

999

SECURITY AND SAFETY FOR ALL

ISSUE 129 OCTOBER 2022

UAE TIGHTENS
PATROL VERSUS
MONEY GRIME

GLOBAL POWER
OF UAE PASSPORT
SEES STEADY RISE

SPOTLIGHT:
LOOK WHERE
YOU WALK

UAE READY FOR *KICK-OFF*

BIGGEST INTERNATIONAL SPORTING
EVENTS COMING TO UAE



IN THIS ISSUE: NAVIGATE POST-PANDEMIC RUSH HOUR AS TRAFFIC VOLUME BALLOONS



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*The UAE's
rising power is
reflected in the
high rank of its
passport, which
allows UAE
citizens to enter
176 countries
without a visa
or with visa on
arrival*

Let the ball start rolling

The month of October brings the gift of autumn to the UAE, and with it comes an influx of inbound travellers as the days grow cooler; it's the reverse side of the outbound travel rush in the summer holidays. This year, the country is set to see an extraordinarily high volume of tourist arrivals — not only will football fans arrive in droves for the FIFA World Cup 2022, starting next month in next-door Qatar, but the UAE itself also has a packed autumn-winter sports calendar starting this month.

Our cover story presents this UAE's full-throttle strategy to promote sports tourism with high-octane championships like Abu Dhabi's Formula One Grand Prix; the recently held Asia Cup in Dubai and Sharjah; and the forthcoming T10 Abu Dhabi. Other world-class events span sporting disciplines like basketball, tennis, rugby, mixed martial arts, jiu-jitsu, triathlon, and marathon. All of these sporting events come together to place the UAE on the world map of top destinations for sports enthusiasts. Apart from raising the country's global profile, this has clear economic benefits as well. The global sports tourism sector is expected to grow about 457 per cent from 2020 to 2030, going from \$323.42 billion (Dhs1.19 trillion) to \$1.8 trillion (Dhs6.61 trillion) over this period. By promoting its own sports tourism sector, the UAE stands to gain a significant share of this massive market.

Attracting millions of international visitors every year, building best-in-class tourism infrastructure, growing a sustainable non-oil economy, and carrying out humanitarian missions are all key factors in consolidating a nation's power on the global stage. The UAE's rising power is reflected in the high rank of its passport, which allows UAE citizens to enter 176 countries without a visa or with visa on arrival.

Based on the prestige of this passport, ranked No. 15 in the world on the latest index, and the government's landmark declaration in 2021 that expatriates could now get a UAE passport, **999** has spoken to several residents who've lived here for 20-30 years. Their response reveals the deep pride that long-time residents take in this country, their second home, and why they believe that citizenship for non-Emiratis will help the UAE thrive further.

The accelerating pace of economic and urban development here means that there's a lot of money passing through this country's financial channels. In this scenario, there's an urgent need to monitor and neutralise money-laundering threats — very strong emerging economies, such as the UAE, are amongst the prime targets of unsavoury people trying to wash the dirt off their ill-gotten money. To keep its financial channels free of such grime, anti-money laundering (AML) measures are being tightened by the UAE. Our report in this issue brings you the ramifications of this economic crime.

In other features this month, **999** puts the spotlight on the extremely severe legal penalties for venting one's ire on social media, especially to take revenge on someone and make their reputation suffer; the risks of jaywalking, which could result in a car crash, injury, and even death; and the need to plan one's commute to avoid the traffic congestion in and around school zones, now that the new school year is in full swing.

We live in one of the best countries in the world, and it's up to each one of us to cultivate the social behaviours that support the leadership's goals. **999** is with you all the way in this worthy endeavour.



**Ministry of Interior
United Arab Emirates**

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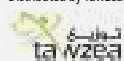
Published on behalf of
the Ministry of Interior by



New Perspective
media

PO Box 77910
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Abu Dhabi, UAE
Tel: 02- 491 7100
editorial@newperspectivemedia.com
www.newperspectivemedia.com

Distributed by Tawzea



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FIGHT THE MENACE**

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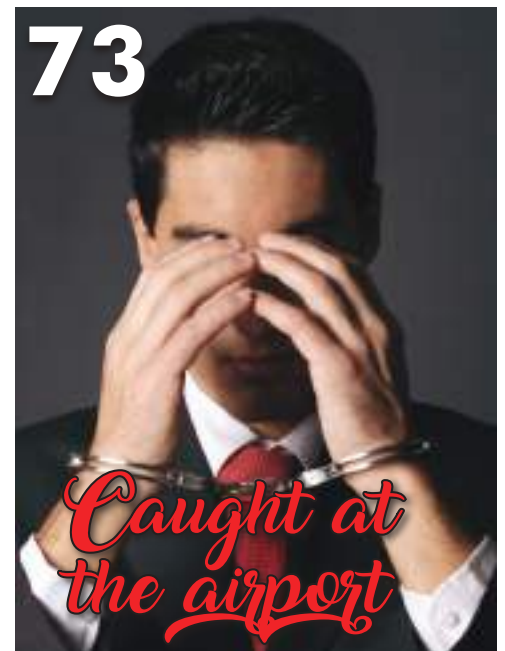
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UAE READY FOR KICK-OFF

WITH THE FIFA WORLD CUP 2022 COMING UP IN THE GULF NEXT MONTH AND THE ASIA CUP CRICKET TOURNAMENT RECENTLY HELD IN DUBAI, THE UAE IS SET TO REAP THE HUGE REWARDS OF SPORTS TOURISM, BUILDING UPON EXISTING ATTRACTIONS LIKE THE ABU DHABI F1 GRAND PRIX

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Internationally respected artist

President, VP witness signing of landmark natural gas agreement



DMO

PRESIDENT His Highness Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan and His Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice President and Prime Minister of the UAE and Ruler of Dubai, witnessed the signing ceremony of the landmark gas sales agreement between Abu Dhabi National Oil Company (ADNOC) and Dubai Supply Authority (DUSUP).

The agreement between two of the UAE's most prominent oil and gas companies stands to further

reinforce the country's progress in climate action and responsible energy transition.

Under this deal, ADNOC will supply DUSUP with natural gas, which will be used instead of clean coal for electricity generation at Dubai Electricity and Water Authority (DEWA)'s IPP (Independent Power Producer) Hassyan Power Complex. It aims to further reduce carbon emissions from the power generation process, which supports the UAE Net Zero by 2050 Strategic Initiative.

President administers oath of office to new UAE ambassadors

PRESIDENT His Highness Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan administered the oath of office to new UAE ambassadors

and wished them success in fostering good relations and cooperation in their respective missions.

His Highness said that the UAE is witnessing a new era of development, where partnerships and economic relations with other friendly countries will be much needed and the diplomatic missions play a huge role in it.

The President urged them to work tirelessly to provide Emirati citizens in other countries with all means of comfort and care.



WAM

Finland; Salem Suhail Al Neyadi to the Organisation Internationale de la Francophonie; Abdulla Saeed Al Shamsi to

the Republic of Nepal; Mohammed Ahmed Al Harbi to the Republic of Poland; Rawda Al Otaiba to the Republic of Costa Rica; Ahmad Juma Al Rumaithi to the Federal Republic of Somalia; Mohammed Mahmoud Al Shamsi to the Republic of Ireland; Ahmad Ibrahim Al Nuaimi to the Republic of Georgia; Sheikh Khalifa bin Mohammed bin Khalid Al Nahyan to the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan; and Hamad Al Zaabi to the Republic of Yemen.

During the ceremony, the new ambassadors pledged their loyalty to the UAE with high regard for honesty, integrity and confidentiality. Those who took the oath of office were UAE Ambassadors-designate Dr Abdul Nasser Al Shaali to the Republic of India; Ahmad Wahib Moez Ahmad to the Federal Republic of Germany; Abdullah Ali Khasif Al Hamoudi to the People's Republic of Bangladesh; Amna Mahmoud Mohammed Fikri to the Republic of

the Republic of Nepal; Mohammed Ahmed Al Harbi to the Republic of Poland; Rawda Al Otaiba to the Republic of Costa Rica; Ahmad Juma Al Rumaithi to the Federal Republic of Somalia; Mohammed Mahmoud Al Shamsi to the Republic of Ireland; Ahmad Ibrahim Al Nuaimi to the Republic of Georgia; Sheikh Khalifa bin Mohammed bin Khalid Al Nahyan to the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan; and Hamad Al Zaabi to the Republic of Yemen.

Mohamed bin Zayed leads UAE's tribute to Queen Elizabeth II

PRESIDENT His Highness Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan led the UAE's tribute to Queen Elizabeth II, the United Kingdom's longest serving monarch who passed away at the age of 96 on September 8.

UAE's close friend

HH Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan extended his sincere condolences to the family of Queen Elizabeth II and the people of the UK.

The President described her as a "close friend of the UAE and a beloved and respected leader".

"I extend my sincere condolences to the family of Queen Elizabeth II and the people of the UK. Her Majesty was a close friend of the UAE and



HH Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed tours Queen Elizabeth II and Prince Philip to the Sheikh Zayed Grand Mosque in November 2010

a beloved and respected leader whose long reign was characterised by dignity, compassion, and a tireless commitment to serving her country," His Highness tweeted.

A global icon

For his part, His Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin

Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice President and Prime Minister of the UAE and Ruler of Dubai, said Queen Elizabeth was "a global icon who represented the finest qualities of her nation and people".

In a tweet, the Vice President said: "We join the world in mourning the passing of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth, a global icon who represented the finest qualities of her

nation and people. Her incredible lifetime of service and duty to the United Kingdom is unparalleled in our modern world."

Queen Elizabeth II has established a close bilateral relationship with the UAE throughout her reign. She made two state visits to the country—first in 1979 followed by another in 2010.

Mohamed bin Zayed takes UAE to new era of growth, says VP



WAM

PRESIDENT His Highness Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan's leadership has taken the UAE to a new era of growth, His Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice President and Prime Minister of the UAE and Ruler of Dubai, highlighted.

During a UAE Cabinet meeting to review the country's competitive and development indicators, HH Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid announced that the country's leading rankings in global independent indices have significantly increased in the post-pandemic era.

"Under the leadership of my brother Mohamed bin Zayed,

the UAE has managed to overcome the COVID-19 pandemic. Our country has become globally prominent for its significant economic growth and development," the Vice President stated.

So far this year, the UAE has topped 156 global indicators, up from 121 in 2020. The country likewise ranked amongst top 10 countries in 432 global indicators compared to 312 in 2020.

HH Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid added that the UAE has become one of the world's top destinations for expats seeking to relocate, thanks to the country's relaxed visa laws and the benefits it offers to the best talents worldwide.

Vice President meets King Charles III at Buckingham Palace

HIS Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice President and Prime Minister of the UAE and Ruler of Dubai, met His Majesty King Charles III of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, at Buckingham Palace in London to offer the UAE's deepest condolences on the passing of Queen Elizabeth II.

The Vice President personally attended the state funeral ceremony for the late monarch and conveyed sincere condolences to HM King Charles III on behalf of the UAE government and its people.

His Highness highlighted the significant role played by Queen Elizabeth II in the long-standing relations between the UAE and the UK,



WAM

and wished that this historical ties would continue to grow deeper.

Earlier, the UAE leaders also sent congratulatory messages to HM King Charles III on his accession

to the throne following Queen Elizabeth II's death.

President His Highness Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan stated: "Our best wishes to my dear friend His Majesty King Charles III on his accession to the throne of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland. We look forward to further strengthening this exceptional friendship."

For his part, His Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid said:

"Congratulations to the people of Great Britain and Northern Ireland on the occasion of His Majesty King Charles III's accession to the throne. We wish him success in his new royal duties, and the friendly British people continued prosperity and progress."

Mohammed bin Rashid promotes 6,802 security personnel in Dubai

HIS Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice President and Prime Minister of the UAE and Ruler of Dubai, has issued an order to promote a total of 6,802 senior officers, non-commissioned officers and individuals across several of Dubai's security services.

Of this number, 4,141 members were from Dubai Police; 323 from the General Directorate of Civil Defense; 1,458 employees of the

General Directorate of Residency and Foreigners Affairs; along with several more from the State Security Agency in Dubai.

The promotion was an expression of recognition of His Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid for the efforts and achievements of the security system in the emirate and to strengthen the efforts of the UAE in preserving the nation's security.

Lt General Dhahi Khalfan Tamim, Deputy

Chairman of Police and Public Security in Dubai, expressed his earnest appreciation and gratitude to His Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid.

"The promotions represent a great incentive for all teams to continue their hard work on consolidating the pillars of security, providing the highest levels of safety and preserving the gains achieved at the country level," Dhahi Khalfan said.

Saif bin Zayed presents “Tree of Peace” to Mother of the Nation



HH Sheikh Saif bin Zayed and HH Sheikhha Fatima bint Mubarak during the ceremonial unveiling of the “Tree of Peace”



HIS Highness Lt General Sheikh Saif bin Zayed Al Nahyan, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior, presented the “Tree of Peace” to Her Highness Sheikhha Fatima bint Mubarak, Chairwoman of the General Women’s Union (GVWU), President of the Supreme Council for Motherhood and Childhood, and Supreme Chairwoman of the Family Development Foundation.

The gesture was intended as a symbol of gratitude for Her Highness Sheikhha Fatima bint Mubarak’s exceptional work in empowering women of all cultures, faiths, and nationalities via dialogues that promote tolerance, love, and peace.

As a staunch supporter of the importance of empowering women, the “Mother of the Nation” has launched a number of ongoing

initiatives that highlight the capabilities and skills of Emirati women—which are crucial to achieving UAE society’s progress and advancement.

A large number of female dignitaries attended the event, which took place at Umm Al Emarat Park in Abu Dhabi, alongside the International Conference on Women, Peace, and Security.

Interior Minister unveils family stability support programme

HIS Highness Lt General Sheikh Saif bin Zayed Al Nahyan, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior, in the presence of His Highness Sheikh Khalid bin Zayed Al Nahyan, Chairman of Zayed Higher Organisation for People of Determination (ZHO), launched a family stability support programme “Mabrook Madabart” (Arabic for ‘Congratulations on your Marriage’).

The initiative, which is part of Abu Dhabi’s unified government services system dubbed “Tamm”, was created to nurture the



HH Sheikh Saif bin Zayed and HH Sheikh Khalid bin Zayed during the unveiling of family stability support programme “Mabrook Madabart”

establishment and formation of happy, stable, and cohesive families.

The “Mabrook Madabart” initiative

provides people of determination with digitalised services that expedite the processing of marriage requirements and documents.

One of these services is to link would-be couples with the relevant institutions and provide a calendar of the dates of all annual mass wedding ceremonies that will take place in Abu Dhabi during the year. Moral support,

awareness and guidance support services, including family counselling and guidance, are also provided.

Saif bin Zayed leads launch of Snapchat’s parental control feature

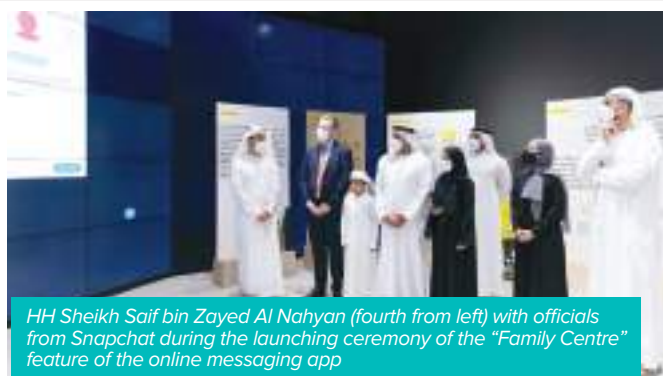
HIS Highness Lt General Sheikh Saif bin Zayed Al Nahyan, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior, has witnessed the launching ceremony of the new “Family Centre” feature of Snapchat in the UAE.

In collaboration with the UAE Ministry of Possibilities, the social media company unveiled the “Family Centre” feature, which allows parents to know the people with whom their children communicate, although they will not

be able to see the content.

The cooperation between the Ministry and Snapchat reflects the UAE government’s staunch commitment to providing its citizens and residents with all the necessary tools to ensure their safety and security, as well as their digital well-being.

This feature also allows parents to report any abusive or suspicious accounts directly to Snap’s Trust and Safety Team.



HH Sheikh Saif bin Zayed Al Nahyan (fourth from left) with officials from Snapchat during the launching ceremony of the “Family Centre” feature of the online messaging app



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Follow-up committee reviews airspace security, drone use

THE follow-up committee for the implementation of the light air-sports system held a meeting, led by Major General Dr Ahmed Nasser Al Raisi, Inspector General of the Ministry of Interior.

During the meeting, the committee briefed Al Raisi on several systems and technical initiatives that enhance airspace security and ensure the proper use of drones, thereby reducing the risks.

Al Raisi welcomed the attendees and



Major General Al Raisi (centre) leads the recent Mol's light air-sports follow-up committee meeting

stressed upon the continued success of the teams and committees in achieving their key goals. He called upon all parties to put in

business development from its members. The results of its annual media campaign plan were reviewed.

more fruitful integrated work to sustain their success and accomplish more in the space of light air-sport.

In the presence of all its members and strategic partners, the committee reviewed presentations on several projects and initiatives that include modern solutions and technologies.

The committee also listened to presentations on

Mol hosts session on policies and plans for internal security

THE General Directorate of Federal Central Operations organised a workshop on internal security, attended by representatives of chiefs of police as well as strategic partners.

The workshop, held at the Ministry of Interior (Mol) auditorium in Abu Dhabi, was presented by Brigadier Dr Salem Abdullah Alwan Al Habsi, Director of Crisis and Disaster Management in the General Directorate of Federal Central Operations.

At the workshop, the participants reviewed the most important joint policies and plans. They also reviewed internal security projects implemented by the Mol to keep pace with future developments, enhance cooperation and coordination, and provide the best services to the community.



Participants of the Mol workshop on internal security policies and plans at Dubai Police Officers Club

Mol holds workshop on child protection procedures

THE General Directorate of Strategy and Performance Development at the Ministry of Interior organised an advisory workshop on the Ministry's child protection policy.

It was attended by representatives from UAE Police Social Support Centres, Mol

Child Protection Centre, other stakeholders at the Policy Directorate, and strategic partners.

The event took place at Dubai Police Officers Club and focused on child rights policy development and drafting.

The meeting tackled the unification of

procedures undertaken when a case of child abuse is reported and the ways to deal with such cases while ensuring the child's protection, offering the necessary support to preserve their rights, and preventing their exposure to any further abuse or violence.

Abu Dhabi Police celebrate International Engineer's Day



Major General Al Khaili (7th from left) with officers from Abu Dhabi Police's Engineering Projects Department and Aviation Department

WITH the participation of engineers from the Engineering Projects Department and the Abu Dhabi Police Aviation Department, the police force celebrated International Engineer's Day (September 15). The event was held in appreciation of engineers, whose efforts are reflected in the process of development, especially security work.

Major General Khalifa Mohammed Al Khaili, Director of the Finance and Services Sector at Abu Dhabi Police, praised the male and female engineers, stressing upon the police leadership's keenness to motivate them to continue achieving excellence in their field, which would in turn enhance policing processes.

Brigadier Pilot Trainer Saeed Salem Al Marar, Director of the Abu Dhabi Police Aviation Department, conveyed the police leadership's appreciation for the distinguished efforts of aircraft engineers working in the Maintenance Department of the Abu Dhabi Police Aviation Department.

He praised their vital role in carrying out maintenance for helicopters, with mastery and high skill in processing and engineering and technical maintenance, ensuring the airworthiness of these helicopters and enabling the police force to perform its air operations with optimal efficiency.

Lieutenant Colonel Dr Hamad Al Asri Al Shamsi, Director of the Engineering Projects Department, also spoke of the police leadership's appreciation of the engineers' great efforts and the leadership's commitment to helping the engineers apply the best international standards to all police work.

At the end of the ceremony, Al Khaili honoured distinguished engineers, praising their efforts, effective role, perseverance, and excellence.

Al Ain gets new vehicle inspection track for light vehicles

BRIGADIER Mohammed Al Buraik Al Amri, Director of the Drivers and Vehicles Licensing Directorate in the Central Operations Sector at Abu Dhabi Police, in the presence of Eng. Bader Saeed Al Lamki, CEO of ADNOC Distribution, inaugurated the track of the Technical Inspection Centre for Light Vehicles at Al Hayer Station in Al Ain, after conducting 200 technical checks.

Al Amri stressed that the opening of the track came within the framework of cooperation with the Abu Dhabi National Oil Company (ADNOC Distribution), within the government's directives on implementing the national strategy for quality of life, and providing innovative and convenient services to the public. The new technical inspection track will benefit residents of the areas of Al Hayer, Al Faqa', Al Shuaib, and some adjacent areas.

The police officer called upon drivers of light vehicles in Al Hayer and nearby places to avail themselves of the services provided by Abu Dhabi Police and ADNOC Distribution through the new



Brigadier Al Amri (centre-left) and Eng. Al Lamki (first from left) briefed during the inauguration of the new track of the Technical Inspection Centre in Al Ain

technical inspection centre.

Al Lamki stressed the importance of this cooperation for the community. He said that this saves people's time and effort by

offering inspection services that are not only closer to their location but are also aligned with the highest international practices and standards.

Dhahi Khalfan leads juvenile welfare meeting in Dubai



Lt General Dhahi Khalfan (centre) with officers of Juvenile Awareness and Welfare Association

LIEUTENANT General Dhahi Khalfan Tamim, Deputy Chairman of Police and Public Security in Dubai, and Chairman of the Board of Juvenile Awareness and Welfare Association, recently chaired the

67th meeting of the association.

Held at the Dubai Police Officers Club in Al Jaddaf, the meeting discussed several topics, including a review of the implemented programmes and activities.

Dhahi Khalfan praised the efforts put into the summer programmes and events, including awareness seminars, competitions, educational lectures, workshops, camps and the initiative 'Courses for Youth Leaders' for the age group 14-17 years. The programmes also included scenarios depicted through short cartoon films, which were aimed at educating young people about UAE customs, traditions and values, and providing them with social skills.

Amongst the important topics reviewed were the second report on achievements made through youth studies; licences from the Community Development Authority; a plan submitted by the media awareness team of the association; and a plan for the training team of the Child Welfare Council in the school environment, in collaboration with the Ministry of Education.

Sharjah Police bolster cooperation with Ministry of Defence



Major General Al Shamsi (centre-right) presents a token of appreciation to Major General Al Ameri during a high-level meeting between Sharjah Police and the Ministry of Defence

AT the Special Tasks Department headquarters, Major General Saif Al Zari Al Shamsi, Commander-in-Chief of Sharjah Police, met with Major General Saleh Mohammed Saleh bin Muqrin Al Ameri, Commander of Joint Operations,

Ministry of Defence, to discuss ways to improve the existing frameworks for military cooperation.

A number of officers from the Ministry of Defence, Ministry of Interior, and Sharjah Police were present. Attendees

discussed the personnel, systems, and mechanisms allocated to security operations, in order to improve preparedness. Numerous procedures that could strengthen security were explored at length.

Ras Al Khaimah Police launch traffic fine initiative

THE Ras Al Khaimah Police General Command has launched an initiative for vehicle owners who have pending traffic fines, particularly fines that have been accumulated over a period of two years or

more. The initiative provides for special packages that would enable vehicle owners to clear their fines.

Major General Ali Abdullah bin Alwan Al Nuaimi, Commander-in-Chief of Ras Al

Khaimah Police, stressed that the initiative was launched in line with the strategic objectives of the Ministry of Interior for better traffic safety and enhancing road users' respect for the law and traffic regulations.

Al Marri reviews Community Happiness Dept's performance indicators

LIEUTENANT General Abdullah Khalifa Al Marri, Commander-in-Chief of Dubai Police, inspected the General Department of Community Happiness in Dubai Police, as part of the annual inspection visit for public administration and police centres under the Dubai Police General Command.

Al Marri reviewed the key performance indicators of the General Department of Community Happiness during 2021. According to the annual report of Community Happiness, the indicators achieved 93.6 per cent overall, exceeding the target of 91 per cent. The score was 95.3 per cent in career happiness of public administration; 95.8 per cent in happiness of



Lt General Al Marri (second from left) speaking to officers of the General Department of Community Happiness at Dubai Police

partners; 90.3 per cent in satisfaction of Officers Club members; 93.3 per cent in satisfaction with community initiatives; and 93.9 per cent in satisfaction with the dissemination of information last year.

He also reviewed the indicators of the

Rehabilitation and Readiness Centre at Dubai Police, which present the percentage of physical readiness for the affiliates at Dubai Police, as well as 2021 statistics of the centre; the Department of Community Relations; the 'Happiness of a Child' initiative; the recreational campaigns; the number of Ripe Market visitors; the Outreach Programme for Foreign Communities; the Youth

Programme; the 'Live as a Hero' programme; and the results of the 'Positive Spirit' initiative.

Al Marri also reviewed the achievements of the Department of Sports Affairs and indicators of public interaction with media content on all official social media platforms of Dubai Police.

Sultan Al Nuaimi lauds AI progress at Al Nuaimiya Police Station

MAJOR General Sheikh Sultan bin Abdullah Al Nuaimi, Commander-in-Chief of Ajman Police, praised the excellent performance achieved by the Al Nuaimiya Comprehensive Police Station in the areas of Artificial Intelligence, speed of response, and customer happiness.

Lieutenant Colonel Muhammad Abdullah Abu Shehab, Head of the Al

Nuaimiya Comprehensive Police Station, and several officers and non-commissioned officers



Major General Sultan Al Nuaimi (centre) takes stock of the functions of a robot police at the Al Nuaimiya Comprehensive Police Station

were involved in reviewing the progress of work procedures and identifying the modernisation needs.

The commander-in-chief inspected the Comprehensive Police Station's vehicles and their maintenance mechanism. He lauded the efforts made for the smart transformation of police services, thereby greatly enhancing customer satisfaction.

At the end of the inspection tour, Al Nuaimi praised all employees of the Al Nuaimiya Comprehensive Police Station and their keenness to do their duty to the fullest.

Umm Al Quwain Police to soon get a green building

THE Ministry of Energy and Infrastructure continues to implement the project of a new building for the Umm Al Quwain Police General Command in the Al Ramlah area. Completion of the project will take 730 days.

The area of the building is 17,750 square metres, out of a total land area of 32,118 square metres. The building's multiple levels will have meeting rooms, offices and administrative departments, training rooms, service facilities, and 365 parking lots, including electric vehicle parking lots, and parking spaces for people of determination.

The building follows sustainability standards for green buildings. It is being equipped with power and water saving systems; intelligent building management systems; motion and lighting sensors that shut down air-conditioning and lighting when employees exit; and solar panels for renewable energy.

Fujairah Police roll out traffic campaign for students

THE Fujairah Police General Command, represented by the Traffic and Patrols Department, launched in September the fourth campaign for 2022 under the slogan 'Traffic Safety for Students'.

The three-month campaign comes within the operational plans of the Ministry of Interior and the Traffic and Patrols Department of Fujairah Police.

Captain Mohamed Saeed Al Hamour, vice director of the Department, stressed the importance of achieving traffic safety for students through the consolidation of all efforts.

First Lieutenant Moza Abdulsalam Al Daramaky, Director of the Traffic Awareness and Media branch, explained that the campaign aimed to prepare a generation capable of applying traffic safety concepts.

Dhs1.053 trillion

The UAE's record-breaking non-oil foreign trade during the first half of 2022, up by 17 per cent compared to the same period in 2021. This increased the non-oil trade by 25 per cent and 35 per cent compared to the same period in 2020 and 2019 respectively.

Dhs399 billion

The UAE's Constant Price GDP (gross domestic product) for the first quarter of 2022, according to the Ministry of Economy. This figure recorded a growth rate of 8.4 per cent compared to Dhs368 billion in the same period in 2021.

156

The number of global indices so far topped by the UAE in 2022 as compared to 121 in 2020. Most of these indices showed the UAE surpassing the pre-pandemic growth of the commercial and development sectors, according to data cited by the UAE Cabinet.

432

The number of global indicators wherein the UAE ranked amongst top 10 in 2022, compared to 314 in 2020. This was based on the latest data released by the UAE Cabinet—which covered various global indices including economy, safety and security, and regulations flexibility.

1st

The UAE's leading ranking in the Arab world in the 2021/2022 Human Development Index, published by the United Nations Development Programme. The country has ranked 26th globally in this index, which assesses long-term progress in basic dimensions of human development.

BE IN THE LOOP

MOI PARTICIPATES IN 31ST GCC CIVIL DEFENCE DIRECTORS GENERAL MEETING



Major General Dr Jassim Mohammed Al Marzouqi, Commander-in-Chief of the Civil Defence at the Ministry of Interior (first from right), led the UAE delegation to the 31st GCC Civil Defence Directors General Meeting at the headquarters of the General Secretariat in Riyadh. Al Marzouqi praised the organisation for its resolute efforts in strengthening the relations between its member states and bolstering cooperation, particularly in facing latest developments and challenges.

MOI TO SPONSOR UN CHIEFS OF POLICE SUMMIT 2024 IN NEW YORK




In its staunch commitment to promoting international peace and security, the Ministry of Interior (MoI) has participated in the recently concluded United Nations Chiefs of Police Summit (UNCOPS) 2022 in New York, United States. On the sidelines of the biannual event, which is dubbed as the largest gathering of police chiefs in the world, the MoI has pledged to sponsor the UNCOPS 2024, with the aim of sustaining cooperation amongst member states.

MOI, INTERPOL MENA CONCLUDE 4TH PHASE OF JOINT BIOSECURITY INITIATIVE



The fourth phase of the joint biosecurity initiative of the Ministry of Interior and Interpol's counter-terrorism division at its MENA coordination office has concluded. The field exercise held at the Civil Defence Academy was aimed at raising the skills and competence of UAE's safety and security forces in terms of mitigating the risk of any biological incidents and dealing with disasters and crises.



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UAE NEWS BULLETIN

POLICE NEWS, PEOPLE, NUMBERS AND EVENTS

ABU DHABI



DHS800 AND 4 BLACK TRAFFIC POINTS

Abu Dhabi Police have reminded motorists of the dangers of distracted driving in a video uploaded on their social media pages. The video shows a multi-car collision when a distracted driver failed to spot a car that had broken down in the middle of the road. Distracted driving gets a motorist a fine of Dhs800 and four black traffic points.

AJMAN



3 MONTHS

An Asian man was sentenced by Ajman Criminal Court to spend three months in jail for threatening to kill his business partner. The court heard that he held a knife to the victim's throat on many occasions to intimidate the latter about their shop's profit. He will be deported after serving his jail term.

DUBAI



796

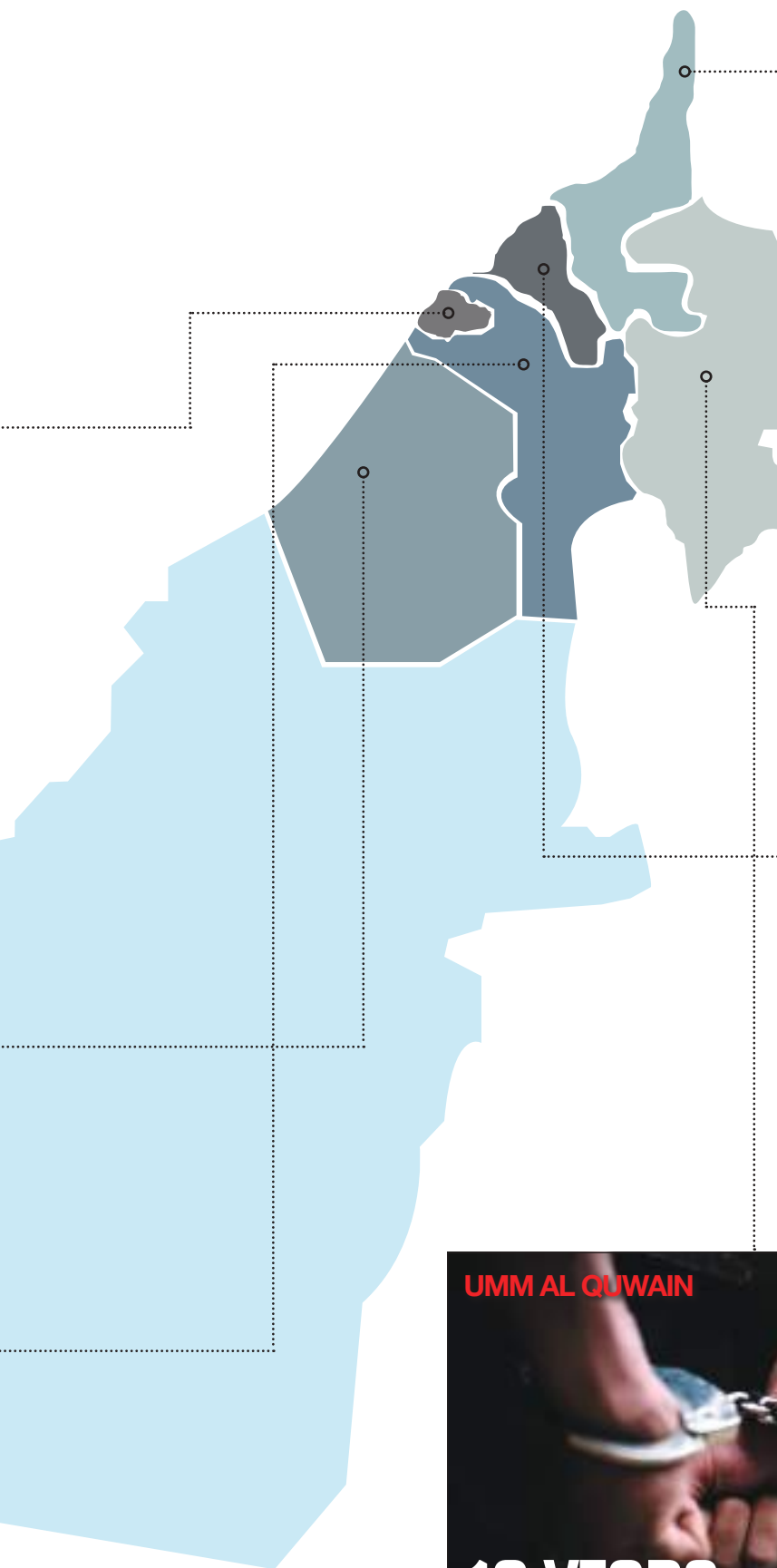
The crackdown on begging by Dubai Police resulted in the arrest of 796 beggars and 1,287 street peddlers during the first six months of 2022. The police force has reminded the public that begging is illegal in the UAE, as it poses a threat to public safety and security. Such an activity can be reported to the toll-free number **901** or through the 'Police Eye' service on the Dubai Police app.

RAS AL KHAIMAH



2

Two African men, who were involved in a string of robberies in the emirate, have been arrested by Ras Al Khaimah Police. Their latest criminal activity, captured by CCTV, was in a grocery store. The duo wielded meat cleavers and wore face masks. They demanded the cashier to empty out the cash register. Both men have been referred to the Public Prosecution.



FUJAIRAH

2 YEARS



Residents in the emirate have been advised to pay heed to safety warnings during poor weather conditions, as failing to do so could mean a stiff punishment. The authorities issue weather safety alerts during rainy days so that people can avoid driving or going to wadis and low-lying areas. As per Article 399 of the Federal Decree Law No.31/2021, a person who puts himself or others in danger may be fined and/or imprisoned for a maximum term of two years.

SHARJAH

216KG

Sharjah Police, in cooperation with police forces from Abu Dhabi and Umm Al Quwain, arrested a member of an international narcotics syndicate. His movement was placed under round-the-clock surveillance after a tip-off that he was receiving a shipment of illegal drugs on a beach in Sharjah. During a raid, the police seized 216kg of narcotics, which the suspect kept in a villa in one of the emirates. Investigations are under way to identify the source of the illegal drugs.

Sharjah Police

UMM AL QUWAIN

10 YEARS

An Arab man received a 10-year jail sentence from Umm Al Quwain Misdemeanour Court for molesting his two nieces under the age of 18. One of the girls first confided in her mother's friend. When the mother learned about it, her other daughter revealed that she was also molested by their uncle on several occasions. The convict denied all accusations, but the court found him guilty of the charge.

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UAE READY FOR *KICK-OFF*

WITH THE FIFA WORLD CUP 2022 COMING UP IN THE GULF NEXT MONTH AND THE ASIA CUP CRICKET TOURNAMENT RECENTLY HELD IN DUBAI, THE UAE IS SET TO REAP THE HUGE REWARDS OF SPORTS TOURISM, BUILDING UPON EXISTING ATTRACTIONS LIKE THE ABU DHABI F1 GRAND PRIX

BY NEIL BIE





How big is a chunky slice of a large, power-packed pie? Big enough to fire up the muscles needed to run over a long distance. We aren't talking of the dietary requirements of the human body here, but the endurance and winning streak of the UAE economy. This country is now looking to scoop up a large portion of the global sports tourism industry, which is estimated to reach \$1.8 trillion (Dhs6.6 trillion) by 2030. This is a global market — and just one part of the wider tourism sector — that's nearly 443 per cent bigger than the UAE's GDP of \$405 billion (Dhs1.49 trillion) in 2021.

This growth trend in the worldwide sports tourism industry, estimated at a compound annual growth rate of more than 16 per cent (from 2021 to 2030), is part of an overall trend of global tourism sharply rebounding after the pandemic. According to an April 2022 report from the business news agency Reuters: "The travel and tourism industry's GDP is seen hitting \$8.35 trillion this year and \$9.6 trillion in 2023, a return to its pre-pandemic level."

The UAE has made sports tourism a strategic focus area, not just organising sports events but also proactively utilising them to bring more people into the country, giving aviation, retail, and hospitality a big boost. The emirates of Dubai and Sharjah recently hosted the high-profile Asia Cup cricket tournament, and the UAE is certain to benefit from the anticipated tourist influx into the Gulf when

the FIFA World Cup 2022 is held in Qatar in November this year.

November 2022 will also see the Abu Dhabi Formula One Grand Prix, for which most of the tickets were snapped up by mid-September. The F1 event is one of the crown jewels of sports tourism in the UAE. A new champion emerged in the 2021 race here — Max Verstappen beat F1 legend Lewis Hamilton — making the whole experience very thrilling for F1 fans.

Sports tourism has been labelled by the United Nations World Travel Organization as one of the fastest-growing sub-sectors of tourism worldwide. Behind the UAE's rising reputation as a global sports hub are its world-class sports facilities; unrivalled hospitality and tourism infrastructure; prowess in organising mega-events; relaxed visa rules, especially the new multiple-entry visa; and its exemplary handling of the COVID-19 pandemic.

NATURAL EXTENSION

Tourism has been one of the cornerstones of the UAE economy for long. In the initial years, the tourist flocks landed mostly in

Dubai, but over time, Abu Dhabi, Sharjah, and the Northern Emirates have all created their own tourism strong points, and sporting events or sports-oriented recreational activities are a key part of their efforts.

Sharjah is one of the established top destinations in the world for cricket fans. The emirate is associated with some legendary moments in the sport, e.g. the April 1986 cliffhanger final of the Austral-Asia Cup, in which Pakistan's Javed Miandad hit an incredible sixer off the last ball of the match, giving his country a tournament win over archrival India.

In recent years, sports fans around the world have had their eyes on the UAE as one of the must-visit hotspots, with many international sporting events on the horizon. The US-based company Allied Market Research named the UAE in a study published in August 2021 as one of the Key Market Segments in Latin America, the Middle East and African (LAMEA) region along with countries such as Brazil, South Africa, and Argentina.

Globally, the sports tourism sector is anticipated to grow more than 456 per cent from the pandemic-hit period to the end of

November 2022 will see the Abu Dhabi Formula One Grand Prix, for which most of the tickets were snapped up by mid-September. The F1 event is one of the crown jewels of sports tourism in the UAE

THE NUMBERS: GLOBAL SPORTS TOURISM

DHS6.61 TRILLION

Projected total worth of the global sports tourism sector in 2030, or 456 per cent increase from Dhs1.186 trillion in 2020, as per Allied Market Research

16 PER CENT

Compound annual growth rate of the worldwide sports tourism industry from 2021 to 2030, according to Allied Market Research

10 PER CENT

Percentage share of sports tourism in the global tourism industry, according to the United Nations World Tourism Organization

this decade, going up from \$323.42 billion (Dhs1.186 trillion) in 2020 to a huge \$1.8 trillion (Dhs6.61 trillion) in 2030. This would be achieved by a combination of sports events and facilities, tourism, travel, and trade at both business-to-consumer and business-to-business levels.

His Highness Sheikh Saud bin Saqr Al Qasimi, Supreme Council Member and Ruler of Ras Al Khaimah, said it best when he highlighted that sport was deeply embedded within Emiratis — from the way people welcome visitors from all over the world to how these events showcase just how far the UAE has progressed in terms of developing infrastructure that has hosted hundreds of local and international sporting events and drawn millions of visitors.

Horse racing is an integral part of the Emirati sporting tradition, and the UAE has one of

the most talked-about racing events in the world. The Dubai World Cup, held at the Meydan Grandstand and Racecourse, has a total prize pot of \$35 million

(Dhs128.45 million) and naturally attracts the world's top racehorses.

In July 2010, His Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice-President and Prime Minister of the UAE and Ruler of Dubai, won the Endurance Horseracing Championship held in Houston Park, Britain. He has won other endurance races, too, but that one felt particularly significant as it followed the opening of the Meydan racecourse in Dubai in March 2010.

In March 2022, the emirate of Dubai hosted the 15th edition of Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum Endurance Cup, one of the top events on

Globally, the sports tourism sector is anticipated to grow more than 456 per cent from the pandemic-hit period to the end of this decade, going up from \$323.42 billion (Dhs1.186 trillion) in 2020 to a huge \$1.8 trillion (Dhs6.6 trillion) in 2030



15th edition of Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum Endurance Cup

Endurance Dubai

“Sports are part of the identity and culture of the Emirati people



HH SHEIKH SAUD BIN SAQR AL QASIMI

Supreme Council Member and Ruler of Ras Al Khaimah

the international endurance racing calendar. This was a 160km ride, the culmination of the annual Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum Endurance Festival.

PART OF UAE IDENTITY

“Sports are part of the identity and culture of the Emirati people,” said HH Sheikh Saud bin Saqr, when he received in August 2022 the UAE Rugby Federation led by its president, HH Sheikh Mohammed bin Maktoum bin Juma Al Maktoum.

Ras Al Khaimah is quite the sporting destination in its own right, hosting one of the world’s top half-marathon events, with the next one coming up in February 2023. The emirate will also host the 2023 Minifootball World Cup from end of April to early May.

The emirate of Ajman, one of the premier water sports destinations in the Middle East, has made sports tourism a key component of its overall tourism strategy. Speaking at the second edition of the City Centre Ajman Indoor Run, held in June 2022, Khadija Turki, Acting Director General of the Ajman Department of Tourism Development, said, “We are keen to organise a series of events and sports activities during the year as part of Ajman Tourism’s strategy to promote the emirate as a sports destination that attracts all members of society and athletes, from local and international arenas.” The indoor run was an innovative way to continue being active



while avoiding the searing outdoor heat of the desert summer. Turki spoke of “the culture of adopting sport as a lifestyle... by creating practical solutions”.

The emirate of Fujairah has a very popular international marathon, supported by His Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Hamad Al Sharqi, Crown Prince of Fujairah.

The emirate of Umm Al Quwain has been promoting its own cycling race, which is now in its third year. The event attracts hundreds of participants and many times that number of spectators.

All of these events have multiple benefits: they bring people together and create a sense of community; they raise the UAE’s international profile even further; they help international visitors get a taste of everything this country has to offer; and they directly put a lot of money into the local economy.

The economic benefits of sports tourism were evident during this year’s Asia Cup final, held on September 11 in Dubai. As Sri Lanka played against Pakistan in the final, every public venue that had a large TV screen was packed with people. That’s how it tends to be, because even though anyone can now watch a sporting event on their TV or handheld device, fans want to get together to watch the sports

that they’re passionate about — that translates to great business. That’s why large screens will go up everywhere when the FIFA World Cup.

According to reports, the UAE is fully prepared to welcome football fans during the event, with special hotel packages and dedicated ‘fan zones’ across the emirates. World Cup host Qatar is just a few hours’ drive from UAE cities and flights take less than 90 minutes. It makes sense that many football fans would come to the UAE.

PANDEMIC NORMS EASED UP

The UAE has relaxed its visa rules, allowing for more tourists to visit the country, without the need for pre-departure PCR tests for fully vaccinated individuals.

In addition, the country has introduced a multiple-entry visa that will cost only Dhs100 for those who have the “Hayya” card issued by FIFA World Cup Qatar 2022. Fans of the World Cup will be able to enter the UAE many times over the course of 90 days with this multiple-entry tourist visa. Holders of “Hayya” cards can visit the UAE by applying for this visa beginning November 1, 2022, according to the Federal Authority for Identity, Citizenship, Customs, and Port Security.

This visa may be renewed for an additional 90 days under the same terms, restrictions, and costs as the UAE’s current visa policy. The aforementioned processes do not apply to citizens of some countries who do not require visas to enter or remain in the UAE under the present regulations.



GLOBAL BENCHMARKS

Saeed Mohammed Hareb, Secretary General of Dubai Sports Council (DSC), affirmed recently that the UAE had, indeed, become one of the most successful countries in providing a uniquely tailored experience enjoyed by sports fans from around the world.

“The UAE, in general, and Dubai, in particular, have gained the world’s confidence in their ability to host any event successfully. Dubai has set global benchmarks and is now a role model in hosting and organising major global sports events, such as cricket’s Twenty20 World Cup and the Indian Premier League at Dubai International Stadium. Dubai is today one of the world’s most successful cities for hosting mega-events, thanks to the vision of its leadership, a clear strategy, robust infrastructure, and event-management capabilities that make participating and attending events in the city a unique experience,” said Hareb.

One could easily see how the UAE has put in the effort to build massive structures that support the development of sports tourism in the country — from Zayed Sports City in Abu Dhabi, which was built four decades ago and has since hosted sports celebrities like Rafael Nadal in 2019, to the 15,000-seater Hamdan Sports Complex in Dubai, which is now one of the biggest multi-sport facilities worldwide, frequented by Serbian tennis star and UAE Golden Visa holder Novak Djokovic since 2014.

The UAE is rife with mega-structures that not only specialise in a particular field or sport, but are also future-proof,

interchangeable venues that can accommodate thousands of visitors across multiple functions as well.

For rugby, Dubai has The Sevens Stadium, which hosts over 100,000 individuals during its annual Emirates Airline Dubai Rugby Sevens, the longest-running sports event in the Middle East that traces back to 1970. The Sevens found its new and permanent home at this stadium, which hosted the games since its opening in 2008.

Abu Dhabi has a dedicated race course for its world-famous F1 Grand Prix. The event has its home at the Yas Marina Circuit, a technologically-advanced race track that hosts over 400 events every year, spanning motorsports, health, fitness, and others.

Yas Island’s newest multipurpose facility, Etihad Arena, also hosted boxing superstar Floyd Mayweather Jr in an exhibition match in May 2022.

For football, Dubai has the Al Maktoum Stadium – Al Nasr Club, which was designed according to the international specifications of FIFA (Fédération Internationale de Football Association or the International Federation of Football Association).

These are but a few of the many infrastructural projects that the UAE has built over the five decades since the founding of the country. It’s because of these mega-structures that the UAE, particularly Abu Dhabi, was awarded the title of ‘Middle East’s Leading Sports Tourism Destination in 2021’ at the World Travel Awards.

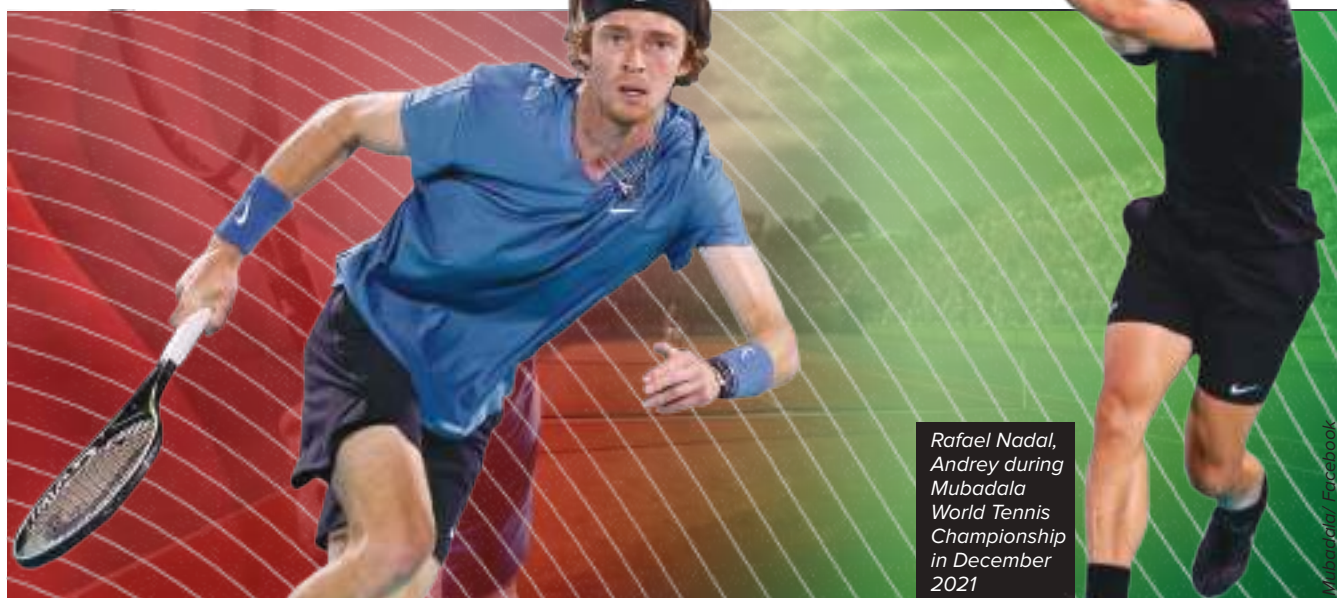
Ali Hassan Al Shaiba, Executive Director

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SAEED MOHAMMED HAREB
Secretary General of Dubai Sports Council

of Tourism and Marketing at DCT Abu Dhabi, said, “Abu Dhabi is home to the most important international events and, with its vast array of offerings, has focused on enriching the visitor’s experience even during the height of the pandemic. Under the strong leadership and guidance of DCT Abu Dhabi, the emirate continues to enhance its tourism offerings and consolidate its position on the global tourism map.”



Rafael Nadal, Andrey during Mubadala World Tennis Championship in December 2021

Mubadala Facebook

UNPARALLELED HOSPITALITY

The huge sports facilities would be nothing but empty quarters without the attendance of millions of sports fans. The continuous growth of the UAE's sports tourism industry has been driven by the extraordinary retail and hospitality experience available here, including the extremely wide range of food and beverage offerings. As global travel returns to almost pre-pandemic levels, the combination of sports events and unparalleled hospitality makes the UAE a top draw.

In an interview with 999, Alan Holt, Managing Director at Expat Sport, one of the leading sports tourism agencies in the GCC and the UAE's exclusive agent for the FIFA World Cup 2022 official match hospitality programme, said that this country had mastered the art of not only analysing growth trends in tourism but also of finding ways to ensure that it could truly deliver an experience that'd transform curious visitors into returning tourists each time there was a huge sporting event. What's even better, he added, was that the majority of these tourists weren't solo visitors; they were groups of friends and family members that travelled together to the UAE to enjoy these action-packed events.

"Sports tourism is generally not a solo traveller event; it is a collective shared experience that you enjoy with friends, family members, or your sports group. This suits the UAE market, which has the hospitality facilities and infrastructure to support this type of group travel. This is great for the economy, [and] also brings a different type of tourist to the region. In my opinion, sports tourists are generally quite active themselves, so they want to not only spectate the event they're coming to, but also take part in the wealth of sporting experiences the UAE has to offer, such as its incredible golf courses and water sports," said Holt.

He explained that international sporting spectacles as well as new local sporting events like the Dubai Fitness Challenge and the ADNOC Marathon, to name a few, attracted global attention to this multi-cultural country. Many of these local events see enthusiastic participation from the UAE residents, who collectively represent 200-plus nationalities, thereby helping the authorities spread the word about the UAE being a sport-friendly nation.

"Current sporting events like the Abu Dhabi Grand Prix are extremely successful amongst both residents and international tourists alike. The Dubai Rugby Sevens has certainly been on most UAE residents'

“Sports tourism is generally not a solo traveller event; it is a collective shared experience that you enjoy with friends, family members, or your sports group. This suits the UAE market, which has the hospitality facilities and infrastructure to support this type of group travel



ALAN HOLT

Managing Director at Expat Sport, a leading sports tourism agency

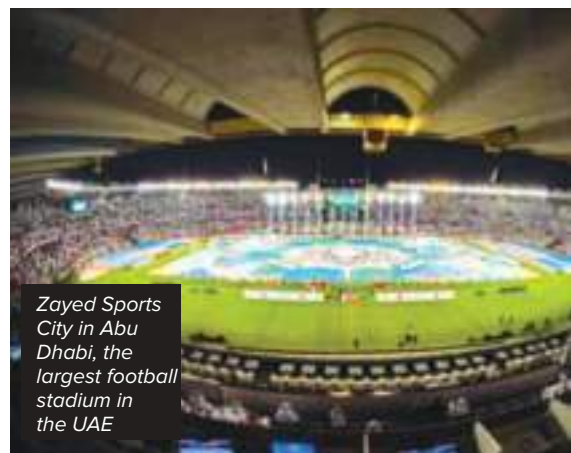
bucket lists at some point, as well as the Dubai World Cup," said Holt.

"Interestingly, I think there has been a growth in popularity with the new events like the Dubai Fitness Challenge 30x30, which is an amazing initiative and is attracting both international sports enthusiasts and residents wanting to participate in activities such as the iconic cycling event Dubai Ride down Sheikh Zayed Road," he added.

GROWING NUMBERS

That the UAE is a welcoming, hospitable, and very capable host country has been proved by the strong participation of residents and international tourists who show up at the games. Statistics show that visitor numbers for sporting events, despite COVID-19 struggles, are rising. For instance, from around 135,000 in 2018 and 2019, attendees at the Abu Dhabi F1 Grand Prix increased 13.33 per cent to 153,000 in 2021. This year, when ticket sales began, the Grandstand and Hill tickets for the F1 race were sold out "in record time", as local media reported — the crowds could be even bigger this year.

Ever innovative, the UAE also knows exactly how to make more people come and stay at its great hotels, shop at its great malls, and generally drop a lot of dirhams into the local economy. According



Zayed Sports City in Abu Dhabi, the largest football stadium in the UAE



The Sevens Stadium in Dubai

to business media reports, the UAE is offering multiple-entry visas "at the nominal fee of 100 dirhams" to World Cup fans who hold valid match tickets.

The UAE's well-regarded budget airline flydubai is expected to operate 30 return flights daily to and from Doha, the capital of World Cup host emirate Qatar. That means football fans can stay in the UAE and fly off to see their matches in Qatar, if that's what they prefer.

Certainly, the UAE has a major advantage over its Gulf neighbours in the range of experiences it can offer a visitor, beyond the primary sporting event that the visitor comes to see.

With tourists coming in droves to the country, the UAE's sports tourism industry effectively creates a huge demand for people, products, and resources. Hotels, restaurants, travel agencies, and events companies start hiring more, hotel rooms are added, and a beneficial cascading effect is seen in the economy.

"Such enormous sports events require a great number of resources in order to be successful and, thus, they provide an enormous amount of employment opportunities. People are needed in all aspects of the industry, from managing logistics, transportation, construction of hotels, to hospitality within those hotels, travel, events, team organisation... the list goes on," said Holt.

The biggest winner, he feels, is the country's aviation industry. He revealed that the upcoming FIFA World Cup in Qatar, for instance, would have over 5,000 guests flying into Dubai through his agency alone. "I believe the FIFA World Cup 2022 will also attract fans wanting to visit the region for the first time and base themselves between the UAE and the host nation," said Holt.

Giving some examples of the tourism arrangements, he said, "Expat Sport has just launched Dubai's first football fans' hotel experience, partnering with NH Dubai The Palm, for football supporters wanting to base themselves here and fly over on the daily shuttle flights for the live games.

"We have over 5,000 guests arriving from around the world from Mexico, South America, the United Kingdom, and India. Naturally, the aviation industry benefits significantly, with local airlines like Emirates or Etihad having all of their crew reside in the UAE, meaning the increased demand for flights is mirrored in the demand for locally based cabin crew."

With everything pointing to a major growth spurt in the global sports tourism industry, the UAE is ready for kick-off, confident in the fact that it has one of the best 'teams' in the business.



Etihad Arena in Abu Dhabi



Al Maktoum Stadium - Al Nasr Club

UAE'S BIGGEST SPORTING EVENTS TILL DECEMBER 2022

NBA ABU DHABI

DATE: October 6 and 8

Atlanta Hawks and Milwaukee Bucks of the National Basketball Association (NBA), the professional league of North America, will play in the league's inaugural games at the Etihad Arena on Yas Island in Abu Dhabi.

The NBA will hold its first-ever games in the UAE and the Arabian Gulf at the NBA Abu Dhabi Games this year. This is part of the multi-year agreement between the Department of Culture and Tourism – Abu Dhabi (DCT Abu Dhabi) and the NBA to deliver games to the UAE.



UFC 281

DATE: October 22, 2022

The Department of Culture and Tourism – Abu Dhabi (DCT Abu Dhabi) and the Ultimate Fighting Championship (UFC), the premier mixed martial arts organisation in the world, have announced the return of Abu Dhabi Showdown Week, the third event of a five-year partnership, titled UFC 281, at Etihad Arena. While Abu Dhabi has hosted foreign UFC events during the pandemic, UFC 281 will be the first time since UFC 242 (Khabib vs Poirier) in September 2019 that events and activations can return in full form in the emirate.

The third Abu Dhabi Showdown Week will feature city-wide activations with some of the biggest UFC stars, as well as concerts, seminars, pool parties, and other activities.



ABU DHABI WORLD FESTIVAL JIU-JITSU CHAMPIONSHIP

DATE: November 11-12

The 14th Abu Dhabi World Festival Jiu-Jitsu Championship will be held in the Jiu-Jitsu Arena at Zayed Sports City. This event, which features a variety of age-graded, mat-rolling talent, is one of the most important occasions in the Middle East's martial arts calendar.



FORMULA 1 ETIHAD ABU DHABI GRAND PRIX

DATE: November 18-20

The dramatic Formula One season finale will once again be held at the Yas Marina Circuit, which has recently been updated to get the best out of the 2022 F1 car models (with more possibilities for overtaking). The Yasalam After-Race Concerts have Swedish House Mafia scheduled to perform, with their first confirmed show on Friday, November 19.



WORLD TRIATHLON CHAMPIONSHIP FINALS

DATE: November 23-26

Yas Island in Abu Dhabi will host the World Triathlon Championship Finals, which are the highlight of the World Triathlon schedule each year. More than 5,000 foreign and 2,500 local triathletes are to participate in the multi-day triathlon festival, which will award world champions in the Elite and Age Group racing categories.



T10 ABU DHABI

DATE: November 23 – December 4

The T10s, a competition showcasing cricket's quickest and most thrilling format, will visit Abu Dhabi for a fourth time later this year. The Abu Dhabi T10, which will take place at the Zayed Cricket Stadium, is renowned for its lightning-paced, huge-swinging, six-smashing, quick-fire encounters that are often over in a couple of hours. By hosting the T20 World Cup, the IPL, and the 2021 edition of T10 Abu Dhabi, the UAE was figuratively the centre of the cricketing universe last year.



EMIRATES AIRLINE DUBAI RUGBY SEVENS/DUBAI 7S

DATE: December 1-3

Since the beginning of the HSBC World Rugby Sevens Series in 1999, the Emirates Dubai 7s has been a part of it. This is the only competition that annually hosts both the Men's and Women's series. Every year, on the first weekend of December, the Emirates Dubai 7s takes great pride in hosting the world's top teams. This is the biggest rugby 7s competition, with teams participating from all around the world. Over the course of three days, there will be 15 divisions of play as teams spread out throughout The Sevens Stadium's eight gorgeous fields.



FIBA 3x3 WORLD TOUR FINALS

DATE: December 9-10

In recent years, FIBA 3x3 has had a remarkable rise in popularity. It is a fast-paced, three-on-three basketball style that was adopted from urban blacktop courts and the streets; it is a grassroots ode to balling and was recognised as an Olympic sport as of Tokyo 2021 (an accomplishment for which Abu Dhabi's backing was crucial). The 11th FIBA 3x3 World Tour Finals are coming soon to Abu Dhabi.



ADNOC MARATHON

DATE: December 17

This year's ADNOC Abu Dhabi Marathon will give participants more time to get ready and train in colder weather. The recently established community race series offers an additional chance for new and aspiring runners to get familiar with the race setting, try out various lengths, and improve their running form and endurance ahead of the marathon. The marathon competition has a 42km full marathon route; a marathon relay in which two runners race 21km each; a 10km circuit; a 5km run; a 2.5km family fun run, and more.



MUBADALA WORLD TENNIS CHAMPIONSHIP

DATE: December 16-18

The International Tennis Centre, Zayed Sports City in Abu Dhabi, will host the Mubadala World Tennis Championship, bringing it back to the city's athletic and entertainment calendar. Since 2009, the annual World Tennis Championship, which comprises eight of the top tennis players in the world (six men and two women), has regularly offered top-notch sporting entertainment to the UAE. The star player lineup will be revealed in due course. Previous competitors include Rafael Nadal, who has won the tournament five times, Novak Djokovic, Roger Federer, Maria Sharapova, and Serena and Venus Williams.





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MONEY FROM GRIME

AS THE CRIME OF MONEY-LAUNDERING THREATENS GLOBAL ECONOMIES, THE UAE TIGHTENS THE BELT ON INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION TO FIGHT THE MENACE

BY K NIVEDITA





In its quest to build an economy independent of oil, the UAE's focus is on fintech (financial technology) and banking, amongst other diversification strategies. The country is highly digitalised and is already one of the financial centres of the Middle East, with the huge potential of becoming a global hub because of its recent residency reforms and geographical location. With so many things in its favour, what could the hurdles be? Well, money-laundering is a big one.

At the end of August 2022, the news was out that a fine of Dh\$1.3 million had been imposed on a licensed money service provider registered in Abu Dhabi, for not adhering to several applicable Anti-Money Laundering (AML) requirements. The fine was imposed by the Financial Services Regulatory Authority (FSRA) of Abu Dhabi Global Market (ADGM), which is one of the top financial centres in the Gulf, located on Al Maryah Island.

According to information published on its website: "ADGM's four independent authorities — the Registration Authority (RA), the Financial Services Regulatory Authority (FSRA), ADGM Courts, and ADGM Authority — together ensure that its business-friendly environment operates in line with international best practices, recognised by major financial centres worldwide."

The key phrase here is "international best practices". For any country to establish itself as a global financial hub, adherence to AML requirements is imperative, because without that, there's not enough credibility.

No illegal money was found, but the gaps in the process left the firm

vulnerable to money laundering. Wise fully cooperated with FSRA and was, thereby, given a substantial discount on the penalty amount.

The UAE's transparency enhances its reputation as a country that implements best international practices in finance. This was not only plugging the gaps in the processes of one company, but also building trust with the overall financial sector.

Also in August 2022, the UAE Central Bank issued revised AML guidelines, further updating the guidelines issued in September 2021. These guidelines are applicable to all licensed financial institutions (LFIs) and they're designed to fortify these LFIs against AML rackets.

A cancerous growth in the body of the global economy, money-laundering is conservatively estimated by the United Nations at \$800 billion (Dhs 2.94 trillion), or about 2 per cent of the global Gross Domestic Product (GDP). The short definition of money-laundering is the transfer of money from illegal sources through various financial channels, eventually giving it the appearance of legitimate funds — it's essentially the



“Our efforts to protect our security and economic prosperity will always come first. This means that Mol and the UAE law enforcement will continue to investigate and apprehend complex criminal networks and their assets in close coordination with domestic and international partners

HH LT GENERAL SHEIKH SAIF BIN ZAYED AL NAHYAN

Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior



process of laundering all the criminal ‘grime’ from the money until it looks ‘clean’.

SEIZING DIRTY MONEY

What are the sources of money that criminals want laundered? Any kind of racket can be a source. Take the example of an operation named ‘Canne à Sucre’

THE MONEY LAUNDRY

The International Monetary Fund (IMF) defines money-laundering as the “processing of assets generated by criminal activity to obscure the link between the funds and their illegal origins”.

The United Nations’ Vienna 1988 Convention (Article 3.1) describes it as “the conversion or transfer of property, knowing that such property is derived from any offence (s), for the purpose of concealing or disguising the illicit origin of the property or of assisting any person who is involved in such offence(s) to evade the legal consequences of his actions”.

All crimes that make profits have a money-laundering component. A person or an organisation that has earned an income through the drug trade, trafficking, or other criminal methods has to make it appear legitimate so that the funds can be used in the regular marketplace without raising the suspicion of security agencies.

While the UN estimates the money-laundering market to be worth \$800 billion [Dhs2.94trn] to \$2 trillion [Dhs7.34trn], “due to the clandestine nature of money-laundering, it is, however, difficult to estimate the total amount of money that goes through the laundering cycle”, it said in a statement.

The overarching organisation FATF acts as a global money-laundering and terrorist-financing watchdog, making policies and working to create the political will to bring about national legislative and regulatory reforms. It has more than 200 member-countries, including the UAE, within its umbrella.

that came to light in May 2022. The French phrase for sugarcane was the code name of a major transnational operation, in which police forces of three countries and the UAE dismantled a cocaine smuggling network stretching between the ports of South America and Europe.

In synchronised raids, a key gang member was apprehended by Dubai Police and 17 others were picked up in various other cities of the world. Twenty-two tonnes of sugar, laced with cocaine, were seized in a Western country. It was found that the gang had been involved in large-scale trafficking of tobacco and cocaine as well.

The law enforcers found that the criminals had also been laundering illegal money to the tune of several million euros. That was from just one gang.

The AML requirements, therefore, don’t just stop the flow of dirty money, but they also hit the criminal rackets where it hurts, cutting off the cash flow for dealers in narcotics, illegal weapons, animal parts, counterfeit goods, etc. Blocking terrorist financing also comes within AML requirements.

Any country that wants to rise to the top of the global financial services sector has to reinforce that it’s trustworthy by implementing strict AML measures. That brings many benefits. For instance, it was recently reported in India that the Directorate of Enforcement (ED), the Government of India agency responsible for fighting economic crimes, was on an overdrive, unearthing ill-gotten money and getting India’s nationalised banks Rs 23,000 crore (Dhs10.95 billion approximately) in refunds. These refunds came from the sale of assets that ED seized from the accused. The agency investigates offences committed within the scope of the Prevention of Money Laundering Act, 2005; the Foreign Exchange Management Act, 1999; and the Fugitive Economic Offenders Act, 2018.

The success of these investigations —

undertaken by India or any other country — is observed closely by the Paris-based intergovernmental body, the Financial Action Task Force (FATF). A country that gets a good score from FATF can access loans from the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank at low-interest rates. A bad score from FATF can mean damage to the country’s reputation, a downgrading of sovereign credit rating, and limited access to global finance.

EYE ON THE TOP SPOT

The UAE, home to top international financial centres such as the Abu Dhabi Global Market and the Dubai International Financial Centre (DIFC), is ranked 16th out of 190 countries on the World Bank’s annual ‘ease of doing business’ index. In order to become number one, the country has implemented a slew of reforms to attract global attention and foreign investment, generate employment, and steer away from an oil-based economy.

To strengthen its financial health, the UAE is administering some strong medicine — this includes the anti-cybercrime law and the AML requirements — to kill the disease called money-laundering. The more action it takes, the higher its credibility, and the better its integration with the global financial network.

In March 2022, His Highness Lt General Sheikh Saif bin Zayed Al Nahyan, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior, had announced that the efforts to enhance the UAE’s anti-money laundering system were a testament to the country’s commitment to combating a global problem. “Our efforts to protect our security and economic prosperity will always come first. This means that Mol and the UAE law enforcement will continue to investigate and apprehend complex criminal networks and their assets in close coordination with domestic and international partners,” said His Highness Sheikh Saif bin Zayed.

“The [AML] guidance aims to promote the understanding and effective implementation by licensed financial institutions of their statutory anti-money laundering and combating the financing of terrorism obligations

– UAE Central Bank

A few months before the Interior Minister's statement, in September 2021, the UAE Central Bank issued new guidelines to financial institutions on AML practices. According to the news agency Reuters, this was “the latest of a number of measures launched by the Gulf state to combat illicit financial flows”.

“Banks will be required to develop internal procedures and put in place indicators to identify suspicious transactions and report them to the Central Bank's Financial Intelligence Unit... They will also need to regularly screen their databases and transactions against names on lists issued by the United Nations Security Council or by the UAE government before conducting deals or entering into a business relationship with individual and corporate clients,” the report stated.

The news agency quoted the UAE Central Bank as saying: “The [AML] guidance aims to promote the understanding and effective implementation by licensed financial institutions of their statutory anti-money laundering and combating the financing of terrorism obligations.”

UAE'S LEGAL BARRIERS

In the UAE, the Federal Decree No. 20 of 2018 on anti-money laundering and countering the financing of extremism had been introduced by the late Sheikh Khalifa bin Zayed Al Nahyan. The then Finance Minister of the UAE, Sheikh Hamdan bin Rashid Al Maktoum, who was also the deputy ruler of Dubai, had said that the nation was committed to international laws in fighting money-laundering and financing of terrorism and illegal organisations.

“The UAE has always been a beacon of justice and peace...This law is part of



NUMBERS CRUNCHED



\$800 billion-\$2 trillion

Laundered money globally every year, according to the United Nations. This is estimated to be between Dhs2.94 trillion and Dhs7.34 trillion



DHS41 million

Amount of penalties imposed by the UAE on activities that violated its anti-money laundering law in the first six months of 2022



Dhs300,000-Dhs10 million

Fine for perpetrators of money-laundering, according to the UAE Federal Decree No. 20 of 2018 on Anti-Money Laundering and Countering the Financing of Terrorism



79 members

Gang convicted by the Abu Dhabi Criminal Court in May 2022 for generating income through fraud and money-laundering. They enticed people to “invest” in fake companies



Dhs3.85 billion

Collected penalties in 2021 by the Executive Office of Anti-Money Laundering and Counter-Terrorism Financing from those engaged in money-laundering activities in the UAE



18 members

Gang members (involved in money-laundering) arrested in an international operation named 'Canne à Sucre' in May 2022. The joint operation included UAE law enforcement

“ Illicit finance poses a threat to the UAE’s international reputation and to the integrity of our world-leading financial sector. Our collective goal is to tackle this



HH SHEIKH ABDULLAH BIN ZAYED AL NAHYAN

Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation

TRAVEL ROUTE OF DIRTY MONEY

Money-laundering happens, in theory, in three stages: “Placement”, which means moving the funds from direct association with the crime; “Layering”, or disguising the trail to foil pursuit; and “Integration”, which is making the money available to the criminal from what seem to be legitimate sources.

Take a hypothetical case of a criminal who has ill-gotten gains. He might channel it through a hotel that he has set up as a legal front. The paperwork from the hotel would show the illegal money to have been legitimately earned, and the criminal can then use the money openly. There will be plenty of account manipulation, of course, in order to slip the illegal funds into the legal earnings.

In real life, money-laundering doesn’t always follow the three-step formula. According to the UN, “some stages could be combined, or several stages repeated several times. Cash from drug sales is divided into small amounts, then they are deposited by ‘money mules’ and afterwards transferred as payment for services to a shell company. In this case, the placement and layering are done in one stage”.

In whichever way money is laundered, it weakens the infrastructure of a country and the world, threatens financial institutions, and impacts political stability across borders. As criminal networks thrive on the strength of billions in black money, a country’s financial institutions become compromised and the brunt is, ultimately, borne by common citizens.

the country’s strategy to protect the local financial system by applying the best and most efficient systems to fight crimes, which negatively affect the economy and political and financial stability of countries,” said Sheikh Hamdan bin Rashid Al Maktoum at the time.

In 2021, the UAE Central Bank’s new AML guidelines of September had been preceded by the establishment of an AML court in Dubai in August, and the creation of an Executive Office for Anti-Money Laundering and Counter-Terrorism Financing by the UAE government in February. Along with the Central Bank, a number of ministries work together on enforcing AML in the UAE.

In November 2020, His Highness Sheikh Mansour bin Zayed Al Nahyan, Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Presidential Affairs, and Chairman of the Abu Dhabi Judicial Department, passed ADJD Resolution No. 35 of 2020 to establish a specialist money-laundering and tax evasion court in Abu Dhabi, under the purview of the Abu Dhabi Criminal Court.

Later in the same month, it was announced that several resolutions had been issued by HE Sultan bin Saeed Al Badi, who was then Minister of Justice, on the establishment of AML courts within the Federal Courts system, covering the courts in Sharjah, Fujairah, Umm Al Quwain, and Ajman.

In February 2022, His Highness Sheikh Abdullah bin Zayed Al Nahyan, Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, reiterated the UAE’s resolve to fight the problem of money-laundering in an article to a business magazine. He mentioned that only “a tiny proportion” of global money-laundering took place in the UAE. However, he emphasised: “Illicit finance poses a threat to the UAE’s

international reputation and to the integrity of our world-leading financial sector. Our collective goal is to tackle this”.

His Highness Sheikh Abdullah bin Zayed Al Nahyan wrote: “That is why I lead the Higher Committee Overseeing the National Strategy on Anti-Money Laundering and Counter-Terrorism Financing. Our objective is simple: to increase the UAE’s effectiveness at combating financial crime.”

This statement came in the same month when the UAE marked one year of the establishment of the Executive Office for Anti-Money Laundering and Counter-Terrorism Financing.

The following month, in March 2022, it was announced by this Executive Office that a sum of \$1.048 billion (Dhs3.85 billion) had been collected in penalties, all through 2021, from those engaged in money-laundering and terrorism-financing activities.

At the time, speaking to the state news agency WAM, Hamid Al Zaabi, Director General of the UAE Executive Office for Anti-Money Laundering and Counter-Terrorism Financing, said that the Office closely worked with partners in the public and private sector. “On the legislative front, several major legal amendments were recently adopted, including the anti-money laundering law that includes wider powers related to confiscations, as well as controlling virtual assets,” said Al Zaabi.

It was later reported that in the first half of 2022, the AML penalties imposed exceeded Dhs41 million.

TOGETHER IN THE FIGHT

Digitalisation of commercial transactions, cross-border trade, and internationalisation of finance have made things easier for money-laundering criminals, as there are so many more places now where they can



“ International crime requires an international response. This action sends a clear signal of the UAE’s intent to work in close collaboration with international partners in pursuit of international crime

HE ABDULLAH BIN SULTAN BIN AWAD AL NUAIMI

Minister of Justice

move the money, so many shell companies that can be set up on overseas territories, with transactions done remotely.

This has necessitated a similarly coordinated international law enforcement response. The UAE, which collaborates with other governments and specific security agencies in other countries to fight crime, has a collaborative approach to AML measures as well.

A recent case illustrates this. In May 2022, a 79-member gang was convicted by the Abu Dhabi Criminal Court for generating income through fraud and money-laundering. The gang had created fake addresses of a securities trading company in a Far-Eastern country and then used it to entice people to “invest” in the stock market. The ill-gotten gains were laundered and used to buy, amongst other things, real estate, vehicles, computers, mobile phones, and jewellery.

The court announced prison terms of three to 15 years and deportation for the gang members. The convicts were also fined amounts between Dh\$200,000 and Dh\$1 million.

Like this gang, which included criminals from six countries on different continents, other criminals are also operating from various countries and taking advantage of technology that seamlessly connects global financial systems.

In the financial sector, innovations are taking place regularly, as new tools come into being and new markets are explored. The challenge for countries is enabling

the expansion of digital financial networks while curbing the risks posed by money-laundering gangs. Nations are collaborating closely, because no one country can feel truly secure unless everybody is safe.

The UAE has adopted a multi-pronged approach. One of these is to conduct police action directly on its territory, even if the cases of fraud happened elsewhere in the world. In June 2022, Dubai Police arrested two brothers of south Asian origin who had been living in an African nation, where they were wanted for money-laundering and other financial crimes. “The arrests reflect the continuous efforts of the UAE in combating money-laundering crimes,” said Dubai Police on Twitter.

Another instance of such partnership, also in June 2022, was the arrest of a Europe-based hedge fund trader in Dubai, because he was a suspect in a \$1.7 billion (Dh\$6.24 billion) tax fraud and money-laundering case in Europe. Dubai Police worked closely with the police force of that European country to investigate and build a substantial case against this trader.

“International crime requires an international response...[the arrest of the trader] sends a clear signal of the UAE’s intent to work in close collaboration with international partners in pursuit of international crime,” said His Excellency Abdullah bin Sultan bin Awad Al Nuaimi, who took over as Minister of Justice a year ago.

On other fronts, the UAE has hosted events of knowledge exchange, such as ‘Targeted Financial Sanctions Summit

2022 – Countering Terrorist and Proliferation Financing’ at Expo 2020 Dubai in February. It was attended by representatives of several countries as well as the UN.

EFFORTS GET SOLID RESULTS

In February 2022, the International Monetary Fund issued a report in which it commended the UAE for strengthening its AML and counter-terrorism financing infrastructure. “The IMF’s acknowledgement of our national efforts to improve our response to money-laundering and terrorism financing highlights the agility of the UAE to recognise challenges and methodically address them. Through ongoing co-operation with both local and international regulators, we will continue to safeguard the country’s financial sector from illicit activity,” said Al Zaabi of the Executive Office.

“ The IMF’s acknowledgement of our national efforts to improve our response to money-laundering and terrorism financing highlights the agility of the UAE to recognise challenges and methodically address them



RECENT AML CONVICTIONS IN THE UAE



TRANSITING MONEY LAUNDERER

Law enforcement authorities in a Western country contacted the UAE about one of their citizens, and the police here swung into action. The man was suspected of being involved in tax evasion and suspicious money transfers, allegedly to conceal the illegal source of the funds. When he was transiting through Dubai in July 2022, he was arrested and faced charges.

On August 2022, he was convicted by the Abu Dhabi Money-Laundering and Tax Evasion Court. The court revoked a three-year prison sentence for the man that it had earlier issued and he had appealed. The court, however, upheld his money-laundering charges and ordered him to pay a fine of Dhs5 million. The funds he had illegally received in his account were confiscated and he was ordered to be deported from the UAE.



THE 'SIM CARD' GANG

In January 2022, the UAE Public Prosecution found a gang of nine from Sharjah guilty of laundering money that they had earned through fraud and theft. The gang targeted one of the vulnerable sections of society — labourers. They'd issue SIM cards under the labourers' names, open bank accounts, and obtain ATM cards under their names. The cash belonging to the workers would then be moved to the gang's own accounts before being transferred outside the UAE.

The Public Prosecution warned people against giving their banking details to anybody over telephone, e-mail or other such medium. People who received such calls were asked to report the matter to authorities.

The August 2022 guidelines issued for LFIs by the Central Bank cover the risks related to Politically Exposed Persons (PEPs). The guidelines recognise that LFIs might be exposed to heightened risk of money-laundering, terrorism financing and other illicit finance from customers who are PEPs or if the transactions involve PEPs. Therefore, the LFIs are mandated to carry out "due diligence measures on PEPs and their direct family members or close associates in addition to the standard customer due diligence required for all customers".

According to His Highness Sheikh Abdullah bin Zayed Al Nahyan, "financial institutions, accountants, auditors, dealers in precious metals and stones and property brokers are all required to monitor and report suspicious transactions". He also said, "Law enforcement also has access to a comprehensive database of beneficial ownership on UAE entities. This is helping to join dots across the economy quickly and effectively."

One of the UAE's path-breaking strategies is to involve the people by conducting awareness campaigns regularly about laws, regulations and standards for money remittance. This helps embed the nation's focus on honest financial dealings in the public psyche. One such campaign was carried out by the Central Bank and the Ministry of Interior in July 2022.

Outreach programmes on financial integrity include workshops for the private sector, such as the March 2022 workshop in Abu Dhabi titled 'Combating Money-laundering Crimes in the Commercial, Economic and Real Estate Sectors in the Light of UAE Legislation and Judicial Principles and International Experiences'.

Then, there's the deterrent of sentencing. The courts, law enforcement agencies, and local and federal authorities co-operate closely on AML and related cases. According to the Federal Decree No. 20 of 2018 on Anti-Money Laundering and Countering the Financing of Terrorism, the penalty for money-laundering is imprisonment and a fine between Dhs300,000 and Dhs10 million. In recent years, criminals have been sent to prison for periods between nine months and eight years, and fines of more than Dhs15 million have been collected.

With such a sharp sting waiting for money-laundering perpetrators, the UAE is well on its way to further cementing its status as a premier financial hub for not just the Middle East, but also the world.



POWER OF THE UAE PASSPORT

THE RAPID PROGRESS OF THE UAE UNDERPINS THE HIGH GLOBAL RANK OF ITS PASSPORT. **999** EXPLORES THE REASONS FOR ITS GROWING STRENGTH AND WHAT THE PROSPECT OF ACQUIRING THIS PRESTIGIOUS UAE CITIZENSHIP MEANS FOR EXPATS

BY SANCHITA GUHA

Passports, those little booklets that help us pass through a port, are fascinating objects. Outwardly very similar to each other in shape and size, varying only in colour, all passports aren't made equal; some have way more power than others. Just how much power our passport has — or hasn't — is evident from exactly how much paperwork we need to do to get a visa, even if it's a visa for just a measly mini-break in a city just a few hours away by air.

Since the passport represents a nation, the power of the passport is really the power of a nation. The UAE, as we've seen this year, has a very powerful passport, its holders being able to enter 176 countries visa-free or with a visa on arrival. What's more remarkable than the UAE's 15th rank on the Henley Passport Index 2022 is just how far it has climbed over the past decade. This passport was ranked No. 64 in 2012, with a score of 106, which means a rapid climb of 49 places in just 10 years on the Henley Index, compiled by Henley & Partners, a

global firm specialising in residency and citizenship by investment.

In December 2018, the UAE passport was ranked No. 1 in the world on the Passport Index, compiled by Arton Capital, also a firm for residency and citizenship by investment. On that index, too, the UAE passport accomplished a rapid climb, moving up from No. 27 in December 2016. When it reached the top spot, the UAE passport opened visa-free doors to 167 countries for its holders.

Whichever the index and whatever the rank, it's obvious that the UAE passport has been going from strength to strength. There's more to it than the country's growing prosperity, combined with its political stability — those are the key factors that make other nations look favourably upon a particular country's passport and give the holders easy entry, but those alone don't explain the UAE's rapid rise.

There's a lot of work being done in the background by the country's diplomats and ministries to help the UAE passport continuously climb higher on global indices. What we get to see is the fruition of those efforts.

“This achievement is a true reflection of the legacy of Sheikh Zayed, the founding father of the UAE. It also underscores what can be achieved through positive diplomacy, reflecting the UAE as a confident and engaged force at the global stage



HH SHEIKH ABDULLAH BIN ZAYED AL NAHYAN

Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Co-operation

HARD WORK GETS RESULTS

Just as people need to work out to build muscle, passport power needs work, too. The year before the UAE took the top spot, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Co-operation launched the UAE Passport Force initiative, with the aim of making it one of the five most powerful passports in the world by 2021. Going by the Passport Index top rank, the country hit that goal three years early.

News of the No. 1 rank came on December 1, 2018, a day before the country's 47th anniversary. At that time, congratulating the nation, His Highness Sheikh Abdullah bin Zayed Al Nahyan, Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Co-operation, said, “This

achievement is a true reflection of the legacy of Sheikh Zayed, the founding father of the UAE. It also underscores what can be achieved through positive diplomacy, reflecting the UAE as a confident and engaged force at the global stage.”

Before this, in May 2015, the UAE and the European Union had signed a short-stay visa waiver agreement at a ceremony held in Brussels. The reciprocal agreement provided for visa-free travel to the UAE for EU citizens and to EU nations for UAE citizens. The visa-free travel would be available for a period of stay of 90 days within any 180-day period.

This was a very significant achievement, since European cities are amongst the top summer destinations



in the world, and the EU territories are within easy reach of flights from the UAE, e.g. a nonstop flight from Dubai to Paris could take less than 8 hours. This one agreement gave the gift of visa-free travel to 27 countries of the European Union to UAE passport holders.

The United Kingdom, another key destination for travellers from the UAE, has left the European Union after the ‘Brexit’ vote, but visa-free travel to the UK will become available for UAE passport holders from 2023, under the Electronic Travel Authorisation (ETA) system of the UK. In March 2022, the UAE was added to the list of countries eligible for ETA.

North American countries also open their border gates visa-free for UAE passport holders, giving them access to some of the most talked-about cities in the world and some unrivalled natural wonders.

CLEARING THE COVID TEST

A nation may be economically, politically, and militarily powerful, but how well has it fared against the microscopic organism that sent the world into the sick bay in early 2020?

One of the reasons for the UAE's post-pandemic passport power is just



RISE AND RISE OF THE UAE PASSPORT



Its steady climb on two indices shows the country's growing global power

HENLEY PASSPORT INDEX

compiled by Henley & Partners

2022 – **No. 15**

2012 – **No. 64**

Climbed up **49** places

Visa-free entry to **176** countries

PASSPORT INDEX

compiled by Arton Capital

2018 – **No. 1**

2016 – **No. 27**

Climbed up **26** places

Visa-free entry to **167** countries

Both the indices are compiled by companies specialising in residency and citizenship by investment

how extraordinarily well it managed the COVID-19 pandemic. From its early mobility restriction measures and containment to faster digital transformation, from international humanitarian missions to a national vaccination drive, the country didn't put a foot wrong.

The 15th position in 2022 is by no means a setback from the 1st position in 2018. The two indices are different, and the UAE passport holders can now visit nine more countries visa-free than they could three years ago.

This country's passport was hailed as a "pandemic winner" by the Henley Passport Index 2022. The report said: "Throughout the turmoil of the past two years, one thing has remained constant: the growing

strength of the UAE passport."

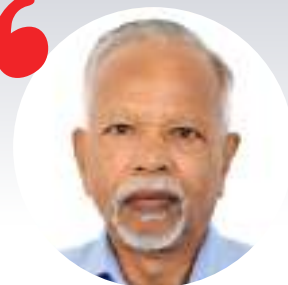
Bolstered by its economic diversification policy, the UAE has weathered the pandemic quite well, with a quick recovery and optimism amongst its core sectors. The recent spate of visa reforms will fortify the UAE's social and economic development, making its passport still more powerful.

The Henley report revealed that interest in the UAE was increasing amongst high-net-worth individuals (HNWIs) and business investors. The report said that the country could see the highest net influx of HNWIs globally in 2022. The forecast for this year is an increase of 4,000, compared with 1,300 in 2019, an increase of 207 per cent.

“One of the reasons for the UAE's post-pandemic passport power is just how extraordinarily well it managed the COVID-19 pandemic. From its early mobility restriction measures and containment to faster digital transformation, from international humanitarian missions to a national vaccination drive, the country didn't put a foot wrong

Forward trajectory of the UAE

“



PATRICK MICHAEL

Indian, media professional

One of the true veterans in the UAE media circle, Patrick Michael believes that getting a UAE passport is "personally speaking, totally worth it". About the dilemma of giving up his Indian citizenship for UAE citizenship, he said, "Yes, the dilemma certainly exists, since I'd be torn between my homeland and the country I've called home for more than three decades. But having lived here for that long, I know what this country has to offer; its increasing role in several fields within the global arena; and the safety and security of its residents."

The visa-free travel afforded by the UAE passport wouldn't be the deciding factor for Michael. He said, "It's the overall environment that we live in here, the foresight of the leadership and the forward trajectory that the UAE is on that would drive this decision."

"I've lived here for over three decades, spending the most important years of my life in the UAE. My children were totally raised here and we've seen the country grow phenomenally over these decades. The vision that has propelled the country forward is nothing short of remarkable and we, as residents, have reaped the benefits."

A force for good, a voice of moderation

“



EHTESHAM SHAHID

Indian, editor at a think tank

Talking about the factors behind the strength of the UAE passport, senior media professional and editor at a think tank Ehtesham Shahid said, “The growing power of the UAE’s passport can be attributed to the stature that the country has acquired as a regional power in recent years. It has established itself as a force for good, a voice of moderation, and a business and investment hub. The UAE’s geographical location, accessibility, ease of travel, flawless security, and balanced diplomatic manoeuvres have added credence to its reputation. The country has grown beyond being a tourism hub to become a demographic melting pot. These are very intangible but enormous assets for a developing power.”

About the prospect of UAE citizenship, Shahid said, “I’ve chosen to live in this country for close to two decades and have spent the best years of my life here. This entire journey has been extremely rewarding personally and professionally. Yet, I never thought about having a UAE passport because it did not make any difference to my progress in this country. I never felt discriminated against during all these years.”

It’s a reasonable assumption that many of these HNWIs may eventually become eligible for a UAE passport and would then look at dual citizenship, or maybe even give up their original citizenship if they decide to reside permanently in the UAE. That has now become a distinct possibility.

CITIZENSHIP FOR EXPATS

Of all the residency reforms that have come in the past few years, the most significant announcement — indeed, a paradigm shift — was the January 30, 2021, announcement that the UAE would grant citizenship to select expatriates.

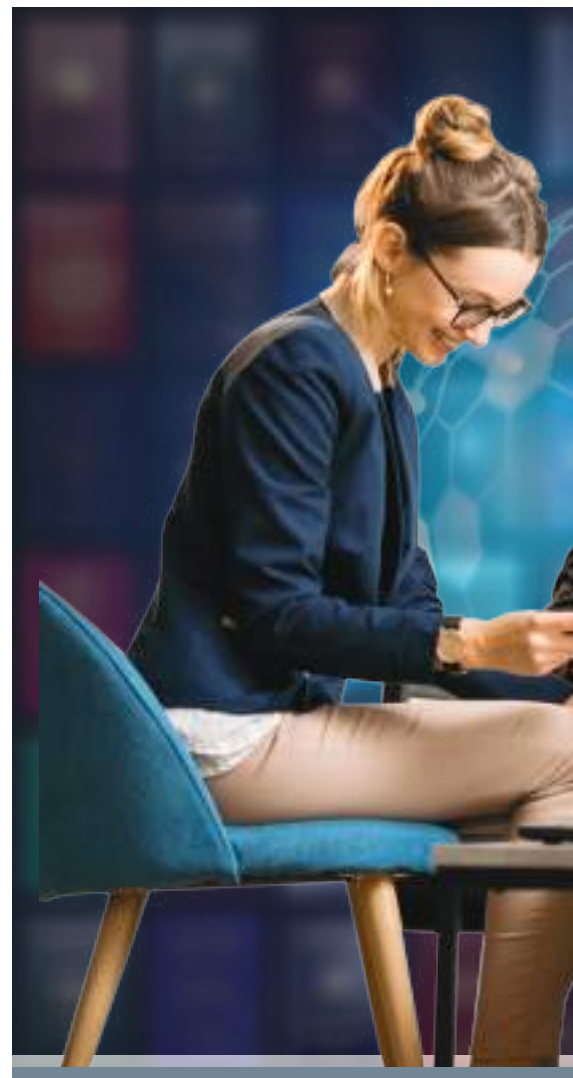
This is a step that goes much further than the 10-year Golden Visa for certain categories of expats. A passport gives one a true sense of belonging in a country, a sense of being a citizen; a visa holder is still an expat, even if a highly privileged expat.

Like one of the many firsts it has achieved, the UAE is the first country in the Arabian Gulf to open the door of citizenship to expats. The eligibility criteria include a certain level of investment made by an expat and certain skills that are most prized in this country. However, simply knowing that the possibility exists — the possibility of getting one of the most powerful passports in the world, in one of the most well-governed nations in the world, with a growing and diversified economy — has a huge aspirational value for all expats.

“The UAE Cabinet, local Emiri courts and executive councils will nominate those [expats] eligible for the citizenship under clear criteria set for each category. The law allows receivers of the UAE passport to keep their existing citizenship,” stated His Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice-President and Prime Minister of the UAE and Ruler of Dubai, when the announcement was made last year.

To understand how long-time residents of the UAE look at this citizenship development, 999 spoke to some expats who’ve spent two decades or more in this country and don’t ever want to give up their life here. Their opinion on acquiring a UAE passport — if they met the eligibility criteria — ranged from “totally worth it” to “a permanent settlement will have to be weighed in terms of several associated personal and other aspects”.

It was the unanimous view of these expats that until now, the lack of a UAE passport hasn’t made them feel discriminated against at all in this country.



Acquiring a UAE passport, therefore, would depend, for them, on some practical factors as well as emotional ties.

PASSPORT AS ECONOMIC DRIVER

Like most of the recent residency reforms, citizenship for non-Emiratis is meant to consolidate the country’s progress as it veers away from fossil fuel dominance and continues with its economic, social, and cultural diversification. The aim is to become one of the top knowledge economies of the world over the next 50 years. Knowledge is an infinite resource, unlike the finite reserves of hydrocarbons, and any country that stays ahead on this road will eventually become a world leader.

The UAE doesn’t set small targets for itself, as has always been evident. The UAE Centennial Plan 2071, launched by HH Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, is “a long-term, full-vision plan that extends for five decades after



2021. It forms a clear map for the long-term government work, to fortify the country's reputation and its soft power. The plan aims... to make the UAE the best country in the world by the next centennial in 2071."

Attracting top talent and investments from around the world with the promise of a Golden Visa and then, perhaps, a very powerful passport is one of the key elements of increasing this soft power.

Indian expat Patrick Michael, who helmed one of the UAE's leading newspapers, *Khaleej Times*, as Executive Editor for many years, told this magazine, "The UAE cannot but thrive should the 'passports for expats' policy become a reality. Instead of applying for passports elsewhere in the world, I am quite sure a lot of people like me would opt for the UAE passport. That means people stay here, invest their money here, and contribute to the economy."

Speaking of why the UAE has

introduced a passport for residents now, so many years after the unification of the emirates, British expat Stephen King, Senior Lecturer in Media at Middlesex University Dubai, said, "The UAE government always operates in a fair and logical manner, with a focus on providing benefits for its citizens as a priority. This is only right. But now, with so many investors supporting the growth of the country, one might observe that the government is being fair and logical again in rewarding those who have shown loyalty and faith in the success of the country. This will also enrich the community with the best talent who have been attracted to live here over the past three decades."

RELOOK AT VISA REFORMS

For residents whose countries offer dual citizenship, the attractiveness of acquiring UAE citizenship is a foregone conclusion. For others, it's a matter

Foresight and lofty principles

“



KRISHNA KUMAR N.P.
Indian, media professional

A witness to the UAE's "phenomenal growth" for more than three decades now, veteran journalist Krishna Kumar N.P. said that the country was surging ahead "due to the foresight and lofty principles of the Founding Fathers, and because the UAE as a nation and society has progressed by upholding those lofty values".

Analysing the specific factors behind the UAE's national growth, as reflected in its passport power, he said, "The UAE has been very open to other cultures, nationalities, and beliefs, while trying to ensure the best quality of life for both Emiratis and the expatriates who've made the UAE their home away from home.

"The laws have been progressively tweaked to be in line with universal values, while upholding the Arab culture and traditions.

"Being an open economy with minimum red tape has ensured the free flow of talent, expertise, goods, services, and investment."

A beautiful and ever-welcoming country

“



PRADIPTO DUTTA

Indian, architect and project director

Having come to the UAE as an architect with a young family many years ago, Pradipto Dutta has now made this country his “second home”. If he were to become eligible for a UAE passport, it wouldn’t be a snap decision for him. He said, “Changing the passport is a significant decision that impacts not only the person but the entire family. Usually, opting for immigration or going for citizenship in a foreign land is associated with many factors other than only the travel benefit. These include socio-economic and emotional factors.

“I can say that the UAE has many Indian families having spent generations here, who are second or even third generation, and for them, UAE is home; while for many others like me, this is a second home. For someone like me, a UAE passport would be a great opportunity to live in this beautiful and ever-welcoming country. However, a permanent settlement will have to be weighed in terms of several associated personal and other aspects.”

In general, for Indians, who aren’t yet allowed dual citizenship, being nominated for a UAE passport might actually present a dilemma, said Dutta, since they never expected to get one until now. “But, like every other good thing that keeps happening here, it’s just a matter of time before this becomes a coveted opportunity for many Indians working and living in the UAE.”

Speaking for himself, when it comes to a change in citizenship, “the biggest consideration would be the after-retirement situation, mainly financials and medical expenses”. His children and those of his peers are likely to be much keener to settle in the UAE, because “this is where they belong to”.



that needs careful consideration as the psychological pull of their country of origin remains strong. Also, because the passport will be given only through nomination as of now, there’s a need for further strategic manoeuvres in the existing visa regime in order to attract people who may not fit the UAE passport criteria, but can contribute significantly, nonetheless.

“Acquiring a nationality is and should remain a matter of exclusivity and privilege. However, to develop a knowledge-based society, a country

needs various skill sets and the UAE is already doing this by expanding its Golden Visa programme. I reckon, a closer eye on the manpower requirements of a knowledge economy on a 50-year scale is a more pertinent way forward than just offering passports. Strengthening work and family visa facilities will attract more quality people to the country,” said Indian expat Ehtesham Shahid, Editor at the independent think tank Emirates Policy Centre, based in Abu Dhabi.

Indians, the dominant expatriate group



here, making up almost 40 per cent of the total resident population, tend to be strongly attached to their roots. India doesn't yet permit dual citizenship, which is why a UAE passport, should it even be offered, may remain a happy idea for an Indian rather than a happy reality.

Veteran mediaperson Krishna Kumar N.P., who spent 24 years with *Gulf News* and is now a senior online journalist with *Al Arabiya English*, said that after 32 years in the UAE, he and his wife didn't feel any need to give up their Indian citizenship, and that his Dubai-

resident daughter and her husband would "decide on their course of action" in this matter. However, he emphasised that 'Media' ought to become one of the preferred categories for the UAE's 10-year visa and passport.

He said, "I do feel strongly [that] since the UAE has already started issuing a 10-year cultural visa, 'Media' should also be a dedicated, specialised category for passports/visas, since their contribution has gone a long way in building this global image, as well as in strengthening social cohesiveness internally, creating

An opportunity for society to grow

“



ELLANIE VILLENA
Filipina, business owner

A member of the large Filipino community in the UAE and a business owner, Ellanie Villena said that "the globally top ranked passport is not only worth the effort but rather an advantage and honour to have".

Being a travel industry professional, she greatly values the global access granted by the UAE passport. "You're welcomed by 176 nations with open arms, confidence, and trust. It's a privilege that every resident of the UAE would love to have and be the representative of this country for the rest of the world. The nation that welcomes everyone from the world, gets a similar welcome by them — it's a win-win deal all along," she said.

Speaking of her ties to her homeland, Villena said, "The Philippines is my homeland, my birthplace; it's very close to my heart. Having said that, I'd never think twice about [accepting UAE citizenship]. The good part is that both the UAE and the Philippines allow dual citizenship, which means I can keep both passports and maintain my identity as well. I'll surely be proud to be a Filipina and represent the most socially diverse country in the world."

On the psychological impact of a possible UAE citizenship on expats, she said, "It's an opportunity for society to grow, and be more diverse, tolerant, and acceptable to all. No country in the world represents this many nationalities as residents. Imagine all the nationalities of the world being part of one country, what an amazing place this will be. We'll be the one and only place in the world that'll be the world itself — a proud moment for us all."

The country is an importer of talent

“



STEPHEN KING
British, senior lecturer

As the holder of a British passport, senior lecturer Stephen King believes that since his country allows dual citizenship, “it makes perfect sense” for him to accept a UAE passport, should he be nominated for one. A resident for nearly 21 years now, he said, “Given that I’ve spent almost half my life here, I’d certainly explore the benefits.”

On the impact of UAE citizenship for non-Emiratis, King said, “The UAE is a wonderful place to live and work. People are coming from all over the planet to stay here and find their fortune. The UAE passport, therefore, benefits from the country being an importer of talent.”

Aside from the dual citizenship advantage, his main reason for accepting a UAE passport would be the very close ties he has here; these ties have, over time, become much stronger than his connection to the United Kingdom. He said, “My good friends are from the UAE, Sudan, and India as well as from my wife’s family, who are all from the [Middle East] region. My only connection to the UK is through Facebook — to my family — and through a ‘Brits in Dubai’ group. I’ve looked at moving back to the UK several times, but have never left. Obtaining a dual citizenship would be like formalising what’s really already in my heart, that this is my home.”



understanding between various nationalities, and finally, in explaining government regulations, and in times of national emergencies like the recent pandemic.”

ALL WILL BE EQUALS

Until the prospect of a UAE passport for non-Emiratis came into the picture, all expats were expats, regardless of how many years they lived here, how much property they owned, what income bracket they were in, etc.

Now, some expats are within sight of being nominated for a UAE passport, perhaps without even spending the number of decades as the expats that **999** spoke to. And other expats will still have to go through the periodic visa renewal process. Given how powerful the UAE passport is and how much prestige is associated with it, could this branching off in two directions create any ‘haves’ and ‘have-nots’ amongst expats, especially those in the same social circles?

Indian expat Pradipto Dutta, Project Director at a multinational design, engineering and project management consultancy, is socially very active in Dubai, being a part of various cultural events in his compatriot circle. He doesn’t foresee any ‘first amongst equals’ situation arising from some expats being nominated for the UAE passport in the near future.

He said, “These big decisions depend on several factors, similar to the different travel allowances / restrictions for different passports compared to each other. In more than 17 years in the UAE, I’ve never felt inequality amongst expats under any circumstances. I have trust in the implementing bodies, that they’d pay special attention to ensure there would be no inequality amongst expats on this matter as well.”

A similar view was expressed by Filipina expat Ellanie Villena, Owner, Angel Wings International Tourism LLC. Disagreeing that there might be any “passport inequality” amongst UAE expats, some of whom would become citizens, she said, “I wouldn’t call this an inequality, because it’s an opportunity to be part of a nation that is becoming global. If someone cannot be a part of this, it doesn’t mean it’s unfair. Every country has its own citizenship policy and restrictions; the UAE has allowed this provision for those expats who deserve to be a permanent part of the country.”

She perfectly summed up what the powerful UAE passport meant for expats — something to strive for, not something to be taken for granted: “Not everyone qualifies for the Olympics or World Championships; some do not reach or perform to the set standards, and it’s all fair to the people who qualify to be part of the best.”



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LOOK WHERE YOU WALK



JAYWALKING IS ALMOST AS BIG A THREAT TO ROAD SAFETY AS SPEEDING — IT MAY SAVE ONE A LITTLE TIME, BUT IT CAN RESULT IN A FATAL ACCIDENT. **999** REVISITS THE UAE POLICE FORCES' ABSOLUTE COMMITMENT TO CURBING THIS PRACTICE

BY NEIL BIE



For a country where it's so easy to own and maintain a vehicle, the UAE has created surprisingly good road infrastructure for pedestrians, too. Or, perhaps, it's not so surprising, because road safety encompasses both people in cars and people on foot — and this nation puts a premium on road safety. Therefore, jaywalking is considered nearly as big an offence here as speeding. When it comes to speeding, the minimum fine is Dhs300 (and the maximum is Dhs3,000), whereas a jaywalker gets a fine of Dhs400.

So, who is a jaywalker? Someone who disregards the designated pedestrian crossing just to save themselves a little time by crossing a road wherever they want, thus increasing the risk of a collision with a moving vehicle, an accident that could kill one or both parties. That's so unnecessary.

A glimpse of the UAE public spaces is enough to show the country's pedestrian-friendly approach. At the Abu Dhabi bus station, you will see wide pedestrian lanes available at all intersections, an arching overpass in the middle that leads directly to the main bus station, as well as huge walking spaces on both sides of the road. It is the same across Dubai's bus and metro stations and all other streets. No matter how busy these streets might be, there will always be a dedicated lane for pedestrians to safely cross the road.

However, despite all of this great infrastructure, some pedestrians seem 'too busy' to make the effort of using an overpass or walking down the road to cross from the nearest pedestrian crossing. They simply don't accept the reality that the human body is more vulnerable than metal during a collision, or that a person hit by a car even at 30kmph has a 10 per cent chance of dying, while a person hit by a car doing more than 60kmph has only a 10 per cent chance of surviving.

In 2021, no less than 7,800 individuals in Abu Dhabi alone took the risk of rushing to the other side of the road by jaywalking — or maybe 'jayrunning'.

This jaywalking behaviour led to the deaths of 12 and the injury of 199 in Dubai in the first half of 2022. This has also resulted in 9,416 traffic fines issued to jaywalkers during the same period in the emirate.

Sharjah reported over 2,200 individuals fined during 2021 for the same offence.

SHORTCUTS OVER SAFETY

UAE authorities continue to be baffled by the blatant disregard of road safety rules by these erring pedestrians. Once caught, these individuals face a hefty fine — but with the numbers of jaywalkers still doing the deed daily, it appears that they won't get the message until they're

actually nabbed by the police.

Brigadier Jumaa bin Suwaidan, Deputy Director of the Traffic Department at Dubai Police, underscored the importance of keeping the public safe. The master plan of these roads always has safe pathways for pedestrians, be it designated crossings marked on the road, overbridges, or underpasses.

"Some people don't understand the importance of crossing safely. We caught some [people] carelessly crossing roads even though there was a crossing point or a bridge a few metres away. There were people trying to cross highways with 120 kilometres per hour speed limit," said bin Suwaidan.

Abu Dhabi authorities also highlight the perils of jaywalking as one of the main reasons behind road accidents and injuries amongst pedestrians in the Capital. "Crossing from non-designated areas of the road is very dangerous. In fact, it is one of the main causes of run-over accidents. Run-over accidents are mainly caused by pedestrians' poor judgement, as they cross busy roads in

“Some people don't understand the importance of crossing safely. We caught some [people] carelessly crossing roads even though there was a crossing point or a bridge a few metres away



BRIGADIER JUMAA BIN SUWAIDAN

Deputy Director of the Traffic Department at Dubai Police

non-designated areas, and negligence by motorists, who do not give priority to people crossing the road," read a statement from Abu Dhabi Police.

In a video on Abu Dhabi Police's official Twitter page, a man can be seen crossing the road in the middle of cars moving at high speeds, seemingly oblivious to the risks while focusing on his mobile phone. A second frame shows two people crossing the road using their e-scooters. The police said, "Pedestrians should use

NUMBERS CRUNCHED



7,800

Abu Dhabi Police's issued traffic fines for jaywalking in 2021

9,416

Dubai Police's issued traffic fines for jaywalking during the first half of 2022

2,200

Sharjah Police's issued traffic fines for jaywalking in 2021



“Based on our own observations, this form of dangerous behaviour can be seen through all ages, nationalities and ethnic backgrounds



THOMAS EDELMANN

Founder and Managing Director of Road Safety UAE

the designated crossing points properly, obey any signals at controlled crossings and be vigilant.”

EVERYBODY IS DOING IT

The common excuse of jaywalkers is that they’re in a hurry, and were trying to save a little time and avoid the inconvenience of finding the nearest designated spot to cross the road. So serious is the problem that when new regulations came into effect on July 1, 2017, amending the Federal Traffic Law No. 21 of 1995, the fine for jaywalking was doubled: from Dhs200 to Dhs400.

Thomas Edelmann, Founder and Managing Director of Road Safety UAE, told **999**, “We do not have any data on which age group is most likely to jaywalk, but, based on our own observations, this form of dangerous

behaviour can be seen through all ages, nationalities and ethnic backgrounds. It’s truly a big problem.”

He added: “Often, we see pedestrians crossing at dangerous stretches of roads, where there are simply no pedestrian crossings close by. We must not forget that we experience a constant expansion of the UAE’s road network and, often, the pedestrian crossings come in Phase Two. The government entities are doing a lot to build new pedestrian bridges and pedestrian crossings.”

STRUGGLES OF MOTORISTS

When the traffic is moving fast, a driver could easily miss a pedestrian darting in front of them from either direction in the blink of an eye. The best-case scenario would be the sound of tyres screeching as the motorist hits the brake hard; the worst-case scenario would be the car hitting the jaywalker, or swerving sharply to avoid a run-over accident and thereby hitting another car.

When a car does hit a person, the result can be catastrophic for the pedestrian. In July 2022, the Al Ain Court of Appeals ordered a reckless motorist to pay Dhs600,000 to a man who was hit by the motorist and sustained serious wounds and fractures. The injuries required several surgeries and left the victim with a permanent disability. This wasn’t a case of jaywalking, but the extent of injuries shows what the consequences of jaywalking could be — and since the jaywalker would take at least some of the blame for an accident, the compensation might not be so generous.



Pedestrians risking their lives and limbs in crossing a busy highway in Dubai



Jaywalkers photographed in Sharjah

FINES AND PENALTIES FOR JAYWALKERS AND MOTORISTS

According to Federal Traffic Law No. 89, the following penalties will be levied:

DHS400 Anyone found crossing a street without using the designated pedestrian lane

DHS400 Anyone caught crossing a street while disobeying traffic signals

DHS500 Motorists who fail to yield to pedestrians at predetermined zones like zebra crossings. They will also receive six black points



Jaime Puebla / The National



Virendra Saklani/Gulf News

Meanwhile, according to Dubai Police data, there have been more of these jaywalking accidents compared to the same time in 2021. In the first half of last year, there were 120 collision incidents between cars and pedestrians, which left 11 people dead and 116 hurt. It increased by 60 per cent in the same period this 2022—there were 192 traffic incidents involving pedestrians, of which 12 jaywalkers were killed and 199 others were injured.

Brigadier Jumaa bin Suwaidan urged motorists to keep their eyes peeled for jaywalkers. “Motorists should be alert all the time, as they can avoid accidents even if it’s the fault of the pedestrian,” he said.

Motorists are, of course, held responsible for disregarding designated pedestrian crossings. Drivers who fail to give way at zebra crossings face not only a Dhs500 fine but also six black points on their licence.

To prevent accidents, pedestrians have also been advised not to use their mobile phones while crossing the street, especially if they’re responding to text messages.

Additionally, the police forces have consistently emphasised the need for motorists to be more patient and yield to pedestrians when it’s safe to do so at uncontrolled crossings as well as in areas that are close to schools and other educational facilities, particularly now that school is back in session.

SAFETY CAMPAIGNS

Police forces all across the UAE are steadfast in their efforts to make residents understand the need for using proper pedestrian pathways and to persuade drivers to be more tolerant of people crossing the road.

Dubai’s ongoing campaign ‘Because Your Life is Precious, Cross Safely’ was initiated by the emirate’s Roads and Transport Authority (RTA). It targets motorists, workers and students, with the authorities giving educational talks to highlight the importance of keeping pedestrians safe as they cross the road.

“This pedestrian safety campaign is one of four outreach campaigns that RTA has planned for this year, 2022, in collaboration with several strategic partners, including the Ministry of Education, Dubai Police, Permanent Committee of Labour Affairs, and the Knowledge and Human Development Authority,” said Maitha bin Adai, CEO of Traffic and Roads Agency, RTA.

She added, “The campaign aims to reduce the number of traffic-related fatalities and injuries and improve the traffic safety

indicators in Dubai. It constitutes part of the targets of the Dubai traffic safety strategy.

In Sharjah, Captain Saud Al Shaiba, spokesperson for the Traffic and Patrols Department of Sharjah Police, told local media their campaign titled ‘Your Safety is Our Goal, Cross Safely’ led to a nearly 90 per cent drop in the number of jaywalking incidents from 21,243 in 2019 to only 2,213 in 2021.

“It’s important that all road users understand the risks of violating safety rules while crossing or walking on the road, and learn how to stay safe. Pedestrians are advised to cross roads from the zebra crossing only or from the pedestrian bridges, otherwise they will face fines,” said Al Shaiba.

Al Shaiba added that pedestrians were frequently warned not to cross highways with speed limits of more than 80kmph, and if they did, they’d be held accountable for any accidents caused by their actions. The Federal Penal Code enables traffic prosecutors to hold jaywalkers accountable and submit them to court if their actions lead to accidents, injuries, deaths, or property damage.

The campaign ‘Safety of Pedestrians and Drivers from Run-over Accidents’ in Ajman and Fujairah also highlights the key role that both pedestrians and drivers are expected to play to make roads safer.

These campaigns, according to Lt Colonel Saif Abdullah Al Falasi, Director of Traffic and Patrols at Ajman Police, were created to support the Ministry of Interior’s initiatives to reduce run-over accidents by spreading awareness.

TECH DETERRENTS

Apart from ongoing awareness campaigns, the UAE has also put the latest technology to work, so that the police could monitor these busy roads for both jaywalkers and motorists who don’t give way at zebra crossings.

The new smart system is called ‘Hather’, which in Arabic means ‘careful’. With the help of this sophisticated system powered by Artificial Intelligence (AI), vehicles will be reminded to follow the law and give priority to pedestrians crossing from specified locations for their safety. The authorities said that they were now testing the new smart system close to schools and business hubs in Abu Dhabi after a successful pilot phase.

During the trial period, the new radars picked up several violations. They were provided drivers with instructional messages on the importance of stopping

“ RTA has carried out several soft mobility elements to improve the infrastructure of three localities, which included constructing more than 300 raised pedestrian crossings, and providing 33 kilometres of shared cycling tracks



MATTAR AL TAYER

Director General and Chairman of the Board of Executive Directors of RTA



ROAD SAFETY TIPS FOR PEDESTRIANS



Here are a few things to remember the next time you step out, according to Thomas Edelmann, Founder and Managing Director of Road Safety UAE:

- 1 Don't cross the road except at dedicated crossings for pedestrians. Use pedestrian bridges, underpasses, or dedicated crossings — zebra crossings with or without traffic lights.
- 2 At zebra crossings with traffic lights, only walk at 'green'. Should the signal start to blink or switch to red, make sure you hurry up to reach the other side of the road.
- 3 At zebra crossings without traffic lights, you must be very careful, since not all cars will stop for you. Only walk when you can safely cross all lanes of the street.
- 4 A good tip is also to make eye contact with drivers, so you're sure they've noticed you. Don't be distracted when you cross the road; mind your mobile phone.
- 5 Be extra careful when you walk near reversing cars.
- 6 Drivers often have an obstructed view and they might not see you when you're passing close to the car. Keep your distance and try to anticipate the moves of the car.
- 7 Watch the children who are with you. Children have a different view of the traffic and often lack the experience of assessing traffic movements. Make sure you watch your kids very closely in all forms of traffic. Do not let kids play close to streets or reversing cars.

their cars while people crossed at designated zebra crossings.

In order to maximise the pedestrian flow, Dubai has also implemented Smart Pedestrian Signals, which detect pedestrian movement both before and during street crossings and take into consideration vehicle movement.

Mattar Al Tayer, Director General, and Chairman of the Board of Executive Directors of RTA, highlighted that they'd be creating and improving soft mobility areas to help pedestrians have easier and safer access to the roads, increasing from eight districts in 2022 to 29 districts by the end of 2026. "RTA has carried out several soft mobility elements to improve the infrastructure of three localities, which included constructing more than 300 raised pedestrian crossings, and providing 33 kilometres of shared cycling tracks in several areas," said Al Tayer.

The Soft Mobility project is focused not just on improving crossings for pedestrians, but also on enhancing the components of integrated transportation, which primarily include meeting the needs of people with disabilities; building raised pedestrian crossings and speed-calming devices; specifying all types of cycling tracks, providing bike racks; placing directional and warning signs; adjusting pavements; specifying lanes shared by vehicles and non-motorised transport modes; and constructing rest stops along with landscaped and sitting areas.

It's a plan to make Dubai mobility even more organised than it is now. All that's left is for the pedestrians to stop jaywalking. And that goes for the entire UAE, too.



Dr Maysa Rashed Ghadeer is a prominent UAE writer interested in local affairs and a former member of the Federal National Council (FNC)

LET'S THANK OUR 7-STAR SMART SERVICES

The UAE government is investing tremendously in digitalisation, a move that employees and customers should equally appreciate and support

The UAE is pulling out all the stops to turn its smart government vision into reality. This is very clear and does not require further elaboration. In particular, the country has made significant progress in this direction not only in the procedures of completing digital transactions but also at the level of departments that are now providing their services through smart channels.

This digital transformation reduces the time required to complete transactions, as well as the quantity of supporting documents needed to complete the transaction.

It means that there is a highly efficient electronic system combining the majority of federal or local government sectors and that documents can be pulled up by the system quickly.

In the years leading up to COVID-19, we noted the inaction of some employees. These employees would make no effort to just press a few buttons on the computer screen to search for a client's paperwork. They would request that client to present his/her identity card every time, for example, even though all the client data would already be stored in the client's digital file and could be retrieved from the system.

This would be the experience of customers visiting various government departments and also when carrying out bank transactions. The same person would have to repeatedly show the same supporting documents every time.

To change this culture, the UAE government has eliminated all paperwork transactions in some government sectors, both to save time and effort and also to demonstrate its commitment to environmental obligations.

At the same time, the UAE government continuously emphasises its determination to move forward through the automation of systems and the smart transformation of services.

This includes the conversion of tedious paper-based manual transactions into seven-star smart self-services. These self-services, facilitated through the use of smart technology, have enabled community members to continue all aspects of their life without interruption and wastage of time.

The government is spending tens of millions of dirhams to accomplish this smart digital transformation. It is assumed that employees and members of society will fully understand the value of the budgets spent on these digitalisation programmes — their objectives are particularly oriented towards increasing customer

satisfaction and enabling the completion of more transactions in less time than it took earlier.

Those objectives, when achieved, reflect positively on the performance of institutions and the country. For example, during an unprecedented and unforeseen global crisis like the COVID-19 pandemic, the UAE's big changes in the field of smart transformation picked up the pace and helped the country keep everything functioning well.

The government has implemented virtual connectivity partnerships and accomplished big goals in the smart transformation of departmental work. As a country, the UAE has become one of the best in smart transformation.

Going beyond what has been accomplished in the field of smart services and smart tech-enabled governance in the country so far, it is necessary to keep looking for possible alternatives to face any future technological crises and also to find more smart solutions.

We have to keep working to overcome any crisis with alternative, smart and quick plans that do not waste time and effort, and are important for maximising our human resources.

The UAE government has eliminated all paperwork transactions in some government sectors, both to save time and effort and to demonstrate its commitment to environmental obligations



BLACK

WITH THE CURRENT HABIT OF NONSTOP SHARING ON SOCIAL NETWORKS, PEOPLE OFTEN USE THESE PLATFORMS FOR REVENGE, TOO. IN THE UAE, THAT'S A PUNISHABLE OFFENCE. AS **999** REMINDS EVERYONE, TREAD CAREFULLY SO THAT LIVES ARE NOT DESTROYED

BY NASEEF CHENATH

HATE !

EMAIL

SEXTORTION

EMOTIONAL HARM

BULLYING

FAKE

UNNATURAL

LONER



T

he Internet improves communication and democratises access to information. However, it also lets people target others online with hate messages or revenge attacks. Such hate posts and revenge posts come from people concealing themselves behind fake accounts and targeting a community or a country in general, and also from individuals who use their own genuine social media accounts to attack other individual users.

As targeted individuals and communities fight back to protect their reputation, online arguments often escalate, with a lot of misinformation flying around. The victims may experience stress, anxiety, loneliness, and depression if the revenge posts thrown at them are also spotted by other people within their social media circle.

In the UAE, the penalty for online bullying, harassment, spreading of rumours, insulting a religion etc are considered cyber-crime offences for which the penalty ranges from Dh\$100,000 to Dh\$200,000 and there could also be a jail term of one year to two years. The penalties are revised from time to time, but there's always a very stiff penalty, designed to be a deterrent to grossly anti-social

behaviour on social media.

Relentless 'trolling' is a part of this undesirable trend, and everyone — be it a celebrity or a lay person — has faced this at some point, if they're active on social networks.

In fact, even 'superheroes' get knocked down by this avalanche of hate messages and negativity online. Take, for example, Spider-Man actor Tom Holland, who recently took a hiatus from any social media activity for the sake of his peace of mind. The actor said in a three-minute clip, "I have taken a break from social media for my mental health, because I find Instagram and Twitter to be overstimulating, to be overwhelming."

He said, "I get caught up and I spiral when I read things about me online and

In fact, even 'superheroes' get knocked down by this avalanche of hate messages and negativity online

ultimately it's very detrimental to my mental state, so I decided to take a step back and delete the app. There is an awful stigma against mental health and I know that asking for help and seeking help isn't something we should be ashamed of."

Holland, who came into the limelight as a cinema superhero when he was only 20, promotes mental health amongst teenagers. He is directly involved in a charitable organisation called The Brothers Trust, which supports an app called Stem4, designed to help teenagers with their mental health.

SEVERE EMOTIONAL HARM

It's one thing that you will get into trouble when you send hateful comments to somebody, but it's quite another thing that there are people who are breaking all boundaries by inflicting irretrievable psychological damage on their victims.

Online revenge is amongst the worst cases of cyber-violence, which involves a persistent and repeated course of conduct targeted at a specific person, causing severe emotional harm.

Recently, a young man in the UAE, who had sent an insulting voice message to his colleague via WhatsApp, was ordered by the Al Ain Court of First Instance to pay Dhs10,000 in damages to the targeted person.

As per the official court documents, the victim, who was in his twenties, had filed a lawsuit against his colleague, demanding a compensation of Dhs50,000 in moral and psychological damages for being insulted, abused, and threatened through voice messages sent by the accused colleague via WhatsApp.

Presenting evidence of the voice message to court, the complainant said that the offensive messages belittled him and affected him psychologically.

Indeed, today a simple social media message could land you in big trouble. So, when you feel like venting your frustration or anger in the online world, remind yourself that the fallout could be serious for you.

LOSS OF REPUTATION

Cyber-harassment often involves a storm of abuse, terrorising victims by threatening violence or posting defamatory falsehoods to cause the victims embarrassment or make them appear worse amongst friends, family, or co-workers. Offenders may also impersonate victims in online ads and falsely suggest that their victims are interested in sex with strangers. As a result, the victim's reputation gets ruined.

Sometimes, harassers take advantage of search engines to ensure the prominence of their lies while somebody searches for victims' names. They also invade victims' privacy by posting their sensitive information, e.g.

“It is a criminal offence in the UAE to record people without their knowledge and publish their images on social media or on websites. One should not send videos to relatives or friends, even in good faith, so as not to be held legally accountable



COLONEL FAISAL AL QASIM
Director of Security Media at Dubai Police

private photographs or national identity numbers. This exposes a victim to the risk of extreme public embarrassment and also financial fraud.

Cyber-harassment includes “revenge porn”, a situation in which a person harasses their victim by making the latter's sexually explicit photos available to all and sundry online. A related offence is “sextortion”, in which the harasser accesses such photos — sometimes by hacking the victim's account — and then threatens to publish them unless the victim submits to certain demands, including demands of cash payments.

Frequently, these “sextortionists” happen to be a person's current or previous partner, extremely determined to blackmail or take revenge. Revenge porn isn't limited to romantic partners, though. A co-worker, family member, or stranger could also gain access to one's private images and share them publicly for a variety of reasons.

Colonel Faisal Al Qasim, Director of Security Media at Dubai Police, had said: “It is a criminal offence in the UAE to record people without their knowledge and publish their images on social media or on websites. One should





not send videos to relatives or friends, even in good faith, so as not to be held legally accountable. Exchanging videos or pictures can cause harm to others and destroy their reputation.”

In a sextortion case, the offender uses images, videos, or information concerning the victim’s sexual preferences, unless the victim pays up or engages in more sexual acts. The perpetrator usually threatens to share sexual content with the victim’s family, colleagues, friends, and other acquaintances. The content might also be uploaded to a large (pornographic) online platform, putting a great deal of fear in the victim. The offenders might show images or a screenshot of a specifically explicit

conversation and skim the victim’s social media accounts to discover their family members and friends.

In other words, the extortionist lets the victim know they can destroy the latter’s reputation at any moment, taking anything and everything out of context or even by using morphed images.

As with any crime, cyber-harassment is mostly targeted at women and girls. It’s termed “cyber-violence against women and girls” (CVAWG or Cyber VAWG) and involves sending sexually explicit e-mails or insulting messages; improper advances on social media and other platforms; the threat of physical or sexual violence; hate speech containing

PROTECT EMPLOYEES VS CYBER-HARASSMENT

Here are some practical steps that employers can take in order to deal with cyber-harassment, cyber-bullying, or cyber-violence within an organisation:

1 REVIEW COMPANY POLICIES AGAINST CYBER-CRIMES

A reference to cyber-bullying should be incorporated in the company’s bullying or harassment policy and disciplinary and grievance policies, emphasising that cyber-bullying constitutes a serious disciplinary offence and will not be tolerated at any cost.

2 CREATE A PROPER REPORTING SYSTEM

The management of an organisation should create a reporting system that makes it easy for individuals to report online abuse. An effective reporting system encourages a greater number of employees who’ve experienced cyber-violence to report it.

3 HAVE AN EFFECTIVE INVESTIGATION PROCEDURE

Companies should take a solid approach if they do unearth instances of online revenge or harassment. A claim needs to be investigated by the employer sensitively, promptly and fairly, giving out the message that the organisation will deal seriously with any case of cyber-violence.

4 HAVE AN INCLUSIVE WORKPLACE

Fostering an open and inclusive workplace with a zero-tolerance approach to unfavourable behaviour is a key factor that will discourage online harassment and abuse at the workplace. In such an environment, employees are more likely to feel comfortable reporting any instances of online attacks.

5 TRAIN PEOPLE AGAINST HARASSMENT

Since the pandemic has transformed the landscape of our working environments, remote work is more than likely to continue in some shape or form. In this scenario, employers should consider training people on the correct use of social media, which could ensure that employees are clear in their understanding of the type of behaviour that’s classed as cyber-harassment.

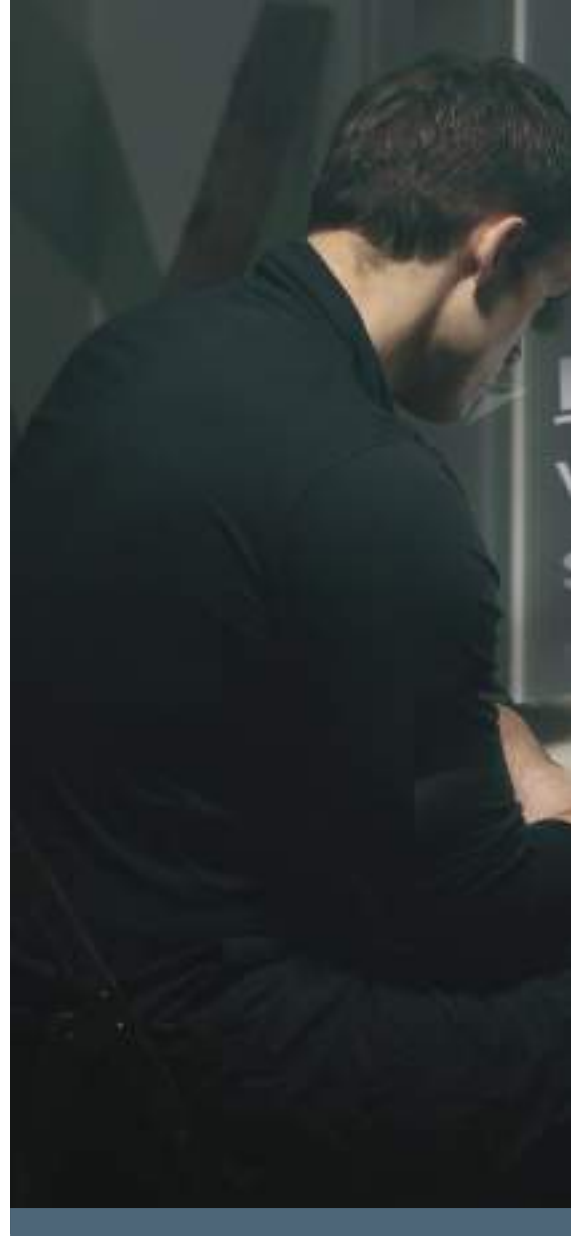
Source: Shehna Amin/Farrer & Co



language that insults, threatens or targets an individual based on her gender and other traits.

In April 2021, a 35-year-old woman from another country went on trial at the Sharjah Misdemeanour Court for threatening to publish the social media conversations she had had with a 60-year-old man from the UAE. The woman had met the man on a matrimonial website and shared many texts and conversations over social media before deciding to get married. She arrived in the UAE to carry out formalities of her residency visa in order to marry him. Then, he changed his mind. The man said that he could help her find a job, but his family circumstances no longer allowed him to marry. She was furious by this turn of events and threatened to expose him with the recordings of their calls. To protect himself, the man went to the cops, who arrested the woman.

There are two kinds of people who threaten to publish personal chats and





“ Due to the broad definition of ‘illegal content’ under the law, UAE residents should be cautious about what they publish, circulate, or re-circulate on social media



KOSTUBH DEVNANI
Associate at ADG Legal

conversations online — professional scammers who lure people into romances in order to wrest money from them; and ordinary people who do so due to anger, hurt feelings, or other strong emotions. The law, however, looks upon blackmail

as a heinous crime. The Cybercrimes Law and other legal branches of the UAE are strict about privacy and one cannot violate the rights of an individual, including an old flame or an ex-employer, or entities, such as your place of work, using social media.

CYBER-VIOLENCE HITS MORALE

Online users should think twice before posting content online, warned Kostubh Devnani, Associate at ADG Legal. “Due to the broad definition of ‘illegal content’ under the law, UAE residents should be cautious about what they publish, circulate, or re-circulate on social media,” said Devnani.

Being the victim of cyber-violence has a severe impact on the psychological health of those facing it. As Anna Maria Chavez, one of the world’s top experts on women’s leadership, youth development, and ageing, said, “Unless and until our society recognises cyber-bullying for

what it is, the suffering of thousands of silent victims will continue.”

Often, a victim of online revenge or insult will feel distressed and isolated, and they may also go through a traumatic period with sleep deprivation, lack of motivation, or high levels of stress. Sometimes, cyber-bullying can even lead to employees quitting their jobs to escape the harassment.

This online violence affects not only the individual who is subjected to it, but also the organisation as a whole, leading to low morale and distrust amongst employees. If cyber-violence occurs at the workplace and it goes unaddressed and/or unpunished, no employee can feel secure. That can bring down productivity and performance in an organisation, cascading into the resignations and absences of those facing the cyber-harassment. Moreover, it can lead to a serious loss of respect for the managers and supervisors in an organisation, especially

UAE LAW AGAINST CYBER-CRIMES



The UAE's New Cyber-crimes Law came into force as part of its comprehensive legal reform programme by Federal Decree Law No. 34 of 2021. As per this law, the illegal disclosure of personal data could result in a six-month imprisonment and a fine ranging from Dh\$20,000 to Dh\$100,000.

The law also makes it punishable to monitor, disclose the location data of individuals without consent. This new form of privacy breach that's specified in UAE law for the first time is aligned with situations such as the unauthorised interception of communications, taking photographs, and disseminating information that could harm a person.

The offence of spreading false information under the New Cyber-crimes Law is much broader than the previous law. It's neither restricted to false information nor to information that harms the state, and aims to prevent misinformation and fake news circulated on social media. Every offender who spreads harmful content will face a prison sentence of at least one year and a fine of up to Dh\$200,000.

The illegal disclosure of personal data could result in a six-month imprisonment and a fine ranging from Dh\$20,000 to Dh\$100,000

if the employees feel that the reporting managers didn't do enough to resolve the issues around cyber-violence.

FACTS ON CYBER-ABUSE

While educational institutions, governments, and independent organisations are attempting to raise awareness of cyber-violence, the problem is here to stay until better solutions are devised.

A study by scholars at the Universities of Florida and Denver illustrates that the pandemic had a marked effect on cyber-crimes on Twitter. As per the study, the analysis of 454,046 publicly available tweets connected to cyber-bullying

showed a direct correlation between the pandemic and cyber-bullying cases.

In another study by L1GHT, a company that specialises in AI that's built to detect and filter toxic content to safeguard children, online toxicity and cyber-bullying on social media sites and video-conferencing rose by up to 70 per cent due to the pandemic. This included a 200 per cent surge in toxicity and online harassment targeted at Asians (because the pandemic originated in Asia). The study also unveiled an increase in hate speech amongst children and adolescents that correlated directly with a rise in COVID-19 infections within the population.

According to Verywell, a website providing health and wellness information by health professionals, that increase was due in part to the more leisure time and online presence that children had on account of the lockdown and online schooling.

SELF-INFLICTED HARM

A 2018 study found that young adults under the age of 25 who were victimised by cyber-harassment / cyber-violence were twice as likely to inflict self-harm. Additionally, as per research submitted at the 2017 Pediatric Academic Societies Meeting, the number of children admitted to hospitals for suicide attempts or expressing suicidal tendencies doubled between 2008 and 2015. Much of this increase was linked to an increase in online abuse.

While social networks tend to eat up most of the attention related to cyber-violence, it can happen on any online medium, including gaming. In one survey, 79 per cent of gamers stated that they had been targeted while playing online. Another survey, with over 2,000 adolescent subjects, showed that over one-third of them experienced bullying in mobile games. A 2020 Ditch the Label survey of over 2,500 young adults found that 53 per cent reported to be victims of cyber-violence in online gaming environments.

REPORT CYBER-CRIME IN UAE



You can report cyber-crimes online through the following channels:

- Abu Dhabi Police's Aman service hotline **8002626** or e-mail at **aman@adpolice.gov.ae**
- Dubai Police's **eCrime website**
- **'My Safe Society'** app, launched by the UAE's federal Public Prosecution, which is available on iTunes
- Report to the nearest police station in your area, or call **999** for help

Warmest Congratulations to President



His Highness Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan

on the great trust placed in him by Members of the federal Supreme council and Rulers of the Emirates to lead the country after being elected President of the UAE.

We pray to Allah Almighty to bless and guide His highness. We renew our loyalty and pledge of allegiance to his leadership to serve the UAE people.

NAVIGATE POST-PANDEMIC RUSH HOUR

WITH THE UAE WELL INTO THE NEW SCHOOL YEAR, TRAFFIC VOLUME HAS BALLOONED, AND THAT CALLS FOR EXTRA PLANNING TO AVOID CONGESTION AND COLLISIONS

BY TESSY KOSHY





Over a million students returned to their classrooms in September, after the summer break in the UAE. This meant that the streets were once again dotted with yellow school buses ferrying students from more than 500 public and 600 private schools across the country. Add to this the number of family cars on the school run vying for road space with office commuters and other motorists.

Anticipating this, the UAE authorities have been running campaigns to ensure a smooth flow of traffic, especially during the back-to-school season. In Abu Dhabi, the police cautioned motorists to reduce speed when they passed through school

zones and urged parents to use designated parking spaces at schools, to avoid obstructing the way for other motorists.

Dubai Police's annual awareness campaign with the motto 'A Day Without Accidents' invites members of the public to ensure safety on roads by complying with local traffic laws and regulations. According to Butti Ahmad bin Darwish Al Falasi, Director

of Security Awareness at Dubai Police, the campaign has proven to be successful over the past three years in achieving zero deaths on the first day of school.

Major General Saif Muhair Al Mazroui, Director of the General Department of Traffic at Dubai Police, extolled the campaign, saying, "We've been able to reduce the number of road-related fatalities per 100,000 remarkably.

“ In Abu Dhabi, the police cautioned motorists to reduce speed when they passed through school zones and urged parents to use designated parking spaces at schools, to avoid obstructing the way for other motorists

However, it's crucial that we continue to sustain the safety awareness initiatives, particularly during the academic year when our dear pupils are transported."

The emirate of Ras Al Khaimah also launched a comprehensive, three-month-long awareness campaign for smooth traffic movement in the new academic year. "The police have put together a strategic plan to intensify traffic patrols at intersections as well as at internal and external roads, in order to regulate traffic and facilitate the movement of school buses," said Brigadier Ahmed Saeed Al Naqbi, Director of Traffic and Patrols Department at the General Department of Central Operations in Ras Al Khaimah.

RESPECT THE 'STOP' SIGN

School bus drivers have also been instructed to drive safely and to ensure the safety of children as they board the buses and are later dropped off. In a video message posted on Twitter, Captain Engr Mohammed Al Esai of the Traffic Directorate and Patrols of Abu Dhabi Police said, "Vehicles are supposed to stop in both directions on a two-way road when the 'stop' sign is displayed at a distance of 5 metres away from the school bus."

The 'stop' sign is a mechanical arm with a big red octagonal sign saying 'STOP' that sticks out at a right angle from the side of the school bus — it imitates the way that motorists once upon a time used to stick their arm out of the window to signal their intention to other drivers. The 'stop' sign arm is normally folded and flattened against the side of the bus; school bus drivers make it stick out when a student has to be picked up or dropped off.

“ We’ve been able to reduce the number of road-related fatalities per 100,000 remarkably. However, it’s crucial that we continue to sustain the safety awareness initiatives



MAJOR GENERAL SAIF MUHAIR AL MAZROUI

Director of the General Department of Traffic at Dubai Police

It's extremely important to respect the 'stop' sign of a school bus, because not doing so could result in a tragic accident. Motorists who ignore the 'stop' sign on a school bus get a fine of Dh\$1,000 and 10 black points on their licence.

THE PANDEMIC TRAFFIC

The truth is that during this school term, motorists were in for a surprise. For the past two years, because of the pandemic and its aftermath, and the resultant online learning and work from home, there were fewer cars on the road and a lot less traffic. While the pandemic was a threat to public health, the limited movement of people also meant cleaner air and less road congestion.

Worldwide, this decrease in traffic was noted and studied, including in the UAE.

“ Vehicles are supposed to stop in both directions on a two-way road when the 'stop' sign is displayed at a distance of 5 metres away from the school bus



CAPTAIN ENGR MOHAMMED AL ESAI

Officer at Traffic Directorate and Patrols of Abu Dhabi Police

Several parts of the country reported a significant drop in traffic during the pandemic.

A study conducted by TomTom, a leading independent location technology specialist, and shared with RoadSafetyUAE, revealed that road traffic in the UAE had been dramatically reduced in 2020 due to COVID-19 restrictions. Congestion levels dipped down to 6 per cent in April 2020 and went back to only 19 per cent in December the same year. Newspapers also reported that the bumper-to-bumper traffic from Dubai to Sharjah had been drastically reduced during these months.

Then, in 2021, the traffic began to increase and the number of accidents also saw an increase. As per recent data from



Major General Saif Muhair Al Mazroui (first from left) and Dubai Police mascot 'Mansoor' welcome pupils in Dubai with the launch of 'A Day Without Accidents' initiative



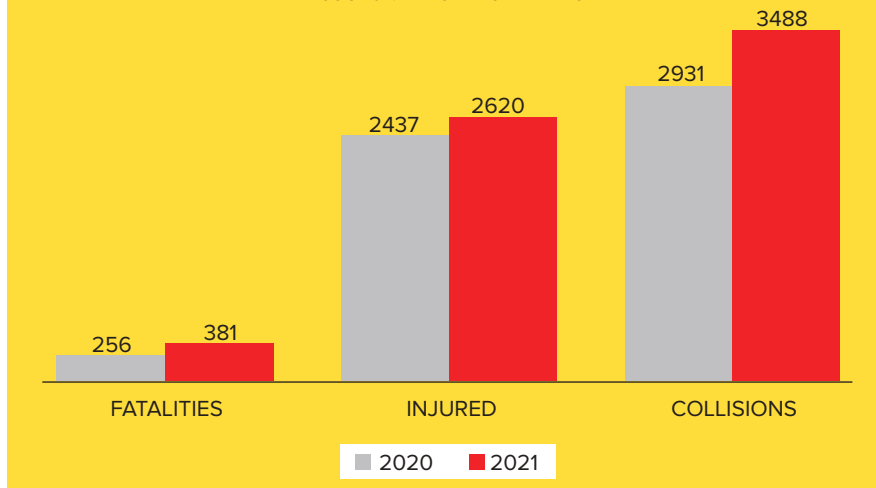
Pupils from Hatta get a ride in Dubai Police patrol cars as part of the police force's 'Schools Security' initiative



Abu Dhabi Police's remind motorists to always respect the school bus stop sign to prevent tragic accidents

UAE ROAD ACCIDENTS 2020-2021 DATA

SOURCE: MINISTRY OF INTERIOR



the Ministry of Interior, road accidents killed 381 individuals and injured 2,620 in the UAE in 2021, compared to 256 deaths and 2,437 injuries in 2020. The number of collisions climbed to 3,488 in 2021 from 2,931 in 2020.

The figures have increased primarily due to distracted driving offences, which had caused 1,031 collisions in 2021, up from 816 in 2020. Sudden swerving offences also increased from 548 in 2021 compared with 492 in 2020.

EVERYONE HAS A ROLE

Thomas Edelmann, Founder and Managing Director of RoadSafetyUAE, highlighted that the road accident fatalities in the country were still below the global trend; however, every motorist still had a role to play in making the roads safer. He said, "We all — not only the government — have to contribute to making drivers understand that they play a vital role in the context of road safety."

Driving data across the world mirrored the trend in the UAE, showing us the positive effects of traffic elimination, one amongst them being the reduction of road fatalities. According to a study published in the *World Journal of Emergency Surgery*, the number of RTC (road traffic collision) trauma patients in two hospitals in Al Ain dropped by 33.5 per cent during the pandemic compared with the pre-pandemic period. The study was conducted by comparing data from Al Ain and Tawam Hospitals.

The drop in accidents was attributed to reduced motor vehicles, pedestrian and bicycle injuries.

The post-pandemic reality is that, as life has returned to normal, the roads are once again experiencing vehicular traffic pressure. Besides the regulatory authorities controlling the traffic situation, members of the public are key participants in curbing traffic blocks on the road. From parents dropping children off to school, to office commuters and other motorists, everyone can play an active role in making life on the road easier for all UAE residents.

"To reduce traffic and fatalities on the road, motorists should take responsibility by looking out for each other. We have to stop ego-centric behaviour and comply with the rules," suggested Edelmann.

MANAGING TIME WELL

For parents on the school run, one of the most crucial factors, said Edelmann, would be time management. "Parents can reduce a lot of stress and [avoid] traffic if they leave for school drop-offs on time. This way, both parents and students will be more relaxed," he said. Also, as parents are role models for their children, they ought to exhibit the right behaviour by helping children cross the streets and by parking their cars without obstructing other motorists in school zones.

Dubai resident Nimitha Kareem has already been doing this. A resident of



To reduce traffic and fatalities on the road, motorists should take responsibility by looking out for each other. We have to stop ego-centric behaviour and comply with the rules



Al Nahda 1, she drops off both her children at school in the adjoining Al Qusais area. “Although the drive to the school only takes five minutes, I make it a point to leave 15 minutes earlier, by 6.45am, to help my daughter reach her school before time,” she shared. Her daughter’s school is located in a busy school zone housing several educational institutions. On mornings and afternoons, the area tends to get clogged with cars and school buses. “I’ve seen parents stop their cars even in the middle of the road, when they get late,” said Kareem. During the pandemic, she recalled, driving on the same street was a breeze.

Office commuters, too, can avoid the rush hour by planning their office



An Abu Dhabi Police officer ensuring the smooth flow of traffic

Abu Dhabi Police

RESIDENTS SPEAK



NIMITHA KAREEM
Dubai resident

Although the drive to the school only takes five minutes, I make it a point to leave 15 minutes earlier, by 6.45am, to help my daughter reach her school before time



KEVIN D'SA
Sharjah resident

By leaving at 6am from my home in Sharjah, I reach my workplace by 7am, saving more than 30 minutes of driving time, during the peak office hours



SUJIT MATHEWS
Dubai resident

I leave home by 6.30am and reach the office before other commuters typically hit the road, especially bypassing the congestion at Al Khail Road that connects to E11. In the evenings, I leave earlier from the office, and then continue working from home once I'm back



In the UAE government sector, such flexible work timings are already being encouraged, especially during the back-to-school season. The Federal Authority for Government Human Resources (FAHR) announced in late August 2022 that parents working in federal government departments in the UAE could start work late or leave work early, under the back-to-school policy.

FAHR urged ministries and federal entities to enable their staff to accompany their children to schools and nurseries. This means that they can arrive late to work in the morning and leave early for a maximum period of three hours.

Sujit Mathews, a private sector employee who lives in the Hudaiba area in Dubai and works in Jebel Ali, has also been avoiding the rush hour by following a two-pronged approach of leaving early for work and partially working from home. "I leave home by 6.30am and reach the office before other commuters typically hit the road, especially bypassing the congestion at Al Khail Road that connects to E11. In the evenings, I leave earlier from the office, and then continue working from home once I'm back," he explained.

Even during weekends, he prefers to go out in the morning for family outings and errands to avoid getting stuck in traffic. Appreciative of Dubai's well-planned and wide roads, Mathews also often looks for alternative routes to dodge traffic bottlenecks.

commute beforehand. "During the first few weeks of school reopening, office-goers should avoid driving during the school traffic hours. Instead, they can either drive earlier or a little later or even opt to work from home," said Edelmann.

Sharjah resident Kevin D'Sa, who works in Dubai Investment Park, opted for early morning work hours to reduce driving time. "By leaving at 6am from my home in Sharjah, I reach my workplace by 7am, saving more than 30 minutes of driving time, during the peak office hours," he said.

UTILISING FLEXI-WORK

During the pandemic, as work from home became the norm, it also paved the way for greater flexibility for employees. Employers now are open to flexi-work options, as they've seen it yield the same results — or even better results — than mandatory attendance at the office.

"One of the optimistic developments of COVID has been the way businesses are operating. They understand now that there are many ways to work and be productive. But employees, too, need to communicate and chart a plan that lets them make the best use of their day," pointed out Edelmann.



The trend of micro-mobility is not going to go away even in the UAE; that's why we need more regulations, dedicated areas for such vehicles

MICRO-MOBILITY FACTOR

Along with the school buses and office-goers, another factor on UAE roads is the increasing number of motorbikes, bicycles, e-bikes, and e-scooters. During the pandemic, micro-mobility (single-passenger vehicles) became a preferred mode of transport for people across the globe. These personal vehicles with no human interaction and natural social distancing provided citizens with an alternative to shared transport systems.

However, micro-mobility has come with its own challenges, leading to frequent traffic violations and accidents. "The trend of micro-mobility is not going to go away even in the UAE; that's why we need more regulations, dedicated areas for such vehicles and clear enforcement of safety practices," suggested Edelmann.

10 POSITIVE DRIVING HABITS THAT WE NEED TO CULTIVATE



- 1. Caring and polite behaviour:** Treat others like you want to be treated. It must be the umbrella and the foundation of a positive UAE driving culture.
- 2. Wear seat belts:** Everyone must wear seat belts. All passengers in a car are required to wear seat belts, including those sitting in the rear seat, failing which the driver of the vehicle will be fined Dhs400 and slapped with four black points.
- 3. Drive defensively:** It addresses the most dangerous driving behaviour linked to the main killers on our roads. Reckless driving will incur a fine of Dhs2,000, plus 23 black points and impounding of the vehicle for a period of 60 days. The same punishment and fine will apply to drivers who endanger the lives of others.
- 4. No distractions:** Put the mobile phone on 'silent' and put it away. Using phones while driving or any other distractions will attract a fine of Dhs400 and four black points.
- 5. No tailgating:** Always keep your proper distance from the vehicle in front, in all weather conditions.
- 6. No speeding:** Instead of rushing for work, start your trip 10 or more minutes early.
- 7. Use the indicator:** This is to show other motorists that you intend to change direction, whether turning left or right or moving out into traffic. Do this timely and before every manoeuvre.
- 8. No driving under the influence:** This covers all banned substances. Violators will have their licence suspended for one year, starting from the day of the verdict. Court will decide the fine and/or jail term.
- 9. Tolerance:** Care for pedestrians and weaker road users.
- 10. Teach our kids:** Parents, nurseries, schools and universities must protect our kids of today and nurture the next generation of caring and safe traffic participants.

Source: RoadSafetyUAE

While the traffic authorities across the emirates have prescribed several regulations and safety stipulations for e-scooters and bicycle riders, it's again up to users to show responsible behaviour

and follow these guidelines. Just like any other public system to work, even for smooth traffic flow, the community and the authorities need to work together to find perfect solutions.

KARAK YOUR WAY

كركك على مزاجك

Just Chill
DRINKS CO.



3 in 1

Authentic Arabic Flavour

نكهة عربية أصيلة

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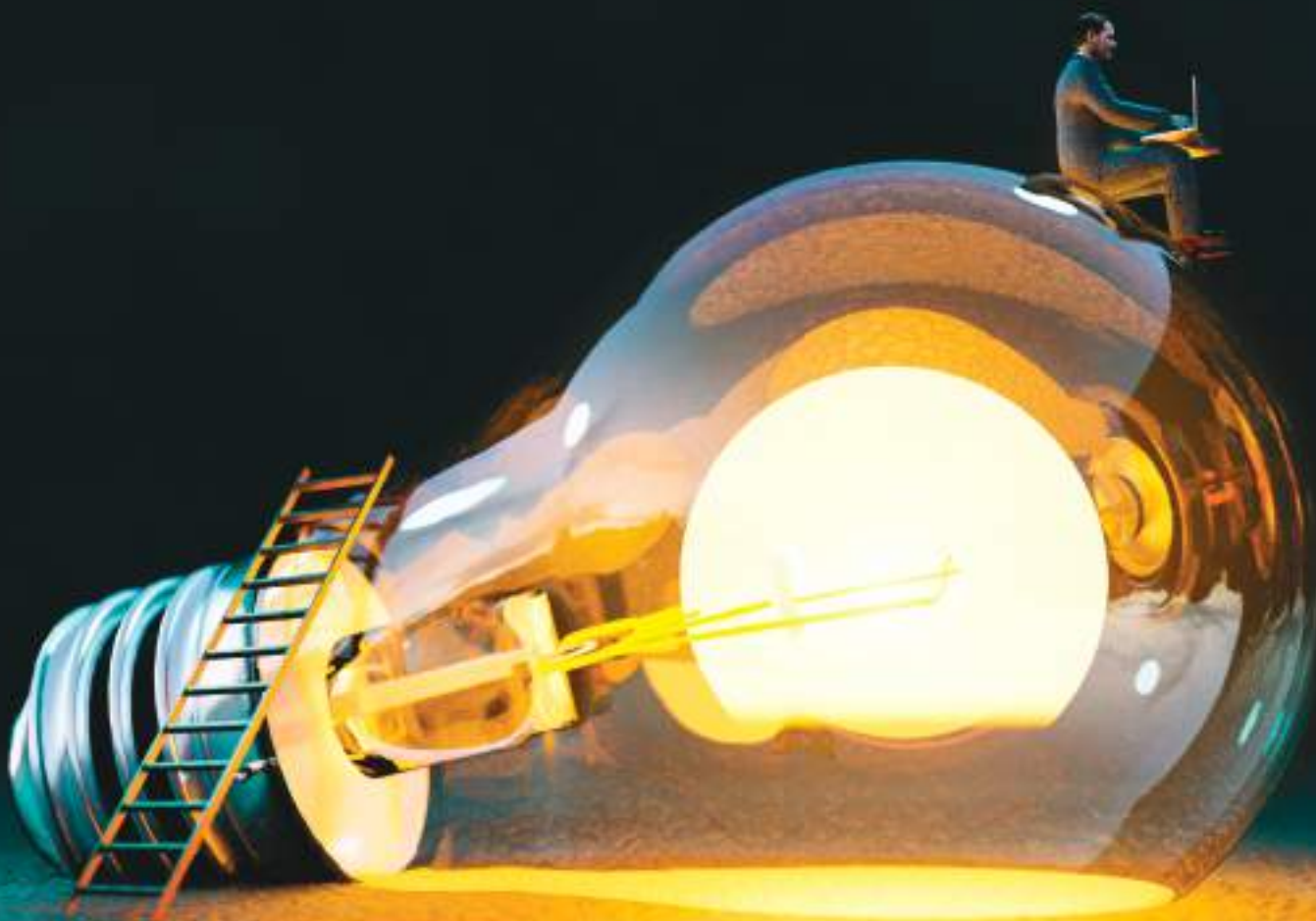




Curiosity breeds innovation

999 GIVES YOU SEVEN TIPS ON HOW YOU CAN BECOME SMARTER EVERY WEEK — A VITAL AND USEFUL ABILITY THAT CAN HELP YOU KEEP UP WITH THE DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION OF THE WORLD

BY JUSTIN AGUILAR



Our society is greatly shaped by outputs of humankind's curiosity. It is one of the key drivers of businesses today, especially with evolving industries brought about by technological advancement.

Throughout history, one of the greatest strengths that all the best scientists in the world share is curiosity. It is also the wheel that pushes innovators to begin their process of discovery.

Amongst the compelling examples of 'curiosity' at work is the creation of penicillin by Alexander Fleming in 1928, shortly after he demonstrated its

effects as an antibiotic. The issue was that it needed to be mass-produced in order to be a viable pharmaceutical product. Through the earnest curiosity of scientists, it was eventually discovered that the best strain of penicillin for production was on a mouldy cantaloupe in Peoria Market in 1943.

With this inquisitiveness, countless lives have been saved by penicillin and the antibiotics that have since followed. Therefore, it pays to be smart and fastidious in this fast-paced, tech-driven era. Here are helpful tips to acquire new information in ways that create value for yourself and society.

1 Rewire your brain by reading

Educational research discovered that your IQ is intimately related to your vocabulary. Take a standard vocabulary test and then an intelligence test — the results in both will be substantially the same. One way to enrich your vocabulary is through reading.



Reading, of course, requires patience, diligence, and determination. Scanning through your mobile phone for headlines and reading bits of text will not help you gain cognitive difference. These shortened reading materials are actually dangerous and are the literary equivalent of sugar addiction. Information gathering in under 140 characters is considered lazy. So how much do you need to read a day to become smarter?

Numerous studies have defined that 15-30 minutes is the minimum time we should dedicate to reading each day. Neuroscientists agree that even simple lifestyle changes, like daily 15 minutes with your nose in a book, will support your brain health for a lifetime.

If you are the type who's not into reading, you can fill in the gaps in your life with educational audio. Another option can be taking up a new course. There's a lot of free information online but a quality course brings it all together and saves you time.

2 Focus on building a deeper understanding

True smartness does not come only from acquiring new information, but can also be discerned based on how we have come to understand others.

Better understanding of the new knowledge that you acquired from reading will help you become smarter. Breaking down complex information, absorbing it, and using it for problem-solving is a common practice of smart individuals.

Some of the key ways to build deeper understanding are to have effective note-taking skills, discussing and debating, and most importantly, putting them into practice and cultivating new learnings to skills.

Authors Ritchhart, Church and Morrison wrote in 2011 a book titled *Making Thinking Visible* in which they laid out the kinds of thinking that are essential in aiding our understanding.



THE UNDERSTANDING MAP

(Ritchhart, Church & Morrison, 2011)

- Observing closely and describing what's there
- Building explanations and interpretations
- Reasoning with evidence
- Making connections
- Considering different viewpoints and perspectives
- Capturing the heart and forming conclusions
- Wondering and asking questions
- Uncovering complexity and going below the surface of things

3 Constantly ask and seek clarification

Being willing to ask "dumb questions" is, ironically, one of the smartest things you can do.

"Learning the basics of a field or a craft is often where people get stuck, but being willing to ask the basics helps you build a foundation for the advanced parts of a skill," said Allen Gannett, author of *The Creative Curve*.

Innovation always starts with curiosity. Asking questions pushes you to extend your mind's horizon and hone your inquisitiveness. There is value in asking questions because it's the way we acquire new perspectives.

Research shows asking for advice makes us look smarter. A Harvard study by AW Brooks published in 2015 stated that fear of looking clueless "is misplaced". The study said: "We demonstrate that individuals perceive those who seek advice as more competent than those who do not seek advice."

Seeking clarifications when doing a daunting task also shows that you are smart and confident enough to deliver a positive outcome. The purpose of clarification is to ensure that you, as a listener, have an understanding of what the speaker has said is correct, reducing misunderstanding. Clarifications also reassure the speaker that you are genuinely interested in them and are attempting to understand what they're saying.



4 Diversify your day

While having a routine helps in efficiency, one should be careful not to get stuck and be left behind in the changing work dynamic of the corporate world. To keep your intelligence at par with society's demands, you should try to incorporate something new daily.

This could be through meeting diverse people, welcoming new ideas, or changing what you read, or how you do things. Other ideas that you can try include incorporating new health habits, exercising, learning a new language, or adding a new cuisine or food experience.

Diversifying your thoughts can also be beneficial in unlocking parts of your brain that have not been activated since you have followed a daily routine. There are also some scientific reasons for shaking up your routine. Most notably, it has the power to rewire your brain.

For starters, it can increase focus. "Neuroscientists have found that our brains are constantly seeking novelty, and will become distracted easily in search of the bright new shiny thing," said Brigid Schulte, author of *Overwhelmed: How to Work, Love and Play When No One Has the Time*.





5 Review learned information

Not all things that we learn are kept in our minds. If we want to remember and retain information in the long term, then we need to review it regularly. Otherwise, our memory will begin to fade and the things that we've learned will be lost. Review strategies are a great way of helping us to move information from our short-term to our long-term memory.

Any learning needs to be repeated several times before it sticks. So, you must review what you've learned regularly and strengthen your memory if you want your new knowledge to really sink in.



Memory expert and psychologist Hermann Ebbinghaus' most famous discovery, the "Forgetting Curve", shows how new information can fade from memory over time unless you take the time to review it.

Ebbinghaus' research also revealed that each time you review information, you can wait a little longer before doing so again. Having that interval or "spaced learning" allows your brain to

revisit your learning and help retain it.

There are several strategies you can use to review learned information. You can begin with reviewing your information immediately, scheduling further reviews and then, testing yourself.

Rewriting your notes, teaching someone else, and putting your learning into action are some of the proven techniques that can help you review and retain information.



6 Note down and keep track of your ideas

Highly intelligent people anticipate that great thoughts can happen at any moment and tend to always carry a pen and a notebook.

"No matter how big, small, simple or complex an idea is, get it in writing. But don't just take notes for the sake of taking notes, go through your ideas and turn them into actionable and measurable goals. If you don't write your ideas down, they could leave your head before you even leave the room," said Richard Branson, who credits his success as a billionaire to his habit of note-taking during meetings.

Note-taking is really useful in helping you understand, remember, and retrieve essential points when you most need them. It also allows you to look back and keep track of how you have changed your views or discover the main turning points of your decisions.



7 Welcome change



One of printing's founding fathers, Benjamin Franklin, famously said, "When you're finished changing, you're finished."

Franklin basically believed that one must allow himself to change, to be open to new things and to ultimately become a different, better version of oneself.

Having an open mind to welcome change will allow you to discover that some of your perceptions were off, or that your viewpoints weren't grounded in fact. By being receptive to new ideas, you are giving yourself room to grow and continue on your path to seeking wisdom.

Jeff Bezos, Executive Chairman of Amazon, shared in a seminar in 2012 his observation that "the smartest people are constantly revising their understanding, reconsidering a problem they thought they'd already solved. They're open to new points of view, new information, new ideas, contradictions, and challenges to their own way of thinking."

Bezos said he doesn't think consistency of thought as a particularly positive trait. It's better, even healthier, in fact, to have an idea that contradicts one you had before.

As you open yourself to welcoming changes, you become smarter and subconsciously pave your way to becoming successful.

Did you know?

A group of researchers from the Netherlands Institute for Neuroscience discovered a new "brain circuit" underlying curiosity and novelty-seeking behaviour. They found "a whole path of multiple brain regions" that converts curiosity into action in mice. Specifically, a region called the Zona Incerta is responsible for this novelty-seeking behaviour. Before this, the brain mechanisms that drive exploring the unknown and making discoveries were unclear. The results of the study were published in the journal *Science* in May 2021.



Source: Science Daily

Caught at the airport

A BANK EMPLOYEE WHO GETS FIRED FROM WORK STEALS A HUGE AMOUNT OF MONEY ON THE LAST DAY OF HIS NOTICE PERIOD. HE TRIES TO FLY OUT OF THE COUNTRY, BUT THE LONG ARM OF THE LAW GETS HIM FIRST

BY WAGIH HASSAN

As the old sayings go: “It’s easier to catch a liar than lame a man” and “Ill-gotten gains never help you prosper.” These adages apply to the path chosen by Samir, 35.

He was employed by one of the most reputable banks in the country, and was dealing with customer transactions worth millions in various currencies. All he could think about was to become a millionaire someday. But the path he had chosen to achieve this dream threw him into a prison cell.

One day, Samir woke up from a dream in which he saw that he had bought a luxurious house in his home country, a new luxury car, and that he was able to give his fiancée, Faraha, 22, a lavish wedding ceremony.

After waking up from this dream, his thoughts were concentrated on one terrible thing: illegally obtaining huge amounts of money from the bank that employed him. He was a technical expert, well-versed in all digital banking transactions, and he decided to use his knowledge to commit theft.

While Samir had already made up his mind to steal a lot of money, something happened at work that changed his thoughts into action — the bank management terminated his service, leaving him enraged, as he had worked for the bank for 10 years.

From the day he was handed his letter of termination, he had a month to leave the bank, as per the law. Samir became determined to use this one-month notice period to put his embezzlement plan into action.

His sense of entitlement came from his fury at being terminated after a decade’s service to the bank. His mind was ravaged by nefarious thoughts, and “embezzlement from the bank” became a driving need because he craved both money and revenge.

So, how was his plan carried out on the ground? Though consumed by anger by the management’s order to fire him, Samir was careful about how he’d steal the money; he didn’t rush into it.

For the entire month of the notice period, he did nothing wrong. Then, on the last day, when it was evening and the e-banking system of Samir’s bank branch had shut down for the day, he performed a lot of bank operations by transferring millions of dirhams to the account of his fiancée Faraha in her country of origin.

Samir scheduled these digital



While Samir had already made up his mind to steal a lot of money, something happened at work that changed his thoughts into action — the bank management terminated his service

operations in such a way that the money transfers to Faraha would be completed only the next morning, when the e-banking system would be restarted at the branch. By that time, the embezzler planned to be out of the country; he believed that when the bank discovered these unauthorised transfers, he’d be

far away from the reach of UAE law enforcement.

In the 10 years that he had worked with this bank, Samir had managed to save up a lot of money, with which he had bought a house in his hometown and still had enough left over to comfortably marry Faraha and meet other family responsibilities. However,

It was just a matter of hours before the bank discovered that a huge amount of money had been transferred illegally

would send him to Public Prosecution. The matter should be solved with Faeq, either by paying the money or coming to a settlement with him.

At the Public Prosecution Office, Samir cashed the cheque for Faeq and requested him to drop the legal procedures against him. After this was sorted out, he tried to book the earliest flight that would take him out of the UAE the next morning. While waiting for his flight, Samir felt it was the longest 12 hours of his life. He was very nervous, as every minute's delay increased the risk of his arrest for the embezzlement. It was just a matter of hours before the bank discovered that a huge amount of money had been transferred illegally.

Meanwhile, the bank opened for business the next morning, the e-banking system was restarted, and the money transfers initiated by Samir the previous evening went through in the morning. The bank was surprised to discover that millions of dirhams had been transferred just that morning to someone named Faraha.

The bank administration began scrutinising all the records to find out the reason for these huge transfers to Faraha. It took a few hours of reviewing all the records and procedures to determine that these were fraudulent transfers. It was clear to the bank that an act of embezzlement had occurred while the electronic system was closed. It was also detected that the person who had committed this crime was Samir.

The bank rushed to inform the police, so that Samir could be arrested before he flew out of the country. He was stopped at the airport, charged with embezzlement, convicted, and sentenced to prison. He had dreamed of living as a millionaire, but ended up living as a jail inmate.

The names and characters mentioned in the story are fictitious and any resemblance with real people is purely coincidental.

because of greed, all his gains were on the verge of turning into losses.

After illegally transferring money to Faraha from the bank, Samir immediately attempted to leave the UAE, booking a seat on the first flight available for his home country. To his shock, he was stopped at the airport — it turned out that there was a travel ban imposed on him; security at the airport had a list of people prohibited from leaving the country, and his name was on the list.

Desperate to escape, Samir tried convincing Captain Saeed, the officer in charge at the airport, that there was

a mistake. He said that a senior and respected employee of a major bank wouldn't do anything that would attract a travel ban. He tried to persuade the officer that he was going home, on leave from his workplace, to see his family and friends after a long time.

Captain Saeed reiterated that there was no mistake, and that the travel ban database showed Samir's name because he had issued a cheque without enough account balance to honour the cheque.

At this moment, Samir remembered that he had given a cheque to a person named Faeq. The officer told Samir that the police



Ali Obaid is a veteran Emirati commentator and writer on local issues; he currently heads the News Centre at Dubai Media Incorporated

CULTURES LOCKED IN A BATTLE OF IDENTITIES

The recent reaction of a Western law firm to the personal opinion expressed by an Emirati lawyer reveals ambivalence hidden in the so-called freedom of speech

Bullying attitudes that defy common sense are probably not a new phenomenon, but it is starting to take an orderly form these days. Unfortunately, some institutions demonstrate these bullying attitudes.

A Western law firm has recently announced the termination of its partnership with the law office owned by Emirati lawyer Dr Habib Al Mulla.

The termination occurred as a result of his social media post against behaviours that were against our national identity, customs, traditions and religion, and against people of certain gender orientation.

When confirming the news of the two firms' separation, Dr Habib Al Mulla stated that his opinions were based on his religion and personal principles. He said, "We are a tolerant society, accepting the differences, but we can't accept any attitudes against our religious beliefs and Islamic customs."

His views about some of the phenomena that are offensive to UAE society are considered to be freedom of opinion in some other countries, especially in Western cultures or other westernised societies.

However, the foreign law firm's reaction to Dr Habib Al Mulla's views is considered blatant bullying, contrary to this so-called freedom.

This situation has received a huge reaction on UAE social media platforms.

Most social media users supported the Emirati lawyer's position and denounced the firm's attitude of intellectual dishonesty, which was inappropriate for those claiming to raise the banner of freedom and respecting the opinion of others.

Logic says that there is great wisdom in which God creates humans, despite their religion, country, colour, gender, ethnicity, and culture. It is this sense that puts

nations in the position to protect values that have underpinned societies since creation.

Religion, national identity, customs and traditions are red lines that we should not cross, and no one must be allowed to interfere with common characteristics of our culture, identity, and religion.

This is what our leaders have called for, and let us always stick to protecting our culture, identity, and religion. We are not against development if it is balanced with the preservation of identity, customs, and traditions.

As for a country, the most important blessing is the

security it offers to its residents and citizens. This blessing can be compromised if our identity is in danger, especially when we face attacks from a group with some vested interests. Some of them do so knowingly and intentionally, and others do so with ignorance or following a blind tradition — they don't know how dangerous it is, and they don't realise the depth of the abyss that our society might fall into.

The next battle, as we experienced, is a battle of identities.

We do not seek to destroy any identity, just as we are interested in preserving our identity from the hands of people with both apparent and hidden agendas. What our parents and grandparents have left us will be lost unless we repel these systematic and indiscriminate attacks that are filling and overflowing cyberspace currently.

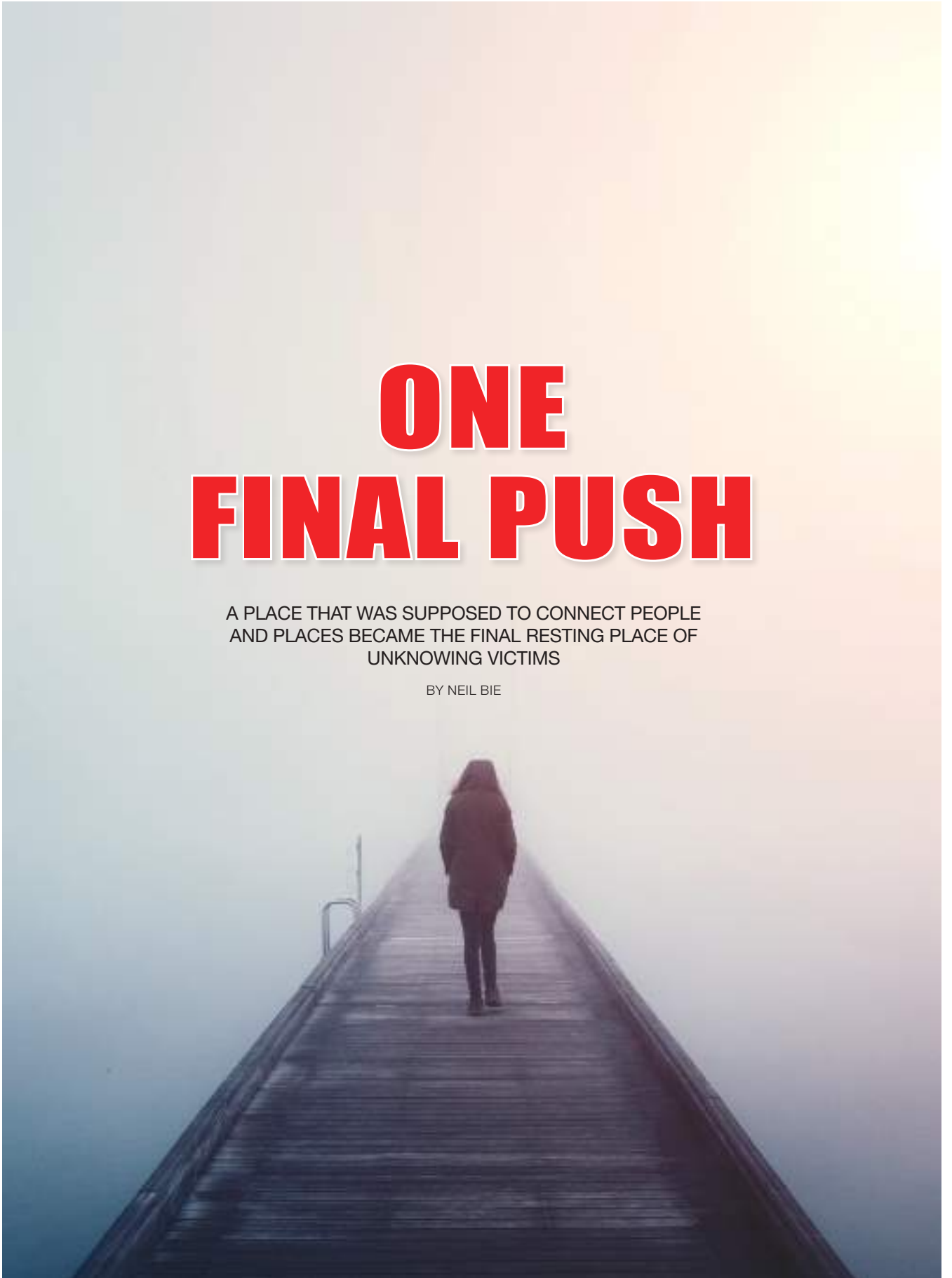
We thank God that there is a societal consciousness that constitutes a strong wall that raises the ceiling of hope in souls, and guarantees us victory in this battle of identities.

We are not against development if it is balanced with the preservation of identity, customs, and traditions

ONE FINAL PUSH

A PLACE THAT WAS SUPPOSED TO CONNECT PEOPLE
AND PLACES BECAME THE FINAL RESTING PLACE OF
UNKNOWN VICTIMS

BY NEIL BIE



DISTURBED DAD

WHEN: JANUARY 2009

WHERE: MELBOURNE, AUSTRALIA

One morning in January 2009, four-year-old Darcey Freeman was to begin her first day of prep school. Her dad Arthur was supposed to take her to school that day where her mom, Peta Barnes, was waiting. Darcey grew up with her parents separated, after their divorce in 2007. However, the little girl didn't know that her parents had been extremely at odds ever since their divorce.

Peta, who was at Darcey's school, called Arthur to check on their daughter. She was shocked when Arthur told her to "say goodbye" to her child and hung up. Peta called Arthur the second time, and the estranged husband responded that she "would never see" her child again. Peta then called her solicitor immediately and called the police, too.

With his hazard lights on, Arthur came to a stop in the West Gate Bridge's inbound emergency lane in Spotswood. Darcey was then hoisted from the automobile and brought to a rail before she was pushed off the bridge by her own father. Many witnesses saw what happened. After that, Arthur got back in his car and headed for the base of the bridge.

Following calls from witnesses, the responding paramedics and police discovered Darcey at the base of the bridge. She was given CPR by police and paramedics, and she was flown to



Four-year-old Darcey Freeman

Victorian police/AAP

the Royal Children's Hospital. But, with serious injuries, Darcey was pronounced dead the same day.

Arthur was accused of killing Darcey, and after a 19-day trial, he was found guilty. At the trial, Arthur said he couldn't recall doing what he had done, but conceded that he was to blame for Darcey's death. He tried to prove that he was mentally ill when the crime was committed, but this defence was ultimately rejected. The court sentenced Arthur to life in prison with a 32-year non-parole period in April 2011. Arthur attempted to appeal his conviction to the Court of Appeal and subsequently to the Court of Appeal's Full Bench, but he was unsuccessful.

FRIGHTENED TO DEATH

WHEN: AUGUST 1995

WHERE: DETROIT, USA

Martell Welch Jr, 20, was involved in a minor accident with Deletha Word on a road near Belle Isle Park by the Detroit River. However, this minor incident drew Martell's ire — enough for him to convince two of his friends in his car to come after Deletha.

As three men yanked Deletha from her car, tore off her clothes, and chased her, dozens of people gathered and some cheered. Police later claimed that most witnesses saw the men attacking the 4-foot-11 woman but the witnesses were too shocked to intervene.

A terrified Deletha attempted to flee from her pursuers — but when she saw that they were still after her, with no one in the crowd even attempting to help her, she thought she had no choice but to jump off the bridge to escape.

"As Martell Welch comes towards her with his arm upraised, she goes into the river," said prosecutor Kevin Simowski, during the opening statements of the court case.

Wanda R. Cal, Martell's attorney, stated to the jury that her client was wrong in attacking the 33-year-old woman. However, she claimed that Martell didn't kill Deletha. She surmised that the PCP substance discovered on the victim's body explained why she jumped into the river. "It was either an accident or suicide," said the attorney.

Witnesses saw Martell throw Deletha over a barrier separating a pedestrian walkway from the road before chasing



Deletha Word

FAMILY PHOTO

her down with the tyre iron and threatening to "knock your brains out".

Deletha climbed over a railing and leapt when Martell got close to her, as one of Martell's companions blocked her escape route. Later, a witness saw Martell approach the partially clothed woman with "his arms lifted in the air". Deletha reportedly let go of the railing and fell when Martell came within five feet, according to a witness.

Jurors took less than five hours over two days for their deliberation. The court found Martell guilty of second-degree murder in the drowning of Deletha in the Detroit River and he was sentenced to up to 40 years in prison.

FURIOUS EX

WHEN: DECEMBER 2019

WHERE: DUNKELD, SCOTLAND

Hazel Donaldson lost consciousness when she was hit by an unknown object in the head. The last thing she saw was her furious ex-partner, Robert Leggat. When she came about, she was hanging by a bridge headfirst as Robert had seized her body.

Robert attempted to kill his ex-partner by lifting her legs as she was leaning against the wall of the bridge and pushing her, causing her to fall to the ground below at the River Tay at Dunkeld.

However, at the time, Robert didn't know that Hazel had survived the fall. She filed a case against him shortly afterwards.

Investigations revealed that Robert was released on bail when the crime was committed. This only added to the aggravation of the crime. Robert disputed accountability for the crime. The jury judged him to be responsible, as attorney Jim Keegan QC told the court that Robert did not want to take responsibility for his actions.

"It is quite clear the accused has a substantial record, most of it related to road traffic offences, but there are very serious offences on his record as well," said the attorney. He stated that Robert understood he had to accept the jury's decision and added, "He also understands that given the seriousness of the current offence for which he was



convicted, there is absolutely no alternative to a significant prison sentence."

Robert was sentenced to nine years in prison. "It was only good fortune that she landed on the ground and not in the river. It was extremely frightening for the complainer and [it] has ongoing physical consequences for her," said Judge Fiona Tait.

The judge stated that due to the gravity of the crime, Robert could only be dealt with by imposing a prison sentence. The judge also ordered that he be monitored for another three years after his release.

She also issued a 12-year non-harassment order, prohibiting Robert from approaching or contacting his 30-year-old victim during a sentencing hearing at Edinburgh's High Court.

SERIAL LIARS

WHEN: SEPTEMBER 2018

WHERE: ALBERTA, CANADA

Couple Julian Whiskeyjack and Jena Hunter along with Jermaine Steinhauer with his girlfriend, and single mom-of-four Lindsay Jackson met up at a house party in the Saddle Lake Cree Nation in Canada around late September 2018. As the night went on, a conflict amongst the four erupted, with Lindsay bearing the brunt of the argument. This was the last night when Lindsay was seen alive. Days later, police found Lindsay's waterlogged corpse in the river near Duvernay, 145km east of Edmonton.

During the trial, Justice Larry Ackerl of the Court of Queen's Bench, who issued the decision on June 2021, stated that both Julian and Jena were amongst suspects in the murder but could not be relied upon to accurately describe Jermaine's claimed involvement.

The judge characterised the testimony of Julian and Jena, who were both found guilty of first-degree murder in Lindsay's death, as "profoundly dishonest". The judge stated that "their account regarding what happened on the bridge substantially disagrees".

What was clear during the trial was the fact that in her final hours, Lindsay was thrown from the Duvernay Bridge. "Each accused the other of assisting Steinhauer while claiming innocence. This divide is best, if not only, reconciled by concluding one or both of Hunter and



Whiskeyjack are deliberately lying under oath," said the judge, who rejected the testimonies of both Julian and Jena as "unreliable", save for it placing Jermaine in Lindsay's company on the night of her murder.

"They cannot be explained by inattention, misappreciation or inadvertence. Rather, they arise from the calculated, self-serving deception of both witnesses. Each purposefully lied about what occurred on the bridge that night," said the judge.

Both Julian and Jena were sentenced to life in prison with no chance of parole for 25 years.



THE ELOQUENT PEASANT

Dr Samar Al-Shamsi is an internationally respected artist who is renowned for her commissioned portraits of high-profile individuals, including the late Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan, UAE President His Highness Sheikh Khalifa bin Zayed Al Nahyan, US President Barack Obama, and others.

The know-it-all people may seem at first very convincing, as they have a unique style that is easily accepted by their followers

On the sidelines of the seasonal tweet of every know-it-all person are diverging ideologies, reneging on their words and stirring up verbal and nonverbal vexation. They, in fact, struggle with themselves, and their internal conflict leaves them with a heavy heart that shows them quite pale out of illness or quite dark out of bearing a grudge. All they want is to vex others. Our reality says: learn what you love and get to your intended top, but stay kind to others.

The know-it-all people may seem at first very convincing as they present themselves with a unique style that is easily accepted and adopted by their followers or audience. Recently, I learned through experience that some people, in the past years, did not get what they wanted. They did not quite understand the reason why at the time. It was a blur for them. Sadness filled their hearts. Yet today, they reached the top beyond their expectations and that of others who think that reaching the top is an illusion.

Planning and awareness are quintessential to paving one's social life path and then diving into the fierce professional life. Those who work hard and reach for the stars are destined to succeed amongst their peers. A cause for concern in the words of the know-it-all is trying to twist the truth

when they fail to achieve others' successes that are rather lessons that the youth should learn from.

It is like poisoning minds against this great constellation of ambitious nobles. Those who refute things that they have never heard of or believed in, do so because their dreams had reached a dead end. Had they successfully brought them to light, they would not have given relevance to that saying. They might have rebutted it as well.

It could even become greatly disastrous in the wink of an eye when an effort is put into justifying our failure to reach our goals

Getting to the top is simply provocative and not an unreachable illusion. It could even become greatly disastrous in the wink of an eye when an effort is put into justifying our failure to reach our goals, and into spoiling other people's hard work, and undermining their grand struggle that was written with golden letters on the face of their mundane history.

Ironically, some people quote a gang of losers to promote that, turning a blind eye to the success of the elite of the hardworking and the ambitious, simply to kill their joy. Denigration takes over comforting or sharing the joy of those who were unlucky or were late bloomers. They are instead uncunningly vexed by those who pretend to have genius.

The views expressed by 999 columnists are their own and do not necessarily reflect those of the Ministry of Interior

THE GULF

between colonial powers

STARTING WITH THE PORTUGUESE, MANY EUROPEAN COLONIAL POWERS SET THEIR SIGHTS ON THE GULF. SOON, THE STRONGEST CONTENDER WAS THE EAST INDIA COMPANY, REPRESENTING THE INTERESTS OF BRITAIN

BY DR FALEH HANDHAL



We now enter the era of Britain's relations from 1809 to 1892 with the Trucial States. One of the salient characteristics of European colonisation in the Gulf region was making the port an essential component in the colonial system, thereby controlling the trade movement in the Arabian Gulf and the Indian Ocean as well as the trade to and from India, which was the first colony for the British.

The consequences of the British occupation of India also cast their shadow on Arab nations. The European countries that sought to invade the Arabian Gulf territories were Portugal, the Netherlands, France, and Britain — the first colonial power to eye this region was Portugal.

PORTUGUESE IN THE INDIAN OCEAN AND ARABIAN GULF



Vasco da Gama

Museu Nacional de Arte Antiga

In 1415, Prince Henry the Navigator was a central figure in the early days of the Portuguese Empire. He had drawn a preliminary map with the aim of finding a sea route to the source of the world's wealth, which was India.

In 1495, King Manuel appointed Vasco da Gama to lead a Portuguese fleet to India in search of a maritime route by sailing down the western coast of Africa and rounding the Cape of Good Hope. In 1498, Vasco da Gama arrived at the port of Goa in India, and when he returned to Lisbon in 1499, his ships were loaded with Indian cargo and the most famous spices.

King Manuel then concentrated on controlling a part of India, the Strait of Hormuz, the cities of Muscat, Khor Fakkan, and Julfar in Ras Al Khaimah, in order to prevent the sailing of Arab merchants to India from those Gulf cities. This situation continued until 1624, when Imam Nasser bin Murshid Al-Yarubi was able to achieve amazing victories against the Portuguese in Oman and other regions in the Arabian Gulf.



17th-century plaque of Dutch East India Company

Stephen Dickson

DUTCH PRESENCE IN THE GULF

The presence of the Portuguese in the Arabian Gulf region drew the attention of other European powers, such as the Dutch, who arrived in the Gulf from their bases in Indonesia. In 1602, they establish the Dutch East India Company to obtain the Shah's broad trading privileges for the silk trade.

Their presence on the Persian coast was a commercial base at the Persian port

of Kharg, during the reign of the Yarubian state in Oman, until Prince Nasser Al-Zaabi ended their commercial presence.

FRENCH ROLE IN THE REGION

India's trade also widened the horizon for France. In 1644, it founded the French East India Company, and in 1667, it opened a trading centre at the port of Bandar Abbas.



Revolt in Cairo in 1798/ Painting by Girodet-Trioson (1810)

NAPOLÉON.ORG



The East India House in Leadenhall Street, London/
Illustration by Thomas Hosmer Shepherd (1817)

On December 31, 1600, the East India Company was founded. The company paved the way for British influence in the Gulf by opening a commercial centre in the western Indian coastal city of Surat

As a consequence of this, a conflict began between Britain and France in what became known as the Seven Years' War, which also affected the Gulf region.

The French base in the Gulf was located on the island of Mauritius, which is also known as "Ile de France". This island is located off the eastern coast of Africa, at a point in the Indian Ocean that is equidistant from Oman and India. From there, Ile de France established commercial relations with the Sultanate of Oman.

As a consequence of the British side losing during the French campaign to occupy Egypt in 1798 by Napoleon Bonaparte, the northeastern African country of Egypt became a starting point for France to reach more ambitious targets by controlling the eastern trade with India.

During these developments, the British sent 4,000 soldiers to reinforce their presence in India, and the commander of the British forces present there ordered the navy to destroy any French vessel seen in the Indian Ocean. This was meant to end the French presence in the Arabian Gulf region and open the way for a British presence that could not be contested by any other European country.

BRITAIN'S POSITION IN THE GULF

British forces entered the Arabian Gulf with the aim of controlling the trade movement between India and Persia. On December 31, 1600, the East India Company was founded. The company paved the way for British influence in the Gulf by opening a commercial centre in the western Indian coastal city of Surat.

In 1622, Shah Abbas Safavid engaged Britain's help to oust the Portuguese from the island of Hormuz. This was followed by Imam Nasser bin Murshid Al-Yarubi Al-Omani confronting the Portuguese presence in the Gulf and neighbouring areas.

At that time, King Charles II gave instructions to transform the East India Company into a centre for political and military power, with the right to declare war and to conclude peace treaties with any non-Christian prince on behalf of the British Crown.

This was accompanied by warship construction and management of the Civil Court, which generally indicated the transformation of the company into a managing agency for the British government of India.

For the Gulf and the Sultanate of Oman, the British forces decided to cultivate strong relations with the Governor of Oman, Imam Sultan bin Ahmad bin Said, due to its strategic geographical location as the gateway to the Gulf.

The British sent Mirza Mehdi Ali Khan, as a representative in Abu Shahr, to meet the Imam. As a result of that meeting, they signed the 'Qalnamah' in 1798; it contained seven articles requiring cooperation between Britain and Oman, as well as closing Oman's ports to French vessels.

AL QASIMIA AND ITS ROLE IN THE GULF

Al Qasim appeared on the pages of Gulf history first as a military force, and then they made political interventions in the events in Oman, as well as between Oman and Saudi Arabia from 1750.

In 1804, the founding leader of the Grand Al Qasimia, Sheikh Sultan bin Saqr Al Qasimi, emerged due to his political status and the important geographical location of Al Qasimia.

The British Government in India decided to sign the first peace treaty with Sheikh Al Qasimi, in order to maintain their presence in the area and protect vital interests. In May 1805, Captain David Seton, who was assigned as the representative of the British Government, arrived in Muscat.

Sheikh Al Qasimi was outside Ras Al Khaimah, so he dispatched his deputy to Abdullah bin Karoush, to negotiate with Captain Seton, in Bandar Abbas. The negotiations resulted in the writing of a Qalnamah agreement with six articles, which indicated in the introduction: "This Qalnamah agreement between Sheikh Abdullah bin Karoush, on behalf of Sheikh Al Sheikh Prince Sultan bin Saqr bin Rashid Al Qasimi, and Captain David Seton, on behalf of the East India Company, on February 6th, 1806, in Bandar Abbas."

Article 1 stated: "Peace shall be established between the East India Company and Sultan bin Saqr Al Qasimi, and all the continents on the coast of the Arabian Peninsula. All the vessels of both parties will be respected."

This was Britain's first agreement with the first emirate, the Emirate of Qawasim, during the reign of Sheikh Sultan bin Saqr Al Qasimi.



J Thirtle

British troops landing at the coast of Ras Al Khaimah/ Painting by J Thirtle (1809)

The fall of 1808 recorded a torrent of accusations based on rumours, which were used by the opponents of the Qawasim to launch a campaign to impose British control and sovereignty over trade in the Gulf

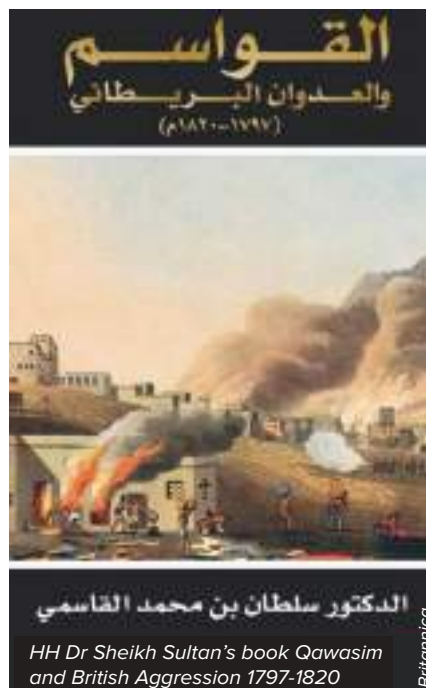
Article 4 said: "If a British vessel stops on the coast of Qawasim for wood or water or is compelled by weather conditions or for any other reason, it must be assisted and maintained by Qawasim and allowed to take refuge or leave as its owners deem appropriate."

Article 6 said: "When this treaty is stamped, Al Qawasim can use the British ports from Surat to Bengal."

CHANGES IN POLITICAL LEADERSHIP

In 1808, a political event took place in Al Qasimia, when Sheikh Hassan bin Rahma Al Qasimi ruled the emirate instead of Sheikh Sultan bin Saqr Al Qasimi, which caused the beginning of problems for British ships and divisions in the Gulf, as described by His Highness Dr Sheikh Sultan bin Muhammad Al Qasimi, Ruler of the Emirate of Sharjah, in his book *Qawasim and British Aggression 1797-1820*.

Page 177 of the book said the following: "During that period, in the fall of 1808, strange incidents occurred in the Gulf between ships that appeared



to belong to the East India Company and Arabs.

"These incidents were small accidents, but the British officials in the company and their representatives

in the Gulf have shown that those accidents were highly important in the context of British policy in the Gulf.

"Officials and historians alike considered those acts as criminal piracy, which justified the launch of military campaigns against people. Most of these incidents were the result of misunderstanding and understanding, which happened in the Gulf at that time. Instability and internal disturbances were the prevailing situations in all the lands located in the Gulf region. The Arabs were commoners, and there were pirates, and there were attackers of ships, and for some strange reason, they were not called pirates.

"The fall of 1808 recorded a torrent of accusations based on rumours, which were used by the opponents of the Qawasim to launch a campaign to impose British control and sovereignty over trade in the Gulf.

"The first accident occurred with the ship Fiori, then the ship Minerva, then the ship Sylve and Nautilus. The British indicated that the perpetrators were the Qawasim, so the Government of India prepared a naval campaign to fight the Qawasim."

Warmest Congratulations to President



His Highness Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan

on the great trust placed in him by Members of the federal Supreme council and Rulers of the Emirates to lead the country after being elected President of the UAE.

We pray to Allah Almighty to bless and guide His highness. We renew our loyalty and pledge of allegiance to his leadership to serve the UAE people.

TAKE A PEEK AT THE NEWEST MUST-HAVE HIGH-TECH ELECTRONIC DEVICES

GROUNDBREAKING SERIES

Apple has finally unveiled its new cutting-edge mobile phone series—**iPhone 14 and iPhone 14 Plus**, featuring two sizes — 6.1 inches and 6.7 inches. They feature a new dual-camera system, Crash Detection, a smart phone industry-first safety service with Emergency SOS via satellite, and the best battery life on iPhone.

Capturing stunning photos and video, iPhone 14 and iPhone 14 Plus both have a powerful camera system featuring new Main and front TrueDepth cameras, the Ultra Wide camera for unique perspectives, and Photonic Engine — an enhanced image pipeline. Both models include the A15 Bionic chip with a 5-core GPU, which offers incredible performance and efficiency for demanding workloads, and is designed with privacy and security built in.

The new iPhone series uses iOS 16, offering a reimagined Lock Screen with a multilayered effect that artfully sets subjects of photos in front of the time, and newly designed widgets that offer information at a glance.

What's more, with a new dual-core accelerometer capable



PRICE: From Dhs3,399

WEBSITE: <https://www.apple.com/ae/>

of detecting G-force measurements of up to 256Gs and a new high dynamic range gyroscope, Crash Detection on iPhone can now detect a severe car crash and automatically dial emergency services when a user is unconscious or unable to reach their iPhone.

The new iPhone series will be available in midnight, blue, starlight, purple, and red finishes in 128GB, 256GB, and 512GB storage capacities.

PIXEL PERFECT



Google packs the performance-focused 'Google Tensor', extensive battery life, and intelligent photography with a better price point in its latest iteration of the Pixel 6 series: **The Google Pixel 6a**.

The Google Tensor on the mobile phone allows apps to open swiftly, websites and photos to load rapidly, and everything to work seamlessly. Its Adaptive Battery function scans your most frequently used apps and saves power on those you rarely use. Users may pick which applications to run using Extreme Battery Saver, and Pixel will switch off the others.

Face Unblur allows mobile photography fans to effortlessly sharpen faces, so they can capture every moment, even in motion. Users may also use the Magic Eraser to erase undesired things from photos. They may also modify the hue and brightness of an item so that it blends in.

The Pixel 6a is water and dust resistant with an IP67 certification. As a result, you can take your mobile phone with you everywhere you go. The Titan M2TM processor and Google Tensor security core add an extra layer of hardware security to Pixel, making it more resistant.

PRICE: Dhs1,649

WEBSITE: <https://store.google.com/us/>

AUTOFOCUS MASTER

Sony's highly anticipated **Xperia 5 IV** boasts a 6.1-inch 1080x2520px OLED display with a refresh rate of 120Hz, and the display is 50 per cent brighter than the previous model. It also features a 10 per cent bigger battery, increasing the Xperia 5 IV's capacity to 5,000mAh.

For its camera, Sony has used a traditional lens arrangement for the Xperia 5 IV. It sports a 12MP triple configuration, consisting of a 16mm 1/2.5" ultrawide, a 24mm 1/1.7" wide with 1.8µm pixels, and a 60mm 1/3.5" telephoto. All three lenses have autofocus, and the wide and tele are also optically stabilised. All three sensors offer quick 120fps readout, and Sony has extended its Real-time Eye AF and Real-time tracking from its camera array to the Xperia 5 IV's primary cameras owing to the integration of distance analysis with AI.

Sony states that the Xperia 5 IV can be charged to 50 per cent in 30 minutes using a 30W PD charger and supports wireless charging. It added that the mobile phone's battery would last up to three years as well.



PRICE: Dhs3,670

WEBSITE: <https://electronics.sony.com/c/mobile>

PRODUCTIVITY BOOSTER

Whether you're retouching images, streaming a favourite game, or pushing through emails,

Microsoft's Surface Pro X helps you maximise and optimise your time around these and other tasks.

Mechanical illuminated keys (including a function row), optimal key spacing for rapid, accurate typing, and a wide glass touchpad for precision input allow you to write, code, or email in comfort. When compared to a standard laptop, the Surface Pro X's characteristic 3:2 aspect ratio allows users to read Word documents and webpages at a more optimum scale and display with an 18 per cent more vertical screen view.

The built-in 5.0MP front-facing camera with 1080p HD video is ready at any angle and intelligently adapts to lighting situations to portray natural skin



PRICE: Dhs2,205

WEBSITE: www.microsoft.com/en-us/

tones more accurately. The 10MP rear-facing camera with autofocus is capable of scanning documents and recording 4K video. The finest video calling experience on Surface Pro yet is delivered by dual far-field Studio Mics and enhanced speakers.

ERGONOMIC PARTNER



PRICE: Dhs450

WEBSITE: www.logitech.com/en-ae/

Logitech prioritises good finger posture with its newly-launched **ERGO K860**, a split ergonomic keyboard designed to help alleviate strain in its user's hands.

The curved keyframe of the ERGO K860 positions your hands, wrists, fingers, and forearms in a more natural stance — you'll experience the difference the instant your hands rest on the keyboard. A pillowed wrist rest elevates your forearms just above the keyboard, providing 54 per cent greater wrist support and 25 per cent less wrist bending.

This is a smooth and ultra-precise typing experience that does not sacrifice speed or accuracy. Your fingertips slide smoothly across the keys' matte surface, and tactile accents help you orient your fingers and stay focused. The split arrangement and convex shape encourage more natural finger and hand positioning.

MULTISPORT SMARTWATCH

Polar Vantage V2 is a strong fusion of simple design and revolutionary technology. The watch itself is extremely light, but it is packed with sophisticated training and recuperation functions, a longer battery life, and better GPS to help users perform to their full potential.

It has a battery life of up to 100 hours and is waterproof to 100 metres. It is made to function without sacrificing quality — the attractive, lightweight aluminium unibody also functions as an antenna signal enhancer for the built-in GPS. Supporting GPS, GLONASS, Galileo, and QZSS satellite systems for quicker fix times, so you can train with the greatest location experience anywhere on the globe.



PRICE: Dhs2,099

WEBSITE: <https://www.polar.com/ae-en/vantage/v2>



EXPLORE THE HEALING WONDERS OF NATURE FOR YOUR MENTAL HEALTH AT HOME. REACH THE NEXT LEVEL OF INTERPERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS BY LENDING AN EAR TO YOUR LOVED ONES, AND EVEN TO STRANGERS

NATURAL REMEDY

TITLE: Leaf Your Troubles Behind: How to Destress and Grow Happiness through Plants

AUTHOR: Karen Hugg

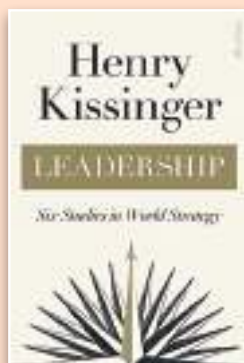
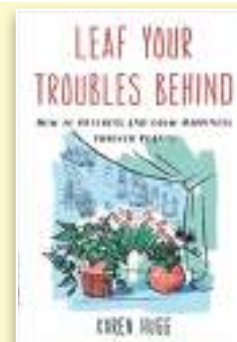
PUBLISHER: Prometheus

PRICE: Dhs74

Have you ever felt happier after a walk in the woods or fiddling with houseplants, but your hectic life stressed you out again? In our rushed, tech-based, indoor society, we may yearn for a break but only manage to get through a noisy day and collapse upon the bed. Regaining peace of mind seems beyond reach. But what if there were easy, low-cost activities to heal the soul? What if we could regularly access tranquility? How would we do that?

The answer may be in the simplest, most abundant thing all around us: plants. Greenery is like a magic pill for our mental health. Science tells us plants lower heart rates, make us more relaxed and productive, boost our immune system, help us live longer, and provide air, food, fragrance, and beauty.

In this book, horticulturist Karen Hugg draws on the science and two decades of professional gardening experience to help readers reduce stress and increase happiness. Through her original, approachable system of “Green Leisure”, you will discover nature’s scientifically proven power to heal us from stress and explore which green leisure activities are right for you.



FRESH PERSPECTIVES

TITLE: Leadership: Six Studies in World Strategy

AUTHOR: Henry Kissinger

PUBLISHER: Allen Lane

PRICE: Dhs134

“Leaders,” writes Henry Kissinger in this compelling book, “think and act at the intersection of two axes: the first, between the past and the future; the second between the abiding values and aspirations of those they lead. They must balance what they know, which is necessarily drawn from the past, with what they intuit about the future, which is inherently conjectural and uncertain. It is this intuitive grasp of direction that enables leaders to set objectives and lay down a strategy.”

In this book, Kissinger, a former US Secretary of State, analyses the lives of six extraordinary leaders through the distinctive strategies of statecraft that he believes they embodied. Charles de Gaulle set France beside the victorious Allies and renewed its historic grandeur by “the strategy of will”.

RECOVERING FROM TRAUMA

TITLE: What Happened To You?: Conversations on Trauma, Resilience, and Healing

AUTHORS: Bruce Perry, Oprah Winfrey

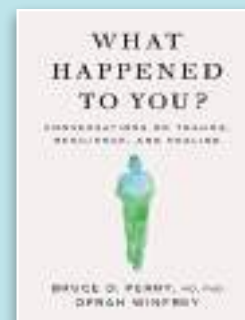
PUBLISHER: Flatiron Books

PRICE: Dhs55

Have you ever wondered “Why did I do that?” or “Why can’t I just control my behaviour?” Others may judge our reactions and think, “What’s wrong with that person?” When questioning our emotions, it’s easy to place the blame on ourselves, holding ourselves and those around us to an impossible standard. It’s time we started asking a different question.

Through deeply personal conversations, Oprah Winfrey and renowned brain and trauma expert Dr Bruce Perry offer a groundbreaking and profound shift from asking “What’s wrong with you?” to “What happened to you?”

Here, Winfrey shares stories from her own past, understanding through experience the vulnerability that comes from facing trauma and adversity at a young age. In conversation throughout the book, she and Dr Perry focus on understanding people, behaviour, and ourselves.



INTERPERSONAL RELATIONS

TITLE: Maybe You Should Talk to Someone: A Therapist, Her Therapist, and Our Lives Revealed

AUTHOR: Lori Gottlieb

PUBLISHER: Mariner Books

PRICE: Dhs88

From a *New York Times* best-selling author, psychotherapist, and national advice columnist, a hilarious, thought-provoking, and surprising new book that takes us behind the scenes of a therapist's world — where her patients are looking for answers (and so is she).

With startling wisdom and humour, Gottlieb invites us into her world as both clinician and patient, examining the truths and fictions we tell ourselves and others as we teeter on the tightrope between love and desire, meaning and mortality, guilt and redemption, terror and courage, hope and change.

This book is revolutionary in its candour, offering a deeply personal yet universal tour of our hearts and minds and providing the rarest of gifts: a boldly revealing portrait of what it means to be human, and a disarmingly funny and illuminating account of our own mysterious lives and our power to transform them.



ECHOES OF THE MIND

TITLE: Sound Within Sound: Opening Our Ears to the Twentieth Century

AUTHOR: Kate Molleson

PUBLISHER: Faber & Faber

PRICE: Dhs67

A radical new book by journalist, critic and BBC Radio 3 broadcaster Kate Molleson, which fundamentally changes the way we think about classical music and the musicians who made it on a global scale.

Traversing the globe from Ethiopia and the Philippines to Mexico, Jerusalem, Russia and beyond, Molleson tells the stories of 10 figures who altered the course of musical history, only to be sidelined and denied recognition during an era that systemically favoured certain sounds — and people — over others.

A celebration of radical creativity rooted in ideas of protest, gender, race, ecology and resistance, *Sound Within Sound* is an energetic reappraisal of 20th-century classical music that opens up the world far beyond its established centres, challenges stereotypical portrayals of the genre and shatters its traditional canon.

CHANNELLING EMPATHY

TITLE: Talking to Strangers: What We Should Know About the People We Don't Know

AUTHOR: Malcolm Gladwell

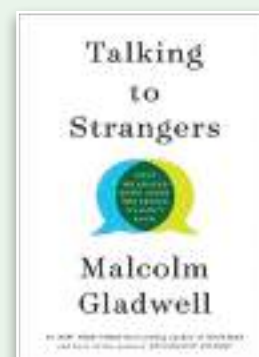
PUBLISHER: Little, Brown and Company

PRICE: Dhs48

Malcolm Gladwell, host of the podcast Revisionist History and author of the #1 New York Times bestseller *Outliers*, offers a powerful examination of our interactions with strangers — and why they often go wrong.

In *Talking to Strangers*, you'll read stories of scientists, criminologists, and military psychologists. Court transcripts are brought to life with re-enactments. You actually read about the contentious arrest of Sandra Bland by the side of the road in Texas. As Gladwell revisits the deceptions of Bernie Madoff, the trial of Amanda Knox, and the suicide of Sylvia Plath, you hear directly from many of the players in these real-life tragedies.

Something is very wrong, Gladwell argues, with the tools and strategies we use to make sense of people we don't know. And because we don't know how to talk to strangers, we are inviting conflict and misunderstanding in ways that have a profound effect on our lives and our world.



15,000 farmers to benefit from UAE-Uzbekistan agri-production drive

The UAE has ramped up its drive to boost agricultural production and resource sustainability as part of its global climate change action, through a new quadripartite partnership that stands to benefit over 15,000 farmers in Uzbekistan.

The move will not only develop degraded ecosystems in Uzbekistan's Aral Sea, but will also help no less than 75,000 individuals, training 150 extension workers and strengthening up to 15 farmers' cooperatives in the process.

In cooperation with Abu Dhabi Fund for Development, the project will be implemented by the International Centre for Biosaline Agriculture (ICBA) through its Regional Office for Central Asia and the South Caucasus in Tashkent, Uzbekistan. The initiative will primarily target disadvantaged populations living in degraded areas of Karakalpakstan.

Mohamed Saif Al Suwaidi, Director General of Abu Dhabi Fund for Development, stated that this project will boost the food security system



across various regions of Karakalpakstan, and will also contribute to job creation and productivity in the area. This will also aid the country in attaining self-sufficiency for food production by acquiring a strategic stock of its highly sought-after crops. The initiative also benefits the environment by maintaining natural resource sustainability.

For his part, Ibrokhim Abdurakhmanov,

Minister of Innovative Development of Uzbekistan, said, "Changes in the state of the natural environment due to human influence, strong anthropogenic impact on living and non-living components causes local, regional and global environmental problems. In particular, I would like to express my gratitude to the leadership of the Abu Dhabi Fund for Development of the UAE and the International Centre for Biosaline Agriculture, which are providing environmental,

agronomic, and economic solutions to tackling the Aral Sea problem, which is considered the most dangerous point of the ecological crisis in the region."

The initiative, which will run from 2022 to 2026, is intended to strengthen agricultural communities' resistance to climate change and build their adaptive ability to deal with land degradation and other adverse conditions.

Over one million species, including giraffes and parrots, face extinction

A new study points out that the accelerating rate of the global biodiversity crisis now poses a huge risk to over a million species of plants such as oak trees, seaweed, cactus, and animals like giraffes and parrots.

The Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES) Assessment Report on the Sustainable Use of Wild Species found out more than 10,000 wild species are captured directly for human consumption, and rural populations in underdeveloped countries are especially vulnerable to unsustainable use, with a lack of complementing options frequently leading them to further abuse already-vulnerable wild species.

"Today one million species are at risk of extinction. And the unsustainable, illegal and unregulated use of species is a large part of the problem. For example, the illegal wildlife trade is a 23-billion-dollar annual business that lines the deep pockets of a few unscrupulous individuals. These people



get rich at the expense of nature and ecosystems," said Inger Andersen, Executive Director, UN Environment Programme (UNEP).

According to the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN)'s Red List of vulnerable species, unsustainable activities such as deforestation and wildfires endanger 31 per cent of the world's 430 varieties of oak.

"The world's trees are threatened by various sources, including logging,

deforestation for industry and agriculture, firewood for heating and cooking, and climate-related threats such as wildfires," read the report from the United Nations.

Meanwhile, marine life, specifically seaweed, faces the same predicament due to mechanical dredging, rising sea temperatures and the building of coastal infrastructure.

Giraffes are hunted for their meat, and their habitat is degraded as a result of excessive wood cutting and

growing demand for agricultural land; it is believed that there are only around 600 West African giraffes left in the wild.

Governments throughout the world currently spend more than \$500 billion (Dhs1.835trn) per year in ways that threaten biodiversity to promote businesses such as fossil fuels, agriculture, and fisheries. This money, according to experts, should be repurposed to encourage regenerative agriculture, sustainable food systems, and nature-positive inventions.

Habitat destruction makes dugong 'functionally extinct' in China

Massive hunting and habitat degradation has taken their toll on dugongs in China, which are now 'functionally extinct' as there have been no reported sightings in Chinese waters since 2008.

A new study spearheaded by Prof. Samuel Turvey of the Zoological Society of London's Institute of Zoology points to fishing and ship strikes amongst the main reasons behind the lack of dugong activity in the country. The Chinese state council has designated the dugong as a grade one national priority protected animal since 1988, giving it the greatest level of protection.

"Our new study shows strong evidence of the regional loss of another charismatic aquatic mammal species in China — sadly, once again driven by unsustainable human activity," said Prof. Turvey.

The dugongs are particularly reliant on



seagrass, a kind of marine habitat that is quickly deteriorating due to human activities ranging from coastal development to water pollution. Although seagrass restoration and recovery initiatives are a top conservation priority in China, the process may be time-consuming, and it may be too late for the dugong populations that live there.

Dr Heidi Ma, a postdoctoral researcher at ZSL's Institute of Zoology and one of the study authors, stated that the researchers conducted interview surveys across four southern maritime provinces along the South China Sea's coastal region to gather local knowledge about dugong sightings and their regional status.

She said that her interviews with the residents revealed that they not only "demonstrate the usefulness of ecological knowledge for understanding species' status, but also help us engage local communities and to investigate possible drivers of wildlife decline and potential solutions for mitigation".

The study authors stated that they would "welcome any conceivable future proof" that dugongs could still exist in China; nevertheless, their investigation found no recent evidence of dugong survival across their known habitats in mainland Chinese seas.

Severe drought reveals 100 million-year-old dinosaur tracks

Texas residents witnessed infallible proof of the existence of the *Acrocanthosaurus*, as residents saw multiple dinosaur footprints from a dried-up river in the area.

Recurrent droughts forced a river running through central Texas to nearly completely dry up, revealing 60 of an estimated 140 dinosaur tracks created by the *Acrocanthosaurus*, which is believed to have existed some 113 million years ago.

"Most tracks that have recently been uncovered and discovered at different parts of the river in the park belong to *Acrocanthosaurus*," said Stephanie Salinas Garcia, spokesperson at the Dinosaur Valley State Park.



Dinosaur Valley State Park

Acrocanthosaurus tracks have not been seen since 2000, with the prints concealed behind layers of water and silt, while visitors to the state park can sometimes view other dinosaur tracks, depending on weather conditions, according to the park's website.

Traces of the *Sauroposeidon*, a 66-foot-tall behemoth that weighed approximately 48 tonnes when fully formed, were also unearthed. *Acrocanthosaurus* is thought to have preyed on *Sauroposeidon*, which explains why their prints were discovered together.

Several states in the US are experiencing severe drought as a result of climate change. Water level drops in important reservoirs prompted the federal government to act, setting water usage restrictions that will affect Arizona, Nevada, and Mexico. Almost the whole state of Texas is facing extreme drought conditions, forcing water supplies to dry up.

Study finds lack of sleep makes us less generous, lonely

A new study shows that sleep-deprived individuals have magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) results that have less activation of empathy parts of the brain, decreasing their desire to help others.

The study, which was conducted by the University of California, Berkeley researchers Ben Simon, Matthew Walker and colleagues Raphael Vallat and Aubrey Rossi, revealed that a lack of sleep blunts this fundamental human attribute, with real-world consequences. It was published in the journal *PLOS Biology* recently.

In the past, sleep deprivation has been associated with an increased risk of cardiovascular disease, depression, diabetes, hypertension and sexual dysfunction. However, the new research shows that a lack of sleep also impairs our basic social conscience, making



us withdraw our desire and willingness to help other people.

“Over the past 20 years, we have discovered a very intimate link between our sleep health and our mental health. Indeed, we’ve not been able to discover a single

to those other individuals, almost like a virus, Walker said.

The researchers encourage everyone to “stop shaming people for sleeping enough as it could very palpably help shape the social bonds we all experience every day”.

major psychiatric condition in which sleep is normal,” said Walker.

“We’re starting to see more and more studies, including this one, where the effects of sleep loss don’t just stop at the individual, but propagate to those around us,” said Simon. “If you’re not getting enough sleep, it doesn’t just hurt your own well-being, it hurts the well-being of your entire social circle, including strangers.”

Worse still, when those sleep-deprived individuals interacted with other people, they spread their loneliness

Short walk after meal can help lower blood sugar

Taking a stroll after eating can do the trick of lowering your blood sugar as per a new study published in the journal *Sports Medicine*.

The study was conducted by researchers from the Department of Physical Education and Sport Sciences, University of Limerick in Ireland.

“Intermittent standing breaks throughout the day and after meals reduced glucose on average by 9.51 per cent compared to prolonged sitting. However, intermittent light-intensity walking throughout the day saw a greater reduction of glucose by an average of 17.01 per cent compared to prolonged sitting,” said study co-author Aidan Buffey, a doctoral student in the physical education and sport sciences.

According to the study, the time spent walking does not need to be that long for



it to have an impact on one’s health. Just 2 to 5 minutes after eating can do the trick.

The study was done through a meta-analysis of seven studies that compared the impact of sitting, standing and walking on the body’s insulin and blood sugar levels. They simply asked participants of the study to either stand or walk for 2 to 5 minutes every 20 to 30 minutes over the course of a full day.

“Between the seven reviewed studies, the total activity time throughout the observation was roughly 28 minutes with the standing and light walking breaks lasting between 2 to 5 minutes,” Buffey said.

The study emphasised that “muscles need glucose to function, so movement helps clear sugars from the bloodstream”. As an example, they pointed out why carbo-loading before a

race or marathon is a common practice amongst many athletes, especially runners.

To maximise the benefit of moving or walking in lowering blood sugar, they recommend meeting the minimum physical activity standards, which are 150 minutes of moderate-intensity physical activity and two days of muscle strengthening activity a week.

Newly discovered 'danger signal' may spur vaccine development

A collaborative team of researchers from Harvard University, Columbia University, and Rutgers University has unlocked the mechanisms of adenosine triphosphate (ATP). The discovery could lead to new development of vaccines and allergy medications.

Also known as the "danger signal", ATP provides energy in living cells required for everyday activities, including nerve impulse propagation, muscle contraction, and chemical synthesis.

The study suggested that when the human gut is under attack from parasites, ATP is released and metabolised. The metabolised ATP goes on to bind to the damaged epithelial cells to initiate the danger signal and immune response.

Their research involved injecting helminth parasites into mice without



adenosine receptors. Helminths are one of the most common parasites to affect humans globally. They are usually contracted from contaminated foods or beverages before making a home in the intestinal tract, absorbing nutrients as the host unknowingly progresses towards a state of malnutrition.

To date, there is no vaccine available for this parasite, making it the ideal

subject of the research. might be able to create a vaccine that would sensitise the immune system," he said.

"On the other side, this finding suggests that it may be possible to treat allergies, which are basically unwanted immune responses, with medications that block adenosine receptors and reduce the immune response and associated harmful inflammation," he posited.

People with heart disease carry similar genes, study says

A study by the US Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) shows that the "heart attack gene" may be true for all populations. The "heart attack gene" is believed to cause a 50 per cent lifetime risk of developing heart disease.

Earlier studies found higher risk of more severe heart disease in Caucasian, South Asian, and East Asian populations. However, the VA study has pointed out that genetic studies never had enough people of other ancestries to determine whether the same held true for other populations.

Published in *Nature Medicine*, the study examined the genes of more than 27,000



African and 12,000 Hispanic people with coronary artery disease.

VA researchers have confirmed in the study for the first time that many genetic variations known to heighten heart disease

risk in Caucasian people have the same effect in people of African and Hispanic ancestry, too. "Ours is the first genetic study of coronary artery disease that had enough people of African and Hispanic descent to confirm previous findings in white people," author Dr Themistocles (Tim) Assimes, a cardiologist and researcher at the VA Palo Alto Healthcare System and Stanford University.

Coronary heart disease is the leading cause of

death globally. It is the term that describes what happens when your heart's blood supply is blocked or interrupted by a build-up of fatty substances in the coronary arteries, which can lead to heart attack.

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WHAT THE MONTH HAS IN STORE



Aries (March 21 to April 20)

Even when your courage has a touch of carelessness, even when your quest for adventure makes you a bit reckless, you can be resourceful enough to avoid dicey consequences. Maybe more than any other sign of the zodiac, you periodically outfox karma. But in the coming weeks, you should not to barge into situations where rash boldness might lead to wrong moves. Please do not flirt with escapades that could turn into chancy gambles. At least for the foreseeable future, you ought to be prudent and cagey in your quest for interesting and educational fun.



Taurus (April 20 – May 21)

In 1946, medical professionals in the UK established the Common Cold Unit. Its goal was to discover practical treatments for the familiar viral infection known as the cold. Over the next 43 years, until it was shut down, the agency produced just one useful innovation: zinc gluconate lozenges. This treatment reduces the severity and length of a cold if taken within 24 hours of onset. So the results of all that research were modest, but they were also much better than nothing. During the coming weeks, you may experience comparable phenomena, Taurus: less spectacular outcomes than you might wish, but still very worthwhile.



Gemini (May 22 – June 20)

Here's a scenario that could be both an invigorating metaphor and a literal event. Put on rollerblades. Get out onto a long flat surface. Build up a comfortable speed. Fill your lungs with the elixir of life. Praise the sun and the wind. Sing your favourite songs. Swing your arms all the way forward and all the way back. Forward: power. Backward: power. Glide and coast and flow with sheer joy. Cruise along with confidence in the instinctive skill of your beautiful body. Evaporate thoughts. Free yourself of every concern and every idea. Keep rambling until you feel spacious and vast.



Cancer (June 21 – July 22)

In the coming weeks, you will be cuddled up in your warm bed, surrounded by stuffed animals and wrapped in soft, thick blankets covered with images of bunnies and dolphins. Your headphones are on, and the songs pouring into your awareness are silky smooth tonics that rouse sweet memories of all the times you felt most wanted and most at home in the world. There will be a cup of hot chocolate on your bedstand, too, and your favourite dessert. Got all that, fellow Cancerian? In the coming days and nights, you should enjoy an abundance of experiences akin to a true 'day off' to what is described here.



Leo (July 23 – August 22)

For 15 years, Leo cartoonist Gary Larson created *The Far Side*, a hilarious comic strip featuring intelligent talking animals. It was syndicated in more than 1,900 newspapers. But like everyone, he has had failures, too. In one of his books, Larson describes the most disappointing event in his life. He was eating a meal in the same dining area as a famous cartoonist he admired, Charles Addams. Larson felt a strong urge to go over and introduce himself to Addams. But he was too shy to do so. Don't be like Larson in the coming weeks. Reach out and connect with receptive people you'd love to communicate with.



Virgo (August 23 – September 22)

"Love your mistakes and foibles," Virgo astrologer William Sebrans advises his fellow Virgos. "They aren't going away. And it's your calling in life—some would say a superpower—to home in on them and finesse them. Why? Because you may be able to fix them or improve them with panache—for your benefit and the welfare of those you love." While this counsel is always relevant for you, dear Virgo, it will be especially so in the coming weeks.



Libra (September 23 – October 22)

Tips for making the most of the next three weeks: 1. Be proud as you teeter charismatically on the fence. Relish the power that comes from being in between. 2. Act as vividly congenial and staunchly beautiful as you dare. 3. Experiment with making artful arrangements of pretty much everything you are part of. 4. Flatter others sincerely. Use praise as one of your secret powers. 5. Cultivate an open-minded skepticism that blends discernment and curiosity. 6. Plot and scheme on behalf of harmony, but never be a bootlicker.



Scorpio (October 23 – November 21)

Poet Mary Oliver wrote, "There is within each of us a self that is neither a child nor a servant of the hours. It is a third self, occasional in some of us, a tyrant in others. This self is out of love with the ordinary; it is out of love with time. It has a hunger for eternity." During the coming weeks, Scorpio, you will be cheering on your own for the ascendancy of that self in you. More than usual, you need to commune with fantastic truths and transcendent joys. To be in maximum alignment with the good fortune that life has prepared for you, you must give your loving attention to the highest and noblest visions of your destiny that you can imagine.



Sagittarius (November 22 – December 21)

Feeling lonely lately? Here are several tips for you to maximize the flow of good fortune in the coming weeks: 1. Use your imagination to make everything seem fascinating and wonderful. 2. When you give advice to others, be sure to listen to it yourself. 3. Move away from having a rigid conception of yourself and move toward having a fluid fantasy about yourself. 4. Be the first to laugh at and correct your own mistakes. (It'll give you the credibility to make even better mistakes in the future.) 5. Inspire other people to love being themselves and not want to be like you.



Capricorn (December 22 – January 19)

Capricorn poet William Stafford wrote, "Saying things you do not have to say weakens your talk. Hearing things you do not need to hear dulls your hearing." Those ideas are always true, of course, but it's especially crucial that you heed them in the coming weeks. You need to build your power right now. An important way to do that is by being discriminating about what you take in and put out. For best results, speak your truths as often and as clearly as possible. And do all you can to avoid exposing yourself to trivial and delusional "truths" that are just opinions or misinformation.



Aquarius (January 20 – February 18)

You are an extra authentic Aquarius if people say that you get yourself into the weirdest, most interesting trouble they've ever seen. You are an ultra-genuine Aquarius if people follow the twists and pivots of your life as they would a soap opera. And I suspect you will fulfil these potentials to the max in the coming weeks. The upcoming chapter of your life story might be as entertaining as any you have had in years. Luckily, imminent events are also likely to bring you soulful lessons that make you wiser and wilder. This is truly an exciting time for you.



Pisces (February 19 – March 20)

"I am lonely, yet not everybody will do," observed Piscean author Anaïs Nin. "Some people fill the gaps, and others emphasise my loneliness," she concluded. Pisces, it's your task right now to identify which people intensify your loneliness and which do fill the gaps. And then devote yourself with extra care to cultivating your connections with the gap-fillers. Loneliness is sometimes a good thing—a state that helps you renew and deepen your communion with your deep self. You'll be wise to experience an intimacy that enriches your sense of feeling at home in the world. You'll thrive by consorting with allies who sweeten your love of life.

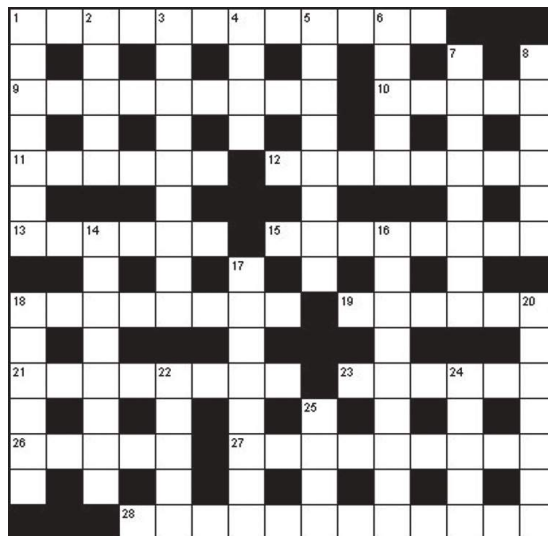
PUZZLES

ACROSS

- 1 Fruit drink (6,6)
- 9 Member of Parliament (9)
- 10 Left nothing (5)
- 11 Terribly rude (6)
- 12 Operatic heroine (8)
- 13 Usual manner (6)
- 15 About-turn (8)
- 18 Old silk (8)
- 19 Turn over hotel (6)
- 21 Diamond privilege (4,4)
- 23 Surface convexity (6)
- 26 Out of practice year (5)
- 27 Absurd march (9)
- 28 Drivers mix (7,5)

DOWN

- 1 Greek hero (7)
- 2 Give notice (5)
- 3 Turning traitor (9)
- 4 Bristle (4)
- 5 Held plutonium (8)
- 6 Plant petals (5)
- 7 Leaderless town up (8)
- 8 Militia (6)
- 14 Learning experience (8)
- 16 Offensive snub (9)
- 17 Good character (8)
- 18 Work out (6)
- 20 Old dish (7)
- 22 Shy bear (5)
- 24 Minor poet (5)
- 25 Nameless woman (4)



Easy

			7		3		5	
	8	3			9		7	
					4	3		1
	9	2					8	
8								5
	4					7	3	
6		5	4					
	1		5			8	6	
	2		3		6			

Medium

6				2	1	8		
			3			1		
		9			8		3	4
	2		8		6			
7								9
			5		2		4	
3	6		9			4		
		2			5			
		8	2	3				7

SOLUTIONS

SOLUTIONS FOR THE SEPTEMBER ISSUE



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easy

4	2	3	7	5	1	8	9	6
9	1	8	6	4	2	3	7	5
7	5	6	8	9	3	1	2	4
8	3	4	5	1	7	2	6	9
1	9	5	3	2	6	7	4	8
6	7	2	9	8	4	5	1	3
5	6	7	2	3	9	4	8	1
3	4	9	1	7	8	6	5	2
2	8	1	4	6	5	9	3	7

medium

		7	2		1			9
							2	6
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	2		8		1			
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9	S	E	M	I	S		10	A	M	E	T	A	B	O	L	A				
11	A	R	T	E	R	Y		12	S	P	H	E	R	I	C	S				
14	G	I	I	C	I		15	Q	R					S						
16	M	E	C	C	A		17	U	P	A	N	18	I	S	H	A	19	D		
21	U			N				E						S						
23	S	E	M	E	S	T	E	R	S											
25			O				N			E				K	U					
27	22	M	I	N	I	23	M	I	S	E		24	R	O	C	O	C			
29	26	O		I		N		L		25	S		N		C		U			
31	27	T	I	T	H	E	B	A	R	N		28	T	E	M	P				
33	30	I	O	F	O	M		N		E		31	A		A		U			
35	32	F	O	R	F	E	N	D				33	D	R	E	A	M			

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