

999

SECURITY AND SAFETY FOR ALL

ISSUE 149 JUNE 2024

**EXPLORE GLOBAL
TRAVEL MARKET
TRENDS**

**STARTUPS
START-OFF RIGHT
IN UAE**

**SPOTLIGHT:
THE PITFALLS
OF SHARENTING**

AI TRANSFORMS DRUG POLICING

IN THIS ISSUE: MOI'S STRINGENT DRUG ENFORCEMENT RESULTS IN RECORD ARRESTS AND SEIZURES

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Economic prosperity is inextricably linked with safety and security, a principle long championed by the UAE's leadership, permeating all aspects of life including road safety and online security

AI against drugs

Together, law enforcement and Artificial Intelligence can form a staunch defence against the menace of illicit drugs, a global market now estimated to be worth a staggering Dhs2.4 trillion. Leveraging AI, the Ministry of Interior has drastically increased the outcomes of its anti-drug operations both domestically and internationally. This includes a massive crackdown on the promotion of narcotics online and on-the-ground operations targeting major drug cartels.

In 2022-2023, AI-powered intelligence enabled UAE police to facilitate the arrest of 179 suspects and seize nearly 7 tonnes of illegal substances worldwide. Domestically, AI's integration into policing has increased drug trafficker arrests by 103 per cent, capturing over 78 tonnes of drugs.

On the occasion of International Day Against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking on 26th June, our cover story highlights AI-driven innovations and approaches to ramp up the UAE's war on drugs. Our special feature provides an in-depth look at the intensified enforcement networks across the emirates.

The UAE's unswerving commitment to safety and security bolsters the nation's reputation as a safe haven for tourists and investors alike.

For the third consecutive year, the UAE earned the No. 1 spot in TripAdvisor Travellers' Choice Awards 2024. This prestigious recognition is reflected by the UAE's role as a global hub for the travel and tourism industry, hosting the annual Arabian Travel Market. Our feature story on this showcases the latest trends and upcoming developments in the burgeoning travel and tourism industry of the region.

Another global index topped by the UAE this year is the Global Entrepreneurship Monitor (GEM), where it leads a pack of 49 global economies with a record-breaking GEM score of 7.7. Our feature focuses on the country's cutting-edge infrastructure and innovative economic policies, which are fundamental to its dynamic business ecosystem.

Economic prosperity is inextricably linked with safety and security, a principle long championed by the UAE's leadership, permeating all aspects of life including road safety and online security. In this issue, we offer some 'roadwise' tips for managing car breakdowns and explore the dangers of "sharenting"—the act of posting children's photos online, which poses serious risks including identity theft, public shaming, and data privacy breaches.

Let us remain proactive in adopting safety measures on the roads, be mindful of the digital footprints we leave online, and actively support initiatives that bolster our national security and economic prosperity.



**Ministry of Interior
United Arab Emirates**

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AI TACKLES NARCOTICS

AS THE WORLD OBSERVES INTERNATIONAL DAY AGAINST DRUG ABUSE AND ILLICIT TRAFFICKING ON 26TH JUNE 2024, **999** SHOWCASES AI-DRIVEN TECHNOLOGIES AIMED AT BOOSTING THE UAE'S FIGHT AGAINST NARCOTICS



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Former Member of the Federal National Council (FNC), and UAE writer

Mohamed bin Zayed, Mohammed bin Rashid discuss national affairs



HH Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed and HH Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid meet at Qasr Al Bahr Majlis in Abu Dhabi

Minister of the UAE and Ruler of Dubai, at Qasr Al Bahr Majlis in Abu Dhabi.

Their Highnesses discussed strengthening UAE's vision and explored ways to advance the nation's sustainable growth and the well-being of its citizens. The agenda also included the social and economic affairs of the federal government.

The meeting was attended by HH Sheikh Mansour bin Zayed Al Nahyan, Vice-President, Deputy Prime Minister, and Chairman of the Presidential Court; HH Sheikh Khaled bin Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi and Chairman of Abu Dhabi Executive Council; several sheikhs; and a number of federal government officials.

PRESIDENT His Highness Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan met with

His Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice-President and Prime

President receives prestigious Global Humanitarian Personality Award

PRESIDENT His Highness Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan has been recognised with the inaugural Global Humanitarian Personality Award at the 18th Plenary Session of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Mediterranean (PAM) in Braga, Portugal.

The accolade was given to HH Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed for his exemplary contribution and unwavering support to humanitarian efforts around the world. It recognised His Highness's decades-long philanthropic work, as well as his recent announcement of the creation of the Zayed Humanitarian Legacy Initiative that will allocate Dhs20 billion for humanitarian causes across the most vulnerable regions in the world.

In addition, under His Highness Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed's leadership, the UAE has launched and supported numerous



HH Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed receives the PAM Global Humanitarian Personality Award from a delegation of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Mediterranean

global humanitarian causes over the years, including the global distribution of billions of doses of COVID-19 vaccines through its

Hope Consortium initiative and providing medical aid to refugees and those affected by conflict.

Directors-General appointed at Abu Dhabi Accountability Authority

PRESIDENT His Highness Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan has issued two Emiri Decrees appointing Directors-General at Abu Dhabi Accountability Authority (ADAA).

Mohamed Saeed Al Qubaisi and Wael Abdulqader Mahmoud were appointed Directors-General of the Integrity and Anti-Corruption Sector at ADAA and the Audit Sector of ADAA, respectively.

ADAA is an independent body of the Abu Dhabi Government responsible for promoting and overseeing accountability, transparency, and integrity across all government entities in the Capital, as well as their affiliated companies and projects.



Al Qubaisi



Mahmoud

Mohammed bin Rashid announces 10-year Blue Residency visa



UAE Cabinet

CHAIRLED by His Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Al Maktoum, Vice-President and Prime Minister of the UAE

and Ruler of Dubai, the UAE Cabinet has approved a 10-year Blue Residency visa for individuals who have made exceptional

contributions to environmental protection.

His Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid announced the new visa scheme, stressing the role played by sustainability in the nation's progress.

"The sustainability of our economy has become linked to the sustainability of our environment, and our national directions in this area are clear and consistent," His Highness said on his X (formerly Twitter) account.

The Blue Residency visa will be granted to individuals with exceptional contributions to the protection and preservation of the environment, whether marine or land, alongside efforts to improve air quality and sustainable technologies.

Amongst those eligible are members of international organisations and companies, associations and non-governmental organisations, as well as global award winners and distinguished environmental activists and researchers.

UAE participates in 33rd Arab League Summit in Bahrain

HIS Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice-President and Prime Minister of the UAE and Ruler of Dubai, along with His Highness Sheikh Mansour bin Zayed Al Nahyan, Vice-President, Deputy Prime Minister, and Chairman of the Presidential Court, attended the opening session of the 33rd Arab League Summit in Manama, Bahrain.

The Summit was attended by leaders and representatives from 22 member states of the Arab League.

His Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid was welcomed by HM King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa of Bahrain upon arrival at Al Sakhir Palace. His Highness congratulated HM King Hamad on the exceptional hosting of the Summit and expressed wishes for the continued growth



Leaders and representatives from the member states of the Arab League

and prosperity of Bahrain.

The Summit discussed efforts to strengthen joint Arab action in various fields and build bridges of cooperation and diplomacy to tackle challenges, touching on the situations in Palestine and Gaza.

For his part, His Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid hailed the diplomatic milestone at the United Nations General Assembly voting in favour of granting full UN membership for the state of Palestine.

UAE Cabinet green-lights National Youth Agenda 2031

CHAIRLED by His Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice-President and Prime Minister of the UAE and Ruler of Dubai, the UAE Cabinet has approved the National Youth Agenda 2031.

The Cabinet meeting was held in the presence of HH Sheikh Mansour bin Zayed

Al Nahyan, Vice-President, Deputy Prime Minister and Chairman of the Presidential Court; HH Sheikh Maktoum bin Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, First Deputy Ruler of Dubai, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance; and HH Lt General Sheikh Saif bin Zayed Al Nahyan, Deputy Prime Minister

and Minister of Interior.

The National Youth Agenda 2031 aims to qualify more than 100 young Emirati to represent the country in global organisations and forums related to the national sectors of priority, and to provide 100 per cent suitable career pathways for youth in the labour market.

Mansour bin Zayed leads Ministerial Dev't Council meeting



Qasr Al Watan in Abu Dhabi.

The Council discussed several initiatives, projects, and regulatory guidelines submitted by ministries and federal departments to promote government work and enhance the efficiency of strategic sectors in the country.

The Council also tackled the guidelines related to regulating the public financial affairs of the federal government, in addition to a number of proposed national policies and projects in the fields of education, culture, digital transformation, artificial intelligence, and economy.

The meeting reviewed the requests and recommendations of the Federal National Council regarding several government topics, as well as the results of the country's participation in international conferences and events.

HIS Highness Sheikh Mansour bin Zayed Al Nahyan, Vice-President, Deputy Prime Minister

and Chairman of the Presidential Court, led a Ministerial Development Council meeting at

Second Nafis Award winners honoured in Abu Dhabi

HIS Highness Sheikh Mansour bin Zayed Al Nahyan, Vice-President, Deputy Prime Minister, Chairman of the Presidential Court, and Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Emirati Talent Competitiveness Council (ETCC), honoured the winners of the second edition of Nafis Award 2023-2024, during a ceremony held at Qasr Al Watan in Abu Dhabi.

His Highness Sheikh Mansour thanked the award's winners and partners for supporting the Council's objectives, stressing that the award recognises exceptional establishments that support Emiratisation, honours national talents who have succeeded in their roles in the private and banking sectors, and promotes a culture of excellence amongst citizens in the labour market.

He also lauded the positive competition witnessed during the award's second edition, affirming that its primary goal is



HH Sheikh Mansour alongside the winners and partners of the Nafis Award

to support national talents in these sectors and encourage their professional growth. It also aims to motivate private sector establishments to increase their Emiratisation rates, aligning with the UAE

leadership's vision and government's strategic plan.

The ceremony was attended by several ministers, senior officials, and business leaders.

Mubadala expands investments in Artificial Intelligence

HIS Highness Sheikh Mansour bin Zayed Al Nahyan, Vice-President, Deputy Prime Minister, Chairman of the Presidential Court, and Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Mubadala Investment Company, has spearheaded Mubadala's Board of Directors meeting at Qasr Al Watan in Abu Dhabi.

During the meeting, His Highness Sheikh Mansour underscored the role of Mubadala

in strengthening the UAE's economy. "Alongside its active and constructive contribution to the global economy, Mubadala adopts a forward-looking vision aimed at developing a knowledge-based and innovative national economy," His Highness stated.

The Board approved its report and the company's financial statements for the year 2023.

As part of the company's strategic direction, His Highness Sheikh Mansour said that Mubadala was keen to continue expanding its global investments in sectors contributing to shaping the future. In its 2023 report, the company has deployed Dhs89 billion in technology, digital infrastructure, life sciences and clean energy, while growing its private credit business.

Abu Dhabi Crown Prince opens Global Healthcare Week

HIS Highness Sheikh Khaled bin Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi and Chairman of Abu Dhabi Executive Council, has inaugurated the first edition of Abu Dhabi Global Healthcare Week, organised by the Department of Health – Abu Dhabi under the theme 'Accelerating the Future of Global Healthcare.'

His Highness was accompanied by His Highness Sheikh Theyab bin Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, Deputy Chairman of the Presidential Court for Development and



HH Sheikh Khaled accompanied by HH Sheikh Theyab during the inauguration of the 1st edition of Abu Dhabi Global Healthcare Week

Fallen Heroes' Affairs.

During a tour of the exhibition, His Highness Sheikh Khaled was briefed on the latest innovations in healthcare technologies and

developments in medical sciences being showcased by healthcare institutions and companies.

The Abu Dhabi Crown Prince highlighted the UAE's efforts in accelerating research in medical and therapeutic fields, by investing in strengthening healthcare infrastructure, including hospitals, healthcare facilities, and specialised laboratories.

Abu Dhabi Global Healthcare Week serves as a

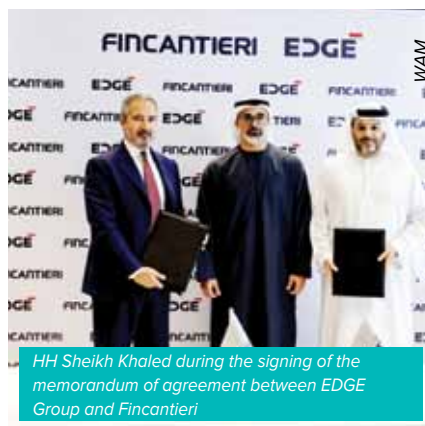
platform for dialogue and knowledge exchange about future healthcare needs and the transition to a proactive and preventive healthcare approach.

MOA forges Abu Dhabi-based shipbuilding joint venture

HIS Highness Sheikh Khaled bin Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi and Chairman of Abu Dhabi Executive Council, has witnessed the signing of an agreement between EDGE Group, one of the world's leading advanced technology and defence groups, and Fincantieri, one of the largest shipbuilding companies in the world, formalising the launch of MAESTRAL, an Abu Dhabi-based shipbuilding joint venture between both companies.

Announced initially in February 2024, MAESTRAL aims to capitalise on global opportunities in creating sophisticated naval vessels.

EDGE holds a majority stake of 51 per



HH Sheikh Khaled during the signing of the memorandum of agreement between EDGE Group and Fincantieri

cent in the venture, securing exclusive rights to fulfil non-NATO orders alongside

strategic orders from selected NATO countries, positioning the venture for a bright commercial future with an order pipeline worth approximately €30 billion (Dhs 119.64 billion).

Highlighting the strategic significance of this partnership, HH Sheikh Khaled pointed out its role in advancing the UAE's defence industries. His Highness added that this partnership aligns with global trends and is set to enhance the capabilities of Emirati firms in the defence sector.

The signing of the agreement was followed immediately by the announcement of a large order by the UAE Coast Guard Forces for 10 technologically advanced 51-metre Offshore Patrol Vessels.

UAE bags medal haul at Jiu-Jitsu Asian Championship

HELD under the patronage of His Highness Sheikh Khaled bin Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi and Chairman of the Abu Dhabi Executive Council, the 8th Jiu-Jitsu Asian Championship saw an impressive performance from the UAE's Jiu-Jitsu National Team.

Throughout the event, which took place at Mubadala Arena, the Jiu-Jitsu National Team amassed 41 medals in the youth competitions, including 11 gold, 8 silver and 22 bronze. In the adult category, they secured a total of 18 medals,



The UAE's National Team has concluded its participation in the Jiu-Jitsu Asian Championship with 41 medals in the youth category and 18 in the adult category

comprising 6 gold, 7 silver and 5 bronze. The players of the National Team, both

men and women, presented a strong performance at the competition's opening, dominated the matches, and succeeded in reaching the podium, winning seven medals, including three gold, two silver, and two bronze.

The national team also dominated the under-21 competitions garnering 4 gold, 4

silver, and 5 bronze medals in the Jiu-Jitsu discipline.

Saif bin Zayed inaugurates ISNR Abu Dhabi 2024



HH Sheikh Saif during his tour of the pavilions at ISNR Abu Dhabi 2024, accompanied by Major General Ahmed Nasser Al Raisi

HIS Highness Lieutenant General Sheikh Saif bin Zayed Al Nahyan, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior, has inaugurated the largest edition of the International Exhibition for National Security and Resilience (ISNR Abu Dhabi 2024), along with its accompanying conference.

Organised by the ADNEC Group in

partnership with the Ministry of Interior, Abu Dhabi Police, and Rabdan Academy, ISNR Abu Dhabi 2024's inauguration ceremony was attended by various UAE and foreign ministers, foreign dignitaries, diplomatic missions, officials from global police organisations, and officials from the police general commands across the emirates.

During his opening address, HH Sheikh Saif stated, "Abu Dhabi's hosting of ISNR 2024, amidst wide international participation, embodies the distinguished position that the UAE has reached as an international destination."

His Highness highlighted that ISNR Abu Dhabi 2024 and the accompanying conference constitute a qualitative leap since the exhibition's inception. The Minister of Interior also toured the exhibition, receiving updates on the newest solutions and technologies in national security, cybersecurity, prevention, and civil protection.

For his part, Major General Ahmed Nasser Al Raisi, Inspector General at the Ministry of Interior, President of Interpol, and Chairman of the Higher Organising Committee of ISNR Abu Dhabi 2024, underscored: "We have spared no effort in making ISNR Abu Dhabi 2024 a global platform for showcasing the latest innovations in Artificial Intelligence (AI), cybersecurity, and internal security. Our aim is for it to serve as a forum for constructive cooperation between policymakers and security sector professionals."

Under the theme 'Accelerating the Transformation in the National Security System', ISNR Abu Dhabi 2024 featured leading experts in national security, cybersecurity, and AI.

Rabdan Security and Defence Institute launched at ISNR Abu Dhabi

HIS Highness Lieutenant General Sheikh Saif bin Zayed Al Nahyan, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior, inaugurated the Rabdan Security and Defence Institute (RSDI) at the ISNR Abu Dhabi 2024 Conference.

The Institute, a specialised think tank developed under the aegis of Rabdan Academy and supported by the Ministry of Interior, will focus on security and defence studies. Rabdan Academy is recognised globally for its expertise in safety, security, defence, emergency preparedness, and crisis management.

The newly launched think tank will provide analysis, research, and policy recommendations concerning defence and security issues in the Middle East, aiming to enhance understanding of regional security dynamics and identify potential threats, as well as opportunities and challenges.



HH Sheikh Saif during the launch of the specialised think tank, Rabdan Security and Defence Institute, at ISNR Abu Dhabi 2024

In a related event at ISNR 2024, the Minister of Interior participated in the Resilience Initiative session, a pioneering youth dialogue platform designed to

empower and educate the youth about Artificial Intelligence, security technology, and national defence, amongst other topics crucial to national security and resilience.



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ISNR Abu Dhabi 2024 ends on a high note with record participation



Al Raisi



ISNR Abu Dhabi 2024 saw huge participation from industry experts and leaders in national security, artificial intelligence, and cybersecurity

UNDER the patronage of His Highness Lieutenant General Sheikh Saif bin Zayed Al Nahyan, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior, the 8th edition of the International Exhibition for National Security and Resilience (ISNR Abu Dhabi 2024) concluded with a record turnout of participants and exhibitors.

Organised by the ADNEC Group in partnership with the Ministry of Interior, Abu Dhabi Police, and Rabdan Academy, the exhibition showcased advancements in security technology and fostered international cooperation.

The global homeland security event, held at the Abu Dhabi National Exhibition Centre, saw huge participation from industry experts and

leaders in national security, artificial intelligence, and cybersecurity.

Major General Ahmed Nasser Al Raisi, Inspector General at the Ministry of Interior, President of Interpol, and Chairman of the Higher Organising Committee of ISNR Abu Dhabi 2024, emphasised the importance of the theme 'Accelerating the Transformation in the National Security System', which highlighted the role of preparing nations for future security challenges and delivering innovative solutions.

During the opening day, Al Raisi remarked, "Strengthening security sector technology is essential to safeguard the country's vital infrastructure and facilities by enhancing cybersecurity and

internal security. Moreover, the technologies showcased at the event have significant commercial and civil applications."

Colonel Abdullah Mohammed Al Suwaidi, Director of Security Scenarios Management and Deputy Head of the Events and Presentations Committee at the Ministry of Interior, conveyed his pride in ISNR Abu Dhabi 2024's role in advancing Abu Dhabi's stature as a key international hub for security experts and decision-makers.

The event highlighted the latest security innovations and solutions across sectors such as law enforcement and infrastructure protection, fostering discussions on advanced technologies and strategic partnerships aimed at bolstering global security resilience.

Badran commends ADIB's Dhs1 million donation to Faraj Fund

ABU Dhabi Islamic Bank (ADIB) has donated Dhs1 million to the Ministry of Interior's Faraj Fund, supporting charitable efforts to aid financially distressed inmates across various penal and correctional facilities in the UAE.

HE Khalil Dawood Badran, Chairman of the Ministry of Interior's Faraj Fund Board,

conveyed his utmost gratitude towards ADIB for this significant community and humanitarian initiative.

Badran highlighted the Faraj Fund's dedication to bolstering partnerships with national institutions, aiming to enhance its effectiveness in alleviating the burdens of financially strained



Badran

Al Mazrouei praises UAE's stature in global humanitarian efforts



Al Mazrouei

MAJOR General Staff Pilot Faris Khalaf Al Mazrouei, Commander-in-Chief of the Abu Dhabi Police, lauded the UAE's ongoing achievements in humanitarian efforts, attributing these successes to the leadership of President His Highness

Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan.

Al Mazrouei highlighted the recent recognition bestowed upon HH Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed as the inaugural recipient of the Global Humanitarian Personality Award from

the Parliamentary Assembly of the Mediterranean.

This accolade, Al Mazrouei said, acknowledges HH Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed's commitment to humanitarian causes and influential role in promoting global peace, human welfare, and stability.

He stressed that the prestigious award also celebrates HH Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed's philanthropic works and prompt response to crises and disasters, helping nations across the globe.

Al Mazrouei also highlighted HH Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed's efforts in fostering communication, diplomacy, and tolerance across various regions and countries.

He expressed pride, particularly within the police ranks, over this significant global recognition of HH Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed. He said it affirmed that the UAE's humanitarian model—inspired by the late Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan, the UAE's Founding Father—has established the nation as a beacon of humanitarian generosity.

Abu Dhabi Police warn public against fake online purchase receipt

ABU Dhabi Police have issued a public warning about online fraud, particularly fraudulent transactions on the internet and social media platforms.

The warning comes in response to a rise in scams involving fake and deferred payment receipts, which scammers provide to unsuspecting victims in exchange for immediate possession of vehicles or other items advertised for sale.

Brigadier Muslim Mohammed Al Ameri, Acting Director of the Criminal Security Sector at Abu Dhabi Police, stressed the importance of public vigilance and the necessity of reporting such fraudulent activities. He underscored the police's commitment to enhancing public awareness and implementing preventive measures to combat these scams.

The scam begins with an

advertisement for goods on social media or specialised apps. After agreeing on terms, the scammer deceives the seller by sending a fake bank receipt and misleading them into believing the payment is being processed, which might take several days.

Al Ameri advised sellers to confirm payment receipt before sending any goods. He also emphasised the importance of reporting incidents of fraud and advised the public to use the Aman service of Abu Dhabi Police for reporting.

The Aman service operates 24/7, allowing the community to contribute to crime prevention through various communication channels: the toll-free number **8002626 (AMAN2626)**, SMS at **2828**, email (**aman@adpolice.gov.ae**), or the **Abu Dhabi Police smart app**.



Al Ameri

Dhahi Khalfan reviews key excellence report of Dubai Police



Dhahi Khalfan reviews presentations from officers of the General Department of Excellence and Leadership at Dubai Police

LIEUTENANT General Dhahi Khalfan Tamim, Deputy Chairman of Police and Public Security in Dubai, recently reviewed a report from the General Department of Excellence and Leadership at Dubai Police. The report showcased significant advancements in governmental excellence and leadership initiatives.

During a meeting at his office in Dubai, Dhahi Khalfan was briefed on various topics including the rapid population growth in Dubai, which now constitutes 53.2 per cent of the UAE's total population, marking it

as the fastest-growing emirate.

The report also detailed Dubai Police's contributions to achieving national agenda indicators, discussing areas such as public security, response times to emergencies, rates of serious crimes, and traffic fatalities per 100,000 inhabitants. Remarkably, Dubai topped the security index in the Best Cities in the World Report for 2023, reflecting its global competitiveness.

Moreover, the report highlighted Dubai Police's active participation in local and international awards, including the Dubai

Government Excellence Programme and the Minister of Interior's Excellence Award.

The meeting also addressed Dubai Police's efforts in nurturing leadership for governmental roles and their involvement in Ministry of Interior committees, which tackle various community issues like risks, nationalities, and money laundering.

Dhahi Khalfan also reviewed over 730 initiatives and projects undertaken by Dubai Police, focusing on operational efficiency and effectiveness, including implementations of Six Sigma and Kaizen.

Sharjah Police, Indian General Consulate bolster cooperation

MAJOR General Saif Al Zari Al Shamsi, Commander-in-Chief of Sharjah Police, recently held a meeting with HE Satish Kumar, Consul General of the Republic of India to the UAE, at the General Police Headquarters in Sharjah.

The meeting was attended by Colonel

Jaber Saeed Al Nuaimi, Director of the Office of the Commander-in-Chief of Sharjah Police, and Colonel Dr Sameh Khamees Al Halyan, Deputy Director of the Strategic Planning and Performance Development Department at Sharjah Police.

The discussions focused on the welfare of

the Indian community in Sharjah, exploring ways to strengthen cooperation and coordination in policing and security matters.

They also reviewed the latest updates and topics of mutual interest, aiming to enhance the bilateral relationship between the two entities.

Fujairah Police participate in Arab Traffic Week 2024

FUJAIRAH Police, through its Traffic and Patrols Department, marked International Traffic Day and Arab Traffic Week 2024, under the theme 'With Awareness, We Arrive Safe'.

This initiative was part of a broader

campaign by the Ministry of Interior and its traffic sector to cultivate a culture of traffic safety and utilise modern traffic systems for safer road mobility.

The events were aimed at elevating traffic awareness and mitigating the risks

associated with road accidents. The campaign focused on enhancing national traffic safety and fostering social responsibility to decrease road incidents, thus saving lives and protecting property.

Al Marri meets with security officials from friendly countries



Al Marri (3rd from right) during a knowledge-sharing session with foreign ministers and security officials at the Dubai Police Officers Club

LIEUTENANT General Abdullah Khalifa Al Marri, Commander-in-Chief of Dubai Police, met with Mihai Catalin Necula, State Secretary of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Romania; Eric Lacayo Rojas, Deputy Minister of Public Security of the Republic of Costa

Rica; and Mario Luiz Sarubbo, National Public Security Secretary Ministry of Justice Brazil, at the Dubai Police Officers Club.

These meetings were part of the knowledge-sharing programme on enhancing the security system, organised by the

Knowledge Exchange Office in the Ministry of Cabinet Affairs in collaboration with the Ministry of Interior. The programme aims to showcase the UAE's pioneering experience in the security field, the best practices developed by the government, and the innovative experiences that have solidified the UAE's advanced position in international competitiveness indices.

The foreign ministers and security officials conveyed their admiration for the advanced level of police and security work they observed in Dubai Police. They praised the efficiency of the police teams and their alignment with the latest technological advancements dedicated to serving humanity, ensuring community security, and protecting the safety of citizens, residents, and visitors.

Ajman Police assess impact of severe weather, recovery efforts

MAJOR General Sheikh Sultan bin Abdullah Al Nuaimi, Commander-in-Chief of Ajman Police, led a meeting of the Permanent Higher Committee of Ajman Police to assess the impacts and outcomes of the recent severe weather event.

The meeting focused on evaluating the consequences of heavy rainfall that significantly affected the Emirate of Ajman, particularly addressing issues related to rainwater accumulation in various areas.

During the discussions, the Committee reviewed the lessons learned from the exceptional weather conditions and strategised on improving future responses. Al Nuaimi



Al Nuaimi (centre) leads the meeting of the Permanent Higher Committee of Ajman Police to assess the impact of the recent severe weather event

commended the extraordinary efforts of the Committee members and their collaborative actions with partners,

which he credited for mitigating damage to lives and property and facilitating a swift recovery.

Ras Al Khaimah Police sign strategic partnership with AURAK

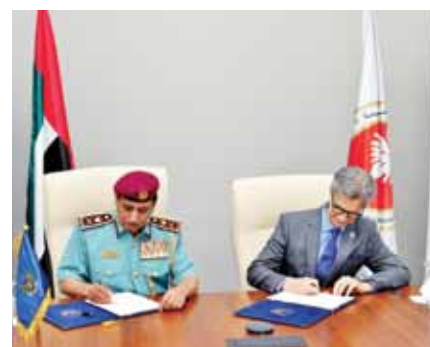
RAS Al Khaimah Police have entered into a five-year strategic partnership with the American University in Ras Al Khaimah (AURAK).

The agreement, signed by Major General Ali Abdullah bin Alwan Al Nuaimi, Commander-in-Chief of Ras Al Khaimah Police, and Prof Dr David Schmidt, President of the American University in Ras Al Khaimah, aims to foster collaboration between the two institutions.

The partnership is designed to integrate efforts, exchange expertise, and achieve top performance indicators. It aligns with

the strategic goals of both federal and local governments, which focus on enhancing cooperative relationships amongst institutions within the emirate.

Al Nuaimi highlighted the benefits of the agreement, noting it will facilitate training and qualification opportunities for university students at Ras Al Khaimah Police. The collaboration also aims to attract talent and encourage both students and faculty to utilise the police's technical resources, including forensic laboratories and crime scene investigation units.



Ali Abdullah bin Alwan Al Nuaimi and Schmidt during the agreement signing between RAK Police and AURAK

1st

UAE's top ranking in the MENA region and 5th globally in the Women in Parliament 2023 Report by the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU), which assesses gender parity in parliamentary representation across 52 countries.

1st

UAE's leading position in the Middle East and 2nd globally in the 2024 Global Digital Shopping Index released by PYMNTS Intelligence and Visa Acceptance Solutions, based on comparative insights from the surveys they conducted in the UAE and seven other countries.

1st

UAE's top ranking for the third consecutive year as the world's best country for starting new business ventures, as per the Global Entrepreneurship Monitor. The UAE also achieved a record score of 7.7 on the Entrepreneurship Index, the highest in the report's history.

1st

UAE's leading position in the MENA region and 8th globally in the 2024 Kearney FDI Confidence Index. The UAE experienced a meteoric rise from 18th place last year. It also clinched the runner-up spot on Kearney's emerging market index, second only to China.

1st

UAE's global ranking for the 8th consecutive year in Fibre to the Home (FTTH) connectivity, according to the FTTH Council's 2024 Annual Report, with a 99.3 per cent penetration rate.

BE IN THE LOOP

MOI CONDUCTS WORKSHOP ON ZERO GOVERNMENT BUREAUCRACY PROGRAMME



The Ministry of Interior (MoI) organised a workshop to discuss the elimination of government bureaucracy in all police general headquarters. This was in line with the UAE's Zero Government Bureaucracy (ZGB) programme, aimed at simplifying and streamlining procedures across government agencies. Major General Expert Khalifa Hareb Al Khaili, Undersecretary at the Ministry of Interior, along with commanders-in-chief and senior officers from police forces across the emirates, participated in the workshop.

UAE, ITALY BOLSTER COOPERATION IN COMBATTING MONEY LAUNDERING



The UAE and Italy organised a five-day training at the Dubai Police Officers Club aimed at enhancing the skills of government personnel in combatting money laundering. The workshop covered financial electronic crimes, online investment fraud using artificial intelligence, currency counterfeiting, and methods for investigating financial trails to combat organised crime.

MOI MARKS ARAB TRAFFIC WEEK 2024



The Ministry of Interior (MoI) actively engaged in marking Arab Traffic Week 2024 under the theme 'With Awareness, We Arrive Safe'. Brigadier Engineer Hussein Ahmed Al Harithi, Chairman of the Federal Traffic Council at the MoI, emphasised the importance of regularly promoting road safety and reinforcing traffic regulations. He also reiterated the MoI's commitment to road security and ensuring the safety of all road users.

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POLICE NEWS, PEOPLE, NUMBERS AND EVENTS

ABU DHABI

POLICE LINE DO NOT CROSS

2

The Abu Dhabi Police General Command mourned the loss of two police officers who died in a road accident while on duty. Policemen Muhammad Obaid Mubarak and Saud Khamis Al Hosani were posthumously promoted to the rank of Lieutenant from the rank of First Policeman.

AJMAN

10 MINUTES

Ajman Police quickly arrested a suspect 10 minutes after he set a large fire in a commercial store in an industrial area following a heated argument with a woman over a personal dispute. It escalated into a stabbing spree and arson, resulting in the woman's death and serious injuries to three others.

DUBAI

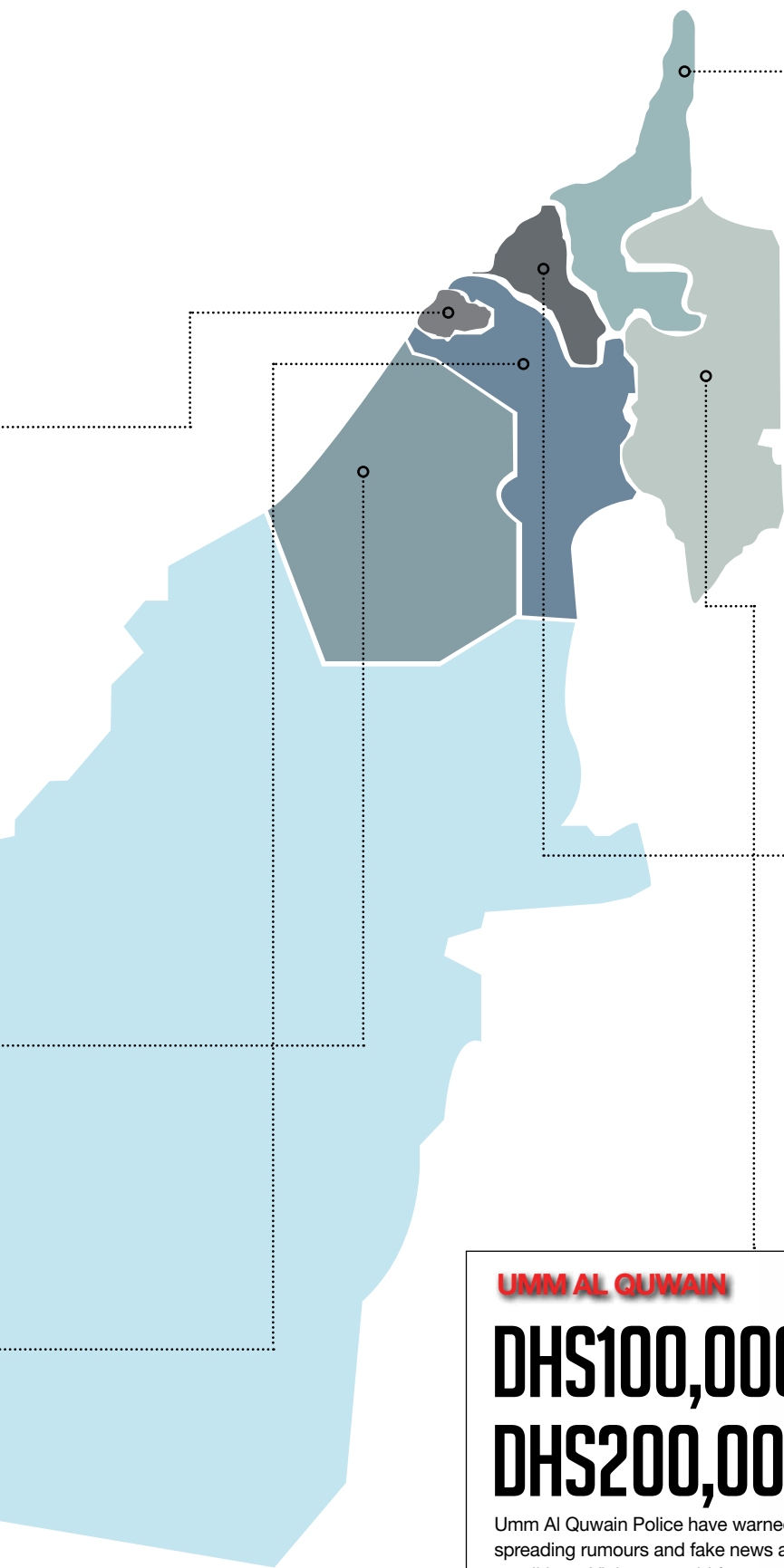
26-YEAR-OLD

The Dubai Court of Appeal has upheld a life sentence for a 26-year-old Asian man, convicted of strangling his girlfriend following a heated argument. According to court records, the man placed her body in a suitcase and abandoned it near a garbage bin.


RAS AL KHAIMAH

120 KMPH

Ras Al Khaimah Police have increased the speed limit on Al Watan Road from 100kmph to 120kmph. The move aims to improve road safety and ease the traffic flow. Motorists are advised to adhere to the new speed limit.



FUJAIRAH



DHS1,000 AND 4 BLACK TRAFFIC POINTS

Fujairah Police have reported 1,914 traffic accidents in the emirate over the past four months, citing sudden deviation, or the unexpected movement of a car outside its lane, as a major cause. Offenders face a Dhs1,000 fine and four black traffic points on their traffic record.

SHARJAH



7

Sharjah Police have warned parents against using an illegal car lift after a 7-year-old boy was found dead inside an unlicensed school service van. The driver failed to ensure that everyone had exited during drop-off. The boy was found dead inside the van when it was time to pick up students from school.

UMM AL QUWAIN

DHS100,000— DHS200,000



Umm Al Quwain Police have warned the public against spreading rumours and fake news about unstable weather conditions. Violators could face severe penalties ranging from one-year imprisonment and a fine of Dhs100,000 to two years imprisonment and a fine of Dhs200,000.

AI TACKLES NARCOTICS

AS THE WORLD OBSERVES INTERNATIONAL DAY AGAINST DRUG ABUSE
AND ILLICIT TRAFFICKING ON 26TH JUNE 2024, **999** SHOWCASES
AI-DRIVEN TECHNOLOGIES AIMED AT BOOSTING THE UAE'S FIGHT
AGAINST NARCOTICS

BY VLAD JOHNSON





الفريق سمو الشيخ
سيف بن زايد آل نهيان
نائب رئيس مجلس الوزراء وزير الداخلية

الحكومة

“Psychoactive substances and narcotic drugs are a serious plague that has become a global challenge to the stability, security, and cohesion of societies

HH LT GENERAL SHEIKH SAIF BIN ZAYED AL NAHYAN

Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior

Traditional investigative methods aimed at curbing illegal drugs, typically progressing from low-level dealers upwards, have been revolutionised by Artificial Intelligence (AI).

Data from the UAE Ministry of Interior (MoI) show AI's role in intercepting illegal drug trade and dismantling drug cartels. AI facilitated the apprehension of 179 suspects in 196 operations worldwide, leading to the confiscation of 6.9 tonnes of illegal substances in 2022-2023.

AI has also bolstered police operations within the UAE, resulting in a 103 per cent surge in drug trafficker arrests and the seizure of over 78 tonnes of drugs with a total street value of approximately Dhs2.4 billion over the same period.

While AI sharpens global law enforcement's response to illicit drugs, it hones the traffickers' tactics to accelerate their supply chain.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, a time when public health measures limited in-person interactions, the online drug trade

notably intensified. The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), the global policymaking body for drug control, reported that this shift drove drug users to the dark web and social media to circumvent traditional “street control”.

Anonymity and a lack of regulation online facilitate clandestine operations of drug cartels whose possible linkages often involve transborder crimes, such as money laundering or terror financing.

Moreover, online interconnectivity across jurisdictions complicates investigations, underscoring the need for advanced technology to keep police ahead in the battle against drug smuggling.

INTERIOR MINISTER AT FNC

The UAE's remarkable prosperity is founded on its unparalleled safety and security, as proved by its cities consistently topping the list of the world's safest cities. Abu Dhabi has been ranked as the world's safest city for six consecutive years by Numbeo. This exceptional standard of safety is a cornerstone that the UAE Ministry of Interior is committed to uphold.

During the first regular session of the 18th legislative term of the Federal National Council (FNC), His Highness Lt General Sheikh Saif bin Zayed Al Nahyan, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior, stressed the importance of



Sharjah Police

Boxes of narcotics seized by Sharjah Police in April 2023

taking stringent measures and policies to combat illegal drug trade.

“Psychoactive substances and narcotic drugs are a serious plague that has become a global challenge to the stability, security, and cohesion of societies,” His Highness stated.

The Interior Minister highlighted that the UAE citizens and residents alike are a driving force behind the UAE’s development, and therefore, safeguarding them has always been a top priority of “our wise leadership since the foundation of the UAE until today”.

The message echoed the statement of President His Highness Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan that “the UAE citizen is the true wealth of the nation.”

GLOBAL SNAPSHOT

The scourge of illicit drugs presents a formidable global challenge, with the market size now estimated at a staggering \$650 billion (Dhs2.4 trillion), wreaking havoc on economies worldwide.

According to the World Drug Report

“Over the last five years, drug trafficking and consumption have increased by an order of magnitude, with Europe one of the main transit and destination markets



JÜRGEN STOCK

Secretary-General
at Interpol

2023 by the UNODC, “1 in every 17 people aged 15–64 globally had used a drug in the past 12 months. The estimated number of [illegal drug] users increased from 240 million in 2011 to 296 million in 2021, or 5.8 per cent of the global population aged 15–64. This represents

a 23 per cent rise, partially attributed to population growth.”

Cannabis remains the most prevalently used drug, with an estimated 219 million users, or 4.3 per cent of the global adult population, predominantly males (70 per cent).

Furthermore, it is estimated that 36 million people used amphetamines, 22 million used cocaine, and 20 million engaged with ‘ecstasy-type’ substances in 2021.

“Opioids continue to be the substance group contributing most significantly to severe drug-related harm, including fatal overdoses. An estimated 60 million people engaged in non-medical opioid use in 2021, 31.5 million of whom used opiates (mainly heroin),” the report highlights.

Illicit drug markets are not only growing in terms of harm but also in scope, from an increasing cocaine supply to drug sales on social media platforms, and the unrelenting proliferation of synthetic drugs — cheap and simple to produce anywhere in the world, with fentanyl notably deadly even in minute quantities.

Addressing drug challenges presents complex policy issues that no single country or region can tackle alone. The UNODC report emphasises, “World drug problems may be global, but their impact is not uniformly distributed. It is the vulnerable, the poor, and the excluded who suffer the most, particularly in the Global South and in underdeveloped and underserved communities across our nations, cities, and villages.”

COLLECTIVE ACTION

Only a finer web of collaboration can untangle the complex web of drug smuggling. This was stressed by global leaders and experts during the 67th session of the UNODC, calling for international cooperation to dismantle the extensive operations of drug syndicates and organised crime groups.

“Drug challenges are evolving swiftly, as synthetics change the market, trafficking networks evolve their business model, and illicit markets overlap with conflict and instability,” Ghada Fathi Waly, Executive Director of the UNODC, stated.

“The global response is at an important juncture, and the Commission on Narcotic Drugs must use this milestone session to unite around balanced responses that safeguard our communities, promote public health, and uphold human rights,” Waly added.

AI’s ROLE in UAE’s anti-narcotics operations

179

The number of drug-related arrests, facilitated by and participated in by the UAE using AI, across the world in 2022-2023.

196

The total number of worldwide operations, either facilitated by or participated in by the UAE in 2022-2023 using AI.

6.9 tonnes

The amount of drugs confiscated by global operations, either facilitated by or participated in by the UAE using AI in 2022-2023.

Over 78 tonnes

The amount of drugs seized within the UAE through AI-powered police operations and intelligence in 2022-2023.

Dhs2.4 billion

The estimated value of the drugs seized in 2022-2023 within the UAE.

Source: UAE Ministry of Interior



The rising tide of ILLEGAL DRUGS WORLDWIDE

**\$650 billion
(Dhs2.4 trillion)**



Estimated global market size of the illicit drug trade.

5.8 per cent



Percentage of the global population aged 15–64 who are illegal drug users as of 2021.

**1 in every
17 people**



The proportion of the global population aged 15–64 who had used illicit drugs in 2021.

**240 million
to 296 million**



The increase in the number of illegal drug users from 2011 to 2021, representing a growth of 23 per cent.

219 million

CANNABIS

60 million

NON-MEDICAL OPIOID

36 million

AMPHETAMINES

22 million

COCAINE

20 million

ECSTASY-TYPE SUBSTANCES

**GLOBAL
ABUSE
OF ILLEGAL
DRUGS
IN
NUMBERS**

“Drug challenges are evolving swiftly, as trafficking networks evolve their business model, and illicit markets overlap with conflict and instability



GHADA FATHI WALY

Executive Director of UNODC

At Interpol’s 50th European Regional Conference, Jürgen Stock, Secretary-General at Interpol, highlighted the surge in drug activities. “Over the last five years, [drug] trafficking and consumption have increased by an order of magnitude, with Europe one of the main transit and destination markets,” Stock said.

AI INTENSIFIES CRACKDOWN

Since only sharper, smarter tools can sculpt safety from the enormous menace of illicit drugs, the United States plans a strategic initiative to recruit 50 AI specialists to intensify the crackdown on transborder crimes, including illegal drugs and child abuse.

“Government needs the support and expertise of our country’s foremost AI experts to help ensure our continued ability to harness this technology responsibly, safeguard against its malicious use, and advance our critical homeland security mission,” Alejandro Mayorkas, US Secretary of Homeland Security, stated.

Currently, the US has been employing AI to curb illegal drug imports across US borders, with a machine learning model that identifies suspicious patterns in vehicles, leading to 240 drug seizures last year.

In Europe, AI technology such as the ‘Roborders’ project has been integrated into border patrols, employing AI robots to detect smuggling activities.

Globally, facial recognition technology is implemented at airports and border checkpoints. Notably, Dubai International Airport began piloting Smart Tunnel tests in 2018, utilising a system of 80 cameras to scan travellers’ faces and irises.

ONLINE MARKETPLACE

Highlighted in the UNODC's World Drug Report 2023, there has been a shift in the drug trade towards digital platforms, social media in particular, where traffickers and users exploit anonymity and accessibility.

"[S]ocial media platforms are growing in importance for facilitating low-level drug transactions, given their popularity and direct accessibility for buyers. Different online platforms are used to facilitate transactions for various drugs. Amongst drugs purchased online, new psychoactive substances are most commonly accessed via specialised Internet shops and the dark web, whereas cannabis and cocaine are more frequently bought and sold on social media platforms," the report stated.

So, where does AI come in? AI technologies can extract insights and detect patterns across these platforms, providing law enforcement with vital leads to disrupt drug networks. Moreover, AI-enhanced web intelligence enables police to monitor and investigate dark web forums, crucial hubs for the illicit drug marketplace.

In April 2024, His Highness Sheikh Saif met with executives from Meta, the parent company of WhatsApp—a platform widely used in the UAE—to enhance collaboration in curbing the promotion of narcotics on social media. This partnership primarily targets the preservation of youth, who are predominantly engaged on these



platforms. Meta has committed to intensifying efforts to block suspicious communications that promote drugs.

AI-enhanced investigative capabilities also assist the MoI in quickly and accurately identifying threat actors and

exposing their accomplices across the drug supply chain.

The power of AI in collating vast amounts of data and finding correlations helps UAE law enforcement identify perpetrators.

PREDICTIVE POLICING

Another application of AI in the fight against narcotics is predictive policing, where algorithms analyse historical crime data to forecast potential crime locations and times.

This smart technology has empowered Dubai Police to significantly reduce crime rates by 25 per cent in the first quarter of 2023.

AI-enabled searches extend beyond the dark web and social media platforms to include data from surface websites, illuminating aspects of drug supply chains.

How does this work? AI aids investigators in uncovering patterns and connections that might otherwise remain undetected. Its precision and accuracy enable investigators to collect, analyse, and present data that are both reliable and trustworthy.

Such reliable data enhance trust and confidence amongst law enforcement, allowing for investigations to be conducted with due diligence.

It ensures that the correct suspects are pursued, and that the information can serve as credible evidence in court. The verified data facilitate the prosecution of criminals, enhancing the quality of indictments and improving prosecution rates.

AI-POWERED DRUG DETECTOR

Researchers in Canada have developed a groundbreaking type of AI—deep learning algorithms—to identify potential novel psychoactive substances (NPS) that may not yet exist.

This cutting-edge approach, published in Nature Machine Intelligence, offers strategic advantages to governments battling to keep pace with the production from global illicit drug labs.

David Wishart, a computer scientist and biologist at the University of Alberta, explained the significance of their research: “Essentially, our software gives law enforcement agencies and public health programmes a head start on the clandestine chemists, and lets them know what to be on the lookout for.”

The research team applied their machine learning algorithm to 1,700 NPS examples, creating a model that identifies subtle properties common in these drugs. This model can then predict compounds with similar properties—potential new street drugs.



Currently, an algorithm, called the ‘DarkNPS’, is being used by major drug enforcement agencies including the UNODC, the US Drug Enforcement Administration, the European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction, and the Federal Criminal Police Office of Germany.

AI-POWERED CHATBOTS

Virtual and chatbot assistants, equipped with advanced language-learning algorithms, are revolutionising communication between law enforcement agencies and the public.

In the UAE, the U-Ask platform, an AI-powered chatbot for government services launched in May 2023, consolidates information about

government services in one location. Available in both Arabic and English, it offers users detailed service requirements, tailored information based on their preferences, and direct application links.

Moreover, an innovative chatbot named Jais Chat, developed by Core42—a division of Abu Dhabi’s AI and cloud company, G42—has been introduced to enhance bilingual communication capabilities.

In building a fortress of safety and justice, technological advancements equip governments with the bricks of precision. Through AI, law enforcement agencies can devise sharper strategies to dismantle the networks of the illicit drug trade.

6 AI policing tools for tackling narcotics

REVOLUTIONARY AI TOOLS TRANSFORMING NARCOTICS POLICING, ENHANCING DETECTION AND RESHAPING ENFORCEMENT STRATEGIES TO EFFECTIVELY COMBAT THE ILLICIT DRUG TRADE

BY VLAD JOHNSON



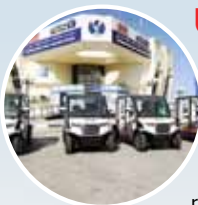
The robo-dog

Fluffy is a robot dog fitted with high-definition cameras, thermal imaging, and infrared capabilities, powered by a sensor that enables it to safely locate and remove suspected fentanyl, a highly potent synthetic piperidine opioid, without human risk.



Advanced surveillance system

Dubai Police utilise the **Oyoon** system to digitally track criminals citywide simply by uploading a mugshot into its database. This advanced surveillance system incorporates Artificial Intelligence, facial recognition, licence plate recognition, and CCTV to monitor crimes, security breaches, emergencies, and traffic issues comprehensively.



Under-vehicle inspection system

The **Siyaj buggy** is an advanced inspection tool capable of manoeuvring under vehicles to capture high-resolution photos and video, with a 360-degree, 30-metre shooting range. This initiative aids Dubai Customs in combatting the smuggling of prohibited and counterfeit goods.



Autonomous border surveillance

Developed by the European Union, the **Roborder** is a fully autonomous border surveillance system providing a comprehensive situational assessment, identifying smugglers, and relaying their locations to border control. It consists of drones and land vehicles equipped with multiple sensors, coordinating to form an inter-operational network.



AI-powered predictive analyser

The **NPS-MS** is an AI-powered solution that uses deep learning to predict the composition of new psychoactive substances, aiding law enforcement in combatting dangerous drugs. It employs machine learning algorithms trained on large data sets to uncover complex relationships and develop predictive models.



Smart drug use detector

The **RP-STREAM** is an AI-powered wearable device designed to monitor illicit drug use amongst individuals with substance use disorders. It uses an algorithm to analyse data collected from the device, identifying drug use patterns and providing timely intervention possibilities.



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UAE'S WAR ON DRUGS

THE GENERAL POLICE COMMANDS ACROSS THE UAE WEAVE A STRONGER NET OF ENFORCEMENT TO WEED OUT THE MENACE OF ILLEGAL DRUGS, RESULTING IN A RECORD NUMBER OF ARRESTS AND DRUG SEIZURES

BY LANCE BERKMAN





“Heavenly laws unanimously agree on the necessity of protecting and preserving human life, as the mind is a divine blessing that distinguishes humans from other creatures

HH LT GENERAL SHEIKH SAIF BIN ZAYED AL NAHYAN

Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior

Last month, the voice of His Highness Lieutenant General Sheikh Saif bin Zayed Al Nahyan, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior, resonated through the halls of the Federal National Council (FNC) during the first regular session of the 18th legislative term.

Alongside officials of the Ministry of Interior (MoI) and commanders-in-chief of general police commands across the emirates, the Interior Minister spoke before the esteemed members of the FNC about the scourge of illicit drugs, highlighting their threats on societies worldwide, including the UAE.

His Highness stressed that narcotics strikes harder on society's most valuable asset—its people. In any society today, His Highness said, narcotics fuel crime, sever family ties, drain economic resources, and shatter the sense of safety within communities.

“Heavenly laws unanimously agree on the necessity of protecting and preserving human life, as the mind is a divine blessing that distinguishes humans from other creatures,” His Highness Sheikh Saif stated.

Emphasising on the common good and respecting human dignity, the Interior Minister highlighted the UAE's stringent but just measures to deter drug smuggling. He also underscored the importance of strengthening community and familial ties through initiatives like community-based recovery programmes, family counselling, and comprehensive social services.

His Highness Sheikh Saif's strong oversight and follow-up in law enforcement operations was shown during the recognition of Dubai Police officers who busted one of the world's largest Captagon smuggling operations. ‘Operation Storm’ 13.76 tonnes of

Captagon pills valued at more than Dhs3.87 billion in September 2023.

His Highness Sheikh Saif vowed that the MoI will always be on the lookout for anyone who dares to tamper with the security and safety of the Emirati society.

NATIONAL STRATEGIC PLAN

This year, under the guidance of His Highness Sheikh Saif, the UAE's Narcotics Control Council activated the National Strategic Plan 2024-2026, setting forth 51 performance indicators to monitor the success of its various initiatives.

Approved during the Council's inaugural 2024 meeting, the National Strategic Plan aims to intensify the UAE's fight against drugs across all governmental levels. It came shortly after the Council's establishment in June 2023, in a bid to foster better coordination between federal and local institutions in combatting drug trafficking.

The responsibilities of the Council include overseeing the enforcement of policies designed to halt drug smuggling at UAE borders, enhancing early drug detection methods, and supporting drug users with necessary psychological and rehabilitation aid.

Also this year, the Council introduced the National Integration Charter in Combatting Drugs, underscoring a unified institutional approach to achieve these objectives, a vision strongly supported by the nation's leadership.

Brigadier Dr Faisal Sultan Al-Shuaibi, Director General of Strategy and Performance Development at the Ministry of Interior and member of the UAE's Narcotics Control Council, outlined the goals of the National Strategic Plan.

Al-Shuaibi further highlighted the



HH Sheikh Saif bin Zayed leads a meeting of the UAE's Narcotics Control Council



HH Sheikh Saif bin Zayed speaks before the esteemed FNC Members, alongside Mol officials and commanders-in-chief of general police commands in the UAE

UAE's contributions to global anti-narcotics efforts. "In 2022 and 2023, the UAE significantly contributed to international efforts against narcotics by combatting money laundering from drug crimes. These collaborations led to the freezing of 1,881 bank accounts and the arrest of 173 suspects," he said.

ONLINE SHIFT OF DRUG SYNDICATES

Drugs sold online have become

increasingly available, allowing drug syndicates to market to vulnerable populations, including children and teens globally. Recognising this threat, the Mol has been taking proactive steps to address the issue.

Brigadier Saeed bin Tuer Al Suwaidi, Director General of Federal Narcotics Control at the Ministry of Interior and Vice Chairman of the UAE's Narcotics Control Council, highlighted Mol's vigilance

“In 2022 and 2023, the UAE significantly contributed to international efforts against narcotics by combatting money laundering from drug crimes. These collaborations led to the freezing of 1,881 bank accounts and the arrest of 173 suspects



BRIGADIER DR FAISAL SULTAN AL-SHUAIBI

Director General of Strategy and Performance Development at the Ministry of Interior and member of the UAE's Narcotics Control Council

in monitoring online drug trafficking activities, noting that many of these operations originate outside the UAE.

Al Suwaidi stated, "The Ministry of Interior actively patrols online platforms used for drug sales and smuggling and collaborates with strategic partners and social media firms to halt the spread of drug-related content."

Addressing the evolving challenge



HH Sheikh Saif bin Zayed and Lt General Abdullah Khalifa Al Marri, Commander-in-Chief of Dubai Police, during the destruction of the narcotics seized by 'Operation Storm'

of drug distribution, Al Suwaidi highlighted the shift towards remote drug promotion via social media, which facilitates faster dissemination. He underscored the UAE's preventive measures, which include international cooperation to apprehend key network operators abroad, leading to significant shutdowns of darknet operations and social media channels used for drug trafficking.

Al Suwaidi said, "Over the past three years, we have successfully banned 2,852 websites and social media accounts and arrested 36 major suspects managing these networks from outside the country."

This strategic approach underscores the UAE's commitment to disrupt the complex landscape of online drug trafficking, safeguarding society from the pervasive reach of narcotics on the digital front.

SOCIETAL RESPONSIBILITY

Al Suwaidi emphasised the collective societal role in combatting illicit drugs, highlighting the need for unity starting from individuals and extending to the family, broader society, and strategic partners of the MoI, including various ministries and local agencies.

Moreover, he underlined the crucial role of parental vigilance. "Teach the youth not to interact with any messages promoting illegal drugs, and to report and block them online," he advised, stressing the dangers of anonymous messages that target children through platforms like WhatsApp from abroad.

Reaffirming the MoI's commitment to tackling illicit drugs, Al Suwaidi said, "The MoI will continue to weed out drug smuggling and drug trafficking networks through distinguished regional and international cooperation with counterpart agencies worldwide."

“Over the past three years, we have successfully banned 2,852 websites and social media accounts and arrested 36 major operatives managing these networks from outside the country

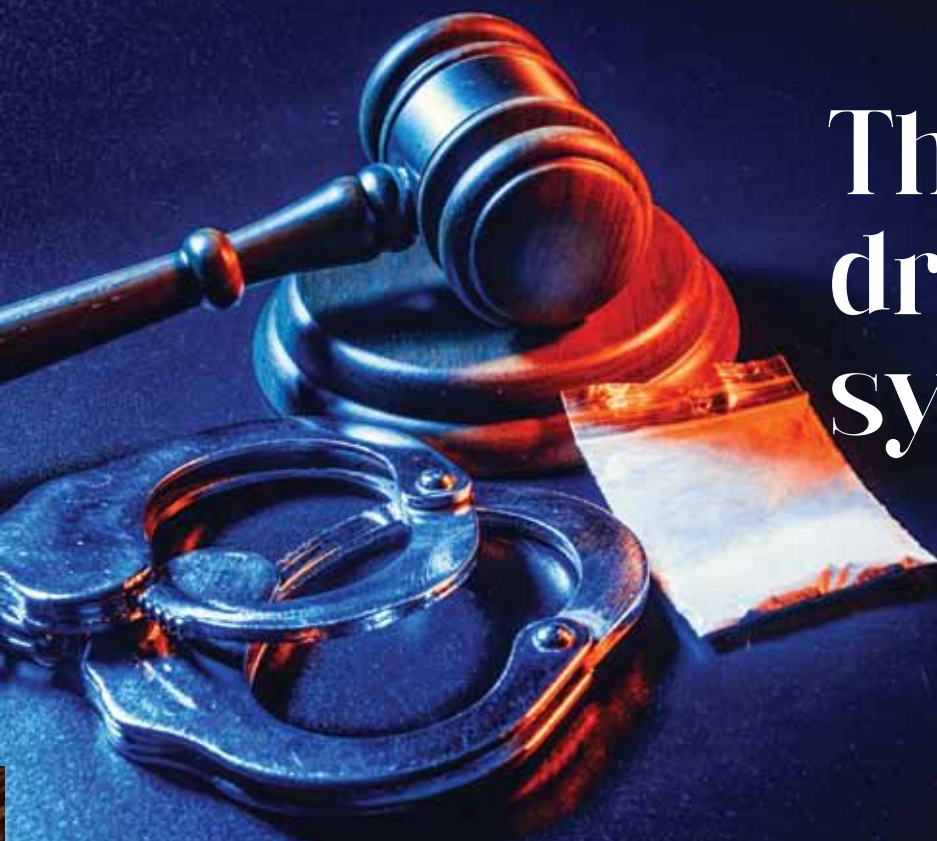


**BRIGADIER SAEED BIN
TUER AL SUWAIDI**

Director General of Federal Narcotics Control at the Ministry of Interior and Vice Chairman of the UAE's Narcotics Control Council



HH Sheikh Saif bin Zayed with the officials and members of the UAE's Narcotics Control Council



The fall of drugs syndicates

HERE ARE SOME OF THE MOST LARGEST ANTI-DRUG OPERATIONS IN 2023-2024

BY LANCE BERKMAN

CODENAME: Operation Storm **WHEN: September 2023**



The key syndicate members who were arrested by Dubai Police after attempting to smuggle 13.76 tonnes of Captagon pills

Marked by meticulous surveillance and sharp investigative work, the Dubai Police General Command shattered a major drug smuggling ring's attempt to flood the UAE with tonnes of Captagon pills.

Codenamed 'Operation Storm', this high-stakes bust in September 2023 saw the force intercept a massive haul of 86 million Captagon pills, cleverly concealed within 651 iron and wooden doors and 432 ornate building panels.

The operation, which unravelled on the back of relentless tracking and intelligence gathering, led to the arrest of six key syndicate members and the seizure of a staggering 13.76 tonnes of Captagon pills with estimated street value of Dh\$3.87 billion.

Lieutenant General Abdullah Khalifa Al Marri, Commander-in-Chief of Dubai Police, underscored the operation's importance. He highlighted the unwavering commitment of Dubai Police, guided by His Highness Lieutenant General Sheikh Saif bin Zayed Al Nahyan, to dismantle sophisticated cross-border organised crime networks.

CODENAME: Operation Lyrica **WHEN: March 2024**



The gang member who was arrested in Ajman with 2.75 million illicit Lyrica tablets

The collaboration between the UAE Ministry of Interior and its Kuwaiti counterpart dismantled a formidable drug syndicate, seizing over 3.7 million Lyrica tablets and arresting three suspects.

The crackdown began with the capture of two gang members at Kuwait Airport, who were in possession of around 1 million tablets. Concurrently, the MoI nabbed another gang member in Ajman, found with 2.75 million illicit Lyrica tablets, widely used to treat epilepsy and anxiety.

The operation was underpinned by robust intelligence sharing between the UAE and Kuwait.

Brigadier Saeed bin Tuer Al Suwaidi, Director General of Federal Narcotics Control at the Ministry of Interior and Vice Chairman of the UAE's Narcotics Control Council, underscored the critical role of collaboration, particularly within the Gulf Cooperation Council, in combating drug trafficking and eradicating its societal menace.

CODENAME: Operation Curtain Reveal **WHEN: October 2023**

In October 2023, the Sharjah Police General Command led a significant operation dubbed “Operation Curtain Reveal”, busting an intricate drug trafficking ring. This multinational gang, comprising 32 members from Asian and Arab nationalities, attempted to smuggle narcotics and psychotropic substances valued at approximately Dhs14 million into the UAE.

Colonel Majid Sultan Al Assam, Director of the Anti-Narcotics Department at Sharjah Police, revealed that following extensive surveillance and police intelligence, they intercepted the gang while smuggling 50 kg of hashish and 49 litres of liquid crystal meth, under directives from an overseas member.

The operation continued as authorities discovered the gang’s warehouse in a neighbouring emirate. It was used for storing drug consignments. The discovery led to multiple arrests and the seizure of 1.17 million psychotropic pills.

Al Assam detailed that the gang employed novel smuggling tactics. “First, they took advantage of a business’ customs clearance to illegally import and conceal liquid meth within vehicle structures.”

Highlighting Sharjah Police’s strategic use of modern technology and police intelligence, Al Assam affirmed the police force’s relentless commitment to thwarting drug operations and to staying ahead of organised crime.



“First, they took advantage of a business’ customs clearance to illegally import and conceal liquid meth within vehicle structures



COLONEL MAJID SULTAN AL ASSAM

Director of the Anti-Narcotics Department at Sharjah Police

OPERATION: Ras Al Khaimah Customs **WHEN: March 2024**

Ras Al Khaimah Customs intercepted two separate smuggling attempts at Ras Al Khaimah International Airport in March 2024, seizing about 11 kg of various narcotics.

The illicit substances were ingeniously hidden within the baggage of two passengers entering the country. Inspections revealed 470 narcotic pills in one traveller’s luggage. Further scrutiny uncovered a diverse assortment of drugs, such as 292 hallucinogenic pills, 5 hallucinogenic stamps, 13.84 grams of hallucinogenic powder, 7.38 grams of cocaine stones, and 274.59 grams of narcotic crystal.

The vigilance and trained eye of customs personnel played a role in these detections, showcasing their expertise and meticulous attention to detail.

The confiscated drugs and the suspects were turned over to the relevant authorities for further legal action.

FOR ILLUSTRATION PURPOSES ONLY



OPERATION: Dubai Customs **WHEN: September and November 2023**

In a series of operations during September and November 2023, Dubai Customs demonstrated its commitment to bolstering security at UAE airports. The Customs Intelligence Department intercepted two significant drug smuggling attempts from an Asian country via air cargo in September.

The first operation uncovered 33,284 various types of narcotic pills hidden within 20 packages, totalling 460 kg and valued at Dhs1 million. The second seizure was even larger, with 175,300 Tramadol pills discovered in 22 packages weighing 520 kg, estimated to be worth Dhs5.25 million.

Continuing their vigilant efforts, Dubai Customs personnel at Dubai International Airport apprehended a traveller in November who attempted to smuggle various drugs concealed within his luggage, originating from a European country. This proactive approach by Dubai Customs highlights its crucial role in safeguarding the UAE’s borders against illicit activities.



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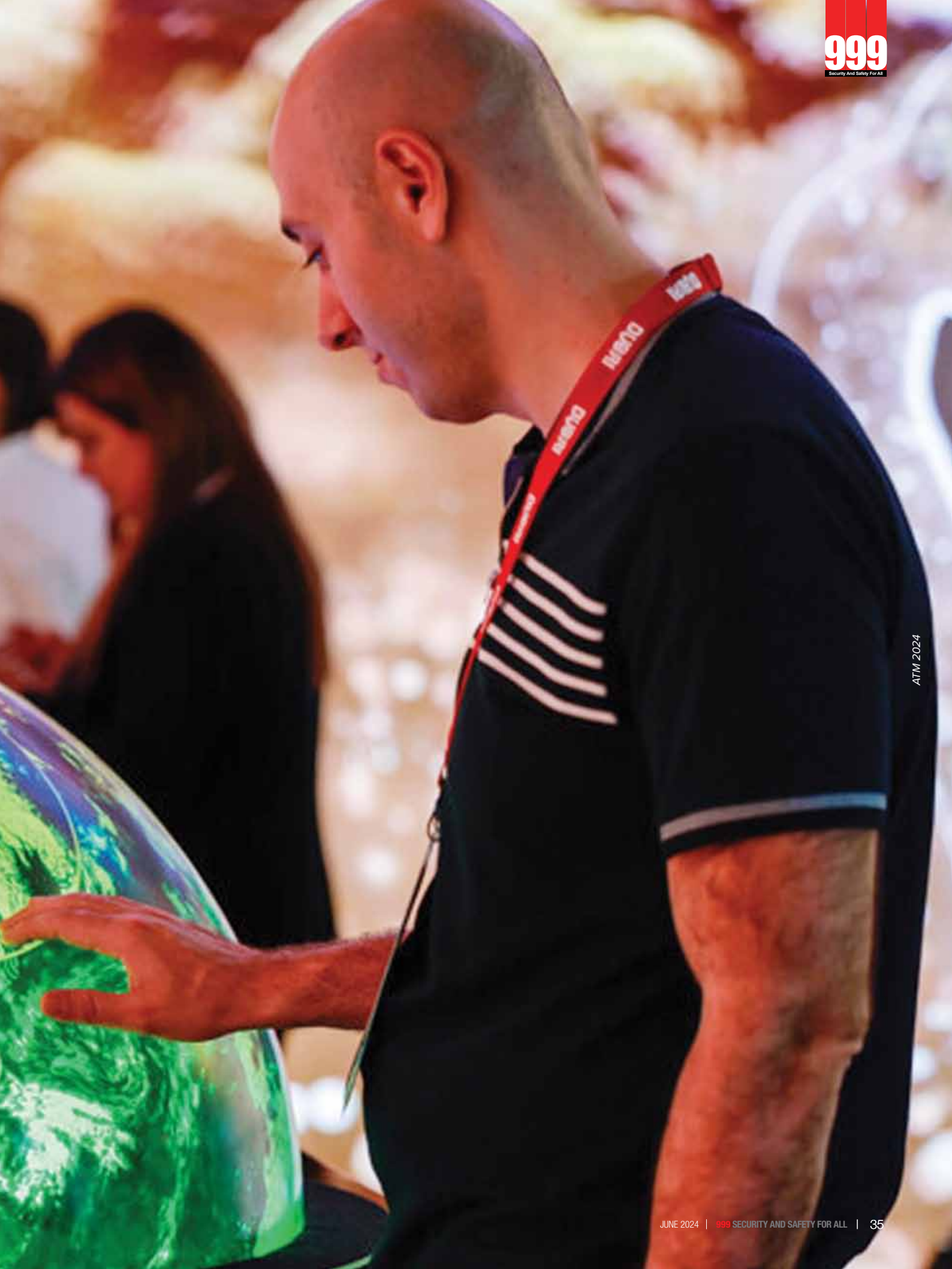
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TRAVEL REIMAGINED

THE MIDDLE EAST'S TRAVEL MARKET IS RIPE FOR THE PICKING. **999** EXPLORES HOW THE WORLD CAN CAPITALISE ON THIS LOW-HANGING FRUIT

BY ADBUL AZMI





The UAE, which recently clinched the top spot as the No. 1 global destination in the Tripadvisor Travellers' Choice Awards 2024 for the third consecutive year, continues to be at the forefront of transforming the travel and tourism industry through innovation, entrepreneurship, and sustainability—key focuses of the Arabian Travel Market (ATM) 2024.

With world-class tourist attractions and international carriers, the UAE's tourism industry significantly boosted the economy in 2023, contributing an 11.7 per cent increase to the Gross Domestic Product (GDP), totalling Dhs220 billion.

The 31st edition of ATM was inaugurated by His Highness Sheikh Ahmed bin Saeed Al Maktoum, President of Dubai Civil Aviation Authority, Chairman of Dubai Airports, and Chairman and Chief Executive of Emirates Airline and Group. The event drew over 46,000 industry professionals from more than 160 countries.

This year's ATM edition was the largest since its inception in 1994, with key players from aviation, hotels, hospitality,

and public attractions highlighting their transformative impact on the industry.

During the inauguration of ATM 2024, HH Sheikh Ahmed remarked, "The massive interest generated amongst ATM 2024 attendees reaffirms the UAE's standing as a major destination for tourism and travel in the region, highlighting its role in shaping the future of the industry by bringing together leaders of allied industries from around the world."

Looking ahead, passenger numbers in the region are projected to hit 429 million this year. However, to effectively capitalise on this low-hanging fruit, there is a need for innovative solutions such as enhancing regional connectivity and streamlining the management of passenger and cargo flows.

Future projections in the travel and tourism industry include a shift towards smaller, more fuel-efficient aircraft, increasing the frequency of flights and enhancing connectivity.

The GCC sets its sights on the introduction of a unified GCC tourism visa by the end of this year and an

“The massive interest generated amongst ATM 2024 attendees reaffirms the UAE's standing as a major destination for tourism and travel in the region, highlighting its role in shaping the future of the industry by bringing together leaders of allied industries from around the world



HH SHEIKH AHMED BIN SAEED AL MAKTOUM

President of Dubai Civil Aviation Authority, Chairman of Dubai Airports, and Chairman and Chief Executive of Emirates Airline and Group

expanded rail network by 2030 to enhance regional connectivity. In the UAE, this commitment is demonstrated by the construction of Al Maktoum Airport in Dubai, which is set to become one of the world's largest passenger terminals, featuring 400 gates. Ras Al Khaimah, meanwhile, plans to launch flying taxis by 2027, to significantly reduce travel times within the emirate.

Elsewhere, some Asian countries are capitalising on making their destinations more sustainable and halal-friendly, leveraging a deeper connection and appreciation for Islamic traditions.

“The GCC sets its sights on the introduction of a unified GCC tourism visa by the end of this year and an expanded rail network by 2030 to enhance regional connectivity



ATM 2024 drew over 46,000 industry professionals from more than 160 countries

FUTURE CONNECTIVITY

HE Abdulla bin Touq Al Marri, UAE Minister of Economy, announced at ATM 2024 that the unified tourism visa, named 'GCC Grand Tours', has been approved. This visa will allow travellers to visit all six GCC countries (Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, and the UAE) on a single multiple-entry tourist visa.

Expected to be available by the end of 2024, the GCC Grand Tours visa will likely permit a longer stay than the current 30-day maximum. "The GCC Grand Tours, that we are working on and aiming to finish, will allow tourists to spend more than 30 days in the region," Al Marri said.

The GCC is also enhancing its economic and trade integration efforts by finalising the Gulf Railway project, which will connect all GCC countries with a completion target set for December 2030.

The 2,177km Gulf Railway project will extend from Kuwait through Saudi Arabia, linking Bahrain, Qatar, and the UAE, and concluding in Oman. It will integrate

with extensive existing and planned rail networks in these countries to bolster regional connectivity.

The project aims to reduce trade costs and travel times, connect ports and cities more effectively, and increase trade flows and foreign direct investment within the bloc.

INNOVATIONS IN AVIATION

As passenger numbers in the Middle East are predicted to reach 429 million this year, indicating a 5.4 per cent increase on 2019 figures, a panel of aviation experts highlighted the role of innovation in a session at ATM 2024.

Kashif Khalid, Africa & Middle East Regional Director at the International Air Transport Association, said, "Without innovation, the future will be very challenging. We cannot continue building bigger infrastructure with the level of passengers we anticipate, so we have to look at how we manage passengers and cargo differently through digital solutions and innovation. On the ground, the industry is working on several innovations, not only to make

“The GCC Grand Tours, which we are working on and aiming to finish, will allow tourists to spend more than 30 days in the region

aviation more sustainable but also to use infrastructure more efficiently.”

“One of these solutions is One ID, where we digitalise tokens for passengers, which enables us to facilitate passengers seamlessly. How we use the traditional infrastructure of airports is going to change dramatically,” Khalid added, underlining the benefit of the unified and efficient identity management solution, which enhances security, simplifies check-in processes, and facilitates seamless travel across airports.

Paul Griffiths, Chief of Dubai Airports, said smaller, more fuel-efficient planes will become more popular in the future resulting in more flights and better

Passenger numbers in the Middle East are predicted to reach 429 million this year, indicating a 5.4 per cent increase on 2019 figures



ATM 2024

This year's ATM edition was the largest since its inception in 1994

“In the future, these planes will cause a plethora of regional airports to be directly connected to major hubs like Dubai. We will be connected to over 300 cities



PAUL GRIFFITHS

Chief of Dubai Airports

connectivity. “Aircraft technology is rapidly changing,” he said during a session at ATM. He added, “A lot of aircraft that come to us are narrow-bodied, more fuel efficient, more capable planes.

“In the future, these planes will cause a plethora of regional airports to be directly connected to major hubs like Dubai. We will be connected to over 300 cities. In advance of that becoming a reality, it is necessary to create an airport with several gates to accommodate a much lower average capacity aircraft. We have

“The deployment of flying taxis will dramatically reduce travel time, for instance, from Ras Al Khaimah International Airport to Marjan Island to just 15-18 minutes



RAKI PHILLIPS

CEO of Ras Al Khaimah
Tourism Development Authority

done some very solid mathematical calculations on how many gates and runways we need.”

Meanwhile, Fujairah International Airport (FIA) is poised to enhance its global reach, with plans to initiate daily flights to several countries, including India. “We are on the brink of expanding our international services, pending some final documentation processes,” Mark Govender, Business Development Manager at FIA, stated. Starting July 2024, Egypt Air will launch operations in Fujairah,



Experience Abu Dhabi clinched the ATM 2024 Best Stand Design Award

signalling the beginning of FIA's expanded services that also include discussions with an Indian airline.

In June 2023, Oman-based SalamAir had commenced bi-weekly flights to Fujairah, which are now operating at full capacity. “The demand for these flights is a testament to their success, offering passengers vital links from Muscat to other destinations,” added Govender.

FLYING TAXIS ON THE HORIZON

Stimulating its local economy and promoting sustainable tourism development, Ras Al Khaimah (RAK) is set to revolutionise travel within the emirate with the introduction of flying taxis by 2027.

This initiative, involving the Ras Al Khaimah Tourism Development Authority (RAKTDA), the Ras Al Khaimah Transport Authority, and Skyports Infrastructure, aims to establish the first electric vertical take-off and landing (eVTOL) air taxi ecosystem in the region.

“The deployment of flying taxis will dramatically reduce travel time, for instance, from Ras Al Khaimah International Airport to Marjan Island to just 15-18 minutes,” said Raki Phillips, CEO of RAKTDA.



The UAE's tourism industry contributed an 11.7 per cent increase to the country's GDP in 2023, totalling Dhs220 billion

ATM 2024



ATM 2024

“The Islamic influence connects the Philippines to the broader Islamic world, fostering a shared appreciation for Islamic traditions



CHRISTINA GARCIA FRASCO
Philippines Department of Tourism Secretary

“With our continued participation at the ATM, we aim to position the Philippines as a top-of-mind destination in Asia



MARIA MARGARITA MONTMAYOR NOGRALES
COO of the Tourism Promotions Board Philippines

Philippines Department of Tourism Secretary, said, “We have eyed this niche market by strategically developing our Halal Tourism portfolio, offering Halal-certified dining, increasing Halal accreditations, and conducting Halal awareness orientations.”

She also noted the cultural connections with the Middle East, stating, “The Islamic influence connects the Philippines to the broader Islamic world, fostering a shared appreciation for Islamic traditions, architecture, and cultural customs.”

Maria Margarita Montemayor Nograles, Chief Operating Officer of the Tourism Promotions Board Philippines, remarked on the growing interest in international travel amongst GCC citizens post-pandemic, saying, “This is one of the major reasons why we are doubling down on our efforts to maintain and enhance our presence in the Middle East. With our continued participation at the ATM, we aim to position the Philippines as a top-of-mind destination in Asia.”

STRONG ASIAN PARTICIPATION

ATM 2024 highlighted Asia’s vibrant role in the travel and tourism industry, with new participants such as China and Macau and returning exhibitors like the Maldives, Sri Lanka, and the Philippines.

In 2023, the Maldives celebrated a record-breaking year, welcoming 1.8 million visitors. Sri Lanka, known for its pristine beaches and ancient ruins, received 210,000 tourists in the fourth quarter alone.

The Muslim travel market is ripe for the picking with arrivals expected to reach 140 million and an estimated spending of \$225 billion (Dhs825 billion) by 2028.

The Philippines is enhancing its appeal by positioning itself as a premier halal-friendly destination in Asia, contributing to a substantial increase in tourist arrivals since 2019. The country recorded 419 per cent tourist arrival recovery from the UAE, 547 per cent from Qatar, and 130 per cent from Kuwait. Last year, it was awarded the Emerging Muslim-friendly Destination of the Year at the Halal in Travel Global Summit, recognising its efforts to cater to Muslim travellers.

At ATM 2024, Christina Garcia Frasco,

TECH-DRIVEN HOSPITALITY

Several sessions at ATM 2024 also put a spotlight on the evolving travel preferences and market strategies in the post-COVID-19 era.

Haitham Mattar, Managing Director, Middle East, Africa and South West Asia, IHG Hotels & Resorts, stressed the importance of how destinations and hotels identify their respective source markets.

“The COVID-19 pandemic has changed the way generations choose [to] travel, with outdoor adventure now taking the No. 1 spot away from ‘beach, sun and sand’. For the industry to stay afloat in difficult times, the private industry needs to mirror the vision of their respective tourism authorities and work together to ensure appealing spending packages for those markets,” Mattar explained.

He also outlined how generational shifts and emerging travel behaviours are giving rise to global travel trends such as ‘slow travel’. Similarly, with the hospitality industry responsible for 10 per cent of



“Travellers need a search platform that offers fast results with visual content that is mobile and community-led



MARC-ANTOINE SIMON

Industry Manager, Travel and Tourism
– MENA, TikTok

global emissions, consumers are now willing to spend up to 31 per cent more on hospitality companies that execute sustainable practices.

Matter also highlighted how innovation in the hospitality industry is triggering the pace of digitalisation. “The future use of technology and AI will be critical for us to get a clear idea of how to enhance consumer preferences. Specifically, travel anxiety is starting to reduce with technology, and the focus should now be firmly on the traveller’s experiences,” Mattar said.

BOOST IN TRAVEL SEARCH

Marc-Antoine Simon, Industry Manager, Travel and Tourism – MENA, TikTok, said, “Travel is one of the most sought-after pursuits in people’s lives, so much so that they would sacrifice just about anything to get away. Unfortunately, the high likelihood of a trip leading to unwanted disappointment is why, ahead of a trip, people go the extra mile to ensure that the reward is maximised and the risk is neutralised.”

Simon pointed out that this desire to take control of the search experience sees today’s travellers swapping keywords for human words, queries for communities and information for immersion.



Amazing Thailand is a promotional slogan originally conceived as a two-year campaign in 1999, but has since become a perennial tourism slogan of Thailand

“Travellers need a search platform that offers fast results with visual content that is mobile and community-led. By creating their own platform, they have eliminated major barriers to travel that once hindered the pre-booking journey, and these communities are making destinations viral overnight,” Simon said.

STARTUP INVESTMENTS

The investment environment for travel and tourism startups in the Middle East was another focal point at ATM.

According to McKinsey & Company, the post-COVID-19 landscape has seen a significant uptick in investment levels, though it remains essential to foster more support for emerging travel entrepreneurs.

Margaux Constantin from McKinsey said, “Many investors are interested in asset-light, EBITDA-positive companies with a minimal ticket size. However, the reality is that these companies form a very small pool, creating fierce competition amongst investors. There is a pressing need to adjust expectations and diversify interests to truly stimulate entrepreneurial growth in the region’s travel industry.”

RETHINKING LUXURY

Industry leaders agree that while the architectural grandeur of hotels might vary, the essence of luxury should be consistent, rooted in common values and authentic experiences across different locations.

Instead of standardising luxury, leading brands are enriching their hotels with local art, music, and cuisine, an ATM session highlighted. The discussion focused on the dual value of involving celebrity chefs to attract guests while also fostering local culinary talents to maintain authenticity and support community development.

Experts emphasised that luxury is not just in the aesthetics but profoundly embedded in the experiences provided. “Knowing small but significant details such as a guest’s favourite dish or their children’s birthdays can transform a stay into an unforgettable experience,” a summit participant shared.



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STARTUPS SET-OFF RIGHT IN UAE

THE UAE HAS CEMENTED ITS GLOBAL POSITION AS THE NUMBER 1 DESTINATION FOR NEW BUSINESS VENTURES. 999 GIVES YOU THE LOWDOWN ON ITS STERLING REPUTATION AMONGST ASPIRING ENTREPRENEURS

BY K NIVEDITA

Time and again, the UAE has cemented its position as the premier global destination for starting and operating new business ventures. In the latest Global Entrepreneurship Monitor (GEM) report, the country was ranked first for the third consecutive year amongst 49 economies. This achievement is driven by its state-of-the-art infrastructure, visionary economic policies, and a thriving business ecosystem.

What's new is that the UAE has broken GEM's historic record by reaching its highest score ever of 7.7 this year. Following the UAE, India is ranked second with a score of 6.6.

The UAE's current standing represents a remarkable ascent from 1999, the year the GEM was initiated, when the country was ranked fifth with a score of 5.8. Today, besides India, the UAE has outranked Saudi Arabia, Lithuania, Qatar, Estonia, the Netherlands, South Korea, Switzerland, and China.

Significant advancements were made in the areas of Research and Development Transfers and Commercial and Professional Infrastructure, improving from a score of 6.8 to 7.8.

"The country's achievement is attributed to its emphasis on entrepreneurship and its support for small and medium-sized

“The UAE's achievement is attributed to its emphasis on entrepreneurship and its support for SMEs. This has enabled the UAE to foster a competitive knowledge-based economy grounded in innovation and new economic principles



**HE ABDULLAH BIN
TOUQ AL MARRI**

UAE Minister of Economy

enterprises. This has enabled the UAE to foster a competitive knowledge-based economy grounded in innovation and new economy principles," stated His Excellency Abdullah bin Touq Al Marri, UAE Minister of Economy.

Further elaborating on the UAE's success, Al Marri stressed that the top ranking in the GEM report underscores

the nation's trajectory towards achieving the UAE Vision 2031. This ambitious vision aims to position the UAE as a global leader in sectors driven by technology, artificial intelligence, renewable energy, space, and fintech, transitioning away from a traditional oil-based economy. Currently, the non-oil sector constitutes 74 per cent of the nation's GDP.

The GEM report is globally recognised as the most comprehensive and authoritative evaluation of entrepreneurship, encompassing 13 distinct Entrepreneurship Framework Conditions (EFCs). These criteria include the ease of market entry, infrastructure quality, research and development, funding avenues for entrepreneurial ventures, access to finance, knowledge transfer, government support programmes, policy environment, taxation, educational initiatives, and cultural norms.

GROUND REALITY

Entrepreneurs are reaping the benefits of the UAE's progressive landscape that equips them to aim higher and do more.

Rajender Prasad, Managing Director of Money Maestro, a major mortgage consultancy in Dubai, tells **999**, "The UAE's strategic location offers unmatched global market access, complemented by its business-friendly



NUMBERS CRUNCHED

1st

The position occupied by the UAE for the last three consecutive years on the Global Entrepreneurship Monitor (GEM) report

7.7

Highest score by any country on the GEM score card which was achieved by the UAE this year

1st

The position of the UAE in the region and 2nd globally in attracting greenfield foreign direct investment

Dhs550 billion

Target foreign investment of the UAE by 2031

The UAE's strategic location offers unmatched global market access, complemented by its business-friendly environment and favourable tax regime, which now [includes] new corporate tax guidelines. With diverse sectors, world-class infrastructure, and skilled talent, it provides a stable platform for entrepreneurial success and expansion, particularly in the MENA region.

Rajender Prasad

Managing Director of Money Maestro



Setting up a business in the UAE is remarkably streamlined, thanks to digitalisation and well-defined processes. Digital processes eliminate the need for physical documentation and notarisation, reducing stress in obtaining licences. The country's startup ecosystem fosters innovation and notably supports female entrepreneurs through mentorship and guidance.

Rajani Nalla

Founder & CEO of Trusity



environment and favourable tax regime, which now [includes] new corporate tax guidelines. With diverse sectors, world-class infrastructure, and skilled talent, it provides a stable platform for entrepreneurial success and expansion, particularly in the MENA region."

He adds that the workspace facilities in the UAE provide modern amenities, which foster collaboration. "The diverse, skilled and multilingual workforce,

including expatriates, ensures high-quality staff. Emphasis on education and professionalism creates an excellent work culture, ideal for businesses," says Prasad.

The GEM report states that, for the first time, it assessed the quality of social support for women and their access to resources compared to men. "The UAE had excellent scores for each: 8.0 for social support and 7.4 for comparative access to resources."

Rajani Nalla, Founder & CEO of Trusity, which offers online classes for children and young people and motivates them to build solutions to real-world problems, aligned with UN Sustainable Development Goals, has experienced this herself. "Setting up a business in the UAE is remarkably streamlined, thanks to digitalisation and well-defined processes. Digital processes eliminate the need for physical documentation and notarisation,

reducing stress in obtaining licences. The country's startup ecosystem fosters innovation and notably supports female entrepreneurs through mentorship and guidance," she shares with **999**.

Nalla adds that regulations by the Ministry of Human Resources and Emiratisation (MoHRE) ensure fair practices for both employers and employees. "But, while the UAE offers a conducive environment for startups, sourcing niche talent, particularly in tech, can be challenging. Roles like marketing and sales often have suitable candidates, but specialised tech roles require more effort. The buzz of innovation in the country has inspired Trusity to align its goals with the Vision 2031. We emphasise real-world knowledge and equip young people with 21st-century skills that address the global skills gap through project-based learning."

OTHER HIGHS

In February 2024, the HSBC Global Entrepreneurial Wealth Report said that entrepreneurs in the UAE rank second only to their counterparts in India in terms of international operations. They are either expanding their businesses abroad or have already done so.

According to 64 per cent of survey respondents, these entrepreneurs will be operating across two to six geographical locations, in contrast to those in the United States and France, where entrepreneurs typically remain based in a single domestic location.

The upward trajectory of the UAE is set to persist, particularly as it attracted the highest level of greenfield foreign direct investment in 2023. This form of investment involves a parent company initiating a venture in a foreign country by building new operational facilities from scratch. A report by the United Nations, released in January 2024, disclosed that the UAE only ranked second to the United States in terms of greenfield foreign direct investment last year.

As part of its economic diversification strategy, the UAE aims to attract Dhs550 billion in foreign investment by 2031, positioning itself amongst the top countries globally. It is clearly on track. The Kearney 2024 Foreign Direct Investment Confidence Index, released in April 2024, illustrates that the UAE has made a significant leap from 18th to 8th place. This index gauges investor confidence in a country, and in the case



In February 2024, the HSBC Global Entrepreneurial Wealth Report said that entrepreneurs in the UAE rank second only to their counterparts in India in terms of international operations. They are either expanding their businesses abroad or have already done so

of the UAE, the surge is attributed to the leadership's consistent commitment to progress and reforms.

BUSINESS ACCELERATORS

In a bid to foster entrepreneurship and attract investment, the UAE has rolled out several measures including

permitting 100 per cent foreign ownership of companies, overhauling visa and residency systems, and introducing pathways for self-employment and long-term residency.

The licensing processes have been streamlined to be faster and more efficient, banking services have been



enhanced, and substantial physical infrastructure incentives have been provided.

These incentives are designed specifically for advanced technology companies seeking to establish offices in the UAE, and include both commercial and residential lease benefits.

The government has also launched initiatives that collaborate directly with businesses, such as the 'Projects of the 50'. Introduced in 2021, this programme is part of an overall national growth strategy and includes a series of developmental and economic projects. It features global campaigns aimed at attracting foreign

investment, national initiatives to bolster emerging homegrown companies and enhance the quality of national products, partnerships with major global economies, and efforts to spearhead the Fourth Industrial Revolution across all sectors.

All these projects seek to establish the UAE as a global nation and a testbed for technologies and innovation. "The vision for the next 50 years is to make the UAE the global capital of investment and economic creativity, an integrated incubator for entrepreneurship and emerging projects, and an advanced laboratory for new economic opportunities," said HE Mohammad bin Abdullah Al Gergawi, Minister of Cabinet Affairs, during the launch of the Projects of the 50.

Another groundbreaking initiative was Ghadan 21, a three-year-long, Dhs50 billion accelerator programme launched in 2019. It was the brainchild of President His Highness Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan. This unique regional programme focused on investing in business, innovation, and people across four key sectors—economic, knowledge, liveability, and social. Experts believe that Ghadan 21 played a crucial role in enabling businesses in the UAE to withstand the shocks of the pandemic and drive forward.

ON COURSE

The result of the concerted efforts has been that the UAE is surpassing its own expectations.

Amidst dynamic global and regional events such as conflicts and political instability, which can upend a nation's economy, the UAE has demonstrated its resilience. At the Economy Middle East Summit 2024, held at the Abu Dhabi Global Market in May 2024, Al Marri announced that the country's economy is projected to grow by 7 per cent in 2024. By 2030, it is expected to reach a Dhs3 trillion economy.

"The UAE will stay on course with its efforts to create an incubating environment for business and economic activities. We are developing flexible and competitive legislation and economic policies to increase the country's attractiveness for foreign investments. The UAE has a suitable economic climate for investors, capital owners, and entrepreneurs," said Al Marri.

PILLARS OF PROGRESS



LOGISTICS

Strategically positioned between the East and the West, the UAE serves as a critical hub for the movement of goods across the globe via road, sea, and air. The logistics sector accounts for approximately 14 per cent of the UAE's GDP, a figure that is expected to continue rising. The efficiency of trade hinges on the seamless flow of goods and the elimination of bottlenecks, with businesses increasingly seeking to reduce carbon footprints as goods are transported over distances and at scale.

Powered increasingly by renewable energy, the country boasts an extensive network of world-class ports, airports,



The logistics sector accounts for approximately 14 per cent of the UAE's GDP, a figure that is expected to continue rising

highways, and other infrastructural assets. Furthermore, the government has implemented trade-friendly policies, reduced costs, and boosted investments.

The country has embraced digital solutions in its supply chains, reducing delays at ports by as much as 70 per cent. This innovation has positioned it amongst the top 12 countries in the World Bank's Logistics Performance Index 2023. The adoption of technology enhances communication amongst various stakeholders—from local suppliers to global marketplaces—leading to better

decision-making concerning inventory and services, and more effective management of customer expectations. Additionally, the value chains in the UAE are strategically designed to include regional hubs, warehousing, and reliable transport routes, providing businesses with multiple options to remain resilient in competitive markets. The UAE's logistical excellence was underscored during the pandemic when the country experienced no shortages of essential items, a testament to decades of strategic investment in supply chain infrastructure.

The UAE is continuously enhancing its transportation infrastructure to improve quality of life and facilitate ease of work. Its public transport network is world-class, encompassing buses, metro, tram, taxis, and water transport. The service is smooth and streamlined, enabling large numbers of people, including business travellers and residents, to utilise public transport regularly.

In April 2024, the General Civil Aviation Authority (GCAA) of the UAE greenlighted a cutting-edge transportation solution by granting approval for the country's first vertiport. These sites will function as hubs for flying vehicles to land and take off vertically, offering an alternative to traditional aircraft runways and enabling convenient passenger pick-up and drop-off. "This achievement of having the country's first vertiport is a first step that we are taking towards reaching the full potential of advanced air mobility and fostering innovation in the transport industry," said Saif Mohammed Al Suwaidi, Director-General of the GCAA.

On May 1, 2024, the Abu Dhabi

Department of Economic Development announced the establishment of a manufacturing plant for electric buses and lorries. The facility will also develop energy storage and charging solutions to serve various industries and applications. These initiatives are integral to the Abu Dhabi Industrial Strategy, which aims to expand the manufacturing sector to Dh172 billion, create 13,600 skilled jobs, and increase non-oil exports by 143 per cent to Dh178.8 billion by 2031. "The UAE is focused on extending comprehensive support to industry players through initiatives of the Abu Dhabi Industrial Strategy," said Arafat Al Yafei, Executive Director of the Industrial Development Bureau, the department's arm mandated to develop and regulate the industrial sector.

“ This achievement of having the country's first vertiport is the first step that we are taking towards reaching the full potential of advanced air mobility and fostering innovation in the transport industry



SAIF MOHAMMED AL SUWAIDI

Director-General of the General Civil Aviation Authority of the UAE

TRANSPORTATION





TELECOMMUNICATIONS

Way back in 2018, the UAE recorded a humongous leap in the development of its telecommunications infrastructure. It went from 24th place in the Telecommunication Infrastructure Index in 2016 to 2nd globally in 2018. In 2021, Best Accounting Software, which reviews and rates financial software, assessed 99 countries on the ease with which online businesses can start and thrive; the UAE was ranked amongst the top dozen. This study confirmed the widely acknowledged fact that the UAE provides the fastest mobile Internet speeds and coverage, ideally suited for Internet users. Remarkably, almost 100 per cent of the country's population uses the Internet.

The push to create robust Information Communication Technology (ICT) infrastructure has been ongoing for over a decade, driven by leadership that views strong telecommunications as foundational for future progress. Hamad Obaid Al Mansoori, Head of the UAE Digital Government and Director-

General of the Telecommunications and Digital Government Regulatory Authority, noted in 2021 that the country led several global competitiveness indicators assessing the development and quality of communications infrastructure.

"The progress achieved by the UAE in the telecommunications sector is a reflection of the wise leadership's directives. Telecom is one of the main engines of development in many sectors and the gateway to enter the Fourth Industrial Revolution era. The UAE is equipped for developments in areas, such as Internet of Things, the fifth generation, technologies supported by artificial intelligence and smart transportation," said Al Mansoori.

“ Telecom is one of the main engines of development in many sectors and the gateway to enter the Fourth Industrial Revolution era



HAMAD OBAID AL MANSOORI

Head of the UAE Digital Government and Director-General of the Telecommunications and Digital Government Regulatory Authority

Microsoft recognised the potential of the UAE and chose the country to set up its first hyperscale data centres in the region in 2019. Two years later, Oracle followed suit by establishing its second cloud region in Abu Dhabi, in addition to the Oracle Cloud Dubai Region.

The UAE, transitioning from an oil-based to a technology and innovation-driven economy, has emerged as a leading tech hub in the Middle East. The country's leadership has been instrumental in nurturing a knowledge-based, technologically advanced economy poised

for the future.

In a pioneering move, the UAE appointed HE Omar Sultan Al Olama as the Minister of State for Artificial Intelligence in 2017, who was later appointed Minister of State for Artificial Intelligence, Digital Economy and Remote Work Applications in July 2020. The Ministry is pivotal in developing policies, strategies, and regulations to consolidate the UAE's standing in cutting-edge fields and propel its future-oriented initiatives.

Efforts to embrace new technologies have led to the establishment of institutions such as the Abu Dhabi Digital

Authority, which develops smart systems for government services, and Smart Dubai, aimed at positioning the UAE as a nucleus for innovative startups and entrepreneurs. Their groundbreaking Artificial Intelligence Lab aims to establish Dubai as the smartest city in the world.

The International Trade Administration of the US has noted that the UAE is one of the largest data centre hubs in the Middle East. "Up to \$1 billion (Dhs3.67 bn) in additional investments are projected by 2026. The UAE data centre market is expected to grow at an average rate of 3.43% between 2022 and 2027," stated the Administration.

Up to \$1 billion (Dhs3.67 bn) in additional investments are projected by 2026. The UAE data centre market is expected to grow at an average rate of 3.43% between 2022 and 2027

—International Trade Administration of the US



TECHNOLOGY



EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS

The demand for higher education courses related to business and technology remains high in the UAE. Universities are offering both short and long-term degrees in fields such as management and information technology, which include specialisations like cybersecurity and network engineering. The curricula adhere to global standards, equipping students to enter the job market with international expertise. A notable addition to the UAE's educational landscape is the interim campus of India's premier institution, the Indian Institute of Technology-Delhi-Abu Dhabi, located at Zayed University in Abu Dhabi. This development represents another stride in augmenting the UAE's capacity to nurture a top-tier talent pool for future generations.

Observers note a shift amongst UAE students from traditional fields such as medicine and engineering towards enhancing their entrepreneurial skills, a trend accelerated by the pandemic. The nation fosters this entrepreneurial spirit through various competitions and



programmes. For instance, TruPreneurs, organised by the educational platform Trusity in February and May 2024, saw

teenagers transform into innovators as they competed in the Final Investor Pitch Competition.

BUSINESS ECOSYSTEM

The UAE offers a vibrant entrepreneurial environment with business-friendly policies and supportive infrastructure, making it home to a large number of startups, SMEs, and industries. Dubai, alone, is said to host more than 10,000 startups. In February 2024, Abu Dhabi's global tech ecosystem, Hub71, onboarded more than 190 startups that have raised Dhs5.4 billion. Last year, Hub71 had tweaked its policies to enable enterprises who were a part of its Company Building Programme to receive up to Dhs750,000, which is 50 per cent more than the previous Dhs500,000 equity-free incentives. On the other hand, ADQ, an Abu Dhabi-based investment and holding company, had launched a platform, DisruptAD, in 2021 to support and nurture over 1,000 startups by 2025.

In the UAE, opportunities abound for hardworking entrepreneurs. Here, you'll



find lots of family-owned businesses alongside enterprises wholly owned by foreign nationals. The state gives extended visas to entrepreneurs who have businesses in the country and there are free zones where an up-and-coming businessperson can avail himself or herself of a number of benefits.

Some of the top banking and financial institutions of the country have their branches and headquarters in the UAE and venture capitalists and investors in the country set their sights on promising businesses. There are also incubation and accelerator programmes, private-public partnership options, training opportunities, and state-of-the-art digital and physical infrastructure.



Ali Obaid is a veteran Emirati commentator, journalist, and writer on local issues

THE INVISIBLE THREAT

A recent crime in Egypt uncovers the tip of the iceberg of the vast networks of illegal online activities that lure young minds with the promise of quick money

A recent murder case in Egypt has brought to light a burgeoning threat in Arab societies—the perilous reach of the “dark web” or dark Internet. This case involved the tragic death of a 15-year-old teenager, whose body was discovered in a residential apartment, horrifically mutilated with his organs removed and placed beside him in a bag.

The Egyptian Public Prosecution reported that upon arrest, the perpetrator confessed to the murder, carried out at the behest of an Egyptian teenager residing in Kuwait. This teenager, whom he encountered online, was linked to a human organ trafficking ring operating via the dark web. He directed the perpetrator to abduct a child for organ harvesting in return for a payment of around \$100,000 (Dhs367,000).

The victim was shown to the teenage mastermind over a video call, during which the gruesome act of organ extraction was also carried out and recorded. Further investigations revealed that the mastermind and the perpetrator had plans to replicate this heinous act with another victim but were apprehended beforehand.

Egyptian authorities, in collaboration with Kuwaiti officials and Interpol, located and arrested the teenage mastermind and his father. Both were extradited to Egypt where the Public Prosecution began their interrogation. The teenager confessed to orchestrating the murder and organ harvesting, intending to sell recordings of these barbaric acts on the dark web for substantial profits. Particularly alarming was his admission that he had committed similar offences previously. His father, however, denied any involvement.

This crime is only the tip of the iceberg. Beneath it lies a complex network of illegal activities and digital underworld operations that are extensive yet not immediately apparent. Equally significant are the broader societal impacts and the ethical decay these hidden dimensions cause, particularly as they entice the youth. The chilling incident in Egypt underscores the urgent need to understand the underbelly of the dark web, which facilitates such brutalities for financial gain and organ trafficking.

The dark web consists of hidden online sites not indexed by conventional search engines. It often harbours illegal or unethical content, although it can also be used for secure communication or accessing privacy-related information. Caution is advised when navigating or attempting to access the dark web due to its associated risks.

The potential hazards of the dark web include exposure to illegal activities such as drug dealing, crime, fraud, exploitation, human trafficking, terrorism, and piracy. Adults might justify their use of the dark web, but it is vital to consider their influence on younger individuals. In a world increasingly driven by

materialistic values, teenagers may succumb to the allure of quick money offered by such illegal avenues, thereby compromising their moral and ethical standards.

Children are particularly susceptible to the perils of the dark web. The consequences are more severe than meets the eye. Therefore, it is essential for the community to remain alert and well-informed in order to protect its most vulnerable members from the invisible threats online.

The victim was shown to the teenage mastermind over a video call, during which the gruesome act of organ extraction was also carried out and recorded. Further investigations revealed that the mastermind and the perpetrator had plans to replicate this heinous act with another victim but were apprehended beforehand

BE ROADWISE during car BREAKDOWN

FACING A VEHICLE BREAKDOWN ON THE ROAD IS A DAUNTING EXPERIENCE FOR ANY MOTORIST. UNDERSTANDING ROAD HAZARDS AND THE UNPREDICTABILITY OF BREAKDOWNS IS CRUCIAL

BY ABDUL WASEY





In the first week of May, the Sharjah-based family of Faisal Siddiqui set out on a leisure trip to Hatta, looking forward to a day of sightseeing. However, their plans were abruptly interrupted when their vehicle broke down en route. Stranded by the roadside under the intense sun, the family not only faced the inconvenience of a disrupted outing but also the serious risk of being stuck on a busy highway.

Upon inspection, Siddiqui discovered a flat tyre. He quickly replaced it with a spare, but the incident prompted him to reflect on the complexities of roadside emergencies and the importance of being prepared for them.

Understanding the causes and remedies for vehicle breakdowns is crucial not only for convenience but for safety as well. Given the busy roads in the UAE, a sudden vehicle malfunction can result in more than just a missed appointment or a lost sightseeing opportunity. Therefore, comprehensive knowledge and regular vehicle maintenance are essential for ensuring safety on the road.

AWARENESS CAMPAIGNS

Authorities and police forces across the UAE regularly conduct awareness campaigns to promote road safety and

prepare motorists for unexpected vehicle breakdowns and other emergencies. The Directorate of Traffic and Security Patrols of Abu Dhabi Police, for instance, frequently distributes educational brochures detailing traffic regulations and safety guidelines on highways. In April, the Directorate enhanced its awareness drive by distributing pamphlets, sweets, flowers, and greeting cards on various internal and external roads.

This initiative aims to improve communication with drivers and increase awareness about traffic safety. Brigadier Mahmoud Youssef Al-Balushi, Director of the Directorate of Traffic and Security Patrols of Abu Dhabi Police, emphasised the importance of adhering to traffic laws. "Avoid speeding, stay focused while driving, maintain a safe distance between vehicles, wear seat belts, and use appropriate seats for children," he advised while underscoring the risks associated with sudden vehicle breakdowns and other road incidents.

Last month, as heavy rains affected the region, authorities in Dubai outlined specific procedures for motorists caught on flooded roads or experiencing vehicle breakdowns during unstable weather conditions. "If you are unable to navigate through flooded roads and your only option is to take an alternative route against the flow of traffic, you

“ Safely pull over to the roadside or, if that is not possible, activate your hazard lights to alert other drivers. Place a warning triangle 50 metres behind your vehicle and move to a safe roadside location. Afterwards, contact the police to report the issue

need to contact Dubai Police at 999 immediately,” stated an advisory from the Dubai Media Office.

In the event of a vehicle breakdown, the advisory said, “Safely pull over to the roadside or, if that is not possible, activate your hazard lights to alert other drivers. Place a warning triangle 50 metres behind your vehicle and move to a safe roadside location. Afterwards, contact the police to report the issue.”

CAUSES OF VEHICLE BREAKDOWNS

Vehicle malfunctions can arise from various causes, often unexpectedly. Issues within the fuel system, such as a blocked fuel filter or a failed fuel pump, can abruptly halt a vehicle. Electrical faults also pose significant challenges; a dead battery or a faulty alternator can immobilise a car, leaving drivers stranded on the road.

Mechanical failures are not limited to the battery or fuel systems. For example, the ignition system, which is vital for starting the engine, might falter due to worn-out spark plugs or defective wiring. Overheating could be another issue, often due to coolant system failures.

Moreover, a malfunctioning transmission may prevent the car from engaging gear, while issues with the suspension system can make the vehicle difficult to control, particularly at higher speeds.

WHAT TO DO

In the event of a vehicle breakdown in the middle of the road, drivers must prioritise safety by moving the vehicle away from traffic to a designated emergency area, or using the right shoulder only if necessary. Activating hazard lights immediately is essential to alert other drivers, according to Abu Dhabi Police.

For personal safety, it is advisable to exit the vehicle from the side away from traffic and wait behind a barrier or guardrail at a safe distance from the road. Setting up a reflective warning triangle or other signalling devices can help make the stalled vehicle more visible. Drivers should avoid attempting to fix the vehicle themselves on busy roads and instead call for emergency assistance by dialling 999.



Top 6 reasons for vehicle malfunctions

Battery issues



Battery failure is a frequent cause of breakdowns. This can occur due to age, poor maintenance, or leaving electrical systems on when the car is not running, which drains the battery life.

Tyre problems



Damaged tyres and wheels are another leading cause of vehicle malfunctions. Punctures from sharp objects, wear from old age, and damage from hitting curbs or potholes are typical scenarios. Maintaining proper tyre pressure and regular checks can help prevent these issues.

Brake failure



This is a critical safety concern and can lead to serious accidents. Common causes include worn-out brake pads, depleted brake fluids, or ABS errors. Regular checks and timely replacement of brake components are essential to avoid such failures.

Overheating



Although less common due to advancements in vehicle cooling systems, overheating can still occur. It's usually caused by a lack of coolant, a faulty water pump, or a broken thermostat.

Starter issues



Problems with the starter motor, such as a damaged electrical solenoid or a broken starter motor, can prevent a car from starting. Regular inspections can help identify potential starter problems before they lead to a breakdown.

Transmission slipping:



In vehicles with automatic transmissions, this can occur when the transmission has worn seals or gaskets, or when debris clogs the system. Keeping up with recommended transmission services is crucial.

“Usually, they break the triangular glass on a car window to access the vehicle and steal any valuables within reach. Such negligence provides a windfall opportunity for thieves



**LIEUTENANT COLONEL
MOHAMMAD ALI BIN HAIDER**

Head of the Buhairah Comprehensive
Police Station at Sharjah Police

According to the UAE Federal Traffic Law, stopping in the middle of the road incurs a penalty of a Dhs 1,000 fine and six black points. Besides the fine, it can also lead to potentially fatal consequences.

WATCH FROM AFAR

Leaving your car unattended on quiet roadside can invite theft, especially with open doors, windows, or keys left behind. Always watch your car from afar while you're making a call for help.

As part of a spring awareness campaign, Sharjah Police rolled out an initiative focusing on preventive measures to deter theft from vehicles. Motorists are advised against leaving their vehicles in isolated areas, which is a common scenario when a vehicle breaks down and the owner leaves to seek mechanical assistance, thus leaving their belongings in the lion's den.

Lieutenant Colonel Mohammad Ali bin Haider, Head of the Buhairah Comprehensive Police Station, highlighted the risk of leaving valuables visible in cars. “Usually, they break the triangular glass on a car window to access the vehicle and steal any valuables within reach. At times, cars are left unlocked by owners near supermarkets, bakeries, houses, public facilities, or isolated areas. Such negligence provides a windfall opportunity for thieves,” bin Haider told the media.

Simple checks such as assessing fuel levels or battery connections might offer immediate solutions or highlight the need for professional intervention. However,



A traffic officer of Abu Dhabi Police conducting an awareness campaign

Simple checks such as assessing fuel levels or battery connections might offer immediate solutions. However, more complex issues like engine or transmission failures require the expertise of qualified mechanics

more complex issues like engine or transmission failures require the expertise of qualified mechanics.

Services like roadside assistance across the country are readily available, offering both mechanical aid and towing services. Drivers need to have emergency numbers saved and readily accessible.

Moreover, motorists facing difficulties on the road can take advantage of the Dubai Police's ‘On-the-go’ initiative. Available at 138 stations across the emirate, this service is a collaboration between Dubai Police and major fuel suppliers like ENOC, ADNOC, and Emarat. It provides vehicle repair amongst other services and allows motorists to report minor traffic incidents, access police services, seek help for vehicle repairs, and utilise lost and found services.

Authorities have streamlined the process for motorists to obtain damage certificates following vehicle breakdowns due to adverse weather conditions. In Abu Dhabi, affected residents can visit police traffic departments in Abu Dhabi, Al Ain, and Al Dhafra to report and document rain damage.

In Sharjah, residents can apply for free vehicle damage certificates directly through the ‘Sharjah Police Smart Mobile’ app or on the official website. This service permits the uploading of photos of the damaged vehicle, thus eliminating the need for a physical inspection at a police station.

Similarly, Dubai has made its damage certificate application available through the Dubai Police app and website,



although previously a vehicle inspection at a police station was required.

These measures across the emirates are designed to alleviate burdens on motorists, ensuring they can easily obtain necessary documentation under exceptional circumstances.

PREVENTIVE MEASURES

Preventive maintenance is the most effective strategy to minimise the risk of breakdowns. Regular check-ups that include oil changes, tyre inspections, and fluid level checks are essential. For those driving in areas with extreme heat conditions, special attention should be given to cooling systems and air conditioning maintenance.

Drivers should also be vigilant for any signs of vehicle distress, such as unusual noises, warning lights on the dashboard, or changes in vehicle performance. Early detection of issues often prevents them from evolving into more severe problems that could lead to a breakdown.

The UAE government places utmost emphasis on road safety, which is evident from the stringent traffic laws and the extensive network of roadside assistance and emergency services.

Always be ready



Carry an emergency kit

Always have an emergency kit in your car's trunk. This should include a first aid kit, non-perishable food, water, basic car tools, jumper cables, and the contact details for your car-care services and insurance provider.



Maintain the car battery

To avoid starting issues, have your car's battery checked professionally if you notice any difficulties. Turning off the ignition and lights when the car is not in use can also prolong the battery's life.



Check and top up engine oil

Regularly monitor your car's engine oil level. If it drops or if the engine oil light comes on, address it immediately. Driving with insufficient oil can lead to serious problems.



Importance of regular car servicing

Schedule regular car services, especially if you drive frequently in poor conditions. Comprehensive servicing every six months and timely MOTs are crucial for identifying and addressing potential issues early.



Driving tips to avoid breakdowns

Use smooth driving techniques and avoid harsh conditions when possible. Harsh braking and clutch riding can wear down your car's components faster.



Monitor water level and temperature

Always check your car's radiator water level before trips and keep an eye on the temperature gauge to avoid overheating.



Avoid overloading the vehicle

Stick to your vehicle's load capacity to prevent strain on the brakes and suspension, which can increase the risk of breakdowns.



Pay attention to warning signs

Never ignore unusual noises, smells, or dashboard warning lights. Visit a workshop promptly to address these issues.





TRAFFIC POLICE HOTLINES

Abu Dhabi	800 3333 (For non-emergency roadside assistance) 999 (In case of breakdown affecting traffic)
Dubai	800 9090 (For non-emergency roadside assistance) 999 (For emergency)
Sharjah	901 (For non-emergency roadside assistance) 999 (For emergency)
Ajman	901 (For non-emergency roadside assistance) 999 (For emergency)
Ras Al Khaimah	901 (For non-emergency roadside assistance) 999 (For emergency)
Fujairah	92233322
Umm Al Quwain	999

The onus also lies with individual drivers to arm themselves with the knowledge and tools necessary to manage unexpected situations. This encompasses regular vehicle maintenance and knowing the appropriate times and methods to summon roadside assistance




Abu Dhabi Police, for example, recently released 3D videos on traffic safety on its social media channels and website, highlighting the hazards of distracted driving and the importance of vehicle maintenance while promoting safe driving during adverse weather conditions.


"Traffic awareness through CGI [computer-generated imagery] videos is one of the forms of modern media messages to reach different segments of society," Major Ahmed Abdullah Al Muhairi, Director of the Digital Traffic Awareness and Education Project at the Directorate of Traffic and Security Patrols of Abu Dhabi Police, was quoted as saying in March this year.

However, the onus also lies with individual drivers to arm themselves with the knowledge and tools necessary to manage unexpected situations. This encompasses regular vehicle maintenance, acquiring basic troubleshooting skills for common automotive issues, and knowing the appropriate times and methods to summon roadside assistance.

Effectively managing a roadside emergency not only protects the driver but also ensures the safety of fellow road users, helping to maintain the smooth flow of daily traffic. Therefore, understanding and preparing for potential vehicular failures are just as important as learning the rules of the road.

Abu Dhabi Police's 8 safety steps following a car breakdown

-  **1** Move to a safe area off the road, using designated spots for emergencies if available.
-  **2** Only use the right shoulder in extremely urgent situations.
-  **3** Turn on hazard lights immediately to notify other drivers of your presence.
-  **4** For safety, avoid staying in or near your vehicle on the road.
-  **5** Exit your vehicle from the side away from traffic and stay behind barriers if possible.
-  **6** Position reflective triangles or other signals well before your vehicle to enhance its visibility.
-  **7** Do not attempt repairs yourself on busy roads; leave it to professionals.
-  **8** Always call 999 for emergency assistance in case of vehicle breakdowns.



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SHARENTING FALLOUT

AUTHORITIES CAUTION THAT “SHARENTING”, OR THE ACT OF SHARING A CHILD’S PHOTO AND INFORMATION ONLINE, IS FRAUGHT WITH DANGERS OF IDENTITY THEFT, PUBLIC SHAMING AND PRIVACY BREACHES

BY REMY ARDEN





From the moment photography entered the domestic sphere in the 19th century, parents and grandparents have been captivated by the prospect of capturing their little ones' milestones and everyday moments. Photo albums once became every family's most treasured possession.

Social media has increased the reach of parents, enabling them to share images and videos of their children around the world. An audience of families and friends as well as strangers can witness a child's bumbling first steps and innocent responses to new experiences.

Platforms like Snapchat, Facebook, Instagram, and TikTok have become today's digital photo albums, yet they are not without risks. A research by cybersecurity firm Kaspersky indicates that over 75 per cent of parents post pictures of their children on social media, and 33 per cent do so without their children's consent. These practices, juxtaposed with significant data breaches like Facebook's in 2021—

where the details of 533 million users from 106 countries were exposed—highlight the potential dangers inherent in seemingly ordinary posts.

Some parents go to great lengths to build an online fanbase. However, its danger was illustrated by a recent event in the United States. It involves six siblings from a town in the US who were amongst the world's most-watched children, thanks to their mother, Ruby Franke. She documented the family's lives as a vlog, *8 Passengers*, while offering parenting advice.

Since family dramas are quite popular, millions tuned in to watch Franke's controversial parenting methods, which included denying her six-year-old lunch at school, removing her eldest son's bed, and threatening to withhold holiday gifts and meals.

However, questions soon emerged about Franke's extreme parenting style. What happened next has sent shock waves across the world and turned the spotlight on the harmful impact of a common practice called "sharenting".

In a distressing turn of events in

September 2023, Franke's 12-year-old son was found seeking help with visible signs of abuse. Following this, authorities discovered his 10-year-old sister in a state of neglect.

Franke and her business partner, Jodi Hildebrandt, were arrested. By February 2024, Franke had been sentenced to four prison terms, ranging from one to 15 years each, on charges including aggravated child abuse.

CAUTION FOR PARENTS, HOUSEHOLD STAFF

In January 2024, the Abu Dhabi Judicial Department (ADJD) issued a caution to parents against sharing photos and videos of their children on social media, to safeguard minors and enhance their safety.

"Exposing private sphere to people outside the family, allowing them to know details of the child's life, also exposes your child to danger," ADJD stated.

It explained that showing their lives on social media can make children susceptible to abuse, exploitation, and in





some cases, blackmail.

ADJD also advised families that it is prudent to refrain from sharing details about their personal lives and relationships with household employees, such as domestic helpers or drivers.

In the UAE, taking photos of children and publishing them online without the consent of their parents falls within the scope of the UAE Cybercrime Law. Violators may face fines ranging from Dh150,000 to Dh500,000 and a minimum jail term of six months, depending on the severity of the offence.

The UAE takes the issue of children's safety seriously, with the Ministry of Interior (MoI) establishing the Higher Committee for Child Protection in 2009.

The MoI's Child Protection Centre, established in 2011, undertakes the role of developing, implementing, and customising the initiatives and processes aiming at providing safety, security, and protection for all children living in the UAE or even those coming as visitors.

The Committee plays a key role in maintaining the safety of children because achieving justice and protection for children is a shared responsibility.

SHARENTING PITFALLS

Driven by desires for appreciation, popularity, or financial gains, some parents compromise the safety and privacy of their children, who are too young to understand consent.

Often a child's first exposure to the blue light of a screen is when their photograph is taken right after birth with a mobile phone. When celebrities share ultrasound images of their unborn child, or influencers market products using their young children as models, they are disseminating intimate details about minors into the digital world. Similarly, when the typical parent shares every developmental stage of their child, they become part of a phenomenon known as "oversharenting," often without recognising the potential long-term impacts on their child's privacy.

Worldwide, sharenting has raised serious concerns as technology could potentially manipulate data, thereby exposing children to risks such as identity theft, public shaming, discrimination, and privacy breaches.

In this digital age, parents have grown accustomed to the Internet, with communication technology advancing by leaps and bounds each year. Gadgets like tablets, smartwatches, and interactive

Exposing private sphere to people outside the family, allowing them to know details of the child's life, also exposes your child to danger

**Abu Dhabi Judicial Department
January 2024 Advisory**



Why do parents put their children on display?



DOCUMENTING MILESTONES

Many document key life events, including children's first birthdays, on social media, allowing them to revisit these moments. Most platforms offer free uploads, enabling users to create extensive personal timelines.



PARENTAL NETWORKS

On social media, many parents form communities with other new mums and dads to discuss parenting issues. They exchange advice and the latest insights from others in similar situations.



SHARING ACHIEVEMENTS

Just as individuals share personal milestones online, parents equally enjoy posting their children's accomplishments, from uttering their first words to securing a trophy in a sports event. However, studies suggest that parents who frequently share images of their children online feel a need for increased validation, leading them to continue posting due to the dopamine rush it provides.



KIDFLUENCERS AND MONETISATION

The rise of 'Kidfluencers'—children who become social media influencers—highlights this trend. These young influencers are amongst the highest earners on social platforms. Moreover, social media acts as fertile ground for marketers, with many brands engaging parents and children for product placements ranging from toys to clothing, providing a substantial income source for many families.

“On average, by the age of 13, parents have posted 1300 photos and videos of their child to social media.

We need to stop and think what about this means for children's lives now and how it may impact their future lives as adults



ANNE LONGFIELD

Former Children's Commissioner for England

toys can keep children connected online for extended periods. There is an app available for virtually every aspect of child-rearing; simply log in with your child's details, and you can monitor their feeding and sleep schedules, organise playdates and school activities, and manage doctors' appointments and daycare communications.

What often gets lost in the slippery slope of convenience is that all these digital devices involve making a lot of data about a child available to different companies online. Incidentally, a couple of popular apps that track children's location through GPS have experienced data leaks – making sensitive information publicly available about the child.

GLOBAL REGULATIONS

Worldwide, too, governments are concerned about the safety of children. A hallmark step was taken by France in 2023 when the country's National Assembly's law committee unanimously passed a law banning parents from sharing photos of their children on social media platforms.

“We are sending out a message to parents that they must protect their children's privacy. The average child has 1,300 photos of themselves circulating on social media platforms before the age of 13, which is even if they are allowed to have a social media account,” said Bruno Studer, a Member of the French Parliament who presented the bill.

Even as early as 2018, Anne Longfield, then the Children's Commissioner for England, presented a report, “Who Knows What About Me”. She wrote, “More information is collected and shared about



NUMBERS CRUNCHED

75%

The percentage of identity theft cases by 2030 whose biggest cause is sharenting, based on a Microsoft study

33%

Parents who have never asked their children for permission before sharing photos online, per a Kaspersky study

75%

The percentage of parents found by a Kaspersky study to have shared their children's images on social media

92%

Children who have a digital footprint by the time they are two years old, based on a study by security company AVG

Dhs3.3 billion

The estimated value of identity fraud caused annually by sharenting in 2030, according to a study by Barclays Bank

us as we go about our daily lives than ever before...This is true for all of us. But, the difference for children today is that their data footprints begin from the very moment that their proud parents upload that first baby photo to social media. On average, by the age of 13, parents have posted 1,300 photos and videos of their child to social media... We need to stop and think [about] what this means for children's lives now and how it may impact their future lives as adults."

In India, the Criminal Investigation Department of a state warned parents in 2023 that sharenting could lead to morphed images of the children and "digital kidnapping" in which criminals use the child's images for unethical purposes.

DIGITAL FOOTPRINTS

Numerous studies and statistics support experts' concerns about the public availability of children's personal information due to overzealous parental sharing. Statistics from the security company AVG reveal that 92 per cent of children have established a digital footprint by the age of two, a fact troubling for parents who are largely unfamiliar with their online "friends".

Another study, by Barclays Bank, has shown that annual losses from identity fraud caused by sharenting in 2030 would be around \$900 million (Dhs3.3 billion) a year. The bank, which maintains that "It's a good idea for you and your family members

to periodically spring clean your social media profiles," warns that adults share essential details that make up security questions at banks and other financial institutions, such as date of birth, mother's maiden name and names of pets and sports teams, online besides successive photographs of a child. Furthermore, the advent of technologies like Deepfake, which can convincingly alter personal images, underscores the potential misuse of the extensive data available on young individuals.

Yet, another major study, by Microsoft, has estimated that sharenting might be the biggest factor in more than 75 per cent of identity theft cases by 2030. The digital world is notorious for never forgetting. Once a photograph or a video is uploaded online, the person cannot find out who has seen it—even when there is a privacy setting—or saved it or distorted it with the use of AI tools. Even if the parent deletes an embarrassing image of a child, there is no way to know if it has really disappeared or exists as a copy somewhere. Thus, one lacks control over the content that one posts on social media. According to Kaspersky, a study has found that 32 per cent of children said that their parents had shared a story, image, or video of them on social media even after they explicitly asked them to refrain. All of this suggests that online photo sharing has inherent privacy issues between children and parents.



How to share content about your children safely

Secure your account



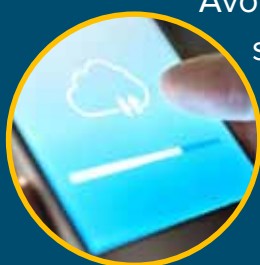
Lock your account so that only approved individuals, such as family and friends, can view your posts. For increased safety, disable the “reshare” option on your account.

Anonymise images



Many parents are anonymising their child’s images by blurring faces or covering them with stickers when posting online. Such tools are widely available on platforms like Instagram.

Protect sensitive information



Avoid sharing sensitive details such as dates of birth, and addresses of homes and schools. Review your profile to ensure your posts do not enable a stranger to build a profile of your child.

Assess intentions



Before posting an image, think about why you want to share it. If possible, ask your child if they would mind having their photograph or video shared online.

Consider child’s feelings



Reflect on whether a child would feel embarrassed by a photo or caption. Consider if they will appreciate pictures of personal moments or quirky nicknames as they grow older.

Control sharing



Request that your family and friends refrain from sharing images of your child online or posting any they have taken. They are likely to understand and take measures to protect your child’s privacy.



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

MINDS ADRIFT

In this redefinition of madness, let us not forget that the Arab heritage is replete with descriptions of lovers as madmen

Every city harbours its lovers, just as it cradles its cemeteries, its bustling cafés, its labyrinthine alleys, and its madmen enamoured with its essence. These cities possess houses with distinctive appellations, shrouded in narrative, striving for chastity and detachment. Yet, the madmen, as the populace calls them, stand out as the most remarkable and vivid figures within these urban landscapes.

Today, more than ever, we find an imperative to converse about madness and the mad.

Time seems to have halted, and all have succumbed to silence or fearful rationality, fostering a collective unease. There is an escalating need to unearth the hidden and to restore dignity to madness, lest the pandemic transforms us into a herd bearing the guise of humans, stripped of all life's delights by our overwhelming dread of death.

Madmen throughout our history have been a varied lot, not cast from a single mould or fashioned with uniform details. Amongst them are the silent ones who possess naught but the capacity to observe others with a blend of irony and occasional fear. Others are garrulous, incessantly questioning, intervening, or making demands. They are not, as Arab cinema sometimes depicts, both sages and dervishes, endlessly repeating phrases laden with inner agony. This suffering unites them despite their disparate cities and diverse visages. Is it not enough that they are deemed madmen, when to many, a more fitting description would be that they are simply different?

Many of us hold in our memories the images of the

“madmen” of our cities, even if we have never seen them or feared them. The overarching narrative is unjust to anyone who deviates from the norm. Madness is often intertwined with notions of violence, aggression, or shrieking. This is how society defines madness for its youth, and as they mature, and the vast horizons of global literature and cultures open up to them, they

begin to re-evaluate much of what has been ingrained in their memories, including the concept of madness. We now embrace a novel definition, distant from the one we were nurtured on, perhaps as a form of homage to the notion of madness. Some proclaim, “How sweet is madness,” while others assert there is a certain health in it. Dreamers have hastened to describe madness with every conceivable connotation of liberty and emancipation.

In this redefinition of madness, let us not forget that Arab heritage is replete

with descriptions of lovers as madmen. Anyone deeply submerged in love is deemed mad for their beloved. Thus, we have Majnun Layla, Qays ibn al-Mulawwah, and Majnun Buthayna, Jamil ibn Abdallah ibn Muammar, who is often only known as Jamil Buthayna, amongst many others.

While the notion of madness in the Arab heritage often brushes against romanticism, a touch of it enlivens the heart, and an abundance of it preserves the joy that seeps through the fissures in the walls of the sane. This is not an exaltation of madness, but rather a call to soothe the minds adrift.

While the notion of madness in Arab heritage often brushes against romanticism, a touch of it enlivens the heart, and an abundance of it preserves the joy that seeps through the fissures in the walls of the sane

6 must-know etiquette tips for UAE professionals

LET'S GO BACK TO BASICS OF DAY-TO-DAY PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT.
HERE ARE ESSENTIAL WORKPLACE ETIQUETTE TIPS THAT REMAIN CRUCIAL
WHETHER IN A HYBRID OR IN-OFFICE WORKING MODEL

BY TREV AGASSI





In the UAE, home to nearly 600,000 small and medium enterprises (SMEs) contributing 63.5 per cent to the non-oil gross domestic product, professional conduct is not just encouraged—it underpins every business interaction.

Given the comprehensive regulations aimed at enhancing the competitiveness of the job market and the well-being of the workforce, some behaviours that might be acceptable elsewhere are frowned upon here. For example, office gossip, whether online or offline, is penalised under the country's laws on defamation and cybercrime.

Despite the extension of hybrid work in this post-pandemic era, workplace etiquette will never get outdated in any company handbook. It is vital for ensuring smooth business operations and cultivating a culture that attracts and retains top talent, fosters strong relationships, and drives success.

A 2022 survey by global job seeker service Resume Builder revealed a significant gap in etiquette awareness amongst employees. It found that a majority of employers believe their staff need to refine their workplace manners,

According to the Resume Builder survey, 78 per cent of business leaders stress the importance of making polite conversation, 75 per cent emphasise dressing professionally, and 69 per cent focus on writing professional emails

with over 60 per cent of companies planning to implement etiquette workshops.

This push for improved manners is a response to the challenges businesses face as they reintegrate employees who have adopted casual at-home habits or those with limited experience in a professional setting.

Four years since the onset of the pandemic, the demand for workplace etiquette training has surged globally. According to the Resume Builder survey,

78 per cent of business leaders stress the importance of making polite conversation, 75 per cent emphasise dressing professionally, and 69 per cent focus on writing professional emails.

Anne Chertoff, CEO of New York-based Beaumont Etiquette, echoed these findings. She noted a 100 per cent increase in the number of companies requesting trainings since last year. In an interview with CNN, she highlighted a common oversight: "If you just got used to taking your lunch plate and putting it next to the sink, that's what you're still doing. So, you have to learn and remember that, no, you have to wash your dish because you're not at home, you're at the office."

Chertoff also pointed out other issues such as inappropriate dress in the office and misunderstandings arising from the use of informal communication styles, like emojis and acronyms, which can be prone to misinterpretation.

Reflecting a wider trend, the popularity of office etiquette tips on social media platforms—from TikTok videos to LinkedIn courses—illustrates an increased awareness of the importance of proper office behaviour. Here are some etiquette tips for day-to-day workplace interactions:

1

Shun office gossiping

In the UAE, where the integrity of both the employees and organisations is highly valued, rumour-mongering is not just frowned upon; it's legally actionable. Such behaviour can damage reputations, foster a toxic work environment, and deteriorate professional relationships. Employees are encouraged to uphold confidentiality and to avoid spreading unverified or sensitive information about their company, clients, or colleagues.

Legally, spreading gossip or rumours, whether online or offline, can result in severe consequences. Defamation or circulating false information that harms someone's reputation, under the UAE Penal Code, can lead to 2 years in jail and/or a fine of up to Dh50,000. Meanwhile, Article 20 of the UAE Cybercrime Law takes a strong stance against the dissemination of online rumours that could disrupt public order or morals. Penalties may include detention and fines of up to Dh500,000.



2

Be professional online, too

Social media can be a powerful tool for boosting your visibility in the community, connecting with more customers, and keeping up with the latest trends. That said, it's smart to keep your personal and professional lives separate online. Remember, your posts and likes can stick around forever. Keep in mind that potential clients and future employers might take a peek at your personal feeds, too.

It's fine to log on for work-related reasons, but try not to get lost in your feed. Getting distracted? Try turning off those pesky notifications or switching on the "Do Not Disturb" setting to stay focused.



4

Respect diversity

Embracing diversity in the workplace is crucial for fostering an inclusive environment where every employee feels like they are valued and empowered. It's about appreciating the unique perspectives and talents each person brings. Remember, the words you choose matter—be mindful to avoid language that could be perceived as offensive or discriminatory. Taking the time to learn about different cultures, backgrounds, and identities can enrich your professional interactions and contribute to a more cohesive workplace.

Article 25 of the UAE Constitution affirms that all individuals are equal before the law, irrespective of race, nationality, religion, or social status. Further reinforcing this, Federal Law No. 2 of 2015 concerning Discrimination and Hatred explicitly targets the prevention of discrimination and the promotion of equality. Those found guilty of discriminatory acts can face severe consequences, including imprisonment for up to 5 years or fines ranging from Dh500,000 to Dh1 million. This is especially stringent if the act is carried out by a public employee in the course of their duties.



3

Keep your email professional

While it's easy to pepper conversations with emojis when chatting with family and friends, they're a no-go in professional communications, especially over email. Emojis, although fun, can muddy the waters in business interactions. Their casual nature may introduce ambiguity and in diverse workplaces, their meanings can vary across cultures, leading to possible confusion. Furthermore, using emojis can diminish the professional tone vital for maintaining credibility and respect.

For conveying messages, especially when discussing complex or sensitive topics, choose your communication medium wisely. Always ensure emails are clear, concise, and free from spelling errors, and think twice before using emojis. Remember, emails are permanent records, so it's crucial to keep them precise and appropriate for all professional contexts.





HERO'S FALL

A UNIVERSITY STUDENT PASSIONATE ABOUT DETECTIVE FICTION
IS MURDERED IN A SCENE STRAIGHT OUT OF A CRIME NOVEL. THE
CID TEAM, UNCOVERING A PLOT FUELLED BY PEER JEALOUSY,
NAVIGATES TWISTED CLUES TO DELIVER JUSTICE

BY WAJIH HASSAN

DIGITAL ILLUSTRATION BY ANANGPAL SINGH



Khalaf, a 21-year-old university student, has developed a deep admiration for the novels written by the renowned English crime novelist, Agatha Christie. He was amused by how she weaved mysteries and kept readers hooked. One of his favourite quotes was from one of the characters in her novel *Hercule Poirot*: “I admit that a second murder in a book often cheers things up. If the murder happens in the first chapter, and you have to follow up everybody’s alibi until the last page but one—well, it does get a bit tedious.” But little did he know, these words would eerily echo the complexities of his own untimely demise.

A literature major specialising in Arabic Language and Literature at a university in one of the emirates, Khalaf earned the moniker “Jackson, the Hero”, aptly describing his academic excellence and notable achievements in bodybuilding, which he started during his mid-teens and flourished into a passion that won him several medals.

However, underneath the admiration of his university professors and friends lay a current of envy amongst some of his peers. Two of these, Hamed and Ghanim, harboured jealousy exacerbated by their own insecurities and failures.

One foggy night, the undercurrents of their envy culminated in a tragic event. Khalaf was found dead in front of his family’s house, stabbed multiple times in a manner that seemed ripped from the pages of a detective thriller—a genre he so loved. The only clue initially available was a murky CCTV footage captured across the street, showing two indistinct figures approaching his house.

The case was assigned to a Criminal Investigation Department (CID) team led by Colonel Ahmed, who

approached Khalaf’s murder with determination, having once been a lecturer on criminal psychology at Khalaf’s university.

The CID team began their investigation by piecing together Khalaf’s last days. They interviewed friends, family, and acquaintances, building a picture of his life and the dynamics within it. Their attention was drawn to Ghanim through interviews that seemingly showed visible discomfort when discussing Khalaf’s recent victories in various bodybuilding competitions.

The breakthrough came when the CID team revisited the grainy footage from the night of the murder. Enhancing the video, they spotted a brief flash—a reflection from a ring. Incidentally, they recalled Ghanim’s ornate silver ring during their interview with him. This detail shifted the CID team’s focus squarely onto him.

With a search warrant secured, the team conducted an investigation on Ghanim and sent the three rings he was wearing for forensic analysis. One of those rings confirmed traces of Khalaf’s blood embedded in its intricate engravings.

Faced with the watertight forensic evidence during interrogation, Ghanim’s defences broke down. He confessed to the crime, conceived out of jealousy and resentment towards Khalaf. Ghanim’s confession led to Hamed’s arrest. The duo were tried and convicted, under the weight of the CID team’s meticulous investigation.

In the aftermath, the university community and Khalaf’s family and neighbourhood remembered Khalaf as a beacon of potential tragically cut short by those he walked the university corridors with. But in his death, as in the stories he cherished, justice had been served.

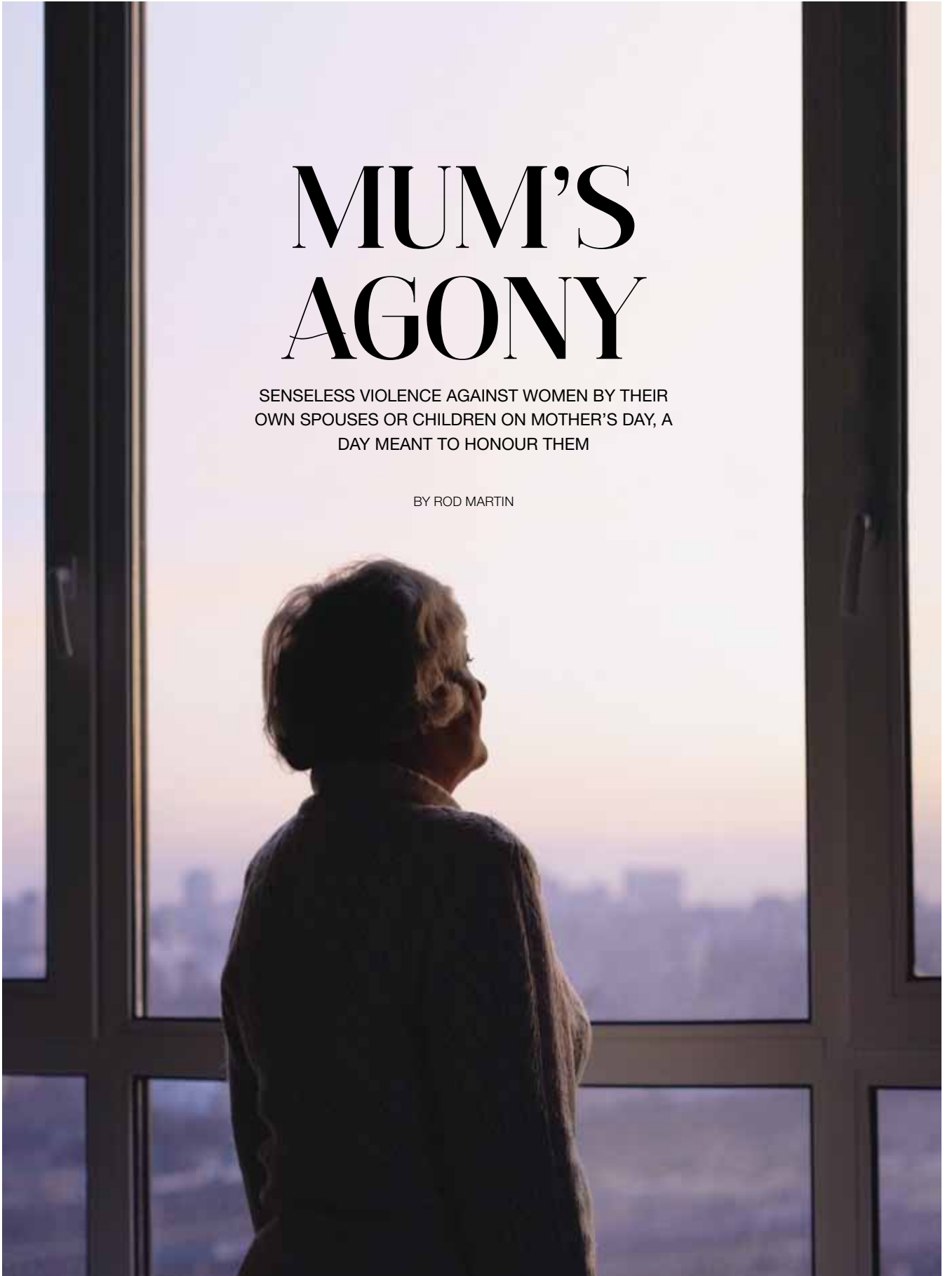
The only clue initially available was a murky CCTV footage captured across the street, showing two indistinct figures approaching his house

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

MUM'S AGONY

SENSELESS VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN BY THEIR
OWN SPOUSES OR CHILDREN ON MOTHER'S DAY, A
DAY MEANT TO HONOUR THEM

BY ROD MARTIN



TRANQUILLISER

WHEN: MAY 2020

WHERE: COLORADO, UNITED STATES

Suzanne Morphew, 49, disappeared after going on a bicycle ride on Mother's Day in 2020. Her remains were discovered three years later in a remote part of central Colorado, over 65 kilometres south of her residence.

An autopsy report issued by the Chaffee County Attorney's Office concluded that Suzanne died by "undetermined means". The report revealed the presence of a mix of drugs typically used to tranquillise wildlife in one of her bones but noted the absence of any trauma.

A year after Suzanne's death, her husband, Barry, was arrested in May 2021 for her murder. During the arrest, authorities found a dart gun and accessories used for tranquillising wildlife in the couple's home. Barry, an avid hunter and sportsman, defended himself to the police, stating he had left Suzanne at home early on the day she died to go to a construction job in Denver.

However, the case was dropped in 2022, before the trial even began. The dismissal followed a judge's decision to prohibit the prosecution from calling most of their primary witnesses, citing procedural errors in turning over evidence.

Barry's legal representatives lodged a complaint against the investigators, accusing them of deliberately concealing evidence. His attorney, Iris Eytan, claimed the evidence pointed to Suzanne



Barry Morphew and his wife Suzanne

being abducted, drugged, and killed by another individual, stating that Barry's tranquilliser gun was not working at the time of her disappearance.

Last April 2024, an updated autopsy report by the Colorado Bureau of Investigation classified Suzanne's death as a "homicide by undetermined means in the setting of butorphanol, azaperone, and medetomidine intoxication", suggesting the possibility of a retrial.

Following the release of the autopsy findings, Barry's legal team issued a statement via Colorado Public Radio, saying "The Morphews have prayed that the authorities would remove their blinders and not only find Suzanne but also apprehend the individual responsible for her disappearance and murder."

FEUD ON CATS

WHEN: MAY 2023

WHERE: LAS VEGAS, UNITED STATES

On Mother's Day, a man brutally murdered his mother, claiming she was a robot.

Linda Cooney was stabbed to death and her body was thrown into the backyard pool at their Las Vegas home by her son, Aaron Cooney.

Aaron's brother (name withheld) mentioned he had left his mother in the house to walk his dog at 12:30 am and assumed she had gone to bed upon his return around 2:30 am.

The following morning, the brother asked Aaron about their mother's whereabouts. Aaron chillingly replied, "I stabbed her last night. She's gone."

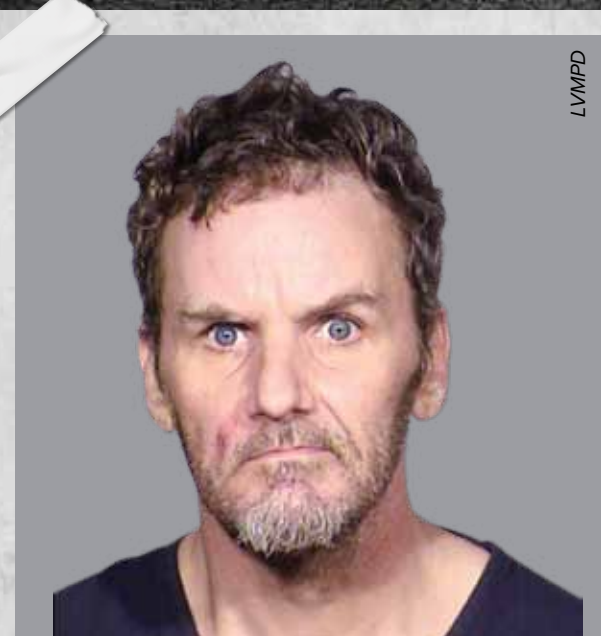
When he asked why, Aaron reportedly said, "That's not our mum anyway. We need a new one. She was a robot."

The brother then rushed to the backyard and called 911. There, he discovered Linda face down in the pool, bleeding from multiple stab wounds. As he was pulling their mother's body from the pool, Aaron reportedly remarked, almost jokingly, "She was clearly dead."

Upon arrival, authorities confirmed her death at the scene. Homicide detectives noted that Linda had suffered multiple stab wounds to her forearms, head, armpit, chest, and legs.

Police found bathmats and towels covered in blood, and the handle of a kitchen knife with the blade broken off. Detectives also determined there had been an attempt to clean the blood around the master bathroom sink.

The brother told police that the violence had begun a few



Aaron Cooney

months earlier when Aaron had threatened their mother with a knife during an argument about their cats. When interviewed by authorities, Aaron stated he needed to go to the hospital because "he heard voices".

Aaron appeared in Clark County District Court but was found incompetent to stand trial. The court ordered that he be treated at a mental health facility until he is competent to face trial.

GARDEN TOOLS

WHEN: MAY 2017

WHERE: MISSISSIPPI, UNITED STATES

A brief conversation took a tragic turn when a man killed his own mother in her home in Shannon, Mississippi, on Mother's Day.

Antonio Gladney, 37, initially cooperated with authorities and spoke with them on the night of the murder. He was taken into custody the following day.

He had reportedly been estranged from his mother, Molly Gladney, 66, when he broke into her residence, presenting flowers and a Mother's Day card to the subdivision guards to gain entry. The two had an argument which escalated into a violent attack that began inside the home and concluded in the carport.

Police stated the mother was brutally killed with garden tools, resulting in multiple traumatic injuries to the head and face. Antonio fled the scene but returned to his mother's home that same night and spoke with authorities.

Four days after the murder, Antonio made his first judicial appearance in Lee County Justice Court. He confessed to the crime, stating, "I wasn't in my right mind at the time. I was under the influence of something," and added, "I have never been emotional, but when I came down from what I



Antonio Gladney and his mother Molly

was on, I was hurt. I have finally accepted what I did. I did something to hurt my family and to break my family up."

Antonio also pleaded guilty to an aggravated assault charge. He had attacked and threatened three detention officers at the Lee County Jail with a homemade knife. He has been incarcerated and was sentenced to life imprisonment.

MUM'S REQUEST

WHEN: MAY 2015

WHERE: FLORIDA, UNITED STATES

A man admitted to losing control of all his actions when he attacked his mother and slit the throat of his friend who tried to intervene.

The incident began at 10:30 am when Joshua Shaw, 25, was told by his mother to clean his room. She also told his friend to go home. Enraged by his mother's actions, Joshua grabbed her by the neck and threw her to the ground. Joshua's friend then acted in her defence and pushed him away.

The two friends ended in a scuffle and then "briefly talked", the police report stated. However, when his friend went to the kitchen to wash his face, Joshua approached him with a folding knife and slit his throat. The report noted that the wound stretched from the left side of the man's neck to the middle.

Joshua claimed that his friend had slipped and fallen onto the knife when the latter called 911.

When the police officers arrived, his friend was hysterical and applying pressure to his wound with a towel. He then told the police, "He (Joshua) was absolutely trying to kill me."

During an inquest, Joshua eventually admitted to attacking his friend after losing "all control of his actions". He was charged with attempted first-degree murder, battery, obstructing justice, and victim tampering. It was also revealed that his mother has a no-contact order against him, and he was slapped with



Joshua Shaw

contempt of court for violating the restraining order.

He was detained without bail at Palm Beach County Jail.



THE JOURNEY OF IBN JUBAYR

SET OUT TO FULFIL HIS PILGRIMAGE TO MECCA, MUSLIM GEOGRAPHER, TRAVELLER, AND POET IBN JUBAYR BEGAN HIS JOURNEY FROM AL-ANDALUS TO DESTINATIONS THROUGHOUT THE MEDITERRANEAN AND THE FARTHER EAST

BY DR FALEH HANDHAL



Ibn Jubayr, a Muslim traveller from Al-Andalus, embarked on a journey that left a significant mark on literary history. His voyage began in 1183 and spanned more than two years, during which he meticulously documented his experiences, contributing to the creation of a new genre of writing known as the *rihla*, or creative travelogue.

Originating from Granada, now part of modern-day Andalusia in Spain, Ibn Jubayr served as a secretary to Abu Said Osman, the governor of Granada and son of the first Almohad caliph, Abd al-Mu'min. At the age of 38, he departed on February 15, 1183, at a time when Granada was under the rule of the Al Ahmar dynasty, renowned for constructing the iconic Alhambra Palace.

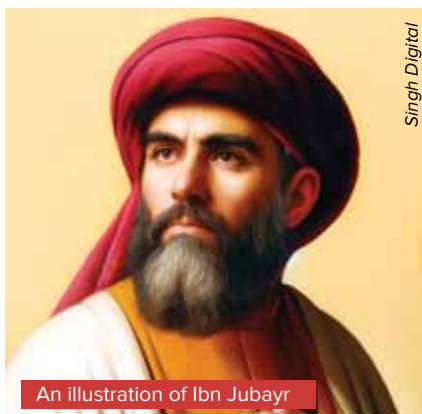
Ibn Jubayr's route took him first to Alexandria via the Mediterranean Sea, where he recounted the perils he faced during the voyage. He then travelled overland to Cairo and from there sailed across the Red Sea to Jeddah. His journey continued to Mecca where he spent eight months, recording in detail the rituals of Ramadan and Hajj.

After Mecca, Ibn Jubayr visited several cities in Iraq, including Kufa, Hillah, and Baghdad. He then ventured north to Mosul and Tikrit, and into Syrian territory, visiting Harran, Manbij, Aleppo, Hama, Homs, and finally Damascus. His return journey to Al-Andalus included a noteworthy stop in Sicily, then under Sicilian control after being ruled by Arabs. He praised the peaceful coexistence he witnessed between Muslims and Christians there.

Ibn Jubayr's extensive writings not only enriched geographic and cultural knowledge but also offered a unique glimpse into the socio-political climates of the regions he visited. All this forms a crucial part of this historical article.

THE POLITICAL LANDSCAPE

During Ibn Jubayr's travels, it is crucial to contextualise the political landscape of the regions he visited, notably Egypt and the Levant, which were under the rule of Salah al-Din al-Ayubbi, also known as Saladin. A former commander in the Fatimid Caliphate's armies, Saladin was appointed vizier of Egypt in 1169. By 1171, he had effectively dissolved the Fatimid Caliphate, redirecting allegiance to Al Mustadi, the Abbasid Caliph in Baghdad. In 1174, Saladin declared his independence in Egypt, gaining the endorsement of the Abbasid Caliph. His rule soon expanded to include Syria and the Hejaz.



An illustration of Ibn Jubayr

Singh Digital

At the age of 38, he departed on February 15, 1183, at a time when Granada was under the rule of the Al Ahmar dynasty, renowned for constructing the iconic Alhambra Palace



Present-day Alhambra Palace in Granada

In 1187, Saladin achieved a significant victory in the Battle of Hattin against the Crusaders. This period marked a critical phase in Ibn Jubayr's journey, coinciding with Saladin's reign over these territories. Despite the nominal authority of the Abbasid caliph in Baghdad, Saladin's governance was predominant in the Islamic world during this era. This political backdrop is essential for understanding the context of Ibn Jubayr's travels.

ALEXANDRIA

Upon reaching Alexandria, the first Arab city on his itinerary, Ibn Jubayr provided an extensive description that captured its vibrancy and cultural significance. He was particularly struck by the Lighthouse of Alexandria (Pharos of Alexandria), noting its remarkable visibility from over 70 miles away due to its immense height and solid

construction, measuring more than 150 cubits.

In addition to the architectural marvels, Ibn Jubayr highlighted Alexandria's role as a hub of intellectual and spiritual activity. He wrote, "The city had numerous schools, which catered specifically to those studying medicine. Ascetics and travellers found solace in retreats dedicated to their needs. The Sultan's support for education and health was evident in the provisions made for scholars and the sick; accommodations were provided, hospitals were maintained, and physicians were appointed to care for those in need."

Ibn Jubayr also observed the city's religious life, noting many mosques which added to the spiritual atmosphere. He recounted a scene of Frankish prisoners riding camels, a spectacle accompanied

A former commander in the Fatimid Caliphate's armies, Saladin was appointed vizier of Egypt in 1169. By 1171, he had effectively dissolved the Fatimid Caliphate



An illustration of Saladin, the Muslim sultan of Egypt and Syria

wife of Pharaoh and adoptive mother of Moses. He remarked on the abundance of mosques and beautifully constructed graves that offered solace to the needy and the strangers.

Ibn Jubayr also provided a detailed account of the Citadel of Cairo, a formidable fortress and the desired residence of the Sultan, alongside a grand hospital that resembled a palace in its architectural beauty and medical provision. The hospital was notable for its separate facilities for sick women and a dedicated area for people with mental illnesses, showcasing advanced healthcare practices of the time.

His observations extended to the ancient pyramids which he described as majestic structures built from precisely carved rocks assembled without visible bonding. These, he noted, were subject to various interpretations about their original purpose, with some viewing them as tombs.

On the western bank of the Nile, Ibn Jubayr described Giza as a bustling town, renowned for its grand Sunday markets and recreational spaces. "A notable feature was the central mosque connected to a gauge that measured the Nile's flow annually, surrounded by marble stones carved with images of crocodiles, believed to ward off the actual reptiles from that stretch of the river," he wrote.

His narrative continued with a description of his voyage from Cairo on the Nile, heading towards Sudan. He recounted his stops in Akhmim and Qena, cities in Upper Egypt noted for their Coptic communities and the conservative



A painting depicting the Lighthouse of Alexandria by Philips Galle, 1572

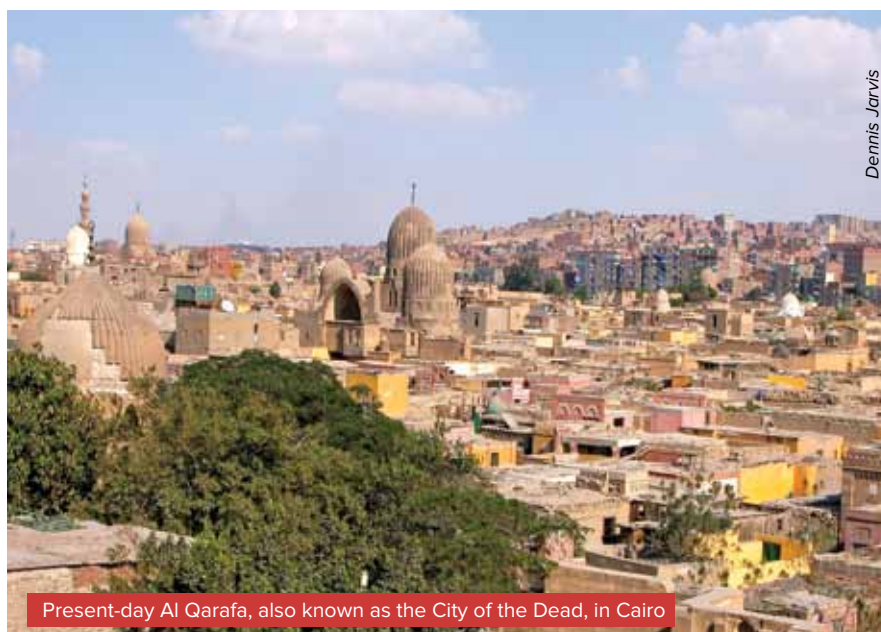
by drummers and trumpeters, illustrating the diverse and dynamic nature of life in Alexandria during this period.

After his time in Alexandria, Ibn Jubayr continued his journey by boarding a ship on the Nile River, setting his course towards Cairo.

CAIRO

Ibn Jubayr was immediately captivated by the Mosque of Sayyidina Al Hussein. He detailed the presence of Al Husayn ibn Ali ibn Abi Talib's remains in a silver tomb, describing an overstructure that was beyond words, adorned with silver and gold candlesticks, and marble walls.

In the same visit, Ibn Jubayr explored Al Qarafa, also known today as the City of the Dead, or Cairo Necropolis, where he noted the graves of significant figures including Rubier ibn Ya'qub and Asiya, the



Present-day Al Qarafa, also known as the City of the Dead, in Cairo



The historical Al Hussein Mosque in Cairo, Egypt

Ibn Jubayr also provided a detailed account of the Citadel of Cairo, a formidable fortress and the desired residence of the Sultan, alongside a grand hospital that resembled a palace in its architectural beauty

customs regarding women's visibility.

Finally, his journey took him to Aydhāb in Sudan, home to the Al Bajjah people, and then across the Red Sea to Jeddah. This passage was marked by treacherous conditions, lasting two days until they safely reached the mainland.

JEDDAH

"When we arrived in Jeddah, we stayed at the residence of the leader Ali, who was the ruler of Jeddah before being appointed as the governor of Mecca," Ibn Jubayr wrote of his stay in Jeddah.

He provided a detailed depiction of the city, noting, "Jeddah is a city on the coast of the Red Sea, with many houses and hotels built of stone. There is a building shaped like a dome, rumoured to have been the house of Hawa, the mother of mankind. Most of the city's rulers are from the Alawi lineage, undoubtedly considered amongst the family whom Allah has chosen for the hereafter."

Ibn Jubayr further observed, "In the city, there are wells carved into the rock, said to be three hundred in number. As for the inhabitants, they represent various Muslim groups and schools of thought."

From Jeddah, Ibn Jubayr's journey continued with a group of pilgrims, heading towards Al Haram, marking another significant leg of his extensive travels. Ibn Jubayr's account of his eight-month stay in the Holy City, which spans over 30 pages, provided a detailed description of Mecca and the surrounding areas, which he meticulously documented during his pilgrimage. Here are some of the highlights from his descriptions:

MECCA AND THE SACRED PRECINCTS

"We entered Mecca through the Umrah Gate," Ibn Jubayr recounted, "and voices resounded with chants of Talbiyah from every direction. Tongues were fervent with supplications, praising Allah until we reached the Sacred Precincts and the dwelling of Ibrahim, the Friend of Allah."

His narrative captured the spiritual intensity and devotion of the pilgrims as they engaged in the rites of pilgrimage, circling the revered Kaaba, and participating in the Tawaf Al Qudum.

He reflected, "Praise be to Allah who honoured us with this visit, and made us amongst those to whom the call of Ibrahim

has come. He is sufficient for us, and what an excellent guardian He is."

THE SACRED MOSQUE

Ibn Jubayr provided a detailed description of the Sacred Mosque's architecture and spiritual components. He wrote, "The floor is paved with marble, and its walls are entirely marble."

In his description of the Sacred Mosque, Ibn Jubayr wrote many expressive phrases and sentences about this magnificent sanctuary. We find ourselves in awe and wonder at his account, as he captures the historical and religious significance of the site. He began by describing the four corners of the Sacred House: the Iraqi Corner, facing north, the Levantine Corner, facing west, the Yemeni Corner, facing south, and the Black Corner, facing east.

"The mosque's atmosphere is enriched by the presence of scholars and the weekly sermons delivered from a pulpit by a preacher adorned in black, walking between two black flags," Ibn Jubayr wrote.

HISTORICAL AND RELIGIOUS SITES

Within the mosque complex, Ibn Jubayr described the Abbasid Dome, housing the Uthman ibn Affan Qur'an, penned by Zayd ibn Thabit and securely bound.

He also mentioned the Dome of Revelation, once the home of Khadija, the Mother of the Believers. Then, he visited the House of Abu Bakr, touching its remaining wall for blessings.

Ibn Jubayr wrote, "Inside a building called the Abbasid Dome, there is the Uthman ibn Affan Qur'an, written in the handwriting of Zayd ibn Thabit. It is bound between wooden covers, secured with large-sized locks, and its pages are wide. Amongst the scenes we witnessed is the Dome of Revelation, which is the house of Khadija, the Mother of the Believers.

"In this house, Fatima Al Zahra was born, and it is where her sons, Hasan and Husayn, were also born. Another noble sight is the House of Bamboo, where the Prophet used to worship Allah secretly with the honourable early Muslims. We also visited the House of Abu Bakr Al Siddiq, except for a wall that people seek blessings by touching. Amongst the mountains with noble significance is the great mountain known as Thawr, which contains the cave where the Prophet sought refuge with his companion."



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

PRESERVING VALUES IN THE DIGITAL WORLD

People must guard against the negative influence of shallow social media content and promote meaningful engagement that genuinely serves and enriches society

The undeniable benefits of social media in our fast-paced, constantly active world include providing innovative tools that support diverse content online. These platforms are employed by various institutions, both locally and internationally, as a form of soft power to influence thought, set trends, or reinforce existing ones. However, we must not overlook the drawbacks these platforms have. A major concern is the widespread dissemination of random clips and content lacking substantial value.

Such online content often promotes values at odds with the cornerstones of society and family. This has prompted the UAE's Public Prosecution to take action against the creators of such social media content, viewing it as not just a breach of personal freedom but as an assault on societal values.

This is a critical time to address this issue as we witness a surge of content with unclear purposes or agenda. It's perplexing why many, either due to a lack of education or values, continue to support and propagate insubstantial posts, inadvertently boosting the visibility and followings of their creators.

This phenomenon raises questions about why these influencers are celebrated and, more worryingly, why their advice is adopted. Many social media users across all ages follow their advice blindly—to the point of making life-changing decisions such as quitting jobs, switching careers, or going under the knife based on distorted opinions and guidance.

The excessive adulation these social media personalities receive from an uncritical audience is a primary factor in the erosion of core values, lending undue importance to shallow content. It empowers creators who neither deliver meaningful messages nor serve their communities, bolstering their negative impact on societal norms and shaping the perspectives of our

new generation. Too often, these figures become the role models people follow and emulate, obsessing over their every move.

What we can do is to counteract their influence by supporting others who provide meaningful and positive contributions to their communities. To do this effectively, we must instil robust values, teach our children to critically evaluate what they see and hear, make informed choices before sharing content, and apply these principles ourselves. Crucially, we must

also take responsibility for reporting content that goes against our values and principles and should not be mistaken for freedom of expression—a right that is too often abused.

The Public Prosecution for Cybercrimes and other authoritative bodies cannot tackle this challenge alone. It requires the collective effort of the community to shield our families and the broader community from harmful content, a task that becomes more daunting as shallow online content becomes normalised. Thus, it is important that we only support what is valuable, ensuring that content without merit does not prevail.

We must instil robust values, teach our children to critically evaluate what they see and hear, make informed choices before sharing content, and apply these principles ourselves

GENAI-POWERED SERIES

Huawei has launched its Pura 70 series, introducing the **Pura 70**, **Pura 70 Pro**, and **Pura 70 Ultra** into international markets. This flagship lineup showcases innovative camera systems and refined aesthetics. At the heart of these devices is the new Kirin 9010 chipset, enhancing performance and efficiency.

The series is notable for its smart features such as AI Gesture Control, utilising Generative AI technology. Each model is equipped with a 13 MP front camera. The Pura 70 boasts a 50 MP main camera with a variable aperture of $f/1.4 - f/4.0$, a 12 MP periscope telephoto lens with 5x optical zoom, and a 13 MP ultra-wide camera. The Pura 70 Pro features a similar 50 MP main camera, complemented by a 48 MP telephoto lens with 3.5x optical zoom and a 12.5 MP ultra-wide sensor. The high-end Pura 70 Ultra includes a 1-inch sensor and a retractable lens, a 50 MP telephoto camera with $f/2.1$ aperture, and a 40 MP ultra-wide sensor.



PRICE: Starts at Dhs2,999

WEBSITE: huawei.com

TURBO-CHARGE MOBILE



PRICE: Dhs9,499

WEBSITE: porsche-design.com

Experience timeless design in the palm of your hand with the **Porsche Design HONOR Magic V2 RSR**, an eye-catching fusion of Porsche Design's motorsport-inspired aesthetics and Honor's advanced technology. This smartphone takes inspiration from Porsche's iconic hexagonal motif in lightweight titanium and features the custom Super Dynamic HONOR Falcon Camera H9800 sensor. It is equipped with cutting-edge HDR sensors and a LiDAR Matrix Autofocus System. This smartphone also has a dual-layer OLED Tandem Display, offering HDR brightness up to 5000 nits.

Powering it is a 5600mAh HONOR Silicon-Carbon Battery, designed for unmatched durability and reliability, even in low-temperature environments. The Porsche Design HONOR Magic V2 RSR is available in Agate Grey and Frozen Berry, colours that pay homage to iconic Porsche models like the 911 and Taycan.

RIY SMARTPHONE

The makers of Nokia phone, HMD, is launching its first self-branded product line of smartphones, the **HMD Pulse**, **HMD Pulse Plus**, and **HMD Pulse Pro**. The HMD Pulse series aims to strike the balance between affordability, performance and repairability. The smartphone maker offers repair-it-yourself (RIY) options for its customers through self-repair kits from iFixit. The series features the octa-core Unisoc T606 processor and comes with 6GB of RAM. It runs on Android 14, powered by a 5000mAh QuickFix replaceable battery. The smartphone also features a 13MP primary camera with autofocus and 8MP front camera, enhanced imagery with 50MP primary rear camera, and 59 hours of battery life.

PRICE: Starts at Dhs549

WEBSITE: hmd.com



ULTRALIGHT HEADPHONES



PRICE: Dhs799

WEBSITE: apple.com

The original go-to headphones for active music lovers have returned with better features. **Beats Solo 4** features Spatial Audio with Dynamic Head Tracking and custom-built 40 mm transducers to minimise electronic latency and distortion for extraordinary clarity and range. The headphones showcase an ergonomic design and ultralight — weighing just 217 grammes, you can almost forget you're wearing them. Beats Solo 4 is made comfortable by its soft but durable UltraPlush ear cushions, balanced flex-grip headband, customisable sliders, and ergonomically angled ear cups. It's also equipped with Fast Fuel, which means a quick 10-minute charge gives up to 5 hours of playback. Beats Solo 4 has up to 50 hours of battery power so you can enjoy listening to your favourite tracks hassle-free.

HEALTH BUDDY

Smart bands meet fashion. That's the edge of the **Xiaomi Band 8 Pro** over other smartwatches. It features a 1.74-inch AMOLED touchscreen, offering 336 x 480px resolution and a 60Hz refresh rate, offering 600 nits of peak brightness and Gorilla Glass 3-reinforced screen. The Band 8 Pro boasts health and activity tracking features with 24/7 heart rate monitoring, SpO2 tracking, sleep and stress monitoring. You can also track 150+ sports modes and monitor your runs through the built-in dual-band (L1 and L5) GNSS satellite receiver, along with the Mi Fitness app. The smart band is powered by a 289 mAh battery that could last up to two weeks with typical usage and six days with AOD mode.



PRICE: Dhs260

WEBSITE: www.mi.com

STREAM IT ALL



The way people interact with and consume content has evolved dramatically in the digital era. As a result, the electronics market has become fiercely competitive, driven by rapid innovations. The **Xming Page One** stands out in this crowded space. This world's first Google TV LCD projector offers unlimited entertainment options with over 700,000 viewing choices across more than 10,000 apps, including certified Netflix access. Users can enjoy content on anything from an intimate 40-inch display to a fully immersive 120-inch screen. The Xming Page One features the latest Google TV operating system, complimentary live TV channels, and an LCD projection of 500 CVIA lumens. Its design includes a simple port layout with an HDMI 2.1 port, a USB-A 2.0 port, and an audio jack, requiring a proprietary DC input.

PRICE: Dhs1,800

WEBSITE: formovie.com



EMBARK ON A READING JOURNEY THROUGH COMPELLING MEMOIRS, INSIGHTFUL WORKPLACE MINDSETS, AND THE RAPIDLY EVOLVING WORLD OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

BY ROD MARTIN



PRACTICAL GUIDE TO AI

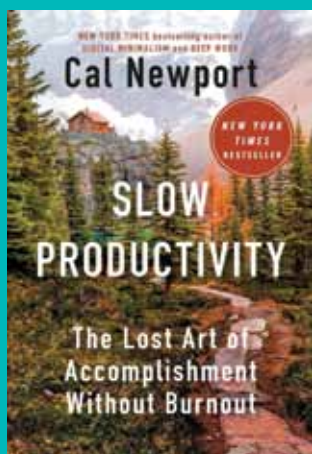
TITLE: Co-Intelligence: Living and Working with AI

AUTHOR: Ethan Mollick

PUBLISHER: Portfolio

PRICE: Dhs104

Consumer Artificial Intelligence (AI) has arrived. And with it comes inescapable upheaval as we grapple with what it means for our jobs, lives, and the future of humanity. Cutting through the noise of AI evangelists and AI doom-mongers, Wharton professor Ethan Mollick emerges as one of the most prominent and provocative explainers of AI, focusing on the practical aspects of how these new tools for thought can transform our world. In this book, he provides a layman's introduction to the current state of Large Language Models (LLMs). It offers a clear, concise, and remarkably comprehensive playbook to navigate the AI revolution currently unfolding at an exponential pace. It urges humans to engage with AI as co-workers, co-teachers, and coaches.



HABITS TO MINDSETS

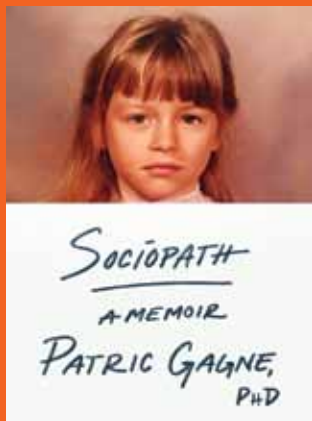
TITLE: Slow Productivity: The Lost Art of Accomplishment Without Burnout

AUTHOR: Cal Newport

PUBLISHER: Portfolio

PRICE: Dhs67

Long before the arrival of pinging inboxes and clogged schedules, history's most creative and impactful philosophers, scientists, artists, and writers mastered the art of producing valuable work with staying power. In this timely and provocative book, Cal Newport harnesses the wisdom of these traditional knowledge workers to radically transform our modern jobs. Drawing from deep research on the habits and mindsets of a varied cast of storied thinkers – from Galileo and Isaac Newton to Jane Austen and Georgia O'Keefe – Newport lays out the key principles of "slow productivity", a more sustainable alternative to the aimless overwhelm that defines our current moment. Combining cultural criticism with systematic pragmatism, Newport deconstructs the absurdities inherent in standard notions of productivity, and then provides step-by-step advice for workers to replace them with a slower, more humane alternative.



MENTAL HEALTH

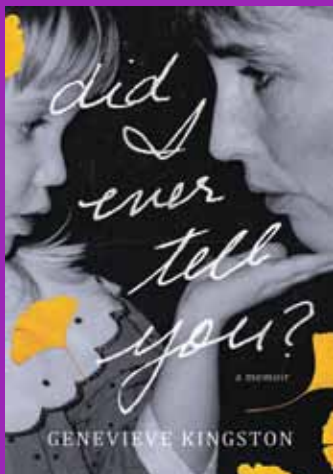
TITLE: Sociopath: A Memoir

AUTHOR: Patric Gagne

PUBLISHER: Bluebird

PRICE: Dhs96

This memoir sheds light on an often maligned and misunderstood mental disorder. It tackles how the author, Patric Gagne, comes to terms with her sociopathy. The constant pressure to conform to a society that rejects anyone like her is unbearable. This leads Gagne to commit bad deeds such as stealing and lying – becoming occasionally violent. She becomes an expert lock-picker and home invader, all with the goal of filling the feeling of nothingness with "something". Things change when Patric reconnects with an old flame; she gets a glimpse of a future beyond her diagnosis. If she is capable of love, it must mean that she isn't peculiar. With the help of some curious characters she meets along the way, she embarks on a mission to prove that the millions of people who share her diagnosis aren't all peculiar either.



MOTHER-DAUGHTER TALE

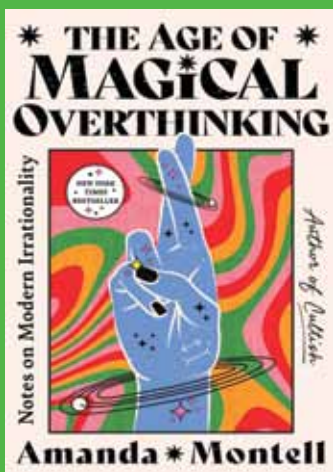
TITLE: Did I Ever Tell You?

AUTHOR: Genevieve Kingston

PUBLISHERS: S&S/Marysue Rucci Books

PRICE: Dhs107

Genevieve “Gwen” Kingston’s mother is diagnosed with terminal cancer when Gwen is just 3 years old. Defying the odds, she lives another eight years—during which time she fills a chest with gifts and letters for Gwen and her brother, Jamie, for every major milestone and birthday through age 30. This book revolves around three unopened boxes that remain: engagement, marriage, and first baby. Two decades after her passing, Gwen’s mother’s extraordinary efforts create a lifelong conversation beyond the grave. This masterfully written memoir tells the story of a family riven by grief. It’s a book about family and legacy; and it’s one that emphatically declares, as Gwen’s mother does in a particularly powerful letter, that “Love is stronger than death.”



MAGICAL THINKING

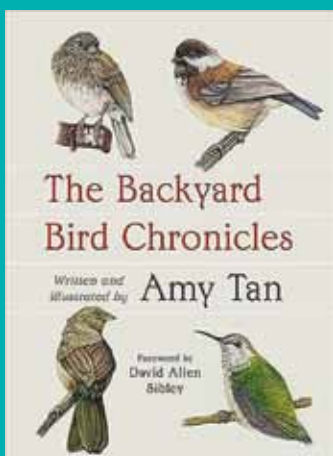
TITLE: The Age of Magical Overthinking: Notes on Modern Irrationality

AUTHOR: AMANDA MONTELL

PUBLISHERS: ATRIA/ONE SIGNAL

PRICE: Dhs100

The bestselling author of *Cultish* and host of the podcast *Sounds Like a Cult* presents a delectable fusion of cultural criticism and personal story that explores our cognitive biases and the power, disadvantages, and highlights of magical thinking. Amanda Montell turns her erudite eye to the inner workings of the human mind and its biases in her most personal and electrifying work yet. She explains that “magical thinking” can be broadly defined as the belief that one’s internal thoughts can affect unrelated events in the external world. In all its forms, magical thinking works in service of restoring agency amidst chaos. In this book, Montell argues that in the modern information age, our brain’s coping mechanisms have been overloaded, and our irrationality turned up to an 11. In a series of thought-provoking chapters, Montell delves into a cornucopia of the cognitive biases that run rampant in our brains.



BIRDS' WORLD

TITLE: The Backyard Bird Chronicles

AUTHOR: Amy Tan

PUBLISHER: Knopf

PRICE: Dhs128

Tracking the natural beauty that surrounds us, this book maps the passage of time through daily entries, thoughtful questions, and beautiful original sketches. With boundless charm and wit, author Amy Tan charts her foray into birding and the natural wonders of the world. In 2016, she becomes overwhelmed by the state of hatred and misinformation on social media, and the country feels more divisive than ever. In search of peace, Tan turns to the refuge she found as a child: nature, a place of wonderment and the freedom that comes with play and imagination. But what begins as an attempt to find solace turns into something far greater—an opportunity to savour quiet moments during a volatile time, connect to nature in a meaningful way, and imagine the intricate lives of the birds she admires.

Abu Dhabi investigates impact of microplastics on marine life

In a pioneering effort, the Environment Agency - Abu Dhabi (EAD) and the Abu Dhabi Quality and Conformity Council (QCC) have partnered on a first-of-its-kind study to investigate the impact of microplastic pollution on marine ecosystems in the Capital.

The findings from the study are expected to provide critical insights into the health of Abu Dhabi's marine environments and will be instrumental in developing strategies to mitigate the environmental impacts of microplastics.

The collaboration, which began in 2022, combines the scientific marine expertise and research capabilities of the EAD with the advanced laboratory



techniques and analytical proficiency of the QCC.

Abdulsalam Al Hashmi, Director of the Environment Quality, Monitoring, and Control Division at EAD, emphasised the critical nature of the study.

"In our bid to assess microplastic contamination levels, EAD is conducting

comprehensive and ongoing environmental surveys. These involve the collection of marine sediment, water, and biota samples from key locations across Abu Dhabi's marine environment," Al Hashmi explained.

"The data and insights gained from this assessment will play a vital role in formulating strategies at both the local and national

levels to effectively address and mitigate any impacts, and to institute a change in community practices," Al Hashmi added.

Microplastics, typically smaller than five millimetres, originate from a variety of sources, including larger plastic debris and microbeads commonly added as exfoliants to health and beauty products.

Sharjah Safari celebrates birth of 2nd African savannah elephant

Sharjah Safari celebrated the birth of its second African savannah elephant, "Tarthooth", named after a rain-associated wild plant, as announced by the Environment and Protected Areas Authority (EPAA).

This event marks a significant milestone following the 2023 birth of "Samra", the first elephant born at the facility.

Tarthooth's birth is a key achievement in Sharjah Safari's broader initiative aimed at promoting the breeding of diverse animal species. The facility's successful breeding programme includes African giraffes, Scimitar oryx, and the rare Madagascar Paratilapia fish. These efforts span various



Tarthooth (centre) becomes the second African savannah elephant born in Sharjah Safari

specialised environments designed to accommodate birds, reptiles, mammals, and other groups, reflecting the Safari's commitment to ecological diversity and conservation.

Hana Saif Al Suwaidi, EPAA Chairperson,

emphasised that the Safari is actively protecting and augmenting populations of rare and endangered species listed under the International Union for Conservation of Nature's Red List.

Al Suwaidi highlighted that African savannah elephants, noted for being the largest land animals, face ongoing threats to their survival. The decline in their population, she said, is a pressing

concern for conservationists worldwide.

Characterised by their impressive size, large ears that help dissipate heat, and distinctly outward-curving tusks, these elephants are predominantly found in the southern plains of the Sahara Desert.



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Research links short anger bursts to higher stroke risk



Researchers from Columbia University have established that short bursts of anger, even just a few minutes, can negatively impact vascular health and increase the risk of stroke, as detailed in a study published in the *Journal of the*

American Heart Association.

The study differentiated the impacts of anger on vascular health from other negative emotions such as sadness and anxiety. In a randomised trial involving 280 participants, individuals were tasked with

recalling feelings of anger, sadness, anxiety, or neutrality for eight minutes. Their vascular health was assessed before and several times after the exercise.

Findings revealed that those who recalled angry experiences exhibited a decline in blood vessel dilation capacity, an effect that persisted for approximately 40 minutes. In contrast, the blood vessel dilation of participants in the anxiety or sadness groups remained unchanged.

Dr Daichi Shimbo, lead author of the study and a professor of medicine at Columbia University in New York City, explained, “There have been some studies in the past that have linked the feelings of anger, anxiety, and sadness to heart disease risk in the future.”

Shimbo highlighted three primary ways in which anger damages blood vessels: by impairing their ability to dilate during reduced blood flow, by interfering with cellular markers related to injury and repair, and by affecting overall blood vessel health.

AI set to transform medical diagnosis

Advances in Artificial Intelligence (AI) are set to revolutionise disease diagnosis, with AI chatbots increasingly used to fill gaps caused by health worker shortages. Large Language Models (LLMs), like ChatGPT, are stepping in for self-diagnosis, according to a recent study.

A study published in *PLOS Digital Health* found that ChatGPT, specifically its GPT-4 iteration, outperformed ophthalmology trainees in diagnostic assessments. GPT-4 scored 69 per cent, compared to the trainees’ average of 59 per cent, although expert ophthalmologists scored higher on average.

“LLMs are approaching expert-level knowledge and reasoning skills in ophthalmology,” the researchers stated, suggesting that LLMs “may provide useful medical advice and assistance where access to expert ophthalmologists is limited.”

A February 2024 study by Harvard University revealed that GPT-3 accurately



included the correct diagnosis within its top three potential diagnoses 88 per cent of the time.

Google’s AI technology has also demonstrated its capability to match or outperform clinicians in detecting diseases such as breast cancer in mammograms and eye conditions in retinal scans. Furthermore, AI is making

strides in aiding diagnoses through medical imaging data, including Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI) scans.

While AI can help meet the demand for health services, it cannot replace the precise symptom information provided by medical professionals. Despite its potential, AI technology remains prone to errors and misinformation, experts said.

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WHAT THE MONTH HAS IN STORE



ARIES (MARCH 21 TO APRIL 20)

This month kicks off with an unyielding energy, pushing you towards new heights in your professional life. Your relentless drive ensures that any project you touch turns into a gold mine. Embrace leadership roles that come your way and remember, the bold moves you make now will carve out future successes.



TAURUS (APRIL 20 – MAY 21)

June ushers in a period of quiet contemplation. The world whirls around you, but your focus turns inward to personal development. Harness this serene energy to reconnect with your core values and reassess your long-term goals. Meditation could bring profound insights.



GEMINI (MAY 22 – JUNE 20)

This month promises a whirlwind of activity, igniting your curiosity and desire to learn. Attend workshops or start a course; new skills will pave the way to unexpected opportunities. Your quick wit and adaptable nature will help you shine in any crowd. Embrace the chaos—it's where you thrive.



CANCER (JUNE 21 – JULY 22)

An introspective phase beckons, drawing you towards home and heart. Focusing on family or your domestic environment could provide a comforting sense of security. Consider creative home improvements or organising family gatherings. These activities will rejuvenate your spirit and strengthen bonds.



LEO (JULY 23 – AUGUST 22)

The spotlight finds you effortlessly this month, highlighting your creative talents. Dive into artistic projects or public speaking opportunities—your charisma will ensure captivated audiences. Your flair for drama and passion for life make you a natural star. Enjoy the applause; you've earned it.



VIRGO (AUGUST 23 – SEPTEMBER 22)

Meticulous planning pays off as you find yourself well-prepared for the unexpected. This is a prime time for career advancement, as your attention to detail and hardworking nature are recognised. Stay proactive and organised—your efforts are about to bear fruit.



LIBRA (SEPTEMBER 23 – OCTOBER 22)

A breeze of harmony flows through your life, urging you to balance professional commitments with personal development. Engage in activities that refine your skills and broaden your understanding. The pursuit of knowledge will enrich your life and open doors in unexpected places.



SCORPIO (OCTOBER 23 – NOVEMBER 21)

This month stirs deep transformative forces within you. Tackle challenging projects or strategic planning sessions; your intuitive understanding of the undercurrents will guide you to success. Trust your instincts—they are sharper than ever and will lead you through any fog.



SAGITTARIUS (NOVEMBER 22 – DECEMBER 21)

Adventure calls, urging you to step beyond the familiar. Whether it's exploring new philosophies or distant lands, your natural explorer's spirit will be fully ignited. Each journey, whether physical or intellectual, promises growth and a wealth of experience.



CAPRICORN (DECEMBER 22 – JANUARY 19)

Steady progress marks your journey this month. Your practical approach and unwavering focus will help you navigate any challenging projects at work. Discipline is your ally, and your commitment to your goals serves as a beacon for others. Lead by example.



AQUARIUS (JANUARY 20 – FEBRUARY 18)

This is a month of innovation and social progress. Your visionary ideas could spark significant changes in your community or field of work. Engage with like-minded thinkers and create platforms for change. Your efforts could lead to a substantial social impact.



PISCES (FEBRUARY 19 – MARCH 20)

Reflection brings wisdom, and this month offers the calm needed to ponder life's mysteries. Your intuitive nature is heightened, leading to insights that could solve complex problems at work or inspire creative endeavours. Trust your inner voice; it speaks the truth.

PUZZLES

ACROSS

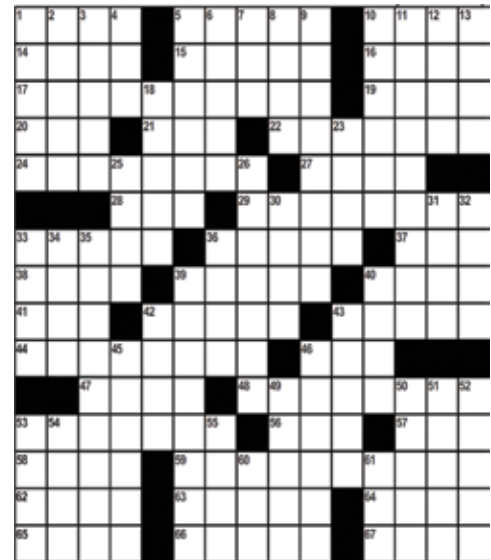
- 1) Doll's cry
- 5) Mark down drastically
- 10) App-based car service
- 14) In a while, in poetry
- 15) Historic 15th-century caravan
- 16) Janet in the Clinton Cabinet
- 17) Creator of Holden Caulfield, born 1/1
- 19) Coach's hands-up signal
- 20) Stuff in a seam
- 21) Whiz kid
- 22) Henri who painted "The Dance"
- 24) Junk mail addressee
- 27) PlayStation maker
- 28) B&B part
- 29) Took a phone call
- 33) Oktoberfest vessel
- 36) Works at steadily
- 37) Pindar work

- 38) Gets out of Dodge

- 39) Adds a dash of flavor to
- 40) Speller's clarifying words
- 41) Comics bark
- 42) Count of jazz
- 43) Showing great passion
- 44) Lunar appearance
- 46) Teary-eyed
- 47) Horse coloring
- 48) "Don't move!"
- 53) Puts up a fight
- 56) Trawler's gear
- 57) Coxswain's order
- 58) Some are fine
- 59) Patriot in a Longfellow poem, born 1/1
- 62) Hook's henchman
- 63) "Quaking" tree
- 64) Slosh through the surf
- 65) "Saved" scores in golf
- 66) Proctors' handouts
- 67) Marginal mark

DOWN

- 1) Big-league
- 2) Wrestling's_ the Giant
- 3) Charlton Heston role
- 4) _ Alicia of "Falcon Crest"
- 5) Added zip to
- 6) Closet filler
- 7) "Life of Pi" director Lee
- 8) Pocket watch part
- 9) Gives grief to
- 10) Like Smokey
- 11) Noted seamstress born 1/1
- 12) Slaughter in Cooperstown
- 13) Weapon in Clue
- 18) Full of cargo
- 23) Helps off the highway
- 25) Storklike bird
- 26) Vote counts
- 30) Prime time, informally
- 31) Clean up, in a way
- 32) Turn down
- 33) Verbal putdown
- 34) Pacific tuber
- 35) "A Passage to India" novelist, born 1/1
- 36) Skip a turn
- 39) March honoree, for short
- 40) Car with a four-ring logo
- 42) Uplifting attire
- 43) Dunkin' Donuts buy
- 45) Some urban pollutants
- 46) Rear ends
- 49) Place to drop anchor
- 50) Like a Hall of Famer
- 51) Huge crowd
- 52) Message with a hashtag
- 53) Talk like Satchmo
- 54) "At Wit's End" writer Bombeck
- 55) Ed.'s request
- 60) Co. with brown trucks
- 61) German "bugs"



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SOLUTIONS

SOLUTIONS FOR THE MAY ISSUE



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easy

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ZÜBLIN | STRABAG's range of services include general and specialized civil engineering, roads, bridges, legacy buildings, railways, dams, ports, water treatment plants and tunnels utilizing the best locally available resources complemented by our international team's know-how and expertise through the project inauguration, realization, and project operation.

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Because success comes from working together, vision, passion, and expertise, clients are seeing **ZÜBLIN | STRABAG** as their primary and trusted partner. Our professional team utilize the latest innovative technology to complete projects to the highest standards. **ZÜBLIN | STRABAG's** expertise enables us to offer a complete and integrated project solution, with our international team committed to ensure the successful delivery of your project, on time and within budget. This makes the difference for **ZÜBLIN | STRABAG's** Clients when it comes to making amazing things possible.

ZÜBLIN | STRABAG recognizes that success is generated by knowing our individual strength and working together as a team.



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