



## UNFAZED BY CRISIS

Nearly half a year since Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, the United Arab Emirates and Egypt severed diplomatic ties with and imposed trade and travel bans on Qatar, the oil-rich emirate has displayed extraordinary resilience and agility in adjusting its economic growth plans.

"During the first couple of weeks of the crisis, the country was in shock. However, we recovered very quickly. According to economic and development indicators, we are now getting back to normal," said Minister of Development Planning and Statistics Dr. Saleh bin Mohammed Al Nabit, who oversees Qatar National Vision 2030.

QNV 2030 is a long-term plan focused on economic, social, human and environmental development that aims to transform Qatar into a balanced and sustainable society by 2030.

"In terms of macroeconomic indicators, it is business as usual. The country is even stronger. We are focused on creating new trade routes, and international partners, as well as developing local businesses and manufacturing," Al Nabit stressed.

As the crisis carries on, Qatar is compelled to become less dependent on foreign partners. Thus, educational institutes assume a larger role in equipping Qataris with valuable knowledge and skills to forge a self-reliant future.

Formed in 2010, the Doha Institute for Graduate Studies (DI) offers programs and research in the humanities, social sciences, public administration and development economics, and most recently, psychology and social work.

"DI is representative of Qatar. We are a small coun-

try, but we think big. In the same way, we are a small institute, but we have a large influence. We are an exclusively graduate institute with research right at the heart of what we do," DI President Yasir Suleiman Malley said.

Accepting around 150 students annually, DI has adopted Arabic as its medium of instruction and has already gained an international reputation for its 15 master's programs.

"While we understand the significance of using other languages, the Arabic language has been academically and professionally neglected. We chose the language not as a result of being here, but as a product of our mission," DI Vice President for Administration and Finance Hend Al Muftah explained.

DI is the region's first graduate institute that advocates an interdisciplinary approach and offers unique master's degrees such as Media and Cultural Studies, as well as Conflict Management and Humanitarian Action.

"What distinguishes DI from other academic institutions in the region is that it is not a replica of any other institution, rather it is built by Arab and international scholars in Qatar, for Qatar and the world," Al Muftah said.

"The Qatari vision is to become a society rooted in its own culture but at the same time, open to the world. We at DI reflect this vision through

our student body," Malley said.


But while Qatar strengthens its focus on local development, it also has not reduced efforts to attract more foreign direct investment.

Robert Hager, Chairman of the American Chamber of Commerce agrees: "Qatar is about long-term commitment. Currently, we see opportunities in food security and renewable energy. While there may be some hesita-

tions due to the blockade, it is the best time to invest because the country continues to grow."

The past months have clearly shown that Qatar can surmount any difficulty by seeking innovative ways to spur growth.

"Our partners have been part of our development. We appreciate that, and we look forward to a bright future," Al Nabit said. ■

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**The Doha Institute for Graduate Studies** is a unique national project established in Qatar with international standards. The aim of the institute is to contribute to knowledge production in the Arab world by creating a space for intellectual independence to empower young Arab scholars. To support this mission, it has formed over thirty partnerships with local, regional, and International academic and non-academic Institutions. It also hosts a Language Center that offers English and Arabic language courses for non-native speakers.

**The institute is dedicated to integrating inter-disciplinary learning and research in four different fields:**

- Social Sciences and Humanities (8 MA Programs).
- Public Administration and Development Economics (4 MA Programs).
- Psychology and Social Work (3 MA Programs).
- Conflict and Humanitarian Studies (1 MA Program).

