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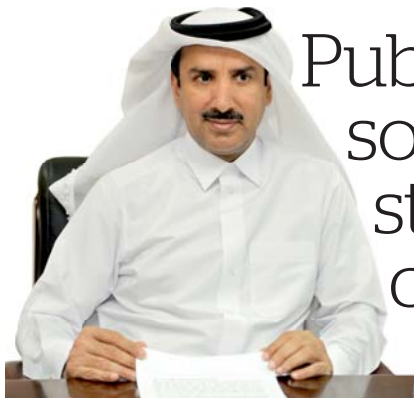
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Turkey offers to mediate in Iran's nuclear standoff



Public support sought as the state's biggest census gets under way

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Latest Figures

# GULF TIMES

WEDNESDAY Vol. XXXI No. 7871  
April 21, 2010  
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**In brief**

**FOOTBALL | Champions**  
**Inter stun Barca 3-1 in classic encounter**

Tireless Inter Milan produced a rip-roaring home performance to overpower Barcelona 3-1 and leave the holders in real trouble after an inspiring Champions League semi-final, first leg yesterday. Goals from Wesley Sneijder, Maicon and Diego Milito, after Pedro had given Barca the lead, set up a fascinating second leg at the Nou Camp next Wednesday. In one of the most electric atmospheres inside the San Siro for years, both sides stretched every last sinew to the limit as Europe's top club competition again showed why fans the world over are so hooked. Inter had the better of the early chances but first blood went to Barca, forced to make a 14-hour bus journey to reach the match because of the Icelandic volcano restricting flights.

**BUSINESS | Exchange**  
**Five stocks added to Qatar index**

Qatar will reshuffle its leading stocks index DSM 20 to boost liquidity and transparency, adding heavyweight stocks, including Qtel, to the benchmark, Qatar Exchange said yesterday. The renamed QE index will launch on May 6, with stock weightings determined by companies' free-float capitalisation and their average daily traded value. These will be measured at the market close on April 29. Qtel will be one of five stocks added to the index. Qatar Electricity & Water, Vodafone Qatar, Gulf International Services and Qatar Insurance are the other names joining the index.

**INDIA | Economy**  
**Central bank raises key rates**

India's central bank yesterday raised key interest rates by 25 basis points and said further rises were likely as it moves to return monetary policy towards pre-crisis settings and battles near double-digit inflation. The Reserve Bank of India's move was in line with expectations, but some investors had bet on a bigger rise. Analysts said the measured tightening increased the likelihood of another hike before the next quarterly review in July.



**BIDDING NATION QATAR**

## Flights to UK and France resume

European airports started to return to life yesterday evening after five days cut off from the rest of the world by a volcanic ash cloud

Qatar Airways yesterday operated flights to the United Kingdom and France as part of the national carrier's efforts at repatriating hundreds of stranded passengers.

Two wide-body aircraft (Airbus A340), originally scheduled to operate flights from Doha to London Heathrow and Manchester respectively, flew to the Scottish city of Edinburgh.

Another aircraft, originally scheduled for Paris, was re-routed to the French provincial city of Lyon. All three flights carried a full load of transit and ex-Doha departing passengers to the UK and France.

"More than 800 passengers would have flown in these three aircraft to Edinburgh and Lyon," an airline source said.

The Doha-based carrier has made arrangements to provide these passengers with road or rail transport from Edinburgh to either Manchester or London and from Lyon to Paris.

European airports started to return to life yesterday evening after five days cut off from the rest of the world by a volcanic ash cloud with authorities downgrading the risk the ash posed to aircraft. The progressive reopening offered stranded passengers relief after days of frustration since no-fly zones were imposed last Thursday.

Qatar Airways has been working with the UK and French authorities to find a window of opportunity to fly amid the uncertainty surrounding flights to and from affected European countries.

The airline has cancelled more than 135 flights to and from Europe since last Thursday for safety reasons, resulting in disruption to its network.

Qatar Airways CEO Akbar al-Baker said: "The situation over the past few days has been unpredictable and remains very fluid. It is a very unfortunate situation facing the airline industry."

"We at Qatar Airways have been working tirelessly to help get travel

plans of our customers back on track and we are monitoring the situation frequently throughout the day, every day."

Flying schedules to affected destinations are being updated regularly on Qatar Airways' website www.qatarairways.com.

Passengers are urged to check their flight status on the website and to confirm bookings by contacting their local Qatar Airways' reservation office.

As selected airports are reopening in phases, passengers are urged not to turn up at affected airports without a confirmed flight booking.

Once full service resumes, it would take some time for schedules to return to normal and to clear the backlog of passengers flying to their final destination.

Meanwhile, the source said its planned test flight to London's Heathrow yesterday had been delayed because the national carrier was still waiting for approval from the UK's Civil Aviation Authority.

Qatar Airways was facing losses of \$5-6mn per day due to volcanic ash-related groundings, al-baker told Dubai-based Al Arabiya television earlier yesterday. "In terms of losses, it's around \$5-\$6mn a day," he said.

"We are spending \$30,000 a day on hotels," he added. **Pages 7, 16, 18**

**Response under fire**

Europe's ash cloud has triggered a flurry of anguished calls for the EU to improve its crisis response and co-ordination. In the European Parliament MEPs took it in turns to urge the EU to do more. Jo Leinen MEP, a German in the centre-left European Socialists and Democrats group, said Europe was "ill-prepared for natural disasters... The emergency video conference of EU transport ministers, held on Monday, should have taken place earlier, he said. That complaint was echoed by other MEPs in yesterday's debate in Strasbourg.

**Premier meets Blair**



HE the Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Sheikh Hamad bin Jassim bin Jabor al-Thani yesterday met the Quartet's envoy to the Middle East, Tony Blair, during his visit to Qatar. They discussed the Quartet's efforts to bring peace to the Middle East.

## First community college to open in September

By Bonnie James  
Deputy News Editor

Taking the Education for a New Era reform initiative to new heights, the Supreme Education Council is all set to open Qatar's first community college in September this year, *Gulf Times* has learnt.

The Community College of Qatar (CCQ) is to offer job training and basic academic programmes for high school graduates who do not get enough grades to enrol in a university.

The objective is to groom them to join a university for higher education or the workforce directly.

The Qatar government has signed a \$45mn (QR164.25mn), five-year contract with Houston Community College (HCC) to open the CCQ, *Houston Chronicle* reported.

*Gulf Times*, which broke the news about the CCQ programme in November 2008, had reported in April 2009 that the project was set for a 2010 launch.

"High School graduates with 70% or more marks stand a chance to enrol in a university in Qatar, but we should understand that there are a lot of students who do not make this grade and subsequently get frustrated," CCQ Steering Committee chairperson Prof Ibrahim Saleh al-Naimi had told *Gulf Times* in November 2008.

Though Qatar University's Foundation Programme and Qatar Foundation's Academic Bridge Programme now prepare such students for a university education, there is a feeling that they are losing time, the official had expressed.

HCC Chancellor Mary Spangler has been quoted as saying that the Qatar project is a natural extension of the community college's role.

**The Community College of Qatar is to offer job training and basic academic programmes for high school graduates who do not get enough grades to enrol in a university**

The initiative, along with other international programmes launched by HCC in recent years, will also provide students from Houston with the opportunities for international exchanges, she said.

HCC also has worked with institutions in Vietnam, Saudi Arabia and Brazil, experience that may come in handy as it hires faculty and staff for the Qatari campus over the next few months.

But unlike the earlier projects, which involved existing institutions, HCC will be creating a college from scratch in Qatar, according to *Houston Chronicle*.

The CCQ will use HCC curriculum and be covered by HCC's accreditation with the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools.

HCC was selected from among eight US community colleges for the partnership which is aimed at providing workforce training as well as lower-division academic course work.

The American Association of Community Colleges president George Boggs said international interest in US community colleges has grown dramatically in recent years.

The Qatar contract will boost HCC's bottom line. Spangler said HCC will receive "slightly less than 10%" of the \$45mn operating budget covered in the contract - 10% would be \$4.5mn - over the five-year term.

"This is not costing taxpayers' money," Spangler said. "We are not doing less at home because we're doing this. We're bringing larger opportunities."

HCC's enrolment has topped 70,000 students this spring, even as it has pursued the international initiatives.

The school actively recruits international students; about 6,600 are currently enrolled, more than any other US community college.

It also sends students to study in other countries, something that once happened exclusively at four-year schools. **Page 28**

## Qatar's small enterprises get boost from \$2bn initiative

By Santhosh V Perumal  
Business Reporter

Qatar is to launch a QR2bn initiative to develop small and medium enterprises (SMEs) as part of its strategy to extend "special support" to its private sector.

The official launch of Enterprise Qatar (EQ) on Sunday will be followed by a meeting on Monday with all the stakeholders.

"Enterprise Qatar has a capital of QR2bn and will help local SMEs with access to financing, and offer training and consultancy services," said Sheikh Mohamed Abdul-Rahman al-Thani, director (Public Private Partnership) at the Ministry of Business and Trade.

He said EQ would not directly finance the projects but through its asso-

ciate Qatar Development Bank (QDB). QDB, one of the sponsors of the initiative along with ExxonMobil Qatar, will stand guarantee to part of loans made to SMEs (with a capital of QR20mn or less) who sign up to the project, according to Sheikh Mohamed.

**"Enterprise Qatar will help local SMEs with access to financing, and offer training and consultancy services"**

Both QDB and QNB had recently entered into agreement on a loan assurance programme, called Al Dhameen, for SMEs in Qatar.

EQ had been created to champion and support innovative entrepreneurial SMEs that are committed to the growth of business culture in the country, he said, adding EQ was committed



QDB chief executive officer Mansoor bin Ebrahim al-Mahmoud, Saleh al-Nabit (General Secretariat for Development Planning), Sheikh Mohamed Abdul-Rahman al-Thani, director (Public Private Partnership) at the Ministry of Business and Trade, and ExxonMobil Qatar's vice president (Government and Public Affairs) Saleh bin Saad al-Mana yesterday.

to building a flourishing SME sector through partnerships that would create a supportive environment.

Sheikh Mohamed said EQ would be co-operating with experts and other agencies to create incubators for SME businesses.

"Enterprise Qatar will empower new and innovative Qatari companies and young Qatari entrepreneurs, providing

them with access to the services and support they need," he said.

Saleh al-Nabit, of General Secretariat for Development Planning, said the government was committed to extend "special kind of support" to build infrastructure for the private sector to flourish.

ExxonMobil Qatar's vice president (Government and Public Affairs) Saleh bin Saad al-Mana said that one of the cornerstones of its national content strategy was creating economic opportunities for local businesses and investing in developing the capabilities of local contractors, suppliers and vendors.

QDB chief executive officer Mansoor bin Ebrahim al-Mahmoud said he had found many complementarities in EQ with their strategies in developing SMEs, which has a crucial role in the country's economic development.

# Public support sought as census gets under way

**Qatar's residents urged to co-operate, provide accurate information; Initial results in a month from the end of exercise**

By Anwar Elshamy  
Staff Reporter

Qatar's biggest census of people started last night and some 3,000 surveyors will be visiting homes and offices in the coming days to collect vital data about the country's residents.

The Qatar Statistics Authority (QSA) chief Sheikh Hamad bin Jabor al-Thani has appealed to the public to fully co-operate and provide accurate information to the census officials, saying that the data of the 2010 census, of which the housing and establishments phase has ended, would be used as a databank which, he said, will be available to both the public and private sector within three months.

"Our aim is not only to collect and produce information, but also to publish it. We are working on a sharing programme named 'Qalam' in which data will be tabulated and analysed in a way that facilitates the job of decision makers," Sheikh Hamad bin Jabor explained.

The census will continue for two weeks during which the surveyors will be visiting houses, firms, public buildings and labour camps to collect information on demographic and economic characteristics of residents.

"This is the most significant and challenging phase of the



QSA chief Sheikh Hamad (right) and al-Mahdi at the press conference yesterday.

census. We have tapped all the available capability to ensure success of the census. But it is the positive response from both citizens and expatriates which will decide the final result. I hope that all would co-operate since this would positively reflect on all the different aspects of life in the country," Sheikh Hamad added.

Giving initial results of the housing and establishment census which recently ended, the

official said the data showed that the number of theatres and clubs has increased by 111.3% compared to the 2004 census, hotels by 109%, banks by 51%, while number of hospitals and schools increased by 10.2% and 19% respectively.

Some 7,000 families have opted for providing the information online via the QSA website ([www.qsa.gov.qa](http://www.qsa.gov.qa)) to avoid a knock on door by surveyors. They would receive their logon

names and passwords via SMS to be able to fill out online forms from today until Monday.

If they fail to meet the deadline for submitting the electronic form, they would be visited by the surveyors.

According to the census schedule, all hotel guests who stayed in the country last night as well as those at the Doha International Airport and the other exit and entry points would have been counted.

"This is an international statistics standard. But they would not be counted in the population of the country," Nasser al-Mahdi, head of the family survey department at the QSA, said.

Al-Mahdi indicated that special arrangements would be made for hotels, and the other places of special nature.

"We have sent forms to all the Qatari diplomatic missions as well as Qataris residing around the world," he added.

For inquiring about the census, the QSA has launched a free toll line 8000800.

To a question on families that might refuse to fill the form, al-Mahdi said a recent Cabinet decision had made it mandatory for all the firms, public departments, and residents in the country to fully co-operate and provide accurate information.

"I am very optimistic about the response of the public. This is not the first census. We have never experienced such a refusal of co-operation," the official said, while observing that 200,000 booklets were distributed during the last period as part of a nation-wide awareness campaign about the significance of the census.

The census' initial results are expected to be announced in a month from the end of the count, while the final results would be available within three months, Sheikh Hamad added.

"The census data would be subject to comprehensive analysis and discussions by academics and researchers to make the best use of it."

## Education City convocation on May 4

Qatar Foundation will host Education City's third senior convocation on May 4 to celebrate the graduation of almost 200 students who make up the class of 2010.

While each university carries its own graduation ceremony, this convocation will unify students from all across Education City.

"At Senior Convocation we are honouring the achievement of the young people who are passing from Education City to the next stage in their lives," QF's vice-president for education, Dr Abdullah al-Thani said.

The graduates will be presented with degrees in subjects ranging from design, medicine and engineering to Islamic studies, business, computer science and foreign services.

"Our vision for this year's senior convocation was to continue the tradition of unity for all Education City graduates through this activity," Convocation Steering Committee member Ahmed al-Salahi said.

During the inaugural Senior Convocation, students from each of the graduating branch campuses had put items related to their disciplines in a time capsule that will be reclaimed in 10 years.

This year the class of 2010 will build their own book of memories where they are sharing their experiences as Education City students.

"I could have studied abroad but studying here in a tight-knit university community helped me form a strong relationship with faculty and

students where I could contribute more and exchange knowledge and experience," said graduating Qatari student Saad al-Matwi.

A distinguished business administration student at Carnegie Mellon University in Qatar, he has received the Student Services award from Carnegie Mellon's main campus in Pittsburgh, and also earned the Dean's List Honors in three semesters.

"My interpersonal skills improved a lot and this makes me feel more confident about embarking on my career and dealing with whatever challenges life throws at me," al-Matwi said.

**"My interpersonal skills improved a lot and this makes me feel more confident about embarking on my career"**

With more than 75 different countries currently represented in the Education City student body, this year's graduating class is also characterised by diversity.

Sahar Mari, an honours student from Virginia Commonwealth University in Qatar with a double major in graphic and fashion design, is one of the international students who will be graduating this year.

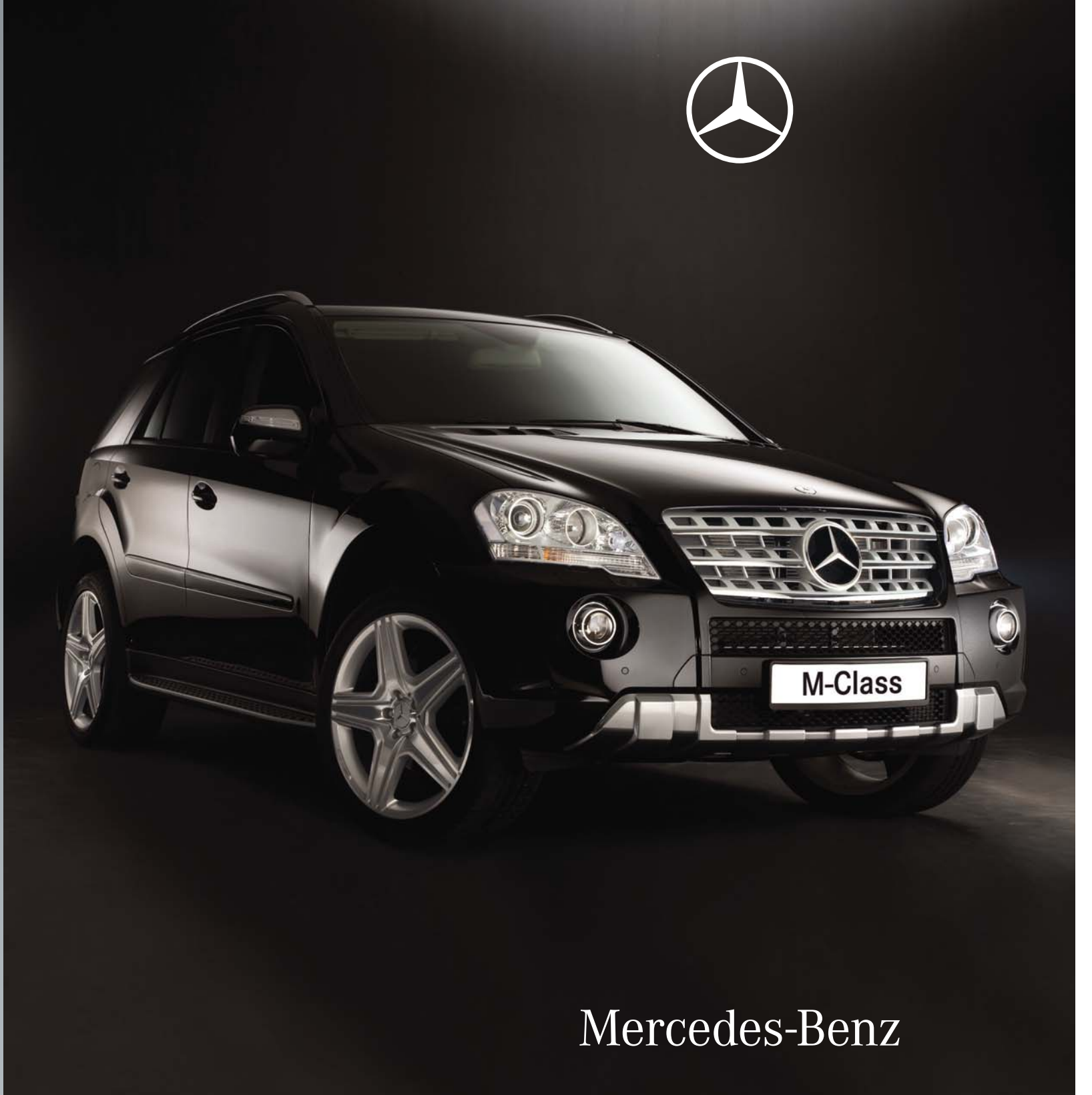
Following the convocation celebrations, Qatar Foundation will offer graduates and the wider Qatar community a chance to share in the celebrations at a concert - to be held in the Ceremonial Court on May 5 - by Saudi Arabian singer Abdul Majid Abdullah.

## Let them stare.

Brimming with attitude, the all-new 2010 ML with AMG Sports Pack features a bold sporty look that lets you stand out for miles. It comes with front and rear AMG cladding with underguard in matte chrome, twin exhaust tailpipes, 21" AMG alloy wheels, aluminum finish footplates, aluminum look roof rails and a radiator grille in sterling silver with chrome trim. The embodiment of power and style.

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