Qatar ports record strong growth momentum in first quarter of 2021

By Santhosh V Perumal

Qatar’s ports registered solid growth in the first quarter of 2021, powered by growing volumes of ship traffic and stronger demand for logistics services.

The three ports—Hamad, Doha and Al Ruwais—posted impressive growth in terms of container throughput, cargo, passengers and aircraft movement.

Hamad Port, the busiest port in the region, handled over 1 million TEUs (twenty-foot equivalent units) in January-March 2021, a 22.34% year-on-year increase.

Doha Port saw a 24.11% increase in container throughput, while Al Ruwais Port recorded a 20.75% rise.

The growth was backed by strong demand for logistics services, particularly during the Covid-19 pandemic, as companies shifted to sea transport for their inbound and outbound shipments.

The UNCTAD or United Nations Conference on Trade and Development expects the global trade volume to expand by 5–7% in 2021, a recovery from the 9.2% contraction recorded in 2020.

In the Middle East, the region’s major ports, including those in Qatar, are expected to benefit from the rising demand for logistics services.

Hamad Port's container handling capacity is expected to be increased from 172,000 TEUs to 250,000 TEUs by 2024, making it one of the largest ports in the region.

Doha Port, on the other hand, is planning to expand its capacity to 300,000 TEUs by 2025, making it a major hub for regional and international trade.

The port of Al Ruwais, which is focused on heavy industrial cargo, is also set for expansion, with plans to increase its capacity to 100,000 TEUs per year for MSC shipping company (MSC).

The three ports together handled over 1.1 million TEUs in the first quarter of 2021, a 25.35% year-on-year increase.

The growth in container throughput is expected to continue in the coming quarters, driven by the recovering global economy and the rising demand for logistics services.

By Pratik Jha

Business Report

Energy investments in the Middle East and North Africa (Mena) region are expected to increase by 30% in 2021, driven by the need for diversified energy supplies and the transition to low-carbon, sustainable energy sources.

The region’s energy sector is set for a significant transformation, with several countries focusing on the development of renewable energy projects and the transition to low-cost, sustainable energy sources.

The Mena region is expected to invest $730 billion in energy projects over the next five years, with a focus on renewable energy, natural gas, and nuclear energy.

The International Energy Forum and Apicorp report that the region’s energy sector is expected to increase by 30% in 2021, driven by the need for diversified energy supplies and the transition to low-cost, sustainable energy sources.

The renewable energy sector is expected to see significant growth, with several countries announcing ambitious targets for the development of renewable energy projects.

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Local retail investors, Gulf funds turn bullish on Qatar bourse

The Residences at The St Regis Al Mouj Muscat appoints OSIR as its exclusive sales agency

Global silicon chip shortage affects Australia's 5G rollout

Weaker US dollar a must for depleting global leveraged money markets.
As meme stock mania fizzes, Wall Street sees ‘big reckoning’

Bloomberg

This week’s stock-market and credit crunch was the first quarter of 2022 into one of the wildest periods of stock-market mania in modern history.

Index - prices - will undoubtedly be dedicated to topics in some corner. But after these relentless spikes in stocks linked to retail investors chasing stocks for the first time in decades, there are signs that the trend is running out of steam. The key question is whether this year’s bull market will continue or whether it will end in a bust.

The day trading frenzy has shown a surprising ability to persist for months, even as many experts have sounded the alarm. But as the mania wears off, analysts and investors are bracing for a potential downturn in the market.

The bull run has been driven by a combination of factors, including low interest rates, abundant cash, and a lack of economic growth. But as these factors begin to change, the market is likely to face a more challenging environment.

The key to understanding the market is to focus on the fundamentals. Investors should be looking for companies with strong earnings and growth prospects, and avoiding those that are overvalued or have too much debt.

This will require a lot of research and analysis, but it is essential to avoid getting caught up in the hype. The market is full of companies that are overvalued and have little chance of surviving in a downturn.

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France cuts growth forecast as nationwide lockdown starts

France’s economy will rebound less than previously expected this year due to the latest four-week nationwide lockdown amid a surge in coronavirus cases. French Finance Minister Bruno Le Maire said on Monday that the country’s GDP growth would slow to 5% this year, down from 8.1% in 2020. Last year, the country’s GDP fell by 8.8% in the first quarter, before recovering to 2.2% in the second quarter and 8.1% in the third quarter.

Le Maire told Le Journal du Dimanche newspaper in an interview published yesterday that new lockdowns “will cost the country 5 billion euros, or 0.3% of GDP.” He added that the new lockdowns would cost the country 15 billion euros, or 1.1% of GDP, this year. The finance minister said the government would provide €5 billion for a solidarity fund, €8 billion for furlough, €1 billion for exemptions in social charges and €1 billion to compensate fixed costs.

The finance minister said the government would not renew the support for companies that have not made sincere and cautious efforts to cut costs and lay off employees.

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China stocks rebound seen fleeting as liquidity fears linger on

Bloomberg

The first day of settling on the record-low in the second largest stock market, but any rebound could prove fleeting in the wake of tighter ruling trade fenders. While China's blue-chip Composite Index and its core ASH 100 index of large-cap companies reversed early declines in the wake of reports on Monday, they fell again in the afternoon, with the benchmark Composite index edging lower after a rebound to 4,990.31 points on Monday.

China stocks fell on Monday as reports of a possible trade deal with the US raised hopes of an easing of tensions between the world's two largest economies, but investors remained cautious amid concerns about the pace of economic recovery in the country.

China stocks rebound seen fleeting as liquidity fears linger on

**An alternative to “no alternative”**

**How bonds snuck up on stocks**

Bloomberg

A common refrain is no alternative to the global risk in a global pandemic is one often quoted by investors in Asia-Pacific, the worst hit region by the lockdowns, hoping that the region’s economic recovery will bring a end to the downturn. While some are押注 the upside, others are warning that the recovery could be slow and uneven. The recent surge in bond yields has raised concerns about the sustainability of the recovery and the risk of a renewed sell-off.

Treasuries have continued to outperform equities, with the 10-year yield on US Treasuries falling to a record low of 0.52% last week. That compares with 3.05% for the 10-year yield on Bunds in Germany, the world’s largest economy. In Asia, the yield on 10-year JGBs has fallen to 0.10%, the lowest level since 2007. The yield on 10-year Chinese government bonds has also fallen to 0.50%, from 3.10% in February.

The rebound in bond yields has come as investors have reassessed their expectations for economic growth and inflation in the region. While some are forecasting a rebound in GDP growth in the third quarter, others are warning that the recovery could be slow and uneven, with the risk of a renewed sell-off.

While bond yields have fallen, equities have remained volatile, with the S&P 500 index falling 2.4% last week. The dollar has also strengthened against major currencies, putting pressure on commodity prices and the Fed’s efforts to support the economy.

China stocks rebound seen fleeting as liquidity fears linger on

**Trading halts in listed firms hit HK bourse after earnings deadline**

Bloomberg

Trading halts in listed firms hit the Hong Kong bourse after the earnings deadline on Tuesday. The Hong Kong Stock Exchange (HKEX) said that 11 firms had been halted from trading due to earnings releases.

The halts were triggered by the exchange's rules that require companies to release earnings results within 48 hours of the deadline. The deadline for companies to release earnings results was extended from 28 days to 50 days in March due to the coronavirus pandemic.

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**Banking on Knowledge**

**US benchmark treasury yield expected to reach 2% by 2023**

By Dr R Seetharaman

In international bond market the issuance of QR5bn in 2020 and in 2021 is expected to $14bn. US treasury yields moved upward to 2% in January 2021, after declining to below 0.5% in mid-2020 due to the easing of macroeconomic fears as new hope emerged with the arrival of vaccine in the US economy. The unemployment rate hit 5% from 2.5% in February. The surge in hiring comes over one year after the pandemic-economic threats the US economy into a tailspin, sending a signal that the recovery may have reached a turning point. It followed a sluggish months-long expansion in the labour market and delivery in the future, assuming as a world-class medical tourism hub, "According to Mashreq-Frost and Sullivan get of 5,700 hospital beds by 2033, ac-

**MoTc hosts event to introduce "Microsoft Govt Framework Agreement"**

The Ministry of Transport and Communications (MoTC) on Tuesday hosted several government entities at a virtual event to introduce the "Microsoft Govt Framework Agreement 2022," signed and approved by the Qatar International Centre for Arbitration (QICCA). The agreement is for arbitration cases and two requests for conditio-

**QICCA settles disputes worth QR2.9bn in 2020**

QICCA board member for International Relations Dr Sheikh Tamim Ali Al Thani.

**Hotel beds targeted to reach 5,700 by 2033 in Qatar: Mashref-Staff and Surfus through**

**Nammra Doha Real Estate breaks ground at Giardino Village in The Pearl - Qatar**

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