

## **UPI is Now Accepted in Qatar with Qatar Duty Free Becoming the First Merchant to Go Live**

**Mumbai, September 24, 2025:** NPCI International Payments Limited (NIPL) in partnership with Qatar National Bank has enabled the acceptance of QR code-based Unified Payments Interface (UPI) across Qatar via point-of-sale (POS) terminals for merchants acquired by QNB and powered by NETSTARS' payment solution. This move will allow Indian travelers to carry out UPI payments seamlessly at major tourist attractions and Qatar Duty Free outlets, which is the first merchant to go live on UPI.

Indians are the second largest group of international visitors to Qatar\*. This partnership will help them to make real-time transactions across the country, limiting the need to carry cash and currency exchange hassle. The acceptance of UPI in Qatar promotes interoperability and expands UPI's global reach.

Moreover, it is expected to benefit Qatar's retail and tourism sectors as UPI acceptance will increase transaction volumes of merchants acquired by QNB. This will further help them in scaling their business while offering convenience to customers.

Speaking on the partnership, **Mr. Ritesh Shukla, MD & CEO, NPCI International**, said, *"We aim to enhance the acceptance of UPI globally and create a truly interoperable global payment network. The partnership with QNB is a step towards this journey. It will help millions of Indian travelers make seamless, secure digital transactions and reduce their dependence on cash. As UPI makes its mark, we are focused on driving interoperability and making cross-border payment experiences hassle-free for users."*

**Mr. Yousef Mahmoud Al-Neama, Group Chief Business Officer, QNB**, said *"We are excited to introduce UPI in Qatar and proud to be at the forefront of innovating the payment landscape. This milestone not only enhances the convenience for Indian travelers but also brings significant benefits to the Qatari market by promoting cashless transactions, boosting retail and tourist sectors, and strengthening interoperability in the payments ecosystem. Importantly, it will also enable local merchants to thrive by attracting more customers and providing them with seamless digital payment options."*

**Mr. Thabet Musleh, Chief Retail & Hospitality Officer, Qatar Airways Group** said, *"At Qatar Duty Free, we are committed to enhancing convenience and accessibility for travellers. As the first entity in Qatar to enable UPI as a payment option, we are proud to offer Indian travellers a seamless, secure, and cashless transaction experience at our outlets. This partnership with NPCI International and Qatar National Bank reflects our dedication to embracing innovative payment solutions that cater to the evolving needs of our diverse customer base. By integrating UPI, we aim to elevate the retail experience at Hamad International Airport, ensuring a smoother journey for millions of visitors."*



The partnership strengthens India's digital payment footprint while offering a seamless and secure payment experience for Indian travelers in Qatar.

**Tsuyoshi Ri, Representative Director and CEO of NETSTARS Co., Ltd.,** said, *“We are honoured to be part of this strategic partnership and milestone, enabling UPI for the first time in Qatar together with NPCI International, Qatar Airways Group and Qatar National Bank. This aligns with our mission to expand seamless and secure payment experiences globally. We are proud to contribute to this launch in Qatar, which will empower local merchants in Qatar to accept digital payments conveniently and efficiently from millions of international travellers.”*

*\*<https://www.qatartourism.com/content/dam/qatar-tourism/qatar-tourism-reports/Qatar-Tourism-FY-2023-tourism-performance-report.pptx.pdf>*

#### **About NPCI International:**

NPCI International Payments Limited (NIPL) was incorporated on April 3, 2020, as a wholly owned subsidiary of the National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI). As NPCI's international arm, NIPL is devoted to deploying NPCI's indigenous, successful real-time payment system—Unified Payments Interface (UPI)—and card scheme (RuPay) outside of India. NPCI has successfully developed and proved its products and technological capabilities in the domestic market by transforming the payment segment in India. Currently, there are several countries that seek to establish a real-time payment system or a domestic card scheme. NIPL, with its knowledge and experience, can offer these countries technological assistance through licensing and consulting for building real-time payment systems to meet the rapidly evolving needs of fast-growing global businesses. NIPL focuses on transforming payments across the globe through technology and innovation. It will not only enable payments for Indians but also support other countries by enhancing their payment capabilities using technological assistance, consulting, and infrastructure.

For more information visit <https://www.nipl.com/>

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#### **About QNB Group:**

QNB Group is one of the leading financial institutions in the Middle East and Africa and is ranked as the most valuable banking brand in the MEA region. Present in over 28 countries across Asia, Europe, and Africa, it offers tailored products and services supported by innovation and backed by a team of over 31,000 professionals dedicated to driving banking excellence, worldwide.

#### **About Qatar Airways:**

A multiple award-winning airline, Qatar Airways won the 'World's Best Airline' for an unprecedented ninth time at the 2025 World Airline Awards, managed by the international air transport rating organisation,

Skytrax. Qatar Airways was previously named the World's Best Airline in 2011, 2012, 2015, 2017, 2019, 2021, 2022, and 2024.

The airline continues to be synonymous with excellence, and has yet again received recognition for 'World's Best Business Class', and 'World's Best Business Class Airline Lounge'. As the leading connector in the region, Qatar Airways has also been lauded with the 'Best Airline in the Middle East' title for the 13 time.

Qatar Airways currently flies to over 170 destinations worldwide, connecting through its Doha hub, Hamad International Airport, the 'Best Airport in the Middle East' for 11 consecutive years, as well as 'World's Best Airport Shopping' for the third year in a row, as voted by Skytrax. Hamad International Airport has previously been named the 'World's Best Airport' by Skytrax in 2021, 2022, and 2024.

Qatar Airways was the first Airline in the Middle East to be certified to the highest level of IATA's Environmental Assessment (IEnvA) programme, based on recognised environmental management system principles (such as ISO 14001). As an inaugural signatory to the Buckingham Palace Declaration in March 2016, Qatar Airways became the first airline globally to be certified to the industry standard for the prevention of illegal wildlife trafficking in aviation

#### ■About NETSTARS

NETSTARS is one of Japan's top payment gateway provider with over 450,000 access points. NETSTARS was listed on the Tokyo Stock Exchange on September 26th, 2023. (TYO: 5590)

Established in 2009, NETSTARS has progressively expanded its payment gateway business. In 2015, it was the first agent to introduce China's QR code payment service "WeChat Pay" to Japan. Since then, NETSTARS has expanded StarPay, a payment solution service that provides stores with integrated implementation and management of various Japanese and international QR code payments and other cashless payment services. At present, using StarPay's technological capabilities as a foundation, NETSTARS is working on further development of diversified services.

Official Website: <https://www.netstars.co.jp/>