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## Barzan University College (BUC) Signs MoU with Vodafone Qatar



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By Haroon Rashid Qureshi

Barzan University College (BUC) signed a landmark industry-academic Memorandum of

Understanding with Vodafone Qatar at the Australian Embassy in Doha.

H.E. Mr. Shane Flanagan, Australia's Ambassador to Qatar, warmly welcomed the guests and

emphasized the importance of strengthening Qatar–Australia ties through academic cooperation, innovation, and employability-driven education. He highlighted that the MoU not only formalizes global partnerships but also represents a critical step toward equipping students for the rapidly evolving demands of the workforce. Following the signing, detailed discussions were held between embassy officials, BUC leadership, and distinguished guests from Qatar’s education and business sectors. The dialogue focused on expanding student opportunities, promoting applied learning, and supporting the objectives of Qatar National Vision 2030.

The MoU lays the foundation for innovative collaborations, encompassing industry partnerships, international academic pathways, and research initiatives that bridge academia and the private sector.

Barzan University College is Qatar’s most ambitious new higher education project. Fully licensed and approved by the Ministry of Education and Higher Education, BUC is committed to academic excellence, affordability, and global readiness. Its programs combine rigorous theoretical foundations with practical experience, aligning with both Qatar’s educational priorities and international standards. The college offers courses at three levels – Foundations, Bachelors, and Masters in partnership with Swinburne University of Technology, Australia, a globally ranked institution among the top 300 universities. The courses are offered in a wide range of fields,

including computing, AI, CyberSecurity, Software Development, Civil Engineering, etc.

Work-Integrated Learning (WIL) is embedded into every semester, ensuring graduates are equipped with both theoretical knowledge and practical skills directly relevant to the labor market.

BUC's leadership underscores its credibility and vision. Chairman Sheikh Abdullah bin Nasser bin Khalifa Al Thani, former Prime Minister of Qatar, and Vice-Chairman Dr. Hassan Al-Derham, former President of Qatar University, bring extensive national and academic experience to the institution. Co-Founder and CEO Engineer Abdur Rahman, alongside Co-Founder and Director Abdul Jaward Mohammed Kamil, provides a strong foundation for creating one of Qatar's most forward-looking universities.

Eng. Abdur Rahman is a seasoned education entrepreneur with over 25 years of experience in establishing and managing private higher education institutions across Sri Lanka and the Gulf. He has established multiple successful Transnational Education (TNE) operations in collaboration with several reputable universities from the UK, Australia, and other countries. He has also founded and is leading EduGate International, a consultancy that supports universities in market entry and campus operations across Asia and the Middle East. His contributions have been recognized internationally, including an Honorary Fellowship from QSi-UK for services to

construction management and education.

Exclusive Interview with Barzan's Co-Founder/CEO- Eng. Abdur Rahman:

On the sidelines of the MoU signing, Eng. Abdur Rahman shared his personal journey and vision for Barzan University College (BUC). Although trained as an engineer, he explained that his true passion has always been education. He began his career in 1999 by founding his first private higher education institution in Sri Lanka, which quickly grew into one of the country's leading private university campuses. Since then, he has established and managed multiple successful universities across Sri Lanka and the Gulf, focusing on institutions that combine academic excellence with practical application. In Qatar, BUC represents Eng. Abdur Rahman's second major higher education initiative and serves as a flagship project for international collaboration.

Discussing what sets BUC apart from other universities in Qatar, Eng. Abdur Rahman highlighted four defining features. First, BUC is the first Australian university in the country, offering programs in partnership with Swinburne University of Technology, ensuring that students graduate with globally recognized degrees. Second, the college's education model emphasizes applied learning, integrating real-world industry exposure into every semester so students gain practical skills alongside theoretical knowledge. Partnerships with companies ensure that students are job-ready from the outset. Third, affordability remains a key priority; tuition fees are

structured to remain accessible for families, and within just two months of its launch, over 100 students from 22 nationalities enrolled. Fourth, BUC offers flexibility for international mobility, enabling students to transfer seamlessly to campuses in Malaysia or Australia, or spend a semester in Melbourne while incurring the same tuition fees as those in Qatar.

Eng. Abdur Rahman also underscored the diversity and inclusivity of the student body. Currently, 23 percent of students are Qataris and 77 percent are international, with a gender ratio of 40 percent female and 60 percent male. He emphasized that BUC is more than an institution for delivering degrees; it is a vibrant academic community that prepares students to make meaningful contributions to Qatar's economy and achieve success on a global stage.