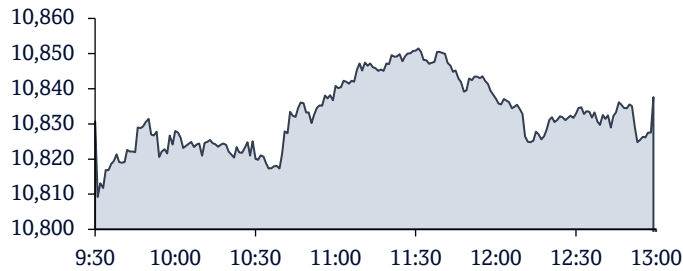


QSE Intra-Day Movement



Qatar Commentary

The QE Index rose 0.1% to close at 10,837.6. Gains were led by the Real Estate and Banks & Financial Services indices, gaining 0.5% and 0.2%, respectively. Top gainers were Qatar Oman Investment Company and Damaan Islamic Insurance Company, rising 4.6% and 1.5%, respectively. Among the top losers, QLM Life & Medical Insurance Co. fell 3.3%, while Mosanada Facility Management Services was down 3.1%.

GCC Commentary

Saudi Arabia: The TASI Index fell 0.6% to close at 10,540.7. Losses were led by the Media and Entertainment and Diversified Financials indices, falling 2.0% and 1.7%, respectively. Saudi Kayan Petrochemical Co declined 3.7%, while Makkah Construction and Development Co was down 3.4%.

Dubai: The DFM index gained marginally to close at 6,164.0. The Materials Index rose 5.1%, while the Consumer Discretionary Index was up 1.4%. National Cement Company rose 5.1%, while Gulf Navigation Holding was up 4.2%.

Abu Dhabi: The ADX General Index fell 0.2% to close at 10,038.3. The Health Care index declined 0.9%, while the Real Estate index fell 0.5%. E7 Group fell 9.9%, while Bank of Sharjah declined 3.0%.

Kuwait: The Kuwait All Share Index fell 0.2% to close at 8,962.1. The Consumer Services index declined 1.6%, while the Basic Materials index fell 1.2%. Aayan Leasing & Investment Co declined 7.5%, while Al-Arabiya Real Estate Co was down 4.9%.

Oman: The MSM 30 Index fell marginally to close at 5,944.8. The Services index declined 0.1%, while the other indices ended flat or in green. Financial Services Company declined 8.1%, while Dhofar Int. Development & Inv. Holding was down 3.8%.

Bahrain: The BHB Index fell 0.1% to close at 2,064.4. Al Salam Bank declined 0.5%, while Beyon was down 0.2%.

QSE Top Gainers	Close*	1D%	Vol. '000	YTD%
Qatar Oman Investment Company	0.551	4.6	10,351.8	(21.5)
Damaan Islamic Insurance Company	4.295	1.5	18.3	8.6
Qatar National Cement Company	2.750	1.2	265.1	(31.6)
Al Faleh	0.698	1.2	1,497.7	0.4
Qatar Industrial Manufacturing Co	2.365	0.8	93.1	(5.8)

QSE Top Volume Trades	Close*	1D%	Vol. '000	YTD%
Baladna	1.279	(0.5)	11,405.9	9.5
Qatar Oman Investment Company	0.551	4.6	10,351.8	(21.5)
Qatar Aluminum Manufacturing Co.	1.572	0.8	8,397.3	29.7
Mesaieed Petrochemical Holding	1.116	0.1	4,962.9	(25.4)
Ezdan Holding Group	1.090	0.2	4,924.0	3.2

Regional Indices	Close	1D%	WTD%	MTD%	YTD%	Exch. Val. Traded (\$ mn)	Exchange Mkt. Cap. (\$ mn)	P/E**	P/B**	Dividend Yield
Qatar*	10,837.61	0.1	1.7	2.1	2.5	59.47	175,301.0	12.2	1.3	4.6
Dubai	6,164.03	0.0	1.4	5.6	19.5	130.35	273,268.9	10.0	1.8	4.6
Abu Dhabi	10,038.30	(0.2)	0.4	3.0	6.6	225.30	781,792.8	19.7	2.5	2.4
Saudi Arabia	10,540.70	(0.6)	0.8	(0.5)	(12.5)	655.57	2,386,637.5	17.9	2.1	3.7
Kuwait	8,962.06	(0.2)	0.5	1.2	21.7	184.55	174,288.7	16.1	1.8	3.4
Oman	5,944.80	(0.0)	0.1	4.2	29.9	74.6	42,082.1	9.7	1.3	5.2
Bahrain	2,064.35	(0.1)	(0.4)	1.2	3.9	2.7	21,220.0	14.2	1.4	3.7

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	24 Dec 25	23 Dec 25	%Chg.
Value Traded (QR mn)	216.5	290.0	(25.4)
Exch. Market Cap. (QR mn)	649,262.9	648,358.4	0.1
Volume (mn)	82.4	100.7	(18.2)
Number of Transactions	10,482	14,390	(27.2)
Companies Traded	52	52	0.0
Market Breadth	32:18	36:12	-

Market Indices	Close	1D%	WTD%	YTD%	TTM P/E
Total Return	25,913.31	0.1	1.7	7.5	12.2
All Share Index	4,086.77	0.1	1.8	8.2	11.9
Banks	5,291.72	0.2	2.0	11.7	10.7
Industrials	4,182.60	(0.2)	2.3	(1.5)	14.8
Transportation	5,409.65	0.1	0.3	4.7	12.2
Real Estate	1,550.69	0.5	1.7	(4.1)	14.2
Insurance	2,499.63	(0.1)	(0.2)	6.4	10.0
Telecoms	2,237.51	0.2	0.9	24.4	12.2
Consumer Goods and Services	8,357.95	(0.0)	1.3	9.0	19.6
Al Rayan Islamic Index	5,143.45	0.1	1.6	5.6	13.6

GCC Top Gainers**	Exchange	Close*	1D%	Vol. '000	YTD%
Ahli Bank SAOG	Oman	0.18	3.4	193.3	10.2
TECOM Group PJSC	Dubai	3.39	2.7	259.6	7.6
Talabat Holding PLC	Dubai	0.937	1.7	21,250.3	(33.1)
Riyadh Cables Group Co	Saudi Arabia	130.1	1.6	154.3	(5.5)
Emirates Integrated Telecom	Dubai	9.86	1.0	2,628.2	31.6

GCC Top Losers**	Exchange	Close*	1D%	Vol. '000	YTD%
Makkah Construction	Saudi Arabia	80.05	(3.4)	129.5	(17.7)
Saudi Tadawul Group	Saudi Arabia	147.5	(3.3)	245.3	(31.9)
Dar Al Arkan Real Estate	Saudi Arabia	15.60	(2.5)	807.9	3.8
Saudi Industrial Investment	Saudi Arabia	12.55	(2.1)	442.9	(27.4)
Saudi Research & Media Group	Saudi Arabia	134.8	(2.0)	39.8	(51.0)

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%
QLM Life & Medical Insurance Co.	2.416	(3.3)	21.9	17.0
Mosanada Facility Management Services	8.890	(3.1)	30.1	(11.1)
Ahli Bank	3.672	(2.4)	274.1	6.4
Gulf International Services	2.630	(2.4)	4,041.5	(21.0)
Widam Food Company	1.540	(1.8)	736.3	(34.4)

QSE Top Value Trades	Close*	1D%	Val. '000	YTD%
QNB Group	18.94	0.5	43,846.2	9.5
Ooredoo	13.07	0.5	16,727.4	13.2
Baladna	1.279	(0.5)	14,655.4	9.5
Qatar Aluminum Manufacturing Co.	1.572	0.8	13,125.3	29.7
Qatar Islamic Bank	24.05	0.2	10,730.9	12.6

Qatar Market Commentary

- The QE Index rose 0.1% to close at 10,837.6. The Real Estate and Banks & Financial Services indices led the gains. The index rose on the back of buying support from Foreign shareholders despite selling pressure from Qatari, Arab and GCC shareholders.
- Qatar Oman Investment Company and Damaan Islamic Insurance Company were the top gainers, rising 4.6% and 1.5%, respectively. Among the top losers, QLM Life & Medical Insurance Co. fell 3.3%, while Mosanada Facility Management Services was down 3.1%.
- Volume of shares traded on Wednesday fell by 18.2% to 82.4mn from 100.7mn on Tuesday. Further, as compared to the 30-day moving average of 111.4mn, volume for the day was 26.1% lower. Baladna and Qatar Oman Investment Company were the most active stocks, contributing 13.8% and 12.6% to the total volume, respectively.

Overall Activity	Buy%*	Sell%*	Net (QR)
Qatari Individuals	26.73%	31.38%	(10,056,991.87)
Qatari Institutions	41.68%	42.08%	(853,483.47)
Qatari	68.42%	73.46%	(10,910,475.34)
GCC Individuals	0.68%	1.20%	(1,117,608.94)
GCC Institutions	0.52%	2.33%	(3,908,143.62)
GCC	1.20%	3.52%	(5,025,752.56)
Arab Individuals	11.44%	12.04%	(1,303,160.40)
Arab Institutions	0.00%	0.00%	0.00
Arab	11.44%	12.04%	(1,303,160.40)
Foreigners Individuals	2.80%	3.06%	(572,972.60)
Foreigners Institutions	16.14%	7.91%	17,812,360.90
Foreigners	18.94%	10.98%	17,239,388.30

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

Global Economic Data and Earnings Calendar

Global Economic Data

Date	Market	Source	Indicator	Period	Actual	Consensus	Previous
12-24	US	Mortgage Bankers Association	MBA Mortgage Applications	19-Dec	-5.00%	--	--
12-24	US	Department of Labor	Initial Jobless Claims	20-Dec	214k	224k	--
12-24	US	Department of Labor	Continuing Claims	13-Dec	1923k	1900k	1885k
12-24	Japan	Bank of Japan	PPI Services YoY	Nov	2.70%	2.70%	--
12-24	Japan	Economic and Social Research I	Leading Index CI	Oct F	109.8	--	--
12-24	Japan	Economic and Social Research I	Coincident Index	Oct F	115.9	--	--

Earnings Calendar

Earnings Calendar

Tickers	Company Name	Date of reporting 4Q2025 results	No. of days remaining	Status
FALH*	Al Faleh Educational Holding	29-Dec-25	4	Due
ABQK	Ahli Bank	21-Jan-26	27	Due

(* Result for 1Q2026)

Qatar

- Aamal's JV Frijns Steel Construction Middle East wins a major contract for execution of structural work that exceed QAR140mn** - Aamal Company Q.P.S.C., one of the region's leading diversified companies, announces that its joint venture, Frijns Steel Construction Middle East, a leading fabricator of high-quality structural steel for the petrochemical and process industries, has been awarded a major contract exceeding QAR 140mn. (QSE)
- Qatar Industrial Manufacturing Company discloses lawsuit** - Qatar Industrial Manufacturing Company discloses that Qatari Diar Real Estate Investment Company has filed lawsuit No. 8848/2025 against it to claim service fees. (QSE)
- Doha Insurance Group's Ordinary General Assembly Meeting** - Doha Insurance Group is pleased to announce that the Group's Board of Directors approved, at its meeting held on 22/12/2025, the scheduling of General Assembly meeting to be held on Monday, 02/03/2026, with a second alternative date on Monday, 09/03/2026. (QSE)
- Dukhan Bank to disclose its Annual financial results on 13/01/2026** - Dukhan Bank discloses its financial statement for the period ending 31st December 2025 on 13/01/2026. (QSE)
- Industrial sector maintains solid growth trajectory** - Qatar has unveiled several key initiatives in the industrial sector in this year that aim at diversifying the economy, promoting sustainability, and fostering growth, in line with the National Vision 2030. In a post on its X platform.

The Ministry of Commerce and Industry (MoCI) highlighted the achievements for 2025 as the Ministry launched a range of key strategic initiatives during the year. These initiatives are aligned with Qatar's goal to diversify its economy away from oil and gas dependence and to establish a robust and competitive industrial sector that contributes to economic stability and growth. Regarding supporting the national industry the post noted that the industrial sector's contribution to GDP reached QR27bn and non-hydrocarbon industrial exports were valued at QR29.8bn. The year also witnessed the launch of the 'National Product Platform' and the number of national products increased to 2,135 (in Q3 2025 compared to 2,015 products in Q3 2024). The industrial sector experienced growth in the number of factories, with the total increasing in 2023 to 929, then to 993 in 2024. The National Product Week is one of the key initiatives aimed to support the national industrial sector. It highlights the quality of Qatari products and enhances their competitiveness in local and regional markets. The post also highlighted the adoption of Qatari technical regulations for the shelf life of food products. The new regulation aims to ensure the safety and quality of food products circulating in the local market by adopting shelf-life periods based on scientific principles and modern international standards. This will help enhance consumer confidence and reduce food waste through the adoption of more flexible shelf-life periods grounded in reliable studies, thereby strengthening the flexibility of the local market by allowing the entry of a wider and more diverse range of products. The Ministry of Commerce and Industry achieved accomplishments that contributed to improving the business environment, developing services, and attracting foreign investment. Qatar ranked among the top 10

countries globally in the 2025 Global Competitiveness Report, it further stated. This achievement reflects Qatar's well-established position in economic and administrative performance indicators and reaffirms the effectiveness of its long-term national policies in implementing the Third National Development Strategy and achieving the national vision. Qatar also achieved 5th place globally in business efficiency. The country saw establishment of 2,911 foreign companies during the first half of 2025 representing an increase of 163% compared to last year. The Ministry's Strategy 2024-2030 was developed directly based on the objectives of the Third National Development Strategy and the relevant sectoral strategies, in line with the Ministry's mandates. Through the National Manufacturing Strategy 2024-2030, the Ministry is implementing 15 key initiatives, encompassing more than 60 developmental projects to enhance industrial efficiency and foster investments in the sector. The strategy aspires to raise the industrial sector's contribution to the national economy, boost the value of non-hydrocarbon exports and improve Qatar's ranking in the Industrial Competitiveness Index. Qatar's National Manufacturing Strategy, emphasizes sustainable development, economic diversification, and the promotion of small and medium-sized enterprise (SME) growth, all aligned with the goals of the National Vision 2030. It aims to position Qatar as a global hub for manufacturing excellence, contributing to the nation's long-term economic goals. (Peninsula Qatar)

• **Qatar emerges as MENA AI leader in global Government Readiness Index 2025** - In the rapidly evolving global artificial intelligence (AI) landscape, Qatar is emerging as a regional frontrunner in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA), securing the 54th position out of 195 nations in Oxford Insights' 2025 Government AI Readiness Index. Regionally, Qatar sits in the fifth position, and its global ranking places it in the upper-middle tier worldwide, outperforming several OECD nations and demonstrating the effectiveness of its top-down, state-led AI strategy. With an overall score that reflects strategic investments in infrastructure, governance, and public sector innovation, Qatar's performance underscores its ambition to transition from an energy-based economy to a knowledge-driven digital hub powered by AI. Qatar's strongest pillar in the Index is Policy Capacity, where it earned an impressive 80.50 score, ranking high alongside global leaders such as the United Kingdom, Egypt, and Serbia. This reflects the nation's proactive approach to articulating a clear, forward-looking AI vision, likely anchored in its National Artificial Intelligence Strategy and reinforced by high-level governmental coordination. The strategy positions AI as a cross-cutting enabler for economic diversification, aligning with Qatar National Vision 2030. The country also excelled in Governance, scoring 77.50-well above the global average. This strong performance signals Qatar's commitment to establishing ethical frameworks and regulatory guardrails for AI deployment. Notably, Qatar has deepened its digital partnerships with global tech leaders; in 2025, it signed agreements with Huawei and other firms to bolster its domestic digital infrastructure, integrating international best practices into its national AI governance ecosystem. In AI Infrastructure, Qatar scored 53.78, placing it among the top performers in the MENA region. This is partly due to substantial foreign direct investment in cloud and data center capabilities. For instance, Microsoft pledged up to \$8bn in AI and cloud infrastructure across the UAE and Saudi Arabia-moves that indirectly benefit neighboring digital economies, such as Qatar's, through regional tech spillovers and talent mobility. Moreover, Qatar's focus on building sovereign compute capacity and securing access to advanced hardware, such as NVIDIA's Blackwell chips (approved for export to Gulf allies in 2025), positions it to support home-grown AI innovation. Qatar's Public Sector Adoption score of 62.82 further highlights its integration of AI into government services. Building on its legacy of digital government transformation-evident in initiatives like the "TASMU" Smart Qatar Program-the state is now embedding AI into urban planning, transportation, healthcare, and education. This practical, use-case-driven approach ensures that AI delivers tangible benefits to citizens while enhancing administrative efficiency. (Peninsula Qatar)

• **Government seen as first customer in Qatar's innovation drive** - The government is positioning itself not only as a regulator but also as the first customer in Qatar's innovation ecosystem, according to an official of the Qatar Research, Development and Innovation (QRDI) Council. Nejouf Al-Jehani, executive director of Strategy & Programs at the QRDI Council,

said this dual role is critical to building confidence in new technologies and enabling startups and corporates to scale. Al-Jehani explained at the 'Ibtechar Majlis' panel discussion that public institutions must lead by example, adopting innovative solutions to address national challenges. By defining problems clearly and piloting solutions, she emphasized that government entities create demand and demonstrate viability. "Government must be the first customer. When we adopt solutions, we give the market confidence to grow," al-Jehani told her fellow panelists Eman al-Kuwari, director of Digital Innovation at the Ministry of Communications and Information Technology (MCIT); Dr Georgios Dimitropoulos, professor and associate dean for Research at the College of Law, Hamad Bin Khalifa University (HBKU); and Hissa al-Tamimi, director of Governmental Innovation Department at the Civil Service and Government Development Bureau (CGB). Engineer Nayef al-Ibrahim, co-founder and CEO of Ibtechar, moderated the discussion, which explored the development of a Public Innovation Lab (PIL) ecosystem that would help to improve efficiency, service delivery further, and encourage greater citizen participation. During the discussion, al-Jehani also underscored the importance of government adoption in shaping the innovation landscape, signaling to entrepreneurs and investors that "new technologies are credible and worth pursuing." Beyond adoption, al-Jehani emphasized the enabling role of government - setting standards, operating partnerships, and ensuring regulatory frameworks evolve alongside technology. She said, "Our role is not only to regulate but to enable - by setting standards, opening partnerships, and creating space for collaboration." According to al-Jehani, this approach helps create a fertile environment where startups, corporates, and researchers can collaborate with confidence. She noted that it also ensures that innovation is not confined to internal reform but extends across the ecosystem, creating value for society at large. Al-Jehani's statements were also complemented by al-Kuwari, who described how the Tasmu Innovation Lab provides controlled sandboxes for testing emerging technologies before full rollout. Al-Tamimi, meanwhile, highlighted the role of government accelerators in embedding an innovation culture and improving Qatar's standing in global innovation rankings. Similarly, Dimitropoulos stressed the importance of academia-government collaboration in building credibility and accelerating the adoption of advanced technologies. (Gulf Times)

• **Saudi cabinet endorses Qatar high-speed rail agreement** - Saudi Arabia's cabinet has formally endorsed the landmark agreement to build a high-speed electric railway linking Riyadh and Doha, hailing it as a project that will boost mobility and tourism across the Gulf. The weekly meeting chaired by the Custodian of Two Holy Mosques King Salman bin Abdulaziz al-Saud praised the development, according to Arab News. The 785km line, scheduled to begin operations in June 2026, will cut travel time between the two capitals to just two hours, creating new opportunities for economic and cultural exchange. The initiative aligns with Qatar National Vision 2030 and Saudi Arabia's Vision 2030, both of which prioritize sustainable transport and tourism development. By offering a fast, eco-friendly alternative to air and road travel, the railway is expected to reshape regional connectivity while reducing carbon emissions. For tourism, the impact is significant. Easier cross-border travel will encourage Mult destination visits, allowing international and regional tourists to explore both countries more freely. Qatar's luxury and cultural offerings, alongside Saudi Arabia's blend of heritage and modern attractions, will benefit from increased visitor flows. The project is also expected to strengthen partnerships with private sector operators, diversify tourism experiences, and extend visitor stays. Beyond tourism, the railway will enhance economic integration by facilitating the movement of goods, services, and professionals. This efficient transport link is anticipated to attract foreign investment, support trade, and deepen bilateral ties. Regionally, the project sets a precedent for sustainable infrastructure in the Gulf. (Gulf Times)

• **Qatar tops Arab world in health services** - Qatar ranked first in the Arab world and 18th globally in health services, according to the Numbeo Index — an international ranking based on a range of criteria, including the quality of healthcare, ease of access to services, efficiency of infrastructure, and levels of beneficiary satisfaction. Throughout 2025, the Ministry of Public Health (MoPH) has continued to play a pivotal role

as the body responsible for formulating national health policies, regulating the health sector, and ensuring the integration of its services in a manner that achieves the highest levels of quality, efficiency, and sustainability. According to MoPH data, there are around 58,000 workers in the public and private sectors, representing various medical, nursing, technical, and administrative specialties. The number of available hospital beds in health facilities stands at 5,485, which reflects the expansion of the health sector's capacity to keep pace with population growth, urban expansion, and the increasing demand for health services. Further, 2025 has seen a qualitative leap in the progress of Hamad Medical Corporation (HMC), which continued to strengthen its position as the main provider of specialized and secondary healthcare in the country and as one of the leading regional models in quality performance and clinical excellence. HMC achievements ranged from strategic partnerships and service development to the introduction of advanced technologies and the realization of unprecedented medical achievements at the national level. As part of efforts to improve access to health services and reduce waiting times, HMC signed partnership agreements with a number of private hospitals, with the aim of referring Qatari citizens who experience long waiting periods in certain specialties to receive timely care. Similarly, HMC opened a musculoskeletal physiotherapy clinic for seniors at Qatar Rehabilitation Centre, reflecting its commitment to developing specialized health care services that support the independence of older adults and enhance their quality of life. The new clinic aims to provide advanced and comprehensive care for seniors through specialized therapeutic programs that help improve muscle strength, increase mobility, and enhance balance. In October 2025, HMC strengthened its regional and international leadership in the development of healthcare systems by organizing the Middle East Forum on Person-Centered Care. The forum served as a pivotal platform for the exchange of global expertise and for highlighting the latest trends in delivering integrated, sustainable, and human-centered health services. Qatar's National Immunization Program has continued to achieve coverage rates exceeding 95% for most essential childhood vaccines, as the outcome of the success of preventive policies, the effectiveness of community awareness campaigns, and society's commitment to the importance of immunization as the first line of defense against infectious diseases. Besides, MoPH has developed a comprehensive five-year national action plan during 2025 aimed at strengthening monitoring and surveillance activities for various additives across all types of locally produced and imported foods. As such, the ministry obtained renewed international accreditation from the American Accreditation Body for food inspection and sampling in accordance with the international standard ISO/IEC 17020, which enhances public confidence in the food control system. On the digital transformation efforts, the launch of the LBAIH application has made a qualitative shift in managing the patient experience. The app enables patients to view their medical appointments, reschedule or cancel them, and access their health records, test results, and prescriptions, in addition to receiving alerts and reminders. (Gulf Times)

International

- US weekly jobless claims fall, but more people collecting unemployment checks** - The number of Americans filing new applications for jobless benefits unexpectedly fell last week, consistent with a low level of layoffs, but the unemployment rate likely remained high in December amid sluggish hiring. Initial claims for state unemployment benefits dropped for a second straight week, declining by 10,000 to a seasonally adjusted 214,000 for the week ended December 20, the Labor Department said on Wednesday. Economists polled by Reuters had forecast 224,000 claims for the latest week. The Labor Department published the report a day early because of the Christmas Day holiday. Part of the surprise decline in applications could reflect challenges adjusting the data for seasonal fluctuations around the year-end holiday season. "Unless companies actually fire workers, the economy will continue to move forward at a moderate pace," said Christopher Rupkey, chief economist at FWDBONDS. The labor market remains locked in what economists and policymakers describe as a "no hire, no fire" mode. Though the economy remains resilient, with gross domestic product increasing at its fastest pace in two years in the third quarter, the labor market has almost stalled. Economists say President Donald Trump's import tariffs and immigration

crackdown have impacted labor demand and supply. The data had little effect on U.S. financial markets during a holiday-shortened session. The number of people receiving unemployment benefits after an initial week of aid, a proxy for hiring, increased 38,000 to a seasonally adjusted 1.923mn during the week ended December 13, the claims report showed. The so-called continued claims covered the period during which the government surveyed households to calculate December's unemployment rate. Continued claims fell marginally between the November and December survey weeks. The elevated continued claims aligned with a survey from the Conference Board on Tuesday showing consumers' perceptions of the labor market deteriorated this month to levels last seen in early 2021. The unemployment rate increased to a four-year high of 4.6% in November, though part of the rise was because of technical factors related to the 43-day government shutdown. The record-long shutdown prevented data collection for October's unemployment rate. The Federal Reserve this month cut its benchmark overnight interest rate by another 25 basis points to the 3.50% to 3.75% range, but signaled borrowing costs were unlikely to fall in the near term as policymakers await clarity on the direction of the labor market and inflation. "Continued claims remain at a level consistent with a slow pace of hiring but aren't sending a signal that hiring conditions have gotten worse," said Nancy Vanden Houten, lead U.S. economist at Oxford Economics. (Reuters)

- Japan likely to cut super-long debt issuance to 17-year low, sources say** - Japan will likely reduce new issuance of super-long government bonds next fiscal year to around 17tn yen (\$109bn), the lowest level in 17 years, two government sources said on Wednesday, nodding to market fears of oversupply that have lifted yields for these notes to record highs. In its debt-sale plan for next fiscal year, the finance ministry will also hold off on increasing issuance of benchmark 10-year Japanese government bonds (JGB), the sources said. The expected move underscores the administration's sensitivity to recent steady rises in bond yields, driven by market expectations that Prime Minister Sanae Takaichi's big spending plans and expansionary fiscal policy will lead to huge debt issuance. The ministry will consider reducing issuance of 20-, 30- and 40-year JGBs next fiscal year by 100bn yen each per month, the sources said. As a result, total issuance of super-long bonds next fiscal year would fall to the lowest since 2009, and below levels planned for the current fiscal year ending in March 2026. The sources discussed the matter on condition of anonymity as they were not authorized to speak publicly. The ministry declined to comment. Concern over the administration's spending plans have hit super-long JGBs hard with yields for those notes climbing to record highs and drawing calls from market participants for the ministry to reduce issuance of these debt. A bond market selloff earlier this year forced the ministry to make a rare revision in June to its issuance plan for the current fiscal year, which led to a reduction in super-long bond issuance to 21.4tn yen from 24.6tn yen. As for other maturity zones, the ministry will likely issue 31.2tn yen worth of 10-year JGBs next fiscal year. The monthly issuance amount, at 2.6tn yen, would be unchanged from this year's level, the sources said. It will also leave unchanged monthly issuance of 2-year JGBs at 2.8tn yen, and 5-year notes at 2.5tn yen, they said. Takaichi, since taking office in October, has stressed the need to focus on revitalizing the economy and signaled watering down the government's target for restoring Japan's finances. Her administration is likely to finalize a record-sized annual budget next fiscal year on Friday, which would come on top of a 21.3-tn-yen stimulus package compiled in November to cushion the economic blow from rising living costs. As bond yields crept up, the administration has toned down talk of aggressive fiscal spending. In an interview with the Nikkei newspaper published on Tuesday, Takaichi said the government will not resort to "irresponsible" debt issuance or tax cuts. She said Japan's debt-to-GDP ratio, while improving as a trend, remained high. (Reuters)
- Japan expects growth to accelerate next year with fiscal stimulus** - Japan's government revised up its economic forecast for the fiscal year to next March and projected that growth would accelerate in the following year, on the view that its massive stimulus package will boost consumption and capital expenditure. The projections are the first to be compiled under Prime Minister Sanae Takaichi's administration, which has announced big spending plans aimed at cushioning the blow to households from rising living costs while promoting investment in growth areas. Under the

latest projections approved by the cabinet on Wednesday, the government expects Japan's economy to expand 1.1% in the current fiscal year, up from 0.7% growth estimated in August due to the smaller-than-expected hit from U.S. tariffs. Growth is expected to accelerate to 1.3% in fiscal 2026 as robust consumption and capital expenditure offset soft overseas demand, according to the projections. The government said it expects consumption to rise 1.3% next fiscal year, the same pace projected for fiscal 2025, as tax breaks and moderating inflation underpin household spending. Capital expenditure will likely increase 2.8% in fiscal 2026, faster than an estimated 1.9% rise for the current fiscal year, due in part to the effect of subsidies and tax breaks aimed at promoting investment in crisis management and growth areas. The government will use the estimates when it drafts the next fiscal year's state budget, which will be finalized on Friday. The administration compiled a 21.3tn yen (\$136.7bn) stimulus package in November that included payouts to families with children, subsidies to cut utility bills, and fiscal spending to promote investment in areas such as infrastructure, artificial intelligence and semiconductor chips. The next fiscal year's budget is likely to include record total spending in line with the administration's expansionary fiscal approach, which has heightened market concerns over debt over-supply and pushed up government bond yields. (Reuters)

Regional

- Saudi venture capital firms seen to bet on M&A as listings get tougher** - Saudi Arabian venture capital firms expect more mergers and acquisitions in the startup space, as stock market weakness and higher valuation scrutiny make initial public offerings less appealing. Investors want exposure to fast-growing companies, but without the volatility that comes with public markets, said Abdullah Altamami, founder and chief executive officer of Merak Capital. "Buyers are more interested in companies before they go public, because once they go public, they're more expensive." As a result, M&A and secondary transactions are set to account for a greater share of exits in the kingdom if conditions remain tight, Altamami said. Merak Capital, which manages about \$800mn, expects five to 10 liquidity events across its portfolio over the next 12-24 months, spanning IPOs, acquisitions and secondary deals. The shift comes as Saudi Arabia's startup ecosystem matures under Vision 2030, the government's push to diversify the economy beyond oil. Venture firms have backed companies across sectors including gaming, fintech, cybersecurity, tourism and fashion. But public markets have come under pressure this year. The Saudi benchmark index is among the worst performers in emerging markets, and while IPO proceeds have held steady at around \$4bn, several recent listings have struggled. Meanwhile, the Middle East became the leading M&A destination across emerging venture markets in the first nine months of the year, with 26 deals, according to data platform Magnitt. Against that backdrop, acquisitions and secondary sales are emerging as a quicker, more dependable route to returns. "The market is reaching a level of maturity where more M&A opportunities will surface," said Basmah Alsinaidi, managing partner and vice chair at Impact46. She expects activity to be driven both by technology companies seeking scale and by traditional businesses looking to add digital capabilities. Impact46 has backed firms including Jahez International Co and Rasan Information Technology Co that have listed on Saudi exchanges in recent years. Its portfolio also includes Lucidya, a customer experience management platform, and Tamara, which became a unicorn — a startup valued at more than \$1bn — in 2023. (Gulf Times)
- KKR inks private credit deal with utility giant Acwa, marking Saudi debut** - KKR & Co is providing private credit financing to a desalination plant in Saudi Arabia, marking the alternatives giant's first foray into the kingdom and highlighting the region's growing appeal to global investors. The buyout firm will come in as an anchor lender in a long-term financing deal for a desalination facility majority owned by Acwa Power Co. The Saudi utility, backed by the Public Investment Fund and listed in the kingdom, is largely responsible for delivering water to the Makkah region. The deal caps a busy period for KKR in the Middle East, where it has invested about \$2bn over the past ten months. This year alone, the firm bought a slice of Abu Dhabi National Oil Co's gas pipeline network, a stake in one of the largest Gulf data center firms and agreed to invest \$220mn in a regional provider of data, analytics and risk management solutions for

quantitative investing. The company's presence in Saudi Arabia dates back to 2014, and its debut deal in the kingdom comes amid a rise in transactions involving foreign institutions in the wider region. Other firms including Brookfield Asset Management have also earmarked the Middle East for expansion as returns in other markets diminish. "Our investment reflects KKR's broader ambition to scale our presence across the kingdom, deepen partnerships with leading corporates, and deploy capital behind essential infrastructure that contributes to long-term, sustainable growth," said Julian Barratt-Due, KKR's head of Middle East investing. The desalination deal also reflects growing appetite for private credit, particularly in Saudi Arabia, where liquidity in the banking system has been drained by the kingdom's ambitious economic diversification projects. There are signs of interest in other cities too. Ares Management last week unveiled the latest private credit investment by an international alternatives firm, providing a \$100mn facility to a Dubai-based multifamily office. (Gulf Times)

- Saudi Passports issues over 17,700 penalties for residency and labor violations** - The General Directorate of Passports issued 17,767 administrative decisions against citizens and residents for violations of residency, labor and border security regulations during late November and December, the directorate said on Wednesday. The penalties, issued through administrative committees at passport offices across the Kingdom, included imprisonment, fines and deportation. The directorate warned citizens, residents, business owners and individuals against transporting, employing or sheltering violators, or concealing them in any way. It also stressed that providing assistance in finding work, housing or transportation for violators is strictly prohibited. The Passports Directorate called on the public to cooperate by reporting violators of residency, labor and border security regulations. Reports can be made by calling 911 in the Makkah, Madinah, Riyadh and Eastern regions, and 999 in other parts of the Kingdom. The directorate said all reports are handled with complete confidentiality and that informants bear no legal responsibility. (Zawya)
- Oman: \$50mn investment to boost PET waste recycling** - In a significant boost for efforts to recycle PET plastics — currently estimated to account for roughly half of all plastic waste ending up in landfills — an agreement has been signed for the establishment of a modern, integrated recycling facility at Salalah Free Zone in Dhofar Governorate, with total investment of up to \$50mn across multiple phases. According to Salalah Free Zone, Next Generation Recycling Solutions will develop the plant on a 15,000-square-metre site to produce high-quality, hot-washed, food-grade rPET flakes — cleaned and shredded fragments of recycled polyethylene terephthalate used as a secondary raw material in the manufacture of new plastic products. "The project represents a long-term investment exceeding \$50mn, to be implemented in multiple phases over a 30-year period, covering capacity expansion of existing PET recycling lines, development of collection facilities across Oman, and the potential future recycling of other plastic polymers such as HDPE and LDPE," the free zone authority said in a statement. The project is intended to support the growth of an integrated industrial ecosystem while leveraging Salalah's strategic logistics position as a key export hub serving European and US markets, in line with Oman Vision 2040, it added. Next Generation Recycling Oman was established through a strategic partnership with a leading Indonesian recycled PET producer founded in 2019 in Tangerang's Periuk district. The partner's PET flakes and granules are supplied to global textile and food-packaging markets across the Middle East, Europe and the US, contributing to the reduction of plastic and microplastic pollution. While the circular economy concept has gained increasing traction in Oman, PET waste recycling efforts have so far made only a limited impact on the scale of the challenge. PET waste in the Sultanate mainly comprises single-use water, soft drink, juice and edible oil bottles, along with clear food containers and some household and personal-care packaging. These are generated largely by households, retail outlets, offices and the hospitality sector, with much of the waste still disposed of through mixed municipal streams. Initiatives such as reverse vending machines to encourage bottle collection and reduce landfill waste have been introduced, particularly in Muscat, but nationwide segregation, collection and recycling infrastructure remains limited. As a result, PET recycling is not yet sufficiently scaled or comprehensive to manage the

country's growing waste stream effectively. However, with the government prioritizing circular economy and recycling objectives in line with Oman Vision 2040 and Net Zero targets, a number of local SMEs have begun investing in commercial-scale facilities to address the PET waste challenge. Among them is Green Muscat Investment and Development Company, which has announced plans to establish a 200-metric-tonnes-per-day PET waste processing plant in North Al Batinah Governorate, close to Sohar Port. Recycled PET flakes from the plant will be targeted at multiple industries, including packaging and textiles. Similarly, Muscat-based Golden Future Recycling is focusing on the recovery and processing of PET plastic waste, converting it into high-quality recycled granules and flakes for reuse in packaging and industrial applications. In addition, some projects unveiled under the recently inaugurated Ladayn Polymer Plastics Program involve the plastics recycling value chain, including PET-related recycling. One such project, Gemini Corporation, focuses on plastic recycling and sustainability, incorporating recycled plastics as inputs for the manufacture of downstream products. (Zawya)

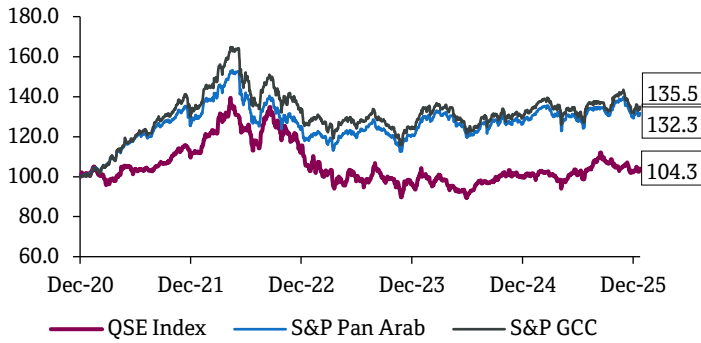
- Oman ranks 3rd globally in AI healthcare deployment as Ministry launches national initiatives** - The Ministry of Transport, Communications and Information Technology (MTCIT), in collaboration with various government entities and private institutions, has implemented a series of pilot projects applying artificial intelligence (AI) across key sectors including healthcare, judiciary, procurement, cybersecurity, open data, and education. These initiatives are part of the ministry's efforts to achieve the objectives of the National Program for Artificial Intelligence and Advanced Technologies. These projects were launched as experimental initiatives fully supported by implementing companies, aiming to highlight the role of public-private partnerships in advancing AI projects. They also underscore the contributions of private companies as active partners in the digital transformation journey. The initiatives are designed to promote the adoption of AI technologies within government entities through low-risk, innovation-driven pilot projects, while encouraging tech companies to invest in smart solutions and support government-led initiatives. National Initiatives: Among the most prominent national initiatives is the "AI Studio", launched by the ministry as the first national center dedicated to AI operating through an open, collaborative model. The studio aims to connect challenges faced by public and private entities with smart solutions, foster an innovation-friendly environment, and support startups and researchers in the AI field. Located at the SAS Center for Innovation in the Innovation Park Muscat, the studio is managed by a private operator with government funding for three years. "Muain AI" As part of the major strategic projects under the National Program for AI and Advanced Digital Technologies, the "Muain AI" model has emerged as Oman's first advanced national language model. Developed and trained on local data, it aims to support digital sovereignty, empower the Arabic language, and assist government employees in analysis, summarization, and content creation while ensuring data security within Oman. This enhances the readiness of government institutions for smart transformation. Pilot Projects: The ministry's Cybersecurity Center, in collaboration with GBM, developed an intelligent chatbot to support users in the field of cybersecurity. The system provides instant, reliable assistance, reduces manual effort, accelerates access to information, and ensures data accuracy. Other initiatives include strategic and research-based projects such as the A2M Platform (BIMANIC), developed with the National University of Science and Technology to predict student outcomes and support educational planning. Another project, Afaq System, uses AI to evaluate tenders, showing promising results in automating technical and financial assessments enhancing transparency and speeding up decision-making. In the healthcare sector, the Ministry of Health, in cooperation with Bahwan Healthcare and Muscat Pharmacy, implemented a national project for early detection of diabetic retinopathy using AI. The project reduced waiting lists, improved diagnostic accuracy, increased patient satisfaction, and enhanced service accessibility. Oman is now the third country globally to implement this service on a nationwide scale, with future prospects for exporting the technology internationally. In medical imaging, the Radiology AI platform was deployed at Khoula Hospital in collaboration with Civilization. The platform analyzes spinal MRI scans, providing preliminary reports to support radiologists and orthopedic doctors, contributing to the automation of medical reporting and informed

clinical decision-making. The Authority for Projects, Tenders, and Local Content, in partnership with Ibtisam Experience, implemented an AI-based project to analyze open data from the Esnad platform using the Himam system. This platform offers data analysis, smart alerts, and report generation via chat-based interfaces, helping registered companies identify tenders most relevant to their fields. Additionally, the Authority, in collaboration with Afaq, developed an AI-powered tender evaluation system to streamline and enhance technical and financial assessments. The system generates comprehensive reports with evaluation results and final award recommendations, improving decision-making efficiency and objectivity. In a pioneering initiative, the Public Prosecution, in collaboration with Rahal, implemented an AI project to analyze legal documents, generate case-related questions, and draft decisions for case closure or referral. The system processes sensitive data locally and achieved over 90% accuracy, demonstrating the effectiveness of AI in enhancing judicial efficiency. These pilot projects reflect Oman's commitment to adopting AI as a strategic tool to improve service quality, boost government performance, and strengthen public-private partnerships. They align with the goals of Oman Vision 2040 and reinforce the Sultanate's position as a hub for innovation and advanced technologies. (Zawya)

- Bahrain becomes first in GCC to start Satellite D2D services** - The Telecommunications Regulatory Authority (TRA) has announced the launch of Satellite Direct-to-Device (D2D) services, making the kingdom the first in the GCC to authorize this cutting-edge technology. This move ensures that mobile users can stay connected even in the most remote areas where traditional cell towers don't reach. Traditionally, mobile phones require proximity to a terrestrial cell tower to make calls or send data. If you are in the middle of the desert or far out at sea, you lose signal. Satellite D2D changes the game by allowing standard, off-the-shelf smartphones to communicate directly with satellites in Low Earth Orbit (LEO) without the need for bulky specialized equipment, explained experts. The launch follows a comprehensive consultation process by the TRA and is a core part of Bahrain's broader digital strategy to remain one of the most well-connected nations on earth. By authorizing this technology, the TRA is bridging the final gaps in the country's digital map, including maritime zones and isolated land areas. Under this new framework, licensed mobile network operators in Bahrain can partner with global satellite firms – such as Starlink or AST SpaceMobile – to provide seamless coverage across the kingdom. TRA general director Philip Marnick noted that this initiative reinforces Bahrain's role as a regional leader. "This technology ensures that people remain connected even beyond the reach of terrestrial networks, supporting safety, economic activity and national resilience," he added. This decision essentially turns the entire kingdom – and its surrounding waters – into one giant 'hotspot', ensuring that being 'out of reach' becomes a thing of the past. For the average user, this means no more dead zones; whether you are on a boat in the Gulf or exploring remote desert areas, your phone will soon be able to find a signal via satellite the moment signal bars disappear. Bahrain has been ranked #1 in the Middle East and North Africa region and the GCC in the prestigious Global Network Excellence Index. Renowned for assessing network quality and availability, the Global Network Excellence Index recognized Bahrain for its exceptional performance in 4G and 5G availability, as well as for its fast and reliable download speeds. The ranking not only affirms Bahrain's advanced digital infrastructure but also showcases the kingdom's readiness to meet the growing demands of a digital-first world. (Zawya)
- Kuwait advances strategic mega projects with China** - The Kuwaiti cabinet reviewed the contract signed two days ago on the engineering, procurement and construction works of Mubarak Al Kabeer Port in Boubiyan Island. The weekly meeting of the cabinet, held at Bayan Palace on Tuesday, was chaired by His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, said Foreign Minister Abdullah Ali Al-Yahya following the meeting. His Highness the Prime Minister said the State of Kuwait takes pride in Sovereign care and wise directives by His Highness the Amir Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah regarding the implementation of strategic projects. "We appreciate the careful follow-up by the political leadership on the mega projects which materialize the political leadership's vision for, and resolve on, realizing

the comprehensive development of the country,” Al- Yahya quoted His Highness the Prime Minister as saying during the meeting. “The State of Kuwait is keen on realizing integration between planning and follow-up on mega projects with a view to enhancing the competitiveness of the national economy and meeting the aspirations of the citizens,” he pointed out. The State of Kuwait attaches great importance to the strategic partnership with the People’s Republic of China and the related agreements and MoUs in the fields of energy, economy, housing, environment, and infrastructure, including Mubarak Al Kabeer Port and the free trade areas. “Those projects serve the common interests of both countries,” His Highness the Prime Minister said, noting that Mubarak Al Kabeer Port is a vital project in Kuwait’s strategy for the development of its national economy. The project strengthens the country’s role in regional and international trade and aims to realize logistical integration among the countries of the region and the global supply chains. It also contributes to bilateral trade exchanges and expands the horizons of economic cooperation, thus serving the common interests of the countries of the region. This vital project, a mainstay in the Kuwait Vision 2035, will contribute to the diversification of the national income and job creation, and development of the national capacities in such areas as logistics, trade, and services. It reflects Kuwait’s commitment to the drive to build a diversified, competitive economy, catalyzing investment, and turning the country into a vibrant regional hub in terms of trade, transport, and logistics, he went on. The cabinet members praised Minister of Public Works Dr. Noura Al- Mashaan for her exceptional efforts, close supervision, and firm commitment to fulfilling all regulatory requirements of state oversight bodies with professionalism and strong institutional diligence. The cabinet noted that her sustained follow-up of technical, administrative, and contractual aspects of Mubarak Al- Kabeer Port project on Boubyan Island culminated in signing the engineering, procurement, and construction contract with the Chinese side, marking a major implementation milestone. Meanwhile, Minister of State for Communications Affairs Omar Al- Omar briefed the Council of Ministers on the unified government electronic services application “Sahel” winning Sheikh Salem Al-Ali Al-Sabah Informatics Award in its 25th edition in recognition of its outstanding digital achievements. Minister Al-Omar stressed that Sahel is not merely an application, but a Kuwaiti success story built on determination and institutional integration, reaffirming continued commitment to developing the platform and enhancing service quality to facilitate transactions efficiently. The cabinet members expressed pride in Sahel’s achievement as a reflection of Kuwait’s digital transformation, commending participating entities and reaffirming continued support for accelerating digitalization, enhancing performance efficiency, and improving service quality. They reviewed a visual presentation by the Head of the Kuwait Financial Intelligence Unit and Chairman of the National AML/CFT Committee Dr. Hamad Al-Mekrad on Kuwait’s readiness for evaluation by the Financial Action Task Force. The presentation highlighted legislative reforms, operational developments, and ongoing efforts to strengthen the national system for combating money laundering and terrorism financing, alongside international cooperation initiatives and institutional coordination reflecting Kuwait’s sustained commitment to compliance and effectiveness. The cabinet reviewed agenda items, approved several, and referred others to competent ministerial committees for further study and report preparation to complete the necessary implementation procedures. (Zawya)

Rebased Performance



Source: Bloomberg

Daily Index Performance



Source: Bloomberg

Asset/Currency Performance	Close (\$)	1D%	WTD%	YTD%
Gold/Ounce	4,479.42	(0.1)	3.2	70.7
Silver/Ounce	71.87	0.6	7.0	148.7
Crude Oil (Brent)/Barrel (FM Future)	62.24	(0.2)	2.9	(16.6)
Crude Oil (WTI)/Barrel (FM Future)	58.35	(0.1)	3.0	(18.6)
Natural Gas (Henry Hub)/MMBtu	3.31	(1.8)	(7.5)	(2.6)
LPG Propane (Arab Gulf)/Ton	65.50	0.6	0.9	(19.6)
LPG Butane (Arab Gulf)/Ton	80.30	0.0	0.5	(32.7)
Euro	1.18	(0.1)	0.6	13.8
Yen	155.93	(0.2)	(1.2)	(0.8)
GBP	1.35	(0.1)	0.9	7.9
CHF	1.27	(0.1)	0.9	15.1
AUD	0.67	0.1	1.5	8.4
USD Index	97.98	0.0	(0.6)	(9.7)
RUB	110.69	0.0	0.0	58.9
BRL	0.18	0.1	0.4	11.8

Source: Bloomberg

Global Indices Performance	Close	1D%*	WTD%*	YTD%*
MSCI World Index	4,474.20	0.2	1.4	20.7
DJ Industrial	48,731.16	0.6	1.2	14.5
S&P 500	6,932.05	0.3	1.4	17.9
NASDAQ 100	23,613.31	0.2	1.3	22.3
STOXX 600	588.70	0.0	0.7	32.0
DAX	24,340.06	-	0.7	38.5
FTSE 100	9,870.68	(0.0)	0.6	30.2
CAC 40	8,103.58	0.0	(0.1)	24.9
Nikkei	50,344.10	0.1	2.6	27.1
MSCI EM	1,392.07	0.4	1.7	29.4
SHANGHAI SE Composite	3,940.95	0.7	1.7	22.3
HANG SENG	25,818.93	0.2	0.6	28.6
BSE SENSEX	85,408.70	(0.5)	0.3	4.1
Bovespa	160,455.83	-	1.1	48.7
RTS	1,089.6	(1.7)	(1.7)	(4.7)

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

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