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Live animal shipments post growth; specialised cargo requires real-time monitoring

Thursday, April 24, 2025
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GULF TIMES
BUSINESS


GLOBAL ACCOLADES: Page 2
UDC earns net profit of QR68mn on revenues of QR679mn in Q1

HE the Minister of Finance Ali bin Ahmed al-Kuwari and his accompanying delegation participated in the meeting of finance ministers, central bank governors and heads of regional financial institutions in the Middle East, North Africa, Afghanistan and Pakistan (MENAP) region, which was chaired by Kristalina Georgieva, Managing Director, IMF, in Washington, DC.

Al-Kuwari calls for 'fair and stable, rules-based international order'

Qatar's Ministry of Finance participated in the meeting of finance ministers, central bank governors and heads of regional financial institutions in the Middle East, North Africa, Afghanistan and Pakistan (MENAP) region, on the sidelines of its participation in the ongoing Spring Meetings of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank Group (WBG) in Washington, DC.

The meeting discussed the main strategic issues and economic growth in the region, in addition to future prospects and fiscal policy requirements to combat inflation. HE the Minister of Finance Ali bin Ahmed al-Kuwari and his accompanying delegation participated in the meeting, which was chaired by Kristalina Georgieva, Managing Director, IMF.

At the meeting, al-Kuwari emphasised the importance of the efforts made by the International Monetary Fund in finding appropriate solutions to address the various challenges facing the world today. He also highlighted the initiatives undertaken by the State of Qatar to ensure fiscal sustainability through growth-friendly fiscal consolidation, which increases savings in the interest of intergenerational equity.

Al-Kuwari stated: "It is essential that we work collectively to uphold a fair and stable, rules-based international order — one that enables all nations to thrive and meet the aspirations of their people."

During the meeting, they reviewed regional and international challenges and risks of high rates of inflation and food insecurity while stressing the importance of continuing efforts to adapt to the current financial and economic developments.

Al-Kaabi meets Bangladesh's chief adviser of interim government

HE the Minister of State for Energy Affairs, Saad bin Sherida al-Kaabi, met with Dr Muhammad Yunus, Chief Adviser of the Interim Government of People's Republic of Bangladesh, in Doha yesterday. Discussions during the meeting dealt with energy relations and co-operation between Qatar and Bangladesh and means to enhance them.

Al-Kaabi meets German official

HE the Minister of State for Energy Affairs, Saad bin Sherida al-Kaabi, met with Hendrik Wust, Minister-President of the State of North Rhine-Westphalia of the Federal Republic of Germany in Doha yesterday. Discussions during the meeting dealt with energy relations and co-operation between Qatar and Germany and means to enhance them.

QNB, Mastercard launch new debit cards campaign to reward customers

QNB has launched a new campaign, aimed at rewarding customers to use their QNB Mastercard debit cards for everyday purchases.

The campaign, taking place from April 24-June 24, will offer winners the opportunity to explore new destinations, rewarding a total of 20 customers with a QR25,000 travel voucher, each.

QNB Mastercard debit cardholders will be given a chance to enter the draw when spending a cumulative amount of QR1,000 on international purchases and cash withdrawal from overseas. Customers will also get an additional chance into the draw for every QR1,000 spends beyond the qualifying amount.

Commenting on the launch of the campaign, Adel Ali al-Malki, Senior Executive Vice-President, QNB Retail Banking Group, said: "We are proud to launch a campaign that rewards customers for using their debit cards instead of cash. QNB's cards and payment products continue to shape the regional payment landscape with secure, convenient and rewarding solutions."

Erdem Çakar, Country Manager, Qatar and Kuwait, Mastercard, added: "At Mastercard, we are committed to making every payment more rewarding. Through our

The campaign, taking place from April 24-June 24, will offer winners the opportunity to explore new destinations, rewarding a total of 20 customers with a QR25,000 travel voucher, each

collaboration with QNB, we are offering cardholders not only secure and seamless transactions, but also the exciting opportunity to turn their everyday spending into unforgettable travel experiences."

QNB Mastercard debit cards are secure, convenient and rewarding payment products with a host of benefits and privileges for cardholders. Customers can transact safely and seamlessly using multiple payment options including mobile wallets.

QIC app wins at 'Innovators Awards' by *Global Finance*

Qatar Insurance Company (QIC) has announced the recognition of its QIC App as one of the top innovations in finance in the Middle East at the annual *Global Finance*'s Innovators Awards for 2025.

The 'Innovators Awards' celebrate financial institutions worldwide that have demonstrated exceptional innovation through groundbreaking solutions and original products and services across diverse sectors and categories. Recognised as a benchmark for digital excellence, these awards highlight how innovation is transforming the financial industry and enhancing the user experience.

Salem al-Mannai, QIC Group CEO, said: "The recognition of QIC App by *Global Finance* as one of the region's top digital innovations this year reflects our success at QIC in pioneering the region's digital landscape in the financial sector, allowing customers to better understand their insurance needs while enjoying seamless access to innovative solutions and empowering them to live, drive, and travel with confidence.

"Our commitment to innovation and our customer-centric approach enable us at QIC to

Salem al-Mannai, QIC Group CEO.

consistently exceed customer expectations and remain the preferred and most trusted insurer in Qatar and beyond."

Al-Mannai added: "We remain dedicated to rewarding this valuable trust with upgraded digital experiences, combined with the most comprehensive financial well-being for every one of our customers.

"Our objective is to make QIC App a true digital ecosystem where users can access all their daily services, and we are confident that our commitment to expanding the features of our app will have a positive impact on every single user, ensuring a truly seamless digital experience while making life in Qatar easier and safer."

QIC App is Qatar's first and only all-in-one platform combining a variety of insurance and non-insurance services, empowering users to live, drive, and travel worry-free while accessing daily services at their fingertips.

Features include buying and managing insurance policies, instalment payments, and claims filing and management. The app also offers a wide range of non-insurance features for ultimate user convenience, all powered by QIC Group's wholly owned subsidiary, Anoud Technologies. These features include a car marketplace, car rental, vehicle repairs and detailing, home car wash services, and much more.

Global Finance magazine was founded in 1987 and is headquartered in New York, with offices around the world. The magazine's audience includes senior corporate and financial executives responsible for investment and strategic decisions at companies and financial institutions in more than 180 countries worldwide.

UDC posts Q1 profit of QR68mn on QR679mn revenues

United Development Company (UDC), one of Qatar's leading public shareholding companies and the master developer of The Pearl and Gewan Islands, posted a net profit of QR68mn and revenues of QR679mn in the first quarter (Q1) of the year.

The net profit attributable to equity shareholders stood at QR72mn, with basic earnings per share of QR0.020.

UDC continues to implement a balanced financial approach focused on operational efficiency and sustainable value creation, through effective revenue and expense management while maintaining the high quality of its services and ongoing projects.

Gewan Island marks a significant milestone in UDC's development journey, with major construction milestones completed. This includes the handover of the Crystal Residence apartments to owners, the launch of retail outlets, and the activation of Crystal Walkway, positioning the island as a prime destination for luxury living, tourism, and investment.

Additionally, key landmarks are taking shape, including the upcoming Corinthia Gewan Island Hotel, set to become a signature hospitality destination in Qatar, and the island's golf course, which promises a world-class sporting experience.

In a new international achievement, UDC earned three Guinness World Records, further cementing its global standing and commitment to innovation and excellence.

These include the largest outdoor air-conditioned shopping centre, the largest outdoor interactive lighting canopy, and the largest pneumatic waste collection system.

These achievements highlight UDC's leadership in real estate development and sustainable solutions.

On The Pearl Island, UDC continued to expand its hospitality and healthcare offerings, including the ongoing development of The Pearl International Hospital.

The company also maintained high residential and commercial occupancy rates and achieved continued growth in both sales and leasing activities.

Retail and commercial spaces on The Pearl and Gewan Islands continue to attract strong interest from investors and major brands, contributing to the vibrancy of the local economy and affirming the appeal of UDC's developments as dynamic commercial hubs.

UDC actively promoted its diverse investment portfolio by participating in key global real estate events such as MIPIM in France and the International Migration & Property Expo in Hong Kong, as part of its broader strategy to attract foreign investment and enhance global collaboration.

Reinforcing its commitment to sustainable social responsibility, UDC recently signed a strategic partnership with Dreama (the Orphans Care Center) to support the participation of Dreama's children in cultural and national events held on The Pearl and Gewan Islands.

The company also continues to support humanitarian initiatives such as the Autism Parents Platform and organises community sports and wellness events to promote healthy lifestyles and social cohesion.

In the first quarter of 2025, UDC hosted several highly successful public events at The Pearl Island, including the Pearl Food Festival, Ramadan Bazaar, and Eid Bazaar. These events drew large crowds and contributed to cultural and commercial engagement, further showcasing UDC's strategy to offer vibrant and inclusive community experiences.

UDC remains a prominent public shareholding company in Qatar, consistently identifying and investing in long-term opportunities that contribute to national development and deliver lasting value to shareholders.

Form left: UDC Chairman Ahmed bin Ali al-Hammadi; and President and CEO Yasser Salah al-Jaidah.

**UDC earned three Guinness World Records, further cementing its global standing and commitment to innovation and excellence.
These include the largest outdoor air-conditioned shopping centre, the largest outdoor interactive lighting canopy, and the largest pneumatic waste collection system**

Qatar Chamber discusses investments with German state of North Rhine-Westphalia

Qatar Chamber hosted a high-level German trade delegation led by Hendrik Wüst, Minister-President of the State of North Rhine-Westphalia, yesterday.

Qatar Chamber chairman Sheikh Khalifa bin Jassim al-Thani, along with several prominent Qatari businessmen, received the delegation.

The meeting explored avenues to strengthen bilateral co-operation and discussed the investment climate in both Qatar and North Rhine-Westphalia, highlighting promising investment opportunities. Discussions also underscored the pivotal role of the private sector in advancing trade and economic relations between the two sides.

Key sectors identified for potential co-operation included information technology, energy, shipping, sports, petrochemicals, ports, engineering, pumping systems, semiconductor solutions, and polymer materials.

Sheikh Khalifa emphasised that the meeting aimed to explore new avenues for expanding bilateral trade and economic co-operation, particularly through the private sector, given its vital role in both Qatar and Germany.

He noted that the trade volume between the two countries reached QR6bn in 2024, with Qatari imports from Germany amounting to QR5.1bn and exports to Germany reaching approximately QR900mn.

"Germany is a key destination for Qatari investments across various sectors, including the automotive industry, telecommunications, financial services, and real estate," Sheikh Khalifa said, adding that hundreds of German companies are currently operating in Qatar across key sectors, either through full ownership or in partnership with Qatari businesses.

Sheikh Khalifa further stated that, in line with the directives of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani to promote foreign direct investment, the Qatari government has proactively accelerated its transition toward a diversified and knowledge-based economy.

He invited investors from North Rhine-Westphalia and across Germany to explore the wide array of business opportunities available in Qatar, emphasising that Qatar is among the world's fastest growing and most promising markets, offering vast opportunities in sectors such as renewable energy, education, real estate, tourism, high technology, sports, security, and healthcare.

Wüst lauded the strong relations between Qatar and Germany, noting that Qatar has become a regional hub for business, media, and sports. He also lauded Qatar National Vision 2030, particularly its focus on two key pillars: sustainability and economic diversification. He emphasised that North Rhine-Westphalia is a leading industrial region in Germany, home to a wide array of major industries. He noted that the region is undergoing a significant transformation — from coal and steel to artificial intelligence and advanced technology — creating vast opportunities for co-operation with the Qatari private sector.

Wüst further highlighted Qatar's strategic geographic location as a gateway to Asia, while North Rhine-Westphalia serves as a vital access point to Western Europe, stressing the importance of fostering co-operation between them in a range of fields, including tourism, logistics, scientific exchange, and more.

During the meeting, Felix Neugart, CEO of NRW Global Business, delivered a presentation on the investment landscape and opportunities in North Rhine-Westphalia. He highlighted that the state is Germany's most economically and industrially robust region, home to many of the country's largest corporations and a thriving startup ecosystem.

He outlined five key sectors where Qatari investors can explore opportunities: artificial intelligence and advanced technologies, high-tech and nanotechnology, hydrogen production and carbon emissions reduction, biotechnology, and aviation.

Hendrik Wüst, Minister-President of the State of North Rhine-Westphalia, receiving a token of recognition from Qatar Chamber chairman Sheikh Khalifa bin Jassim al-Thani during a meeting in the chamber's new headquarters in Lusail City yesterday.

UNITED DEVELOPMENT COMPANY Q.P.S.C.

INTERIM CONDENSED CONSOLIDATED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

as at and for the period ended 31 March 2025

UDC
المتحدة للتنمية
UNITED DEVELOPMENT CO.

INTERIM CONSOLIDATED STATEMENT OF PROFIT OR LOSS AND OTHER COMPREHENSIVE INCOME

for the three-month period ended 31 March 2025

	Three-month period ended 31 March	
	2025 (Unaudited) QR'000	2024 (Unaudited) QR'000
Revenue	678,502	470,707
Cost of revenue	(503,610)	(300,335)
Gross profit	174,892	170,372
Dividend income	71	-
Other operating income	16,562	37,209
Fair value gain / (loss) on investment securities	2,293	(4,043)
General and administrative expenses	(90,645)	(76,885)
Sales and marketing expenses	(8,392)	(11,296)
Operating profit	94,781	115,357
Finance income	13,380	25,882
Finance costs	(63,371)	(66,566)
Net finance costs	(49,991)	(40,684)
Net, share of results of associates and joint venture	23,277	905
Profit before tax	68,067	75,578
Income tax	(224)	(16)
Net profit for the period	67,843	75,562
Net profit for the period attributable to:		
Equity holders of the Parent	72,372	72,493
Non-controlling interests	(4,529)	3,069
	67,843	75,562
Earnings per share attributable to equity holders of the Parent:		
Basic and diluted earnings per share (QR)	0.020	0.020
Other comprehensive income	-	-
Total comprehensive income for the period	67,843	75,562
Total comprehensive income for the period attributable to:		
Equity holders of the Parent	72,372	72,493
Non-controlling interests	(4,529)	3,069
	67,843	75,562

INTERIM CONSOLIDATED STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION

as at 31 March 2025

	31 March 2025 (Unaudited) QR'000	31 December 2024 (Audited) QR'000
Assets		
Non-current assets		
Property, plant and equipment	1,908,655	1,932,567
Investment properties	10,093,807	10,101,760
Right-of-use assets	2,699	3,076
Intangible assets	5,235	5,376
Investment in associates and joint venture	904,765	941,436
Investment securities	27,458	63,795
Accounts and other receivables	320,869	298,084
Total non-current assets	13,263,488	13,346,094
Current assets		
Inventories, net	90,064	83,456
Work in progress	2,523,982	2,754,417
Accounts and other receivables	1,483,033	1,058,642
Cash and bank balances	1,317,679	1,433,018
Total current assets	5,414,758	5,329,533
Total assets	18,678,246	18,675,627
Equity and liabilities		
Equity		
Share capital	3,540,862	3,540,862
Legal reserve	1,770,431	1,770,431
Other reserves	1,148,009	1,148,009
Retained earnings	4,938,863	5,061,238
Equity attributable to equity holders of the parent	11,398,165	11,520,540
Non-controlling interests	(35,669)	(31,140)
Total equity	11,362,496	11,489,400

	31 March 2025 (Unaudited) QR'000	31 December 2024 (Audited) QR'000
Liabilities		
Non-current liabilities		
Loans and borrowings	4,442,230	4,515,956
Accounts and other payables	152,370	147,521
Retention payable	7,235	3,294
Employees' end-of-service benefits	50,235	47,165
Lease liabilities	2,246	2,060
Total non-current liabilities	4,654,316	4,715,996
Current liabilities		
Loans and borrowings	533,345	501,008
Accounts and other payables	1,915,254	1,763,249
Retention payable	212,062	204,550
Lease liabilities	773	1,424
Total current liabilities	2,661,434	2,470,231
Total liabilities	7,315,750	7,186,227
Total equity and liabilities	18,678,246	18,675,627

These interim condensed consolidated financial statements were approved by the Board of Directors and signed on their behalf on 23 April 2025 by:

Yasser Salah Al-Jaidah
President and Chief Executive Officer

Ahmed Ali Al-Hammadi
Chairman of the Board

The consolidated financial statements of the Group as at 31 March 2025 are available upon request from the Company's registered office or at the Company's website www.udcqatar.com

UNITED DEVELOPMENT CO. Q.P.S.C. | UDC Tower, The Pearl Island | P.O.Box: 7256 Doha, Qatar | T: +974 4409 8400 | F: +974 4409 8500 | C.R. No. 22980 | Capital (paid in full) QR 3,540,862,500

Mekdam Holding posts net profit rise of 8% in Q1

Mekdam Holding has reported an 8% year-on-year increase in net profit to QR11.4mn in the first three months of this year.

Earnings-per-share rose to QR0.071 in January-March 2025, up from QR0.066 for the corresponding period last year.

The group's performance for the first quarter of 2025 demonstrated notable improvement across several key financial indicators, reflecting the company's continued positive momentum, said Mekdam Holding chairman Sheikh Mohammed bin Nawaf bin Nasser bin Khalid al-Thani.

The group succeeded in increasing its gross profit margin by 15.1%, alongside a 9.1% rise in net profit margin, indicating enhanced operational efficiency and a significant reduction in finance costs.

Ehab Naser, Mekdam Holding chief executive officer said during 2025, the group was able to sign new contracts with a total value of QR250mn.

The total value of the contracts being implemented stood at about QR2.7bn, while the value of the remaining works amounted to about QR1.6bn.

With respect to the sales proposals, the total offers submitted and being negotiated with customers was valued at about QR2.7bn.

The expected success rate, according to historical indicators, ranges from 20% to 30%. The customer retention rate was around 90%.

As of March 31, 2025, Mekdam Holding's balance sheet reflected strong financial performance, with notable growth in both total assets and shareholders' equity, underscoring the strength of its financial position and the continued momentum in its operational expansion.

Total assets reached QR430.1mn compared to QR393.8mn as of December 31, 2024 — an increase of 9.2% — primarily driven by a significant rise in current assets, which grew by about 12%, indicating an expansion in projects under execution and an overall increase in operational activity. The group also maintained a solid liquidity position, with current assets accounting for 79% of total assets.

The current ratio (current assets to current liabilities) stood at 2.16 times, reflecting a strong ability to meet short-term obligations and sustain operational readiness.

The board reviewed the implementation of the General Assembly's resolutions, which approved an increase in the capital by QR25mn to QR160mn.

It emphasised that the timing of the capital increase was appropriate to support the company's ongoing growth operations, especially in light of high interest rates.

Ezdan Holding Group posts QR153mn net profit in first quarter

Ezdan Holding Group has reported a net profit of QR153mn in Q1 2025 over QR95.5mn in the same period last year.

Earnings per share stood QR0.006 in the first quarter of 2025 compared to QR0.004 in first quarter of 2024.

CLASSIFIED ADVERTISING

SITUATION VACANT

China returns Boeing jets amid Trump's tariff policies

By Alex Macheras

The aviation industry continues to grapple with significant disruptions as President Donald Trump's aggressive tariff policies reshape global trade dynamics. The imposition of steep tariffs on imports from key trade partners has led to increased operational costs, supply chain challenges, and a notable decline in international travel demand.

Major US airlines are already feeling the pinch. Teneo, a global consultancy, has forecast a 17% drop in North American international travel, with travel between the US and Canada expected to fall by more than 70% in the coming months. European travel to the US has also slumped — down 12.8% for the upcoming summer season. Markets like Washington, DC are seeing direct consequences, with a 15.6% decline in bookings, a sharp indicator of growing global hesitancy toward the US as a travel destination in this tariff-fuelled climate.

At the airline level, the response has been blunt. Delta Air Lines CEO Ed Bastian has confirmed that the carrier's growth is stalling, citing global economic uncertainty triggered by tariff turbulence. Delta has postponed deliveries of aircraft subject to tariffs, making it clear the airline won't absorb additional costs imposed by trade measures. Over at United Airlines, CEO Scott Kirby offered tentative support for the administration's intent to strengthen US industry, but markets reacted swiftly. United's stock tumbled over 15% following the announcement, a reflection of investor-concern about long-term implications.

Manufacturers are under just as much pressure. GE Aerospace CEO Larry Culp has called for a return to a tariff-free regime, stating that the company is facing around $500mn in tariff-related costs this year alone. GE is leveraging foreign trade zones and cost controls in a bid to manage the blow, but the strain is visible. RTX Corporation (formerly Raytheon Technologies) has warned that tariffs could wipe out $850mn in operating profit if they persist throughout the year. Despite strong demand for jet servicing — due in part to airlines flying older fleets amid new aircraft delays — RTX's shares fell 9.8% on the back of the warning.

Boeing, meanwhile, is navigating choppy geopolitical waters. The manufacturer has had to retrieve aircraft originally destined for Chinese customers after Beijing responded to the Trump administration's sweeping tariffs with its own retaliatory measures—imposing tariffs as high as 125% on some US goods. With deliveries to Chinese airlines now on hold, Boeing is left with white-tail aircraft, seeking to redirect them to other markets.

The company has nevertheless reported stronger-than-expected Q1-2025 results, reducing its net loss from $355mn a year ago to $31mn this quarter, while posting an 18% rise in revenue to $19.5bn. But underneath the headline figures lie a mounting concern: How sustainable can growth be in a climate where its single biggest international market is effectively off-limits for the foreseeable?

The International Monetary Fund has revised its global growth forecast downward — 2.8% for 2025, compared to 3.3% last year — citing US trade policy as a core driver. Trump's tariffs, some reaching as high as 145%, have not only triggered economic retaliation from China but are also forcing key aviation players to reconsider supply chain dependencies and international expansion strategies.

In Washington and Wall Street, the tone is shifting from cautious optimism to strategic repositioning. For airlines and aerospace giants, these are not merely diplomatic headwinds—they are commercial ones. Aircraft deliveries are being deferred, international route planning is being recalibrated, and in some cases, entire investment strategies are on pause. Demand-sensitive sectors such as aviation simply cannot withstand prolonged trade volatility without structural consequences.

Willie Walsh, Director General of the International Air Transport Association (IATA), offered a stark assessment this week, likening the transatlantic traffic disruption caused by tariffs to the post-9/11 aviation slump.

And while he acknowledged the industry's agility in shifting capacity away from affected markets to growth areas, the overall sentiment remains sombre. Airlines are leaner than ever, but that flexibility cannot shield them from systemic economic friction between the world's largest trading blocs.

This climate of policy unpredictability is also reshaping aircraft procurement decisions. Both Airbus and Boeing now face questions from airline customers about whether long-term delivery schedules can be trusted in a world where geopolitical retaliation can ground an entire order book. Airbus, somewhat shielded due to its European roots, has meanwhile expanded its foothold in China with the Tianjin Final Assembly Line — ensuring aircraft can be delivered without the added layer of transatlantic politics.

What we are witnessing is not just the impact of tariffs, but the erosion of predictability — something aviation depends on more than most industries. Aircraft orders are made years in advance. Route networks are built on decades of bilateral air service agreements. Fuel hedging, passenger demand forecasts, and alliance partnerships all rely on geopolitical continuity.

As President Trump doubles down on his tariff-first agenda, and China responds in kind, aviation is caught in the middle — not just as an industry, but as a barometer of global economic health.

The longer this escalates, the more pronounced the industry-wide effects will be — from suppressed passenger confidence and reshuffled fleet plans to job losses and the downgrading of global connectivity.

■ *The author is an aviation analyst. X handle @AlexInAir.*

Live animal shipments by air register growth; specialised cargo requires real-time monitoring

By Pratap John

Safe transport of live animals by air requires real-time monitoring and is time-critical.

Handling live animals safely, obviously, boosts an airline's reputation for reliability, safety, and ethics.

Airlines that meet IATA's Live Animals Regulations (LAR) are often recognised for their commitment to animal welfare and international best practices.

Live animals — ranging from racehorses and cattle to exotic zoo animals and pets — are considered high-value shipments. This makes them a premium cargo segment, generating substantial revenue per kilogram compared to general freight.

The International Air Transport Association (IATA) data shows that there were close to 200,000 live animal shipments globally in 2024 — up 11% since 2019.

Recently, IATA launched LAR Verify, a digital portal to improve the welfare and safe transport of live animals by air.

LAR Verify is an automated compliance solution for live animal shipments, streamlining planning, booking, acceptance, and handling. It provides real-time access to IATA Live Animals Regulations (LAR), including state and operator variations, container requirements, and documentation standards.

A user-friendly portal ensures easy access to accurate, up-to-date information, while real-time APIs enable seamless integration with transport and cargo management systems.

LAR Verify helps airlines, freight forwarders, and ground service providers handle growing shipment volumes while maintaining top-tier safety and regulatory compliance.

Live cattle in crates are loaded onboard an aircraft. Safe transport of live animals by air requires real-time monitoring and is time-critical. Handling live animals safely, obviously, boosts an airline's reputation for reliability, safety, and ethics.

Beyond the Tarmac

Using LAR Verify, airlines, shippers and freight forwarders can access operator and destination-specific requirements as defined by the IATA Live Animals Regulations (LAR).

The regulations have formed the basis for the worldwide transport of live animals by air for more than 50 years.

The new portal offers an automated compliance solution for live animal shipments, streamlining planning, booking, acceptance and handling. "The volume of specialised cargo — live animals in particular — continues to grow. To manage this opportunity safely and efficiently, a single digital portal that provides access to relevant LAR regulations and facilitates data sharing is mission critical.

As envisioned by IATA's ONE Record initiative, the release of LAR Verify is a key milestone towards achieving a single source of truth for live animal shipments," said Brendan Sullivan, IATA's Global Head of Cargo.

LAR Verify can be embedded into cargo management systems, making it easier to integrate into existing workflows. It provides details on state and operator regulations, including on the export, import, transit and transfer of live animals, documentation requirements such as import licenses per destination, animal classification along with technical standards such as container requirements and labelling, live updates on regional embargoes and trade regulations, including requirements around managing disease outbreaks.

Through advance passenger information (API), shippers and freight forwarders can also upload all required documents for airline verification. Once all documents are correct, airlines can issue a physical acceptance of the cargo, negating the need to move live animals until their travel is confirmed. Industry experts insist transport of live animals by air is a high-value cargo segment. They point out that thoroughbred horses transported for breeding or racing can be worth millions.

Livestock exports, such as cattle, are a key trade component for agricultural economies.

Transporting live animals requires tailored services such as dedicated compartments or temperature-controlled zones, trained staff or handlers onboard and at transfer points and veterinary oversight, customs documentation, and quarantine compliance.

On the strategic importance of the segment in global trade, experts say live animal shipments support agricultural exports and food security, especially between continents.

It also promotes cultural and economic exchanges, such as gifting animals between nations or trading rare species for conservation programmes.

The segment also facilitates scientific and research collaboration, especially involving lab animals or breeding programmes.

Although live animal transport is not the largest cargo category by volume, it is disproportionately valuable due to its complexity, premium pricing, and strategic trade role.

For airlines, excelling in this niche reinforces operational excellence, regulatory credibility, and brand prestige — all crucial in a competitive market.

■ *Pratap John is Business Editor at Gulf Times. X handle: @PratapJohn.*

Boeing prepared to resell China-bound aircraft to other customers

Bloomberg
New York

Boeing Co is prepared to find alternative buyers for China-bound aircraft that are mired in a trade dispute with the US, as the planemaker seeks to reduce the fallout on its jet deliveries and earnings recovery.

China has stopped taking deliveries from Boeing, Chief Executive Officer Kelly Ortberg confirmed in an interview with CNBC after the company reported better-than-expected results. The Chinese move, first reported last week by Bloomberg News, has left in doubt the fate of about 50 jets that were slated to go to the country this year.

"We're working with our customers right now, we're not going to wait too long," Ortberg said in the interview. "We'll give the customers an opportunity if they want to take the airplanes. That's what we'd prefer to do. But if not, we're going to remarket those airplanes to people who want them."

Among airlines that are willing recipients of the aircraft rejected by China is Air India Ltd. Through the end of last month, the airline had accepted 41 737 Max jets originally built for Chinese airlines, and the carrier has signalled it's eager to take more, Bloomberg reported this week.

Ortberg said the company is returning three 737 Max aircraft from its delivery centre in China. "I'm not going to let this derail the recovery of our of our company," Ortberg said, as investors cheered the turnaround with a stock rally.

The possible tariff fallout has cast a pall on an otherwise upbeat recent performance by Boeing, highlighted in the first-quarter report that showed improvements on earnings and cash consumption.

Another possible negative outcome from the trade dispute is the effect it will have on suppliers, many of which are smaller outfits that will struggle to absorb higher costs. Ortberg said the company is keeping a close eye on parts makers but hasn't detected any weakness yet, as Boeing prepares to raise output of its 737 Max and 787 models in coming months.

Boeing eventually aims to reach a monthly cadence of in the mid-50s of Max aircraft after going through several production-increase steps, Ortberg said.

For now, Boeing wants to get to a 38-unit monthly cap instilled by the Federal Aviation Administration, before eventually moving up in steps to 42 and beyond, provided the output metrics remain stable.

Air India keen to take Boeing jets refused by China airlines

Bloomberg
Mumbai

Air India Ltd is looking to take Boeing Co planes rejected by Chinese carriers, people familiar with the matter said, joining the ranks of Asian airlines vying to benefit from the trade war between Washington and Beijing.

The Tata Group-owned carrier, which urgently needs aircraft to expedite its revival, plans to approach Boeing about acquiring a number of jets the US planemaker was readying for Chinese airlines before reciprocal tariffs thwarted the handovers, according to the people, who are familiar with discussions at the Indian airline and didn't want to be identified because the information isn't public.

Air India is also eager to take up slots for future deliveries should they become available, the people said. The carrier has benefited from China's pullback in the past — through March, it had accepted 41 737 Max jets originally built for Chinese airlines whose deliveries were deferred dating back to the model's 2019 grounding. Representatives for Air India and Boeing declined to comment. Malaysia Aviation Group Bhd too is in talks with Boeing over delivery slots vacated by Chinese carriers, Bernama reported.

Chinese airlines were told by the government not to accept Boeing aircraft, Bloomberg News reported last week, after Beijing set reciprocal tariffs of up to 125% on US-made goods. About 10 planes were being prepared for delivery at the time, and some 737 Max jets in China have since been sent back to the US.

Any Boeing planes already built or in progress will present complications for potential buyers, as the cabin configurations for many will already have been set by the original customer, and some payments will have been made. Boeing can't place any aircraft with new owners that are still under contract to airlines in China. The interest from non-Chinese airlines is likely to soften the short-term blow for Boeing, one of the highest-profile US exporters, should the tariff war continue. Still, the trade conflict may complicate efforts to wind down a so-called shadow factory for stored 737s this summer. The US manufacturer is expected to provide an update on the situation with its quarterly results this week.

An Air India aircraft takes off from Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj International Airport in Mumbai, India. Air India is looking to take Boeing planes rejected by Chinese carriers, joining the ranks of Asian airlines vying to benefit from the trade war between Washington and Beijing.

Friction between Washington and Beijing has given Europe's Airbus SE the advantage over Boeing in China over the past several years. In the longer term, geopolitics threatens to shut Boeing out of one of the world's biggest aircraft markets.

Boeing built up an inventory of hundreds of undelivered 737 Max jets starting with its grounding, spurred by two deadly accidents, and continuing through the pandemic. Regulators in Beijing were among the last to clear the jet, and other issues also slowed deliveries, leading the US planemaker to eventually start remarketing the planes. Last year, Chinese regulators paused 737 deliveries for two months over concerns with lithium batteries in cockpit voice recorders.

Air India is interested in more of the already-made Max narrowbodies for its Air India Express unit, the people said. The airline is trying to build the low-cost subsidiary as part of its challenge to InterGlobe Aviation Ltd, which operates India's dominant carrier, IndiGo.

Air India was set to receive about nine more stored 737s through June, taking the total tally to 50 planes, Bloomberg News reported earlier this month. The pool was expected to run dry in a couple of months but with the US-China tariff war recasting the landscape, Air India's Boeing windfall could continue.

The planes are typically repainted in Bengaluru. Air India Express intends to replace business class on the ones it receives with economy by April 2026, but progress has been slowed by supply chain issues, the people said.