper to benefit business customers** – Ooredoo Qatar has launched a new publication summarizing its ability to deliver Managed Security Services (MSS) to its business customers. The document, Managed Security Services in Qatar: Matching Local Compliance with International Best Practices, provides insights into MSS based on Ooredoo's research and observation. The Ooredoo Business Security Services team, in collaboration with Global Data, is a major international research agency. In the context of a variety of online risks and attacks of increasing danger and sophistication, MSS provides best practice in the design and management of cyber security. A key feature of the correct response to these changes is working with a third-party provider at all stages of the safety lifecycle, from preparation and prevention to response, recovery and continuous improvement. The vitality of this approach is highlighted in the White Paper, which examines the Ooredoo cyber security framework, advocates a pro-cyber security outlook and makes specific recommendations for the adoption of MSS. (Qatar Tribune)
- S&P affirms Al Koot Insurance 'A-' Ratings; Outlook Stable** – S&P Global Ratings (S&P) affirmed its 'A-' issuer credit and insurer financial strength ratings on Al Koot Insurance & Reinsurance Company (Al Koot Insurance). The outlook is stable. In 2020, Al Koot reported GPW of QR1,035mn, about 16% higher than in 2019. The healthy growth rate was largely attributable to corrective pricing actions on some large medical contracts. Together with strict lockdown measures to tackle the outbreak of COVID-19, which had a positive impact on Al Koot's claims experience, the company's net combined (loss and expense) ratio improved to 92% in 2020 from 111% in 2019. We now expect GPW to remain relatively flat over 2021-2022, as Al Koot continues to refine its portfolio with no significant growth opportunities in its key lines of business. Al Koot's enhanced technical performance, together with positive investment income, resulted in 2020 net profits of QR51mn, up from QR16mn in 2019. Al Koot continues to enjoy risk-based capital adequacy in excess of our 'AAA' benchmark, and we expect this to remain the case over the two-year outlook horizon. S&P's assessment of Al Koot's risk exposure reflects its evolving underwriting controls following years of significant premium growth and some volatility in technical performance over 2017-2020. After Al Koot successfully re-priced some of its medical business in 2020, S&P expects it to report more stable combined ratios of about 95%-98% over 2021-2022. S&P stated, "Al Koot has clear underwriting guidelines, but we understand that unauthorized underwriting by a former employee dating back to 2019 resulted in the cancellation of the insurance contracts in question by Al

Koot, one of which resulted in a lawsuit. Nevertheless, we do not think the suit will affect Al Koot's capital adequacy or business position, regardless of the outcome. We also understand from management that Al Koot is not facing any regulatory proceedings following the unauthorized underwriting. In addition, we view positively that Al Koot strengthened its governance and risk controls after a thorough internal audit following the unauthorized underwriting. In 2020, Al Koot continued to update its risk registers to ensure compliance with Qatar Central Bank requirements. These included key risk indicators and limits for noninvestment risks. The stable outlook reflects our view that Al Koot should continue to generate profitable earnings and maintain 'AAA' risk-based capital adequacy over the next two years.” (Bloomberg)

- Mega North Field LNG project to have multiplier effects on Qatar's economy** – Qatar Petroleum's (QP) recent investment decision on the \$28.75bn North Field East Project (NFE) will further consolidate Qatar's position as the top liquefied natural gas producer and exporter in the world. NFE is one of the global energy industry's largest investments in the past few years, in addition, to being the largest LNG capacity addition ever, and the most competitive LNG project in the world. The project will raise Qatar's LNG production capacity from 77mn tons per year (mmtpy) to 110 mmtpy by 2025. In addition to LNG, the project will produce condensate, LPG, ethane, sulphur and helium. It is expected to start production in the fourth quarter of 2025 and its total production will reach about 1.4mn barrels oil equivalent per day. Announcing Qatar's investment decision on the mega NFE project recently, HE the Minister of State for Energy Affairs Saad bin Sherida Al-Kaabi said, “This project will generate substantial revenues for Qatar and will have significant benefits for all sectors of the Qatari economy during the construction phase and beyond.” “This investment decision is a clear demonstration of the steadfast commitment by Qatar to supply the world with the clean energy it needs. It carries even more significance considering that it encompasses a number of concrete environmental investments in support of our strong commitment to achieve the highest environmental standards and to provide a credible solution in the low-carbon energy transition.” “One of the most important environmental elements of the NFE project is its CO2 capture and sequestration (CCS) system that will be integrated with our wider CCS scheme in Ras Laffan, which once fully operational will be the largest of its kind in terms of capacity in the LNG industry, and one of the largest ever developed anywhere in the world.” Al-Kaabi added. (Gulf-Times.com)
- Qatar realty sector started off 2021 with buoyancy as building permits jump** – Qatar's realty sector started off 2021 with a big bang as the prospects brightened on account of a robust double-digit month-on-month expansion in the overall building permits issued this January, according to the official statistics. In its latest data, the Planning and Statistics Authority (PSA) also reported an increase month-on-month in the building completion certificates issued in the review period. The PSA figures suggest the total number of new building permits issued were 1,382, of which Al Wakra constituted 22%, or 304 permits, Doha (20%, or 277 permits), Al Daayen (19%, or 266 permits), Al Rayyan (17%, or 229 permits), Umm Slal (11%, or 148 permits), Al Khor (5%, or 66 permits), Al Shahaniya (4%, or 56 permits)

and Al Shamal (3%, or 36 permits). On a monthly basis, at the national level, the number of building permits issued soared 42 with Al Wakra registering 104% surge, Al Shahaniya (87%), Umm Slal (64%), Al Khor (61%), Al Shamal (44%), Doha (39%), Al Rayyan (21%) and Al Daayen (7%). The building permits data is of particular importance as it is considered an indicator for the performance of the construction sector which in turn occupies a significant position in the national economy. The PSA data indicates that the new building permits (residential and non-residential) constituted 50% (696 permits) of the total issued in January 2021, additions 46% (641 permits) and fencing 3% (45 permits). Of the new residential buildings permits, villas topped the list, accounting for 77% (441 permits) of the total, dwellings of housing loans 15% (84 permits) and apartments 6% (36 permits). Among non-residential sector, commercial structures accounted for 53% or 65 permits, the industrial buildings as workshops and factories 28% (35 permits) and government buildings 14% (17 permits). Qatar saw a total of 352 building completion certificates issued in January 2021, of which 248 or 70% was for the new buildings (residential and non-residential) and 104 or 30% for additions. (Gulf-Times.com)

- Real estate trading volume exceeds QR374mn in the week ending February 04** – The total value of real estate transactions in the sales contracts registered with the Real Estate Registration Department of the Ministry of Justice in the week ending February 4 was QR374,292,276. The types of real estate traded included plots of land, houses, residential buildings, multi-use buildings, and multi-use plots of land. Most of the trading took place in the municipalities of Al Rayyan, Al Da'ayen, Umm Salal, Doha, Al Shamal, Al Khor, Al Dhakira, and Al Shahaniya. The volume of real estate circulation during the period from January 24 to 28, 2021 reached QR529,869,240. (Peninsula Qatar)
- Four sewage pumping stations set for upgrade** – Sewage treatment in Doha is set for a further enhancement as the Public Works Authority (Ashghal) is working on the upgrade of four sewage pumping stations. Ashghal, which is working on the New Slata, Al Mansoura, Al Messila and Al Rayyan pumping stations, has informed that the works will be completed by the second quarter of 2021, significantly increasing their capacity. According to Ashghal, the capacity of the pumping stations will be increased by 62% to 211% in vital areas within Doha. As part of the project, upgrade and refurbishment works are being carried out to accommodate both current and future sewage flows within these important areas, and to cope with the future development and expected population growth.
- ATMs, deposit machines start accepting new banknotes** – Citizens and residents will now be able to deposit new banknotes in ATMs and cash deposit machines. Some banks have announced that their ATMs and deposit machines have started accepting new banknotes. (Peninsula Qatar)
- Qatar Chamber to host 1st virtual general assembly on February 15** – Qatar Chamber will hold its general assembly meeting (GAM) on Monday, February 15, via video conferencing. The chamber also noted that if the quorum is not complete at the first meeting, the second meeting would be held at 12 noon on March 3, 2021, regardless of the number of attendees. (Gulf-Times.com)

International

- **US consumer sentiment slips in early February** – US consumer sentiment unexpectedly fell in early February as households remained worried about the economy, despite expectations for additional fiscal stimulus. The University of Michigan said on Friday its consumer sentiment index slipped to 76.2 in the first half of this month from a final reading of 79 in January. Economists polled by Reuters had forecast the index little changed at 80.8. “More surprising was the finding that consumers, despite the expected passage of a massive stimulus bill, viewed prospects for the national economy less favorably in early February than last month,” the University of Michigan said in a statement. (Reuters)
- **CBO projects \$2.26tn US deficit in 2021 before Biden stimulus spending** – The Congressional Budget Office (CBO) estimated the US federal budget deficit would shrink to \$2.258tn in fiscal 2021 from \$3.132tn last year, but the projections exclude President Joe Biden’s proposed \$1.9tn stimulus plan. The CBO, releasing its 10-year budget outlook, said deficits based on current spending and tax laws enacted as of January 12 would shrink to \$905bn by fiscal 2024, but would rise steadily after that to \$1.9tn by fiscal 2031, due in part to rising interest costs from a growing debt burden. The non-partisan budget referee agency has not estimated the fiscal costs of Biden’s COVID-19 aid plan, which is steadily advancing through congressional committees. Some parts of the bill are not yet finalized. But the package is expected to add to US deficits and debt, as some \$4tn in coronavirus spending did in fiscal 2020, which ended September 30. A \$900bn round of coronavirus stimulus passed at the end of December is pushing up estimates for fiscal 2021 deficits. It restored enhanced unemployment benefits and sent \$600 direct payments to many Americans. (Reuters)
- **Fed’s Powell, invoking war effort, calls for national jobs drive** – US Federal Reserve Chair Jerome Powell, citing the country’s push after World War Two to find jobs for returning soldiers, on Wednesday called for a broad national effort to get Americans back to work after the pandemic, particularly minorities and workers ousted from lower-paying jobs. “Given the number of people who have lost their jobs and the likelihood that some will struggle to find work in the post-pandemic economy, achieving and sustaining maximum employment will require more than supportive monetary policy,” Powell said in remarks to the Economic Club of New York. “It will require a society-wide commitment, with contributions from across government and the private sector.” Recovery, Powell said, would require both “near-term policy and longer-run investments” to ensure anyone who wants a job can get one. While the Fed has already promised that borrowing costs for companies and households will be kept low as the economy recovers, the scope and tenor of Powell’s remarks align closely with the sort of ambitious spending proposals being discussed by President Joe Biden and Treasury Secretary and former Fed Chair Janet Yellen. Biden is urging Congress to pass a \$1.9tn emergency spending bill, and is planning a longer-term infrastructure effort that some analysts expect will involve trillions of dollars more. Powell, in keeping with longstanding Fed tradition, did not comment directly on those proposals, the province of the elected officials who wield taxing and spending authority. (Reuters)
- **US labor market struggling, but light at the end of tunnel** – The number of Americans filing new applications for unemployment benefits fell slightly last week as the labor market continued to tread water, but a drop in new COVID-19 cases has raised cautious optimism that momentum could pick up by the spring. The weekly unemployment claims report from the Labor Department on Thursday, the most timely data on the economy’s health, also highlighted labor market scarring, with over 20 million people collecting unemployment checks in late January. Initial claims for state unemployment benefits slipped 19,000 to a seasonally adjusted 793,000 for the week ended February 6. Data for the prior week was revised to show 33,000 more claims received than previously reported. Economists polled by Reuters had forecast 757,000 applications for the latest week. Unadjusted claims decreased 36,534 to 813,145 last week. There were notable jumps in filings in California and Ohio. Including a government-funded program for the self-employed, gig workers and others who do not qualify for the regular state programs, 1.148mn people filed claims last week. Claims are stuck in the upper end of their 711,000-842,000 band between October and November. They remain above their 665,000 peak during the 2007-2009 Great Recession, though they are below the record 6.867mn reported last March when the pandemic hit the US. The labor market recovery has stalled in recent months as the country battled a resurgence in coronavirus infections, which ravaged restaurants and other consumer-facing businesses. The government reported last Friday that the economy created only 49,000 jobs in January after losing 227,000 in December. (Reuters)
- **UK economy slumps by record 10% in 2020 after COVID hit** – Britain’s coronavirus-ravaged economy suffered its biggest crash in output in more than 300 years in 2020 when it slumped by 9.9%, but it avoided heading back towards recession at the end of the year and looks on course for a recovery in 2021. Official figures showed GDP grew 1.0% from October through December, the top of a range of economists’ forecasts in a Reuters poll. This makes it likely that Britain will escape two straight quarters of contraction - the standard definition of recession in Europe - even though the economy is set to shrink in early 2021 due to the effects of a third COVID lockdown. Britain’s economy grew 1.2% in December alone, after a 2.3% fall in output in November when there was a partial lockdown, pointing to greater resilience to COVID restrictions than at the start of the pandemic. That left output 6.3% lower than in February before the start of the pandemic, the Office for National Statistics said. However, the Bank of England forecasts the economy will shrink by 4% in the first three months of 2021 because of the new lockdown and Brexit disruption. It thinks it will take until early 2022 before GDP regains its pre-COVID size, assuming vaccination continues at the current rapid pace, which outstrips the rest of Europe’s. Many economists think recovery will take longer. Sunak, facing the heaviest borrowing since World War Two, said he would continue to focus on protecting jobs when he sets out a new annual budget on March 3. (Reuters)
- **Sunak: UK’s fall in GDP in line with other countries** – Britain’s finance minister Rishi Sunak said the country’s record 9.9% fall in GDP in 2020 was in line with other countries when measured on a comparable basis. “I think it’s important to clear up this question of our comparative economic performance actually,” he

told UK broadcasters. “We calculate GDP in a different way to pretty much every other country (...) now if you correct for that difference or look at it on a more comparable way, nominal GDP, what you find is, our performance is actually very much in line with all our international peers.” He added that Britain’s employment performance during the pandemic was better than most of its international peers. (Reuters)

- **Sunak: UK economy has suffered 'serious shock' from pandemic** – Britain’s economy suffered a serious shock from the COVID-19 pandemic and the government will do everything it can to protect jobs and businesses, finance minister Rishi Sunak said on Friday after data showed a 9.9% fall in GDP in 2020. “Today’s figures show that the economy has experienced a serious shock as a result of the pandemic, which has been felt by countries around the world,” he said. “While there are some positive signs of the economy’s resilience over the winter, we know that the current lockdown continues to have a significant impact on many people and businesses. “That’s why my focus remains fixed on doing everything we can to protect jobs, businesses and livelihoods.” (Reuters)
- **Weidmann: German consumer prices to surpass ECB target this year** – Higher taxes should by the end of this year push inflation in Germany to well beyond the European Central Bank’s target of below but close to 2%, Bundesbank chief Jens Weidmann said in remarks published. Weidmann, in an interview with the Augsburg Allgemeine newspaper, cited reduced value added tax (VAT) that expired at the end of last year and a tax on greenhouses gas emissions that went into effect on January 1. “From today’s perspective, the (EU) harmonized consumer price index in Germany should rise to above 3% until the end of the year,” said Weidmann. “One thing is clear: the inflation rate will not remain as low as last year permanently.” German consumer prices, harmonised to make them comparable with inflation data from other European Union countries, rose by 1.6% YoY last month after declining by 0.7% in December. A flash estimate early this month showed that consumer prices in the 19 countries sharing the euro rose 0.2% MoM in January for a 0.9% YoY jump. Analysts expect prices in Germany to rise if Europe’s biggest economy starts lifting lockdown measures in place since November to contain a second wave of the coronavirus. The European Central Bank (ECB) has been missing its inflation target for years despite ultra low interest rates and buying hundreds of billions of euros in government bonds to inject liquidity into the banking system. Weidmann, who also sits on the ECB’s Governing Council, said if inflation rises, the central bank would have to act accordingly. “If the price outlook requires it, monetary policy will have to tighten its strings,” he told the Augsburg Allgemeine. “At the moment it is about fighting the consequences of the pandemic. So monetary policy became even more expansive.” (Reuters)
- **German businesses dismayed by further lockdown extension** – The German business community expressed consternation on Thursday after Chancellor Angela Merkel and regional leaders agreed to extend the coronavirus lockdown until March 7. Under the agreement reached on Wednesday, hair salons will be allowed to reopen from March 1 but the threshold for a gradual re-opening of the rest of the economy has been tightened: an infection rate of no more than 35 new cases per 100,000 people

over seven days, down from 50 previously. German retailers are currently losing around 700mn Euros (\$849.17mn) every day stores stay closed, the HDE sector lobby group said, calling the decision to extend the lockdown “inappropriate and incomprehensible”. If stores are only allowed to open in April, the retail sector will see sales fall 2% in 2021, but if they stay closed until May, the fall will be about 6%, the HDE estimated. The German economy is on track for growth of 2.8% this year, the DIHK Chambers of Industry and Commerce said, below the government’s latest forecast for 3% growth. Business expectations have dimmed slightly compared to the autumn, the DIHK said. Almost a third of firms expect a negative development in the coming 12 months, and about a fifth expect an improvement, a DIHK survey of 30,000 companies showed. (Reuters)

- **India's January inflation eases to 16-month low as food prices slump** – India’s retail inflation stayed within the central bank’s target range for the second consecutive month as it fell to a 16-month low in January, data released by the government showed on Friday, helped by a sharp decline in food prices. Analysts in a Reuters poll had predicted retail inflation at 4.45% in January, but that it would remain within the Reserve Bank of India’s target range for a second month. (Reuters)
- **Russia, holding key rate at 4.25%, takes more cuts off the table** – Russia’s central bank held its key interest rate at a record low of 4.25% on Friday and said it will not cut rates further, planning instead to start gradually raising them at some point in the future when inflation stabilizes near its target. Russia slashed rates in 2020 to help its economy through the COVID-19 pandemic, related lockdowns and a drop in the price of oil, the country’s main export. But the ruble’s depreciation in the past year fanned consumer inflation, the central bank’s remit, limiting room for additional rate cuts as recommended recently by the International Monetary Fund. Central Bank Governor Elvira Nabiullina, presenting the rate decision at an online media conference, said the bank’s board did not consider cutting or raising rates at Friday’s meeting. “We think the potential for monetary easing has been exhausted... In 2021, the monetary policy will remain soft, supporting recovery in the Russian economy,” Nabiullina said. The central bank kept its 2021 economic growth forecast at 3-4% after the economy shrank 3.1% last year. That contraction, though smaller than the central bank had predicted, was the sharpest in 11 years. Inflation will peak at around 5.5% this or next month and start slowing afterwards, ending the year at 3.7-4.2%, the central bank forecast. “Disinflationary risks no longer prevail over the horizon of 2021,” the bank said in a statement, adding that it will now “determine the timeline and pace of a return to neutral monetary policy.” (Reuters)
- **Russian Central bank says looking into Reddit-fueled trading, restrictions important** – Russia’s Central Bank Governor Elvira Nabiullina, asked about the recent frenzy of Reddit-fuelled retail trading, said the bank was looking into it and highlighted that restrictions for non-qualified or non-professional retail investors were important. The US retail stock trading phenomenon driven by the WallStreetBets Reddit forum is now fueling a copycat trading boom in Europe, banks and brokerages have said. (Reuters)

- Russian Central bank governor speaks at press conference** – Below are excerpts translated from Russian by Reuters from Central Bank Governor Elvira Nabiullina speaking at an online press conference after the central bank kept its key rate unchanged at 4.25% on Friday. ON KEY RATE – “According to our estimates, we think the potential for monetary easing has been exhausted.” “We did not consider cutting the key rate at today’s meeting. When the IMF formulated its recommendations, this was most likely based on a more disinflationary scenario than we are considering in the base case.” “In our view, the situation is not developing towards the disinflationary scenario, but rather closer to the proinflationary scenario. Therefore, our estimates do not coincide with those of the IMF here.” “We intend to start publishing the key rate trajectory in April.” ON MONETARY POLICY – “Monetary policy will remain soft on average throughout 2021, supporting the recovery of the Russian economy. In the base scenario, the return to neutral monetary policy will take place gradually.” “If the inflation forecast stabilizes near the 4% level, then this is the time to return to neutral monetary policy.” ON INFLATION – “We expect annual inflation to peak in February-March.” “We estimate the (peak) level to be somewhere around 5.5%, after which annual inflation will start to fall.” ON OTKRITIE BANK – “(We could) either sell the group as a whole or possibly carve out certain parts and sell them separately, possibly including to strategic investors because there is demand for different types of assets. Above all we are talking about pension assets and the insurance company.” “I hope that by late spring-early summer we will take these decisions.” “In general we intend to start selling Otkritie Group in 2022.” ON REPO AUCTIONS – “Liquidity fluctuations do occur and from this point of view we will keep long-term repo auctions for now, they remain so that banks feel comfortable and understand that they can take these funds from the central bank at any moment.” (Reuters)
- Regional**
- SIBC posts 310.0% YoY rise in net profit to SR980mn in FY2020** – Saudi Investment Bank (SIBC) recorded net profit of SR980mn in FY2020, an increase of 310.0% YoY. Total operating profit rose 1.0% YoY to SR2,846mn in FY2020. Total income for special commissions/investments fell 16.4% YoY to SR3,262mn in FY2020. Total assets stood at SR99.9bn at the end of December 31, 2020 as compared to SR100.8bn at the end of December 31, 2019. Loans and advances stood at SR55.1bn (-3.6% YoY), while clients' deposits stood at SR60.1bn (-12.9% YoY) at the end of December 31, 2020. EPS came in at SR1.28 in FY2020 as compared to SR0.17 in FY2019. (Tadawul)
- ALINMA's net profit falls 22.4% YoY to SR1,966mn in FY2020** – Alinma Bank (ALINMA) recorded net profit of SR1,966mn in FY2020, registering decrease of 22.4% YoY. Total operating profit rose 2.2% YoY to SR5,734mn in FY2020. Total income for special commissions/investments fell 1.2% YoY to SR5,470mn in FY2020. Total assets stood at SR156.9bn at the end of December 31, 2020 as compared to SR131.8bn at the end of December 31, 2019. Loans and advances stood at SR111.2bn (+17.3% YoY), while client's deposits stood at SR119.5bn (+17.0% YoY) at the end of December 31, 2020. EPS came in at SR0.99 in FY2020 as compared to SR1.28 in FY2019. (Tadawul)
- AJMANBAN's net profit falls 36.7% YoY to AED53.4mn in FY2020** – Ajman Bank (AJMANBAN) recorded net profit of AED53.4mn in FY2020, registering decrease of 36.7% YoY. Revenues fell 17.6% YoY to AED1,049.5mn in FY2020. Net operating profit fell 3.4% YoY to AED614.7mn in FY2020. Total assets stood at AED21.5bn at the end of December 31, 2020 as compared to AED23.6bn at the end of December 31, 2019. EPS came in at AED0.025 in FY2020 as compared to AED0.039 in FY2019. (DFM)
- CBI's reports net loss of AED27.3mn in FY2020** – Commercial Bank International (CBI) recorded net loss of AED27.3mn in FY2020 compared to a net profit of AED116.7mn in FY2019. Net interest income and income from Islamic financing & investing assets fell 11.8% YoY to AED417.6mn in FY2020. Net operating income fell 5.5% YoY to AED740.1mn in FY2020. Total assets stood at AED17.1bn at the end of December 31, 2020 as compared to AED18.6bn at the end of December 31, 2019. Loans and advances to customers stood at AED9.8bn (-15.2% YoY), while customers' deposits stood at AED10.0bn (-10.9% YoY) at the end of December 31, 2020. Loss per share from continuing operation came in at AED0.016 in FY2020 as compared to EPS of AED0.067 in FY2019. (ADX)
- SALAM's net profit falls 56.7% YoY to BHD9.1mn in FY2020** – Al Salam Bank-Bahrain (SALAM) recorded net profit of BHD9.1mn in FY2020, registering decrease of 56.7% YoY. Finance Income rose 25.4% YoY to BHD74.9mn in FY2020. Total operating income rose 5.3% YoY to BHD96.6mn in FY2020. Total assets stood at BHD2,261.4mn at the end of December 31, 2020 as compared to BHD2,042.8mn at the end of December 31, 2019. Financing assets stood at BHD814.4mn (+18.8% YoY), while customers' current accounts stood at BHD364.0mn (+25.7% YoY) at the end of December 31, 2020. EPS came in at 4.3 fils in FY2020 as compared to 9.7 fils in FY2019. (Bahrain Bourse)
- KHCB's reports net profit of BHD8.0mn in FY2020** – Khaleeji Commercial Bank (KHCB) recorded net profit of BHD8.0mn in FY2020, compared to a net loss of BHD14.9mn. Total income rose 15.8% YoY to BHD22.6mn in FY2020. Total income before return to investment account holders rose 1.3% YoY to BHD48.2mn in FY2020. Total assets stood at BHD1,015.6mn at the end of December 31, 2020 as compared to BHD939.8mn at the end of December 31, 2019. Financing assets stood at BHD307.7mn (-5.1% YoY), while placements from financial institutions stood at BHD79.5mn (-32.1% YoY) at the end of December 31, 2020. EPS came in at 9.94 fils in FY2020 as compared to Loss per share of -18.56 fils in FY2019. (Bahrain Bourse)
- Fitch revises 11 Kuwaiti banks' outlook to Negative; affirms IDRs** – Fitch Ratings has revised the Outlooks on 11 Kuwaiti banks' Long-Term Issuer Default Ratings (IDRs) to Negative from Stable and affirmed the banks' respective IDRs. The banks are National Bank of Kuwait (NBK), Kuwait Finance House (KFH), Burgan Bank (BB), Al Ahli Bank of Kuwait, Boubayan Bank (BBY), Gulf Bank, Commercial Bank of Kuwait, Ahli United Bank (Kuwait), Kuwait International Bank (KIB), Warba Bank (WB) and Industrial Bank of Kuwait. Fitch has also revised the Outlook to Negative on the support-driven Long-Term IDRs of NBK's subsidiaries, NBK (International) (NBKI) and NBK France (NBKF). The rating actions follow a similar action on Kuwait's sovereign rating on February 2, 2021, reflecting near-term

liquidity risk associated with the imminent depletion of liquid assets in the sovereign's general reserve fund (GRF) in the absence of parliamentary authorization for the government to borrow. The IDRs of the banks are driven by their Support Rating Floors (SRFs). (Bloomberg)

- **Oman economy shrank 6.4% in 2020, IMF says** – Oman's economy likely shrank 6.4% in 2020, the International Monetary Fund said on Friday, due to the coronavirus crisis and low oil prices putting a strain on the state's coffers. That would be a narrower contraction than the 10% fall the IMF forecast for Oman last year. But the sultanate's economy was still hit hard, with its non-hydrocarbon GDP estimated to have reduced by 10%. The construction, hospitality, and wholesale and retail trade sectors experienced the heaviest toll, the fund said, while inflation turned slightly negative, owing to less demand. The IMF forecast a 2020 global contraction of 4.4% in its last World Economic Outlook, an improvement over a 5.2% contraction predicted in June 2020, but said it was still the worst economic crisis since the 1930s Great Depression. Countries in the oil-rich Gulf suffered the double shock of the COVID-19 pandemic, which dampened demand in the non-oil economy, and low oil prices, which have been hurting revenue. Oman's fiscal deficit widened to 17.3% of GDP and was financed by external bond issuance, drawdown of deposits and sovereign funds, and privatization proceeds, the Fund said. "As a result, central government debt rose to 81% of GDP, from 60% in 2019," it said. The IMF said a modest recovery of 1.8% was anticipated for 2021, with more growth expected over the medium term, despite continuing uncertainty. (Reuters)
- **OPEC again cuts 2021 oil demand view, sees second half pickup** – World oil demand in 2021 will rebound more slowly than previously thought, OPEC said on Thursday, adding to a series of downgrades as the impact of the pandemic lingers. Demand will rise by 5.79mn bpd this year to 96.05mn bpd, the OPEC said in a monthly report, trimming its growth forecast by 110,000 bpd from a month ago. The prospect of weaker demand has already prompted OPEC and its allies, known as OPEC+, to slow their plan to boost output. More demand, rising prices and lower rival supply could support the case for more easing, but Iraq said on Wednesday OPEC+ was likely to keep current cuts in March. "While the global economy is showing signs of a healthy recovery in 2021, oil demand is currently lagging, but is forecast to pick up in the second half of 2021," OPEC said in the report. OPEC has steadily lowered its 2021 oil demand growth forecast from 7mn bpd expected in July. Still, the latest forecast is stronger than the prediction made in an internal OPEC report seen this month by Reuters. The group raised its forecast of world economic growth this year to 4.8% from 4.4% previously, despite the impact of "challenges" such as COVID-19 variants and the effectiveness of vaccines. (Reuters)
- **IEA: OPEC's monthly crude output rises with Saudis leading gain** – OPEC crude oil production in January rose 240k bpd from a month earlier to 25.45mn bpd, the International Energy Agency said in its monthly report. Saudi Arabia's output climbed 110k bpd MoM to 9.1mn bpd, just below its new quota. The UAE raised production 40k bpd to 2.61mn bpd, also just below its target. Elsewhere in the Middle East, Kuwaiti production expanded 30k

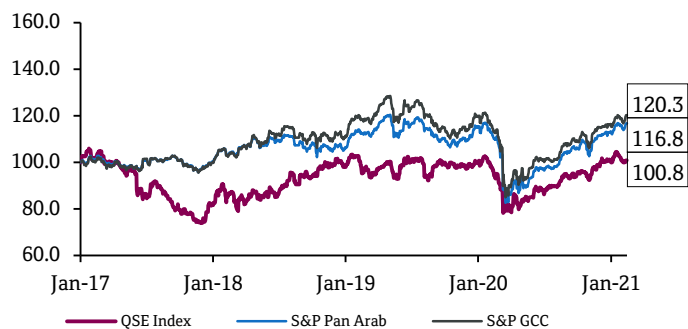
bpd to 2.33mn bpd, while output in Iraq slipped to 3.84mn bpd, below its new cap. (Bloomberg)

- **Riyadh hotels see uptick in January thanks to domestic demand** – Hotels in Saudi Arabia's capital Riyadh in January posted their best performance since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, according to data provider STR, boosted by domestic demand. Saudi Arabia saw a 4.1% economic contraction last year, according to preliminary government estimates, hurt by the twin shock of the coronavirus crisis and lower oil prices. Tourism, a pillar of Crown Prince, Mohammed bin Salman's reform strategy to reduce dependence on oil, suffered because of government measures to prevent the spread of the coronavirus. But domestic tourism has cushioned the blow, with reduced overseas travel giving a boost to local consumption. Occupancy rates at Riyadh stood at 56.2% in January, according to STR preliminary data, with revenue per available room (RevPAR) at SR327.56. "The absolute RevPAR level was the highest for any month in Riyadh since February," the data provider said. On a YoY basis, however, occupancy rates were still down, by nearly 24%. Saudi Arabia last month extended a ban on travel for its citizens and delayed the reopening of its ports from March 31 to May 17. Earlier this month it suspended entry from 20 countries to help curb the spread of the virus. (Reuters)
- **Aldar Properties unit acquires Asteco Property Management** – Aldar Estates, a newly established unit at Abu Dhabi's largest developer, acquires Asteco Property Management and all its branches across Abu Dhabi and Dubai. Following the acquisition, Aldar Estates will manage more than 32,000 units and nearly 28,000 units under owners' association management in UAE and wider region. Aldar did not disclose the value of deal. (Bloomberg)
- **Moody's downgrades Sharjah's ratings to Baa3, changes outlook to negative** – Moody's Investors Service, has downgraded the long-term foreign and local currency issuer ratings and the foreign-currency senior unsecured rating of the Government of Sharjah to Baa3 from Baa2, and changed the outlook on the issuer ratings to negative from stable. The downgrade to Baa3 from Baa2 is driven by Moody's expectation of a sharp deterioration in Sharjah's fiscal strength, as the economic shock brought on by the pandemic continues to have a marked and lasting impact on the emirate's revenue after a severe drop in 2020. Combined with Moody's expectation that government expenditure will continue to grow steadily, in line with the government's strategic social and economic development objectives, material fiscal consolidation is unlikely in the foreseeable future. The negative outlook captures the risk that the government's debt burden and its interest bill rise further than Moody's currently expects, further restraining Sharjah's capacity to respond to future shocks. The downgrade of the rating to Baa3 from Baa2 also applies to the backed senior unsecured debt ratings of Sharjah Sukuk Limited, and Sharjah Sukuk Programme Limited. In Moody's opinion, the payment obligations of the notes issued by these entities, fully owned by the Government of Sharjah, are direct obligations of the government and rank pari passu with other senior, unsecured debt issuances of the government. The provisional rating of the senior unsecured MTN program of the Government of Sharjah and the provisional rating of the backed senior unsecured MTN

program of Sharjah Sukuk Programme Limited have also been downgraded to (P)Baa3 from (P)Baa2. (Bloomberg)

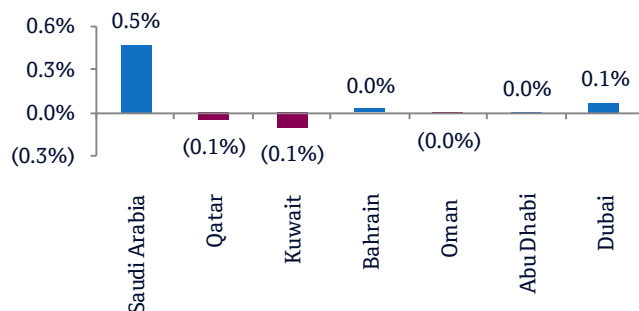
- **IMF: Income tax on the cards for high income earners in Oman –** International Monetary Fund (IMF) has reiterated that Oman is planning to introduce income tax on high income earners as part of its medium-term fiscal balance plan. The Fund welcomed the fiscal balance plan and said introducing value-added tax (VAT) in 2021, a personal income tax on high-income earners being developed, and full-year impact of the expansion of the excise tax base in 2020 are key to reinforcing fiscal sustainability and alleviate financial pressure. In addition, containing the wage bill via civil service reforms; targeting energy subsidies to the most vulnerable groups; streamlining capital expenditure; and broad-based improvements in expenditure efficiency are also key to reforms. When introduced, Oman will be the first country in the GCC to levy income tax in the region. It is expected that Oman can introduce income tax in 2022. Oman aims to bring fiscal deficit down to 1.7% of GDP by 2024, from a preliminary deficit of 15.8% this year. (Zawya)
- **Oman Electricity Transmission issues \$600mn international bonds –** The Oman Electricity Transmission Company has succeeded in attracting investor interest by offering bonds worth \$600mn, due in February 2031, at an interest rate of 5.8%. The company's statement stated that this is the first offering made by a government-related entity outside the Sultanate of Oman since 2018 and the return of the Oman Electricity Transmission Company to the financial markets after a four-year hiatus as the offering benefited from the improvement in investors willingness to invest in the Sultanate, which enhances the strategic importance of the Group Namaa Holding, its subsidiaries in the Sultanate and the international financial markets, and for investors alike. The Oman Electricity Transmission Company succeeded in attracting investor interest in its offering, and investor confidence was boosted. This was largely due to the strategic diversification operations it carried out. Investors from Asia, Europe and America have shown a clear desire to participate in the offer of the Oman Electricity Transmission Company with more than 83% of the record of purchase orders that have been received. (Peninsula Qatar)

Rebased Performance



Source: Bloomberg

Daily Index Performance



Source: Bloomberg

Asset/Currency Performance	Close (\$)	1D%	WTD%	YTD%
Gold/Ounce	1,824.23	(0.1)	0.6	(3.9)
Silver/Ounce	27.36	1.4	1.6	3.6
Crude Oil (Brent)/Barrel (FM Future)	62.43	2.1	5.2	20.5
Crude Oil (WTI)/Barrel (FM Future)	59.47	2.1	4.6	22.6
Natural Gas (Henry Hub)/MMBtu	6.01	(13.2)	77.0	151.5
LPG Propane (Arab Gulf)/Ton	90.00	5.6	3.7	19.6
LPG Butane (Arab Gulf)/Ton	92.75	2.9	(6.0)	33.5
Euro	1.21	(0.1)	0.6	(0.8)
Yen	104.94	0.2	(0.4)	1.6
GBP	1.38	0.2	0.8	1.3
CHF	1.12	(0.2)	0.8	(0.8)
AUD	0.78	0.1	1.1	0.9
USD Index	90.48	0.1	(0.6)	0.6
RUB	73.71	0.1	(1.3)	(0.9)
BRL	0.19	(0.1)	0.0	(3.3)

Source: Bloomberg

Global Indices Performance	Close	1D%*	WTD%*	YTD%*
MSCI World Index	2,818.85	0.4	1.6	4.8
DJ Industrial	31,458.40	0.1	1.0	2.8
S&P 500	3,934.83	0.5	1.2	4.8
NASDAQ 100	14,095.47	0.5	1.7	9.4
STOXX 600	414.00	0.6	1.8	2.9
DAX	14,049.89	0.0	0.7	1.0
FTSE 100	6,589.79	1.3	2.5	3.6
CAC 40	5,703.67	0.6	1.5	1.9
Nikkei	29,520.07	(0.4)	3.0	5.8
MSCI EM	1,428.87	0.1	2.4	10.7
SHANGHAI SE Composite#	3,655.09	0.0	4.7	6.4
HANG SENG#	30,173.57	0.0	3.0	10.8
BSE SENSEX	51,544.30	0.2	1.9	8.6
Bovespa	119,428.70	0.4	(0.9)	(3.3)
RTS	1,461.99	0.0	2.1	5.4

Source: Bloomberg (*\$ adjusted returns; #Market was closed on February 12, 2021)

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