

# Qatar in Perspective

An Orientation Guide



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# Chapter 1: Geography

## Introduction

Qatar lies on the Qatari Peninsula, a portion of the Arabian Peninsula. Measuring about 160 km (100 mi) north-south and 55–80 km (34–50 mi) east-west, Qatar is one of the world's smaller non-island nations, slightly smaller than the U.S. state of Connecticut.<sup>1,2</sup> It is surrounded on three sides by the Persian Gulf, a shallow sea joined to the Indian Ocean through the Arabian Sea. The only land border (with Saudi Arabia) lies on Qatar's southern side. On its northwestern side, Qatar shares a maritime border with the island nation of Bahrain, to the east with the United Arab Emirates, and to the north (along the middle of the Persian Gulf) with Iran.



## Physical Terrain and Topographic Features

The Qatari Peninsula is generally flat. The nation's highest elevation, at a modest 103 m (338 ft), is Qurayn Abu al Bawl (Tuwayyir al Hamir), a rise in the southern portion of Qatar's central limestone plateau.<sup>3,4</sup> On the country's western edge lies the Jabal Dukhan (Dukhan Heights), a range of limestone outcrops reaching heights of 75 m (246 ft) and situated atop Qatar's onshore oil deposits.<sup>5,6</sup> Vegetation is extremely sparse along most of the peninsula's dry, gravelly expanse. In the southeast, near the large lagoon known as Khawr al Udayd, lie crescent-shaped sand dunes (*barchans*) and salt flats.<sup>7</sup> These features, known by their Arabic name *sabkhat* (singular, *sabkha*), are the remnants of saline lakes that have evaporated,<sup>8</sup> leaving flat areas just above the water table marked by deposits of sand, silt, and gypsum, as well as salt.<sup>9</sup> A large, inland *sabkha* also can be found on the western side of Qatar, east of the Jabal Dukhan.<sup>10</sup>

1 Encyclopædia Britannica Online. "Qatar: Land." 2010. <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/485603/Qatar>

2 Oman, UAE & Arabian Peninsula. Walker, Jenny, et al. "Qatar: Environment: The Land [p. 271]." 2007. Footscray, Victoria, Australia: Lonely Planet Publications.

3 Qatar Tourism Authority. "A Key Geographical Location." 2009. <http://www.qatartourism.gov.qa/discover/index/1/175/>

4 Encyclopædia Britannica Online. "Qatar: Land: Relief and Drainage." 2010. <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/485603/Qatar>

5 Sedimentary Basins and Petroleum Geology of the Middle East. Alsharhan, A. S., and A. E. M. Nairn. "Chapter 11: Hydrocarbon Habitat of the Greater Arabian Basins [p. 559]." 2003. Amsterdam: Elsevier Science B.V.

6 Oman, UAE & Arabian Peninsula. Walker, Jenny et al. "Qatar: Environment: The Land [p. 271]." 2007. Footscray, Victoria, Australia: Lonely Planet Publications.

7 Qatar Tourism Authority. "A Key Geographical Location." 2009. <http://www.qatartourism.gov.qa/discover/index/1/175/>

8 Tasks for Vegetation Science, Vol. 42. Sabkha Ecosystems, Volume II: West and Central Asia. Al-Youssef, Mariam, Dorik A. V. Stow, and Ian M. West. "Chapter 13: Salt Lake Area, Northeastern Part of Dukhan Sabkha, Qatar [pp. 163–164]." 2006. Dordrecht, The Netherlands: Springer.

<http://www.springerlink.com/content/978-1-4020-5071-8/#section=456904&page=4&locus=13>

9 School of Ocean and Earth Science, National Oceanography Centre, Southampton University. West, Ian. "Sedimentology of Sabkha, Salt Lakes and Arid Environments." 2006. <http://www.soton.ac.uk/~imw/sabkha.htm>

10 School of Ocean and Earth Science, National Oceanography Centre, Southampton University. West, Ian. "Qatar – Sabkha, Salt Lakes and Other Desert Environments." 2006. <http://www.soton.ac.uk/~imw/Qatar-Sabkhas.htm>

Along parts of Qatar's eastern coast, north of the capital of Doha, lie mangrove wetlands that are particularly valuable as breeding areas for many species of crustaceans and fish, and as nesting areas for birds such as herons and egrets.<sup>11</sup> Unfortunately, Qatar's mangroves have suffered from overgrazing by camel herds, the reclamation of coastal tracts, and seeps of oil from offshore wells.<sup>12</sup> As of yet, there are no formally protected mangrove swamps in Qatar, although Qatar Petroleum, the state-owned oil and gas company, has initiated a mangrove conservation program.<sup>13</sup>



## Climate

Qatar's dry, sun-baked terrain reflects its climate. Summer in Qatar (May to September) is extremely hot and dry. In July, average daytime highs reach 42°C (108°F) but may hit highs of 50°C (122°F).<sup>14,15</sup> July and August are the most uncomfortable months because temperatures remain high and humidity increases.<sup>16</sup> Summer frequently brings the *shamal* (from the Arabic word for "north") winds from the north-northwest. Although shamal wind conditions may develop any time of year, over 50% of shamal days in Qatar occur from May through July.<sup>17</sup> In the winter and early spring, the shamal winds frequently accompany cold fronts.



Qatar's climate transitions to winter during October, when the first post-summer showers (known as *Wasmi*) often occur.<sup>18</sup> Annual precipitation in Qatar is quite low, with the large majority of it occurring between December and March.<sup>19</sup> Records from Doha International Airport show an average annual rainfall of just 75.2 mm, less than half the average rainfall of Baghdad, another dry-climate capital city in the region.<sup>20,21</sup> When the

11 QatarVisitor.com. "Qatar's Mangrove Forests." 2000. <http://www.qatarvisitor.com/index.php?cID=430&pID=1258>

12 Oman, UAE & Arabian Peninsula. Walker, Jenny, et al. "Qatar: Environment: Plants: Endangered Species. [p. 272]." 2007. Footscray, Victoria, Australia: Lonely Planet Publications.

13 World Atlas of Mangroves. Spalding, Mark, Mami Kainuma, and Loma Collins. "Chapter 5: The Middle East [pp. 78–79]." 2010. London: Earthscan, Ltd.

14 Qatar Tourism Authority. "Climate." 2009. <http://www.qatartourism.gov.qa/discover/index/1/176>

15 Encyclopædia Britannica Online. "Qatar: Land: Climate." 2010. <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/485603/Qatar>

16 Qatar Tourism Authority. "Climate." 2009. <http://www.qatartourism.gov.qa/discover/index/1/176>

17 Department of Geography, Geoinformatics and Meteorology, University of Pretoria. De Villiers, Michael Pierre. Predicting the Development of Weather Phenomena That Influence Aviation at Abu Dhabi International Airport. "Chapter 5: Shamal [p. 77–78]." 16 April 2010. <http://upetd.up.ac.za/thesis/available/etd-02082010-193833/unrestricted/03chapter5.pdf>

18 Qatar Tourism Authority. "Climate." 2009. <http://www.qatartourism.gov.qa/discover/index/1/176>

19 World Meteorological Organization. "Climatological Information." 25 October 2010. <http://worldweather.wmo.int/116/c00221>.

20 World Meteorological Organization. "Climatological Information." 25 October 2010. <http://worldweather.wmo.int/116/c00221.htm>

21 World Climate. "Baghdad, Iraq: Average Rainfall." 2008. <http://www.worldclimate.com/cgi-bin/data.pl?ref=N33E044+2100+40650W>

infrequent rainfall finally comes, it often consists of short downpours that awaken dormant seeds in the desert soils, causing a brief flowering of plants.<sup>22</sup>

Winter weather in Qatar, in contrast to summer, is quite comfortable. From November through April, average daily temperatures rarely go below 16–21°C (61–70°F), with average high temperatures between 22–32°C (72–90°F).<sup>23,24</sup> At night in the coldest winter months (December–February), temperatures frequently drop below 15°C (59°F) and can be chilly enough to warrant light jackets.<sup>25,26</sup>

## Bodies of Water

Oil and gas deposits may be the source of Qatar’s wealth, but for Qataris’ their most precious natural resource is water. The country has no permanent rivers or lakes. Groundwater is used almost exclusively for agriculture and livestock purposes. Thus, virtually all water used in Qatar for domestic and industrial use comes from expensive and energy-intensive desalination plants.<sup>27, 28</sup>



دoha, Persian Gulf

Qatar’s largest body of water is Khawr al Udayd, an “inland sea” or shallow tidal lake connected to the Persian Gulf by a narrow, relatively deep inlet that forms part of the Qatar–Saudi Arabia boundary. This unique lagoon system is lined with shoreline sand dunes and *sabkhat*. Khawr al Udayd features numerous types of marine and semi-marine habitats that attract threatened species of birds, mammals, and amphibians. In 2008, the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) placed Khawr al Udayd on its tentative list of future World Heritage Sites.<sup>29</sup>

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22 Cultures of the World: Qatar. Orr, Tamra. “Geography: The Flora and the Fauna [p. 11].” 2008. Tarrytown, NY: Marshall Cavendish Benchmark.

23 Cultures of the World: Qatar. Orr, Tamra. “Geography: A Hot, Arid Climate [pp. 10-11].” 2008. Tarrytown, NY: Marshall Cavendish Benchmark.

24 World Meteorological Organization. “Climatological Information.” 25 October 2010. <http://worldweather.wmo.int/116/c00221.htm>

25 World Meteorological Organization. “Climatological Information.” 25 October 2010. <http://worldweather.wmo.int/116/c00221.htm>

26 College of the North Atlantic. “About Qatar: Weather in Qatar.” 2009. <http://www.cna-qatar.com/AboutQatar/Pages/notables.aspx>

27 Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations. AquaStat. “Qatar: Water Resources and Use (Table 3).” 2008. <http://www.fao.org/nr/water/aquastat/countries/qatar/index.stm>

28 Gulf Times. John, Pratap. “Gulf Countries Facing Water Shortage: Report.” 2 April 2010. [http://www.gulf-times.com/site/topics/article.asp?cu\\_no=2&item\\_no=352700&version=1&template\\_id=36&parent\\_id=16](http://www.gulf-times.com/site/topics/article.asp?cu_no=2&item_no=352700&version=1&template_id=36&parent_id=16)

29 UNESCO. “Khor Al-Adaid Natural Reserve.” 2010. <http://whc.unesco.org/en/tentativelists/5317/>

## Cities

City	Census Population 2004 <sup>30</sup>
Doha (Ad Dawhah)	339,847
Ar Rayyan	258,193
Al Wakrah	26,993
Umm Salal Muhammad	25,413
Al Khawr	18,036
Umm Sa'id (Mesaieed)	12,611

### *Doha (Ad Dawhah)*

Modern Doha, the capital, presents an impressive metropolitan skyline that masks its humble beginnings as a small fishing and pearling village known as Al Bida. In 1847, Shaikh Mohammed bin Thani, who would become the first Al Thani emir, moved his family from the western side of the Qatari peninsula to Al Bida. There he developed strategic alliances that consolidated his authority. The most important was an 1868 treaty with the British, signed a year after Doha was destroyed in an attack by a Bahraini fleet.<sup>31, 32, 33</sup>



© Larry Johnson  
Doha, Qatar

By 1900, Doha was a thriving port city of 12,000 people that primarily engaged in pearl trade. In the 1930s, however, the introduction of cultured pearls from Japan and the ripples of the worldwide Great Depression led to a decline in the city's fortunes.<sup>34</sup> The

30 CityPopulation.de. Brinkhoff, Thomas. "Qatar." 14 July 2010. <http://www.citypopulation.de/Qatar.html>

31 Government of Qatar. Amiri Diwan. "Shaikh Mohammed bin Thani." 2010. <http://www.diwan.gov.qa/english/qatar/MohammedBinThani.htm>

32 The Legal Status of the Arabian Gulf States: A Study of Their Treaty Relations and Their International Problems. Al-Baharna, Husain M. "Chapter 4: Relations With Qatar [p. 36]." 1968. Manchester, England: University of Manchester Press.

33 Oil and Politics in the Gulf: Rulers and Merchants in Kuwait and Qatar. Crystal, Jill. "Chapter 2: History's Legacy: Kuwait and Qatar Before Oil [p. 30]." 1990. Cambridge, England: University of Cambridge Press.

34 QatarVisitor.com. "The History of Doha." 2000. <http://www.qatarvisitor.com/index.php?cID=417&pID=1339>



city and the emirate revived after World War II when Qatar's oil and gas reserves were first exploited.

In 1971, Doha became the capital of newly independent Qatar after Britain withdrew from its Persian Gulf protectorates. The city, already in the throes of growth fueled by hydrocarbon-based wealth, would expand greatly during the ensuing decades. Guest workers from Pakistan, Bangladesh, Malaysia, the Philippines, and many other countries flooded the city to work in construction and other trades and businesses. Today, it is estimated that no more than 20% of Doha's population are native Qataris.<sup>35</sup>

Doha is Qatar's only true city. The metropolitan area hosts most of the nation's governmental, educational, tourist, business, and cultural facilities, and is home to the majority of the country's population. In the middle of the city's crescent-shaped bay (an example of large-scale land reclamation) is Doha Seaport, built to handle deep-water freighters in the 1970s. South of the central city, a new deep-water port is being constructed as the focal point of a new Doha economic zone (currently estimated to open in 2014).<sup>36</sup>

### *Ar Rayyan*

Ar Rayyan, a large Doha suburb inland of the city center, is the site of Education City, a sprawling learning center hosting research facilities and several institutions of higher education, including Qatari branches of well-known American universities such as Texas A&M, Cornell, and Georgetown.<sup>37</sup> To the immediate west of Ar Rayyan, in Al Waqbah, is the Emir of Qatar's palace complex.



© Arend Kuester  
Education City

### *Al Khawr*

Al Khawr is a small coastal city about 50 km (31 mi) north of Doha. Once known as a pearl fishing center, today Al Khawr is the main residential center for workers at Ras Laffan Industrial City, the hub of Qatar's natural gas businesses and industries.<sup>38</sup>

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35 GeographicTravels.com "October 2010 Travel Photo: New Doha Construction." 4 October 2010. <http://www.geographictravels.com/2010/10/october-2010-travel-photo-new-doha.html>

36 Kuwait Times. Reuters. "Qatar's New Doha Port to Handle Cargo From 2014." 28 January 2010. [http://www.kuwaittimes.net/read\\_news.php?newsid=ODcxMzg5MjE2](http://www.kuwaittimes.net/read_news.php?newsid=ODcxMzg5MjE2)

37 The Emirates Network. "Qatar Education City." 2010. [http://education.theemiratesnetwork.com/zones/qatar\\_education\\_city.php](http://education.theemiratesnetwork.com/zones/qatar_education_city.php)

38 QatarVisitor.com. "City Guide to Al Khor." 2000. <http://www.qatarvisitor.com/index.php?cID=417&pID=1043>



## *Umm Sa'id (Mesaieed)*

About 45 km (27 mi) south of Doha along Qatar's eastern coast is Umm Sa'id, Qatar's center of heavy industries. Established in 1949 by Qatar Petroleum as the country's first deepwater port, it is designed to handle oil tanker traffic. It is now home to a refinery and industrial plants producing fertilizers, steel, petrochemicals, vinyl and other plastics, fuel additives, and lubricants.<sup>39,40</sup>

## *Dukhan*

Qatar's western coast is considerably less inhabited than the eastern side. Dukhan, a company town set up for workers in Qatar Petroleum's surrounding oil fields, is the largest population center in the area. A pipeline across Qatar delivers Dukhan's crude oil to Umm Sa'id for refining or export.<sup>41</sup>

## **Natural Hazards**

Apart from its harsh summer climate, Qatar has one of the world's lowest exposures to potential natural disasters. The dry climate and lack of high hills or mountains make any type of flooding highly unlikely. Tsunamis are nearly impossible because of the shallowness of the Persian Gulf. The Qatari Peninsula lies in a seismically stable region, thus limiting any threat from earthquakes.<sup>42</sup> No volcanoes are nearby, and the lack of forests or even vegetation in many regions creates conditions unsuitable for large-scale fires.

Shamal wind storms, producing large clouds of dust and sand, are the only natural events that can significantly disrupt everyday life in Qatar. During the worst of these storms, rolling dust clouds can reach heights of over 300 m (nearly 1,000 ft) and visibility can be reduced to a few hundred meters (or even to zero in extremely severe shamals).<sup>43,44,45</sup> Flights at Doha International Airport may be delayed or diverted during such wind storms, and driving



© Dan A'Vard  
Wind storm in Doha

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39 Global Security. "Logistics Support Station, Umm Said/Umm Said/Musay'id, Qatar." No date. <http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/facility/umm-said.htm>

40 Mesaieed Industrial City. "Businesses in MIC." 2006. [http://www.mic.com.qa/mic/web.nsf/web/mic\\_businesses](http://www.mic.com.qa/mic/web.nsf/web/mic_businesses)

41 U.S. Energy Information Administration, U.S. Department of Energy. "Qatar: Oil" 1 January 2009. <http://www.eia.doe.gov/cabs/Qatar/Oil.html>

42 UAE Interact. "Earthquake Risk in Dubai 'Lower Than That of London.'" 12 April 2007.

[http://www.uaeinteract.com/docs/Earthquake\\_risk\\_in\\_Dubai\\_lower\\_than\\_that\\_of\\_London/24795.htm](http://www.uaeinteract.com/docs/Earthquake_risk_in_Dubai_lower_than_that_of_London/24795.htm)

43 QatarVisitor.com. "Qatar Dust Storm." 21 June 2008. <http://qatarvisitor.blogspot.com/2008/06/qatar-dust-storm.html>

44 DTIC Online. Air Force Institute of Technology. Bartlett, Kevin S., USAF. Dust Storm Forecasting for Al Udeid AB, Qatar: An Empirical Analysis. "II. Literature Review [p. 6]." March 2004. <http://www.dtic.mil/cgi-bin/GetTRDoc?Location=U2&doc=GetTRDoc.pdf&AD=ADA422645>

45 DTIC Online. Air Force Institute of Technology. Bartlett, Kevin S., USAF. Dust Storm Forecasting for Al Udeid AB, Qatar: An Empirical Analysis. "2.4. Dust Storm Forcing Mechanisms [p. 21]." March 2004. <http://www.dtic.mil/cgi-bin/GetTRDoc?Location=U2&doc=GetTRDoc.pdf&AD=ADA422645>

becomes much more dangerous.<sup>46</sup> Hospitals often report an increased number of respiratory illnesses during prolonged shamals.<sup>47</sup> Winter shamals are briefer than summer ones but are more likely to greatly reduce visibility.

## Environmental Issues

Qatar has been growing at a breakneck pace in recent years, with more guest workers entering the country with each new ambitious development project. Between 2004 and 2010, the resident population more than doubled from 744,000 to 1,700,000.<sup>48</sup> Such growth has forced the nation to continually expand its water supply to meet increasing demand. Desalination and (to a lesser extent) treated wastewater have been the primary means by which Qatar has met its water needs.



© Richard Messenger  
Construction workers

However, such projects are expensive and require long lead times for development and the expansion of water storage facilities.<sup>49</sup> The marine ecosystems near the desalination plants can also be damaged by the ocean release of heated brine solutions left over from the desalination process.<sup>50</sup>

Water (as well as electricity) is provided free to Qatari citizens and at heavily subsidized rates for everyone else, thus providing little incentive for water conservation.<sup>51</sup> One telling indicator of the stress on Qatar's water system is that even though the annual production of desalinated water tripled between 1995 and 2008, the amount of desalinated water produced per capita has been steadily declining since 2004.<sup>52</sup>

Groundwater in Qatar primarily comes from two aquifers, one in the north and the other in the south. This water is used almost exclusively for agricultural purposes, primarily in the north where the aquifer water is at shallower depths and is less saline.<sup>53</sup> As Qatar's

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46 Department of Geography, Geoinformatics and Meteorology, University of Pretoria. De Villiers, Michael Pierre. Predicting the Development of Weather Phenomena That Influence Aviation at Abu Dhabi International Airport. "Chapter 6: Dust Storms and Dust [p. 102]." 16 April 2010.

<http://upetd.up.ac.za/thesis/available/etd-02082010-193833/unrestricted/04chapter6.pdf>

47 QatarVisitor.com. "Qatar Dust Storm." 21 June 2008. <http://qatarvisitor.blogspot.com/2008/06/qatar-dust-storm.html>

48 Qatar Statistics Authority, State of Qatar. "Results of the 2010 Census of Population Housing and Establishments." 20 October 2010.

[http://www.qsa.gov.qa/QatarCensus/General\\_Results.aspx](http://www.qsa.gov.qa/QatarCensus/General_Results.aspx)

49 General Secretariat for Development Planning, State of Qatar. "Advancing Sustainable Development: Towards a New Horizon." 2009.

[http://www.gsdp.gov.qa/portal/page/portal/GSDP\\_Vision\\_Root/GSDP\\_EN/GSDP\\_News/GSDP\\_News\\_Files/Article\\_1\\_-\\_Sustainable\\_development\\_and\\_water\\_security.pdf](http://www.gsdp.gov.qa/portal/page/portal/GSDP_Vision_Root/GSDP_EN/GSDP_News/GSDP_News_Files/Article_1_-_Sustainable_development_and_water_security.pdf)

50 General Secretariat for Development Planning, State of Qatar. "Advancing Sustainable Development: Qatar National Vision 2030 [p. 51]." July 2009.

[http://www.gsdp.gov.qa/portal/page/portal/GSDP\\_Vision\\_Root/GSDP\\_EN/GSDP\\_News/GSDP\\_News\\_Files/ENGLISH\\_HDR\\_Final.pdf](http://www.gsdp.gov.qa/portal/page/portal/GSDP_Vision_Root/GSDP_EN/GSDP_News/GSDP_News_Files/ENGLISH_HDR_Final.pdf)

51 General Secretariat for Development Planning, State of Qatar. "Advancing Sustainable Development: Qatar National Vision 2030 [p. 21]." July 2009.

[http://www.gsdp.gov.qa/portal/page/portal/GSDP\\_Vision\\_Root/GSDP\\_EN/GSDP\\_News/GSDP\\_News\\_Files/ENGLISH\\_HDR\\_Final.pdf](http://www.gsdp.gov.qa/portal/page/portal/GSDP_Vision_Root/GSDP_EN/GSDP_News/GSDP_News_Files/ENGLISH_HDR_Final.pdf)

52 General Secretariat for Development Planning, State of Qatar. "Advancing Sustainable Development: Qatar National Vision 2030 [p. 43]." July 2009.

[http://www.gsdp.gov.qa/portal/page/portal/GSDP\\_Vision\\_Root/GSDP\\_EN/GSDP\\_News/GSDP\\_News\\_Files/ENGLISH\\_HDR\\_Final.pdf](http://www.gsdp.gov.qa/portal/page/portal/GSDP_Vision_Root/GSDP_EN/GSDP_News/GSDP_News_Files/ENGLISH_HDR_Final.pdf)

53 General Secretariat for Development Planning, State of Qatar. "Advancing Sustainable Development: Qatar National Vision 2030 [pp. 40–41]." July 2009.

[http://www.gsdp.gov.qa/portal/page/portal/GSDP\\_Vision\\_Root/GSDP\\_EN/GSDP\\_News/GSDP\\_News\\_Files/ENGLISH\\_HDR\\_Final.pdf](http://www.gsdp.gov.qa/portal/page/portal/GSDP_Vision_Root/GSDP_EN/GSDP_News/GSDP_News_Files/ENGLISH_HDR_Final.pdf)

agricultural production has increased in the post-oil era, the rate of extraction of groundwater has risen to nearly four times the aquifer recharge rate.<sup>54</sup> Such groundwater over drafting is unsustainable in the long term. The overuse of groundwater has also contributed to related environmental problems, such as decreasing water quality, saltwater intrusion from the Gulf, salinization of soils in localized areas, and the loss of some natural springs at desert oases.<sup>55</sup> The loss of the oasis springs has a ripple effect on Qatar's mammals, birds, and reptiles, which use these areas as natural habitats.<sup>56</sup>

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54 General Secretariat for Development Planning, State of Qatar. "Advancing Sustainable Development: Qatar National Vision 2030 [p. 44]." July 2009.

[http://www.gsdp.gov.qa/portal/page/portal/GSDP\\_Vision\\_Root/GSDP\\_EN/GSDP\\_News/GSDP\\_News\\_Files/ENGLISH\\_HDR\\_Final.pdf](http://www.gsdp.gov.qa/portal/page/portal/GSDP_Vision_Root/GSDP_EN/GSDP_News/GSDP_News_Files/ENGLISH_HDR_Final.pdf)

55 General Secretariat for Development Planning, State of Qatar. "Advancing Sustainable Development: Qatar National Vision 2030 [pp. 49–50]." July 2009.

[http://www.gsdp.gov.qa/portal/page/portal/GSDP\\_Vision\\_Root/GSDP\\_EN/GSDP\\_News/GSDP\\_News\\_Files/ENGLISH\\_HDR\\_Final.pdf](http://www.gsdp.gov.qa/portal/page/portal/GSDP_Vision_Root/GSDP_EN/GSDP_News/GSDP_News_Files/ENGLISH_HDR_Final.pdf)

56 General Secretariat for Development Planning, State of Qatar. "Advancing Sustainable Development: Qatar National Vision 2030 [p. 52]." July 2009.

[http://www.gsdp.gov.qa/portal/page/portal/GSDP\\_Vision\\_Root/GSDP\\_EN/GSDP\\_News/GSDP\\_News\\_Files/ENGLISH\\_HDR\\_Final.pdf](http://www.gsdp.gov.qa/portal/page/portal/GSDP_Vision_Root/GSDP_EN/GSDP_News/GSDP_News_Files/ENGLISH_HDR_Final.pdf)

## Geography Assessment

1. Qatar's topography is mostly flat.

**True**

The nation's highest elevation, at a modest 103 m (338 ft), is in the southern portion of Qatar's central limestone plateau. The remnants of evaporated saline lakes make up flat areas just above the water table marked by deposits of sand, silt, and gypsum, as well as salt.

2. Qatar is home to a number of protected mangrove areas.

**False**

There are no formally protected mangrove swamps in Qatar, although Qatar Petroleum, the state-owned oil and gas company, has initiated a mangrove conservation program.

3. The *shamal* winds arrive predominantly in winter.

**False**

Summer frequently brings the *shamal* winds from the north-northwest. Although these wind conditions can develop any time of year, over 50% of *shamal* days in Qatar occur from May through July.

4. Qatar's annual precipitation is low.

**True**

Average annual precipitation in Qatar is quite low: 75.2 mm (< 3 in). When the infrequent rainfall finally comes, it often consists of short downpours that awaken dormant seeds in the desert soils, causing a brief flowering of plants.

5. Qatar has no permanent rivers or lakes.

**True**

Qataris' most precious natural resource is water. Groundwater is used almost exclusively for agriculture and livestock purposes. Thus, virtually all water used in Qatar for domestic and industrial use comes from expensive and energy-intensive desalination plants.

## Chapter 2: History

### Introduction

Qatar, a small constitutional monarchy on the Persian Gulf, is one of several independent Gulf States that emerged in the early 1970s from their condition as protectorates of the United Kingdom. Today, Qatar is one of the world's wealthiest countries, possessing extensive oil and natural gas reserves that have driven its remarkable growth over the past few decades. A visitor to ultra-modern Doha, the nation's sprawling capital and home to most of its population, may find it hard to imagine the city as a small, somewhat impoverished village known for pearl diving.<sup>57</sup> Only 75 years ago, that was the reality of Doha, and Qatar in general.<sup>58</sup> Qatar has since emerged from the historical shadows of its well known neighbors, Bahrain and Saudi Arabia, to become a major urban and industrial center of the Persian Gulf region.



© Christian Senger  
The pearl of Doha

### Early History

Archeological investigation of the Qatari peninsula only began in 1956, just 16 years after its first oil well went into production.<sup>59,60</sup> Several Stone Age tools made of flint were discovered in early surveys. Some of the most important finds were pottery shards that traced to the Ubaid period of ancient Mesopotamia (5000 B.C.E.)--- implying that local trade links with other cultures extended further into antiquity than previously imagined. Other archeological discoveries in Qatar include sites dated to 2000 B.C.E. (the same period when Dilmun, an important trading center, prospered in nearby Bahrain) and 1400 B.C.E.<sup>61</sup>



© Nick Leonard  
Ancient carvings in the desert in the north of Qatar

Mentions of the region of Qatar are meager in the historical written record before the 18th century. In the first century C.E., the Roman scholar Pliny the Elder referenced a group of nomads of this region known as the Catharrei.<sup>62</sup> One century later, the Alexandrian astronomer Ptolemy's map of the peninsula shows "Catara" as a town on the

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57 Cities of the Middle East and North Africa: A Historical Encyclopedia. Turner, Angie. "Doha [p. 136–138]." 2007. Santa Barbara, CA: ABC-CLIO, Inc.

58 Cities of the Middle East and North Africa: A Historical Encyclopedia. Turner, Angie. "Doha [p. 136–138]." 2007. Santa Barbara, CA: ABC-CLIO, Inc.

59 QatarVisitor.com. Gillespie, Fran. "The Discovery of Qatar's Past." No date. <http://www.qatarvisitor.com/index.php?cID=430&pID=1326>

60 Embassy of the State of Qatar in Washington, DC. "Landmark Events in the History of Qatar." 2010. [http://www.qatarembassy.net/Landmark events in the history of Qatar.asp](http://www.qatarembassy.net/Landmark%20events%20in%20the%20history%20of%20Qatar.asp)

61 QatarVisitor.com. Gillespie, Fran. "The Discovery of Qatar's Past." No date. <http://www.qatarvisitor.com/index.php?cID=430&pID=1326>

62 Perseus.tufts.edu. Pliny the Elder. The Natural History. "Book VI. Chap. 32. (28.) Arabia." 1855.

<http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/text?doc=Perseus%3Atext%3A1999.02.0137%3Abook%3D6%3Achapter%3D32#note20>

Arabian side of the Persian Gulf, in roughly the same area as modern-day Qatar.<sup>63</sup> Knowledge of the Qatari region by European mapmakers remained sketchy until relatively recently. It was only in the 19th century that Qatar was first portrayed as a peninsula on a map.<sup>64</sup>

For many centuries, Qatar was frequently visited after winter rains by *badu* (Bedouin) tribes grazing their herds.<sup>65</sup> Also, small settlements centered upon trade and pearl fishing arose along or near Qatar's coastal areas. One of the oldest of these settlements to have been investigated by archeologists is Murwab (eighth to ninth century C.E.), whose desert ruins are located at Qatar's northern tip.<sup>66,67</sup> Unfortunately, historical details concerning the tribal groups, who either permanently lived in villages such as these or periodically visited them on their nomadic wanderings, are relatively sparse until the 18th century. Until then, Qatar was something of a backwater compared with the better known regions of the Persian Gulf coast—most notably, Muscat (in Oman) and Bahrain.<sup>68</sup>

### Arrival of the Bani Utub

During the second half of the 1760s, the Al Khalifah and Al Jalahimah, two parts of the Bani Utub tribe, migrated from what is now Kuwait to the northwestern coast of the Qatar peninsula, where they founded the coastal settlement of Az Zubarah.<sup>69,70</sup> Until this time, most of the peninsula's villages had been on the eastern coast, including Al Bida (which eventually became part of modern Doha).<sup>71</sup> While the Al Khalifah and Al Jalahimah quarreled among themselves, ultimately triggering a split between the two groups, Az Zubarah became a bustling center for pearl fishing and trade.



Directly west of Az Zubarah and across a narrow gulf lay Bahrain, which was ruled under Persian suzerainty by an Omani sheikh of the Al Madhkur family. The growing influence

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63 Muhammadanism.org. Zwemer, S. W. Arabia: The Cradle of Islam, 3rd Ed. "Ptolemy's Map of Arabia According to Sprenger." 1900. New York: Fleming Revell Co. [http://www.muhammadanism.org/maps/Arabia%20Felix\\_300.gif](http://www.muhammadanism.org/maps/Arabia%20Felix_300.gif)

64 Catnaps.org. Lockerbie, John. "Addendum: History—Mapping." 2010. <http://www.catnaps.org/islamic/history.html>

65 Catnaps.org. Lockerbie, John. "Addendum: History—Constraints on the Qatar Peninsula." 2010. <http://www.catnaps.org/islamic/history.html>

66 QatarVisitor.com. Gillespie, Frances. "Murwab and the Golden Age: An Early Qatar City." No date. <http://www.qatarvisitor.com/index.php?cID=439&pID=1517>

67 Steamboat Foundation. Woman Today. "An Intersection of Worlds: Looking Into the Nomadic Life of an Excavator." December 2009. [http://www.steamboatfoundation.org/file\\_download/116](http://www.steamboatfoundation.org/file_download/116)

68 The Making of the Modern Gulf States. Zahan, Rosemary Said. "1. The Gulf in History [p. 5]." 1989. London: Unwin Hyman, Ltd.

[http://books.google.com/books?id=iCmYhXoC0FMC&printsec=frontcover&dq=The+Making+of+the+Modern+Gulf+States&hl=en&ei=F2vkTPGgF4TGsAOnyNVm&sa=X&oi=book\\_result&ct=result&resnum=1&ved=0CC8Q6AEwAA#v=onepage&q&f=false](http://books.google.com/books?id=iCmYhXoC0FMC&printsec=frontcover&dq=The+Making+of+the+Modern+Gulf+States&hl=en&ei=F2vkTPGgF4TGsAOnyNVm&sa=X&oi=book_result&ct=result&resnum=1&ved=0CC8Q6AEwAA#v=onepage&q&f=false)

69 Federal Research Division, Library of Congress. A Country Study: Qatar. Toth, Anthony. "Chapter 4. Qatar—Historical Background." January 1993.

<http://lcweb2.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/r?frd/cstdy:@field%28DOCID+qa0026%29>

70 Scribd.com. Ruling Families of Arabia: Bahrain: The Ruling Family of Al-Khalifah. A. de L. Rush, Ed. "2. Origins and History of the Al-Khalifah Dynasty, 1716–1869: Uttoobee Arabs (Bahrein) [pp. 9–10]." 1991. England: Archive Editions.

<http://www.scribd.com/doc/3025528/Bahrain-The-Ruling-Family-of-AIKhalifah>

71 Catnaps.org. Lockerbie, John. "Addendum: History—Trade and Occupation of the Peninsula." 2010. <http://www.catnaps.org/islamic/history>.



and wealth originating from the pearl trade at Az Zubarah led to rivalry and ultimately conflict between the Bani Utub tribes of Az Zubarah and the Al Madhkurs.<sup>72</sup> A series of attacks and counterattacks by Al Madkhur and Bani Utub naval forces culminated in 1783 in the capture of Bahrain, by a combined force of the Bani Utub of Az Zubarah and fellow tribesmen still living in the region of Kuwait. The Al Khalifah family of the Bani Utub coalition declared their sovereignty over Bahrain; after a few years, most of the tribe permanently moved to the island (where they remain as the ruling dynasty). Meanwhile, the Al Jalahimah, feeling they did not receive a fair split of the spoils from the Bahrain conquest, broke relations with the Al Khalifah and moved a few kilometers up the coast from Az Zubarah. Here they established a base of operations for maritime raids against both Al Khalifah and Persian trading ships.<sup>73</sup>

## The Wahhabis

During the middle of the 18th century, central Arabia witnessed the sprouting of an Islamic reform movement preached by the Muslim scholar Muhammad bin Abd al-Wahhab. His teachings followed the Salafi form of Islamic thought, by which the first three generations of Muslims (including the original generation of the Prophet Muhammad and his followers) are viewed as models of the true form of Islam. In Wahhab's interpretation, Islam in the Arab world had become adulterated by non-traditional elements, such as the mysticism of Sufi Islam and icon worship.<sup>74</sup> In 1744, Muhammad bin Abd al-Wahhab formed an alliance with the central Arabian shaikh Muhammad bin Saud, the first leader of what became the House of Saud, the royal family of modern-day Saudi Arabia.<sup>75</sup>



© Juan E De Cristofaro  
Qur'an

The religious fundamentalism of the Saudi-Wahhabi movement spread throughout the Arabian Peninsula through a series of conquests, reaching the Qatar peninsula near the beginning of the 19th century.<sup>76</sup> On the Qatar peninsula, the Wahhabi religious ideology

72 Scribd.com. Ruling Families of Arabia: Bahrain: The Ruling Family of Al-Khalifah. A. de L. Rush, Ed. "2. Origins and History of the Al-Khalifah Dynasty, 1716–1869: Uttoobee Arabs (Bahrein) [pp. 10–11]." 1991. England: Archive Editions.

<http://www.scribd.com/doc/3025528/Bahrain-The-Ruling-Family-of-AlKhalifah>

73 Federal Research Division, Library of Congress. A Country Study: Qatar. Toth, Anthony. "Chapter 4. Qatar—Historical Background." January 1993.

<http://lcweb2.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/r?frd/cstdy:@field%28DOCID+qa0026%29>

74 The Middle East: A Brief History of the Last 2,000 Years. Lewis, Bernard. "Chapter 16. Response and Reaction [p. 311]." 1995. New York: Scribner.

[http://books.google.com/books?id=CjAABdA9z18C&printsec=frontcover&dq=The+Middle+East:+a+brief+history+of+the+last+2,000+years&hl=en&src=bmrr&ei=vafITji7OsnFnAeO8u21DQ&sa=X&oi=book\\_result&ct=result&resnum=1&ved=0CCcQ6AEwAA#v=onepage&q&f=false](http://books.google.com/books?id=CjAABdA9z18C&printsec=frontcover&dq=The+Middle+East:+a+brief+history+of+the+last+2,000+years&hl=en&src=bmrr&ei=vafITji7OsnFnAeO8u21DQ&sa=X&oi=book_result&ct=result&resnum=1&ved=0CCcQ6AEwAA#v=onepage&q&f=false)

75 The Ottoman Gulf: The Creation of Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, and Qatar. Anscombe, Frederick R. "Chapter 1. The Setting [p. 13]." 1997. New York: Columbia University Press.

[http://books.google.com/books?id=og5vjx2V\\_xoC&printsec=frontcover&dq=The+Ottoman+Gulf:+The+Creation+of+Kuwait,+Saudi+Arabia,+and+Qatar&hl=en&ei=XAXjTM3BE4K-sQPT1Oxm&sa=X&oi=book\\_result&ct=result&resnum=1&ved=0CC4Q6AEwAA#v=onepage&q&f=false](http://books.google.com/books?id=og5vjx2V_xoC&printsec=frontcover&dq=The+Ottoman+Gulf:+The+Creation+of+Kuwait,+Saudi+Arabia,+and+Qatar&hl=en&ei=XAXjTM3BE4K-sQPT1Oxm&sa=X&oi=book_result&ct=result&resnum=1&ved=0CC4Q6AEwAA#v=onepage&q&f=false)

76 The Ottoman Gulf: The Creation of Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, and Qatar. Anscombe, Frederick R. "Chapter 1. The Setting [p. 13]." 1997. New York: Columbia University Press.



was embraced by several tribes, among them a clan that ultimately resisted the efforts of the non-Wahhabian Al Khalifah to retain control over the peninsula.<sup>77</sup> They became known as the Al Thani, who several decades later became the dominant tribe of Qatar and the a dynasty that rules Qatar to this day.

## The Pirate Coast

While the Al Khalifah remained nominally in control of the Qatar peninsula from their main base in Bahrain, they faced continued attacks from the Al Jalahimah, led by Rahmah bin Jabir Al Jalahimah. Today he is remembered as the epitome of the Persian Gulf pirate, even sporting a patch over his missing eye, but in truth his marauding seemed largely a single-minded campaign of revenge against the Al Khalifah.<sup>78,79</sup>



DoD image  
House of Shaikh Isa bin Ali Al Khalifa

At the time of Rahmah bin Jamir's raids along the coast, the British East India Company was using the Gulf as a major shipping route for its India-Europe trade. The Al Jalahimah leader was careful to avoid attacks on these ships carrying valuable cargo from South Asia, not wishing to invoke the enmity of the powerful British naval forces. From his base in northeastern Qatar and later the Saudi Arabian port of Ad Dammam, he partnered at one time or another with virtually all powers in the Gulf in his attempt to defeat Bahrain and its Al Khalifah leaders.<sup>80</sup> When the British East India Company signed a General Treaty of Peace with the Gulf shaikhs in 1820, establishing British primacy in the Gulf with the overall intent to end piracy and slave trade there, Rahmah bin Jamir's position became more tenuous, even if his attacks were not directed against East India Company ships.<sup>81</sup> Rahmah bin Jamir's end came in a naval battle with the Bahrain fleet in 1826. With that, the Al Jalahimah ceased to be a serious threat to the Al Khalifah.

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[http://books.google.com/books?id=og5vjx2V\\_xoC&printsec=frontcover&dq=The+Ottoman+Gulf:+The+Creation+of+Kuwait,+Saudi+Arabia,+and+Qatar&hl=en&ei=XAXjTM3BE4K-sQPT1Oxm&sa=X&oi=book\\_result&ct=result&resnum=1&ved=0CC4Q6AEwAA#v=onepage&q&f=false](http://books.google.com/books?id=og5vjx2V_xoC&printsec=frontcover&dq=The+Ottoman+Gulf:+The+Creation+of+Kuwait,+Saudi+Arabia,+and+Qatar&hl=en&ei=XAXjTM3BE4K-sQPT1Oxm&sa=X&oi=book_result&ct=result&resnum=1&ved=0CC4Q6AEwAA#v=onepage&q&f=false)

77 Federal Research Division, Library of Congress. A Country Study: Qatar. Smyth, William. "Chapter 1. Historical Setting: Wahhabi Islam and the Gulf." January 1993. <http://lcweb2.loc.gov/frd/cs/qatoc.html#qa0014>

78 Saudi Aramco World. Mandaville, Jon. "Rahmah of the Gulf." May/June 1975. <http://www.saudiaramcoworld.com/issue/197503/rahmah.of.the.gulf.htm>

79 QatarVisitor.com. "The Scourge of the Pirate Coast." No date. <http://www.qatarvisitor.com/index.php?cID=430&pID=1382>

80 Saudi Aramco World. Mandaville, Jon. "Rahmah of the Gulf." May/June 1975. <http://www.saudiaramcoworld.com/issue/197503/rahmah.of.the.gulf.htm>

81 Federal Research Division, Library of Congress. A Country Study: Qatar. Toth, Anthony. "Chapter 4. Qatar—Historical Background." January 1993. <http://lcweb2.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/r?frd/cstdy:@field%28DOCID+qa0026%29>

## Beginnings of the Al Thani Dynasty

Britain's peace treaties with the Gulf shaikhdoms included one signed by the Al Khalifah shaikh of Bahrain but not tribal representatives of Qatar, because the British viewed Qatar as a dependency of the Al Khalifah dynasty.<sup>82</sup> On the Qatar peninsula, however, the situation was not so simple. Several tribes on the eastern side of the peninsula had only intermittent loyalties with the Bahraini rulers, and periodic conflicts between these tribal leaders and Bahraini forces were the norm.<sup>83</sup> One of these eastern tribal leaders was Shaikh Muhammad bin Thani, who moved his family to Doha in 1847. There he established a strategic alliance with the Saudi Emir Faisal bin Turki and emerged as a leading figure among the eastern tribes.<sup>84,85</sup>



Courtesy of Wikipedia.org  
Bahrain Coat of Arms

When the Bahraini Al Khalifah attacked the eastern settlements of Qatar in 1867, followed by a Qatari counter-attack on Bahrain in 1868, a British political agent was sent to Qatar to broker a settlement among the warring parties. Muhammad bin Thani was chosen to represent the eastern Qatari tribes in the negotiations. The resulting treaty was a milestone in Qatar's history, formalizing for the first time its political separateness from Bahrain and acknowledging Muhammad bin Thani as the most prominent tribal figure on the peninsula.<sup>86</sup> Despite the treaty, the Bahrain rulers pressed their claim for sovereignty over the Az Zubarah region on Qatar's northwest coast. This dispute would not be resolved until 2001, long after Az Zubarah had become nothing more than a desert ruin.<sup>87</sup>

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82 The Legal Status of the Arabian Gulf States: A Study of Their Treaty Relations and Their International Problems. Al-Baharna, Husain M. "4. Relations with Qatar [p. 36]." 1968. Manchester: University of Manchester Press.

83 Catnaps.org. Lockerbie, John. "Addendum: History—Trade and Occupation on the Peninsula." 2010. <http://www.catnaps.org/islamic/history.html>

84 Federal Research Division, Library of Congress. A Country Study: Qatar. Toth, Anthony. "Chapter 4. Qatar—Historical Background." January 1993. <http://lcweb2.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/r?frd/cstdy:@field%28DOCID+qa0026%29> [retrieved 4 November 2010]

85 Amiri Diwan. "Shaikh Mohammed bin Thani." No date. <http://www.diwan.gov.qa/english/qatar/MohammedBinThani.htm>

86 The Making of the Modern Gulf States. Zahlan, Rosemary Said. "6. The Ruling Families of Kuwait, Bahrain, and Qatar [p. 100]." 1989. London: Unwin Hyman, Ltd.

[http://books.google.com/books?id=iCmYhXoC0FMC&printsec=frontcover&dq=The+Making+of+the+Modern+Gulf+States&hl=en&ei=F2vkTPGgF4TGsAOnyNVm&sa=X&oi=book\\_result&ct=result&resnum=1&ved=0CC8Q6AEwAA#v=onepage&q=1867&f=false](http://books.google.com/books?id=iCmYhXoC0FMC&printsec=frontcover&dq=The+Making+of+the+Modern+Gulf+States&hl=en&ei=F2vkTPGgF4TGsAOnyNVm&sa=X&oi=book_result&ct=result&resnum=1&ved=0CC8Q6AEwAA#v=onepage&q=1867&f=false)

87 The Estimate, Vol. 13, No. 6. "The Bahrain-Qatar Border Dispute: The World Court Decision, Part I." 23 March 2001. <http://www.theestimate.com/public/032301.html>

## Ottoman, Saudi, and British Intrigues

In 1871, Qatar became a part of the Ottoman Empire. The Ottoman presence was initially welcomed by Qasim bin Muhammad Al Thani (son of Qatari ruler Muhammad bin Thani), who likely viewed the Ottomans as potentially useful and powerful allies against internal and external threats in anticipation of his future succession as ruler of Qatar.<sup>88</sup> After assuming power, however, the relationship turned to disenchantment as little or no support was offered by the Ottomans in Qatari disputes with Britain and Abu Dhabi.<sup>89</sup> By 1893, Qasim bin Muhammad had reached a low point in relations with the Empire. When Ottoman officials attempted to increase their troops in Qatar, he refused to accommodate the official request, sparking armed conflict between Ottoman forces and supporters of Qasim bin Muhammad. The battle at Al Waqbah, about 15 km (9 mi) west of Doha, was a significant defeat for the Ottoman defenders, and is remembered as the most important battle in Qatari history.<sup>90</sup> Perhaps more than any other event, this victory firmly established Al Thani authority on the Qatar peninsula.<sup>91</sup>



Courtesy of Wikipedia.org  
Biographies of Ottoman jurists

By 1913, the Ottoman Empire, in steep decline, renounced any claims on Qatar. The new Al Thani ruler Abdullah bin Qasim Al Thani, feeling vulnerable to disgruntled family members and possible incursions from resurgent Saudi-Wahhabi forces in the Gulf region, signed a treaty with the British in 1916.<sup>92, 93</sup> The Qatari ruler ceded autonomy in foreign affairs in exchange for British guarantees to provide military protection against attacks “from all aggression by sea” and from anyone not a subject of the shaikh.<sup>94, 95</sup> While this treaty provided Abdullah bin Qasim some protection from assorted threats, it

88 The Ottoman Gulf: The Creation of Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, and Qatar. Anscombe, Frederick R. “Chapter 2. The Resurrection of the Ottoman Rule in the Gulf [pp. 32–33].” 1997. New York: Columbia University Press.

[http://books.google.com/books?id=og5vjx2V\\_xoC&printsec=frontcover&dq=The+Ottoman+Gulf:+The+Creation+of+Kuwait&hl=en&ei=C3PKtISdKI28sAOJ4dxm&sa=X&oi=book\\_result&ct=result&resnum=1&ved=0CCsQ6AEwAA#v=onepage&q&f=false](http://books.google.com/books?id=og5vjx2V_xoC&printsec=frontcover&dq=The+Ottoman+Gulf:+The+Creation+of+Kuwait&hl=en&ei=C3PKtISdKI28sAOJ4dxm&sa=X&oi=book_result&ct=result&resnum=1&ved=0CCsQ6AEwAA#v=onepage&q&f=false)

89 The Ottoman Gulf: The Creation of Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, and Qatar. Anscombe, Frederick R. “Chapter 4. The Chance for Adjustment and Stability, 1872–1893 [p. 87].” 1997. New York: Columbia University Press.

90 QatarVistor.com. Sami, Yousra. “The Battle That Sealed the Deal: The Battle of Al Wajba (1893).” No date. <http://www.qatarvisitor.com/index.php?cID=439&pID=1701>

91 The Making of the Modern Gulf States. Zahlan, Rosemary Said. “6. The Ruling Families of Kuwait, Bahrain, and Qatar [p. 100].” 1989. London: Unwin Hyman, Ltd.

[http://books.google.com/books?id=iCmYhXoC0FMC&printsec=frontcover&dq=The+Making+of+the+Modern+Gulf+States&hl=en&ei=F2vkTPGgF4TGsAOnyNVm&sa=X&oi=book\\_result&ct=result&resnum=1&ved=0CC8Q6AEwAA#v=onepage&q=1867&f=false](http://books.google.com/books?id=iCmYhXoC0FMC&printsec=frontcover&dq=The+Making+of+the+Modern+Gulf+States&hl=en&ei=F2vkTPGgF4TGsAOnyNVm&sa=X&oi=book_result&ct=result&resnum=1&ved=0CC8Q6AEwAA#v=onepage&q=1867&f=false)

92 Federal Research Division, Library of Congress. A Country Study: Qatar. Toth, Anthony. “Chapter 4. Qatar—Historical Background.” January 1993. <http://lcweb2.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/r?frd/cstdy:@field%28DOCID+qa0026%29>

93 The Making of the Modern Gulf States. Zahlan, Rosemary Said. “6. The Ruling Families of Kuwait, Bahrain, and Qatar [p. 101].” 1989. London: Unwin Hyman, Ltd.

[http://books.google.com/books?id=iCmYhXoC0FMC&printsec=frontcover&dq=The+Making+of+the+Modern+Gulf+States&hl=en&ei=F2vkTPGgF4TGsAOnyNVm&sa=X&oi=book\\_result&ct=result&resnum=1&ved=0CC8Q6AEwAA#v=onepage&q=1867&f=false](http://books.google.com/books?id=iCmYhXoC0FMC&printsec=frontcover&dq=The+Making+of+the+Modern+Gulf+States&hl=en&ei=F2vkTPGgF4TGsAOnyNVm&sa=X&oi=book_result&ct=result&resnum=1&ved=0CC8Q6AEwAA#v=onepage&q=1867&f=false)

94 Amiri Diwan. “Shaikh Abdullah Bin Qassim Al Thani.” No date. <http://www.diwan.gov.qa/english/qatar/AbdullahBinQassim.htm>

95 Catnaps.org. Lockerbie, John. “Addendum: History—Formal British Protection.” 2010. <http://www.catnaps.org/islamic/history.html>

did little to discourage internal attacks. In 1935, the British signed another agreement with Abdullah bin Qasim granting the British Anglo-Persian Oil Company (APOC, the forerunner of British Petroleum) a 75-year oil concession in part for British recognition of Abdullah bin Qasim's son Hamad bin Abdullah as the Qatari heir apparent.<sup>96,97</sup> The initial oil exploration in Qatar was carried out by an APOC subsidiary, Petroleum Development (Qatar), Ltd., which ultimately became the Qatar Petroleum Company, Qatar's national oil company.<sup>98</sup>

## The New Gulf Oil State

Oil was first discovered in January 1940 in western Qatar near the modern-day oil company town of Dukhan. Drilling was halted only a few years after the discovery, owing to the start of World War II. It was resumed again in 1947.<sup>99</sup> The first oil exports were shipped in 1949 via the newly constructed tanker terminal at Umm Said (Mesaideed).<sup>100</sup> That same year, Shaikh Abdullah bin Qasim stepped down, having outlived his son and one-time heir apparent Hamad bin Abdullah. Another of Abdullah's sons, Ali bin Abdullah Al Thani, became the new ruler instead.



Ali bin Abdullah inherited a state in its first flush of massive oil wealth. Oil revenues went from USD 1 million in 1950 to USD 23 million in 1954, primarily as the result of a renegotiated split on the Qatari oil concession.<sup>101</sup> The extreme poverty of the 1930s, when Qatar's pearl diving industry had collapsed, was past. With oil money flowing into the country, demands increased among both Al Thani and non-Al Thani Qataris for Ali bin Abdullah to spread more of the wealth their way.<sup>102</sup> Responding to this pressure, Ali bin Abdullah steadily increased allowances to family members, but a decline in oil revenues in the late 1950s led to further discontent among the Al Thani family members.<sup>103, 104</sup>

96 The Making of the Modern Gulf States. Zahlan, Rosemary Said. "6. The Ruling Families of Kuwait, Bahrain, and Qatar [p. 87]." 1989. London: Unwin Hyman, Ltd.

97 Federal Research Division, Library of Congress. A Country Study: Qatar. Toth, Anthony. "Chapter 4. Qatar—Historical Background." January 1993. <http://lcweb2.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/r?frd/cstdy:@field%28DOCID+qa0026%29>

98 Qatar General Petroleum Corporation. "Company History." No date. <http://www.fundinguniverse.com/company-histories/QATAR-GENERAL-PETROLEUM-CORPORATION-Company-History.html>

99 GeoExPro. "The Qatar Oil Discoveries: 1950s." 2010. <http://www.geoexpro.com/history/qatardiscoveries/> [retrieved 4 November 2010]

100 Embassy of the State of Qatar in Washington, DC. "History of Oil Discovery." 2010. [http://www.qatarembassy.net/oil\\_history.asp](http://www.qatarembassy.net/oil_history.asp) [retrieved 4 November 2010]

101 GeoExPro. "The Qatar Oil Discoveries: 1950s." 2010. <http://www.geoexpro.com/history/qatardiscoveries/>

102 Federal Research Division, Library of Congress. A Country Study: Qatar. Toth, Anthony. "Chapter 4. Qatar—Historical Background." January 1993. <http://lcweb2.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/r?frd/cstdy:@field%28DOCID+qa0026%29>

103 All in the Family: Absolutism, Revolution and Democracy in the Middle Eastern Monarchies. Herb, Michael. "The Al Thani, Al Khalifa, Al Nahayan, Al Maktum, and Al Saud [p. 111]." 1999. Albany: State University of New York Press.

104 Federal Research Division, Library of Congress. A Country Study: Qatar. Toth, Anthony. "Chapter 4. Qatar—Historical Background." January 1993. <http://lcweb2.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/r?frd/cstdy:@field%28DOCID+qa0026%29>

Ali bin Abdullah abdicated in 1960 under mounting pressure, and was succeeded by his son, Ahmad bin Ali. Like his father, Ahmad lived an extravagant lifestyle fueled by the 25% of Qatari oil revenues that flowed to him for personal use. The new ruler's opulent ways and extended stays at his Swiss villa continued to feed the discontent of Qataris who believed they were not getting their fair share.<sup>105, 106, 107</sup> As more revenues were again steered toward family members, expenditures targeting social services and infrastructure development in turn declined, thus leading to protests led by non-AI Thani Qataris.<sup>108</sup>

## Independence

Ahmad's cousin, Khalifa bin Hamad Al Thani, was named heir apparent and deputy ruler when Ahmad became Qatar's new ruler. For Khalifa bin Hamad, this situation was a repeat of 1949, when Abdullah bin Qasim had designated him heir apparent to his son Ali bin Abdullah. Once Ali took power as new emir, he preferred to see his own son Ahmad as his successor, so in 1957 he announced Ahmad as the new heir apparent.<sup>109</sup>



© Xavier Bouchevreau  
National Day

While tensions between new Emir Ahmad bin Ali and Khalifa bin Hamad brewed beneath the surface, Khalifa took an active part in many of Qatar's financial, diplomatic, cultural, security, and petroleum-related affairs.<sup>110,111</sup> In 1968, after the announcement of the British withdrawal from the Gulf effective in 1971, Khalifa and Ahmad disagreed on Qatar's path. Ahmad pressed for federation with the other eight Gulf shaikhdoms, and Khalifa hesitated about such a step because of Bahrain's insistence on retaining a senior position within the consolidated state. Ultimately, Qatar and Bahrain chose to be

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105 The Making of the Modern Gulf States. Zahlan, Rosemary Said. "6. The Ruling Families of Kuwait, Bahrain, and Qatar [p. 103]." 1989. London: Unwin Hyman, Ltd.

[http://books.google.com/books?id=iCmYhXoC0FMC&printsec=frontcover&dq=The+Making+of+the+Modern+Gulf+States&hl=en&ei=F2vkTPGgF4TGsAOnyNVm&sa=X&oi=book\\_result&ct=result&resnum=1&ved=0CC8Q6AEwAA#v=onepage&q=switzerland&f=false](http://books.google.com/books?id=iCmYhXoC0FMC&printsec=frontcover&dq=The+Making+of+the+Modern+Gulf+States&hl=en&ei=F2vkTPGgF4TGsAOnyNVm&sa=X&oi=book_result&ct=result&resnum=1&ved=0CC8Q6AEwAA#v=onepage&q=switzerland&f=false)

106 Oil and Politics in the Gulf: Rulers and Merchants in Kuwait and Qatar. Crystal, Jill. "5. Qatar: The Ruling Family and Merchants [p. 153]." 1990. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

107 All in the Family: Absolutism, Revolution and Democracy in the Middle Eastern Monarchies. Herb, Michael. "The Al Thani, Al Khalifa, Al Nahayan, Al Maktum, and Al Saud [p. 114]." 1999. Albany: State University of New York Press.

108 Oil and Politics in the Gulf: Rulers and Merchants in Kuwait and Qatar. Crystal, Jill. "5. Qatar: The Ruling Family and Merchants [p. 153]." 1990. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

109 Oil and Politics in the Gulf: Rulers and Merchants in Kuwait and Qatar. Crystal, Jill. "5. Qatar: The Ruling Family and Merchants [p. 152]." 1990. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

110 The Making of the Modern Gulf States. Zahlan, Rosemary Said. "6. The Ruling Families of Kuwait, Bahrain, and Qatar [p. 103]." 1989. London: Unwin Hyman, Ltd.

[http://books.google.com/books?id=iCmYhXoC0FMC&printsec=frontcover&dq=The+Making+of+the+Modern+Gulf+States&hl=en&ei=3HjITMSzFZT0tgO\\_0Kyxw&sa=X&oi=book\\_result&ct=result&resnum=1&ved=0CDEQ6AEwAA#v=onepage&q&f=false](http://books.google.com/books?id=iCmYhXoC0FMC&printsec=frontcover&dq=The+Making+of+the+Modern+Gulf+States&hl=en&ei=3HjITMSzFZT0tgO_0Kyxw&sa=X&oi=book_result&ct=result&resnum=1&ved=0CDEQ6AEwAA#v=onepage&q&f=false)

111 Federal Research Division, Library of Congress. A Country Study: Qatar. Toth, Anthony. "Chapter 4. Qatar—Government and Politics: The Al Thani." January 1993. <http://lcweb2.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/r?frd/cstdy:@field%28DOCID+qa0042%29> [retrieved 6 October 2010]



independent states, while the other seven shaikhdoms confederated as the United Arab Emirates.

Qatar announced its independence from the United Kingdom on 3 September 1971, a day on which Emir Ahmad bin Ali was at his Swiss villa. Less than 6 months later, Ahmad bin Ali was deposed as emir while he was falcon hunting in Iran.<sup>112</sup> The new emir was Khalifa bin Hamad Al Thani—more than two decades after he was first made heir apparent. The year before Khalifa came to power, the world’s largest natural gas field was discovered in Qatar’s northern offshore waters.<sup>113</sup> It was more than 25 years until these deposits began to generate export revenue. Qatar is today the world’s largest exporter of liquefied natural gas (LNG) and its gas revenues represent a significant portion of the country’s wealth.<sup>114</sup>

## Recent History

During the 1970s and 1980s under Khalifa bin Hamad, Qatar underwent rapid development that brought a large number of expatriate workers into the country, a trend that has continued.<sup>115</sup> In 2008 the Qatari government estimated that 94% of the country’s total work force consisted of non-Qataris.<sup>116</sup>



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Mideast Qatar Arab Summit

Khalifa bin Hamad remained Emir for 23 years. In 1995, his son and heir apparent Hamad bin Khalifa Al Thani deposed Khalifa while he was in Switzerland. Hamad publicly stated at the time of his father’s removal from power, “I am not happy with what has happened, but it had to be done, and I had to do it.”<sup>117</sup> The exact circumstances that triggered the bloodless coup remain a matter of speculation, although it was reported that father and son disagreed over Hamad’s efforts to strengthen ties with Iran and Iraq and to initiate trade contacts with Israel.<sup>118, 119</sup> The following year Hamad became the object of a coup attempt orchestrated by some of his

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112 Federal Research Division, Library of Congress. A Country Study: Qatar. Toth, Anthony. “Chapter 4. Qatar—Government and Politics: The Al Thani.” January 1993. <http://lcweb2.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/r?frd/cstdy:@field%28DOCID+qa0042%29> [retrieved 6 October 2010]

113 World Innovation Summit for Education. “Sponsors: Qatar Petroleum.” No date. <http://www.wise-qatar.org/en/sponsors-footer-list>

114 Energy Information Administration, U.S. Department of Energy. “Qatar: Natural Gas.” December 2009. <http://www.eia.doe.gov/cabs/Qatar/NaturalGas.html>

115 Info-Prod Country Guides. “Qatar.” 1999. <http://www.infoprod.co.il/country/qatar1a.htm>

116 Permanent Population Committee, State of Qatar. “The Population of the State of Qatar 2009.” October 2009.

[http://www.gsdp.gov.qa/portal/page/portal/ppc/PPC\\_home/PPC\\_Publications/studies/](http://www.gsdp.gov.qa/portal/page/portal/ppc/PPC_home/PPC_Publications/studies/)

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father's supporters, although his father denied any involvement.<sup>120</sup> Hamad and his father reconciled in the mid-2000s.<sup>121</sup>

Since Hamad bin Khalifa came to power, Qatar has shed much of its reputation as a Saudi Arabian-dominated lesser player among the Gulf States, and has emerged as an increasingly visible presence within the region.<sup>122</sup> The Qatari government has hosted and been involved in several high-profile peace negotiations, including ongoing talks aimed at ending the Darfur conflict in Sudan.<sup>123, 124</sup> In 1996, Emir Hamad bin Khalifa helped bankroll the start-up of the television news station Al Jazeera, which in over 15 years of broadcasting from its headquarters in Doha has become the most prominent media outlet in the Middle East. Several sports events—most notably the 2006 Asian Games—have drawn attention to the nation. More spotlights will fall on the country in upcoming years as it prepares to host the 2022 World Cup, the premier event of international soccer.<sup>125</sup> Meanwhile, Qatar continues planning on its bid to host the 2020 Summer Olympic Games.<sup>126</sup> Qatar has also become a center of higher education and research in the Gulf with the establishment of Education City, a large complex of universities and research centers affiliated with well-known American educational institutions.<sup>127</sup>

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120 Los Angeles Times. "19 Sentenced to Death for 1996 Coup Attempt." 22 May 2001. <http://articles.latimes.com/2001/may/22/news/mn-1016>

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## History Assessment

1. Wahhabism developed during the Middle Ages.

### False

Wahhabism sprouted from an Islamic reform movement preached by the Muslim scholar Muhammad bin Abd al-Wahhab in the mid-18th century. It spread throughout the Arabian Peninsula through a series of conquests, reaching the Qatar peninsula near the beginning of the 19th century.

2. Qatar's dynastic ruling family is the Al Thani.

### True

On the Qatar peninsula, the Wahhabi religious ideology was embraced by several tribes. One clan ultimately resisted the efforts of the non-Wahhabian Al Khalifah group to retain control over the peninsula. They became known as the Al Thani, the dynasty that rules Qatar to this day.

3. Historically, the British recognized Qatar as a separate entity from Bahrain.

### False

Britain's peace treaties with the Gulf shaikhdoms included one signed by the Al Khalifah shaikh of Bahrain but not tribal representatives of Qatar, because the British viewed Qatar as a dependency of the Al Khalifah dynasty.

4. Qatar was officially recognized as separate from Bahrain in the mid-20th century.

### False

Following skirmishes in 1867 and 1868, a British political agent was sent to Qatar to broker a settlement. Muhammad bin Thani was chosen to represent the eastern Qatari tribes in the negotiations. The resulting treaty formalized for the first time Qatar's political separateness from Bahrain and acknowledged Muhammad bin Thani as the most prominent tribal figure on the peninsula.

5. The Ottoman presence in Qatar was welcomed at the outset.

### True

In 1871, Qatar became a part of the Ottoman Empire. The Ottomans' presence was initially welcomed by Qasim bin Muhammad Al Thani, who likely viewed them as potentially useful and powerful allies against internal and external threats in anticipation of his future succession as ruler of Qatar.

## Chapter 3: Economy

### Introduction

For many years, Qatar was a lesser-known Gulf State overshadowed by its neighbors. Saudi Arabia's immense oil wealth and leading role in OPEC conferred international attention on it, and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) had Abu Dhabi and Dubai, whose vibrant growth seemingly transformed these two emirates overnight into global cities and centers of business, finance, and tourism. But Qatar and its central city Doha seemed lost in the middle—neither as oil rich as Saudi Arabia nor as driven toward economic reinvention and excessive development as the UAE.<sup>128</sup>



© Sam Agnew  
Doha skyline

Natural gas, which for a long time was less valued than oil, brought major changes to the Qatar economy in the 1990s. As natural gas' perceived value has risen as a cleaner, less expensive, and more abundant alternative to oil, Qatar has emerged as a major player in world energy markets.<sup>129</sup> Through development of its natural gas fields (once considered nearly worthless because of the costs and risks of delivering the gas to market), Qatar's rise has been likened to Saudi Arabia's economic ascent several decades earlier, when its expansive oil fields became fully productive.<sup>130</sup>

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128 Denver Post. Swartz, Mimi. "Dubai's Desert Fantasy." 5 April 2009. [http://www.denverpost.com/travel/ci\\_12058457](http://www.denverpost.com/travel/ci_12058457)

129 Gulf Times. Baumann, David. "Cleaner, Cheaper and Abundant." 10 June 2010. [http://gulf-times.com/site/topics/article.asp?cu\\_no=2&item\\_no=369836&version=1&template\\_id=46&parent\\_id=26](http://gulf-times.com/site/topics/article.asp?cu_no=2&item_no=369836&version=1&template_id=46&parent_id=26)

130 New York Times. Romero, Simon. "Natural Gas Powering Qatar Economic Boom." 22 December 2005. <http://www.nytimes.com/2005/12/22/business/worldbusiness/22iht-qatar.html?pagewanted=1&r=1>

## Agriculture

Qatar's hyper-arid climate, which creates desert-like conditions in much of the country, makes agriculture difficult and consequently an insignificant part of the country's overall economy.<sup>131</sup> Less than 1.5% of Qatar's workforce is involved in agriculture, and few of these workers are Qatari nationals.<sup>132,133</sup> With no permanent surface-water resources and a limited, highly erratic rainfall pattern, Qatar's agricultural production requires irrigation using groundwater from aquifers.<sup>134</sup> Roughly 75% of this irrigated water is delivered via flood methods (i.e., dispersed through basins and furrows), which are inefficient compared with sprinklers or drip irrigation.<sup>135</sup>



© Sam Agnew  
Palm tree full of dates

Besides limited water, Qatar's agricultural potential is hampered by a lack of arable land. In 2008, less than 1.1% of its land area was used for agriculture. Even if all potentially arable land in Qatar was put into agricultural production, less than 6% of its territory would be under cultivation.<sup>136</sup> Qatar's most productive soils, known as *rodat*, are scattered in roughly 850 geographic depressions, where rocky debris has accumulated to depths of 30 to 150 cm (14 to 59 in).<sup>137</sup>

Qatar's primary crops include green fodder (mostly alfalfa), vegetables, fruit trees (primarily dates), and barley.<sup>138</sup> Their production is insufficient to feed the nation.<sup>139</sup> Meat provides an important part of the Qatari diet, but most beef, lamb, goat, and chicken is imported.<sup>140</sup> One of the few areas in which Qatar is almost self-sufficient in meeting its needs is fish: emperor fish, groupers, mackerel, and grunt are the primary catch.<sup>141,142</sup>

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131 Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations. Aquastat. "Qatar [p. 311]." 2009. [ftp://ftp.fao.org/agl/aglw/docs/wr34\\_eng.pdf](ftp://ftp.fao.org/agl/aglw/docs/wr34_eng.pdf)

132 Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations. Aquastat. "Qatar [p. 313]." 2009. [ftp://ftp.fao.org/agl/aglw/docs/wr34\\_eng.pdf](ftp://ftp.fao.org/agl/aglw/docs/wr34_eng.pdf)

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135 Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations. Aquastat. "Qatar [p. 316]." 2009. [ftp://ftp.fao.org/agl/aglw/docs/wr34\\_eng.pdf](ftp://ftp.fao.org/agl/aglw/docs/wr34_eng.pdf)

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142 Qatar National Food Security Programme. "Fisheries." 2010. <http://www.qnfsp.gov.qa/programme/agriculture/fisheries>

## Industry

Qatar's oil- and natural gas-based economy is supplemented by a number of large industrial enterprises. Most are in Umm Sa'id (Mesaieed) south of Doha, and in Ras Laffan on the country's northern coast. These sites are, respectively, the locations of Qatar's oil and natural gas processing plants. In Umm Sa'id, several industrial facilities owned or co-owned by Qatar Petroleum produce steel, aluminum, petrochemicals such as low-density polyethylene, fertilizers, plastics, and fuel additives.<sup>143,</sup>

<sup>144</sup> Natural gas is converted to liquefied natural gas (LNG), a product that is ultimately re-gasified but can be shipped without using a pipeline. Ras Laffan's extensive facilities make its port the world's largest exporter of LNG.<sup>145</sup> The Pearl Gas-to-Liquid (GTL) plant at Ras Laffan (currently estimated to open for production in 2012) will provide a new gas-refining option, allowing for the permanent conversion of natural gas into petroleum liquids and lubricants. The Pearl GTL plant (co-developed by Qatar Petroleum and Shell) will be the world's largest such facility, and is the most massive energy project ever built in Qatar. At the height of its construction, 52,000 workers were involved.<sup>146</sup>



© moaksey / flickr.com  
Qatar's Minister of Energy and Industry

Smaller manufacturing concerns in Qatar produce cement and other building materials, sulfuric acid, processed foods, household paper products, power cables, and molded polyethylene water tanks.<sup>147, 148, 149</sup> The vast majority of goods and products for the Qatari consumer market are manufactured elsewhere and imported, as are much of the machinery and materials used by Qatar's construction industry.

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[http://www.industriesqatar.com.qa/IQ/IQ.nsf/1669bfc259d274fd4325721f001cab02/52c97f533cc7a0f24325737d00250492/\\$FILE/IQ Group Profile.pdf](http://www.industriesqatar.com.qa/IQ/IQ.nsf/1669bfc259d274fd4325721f001cab02/52c97f533cc7a0f24325737d00250492/$FILE/IQ%20Group%20Profile.pdf)

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## Energy Resources

Few nations have as abundant a supply of energy resources as Qatar. Its crude oil reserves represent 1.3% of the world's total and, based on recent production levels, these reserves should last for nearly 90 years.<sup>150</sup> A large percentage of Qatar's oil is exported, with Asian countries (led by Japan) being the final destination for most of it. Most of Qatar's offshore oil is transported via pipelines to export terminals at Ras Laffan and Halul Island in the Persian Gulf. The oil from the onshore fields at Dukhan is piped to Umm Sa'id (Musaieed), where it is either refined for domestic use or exported.<sup>151</sup>



© Richard Messenger  
Qatar worker

Qatar's natural gas reserves are the world's third largest, trailing Russia and Iran. Nearly 15% of the world's natural gas resources are held by a country slightly smaller in size than Connecticut.<sup>152</sup> Virtually all of Qatar's natural gas lies in the offshore North Field that crosses the Qatar–Iran maritime border. Until the mid-1990s, Qatar's gas deposits were essentially unexploited. This changed dramatically over a short period of time after LNG facilities in Ras Laffan were constructed. Between 1997 and 2008, Qatar's share of world LNG exports went from none to nearly 15%.<sup>153</sup> Qatar's natural gas operations at Ras Laffan are carried out through two companies: Qatar Liquefied Gas Co. (Qatargas) and Ras Laffan Liquefied Natural Gas Co. (Rasgas), both joint ventures between Qatar Petroleum and international oil and gas companies.<sup>154,155</sup> Another joint venture, the Dolphin Project, delivers North Field natural gas to Ras Laffan, where it is processed and then delivered via an underwater natural-gas pipeline to the UAE.<sup>156</sup>

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## Natural Resources

Qatar's non-hydrocarbon resources primarily consist of by-products of its oil and gas extraction activities. For example, helium from the North Field gas reservoir has become a valuable export, and Qatar is now the third largest producer (behind the United States and Algeria).<sup>157</sup>

Nitrogen is another contaminant of unprocessed natural gas. A large plant in Umm Sa'id extracts this nitrogen, producing ammonia in the process.<sup>158</sup> Much of the ammonia is subsequently

used to manufacture urea—a solid, nitrogen-release fertilizer.<sup>159</sup> Sulfur is another by-product of oil and natural gas processing. Presently, Qatar is exporting some of this sulfur to major markets such as China and India, while also exploring sulfur's use as a replacement ingredient in concrete and asphalt mixtures.<sup>160,161,162</sup>



© Larry Johnson  
Doha steel company

Even though Qatar has no iron ore or bauxite (aluminum ore) reserves, the Qatari government has invested in a large steel plant and aluminum smelter, both located in Umm Sa'id. These facilities require large amounts of energy, which makes Qatar a cost-effective location for the plants because of its abundant, nearby oil supplies. The alumina (refined bauxite) used for the Umm Sa'id aluminum smelter comes from Australia and Brazil, while Brazil, Sweden, and Canada supply the bulk of the iron ore used in the steel plant.<sup>163,164</sup>

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## Trade

Qatar's oil and gas exports assure a consistently positive trade balance that also reflects world energy prices. For example, when oil prices began dropping dramatically in late 2008, Qatar's positive trade balance sharply declined by 40% in 2009.<sup>165, 166</sup> Even though the Qatari government has focused on diversifying the economy, approximately 85% of export revenues and 70% of all governmental revenues come from oil and gas shipments.<sup>167</sup> Qatar's leading exports, excluding oil and gas, were mostly all hydrocarbon-based as well: organic chemicals, plastics, and fertilizers produced from nitrogen obtained during the refining process.



© Dan A'Vard  
Oil pump

Qatar runs a deficit in virtually every other category of merchandise trade.<sup>168</sup> Most food items, manufactured capital and consumer goods, and basic raw materials must be imported. About one third of these come from the European Union. Japan, the United States, and China make up another 25% or so of Qatar's imports.<sup>169</sup>

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## Tourism

Tourism has become an integral part of Qatar's economy. In 2009, about one million visitors arrived in Qatar, and this number is expected to increase by 20% in 2010. Business travelers have traditionally been Qatar's core tourists, but recent promotional efforts have targeted leisure travelers for conferences or short stays on long-distance stopovers.<sup>170,171</sup> This tourism sector, known as MICE (meetings, incentive travel, conferences, exhibitions) within the travel industry, has been bolstered through extensive European and Asian promotion and ongoing construction of four and five-star hotels clustered along the Doha waterfront. Between 2008 and 2009, the number of hotel rooms in the city increased by 25% to nearly 8,500, and was projected to increase another 55% during 2010.<sup>172</sup> This rapid increase in visitor accommodations is timed for the opening of the USD 1.2 billion Qatar National Convention Centre in 2011.<sup>173</sup> International sporting events, including the 2006 Asian Games and annual professional tennis and golf tournaments, have also raised the tourism profile of Doha, as have new events and cultural facilities.<sup>174</sup> Among the most noteworthy of these is the striking new Museum of Islamic Art (designed by renowned architect I. M. Pei), which in a short time has become the centerpiece of Doha's waterfront.<sup>175, 176</sup>



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Doha Sheraton

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## Banking and Currency

Qatar's national currency, the Qatari *riyal* (symbol: QR) is fixed relative to the U.S. dollar (USD) at a rate of 1 USD = 3.64 QR.<sup>177</sup> When the dollar is trading low relative to other currencies, the dollar-pegged *riyal* is susceptible to inflation pressures as the cost of non-U.S. imports goes up. This scenario happened in 2007–2008, when Qatar's inflation rate exceeded 14% for several economic quarters. The Qatari government responded by putting price controls into place, raising public sector salaries, cutting import duties, and performing several other stop-gap measures.<sup>178</sup> But by 2009, as the Qatari real estate market quickly cooled and consumer demand slackened, Qatar's inflation rate abruptly collapsed into deflation. While rumors have periodically swirled through the Middle East financial community that Qatar and the other Gulf States that fix their currency to the dollar might adjust the pegged value or even delink from the dollar, most economists view this as unlikely.<sup>179,180,181</sup>



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ATM

The Central Bank in Qatar (Qatar Central Bank) manages monetary policy and foreign exchange reserves, issues the domestic currency, regulates the Qatari banking industry, and functions as the bank for the government of Qatar.<sup>182</sup> Within Qatar, national banks hold roughly 93% of all Qatari banking assets and a similar percentage of total deposits, with the remainder held by foreign-owned banks. The three largest banks are Qatar National Bank, Commercial Bank of Qatar, and Doha Bank, which held a combined 62% market share of total assets in 2009.<sup>183</sup>

One of the fastest growing areas of banking in Qatar is the Islamic banking sector, which employs financial instruments for investment and finance that are Shariah-compliant, avoiding interest payments. In lieu of interest, banks arrange leasing arrangements tied to a physical asset or service rendered. The bank purchases a property or pays for a service, and the customer subsequently pays the bank for the use of the property or the rendered

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service.<sup>184</sup> In 2005, a little less than 13% of Qatari financing activities were handled by Islamic banks, but that had increased to 19% by 2009.<sup>185</sup>

## Investment

Qatar is a major worldwide investor, with many investments carried out through subsidiaries of the Qatar Investment Authority (QIA), the country's sovereign wealth fund. The QIA, with assets estimated between USD 85 billion and USD 100 billion, was established in 2003 to direct the nation's energy wealth into diversified investments such as banks, real estate, retail establishments (most famously, the London high-end department store Harrods), industries, and other businesses.<sup>186</sup> During the worldwide financial crisis of 2008, the QIA acquired significant equity positions in two high-profile European banks—Barclays Bank of England and Credit Suisse of Switzerland—that were struggling under the credit crunch.<sup>187,188</sup> The following year, Qatar Holding (the QIA's primary investment arm) purchased minority ownership stakes of over 10% in the German automobile makers Porsche and Volkswagen while the two companies were negotiating final terms of a merger.<sup>189,190</sup> In November 2009, the QIA's real estate investment subsidiary purchased the U.S. Embassy building in the Grosvenor Square area of London, which the U.S. government plans to vacate when a new embassy building finishes construction in 2016 or 2017.<sup>191</sup>



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Doha Bank

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## Transportation

Qatar has a modern road system that links Doha with all significantly populated parts of the country via mostly two-lane dual highways. Doha, which continues to sprawl inland from the coast, is partly encircled by a set of ring roads that are steadily being increased and are named alphabetically. (The F-Ring and G-Ring Roads are currently under construction and in planning, respectively.)<sup>192, 193</sup> The D-Ring Road is being upgraded to an expressway, and is seen as a major transportation link between the northern and southern parts of the capital.<sup>194</sup> Buses and taxis are presently the only form of public transportation within Doha.



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Qatar Airlines

Qatar has no rail system, but an ambitious integrated rail project is in the planning stages. If fully realized, this project would include a freight-and-passenger rail line linking Doha with Ras Laffan to the north and Umm Sa'id to the south, a metro network for Doha consisting of four lines and nearly 100 stations, and a high-speed rail system connecting Doha's new international airport to the city center and ultimately to Bahrain via a causeway bridge.<sup>195</sup> Construction on the 40-km (25-mi) causeway to Bahrain, dubbed the "friendship bridge," was to have begun in 2010, but was put on hold due to "escalating costs and diplomatic tensions."<sup>196, 197</sup> The diplomatic dispute most likely involves Bahraini requests for rent from Qatar for use of the Hawar Islands.<sup>198</sup>

Qatar's international airport at Doha is the small country's only commercial airport. Doha International Airport has experienced a rapid increase in passenger traffic and cargo handled over the years and has strained to keep up through expansions. In 2011 or 2012, the New Doha International Airport will open a few kilometers east of the current airport with an initial capacity of 24 million passengers per year.<sup>199, 200</sup> Qatar Airways (QA), the

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nation's flagship airline, is the primary air carrier operating out of Doha and has flights to 100 cities worldwide.<sup>201</sup> The airline's expansion has been impressive: In 1997, QA had four aircraft, but as of 2009, it had 70, with orders placed for 220 more, including 3 Airbus A380 super-jumbo jets.<sup>202</sup>

Qatar has three major ports. Ras Laffan is the nation's hub for LNG exports, while Umm Sa'id (Mesaieed) handles oil and other exports flowing out of that industrial city. Doha is the third port and has traditionally been the primary one for imports. The Doha port has become somewhat hemmed in by all the development going on around the city's waterfront, and thus a new Doha port is being planned for a site just north of Umm Sa'id.<sup>203</sup>

## Standard of Living

By the most commonly used measure of standard of living—real gross domestic product (GDP) per capita—Qatar enjoys the world's second highest standard of living, only exceeded by the tiny European principality of Liechtenstein. The United States has a GDP per capita that is less than 40% of Qatar's.<sup>204</sup> However, by another measure of standard of living—the United Nations Development Programme's Human Development Index (HDI)—Qatar ranks 38th in the world. The reason for the disparity between these two rankings is that the HDI incorporates educational and life-expectancy metrics in which Qatar generally scores lower than the most-developed countries of Europe, East Asia, North America, and Australasia.<sup>205</sup>



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Young man

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Qatar has been described as an “all-embracing welfare state,” in which most social services are either provided outright or heavily subsidized by the government.<sup>206</sup> Among Qatari nationals, the nation’s wealth is relatively evenly distributed, so that poverty among Qataris is nearly inconceivable. For Qatar’s burgeoning expatriate population, its largest group, pay is comparatively high and tax free, and they receive many of the same social subsidies granted to Qatari nationals. Foreign workers in Qatar generally work on contracts extended by their employers who, as the workers’ sponsors, retain great leverage over the extension of work permits and the ability of their workers to move from one job to another.<sup>207</sup>

## Organizations

Qatar is a member of the Cooperative Council for the Arab States of the Gulf, better known as the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC). This six-member body consists of all the states on the Arabian Peninsula side of the Persian Gulf: Qatar, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, the United Arab Emirates, and Oman. Since 2008, the GCC has been a common market that extends relatively unfettered freedom of movement, residency, and employment to citizens of the GCC nations—similar to the European Union.<sup>208</sup> Ambitious plans to establish an economic union among the GCC states, including a common currency, unified laws and regulations related to business investment, and a common aviation policy, are still under negotiation and likely to be several years away at least.<sup>209</sup>



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Gulf Initiative Ministerial meeting

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## Economy Assessment

1. Qatar has a port that is the world's largest exporter of liquefied natural gas (LNG).

**True**

At the port at Ras Laffan, natural gas is converted to liquefied natural gas (LNG), a product that is ultimately re-gasified but can be shipped without using a pipeline. Ras Laffan's extensive facilities make its port the world's largest exporter of LNG.

2. Qatar must import most of the goods intended for its consumer market.

**True**

The vast majority of goods and products for the Qatari consumer market are manufactured elsewhere and imported, as are much of the machinery and materials used by Qatar's construction industry.

3. Qatar has the world's second largest natural gas reserves.

**False**

Qatar's natural gas reserves are the world's third largest, trailing Russia and Iran. Nearly 15% of the world's natural gas resources are held by a country slightly smaller in size than Connecticut.

4. Japan is the leading purchaser of Qatar's oil exports.

**True**

A large percentage of Qatar's oil is exported, with Asian countries (led by Japan) being the final destination for most of it.

5. Qatar's export and governmental revenues reflect its well diversified economy.

**False**

Even though the Qatari government has focused on diversifying the economy, approximately 85% of export revenues and 70% of all governmental revenues come from oil and gas shipments. Almost all of Qatar's leading exports, excluding oil and gas, were hydrocarbon-based as well.



## Chapter 4: Society

### Introduction

Qatari societal norms have evolved from tribal and Islamic traditions common to much of the coastal regions of the Arabian Peninsula. Until the second half of the 20th century, outside influences came primarily from encounters with the British, although these were mostly limited to administrative matters.<sup>210</sup> The subsequent explosion of development accompanying Qatar's emergence as a global leader in hydrocarbon production has brought major changes to the country's social fabric. The question of how Qatar can preserve traditions while experiencing rapid population growth (from an increasing number of foreign workers) creates an ongoing tension. Qatar's recent large-scale infrastructure investment to make it an international destination has also heightened these concerns. A recent government document outlining Qatar's National Vision 2030 listed five of the country's main challenges over the next two decades. One was finding a proper balance between modernization and traditional values, while another was preserving national identity within a rapidly escalating expatriate work force.<sup>211</sup>



© Larry Johnson  
Drinking coffee

### Ethnic and National Groups

Qataris are a minority population within their own country. Results of the 2010 census revealed that only a little over 11% of Qatar's population age 10 or older were Qatari nationals.<sup>212</sup> The remainder consists of foreign workers and their families. Estimates of the breakdown of Qatar's foreign population by country of origin vary widely, because the census does not delineate the non-Qatari population. Nonetheless, all estimates converge on the finding that a large percentage of Qatar's foreign workers come from South Asian countries—in particular, India, Pakistan, Nepal, Sri Lanka, and Bangladesh.<sup>213</sup> Workers from the Philippines, Iran, Egypt, and Jordan/Palestine also make up major immigrant populations within Qatar.<sup>214</sup>



© Richard Messenger  
Doha workers

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210 Qatar Chamber of Commerce and Industry. "Historical Notes of Qatar." 2007. [http://www.qcci.org/English/About\\_Qatar/Pages/history.aspx](http://www.qcci.org/English/About_Qatar/Pages/history.aspx)

211 General Secretariat for Planning Development, State of Qatar. "Qatar National Vision 2030 [pp. 2–4]." [http://www.investinqatar.com.qa/about/qatar\\_vision](http://www.investinqatar.com.qa/about/qatar_vision)

212 Qatar Statistics Authority. "Populations: Population 10 Years of Age and Over by Municipality, Nationality, Sex and Educational Attainment." 2010. <http://www.qsa.gov.qa/QatarCensus/Pdf/Population%2010%20years%20of%20age%20and%20over%20by%20municipality,%20nationality,%20sex%20and%20educational%20attainment.pdf>

213 Today's Zaman. Orhan, Saim. "Land of Foreigners: Qatar." 29 July 2010. <http://todayzaman.com/news-217484-land-of-foreigners-qatar.html>

214 Department of Economic and Social Affairs, United Nations Secretariat. Kapiszewski, Andrej. "Arab Versus Asian Migrant Workers in the GCC Countries [p. 10]." 15–17 May 2006. [http://www.un.org/esa/population/meetings/EGM\\_Iitmig\\_Arab/P02\\_Kapiszewski.pdf](http://www.un.org/esa/population/meetings/EGM_Iitmig_Arab/P02_Kapiszewski.pdf)

All Qataris are considered Arabs, but the Qatari population contains social distinctions not noticeable to outsiders and not publically discussed by Qataris. Some Qatari families have been settled in Qatari coastal cities for several generations. These *Hadar* families are socially distinct from the *Bedu* (Bedouin) population of Qatar. The latter group comprises the descendants of nomads who have been settled in Qatar for less time (mostly since the discovery of oil in the 1930s). While no true Bedouin culture exists within Qatar anymore, the *Bedu* still identify with their nomadic predecessors. Other social groupings are the *Ajam*, descendants of Persian merchants and craftsmen who migrated to Qatar during famines in Persia (modern-day Iran); and the *Abd*, a small group of Qataris who have blood ties to the African slaves that once were transported to the Persian Gulf from slave ports in Oman and Zanzibar. Within the *Ajam*, a further distinction exists for the *Hawla* (Irani-Qataris), whose families have historic links to Arabia (before moving to Persia and ultimately back to the Arab coast).<sup>215</sup> Sometimes the terms *Hawla* and *Hadar* are used interchangeably, but some *Hadar* are descendants of Bedouins who settled in Qatari cities much earlier than the *Bedu*.<sup>216</sup>

## Languages

Modern Standard Arabic is the official language of Qatar and is used in formal communication and in most written materials. It is the form of Arabic taught in schools.<sup>217</sup> Gulf (or *Khaleeji*) Arabic, a colloquial version of the language that is used only in oral communication, is the most commonly spoken, Qatari nationals and foreigners from other Gulf States are its primary speakers. Because of the many workers from other parts of the Middle East, other dialects of Arabic (e.g. Egyptian and Levantine) are also spoken.<sup>218</sup>



© Richard Messenger  
Communication between workers

Qatar's many foreign workers from outside the Middle East speak a variety of languages, reflecting the native languages of their places of origin. These languages are spoken locally—generally between speakers of the same native language—but they are not used in broader social contexts. English is the primary foreign language for cross-cultural communication. In recent years, English language instruction has become a standard of the curriculum in Qatari independent schools, which are reform-oriented, government-funded schools that receive greater educational autonomy (similar to U.S. public charter schools). Since 2003, over 100 such schools have opened in Qatar.<sup>219</sup>

215 Urban Studies, Vol. 43, No. 119. Nagy, Sharon. "Making Room for Migrants, Making Sense of Difference: Spatial and Ideological Expressions of Social Diversity in Urban Qatar [pp. 127–135]." January 2006. <http://ipac.kacst.edu.sa/eDoc/eBook/4425.pdf>

216 Everyculture.com. "Qatar: Orientation: Identification." No date. <http://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Qatar.html>

217 Encyclopædia Britannica Online. "Qatar: People: Ethnic Groups and Languages." 2010. <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/485603/Qatar>

218 LookLex.com. "Qatar: Languages." No date. <http://looklex.com/e.o/qatar.languages.htm>

219 Supreme Education Council, State of Qatar. "Independent Schools." 2005. <http://www.english.education.gov.qa/schools/EISsearch.htm>

## Religion

Qatar is an Islamic nation, and virtually all Qatari citizens are Muslims.<sup>220</sup> Most Qataris are Sunni Muslims, while anywhere from fewer than 5% or up to 25% are followers of the Shi'a sect.<sup>221,222</sup> Almost all the Qatari Shi'a are *Ajam*, descendants of Shi'a who emigrated from Persia (Iran). The *Bedu*, on the other hand, are Sunni adherents.<sup>223</sup>



© Alexander Sehmer  
Friday prayers

Qatar is one of two countries where the majority of Sunnis follow the teachings of Muhammad bin Abd Al Wahhab (Saudi Arabia is the other).<sup>224</sup> Wahabbism, a name for these doctrines used outside the Arabian Peninsula, takes a highly conservative interpretation of proper Islamic beliefs and practices. It emphasizes the “fundamentals” of Islam, as found in the Quran, the descriptions of the life of the Prophet Muhammad and the two generations of early Muslims who followed him.<sup>225, 226</sup> Wahabbism in Qatar is generally more tolerant than in Saudi Arabia. For example, it allowed the construction of a Roman Catholic Church in Doha in 2008, which serves a growing Christian community among the country’s foreign workforce. (Additional churches have since been opened or are under construction.)<sup>227</sup> Meanwhile, Saudi Arabia continues to ban churches and any public expressions of non-Islamic worship.<sup>228</sup> Qatar does not have any equivalent to Saudi Arabia’s Commission for the Protection of Virtue and Suppression of Vice, the religious police (known locally as the *mutaween*) who patrol Saudi cities for violations of Sharia law.<sup>229</sup>

While other religions such as Christianity, Hinduism, and Buddhism have adherents in Qatar, virtually all practitioners of these faiths are foreigners. The Qatari constitution allows for private worship and bans discrimination based on religious affiliation.

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220 Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs, U.S. State Department. “Background Note: Qatar.” 22 September 2010. <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/5437.htm>

221 Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor, U.S. State Department. International Religious Freedom Report 2010. “Qatar.” 17 November 2010. <http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/irf/2010/148841.htm>

222 Urban Studies, Vol. 43, No. 119. Nagy, Sharon. “Making Room for Migrants, Making Sense of Difference: Spatial and Ideological Expressions of Social Diversity in Urban Qatar [p. 130].” January 2006. <http://ipac.kacst.edu.sa/eDoc/eBook/4425.pdf>

223 Urban Studies, Vol. 43, No. 119. Nagy, Sharon. “Making Room for Migrants, Making Sense of Difference: Spatial and Ideological Expressions of Social Diversity in Urban Qatar [pp. 128–130].” January 2006. <http://ipac.kacst.edu.sa/eDoc/eBook/4425.pdf>

224 Engaging the Muslim World. Cole, Juan. “The Wahhabi Myth: From Riyadh to Doha [p. 106].” 2009. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

225 Federation of American Scientists. Congressional Research Service. Blanchard, Christopher. “The Islamic Traditions of Wahhabism and Salafiyya.” 24 January 2008. <http://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/misc/RS21695.pdf>

226 GlobalSecurity.org. “Salafi Islam.” 2010. <http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/intro/islam-salafi.htm>

227 Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor, U.S. State Department. International Religious Freedom Report 2010. “Qatar.” 17 November 2010. <http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/irf/2010/148841.htm>

228 Al Jazeera. Khatri, Shabina S. “Qatar Opens First Church, Quietly.” 20 June 2008. <http://english.aljazeera.net/news/middleeast/2008/03/2008525173738882540.html>

229 Time.com. MacLeod, Scott. “Vice Squad.” 26 July 2007. <http://www.time.com/time/magazine/article/0,9171,1647239-1,00.html>

Proselytizing by non-Muslims, however, is forbidden and can result in prison terms of up to 10 years.<sup>230</sup>

## Gender Issues

Qatar, like most Gulf States, has long been near the bottom of surveys measuring gender gaps in nations of the world.<sup>231</sup>

However, some measures in such surveys can mask underlying trends for countries such as Qatar, in which a high percentage of the population consists of (mostly male) foreign workers. For example, the percentage of Qatari women in the work force has more than doubled over the last two decades, despite the rapid increase of male foreign workers in Qatar's booming construction sector. Many of the barriers that made Qatari women's participation in the work force more difficult have been partially or totally eliminated through new policies and laws implemented since 1997. Recently, the number of Qatari women entering the work force each year reached a level comparable to that of Qatari men.<sup>232</sup> Employment opportunities for Qatari women have traditionally been in the fields of education and health care, or as clerical workers in other professions.<sup>233, 234</sup>



© ict QATAR  
Dr. Hessa Al Jaber  
Secretary General

In terms of educational achievement, Qatari women have surpassed their counterparts. More Qatari girls now graduate from secondary school than boys, and a much higher percentage of post-secondary (i.e. college) students enrolled in Qatar are female.<sup>235</sup> The president of Qatar University, the country's largest post-secondary school, is a woman (Shaika Abdulla Al Misnad).<sup>236</sup> Education City, a new campus consisting of branches of six American universities offering graduate and undergraduate degrees, provides coeducational, English-based instruction in several technical and specialized fields. The student body of most of these Education City branches is predominantly female, although to date Qatari nationals are still a minority of the campus student population.<sup>237</sup>

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230 Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor, U.S. State Department. International Religious Freedom Report 2010. "Qatar." 17 November 2010. <http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/irf/2010/148841.htm>

231 World Economic Forum. Hausmann, Ricardo, Laura D. Tyson and Saadia Zahidi. The Global Gender Gap Report 2010. "Qatar 2010 [p. 256]." <http://www.weforum.org/pdf/gendergap/report2010.pdf>

232 RAND-Qatar Policy Institute. Felder, Dell, and Mirka Vuollo. "Qatari Women in the Workforce [pp. 5, 11]." August 2008. [http://www.rand.org/pubs/working\\_papers/2008/RAND\\_WR612.pdf](http://www.rand.org/pubs/working_papers/2008/RAND_WR612.pdf)

233 RAND-Qatar Policy Institute. Brewer, Dominic J., et al. "Education For a New Era: Design and Implementation of K-12 Education Reform [p. 20]." 2007.

234 RAND-Qatar Policy Institute. Felder, Dell, and Mirka Vuollo. "Qatari Women in the Workforce [p. 15]." August 2008. [http://www.rand.org/pubs/working\\_papers/2008/RAND\\_WR612.pdf](http://www.rand.org/pubs/working_papers/2008/RAND_WR612.pdf)

235 RAND-Qatar Policy Institute. Felder, Dell, and Mirka Vuollo. "Qatari Women in the Workforce [p. 7]." August 2008. [http://www.rand.org/pubs/working\\_papers/2008/RAND\\_WR612.pdf](http://www.rand.org/pubs/working_papers/2008/RAND_WR612.pdf)

236 Qatar University. "The President's Office: Biography." 1 December 2010. <http://www.qu.edu.qa/offices/president/biography.php>

237 MEED.com. "Qatar Education City's Key Institutions." 18 September 2009. <http://www.meed.com/supplements/2009/qatar-education-city/qatar-education-citys-key-institutions/3000797.article>



As Qatar tries to increase the percentage of Qatari nationals in its work force, a policy initiative known as Qatarization, Qatari women play an important role. Professions that were once largely closed to women (such as doctors, police officers, and lawyers) as well as university programs once only enrolling male students are beginning to open for enrollment of either gender. Such new opportunities seem to reflect changing attitudes concerning career choices. For example, a survey of Qatari secondary school graduates in 2006 found that 11% of the female graduates were interested in engineering as a profession—nearly three times the percentage of Qatari boys interested in that technical field.<sup>238</sup>

## Traditional Dress

While Qatar has become accepting of some Western cultural attitudes and styles, men and women in the country continue to follow traditional practices concerning daily dress in public. Most women, when outside their homes, wear an *abaya*, a head-to-toe, long-sleeved, loose-fitting overdress that is traditionally black.

Fashionable trim and embellishments adorn many of these garments. Women's heads are wrapped by a rectangular headscarf known as a *shayla* (or, colloquially, *sheila*) and their faces are sometimes covered by a veil (*niqab*).<sup>239</sup> Qatari men traditionally wear a collared white robe, usually made from cotton, known as a *thobe*. The head is adorned by a *ghutra*, a white (or, sometimes, checkered red and white) square piece of cloth that is folded into a triangle. A crocheted circular head cap known as a *taqiyah* is worn beneath the *ghutra*, which is held on the head by a doubled-banded cord (the *oghaal*).<sup>240, 241, 242</sup>



© Richard Messenger  
Reading the Koran

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238 RAND-Qatar Policy Institute. Felder, Dell, and Mirka Vuollo. "Qatari Women in the Workforce [pp. 16–17]." August 2008.

[http://www.rand.org/pubs/working\\_papers/2008/RAND\\_WR612.pdf](http://www.rand.org/pubs/working_papers/2008/RAND_WR612.pdf)

239 QatarVisitor.com. Abdelaal, Youssa. "Culture: Abayas: What Lies Beneath." 2000. <http://www.qatarvisitor.com/index.php?cID=412&pID=1449#abayafashion>

240 QatarVisitor.com. "Culture: Qatar Clothing." 2000. <http://www.qatarvisitor.com/index.php?cID=412&pID=985>

241 Qatar Museums Authority. "Costumes, Textiles and Jewellery [sic]: Men's Clothes." 2010. [http://www.qma.com.qa/eng/index.php/qma/collections\\_subsection/5](http://www.qma.com.qa/eng/index.php/qma/collections_subsection/5)

242 Culture and Customs of the Arab Gulf States. Torstrick, Rebecca L., and Elizabeth Faier. "Chapter 5: Food, Dress, and Personal Adornment [pp. 102–104]." 2009. Westport, CT: Greenwood Press.

## Arts

### Music

Before Qatar experienced the rush of wealth from its oil and natural-gas reserves, pearl diving was the primary economic pursuit on the peninsula. As boats were rowed out to the pearling banks or while the crew carried out its tasks, singers known as *nahhams* led group singing. Songs during working periods were rhythmic and featured short musical cycles. Longer, slower songs were sung during the return from the pearling banks, and had lyrics that retold local legends. Today, the songs of the *nahhams* are part of the musical heritage of Qatar and other former pearling regions of the Gulf, and can be heard primarily on recordings and in cultural museums.<sup>243, 244, 245</sup>



© Omar Chatriwala  
Live music

A more contemporary form of music popular in Qatar and elsewhere in the Gulf is *Khaleeji*. Using a pentatonic (five-tone) scale, this form of music is a mix of influences from the Arab Bedouin to east African, Iranian, and Indian.<sup>246</sup> The instrumentation for Khaleeji music typically features the *oud*, a fretless 11-stringed instrument with a pear-shaped sound box and a peghead jutting away from the instrument's neck at a 45–90° angle. Double-headed drums (*tabl*) and hand clapping mark the music's distinctive rhythms, while violins often provide the accompaniment in the musical interludes, in which the singer or *oud* player is not spotlighted. Modern Khaleeji music may also include non-traditional instruments, such as synthesizers.<sup>247</sup>

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243 Saudi Aramco World. Khoury, Eileen. "Servants of the Pearl." September/October 1990.

<http://www.saudiaramcoworld.com/issue/199005/servants.of.the.pearl.htm>

244 AfroPop.org. Braude, Joseph. "Africans in the Arabian Gulf." May 2006. <http://www.afropop.org/multi/feature/ID/692/Africans+in+the+Arabian+Gulf>

245 Culture and Customs of the Arab Gulf States. Torstrick, Rebecca L., and Elizabeth Faier. "Chapter 8: Music and Dance [p. 147]." 2009. Westport, CT: Greenwood Press.

246 Culture and Customs of the Arab Gulf States. Torstrick, Rebecca L., and Elizabeth Faier. "Chapter 8: Music and Dance [pp. 142–143]." 2009. Westport, CT: Greenwood Press.

247 Saudi Arabia and the Gulf Arab States Today: An Encyclopedia of Life in the Arab States, Vols. 1, 2. Maisel, Sebastian, and John A. Shoup. "Music: Traditional and Contemporary [pp. 315–317]." 2009. Westport, CT: Greenwood Press.

## Dance

One of the most widely performed dances on the Arabian Peninsula is the *ardah*, which in Qatar celebrates the country's Bedouin traditions. In the past, the *ardah* was performed before going into battle, but today it is usually performed at weddings and other significant ceremonial events. While many variations of the *ardah* exist, the Qatari *ardha* typically begins with a series of chants from two facing rows of men. Often these chants concern the tribes from which the men descend. This part of the *ardha* is followed by the *razeef*, a processional in which boys and men holding swords or camel sticks sway back and forth, waving their swords or sticks to the beat of the music.<sup>248, 249</sup>



© mr\_smee44 / flickr.com  
Sword dance

## Sports and Recreation

Qatar has become a sporting-events hub, hosting high-profile events in golf, tennis, motor racing, and other international sports.<sup>250, 251</sup> Football (soccer) is as popular here as in most of the world. Qatar was announced as the host of the 2022 World Cup, the premier international event in soccer.<sup>252</sup> Beyond these sports, many Qataris enjoy other outdoor activities that carry strong ties to the nation's not-so-ancient past.



© Alexander Sehmer  
Camel racing

Qatari's traditional sports and outdoor activities include falconry, camel racing, and horse racing. Falconry originated in the Arabian Desert as a form of hunting, and prized falcons are still trained to hunt under the command of their human owners. Today, such hunting may take place thousands of miles away in other countries such as Pakistan, where hunting permits for the falcons' favorite prey—the houbara bustard—are still sold each year. (Most houbara bustards in Qatar have long since been hunted to the brink of extinction.)<sup>253</sup>

Camel racing's attraction for many Qataris lies in its connections to Bedouin culture, similar to falconry. Most camel races today at the main track west of Doha use robot

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248 Saudi Arabia and the Gulf Arab States Today: An Encyclopedia of Life in the Arab States, Vols. 1, 2. Maisel, Sebastian, and John A. Shoup. "Music: Traditional and Contemporary [p. 314]." 2009. Westport, CT: Greenwood Press.

249 QatarVisitor.com. Adelaal, Yousra. "Dancing the Ardha at a Qatar Wedding." 2000. <http://www.qatarvisitor.com/index.php?cID=412&pID=1429>

250 Qatar Tourism Authority. "Sports: Related Events." 2010. <http://www.qatartourism.gov.qa/pillars/index/1/sports/256>

251 Middle East Hub. "Football in Qatar." No date. <http://www.middleeasthub.com/qatar/sports/football-in-qatar.html>

252 BBC Sport. "Russia and Qatar Will Host the 2018 and 2022 World Cups." 2 December 2010. <http://news.bbc.co.uk/sport2/hi/football/9250612.stm>

253 QatarVisitor.com. "Arabian Falconry: Hunting With Falcons in Qatar and the Gulf." 2000. <http://www.qatarvisitor.com/index.php?cID=430&pID=1324>



jockeys, a transition made a few years ago to help eliminate the exploitative use of child jockeys. Only two races are held each year in which human jockeys, all over the age of 18, can participate.<sup>254, 255</sup> But out in the desert, away from the race track, it is not uncommon to still see camels being ridden by their human owners.<sup>256</sup>

Qatar has long hosted different equestrian events, including horse racing. Many of these events feature purebred Arabians, the fabled steeds of the Bedouins. The Arabians are noted for their intelligence, endurance, and fierce spirit, characteristics that made the breed invaluable under harsh desert conditions.

Many Qataris living in Doha venture into the desert regions or to the coastal areas for leisure activities. Large tents, reminiscent of the most lavish Bedouin encampments, or village homes in the desert may function as weekend retreats for urban Qataris.<sup>257,258,259</sup> In town, Doha's air-conditioned, Western-style malls and its more traditional Arab markets (*souqs*) provide an alternative getaway for Qatari shoppers.<sup>260</sup>

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254 QatarVisitor.com. "Things to See & Do: Camel Racing." 2000. <http://www.qatarvisitor.com/index.php?cID=415&pID=1049>

255 QatarHappening.com. "Camel Racing." 3 February 2009. <http://www.qatarhappening.com/close-encounters/details.aspx?id=23>

256 Catnaps.org. Lockerbie, John. "Society—Page 2: Leisure." 2010. <http://www.catnaps.org/islamic/society2.html>

257 Everyculture.com. "Qatar: Urbanism, Architecture, and the Use of Space." No date. <http://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Qatar.html>

258 Catnaps.org. Lockerbie, John. "Society—Page 2: Leisure." 2010. <http://www.catnaps.org/islamic/society2.html>

259 Qatar: Enchantment of the World. Willis, Terri. "Chapter 10: A Life in the Sand [p. 126]." New York: Children's Press.

260 Scribd.com. "Doha City Guide: Shopping in Qatar." No date. <http://www.scribd.com/doc/13968319/Shopping-in-DOHA-Qatar>

## **Society Assessment**

1. Qataris make up the majority of the population in Qatar.

**False**

Qataris are a minority population within their own country. Results of the 2010 census revealed that only a little over 11% of Qatar's population age 10 or older were Qatari nationals.

2. All Qataris are considered Arabs.

**True**

All Qataris are considered Arabs, but the Qatari population contains social distinctions not noticeable to outsiders and not publicly discussed by Qataris.

3. Qatar's official language is Modern Standard Arabic.

**True**

Modern Standard Arabic is the official language of Qatar and is used in formal communication and in most written materials.

4. English is becoming more common as a language of instruction in Qatar.

**True**

In recent years, English language instruction has become a standard of the curriculum in Qatari independent schools, which are reform-oriented, government-funded schools that receive greater educational autonomy.

5. The majority of all Qataris are Muslim.

**True**

Qatar is an Islamic nation, and virtually all Qatari citizens are Muslims.

## Chapter 5: Security

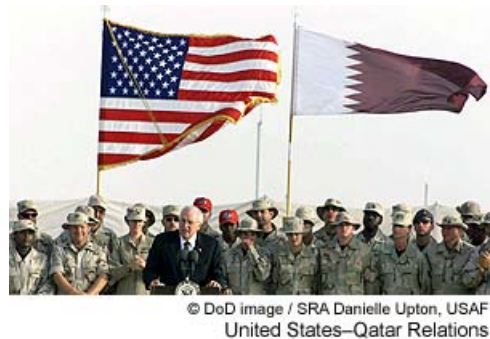
### Introduction

As a small, wealthy nation with increasingly extensive infrastructure and a limited military, Qatar cannot afford to have enemies. A hallmark of Qatar's foreign policy has been its cordial (if not always close) relations with numerous nations that are at odds with one another but find common ground with Qatar. Even Israel, which has been shunned by most nations of the Persian Gulf, had trade relations with Qatar for over a decade until a falling out in late 2008 during the three-week war between Hamas and Israel in Gaza.<sup>261</sup>



### United States–Qatar Relations

Although the United States has had an embassy in Doha since 1973, relations were lukewarm until 1991. During the Persian Gulf War of that year, Qatar allowed international coalition forces to be deployed from its territory. During the war, Qatari forces played a significant role in helping the Saudi Arabian army repel an attack on the town of Kafji. A year after fighting ended, the United States and Qatar signed a defense cooperation agreement, beginning a close military relationship that continues to this day.<sup>262</sup> In 2003, the Al Udeid Air Base southwest of Doha became the new U.S. Combat Air Operations Center for the Middle East, replacing the Prince Sultan airbase in Saudi Arabia.<sup>263</sup> During the Iraq War, Qatar served as the headquarters for the U.S. Central Command, and the U.S.-constructed Camp As Sayliyah continues to be used as a hub for military to transport equipment and armor before positioning them.<sup>264,265</sup>



Beyond military ties, the United States has strong economic relations with Qatar, particularly in the oil and gas arenas. U.S.-headquartered companies such as

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261 CNN.com. Flower, Kevin. "Israel-Qatar Relations Snag over Gaza Aid." 20 May 2010. [http://articles.cnn.com/2010-05-20/world/israel.qatar\\_1\\_qatari-israeli-government-hamas?\\_s=PM:WORLD](http://articles.cnn.com/2010-05-20/world/israel.qatar_1_qatari-israeli-government-hamas?_s=PM:WORLD)

262 Congressional Research Service. Blanchard, Christopher M. "Qatar: Background and U.S. Relations [p. 12]." 5 May 2010. <http://www.dtic.mil/cgi-bin/GetTRDoc?AD=ADA520652&Location=U2&doc=GetTRDoc.pdf>

263 Congressional Research Service. Blanchard, Christopher M. "Qatar: Background and U.S. Relations [p. 14]." 5 May 2010. <http://www.dtic.mil/cgi-bin/GetTRDoc?AD=ADA520652&Location=U2&doc=GetTRDoc.pdf>

264 Congressional Research Service. Blanchard, Christopher M. "Qatar: Background and U.S. Relations [p. 17]." 5 May 2010. <http://www.dtic.mil/cgi-bin/GetTRDoc?AD=ADA520652&Location=U2&doc=GetTRDoc.pdf>

265 GlobalSecurity.org. "Camp As Sayliyah." 2000–2010. <http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/facility/camp-as-sayliyah.htm>

ExxonMobil, Occidental Petroleum, and Pennzoil have been involved in the development of Qatar's hydrocarbon resources. Educational ties have recently been established through the creation of Education City, which houses Qatari branches of several American universities. The two nations have also worked together on counterterrorism efforts since 9/11, although connections between royal family dignitaries and leading Al Qaeda figures during the 1990s and early 2000s have aroused some security concerns in the past. One of these Al Qaeda members was Khalid Shaikh Mohammed, who is thought to be the principal architect of the 9/11 attacks and who worked at the government's Ministry of Electricity and Water during the mid 1990s.<sup>266</sup>

Qatar keeps a delicate balance in foreign relations, maintaining cordial relationships with Iran and Syria and assisting organizations such as Hamas and Hezbollah while hosting U.S. military forces and strengthening ties with Iran's frequent adversary Saudi Arabia.<sup>267</sup> Such disparate relationships have drawn the attention of foreign policy analysts and direct criticism from some corners of the U.S. political establishment.<sup>268, 269</sup> The U.S. government, however, has generally not publically voiced any concerns over Qatar's foreign policy choices. As one senior Middle Eastern analyst put it, "There's a recognition [by the U.S.] of the general tendencies of the Gulf states to hedge their bets. There's always a question in the back of the minds of the leadership—how much faith can they put in the U.S.?"<sup>270</sup> Qatar's relationships with nations and groups who are mutual adversaries also position it as a credible intermediary in regional disputes.<sup>271</sup>

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## Relations with Neighboring Countries

### *Saudi Arabia*

Qatar's only land border is with Saudi Arabia, a much larger country that has long been influential in Qatar through its business ties and connections with members of the Qatari ruling family.<sup>272</sup> Saudi Arabia and Qatar have had cordial relations punctuated by strained periods. In the early 1990s, for example, a series of gunfire exchanges along the border escalated into a full-scale dispute that was not settled until 2001 (and only finally delineated in 2008).<sup>273</sup> Tensions were further exacerbated in 1996 after a failed coup against Qatari Emir Hamad bin Khalifa. Many of those accused and later convicted of having a role in the attempt were members of a clan of the *Bedu Al Murrah* tribe, whose members have traditionally had joint Saudi Arabian–Qatari citizenship. Fourteen of these prisoners were released nearly 15 years later, in May 2010.<sup>274</sup>



© DoD image  
King Abdullah of Saudi Arabia

Since the mid 1990s, Al Jazeera's coverage of the Saudi kingdom has been a persistent thorn in the two nations' relations. In 2002, Saudi Arabia recalled its ambassador from Doha after Al Jazeera ran an unflattering program on the Saudi kingdom's founder.<sup>275</sup> In December 2007, Saudi Arabia announced that its ambassador to Doha would return, signaling a rapprochement between the two nations. In the interim, Al Jazeera's coverage of Middle East events had become noticeably more moderate in tone, possibly in response to competition from the decidedly more neutral, Saudi-owned, pan-Arabic news channel, Al Arabiya.<sup>276,277</sup>

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## Bahrain

Qatar's history has been deeply intertwined with that of Bahrain, dating to 1783 when the Bani Utub tribes of Az Zubarah on Qatar's northwestern coast conquered Bahrain.<sup>278</sup> The Al Khalifah, present-day rulers of Bahrain, are descendants of the Az Zubarah tribal leaders. For much of their history, Bahrain and Qatar have quarreled over territorial boundaries. The Hawar Islands just off the west coast of Qatar and the historical site of Az Zubarah and its environs on the Qatari peninsula have long been claimed by both states. Matters reached a near crisis in 1986, when Bahraini attempts to build on a reef that had risen above high tide led to shots from Qatari gunboats and the taking of several Bahraini prisoners.<sup>279,280</sup> In 2000 the matter was taken to the International Court of Justice, whose ruling awarded the Hawar Islands to Bahrain and the Az Zubarah territory to Qatar.<sup>281</sup>



© DoD image  
King of Bahrain

That decision appeared to eliminate the thorniest issue between Bahrain and Qatar, and a period of cooperation soon followed. Plans were soon being drawn to build a “friendship bridge,” a project that would establish road and rail connections between them via the world's longest marine causeway.<sup>282</sup> Construction was to have begun early in 2010, but has been delayed due to design and cost considerations. The delay was announced around the same time that political tensions between Qatar and Bahrain were heightening. This was a result of Qatari Coast Guard attacks against Bahraini fishing vessels that were in Qatari territorial waters.<sup>283</sup> However, given that one of the stadiums being planned for Qatar's World Cup in 2022—Al Shamal at Qatar's northern tip—has been advertised as receiving around 10% of its attending soccer fans via the friendship bridge, it is still likely that the long-delayed bridge will eventually be built.<sup>284</sup>

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## *United Arab Emirates*

Qatar enjoys quite good relations with the United Arab Emirates (UAE), with which it shares a maritime border in the Arabian Gulf.<sup>285</sup> The countries settled their mutual maritime boundaries in 1969, and this agreement has facilitated the two states working together on cross-border projects.<sup>286</sup> An example is the underwater pipeline that has been delivering Qatari natural gas to the UAE since 2007.<sup>287</sup> The states have also discussed the construction of a causeway connecting them. However, the original 40-km (25-mi) route for the project had to be rerouted and extended to 65 km (40 mi) after Saudi Arabia complained that the road as planned would run through its territorial waters.<sup>288,289</sup> Since then, there has been little news concerning the status of the proposed UAE–Qatar link.



© DoD image  
Prince of the United Arab Emirates

## *Iran*

Qatar's maritime border with Iran runs through the middle of the world's largest natural gas field, the North Field/South Pars Field of the Persian Gulf.<sup>290</sup> The shared gas field, the source of a large part of Qatar's wealth, has contributed to Qatar's cordial relations with Iran, which are significantly better than Iran's bilateral relations with most other countries of the Persian Gulf.<sup>291,292</sup> Leaders from Iran and Qatar meet frequently and have formalized their cooperation in several agreements, most recently in 2010, when the two nations signed security, defense, and economic pacts.<sup>293,294</sup>

Qatar has also seemed to have taken a more accepting attitude than many of its Gulf neighbors toward Iran's nuclear energy program, which several countries suspect is a

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front for nuclear weapons development.<sup>295</sup> For example, in 2006 Qatar was the only member of the United Nations Security Council to oppose a resolution demanding Iran cease all activities related to uranium reprocessing and enrichment.<sup>296,297</sup> More recently, Qatari Emir Hamad bin Khalifa Al Thani publicly stated that Qatar would not agree to let the U.S. use the Al Udeid military base to launch any future attack against Iranian nuclear sites.<sup>298</sup>

## Military

Qatar maintains a modest military force of about 12,400 personnel, divided between an army (force strength of roughly 8,500), navy (1,800), and air force (2,100). Units of the nation's police forces include another 8,000 individuals.<sup>299</sup> Because of the small number of Qatari nationals and the absence of a conscription program, many of Qatar's enlisted personnel are foreigners.<sup>300</sup>



© Noor Saleh  
Qatar Army

Qatar's defense forces are augmented by the United States, which has several thousand military personnel operating out of Al Udeid Air Base and Camp As Sayliyah.<sup>301</sup> Beyond Qatar's defense arrangements with the U.S., the nation also has signed defense agreements with the United Kingdom and France.<sup>302</sup> Most of Qatar's military hardware is purchased from France.<sup>303</sup>

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## Terrorist Groups and Activities

As a wealthy Middle Eastern nation that hosts an American military base and attracts many foreign visitors and workers, Qatar represents a potential target for terrorist organizations. To date, Qatar has suffered only one major terrorist strike. On 19 March 2005, a car bomb detonated outside the Doha Players Theatre, killing a British citizen and injuring a dozen other people. The attack was carried out by an Egyptian who was in the country as an employee of Qatar Petroleum.<sup>304</sup> It came only a few days after a leader of Al Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula called for attacks against “crusader” targets in the Gulf States.<sup>305</sup> Later press reports indicated that as many as 19 individuals were subsequently arrested in the bombing investigation, including one Qatari. No reports of criminal prosecutions were announced, although it is known that some of the foreign nationals arrested were subsequently deported.<sup>306</sup>



© Jey Hwang  
Anti riot drill

The United States has provided counterterrorism training for Qatari law enforcement agencies during the past few years. Cooperation on counterterrorism issues has been ongoing since the 9/11 attacks, although recent U.S. Country Reports on Terrorism have consistently noted that “the United States [continues] to strive for increased cooperation—and particularly information sharing—with the Qatari government.”<sup>307</sup>

## Other Issues Affecting Stability

### *Regional Conflicts*

As Qatar continues to diversify its economy and extend its infrastructure, it realizes that instability in the Middle East could lead to conflict and perhaps disruptions in oil and gas supply networks—the linchpins of Qatar’s economy. Among the Middle East’s most pressing regional issues are the lingering impasse between Israel and the Palestinian territories, escalating world concern about Iran’s nuclear objectives, political instability in Iraq and Lebanon, and the increasing



© DoD image  
Robert Gates meets with Emir of Qatar

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threat posed by terrorist groups operating out of a politically weak Yemen threatened by a secessionist movement.<sup>308,309</sup> All these issues are regularly addressed by Emir Hamad bin Khalifa and other government officials during their diplomatic travels.<sup>310,311,312</sup> The Qatari government has offered itself as a facilitator in some of these conflicts—most notably, in Lebanon—but there are obvious limits to how much a small nation such as Qatar can influence events in neighboring states.<sup>313, 314</sup>

## Water

Qatar has a rapidly increasing population in a country whose limited natural water resources are steadily decreasing. The extraction rate of ground water, Qatar's primary source of water for agriculture, has for many years exceeded the recharge rate, leading to a lowering of the water table, increasing salinity in water wells, and seawater intrusion along the coastal areas.<sup>315</sup>

Qatar's drinking water needs are currently being met by energy-intensive desalination plants, which also require storage facilities. In mid 2010, it was estimated that Qatar's drinking water reserves would only last a day and a half in an emergency, which explains why the country is now in the process of building its seventh desalination plant.<sup>316</sup> Projections indicate that new desalination capacity will need to be continuously added in order for Qatar to keep ahead of water demand in the future.<sup>317</sup>



© Dan A'Vard  
Tap water

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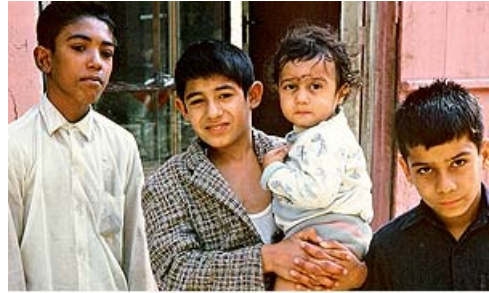
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## Demographic Challenges

Qatar's population has risen so dramatically over the last two decades due to the tremendous number of foreigners who have come to work on the new developments and provide the related services (e.g. health, education) that a rapidly growing population requires. Qatar's demographics have become distorted in the process, with Qatari nationals now significantly in the minority and men widely outnumbering women in the primary working-age groups.



© Anne Elliott  
Children at Doha souq

Therefore, social tensions have taken root between the affluent Qataris (a minority in their own country) and the numerous foreign workers who surround them daily (and who often hail from quite different cultures).<sup>318</sup> As Qatar looks ahead to the 2022 World Cup, which will require constructing or remodeling 12 stadiums as well as new transportation and tourism infrastructure, this population trend will not likely change significantly over the coming decade.<sup>319</sup> But when the number of new projects does slow down and workers begin to leave, the country may face a new challenge: a rapid population decrease and an infrastructure out of proportion with the needs of those remaining.<sup>320</sup> The economic ramifications, such as a plummeting real estate market and a sharp drop in demand for goods and services, could be dramatic if not skillfully managed.

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## Security Assessment

1. Qatar and the United States enjoy a strong military relationship.

**True**

During the 1991 Persian Gulf War, Qatar allowed international coalition forces to be deployed from its territory. A year after fighting ended, the United States and Qatar signed a defense cooperation agreement, beginning a close military relationship that continues to this day.

2. United States universities have been excluded from establishing their presence in Qatar's Education City.

**False**

Educational ties have recently been established through the creation of Education City, which houses Qatari branches of several American universities.

3. Qatar's sole land border is with Bahrain.

**False**

Qatar's only land border is with Saudi Arabia.

4. Saudi Arabia and Qatar's relationship has suffered due to Al Jazeera's coverage of the kingdom.

**True**

Since the mid 1990s, Al Jazeera's coverage of the Saudi kingdom has been a persistent thorn in the two nations' relations. In 2002, Saudi Arabia recalled its ambassador from Doha after Al Jazeera ran an unflattering program on the Saudi kingdom's founder.

5. Bahrain and Qatar share a history.

**True**

Qatar's history has been deeply intertwined with that of Bahrain, dating to 1783 when the Bani Utub tribes of Az Zubarah on Qatar's northwestern coast conquered Bahrain. The Al Khalifah, present-day rulers of Bahrain, are descendants of the Az Zubarah tribal leaders.



## Final Assessments

1. Qatar's largest body of water is a UNESCO World Heritage Site.
2. Doha is the Qatari capital.
3. The majority of Doha's population is made up of native Qataris.
4. Sufficient water supply is a major problem in Qatar.
5. Qatar currently extracts groundwater at a rate faster than the aquifers can recharge.
6. Their defeat of the British marks one of the most important dates in Qatari history.
7. Oil was discovered in Qatar in the mid-20th century.
8. Qatari social services and infrastructure suffered as more money went to support Ahmad bin Ali.
9. Qatar achieved independence in the late 19th century.
10. Qatar's exports of liquefied natural gas currently contribute much of its wealth.
11. Qatar runs a trade deficit in almost every category except oil and hydrocarbon-based products.
12. Qatar's road system is old and in ill repair.
13. Buses and taxis are presently Qatar's only forms of public transportation.
14. Qatar's citizens enjoy many government-subsidized social services.
15. Qatar's population of expatriate workers enjoy many of the same social programs as Qatari nationals.
16. Qatar is the only country where the majority of the Sunni Muslims follow the Wahabbi form of Islam.
17. The number of Qatari women who enter the work force has slowly declined.
18. More Qatari boys graduate from secondary school than girls.
19. One type of Qatari traditional song began among the crews of pearl diving vessels.
20. The *nahhams* are a contemporary form of popular music in Qatar.

21. Territorial disputes have been common in the relationship between Qatar and Bahrain.
22. Their shared gas field has contributed to Qatar's positive relations with Iran.
23. Qatar is outspokenly critical of Iran's nuclear program.
24. The birthrate of Qatari nationals is the largest contributor to the country's dramatic rise in population.
25. The high number of foreigners has caused tension in Qatar.

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