

# Qatar economy sustainable in long-term: Experts

**Strong macroeconomic fundamentals suggest the economy will continue to have a vibrant and sustainable outlook**

By **Mohammad Shoeb**  
The Peninsula

**DOHA:** The current challenges faced by Qatar economy are short-term, but in the long-term, strong macroeconomic fundamentals suggest the economy will continue to have a vibrant and sustainable outlook supported by massive public spending in the run-up to FIFA games in 2022, experts from the local banking and financial sector say.

Providing examples of untapped business opportunities, Fahmi Alghussein, Amwal CEO, said: "Only 2 percent of wealth is managed by professionals in Qatar as against 5 percent in Saudi Arabia, which is even higher in developed countries. Hence it is a great opportunity to be in



**FROM LEFT:** QFC CEO and Board Member Yousuf Mohammed Al Jaida, Amwal CEO Fahim Alghussein, Doha Bank Group CEO Dr R Seetharaman, and Qatar Exchange CEO Rashid bin Ali Al Mansoori, at a panel discussion on "Growing Opportunities in Qatar" at Doha Bank headquarters. Pic: Abdul B/The Peninsula

Qatar. The private wealth of GCC lying overseas should also be channelised into the regional markets."

Fahmi, speaking at a knowledge

sharing session on "Growing opportunities in Qatar" hosted by Doha Bank at its headquarters, however, noted that the challenges

created by lower oil prices remain for investors.

The other guests for the evening included Rashid bin Ali Al Mansoori,

CEO, Qatar Exchange (QE); Yousuf Mohamed Al Jaida, CEO and Board Member of QFC.

Dr R Seetharaman, Group CEO of Doha Bank invited the Guests of Honour at the function. Also present were prominent Qatari businessmen, distinguished guests and senior diplomats from Japan, the UK, India, Singapore, Mexico, Kenya and Canada.

Yousef Gamal El Din, Founder of Medialitera FZE and the Master of Ceremony said: "There was so much negative news on account of fall in oil prices and against this background Doha bank would like to showcase the opportunities in Qatar. Investors should be more concerned about long term view. We are witnessing global slowdown, easing monetary policy since financial crisis and uncertainty. We are in uncharted waters and will look forward to leadership, certainty and content from the key speakers today."

Dr Seetharaman, providing the concept note, added: "Even after seven years since the global financial crisis the sustainable growth is not visible in global economy. Monetary easing had continued since the global financial crisis from the US, Eurozone and Japan Central Banks. The Fed had commenced rate hike last December and it needs to be seen whether it will continue with so much volatility in global financial markets this year

and uneven US economic recovery."

He said that Qatar's 2016 GDP growth is expected to be 4.3 percent. Qatar has budgeted for revenues of QR156bn and expenditures of QR202.5bn for the year. Health, education and infrastructure accounted for the largest share of the 2016 expenditure.

Major infrastructure expenditures amounting to QR50.6bn would include railways, the new Doha port, several large roadways and the expansion of electricity, water and sewage networks.

Al Mansoori from Qatar Exchange, said: "Qatar is one of the fastest growing economies and youngest stock market. Qatar has become an emerging market in recent years. QE's mission is to support Qatar economy. It has 43 listed companies. We have programmes to improve sentiment for retail investors. We have introduced government bonds and are planning to introduce Exchange trade funds (ETF) and provide alternative for investors. We would like to increase the presence of both foreign and local institutional investors in Qatar exchange."

Al Jaida of QFC, added: "Qatar economy will face fiscal and current account deficit however Qatar's resilience is further supported by diversification of central government revenue and growing private sector."