

# 999

**SECURITY AND SAFETY FOR ALL**

ISSUE 105 OCTOBER 2020

**TRACKING  
PROGRESS  
OF COVID-19  
VACCINES**

**MASK  
POLLUTION:  
BANE OF THE  
NEW NORMAL**

**IN THE  
SPOTLIGHT  
BREAST CANCER  
AWARENESS  
MONTH**

## **ABRAHAM ACCORD HERALDS A NEW ERA OF PEACE**



UAE	5,000	AED
KSA	5,000	SAR
Kuwait	0.500	DK
Bahrain	0.500	BD
Oman	0.500	OR



**IN THIS ISSUE:** UAE POLICE REMIND ABOUT THE LIFE-SAVING ZEBRA CROSSING. LET'S TAKE A PEEK INTO JAYWALKERS' MIND



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*Amidst all the news of struggles and uncertainty from around the world, the country has again shown what leadership and vision can do*

## A landmark month

“When the going gets tough, the tough get going.” Nobody knows the exact origin of this sentence, but most of us have heard it at some point. And nothing embodies the spirit of that saying better than what our very own UAE. Amidst all the news of struggles and uncertainty from around the world, the country has again shown what leadership and vision can do.

In September 2020, the country made the groundbreaking announcement that it was authorising a COVID-19 vaccine for emergency use, with priority given to medical frontliners to protect them from infection. This announcement was accompanied by a statement that the Phase III trial of the vaccine, tested on 31,000 volunteers, out of whom 1,000 had chronic conditions, had revealed no significant side effects. The number of volunteers who came forward for the trial made this achievement possible.

A week before these announcements, the UAE launched its National Policy on Vaccinations, with the aim of strengthening the immunity of its entire population of citizens and expats, fortifying them against any future disease outbreaks. It's this sort of forward planning that contributes to the country's sustained progress.

In the same month, on September 15, the UAE played a central role in another historic event. This historical achievement paves the way for an overall peace process and is a realistic response to the geopolitical changes and the security and development challenges facing the region, along with the opening of new avenues for economic prosperity.

Women readers will find this issue of particular interest, as it highlights ways to make one's personal and professional life better. October being Breast Cancer Awareness Month, there's a special report to empower you with knowledge. October is also when the global economy's post-pandemic recovery efforts begin to crystallise, making this the perfect time for women to take the reins of business, supported by our feature.

Now is the time to rise above the anxiety of the pandemic and prepare for a year in which the novel coronavirus would be, hopefully, behind us. We want you to go out with confidence every day and come back home safely. Our feature on jaywalking tells you why spending an extra minute or two on reaching the nearest zebra crossing is the best move for both your health and wealth. The fine for arbitrarily running across the road is steep, but only because the UAE cares very much about you.



### Meet Speakers from around the Globe

**KEYNOTE ADDRESS – TOWARDS NATIONAL RESILIENCE**

**ROUNDTABLE 1: LIFE DURING COVID-19 PANDEMIC**

**ROUNDTABLE 2: IS BCM DEAD?! (Everyone was almost 100% working during Covid-19 Pandemic!)**

**ROUNDTABLE 3: FROM REACTIVE TO PREPARED – The challenges of the New Normal**

**ROUNDTABLE 4: ROLE OF HR IN BCM (Covid-19 Pandemic)**

**ROUNDTABLE 5: EXCELLENCE IN ORGANISATIONAL RESILIENCE – Touching new heights (BCM, ITDR, Risk Management, Crisis Management, Information Security, Cyber Security, Physical Security)**

**ROUNDTABLE 6: NON-VIOLENT COMMUNICATION IN CRISIS MANAGEMENT**



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THE UAE HAS REACHED A MILESTONE IN THE PHASE III CLINICAL TRIALS FOR A COVID-19 VACCINE, AND IT HAS ALSO LAUNCHED A NATIONAL STRATEGY TO RAISE THE OVERALL IMMUNITY OF ITS POPULATION. **999** TRACKS THE PROGRESS OF THESE TRIALS AS WELL AS OTHER VACCINE CANDIDATES ACROSS THE GLOBE

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The humble face mask is your life-saving shield against COVID-19. But if discarded irresponsibly, it will join the millions of other carelessly tossed away masks that land up in the seas and become a threat to the environment – and eventually, a threat to us humans

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If they were a country, the global population of women would represent an economy whose growth market is higher than that of China and India combined. But there's still a gender gap in terms of business and financial inclusion. **999** delves into the importance of closing that gap and empowering women around the world

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# NEW HORIZONS FOR PEACE

THE NEWLY MINTED ABRAHAM ACCORD, FORMALLY SIGNED ON SEPTEMBER 15, 2020, IS YET ANOTHER TRIUMPH IN THE UAE'S ILLUSTRIOUS RECORD OF PROMOTING PEACE AND DEVELOPMENT. **999** DELVES INTO THIS PACT THAT SHINES BRIGHT ON THE BLEAK LANDSCAPE OF THE PANDEMIC



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## Khalifa issues new law to crack down on financial crimes



**PRESIDENT** His Highness Sheikh Khalifa bin Zayed Al Nahyan has issued a law regulating the Abu Dhabi Accountability Authority to enhance the monitoring of public finances, and to strengthen

integrity, transparency, accountability and governance in public offices.

Directly working under His Highness Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi and Deputy Supreme Commander of the UAE Armed Forces, the Authority was established by the new law as a financially and administratively independent entity, and has the full legal capacity to practise its activities to achieve its objectives.

The law has expanded the authority's roles and responsibilities to guarantee effective financial monitoring and efficient financial operations at companies for whom 25 per cent plus of their capital is owned by the government, compared to 50 per cent previously. The objective is to ensure optimum use of public resources across Abu Dhabi.

The law defines three key packages to be

covered by Abu Dhabi Accountability Authority: (1) to implement financial monitoring for all respective government entities; (2) to ensure they are committing to their obligations, objectives and activities; and (3) to oversee the efficiency and effectiveness of the electronic monitoring systems controlling those entities' finances.

Based on Article 31 of this law, entities to be monitored by Abu Dhabi Accountability Authority include: local departments, municipalities, authorities, corporations, councils, general secretariats, courts, police and security entities, centres, offices, universities, institutes, funds, markets, public incorporated bodies, companies either directly or indirectly fully owned by government entities or government companies, or companies for whom 25 per cent of their capital is owned by the government or by government entities.

## Khalifa bin Zayed abolishes Israel Boycott Law ahead of peace accord

**PRESIDENT** His Highness Sheikh Khalifa bin Zayed Al Nahyan issued a Federal Decree-Law No. 04 of 2020, abolishing the Federal Law No. 15 of 1972 regarding boycotting Israel and the penalties thereof.

The federal law came out weeks leading to the 'Abraham Accord' signed between His Highness Sheikh Abdullah bin Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan, Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, who represented the UAE Government, and Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, hosted by US President Donald Trump in Washington DC.

The new law comes as part of the UAE's efforts to expand diplomatic and commercial cooperation with Israel, and by laying out a roadmap towards launching joint cooperation for bilateral relations on various



economic aspects.

With the signing of this law, individuals and companies in the UAE may enter into agreements with bodies or individuals

residing in Israel or belonging to it by their nationality, in terms of commercial, financial operations, or any other dealings of any nature.

## UAE becomes 1st Arab country to grant paternity leave in private sector

**PRESIDENT** His Highness Sheikh Khalifa bin Zayed Al Nahyan approved a new amendment to the UAE labour law, granting private sector employees paid paternity leave.

The UAE becomes the first country in the

Arab world to have implemented the policy. With this, male parents working in the private sector can take a five-day paid paternity leave—must be taken within six months of the birth of their newborn.

The decree aims to further cement family

cohesion and stability, enhance UAE's position and competitiveness in the field of gender balance, and encourage young talents to work in the private sector.

At present, female employees of the private sector get a 45-day maternity leave.

## UAE Cabinet launches national vaccination policy

**CHAIRD** by His Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice President and Prime Minister of the UAE and Ruler of Dubai, the UAE Cabinet approved the National Policy on Vaccinations, a multi-sectoral national framework for combatting communicable diseases and reducing their risks to individuals and society.

The Policy will act as a coordination framework for all parties involved in the immunisation field, in order to support the health system in the country and enhance the efficiency of provided services.

It also aims to bring together the non-governmental sector and community members to support the UAE's fight against communicable diseases by promoting a healthy lifestyle, as well as ensuring the delivery of the best quality



vaccination services and preventive care nationwide.

Some of the most important objectives of the National Policy on Vaccinations are the following: to make vaccines widely available, ensure their

sustainability and quality, raise awareness on their importance, and support innovation and research in the field. It also includes policies on safeguarding public health during health emergencies and disease outbreaks.

## Vice President approves new federal department board, committee heads



**HIS** Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice President and Prime Minister of the UAE and Ruler of Dubai, approved the appointment of several new federal department board and committee heads, as part of the government effort to support the country's

overall development process.

The new appointments followed the latest UAE Cabinet reshuffle and aims to advance the work of federal councils and promote their roles in achieving the strategic national objectives of the federal government.

His Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid approved the appointment of the following: HE Dr Abdullah Belhaif Al Nuaimi, Minister of Climate Change and Environment, appointed as President of the UAE Council for Climate Change and Environment; HE Dr Sultan bin Ahmed Al Jaber, Minister of Industry and Advanced Technology, as President of the UAE's Industrial Coordination Council; and HE Hessa Essa Buhmaid, Minister of

Community Development, as President of the National Council for Quality of Life.

Meanwhile, His Highness also approved the appointment of new federal committee heads including HE Suhail Al Mazrouei, Minister of Energy and Infrastructure, as Chairman of the Supreme Committee, which is tasked to organise the hosting of the World Conference on Automation and Robotics in the Field of Construction 2021.

HE Dr Thani Al Zeyoudi, the Minister of State for Foreign Trade, was appointed as Chairman of the Foreign Direct Investment Committee, while Saeed Mohammed Al Suwaidi was named as the UAE's permanent representative to the International Civil Aviation Organisation.

## VP unveils UAE-NASA deal to train Emirati astronauts

**HIS** Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice President and Prime Minister of the UAE and Ruler of Dubai, announced the government's signing of an agreement with NASA to train Emirati astronauts at its spaceflight training centre in the US for future missions.

"We are pleased to announce the

signing of an agreement with NASA to train UAE astronauts for potential missions to the International Space Station, including space walks and long duration station missions," said His Highness.

"The program will train our youth and astronauts for future missions," His Highness added.

The announcement of the agreement

came days ahead of the first anniversary of UAE's historic journey to the International Space Station.

Major Hazza Al Mansouri, the first Emirati astronaut who waived the UAE flag in space, will join the two-year programme. He will be accompanied by reserve astronaut Dr Sultan Al Neyadi.

## UAE offers full scholarships for children of healthcare workers



**UNDER** the direction of His Highness Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi and Deputy Supreme

Commander of the UAE Armed Forces, the UAE Government announced that children of healthcare workers across the emirates will be given access to full educational scholarships at public schools under a new programme called 'Hayyakum'.

Overseen by HH Sheikh Abdullah bin Zayed Al Nahyan, Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation and Chairman of the Education and Human Resources Council, the Ministry of Education in partnership with the newly-established Frontline Heroes Office launched the scholarship programme that was made available at the start of the

current academic year. It would ensure the education of medical frontliners' children until high school, covering the cost of their tuition, laptops and transportation.

So far, 1,850 children of frontline healthcare professionals have received the scholarships.

HE Sheikh Sultan bin Tahnoon Al Nahyan, Chairman of the Board of the Frontline Heroes Office, conveyed his deep thanks to His Highness Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed for his dedicated support and appreciation to all frontline heroes and caring for their needs and their families in these challenging times.

## Mohamed bin Zayed reviews bilateral ties, regional peace efforts with world leaders

**HIS** Highness Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi and Deputy Supreme Commander of the UAE Armed Forces, reviewed ways to strengthen bilateral relations and regional peace efforts in separate phone conversations with various global leaders.

In a phone call with Egyptian President Abdel Fattah Al Sisi, the two leaders talked about prospects of further consolidating the bilateral relations between the UAE and Egypt across various fronts. They

exchanged views on the latest regional and international developments and issues of common concern.

These were also the topics discussed between His Highness and French President Emmanuel Macron. Additionally, they tackled their countries' efforts to support regional peace and stability.

In another phone conversation with Greek Prime Minister Kyriakos Mitsotakis, His Highness reaffirmed UAE's bilateral ties with Greece. The two sides also discussed

the latest developments in the Mediterranean region. They underlined the necessity of reaching a peaceful settlement to any crises and disputes in the region.

The two leaders also reiterated the UAE-Israel Peace Accord and its importance in enhancing peace and security for the peoples of the Middle East, and charting a new path conducive to achieving development, cooperation, prosperity and brighter future in the region.

## Mohamed bin Zayed lauds launch of inclusive policy for People of Determination

**HIS** Highness Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi and Deputy Supreme Commander of the UAE Armed Forces, and Chairman of Abu Dhabi Executive Council, praised the launch of the Comprehensive Strategy for People of Determination 2020-2024.

The strategy, which was unveiled by the Department of Community Development (DCD) in Abu Dhabi, aims to create an integrated and enabling environment for People of Determination in Abu Dhabi.

Commenting on the inclusive policy for people with special needs, His Highness said: "Today's launch of the Comprehensive Strategy for People of Determination re-affirms our commitment to inclusion, equality and empowerment for all members of UAE society, upholding

everyone's right to participate fully and with dignity in our community."

Meanwhile, His Highness Sheikh Hazza bin Zayed Al Nahyan, Vice Chairman of Abu Dhabi Executive Council, said: "Abu Dhabi's Comprehensive Strategy for People of Determination is an essential step towards further integration and empowerment of this vital community group, to unleash their full potential as key players in our nation's development and future achievements."

The Comprehensive Strategy for People of Determination includes 30 initiatives to be implemented over five years to create an inclusive environment and give People of Determination equal access to rights, services and opportunities.

It will be implemented by six working

teams, including: (1) Health and rehabilitation team led by the Department of Health; (2) Education team led by the Department of Education and Knowledge; (3) Employment team led by the Human Resources Authority; (4) Social Care team led by Zayed Higher Organisation for People of Determination; (5) Accessibility team led by the Department of Municipalities and Transport; (6) Enablers team led by the Department of Community Development.

These teams are tasked to address People of Determination's needs at all stages of life, including health, rehabilitation, education, employment, social care and social security, as well as social engagement, sports, culture and tourism.

## UAE Cabinet issues resolution on mandatory installation of home fire detectors

**UNDER** the chairmanship of His Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice President and Prime Minister of the UAE and Ruler of Dubai, the UAE has approved a resolution that obliges residential homeowners to install fire detectors and link them to the civil defence e-system.

The Ministry of Interior, through the Civil Defence Departments, was tasked to carry out the provisions of the new resolution and cooperate with all concerned parties to facilitate implementation procedures at all levels.

The mandatory policy will be applied to all existing residences or those that are still under or for construction.

The federal or local government

departments concerned with issuing licences for the construction of residential homes are directed to ensure that fire detectors are installed in houses and the owner has subscribed to the e-system, before granting a completion/compliance certificate. The federal and local

governments will bear the costs of installing these devices in homes for people with limited income.

Owners of existing homes are given a period of up to three years to comply.



The policy is in line with the government efforts to protect the lives and properties of the UAE citizens and residents, provide the highest amount of public safety, and protect society from fire hazards.

## UAE honours 5th batch of government accelerators



(FDF) and HH Lt General Sheikh Saif bin Zayed Al Nahyan, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of the Interior, the government honoured in a virtual ceremony the fifth batch of government accelerators, which was launched in partnership with the GWU, under the slogan "Women's Empowerment and Leadership".

**UNDER** the patronage of HH Sheikh Fatima bint Mubarak, Chairwoman of the General Women's Union (GWU), President of the Supreme Council for Motherhood and Childhood, and Supreme Chairwoman of the Family Development Foundation

HH Sheikh Fatima lauded the GWU's role in supporting women empowerment and their representation in all aspects of UAE society. In her speech, Her Highness also pointed out that the country is approaching a new era that requires the

community and national authorities to support each other and cooperate.

For his part, HH Sheikh Saif bin Zayed thanked the UAE leadership's keenness to empower women and reinforce their skills and capacities, making them true partners in the country's process of development and journey of excellence and leadership.

The government accelerators include 167 members from 34 federal and local authorities and community organisations working in seven teams to find solutions to challenges faced by women, including inclusive employment, gender balance, workplaces, and marital dispute resolution.

The fifth batch was launched to find timely solutions to these challenges within 100 days. During this period, 22 workshops and ten cultural events took place involving over 2,000 participants from all segments of the community.

## Saif bin Zayed addresses graduates of youth empowerment initiative

**UNDER** the patronage of His Highness Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi and Deputy Supreme Commander of the UAE Armed Forces, His Highness Lt General Sheikh Saif bin Zayed Al Nahyan, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior, has addressed the graduates of the "Future Leaders Empowerment" Initiative, in a virtual ceremony.

In his speech, His Highness Sheikh Saif bin Zayed described the youth as the future and hope of a nation. For the Emirati youth participants, His Highness assured them that they are always guided and supported by the vision of the country's wise leadership.

The participants— young Emirati and British cadets—were trained in five courses related to youth leadership and empowerment over the

summer period.

The graduation ceremony was organised by Khalifa Empowerment Program, Aqdar, and Sandhurst Royal College. It was attended by Lt General Sir John Lorimar from the UK Ministry of Defense as Sandhurst College's representative, and Mansour Abdullah Belhoul, the UAE ambassador to the UK as well as Police College officials and a number of cadets' parents.



## Al Sha'far leads international meeting on cybercrime



**IT** General Saif Abdullah Al Sha'far, Undersecretary at the Ministry of Interior, recently inaugurated an online meeting of experts on organised cybercrime.

The meeting was held by the Ministry of Interior (MoI) in partnership with the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) for the GCC countries. It was attended by experts and specialists in law enforcement in the GCC and MENA (Middle East and North Africa), and also 85 experts representing 31 countries and international organisations.

Al Sha'far conveyed the greetings of His Highness Lt General Sheikh Saif bin Zayed Al Nahyan, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister

of Interior, and his best wishes for success.

He said that regional and international challenges, along with the current situation across the world had led to changes in crime patterns and methods. He stressed upon the need for preparation to confront this, and for countries to work together against these criminal networks. Institutions and individuals must be made aware of these dangers and their impacts, he added.

Referring to the UAE's strong resolve to deter all crimes, especially cybercrimes, Al Sha'far spoke of the directives of the wise leadership, enhancement of digital security for society, and legislation and policies to protect personal data of individuals and institutions.

## UAE chairs GCC meeting on traffic safety

**THE** UAE chaired the 36th meeting of the Directors General of Traffic in GCC countries, held remotely and discussed ways to enhance cooperation in implementing strategies and plans for better traffic safety.

Brigadier Engr Hussain Ahmed Al Harthy, Deputy Chairman of the Federal Traffic Council at the Ministry of Interior, who also stood as head of the UAE delegation during the meeting, welcomed the leaders and members of the participating delegations. He conveyed the greetings of His Highness Lt General

Sheikh Saif bin Zayed Al Nahyan, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior.

Al Harthy explained that this meeting was held in the context of the repercussions of the COVID-19 pandemic, stressing that the UAE is keen on cooperation in traffic safety.

The meeting discussed linking traffic violations between traffic directorates and departments in the GCC countries; the need to speed up the completion of the connection through a



unified electronic portal that would have a GCC database; and the completion of bilateral linkage between member countries.

## Al Zaabi inspects Ajman Police's Follow-up Department



**IT** Colonel Dr Ali Mubarak Al Zaabi, Deputy Director of the Federal Police Care and Follow-Up Department at the Ministry of Interior,

visited the Police Follow-up Department in Ajman Police, where he was received by Major Salem Mofrah Khamis Al Bend, Head of the Police

praised the outstanding efforts of the Police Follow-up Department at Ajman Police.

He said this in the context of digital transformation in work procedures, in order to achieve the MoI's strategic objectives of enhancing security and customer satisfaction with the services provided.

Al Zaabi paid an inspection visit to the Police Follow-up Department in Ajman Police, where he was received by Major Salem Mofrah Khamis Al Bend, Head of the Police

Follow-up Department, and Captain Majid Saeed Al Ghafli from the Federal Police Follow-up Department. He was briefed on the work mechanism in the Ajman Police department and the efforts made for the implementation of the judicial rulings issued by Public Prosecution, and the smart transformation in the department's procedures and processes.

Al Zaabi lauded the efforts towards switching from traditional paper-based procedures to smart system. The new system allows customers to take their own photos, and put in their digital fingerprint and electronic signature, thereby completing procedures in record time.

## Abu Dhabi Police implement new vehicle impounding law



**ABU** Dhabi Police have begun implementing Law No. 5 of 2020 regarding the impounding of vehicles in the emirate starting September 9, 2020.

Brigadier Suhail Saeed Al Khaili, Director of the Central Operations Sector at Abu Dhabi Police, said the vehicle impounding law is consistent with the Federal Traffic Law, and that it is being implemented following thorough studies of accident and traffic violation statistics in the emirate. These studies were undertaken with the aim of enhancing traffic safety and reducing accidents, given the increase in the number of vehicles, he said.

Al Khaili added that the Traffic and Patrols Directorate of Abu Dhabi Police studied the most serious accident-causing

violations in order to deter reckless motorists through strict penalties. Under Law No. 5 of 2020, fines were increased in order to decrease traffic accidents and road deaths in Abu Dhabi, he said.

Outlining the types of violations that would cause vehicles to be impounded as well as the corresponding penalties, Al Khaili said that motorists must pay a fine of up to Dhs50,000 for deliberately colliding with a police patrol vehicle or causing damage to it, and they would also have to pay for the cost of repairing the police vehicle.

Motorists would also be fined for driving a vehicle with fake, hidden or altered plate numbers. Al Khaili said that motorists must pay traffic fines in full if their value exceeded Dhs7,000. Other penalties for

rash driving are:

- A fine up to Dhs50,000 in case a motorist drives in a way that endangers his own life or the lives of others, or their safety and security;
- Withdrawal of a driver's licence for 6 months, along with a fine, in case the driver jumps a red light;
- A fine up to Dhs10,000 for changing a vehicle's engine or base (chassis) without a permit;
- A fine up to Dhs5,000 for causing an accident by speeding, sudden swerving, failure to leave enough distance between vehicles, not giving priority to pedestrians, and if a child under 10 years of age sits in the front seat, when the speed limit exceeds 60 kmph.

## Abu Dhabi Police study gradual increase in traffic penalties

**BRIGADIER** Ahmed Abdullah Al Shehhi, Deputy Director of the Central Operations Sector at Abu Dhabi Police, stated that the police force is working on studying the gradual increase of penalties to control violators on the roads.

Deterrent measures are necessary to enhance traffic safety and curb accidents, said Al Shehhi, stressing the need to spread awareness on safe traffic behaviours to protect road users from death and injuries.

He affirmed Abu Dhabi Police's

keenness to enhance traffic awareness, by conducting specialised workshops and educating the public about the best ways to stay safe, in line with laws and regulations. These workshops are carried out through Abu Dhabi Police platforms on social media.



## Dhahi Khalfan highlights role of youth to society's progress



**LT** General Dhahi Khalfan Tamim, Deputy Chairman of Police and Public Security in Dubai and Chairman of the Juvenile Awareness and Welfare Association, attended a brainstorming session where he

own challenges.

Dr Khalifa Al Suwaidi, board member of the Juvenile Awareness and Welfare Association, moderated the session. He stressed that field scientific research is one

emphasised the importance of the youth.

He said that they represent the wealth of the future that, if well invested, would lead the nation to prosperity and success. Also, he stressed that every society is exposed to its

of the most important ways to learn about the future that young people envision for themselves and their societies. He added that the Association decided to organise this session with the aim of forming a scientific team to conduct a field study in the UAE community; defining the objectives of this study and the expected outputs; and coming up with recommendations, which shall be submitted to the competent authorities.

The online session was attended by decision-makers representing the authorities for youth welfare in the UAE at the federal and local levels.

At the end of the session, Dhahi Khalfan thanked the participants for their positive interaction, praising the concerted efforts of the government sector and civil society associations.

## Sultan Al Nuaimi applauds smart services

**MAJOR** General Sheikh Sultan bin Abdullah Al Nuaimi, Commander-in-Chief of Ajman Police, praised the achievements of comprehensive police stations during the first half of 2020, especially in terms of enhancing smart services developed with partners, leading to a high degree of customer satisfaction.

He said this during his virtual inspection tour of the Comprehensive

Police Centres Department and the El Mina Police Station through a visual communication system.

Al Nuaimi also praised the heads of comprehensive police stations and their staff for supporting the national agenda and for their initiatives to develop customer happiness centres.



## Al Mualla honours a good civilian in Umm Al Quwain

**MAJOR** General Sheikh Rashid bin Ahmed Al Mualla, Commander-in-Chief of Umm Al Quwain Police, honoured Abdulrahman Al Balushi for his efforts and cooperation with police officers in reporting suspects and contributing to

their arrest.

The police commander said that the cooperation of community members with police officers is a national duty and evidence of their love for this country.

What Al Balushi had done, he said,

showed his utmost concern for both the country and its people.

Al Mualla then called upon all members of society to cooperate with the police force to help deter crime and maintain security.

## Ali Al Nuaimi inspects happiness centre

**MAJOR** General Ali Abdullah bin Alwan Al Nuaimi, Commander-in-Chief of Ras Al Khaimah Police, inspected the comprehensive new customer and staff happiness building, which is being finalised in preparation for opening

ceremony early next month.

The new centre represents a quantum leap in the services provided to the public by reducing the time of the customer journey and unifying the services of the General Command through a single

window for all concerned parties.

Alwan Al Nuaimi was accompanied by Brigadier Abdullah Khamis Al Hadidi, Deputy Commander-in-Chief of Ras Al Khaimah Police, and a number of general directors and officers.

## Al Marri presides security meeting on World Expo in Dubai

**LT** General Abdullah Khalifa Al Marri, Commander-in-Chief of Dubai Police and Chairman of the Security Council for the World Expo, confirmed that the Expo work teams have been working in an efficient manner despite the challenges of COVID-19.

He said this while presiding over a Security Council meeting to prepare for hosting the World Expo in Dubai.

In the meeting, Al Marri reviewed the time frame for completing the country pavilions and construction progress in light of the pandemic. Also discussed were topics from past meetings and decisions taken earlier.

Colonel Hareb Al Shamsi, General Coordinator of the Criminal Investigation Sector, reviewed the latest updates in the security plans for the global event, stressing the sector's keenness to carry out the directives of the higher leadership.



Colonel Musabbah Al Ghafli, General Coordinator of the Operations Sector, presented field procedures for the Operations team and the preparedness of the field teams.

Meanwhile, Lt Colonel Salah Muhammad Al Marzouqi, General Coordinator for the Support Sector, spoke of personnel training according to the

sector's plan and deploying four smart police stations at the event site.

Ahmed Al Khatib, Executive Director of Real Estate Development and Delivery at the Expo, presented the developments of the World Expo project, expected work completion dates, challenges as well as COVID-19 precautionary measures in place.

## Sharjah Police roll out vehicle safety drive

**THE** Sharjah Police General Command, represented by the Traffic Services and Licensing Centre, launched a campaign entitled 'Vehicle Safety Requirements', which aims to raise awareness on vehicle registration and renewal, and ensuring their roadworthiness through safety checks.

Lt Colonel Muhammad Al Mahrizi, head

of the technical inspection section at the Vehicles and Drivers Licensing Department of Sharjah Police, stated that a total of 205,610 vehicles were inspected from January 1 to August 31, 2020. Of these, there were 181,610 light vehicles and 24,000 heavy vehicles.

The campaign, he said, aims to educate

drivers on the basic requirements for registering and renewing vehicles, in accordance with the regulations, including examining tyres and making sure of their validity dates; checking the lights and seat belts; keeping a fire extinguisher; and properly servicing the vehicle exhaust, engine oil and brakes.

## Fujairah Police initiate 'Safe beaches' campaign



**FUJAIRAH** Police, represented by the Community Police Department and the Youth Council, and in coordination with the Media

amongst beachgoers on the importance of preventive measures and the steps to avoid drowning accidents. The campaign also

and Public Relations section, initiated 'Safe Beaches' initiative.

With the participation of Civil Defence and National Ambulance, the campaign aims to raise awareness

covered important personal security and safety measures as well as the need for social distancing in public spaces in light of the COVID-19 contagion.

Major Ahmed Saeed Al Hashemi, Head of the Community Police Department, urges beachgoers to check the weather forecast; abide by the instructions and regulations related to safety procedures; monitor children on the beach and not allow them to go into the sea alone and/or without a life jacket; take precautions while swimming after sunset; and not leave their belongings unattended on the beach.



## 8 million

The number of COVID-19 tests conducted in the UAE, as announced by the Ministry of Health and Prevention in the 2nd half of September 2020. This illustrates the country's leading global efforts in the battle against the coronavirus pandemic.

## 1st

The UAE becomes the first country outside China to approve emergency usage of a COVID-19 vaccine candidate, in a vote of confidence amongst government health authorities in the country, following the culmination of the Phase III clinical trials of the first inactivated vaccine in the world.

## 1st

Top spot taken by the UAE in the MENA region on the list of the 2020 Smart City Index by The Institute for Management Development, which measures the use of technology to improve the quality of life for residents. Globally, Abu Dhabi and Dubai ranked 42nd and 43rd, respectively

## 3 years

Grace period given to owners of existing homes in the UAE to install fire detectors and connect them to the civil defence e-system, according to a new UAE Cabinet resolution issued in September 2020. The Ministry of Interior will carry out the provisions of the resolution.

## 3 months

The duration (September to October) of the 4th unified traffic awareness campaign launched by the Ministry of Interior, under the slogan "Traffic Safety for School Students". The online initiative aims to reach the highest level of traffic safety, in order to protect students from road risks and to reduce the overall traffic accidents in the UAE.

### BE IN THE LOOP

#### Interior Minister addresses graduates of youth leadership training



HH Lt General Sheikh Saif bin Zayed Al Nahyan, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior, (2nd from L) and the graduates of a youth leadership training

HH Lt General Sheikh Saif bin Zayed Al Nahyan, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior, addressed the Emirati and British youth participants of the "Future Empowerment Initiative" during a virtual graduation ceremony. His Highness echoed the unwavering commitment of the UAE Government to support the youth, whom he described as the hope and future of a nation.

#### Mol's development council pushes for smart services transformation



Major General Khalifa Hareb Al Khailei, Chairman of the Institutional Development Council at the Ministry of Interior

Major General Khalifa Hareb Al Khailei, Chairman of the Institutional Development Council at the Ministry of Interior (Mol), discussed with the officers and members of the Council the implementation of Mol's smart and electronic services. The meeting also discussed a number of topics in line with administrative and developmental projects at the Ministry.

#### UAE leads 36th GCC traffic dept meeting



Brigadier Engr Hussain Ahmed Al Harthy, Deputy Chairman of the Federal Traffic Council at the Ministry of Interior

In the 36th meeting of Directors-General of the GCC Traffic Departments, Brigadier Engr Hussain Ahmed Al Harthy, Deputy Chairman of the Federal Traffic Council at the Ministry of Interior and Head of the UAE delegation, discussed ways on enhancing joint cooperation to come up with strategies that would enhance the level of traffic safety in GCC member states. This virtual meeting, chaired by Al Harthy, concluded on the need to speed up the adoption of a unified online portal to provide better coordination amongst traffic authorities in the GCC.

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# UAE NEWS BULLETIN

POLICE NEWS, PEOPLE, NUMBERS AND EVENTS



ABU DHABI

1.5 TONNES

Abu Dhabi Police, in coordination with the Department of Municipalities and Transport, and the Abu Dhabi Waste Management Centre (Tadweer), seized 1.5 tonnes of niswar, a banned tobacco product, from a secret lab inside an unlicensed factory in the emirate. Four men arrested in the raid were referred to the public prosecution. All raw materials and equipment found in the lab were also seized and will be destroyed.



AJMAN

3 MINUTES

The rapid response of police and paramedics, who arrived within 3 minutes, prevented a blazing car from exploding and injuring nearby people. The car was being driven by a young individual at a high speed when it hit the sidewalk and flipped. The driver and the car's male passenger were able to get out of the vehicle before it was engulfed by the fire.



RAS AL KHAIMAH

67-YEAR-OLD

An Arab woman, 67, is battling for her life after braving a blazing fire in her house in the Khat area – she was badly injured trying to save her sons. One of them was trapped inside the house, and without hesitation, the mother entered the burning portion of the house to rescue him. While she successfully saved him, half of her body sustained second- and third-degree burns.



UMM AL QUWAIN

EXIT NO. 90

A critically injured driver, aged 29, who had an accident on Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Road in Umm Al Quwain, was airlifted by a rescue chopper to a hospital. According to a photo released by the police, his vehicle had hit a metal road fence. The driver possibly lost control over the vehicle near Exit No. 90 due to speeding or inattentive driving, as per the initial investigation.



DUBAI

DHS2 MILLION

A Dhs2 million bribe boomeranged on a drug peddler after the Dubai Court of First Instance ordered him to pay the same amount in penalty for attempting to buy off an airport police officer. The 30-year-old Asian man was apprehended at the Dubai International Airport in October 2019. He will be deported after serving his jail term.



SHARJAH

DHS2.4 MILLION

Sharjah Police busted an 11-member gang that stole 662 laptops worth Dhs2.4 million from the warehouse of a trading company. The theft was executed in a meticulous manner, without leaving a single fingerprint. They cut all CCTV connections and stole its digital storage. But intensive work by the Criminal Investigation Department of Sharjah Police led to the arrest of the suspects, and the police were able to recover all the stolen devices.



FUJAIRAH

From July to August 2020, the Dibba Al-Hisn Municipality has issued warning notices to at least 22 outlets that were caught not observing COVID-19 precautionary measures. The municipality stressed that it would leave no stone unturned to identify erring outlets during its daily inspections and raids.

Some images are for illustrative purposes only



# NEW HORIZONS FOR PEACE

THE NEWLY MINTED ABRAHAM ACCORD, FORMALLY SIGNED ON SEPTEMBER 15, 2020, IS YET ANOTHER TRIUMPH IN THE UAE'S ILLUSTRIOUS RECORD OF PROMOTING PEACE AND DEVELOPMENT. **999** DELVES INTO THIS PACT THAT SHINES BRIGHT ON THE BLEAK LANDSCAPE OF THE PANDEMIC

BY NEIL BIE



“We have come today to tell the world that this is our approach, and that peace is our guiding principle. Those who begin things in the right way, will reap bright achievements, with the grace of God



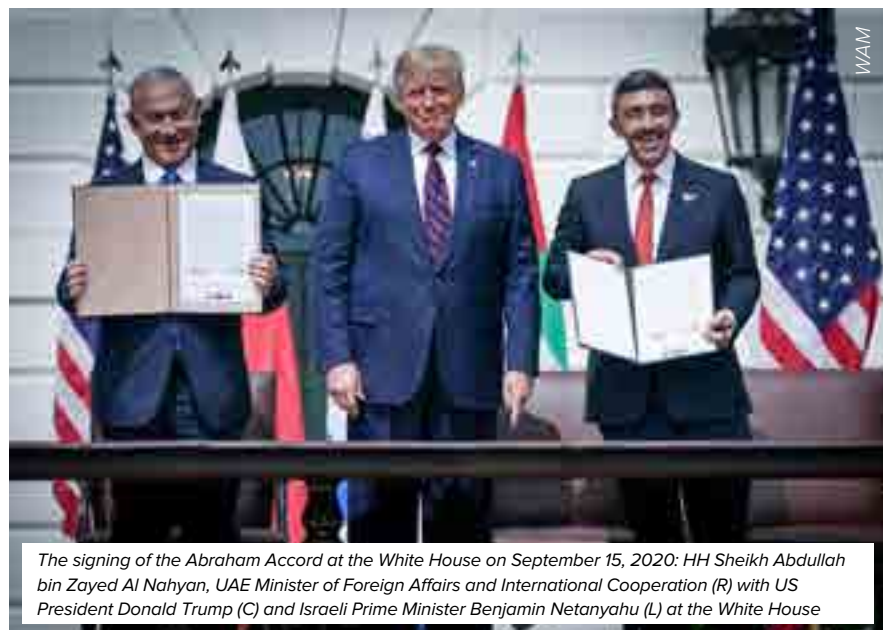
**HH SHEIKH ABDULLAH BIN ZAYED AL NAHYAN**

Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation

The name ‘Abraham’, considered to be the patriarch of major religions in the world, took on a new meaning on September 15, 2020, when a groundbreaking peace pact called the ‘Abraham Accord’ was signed in Washington DC between the UAE



HH Sheikh Abdullah bin Zayed Al Nahyan, Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, during his keynote speech on the signing of the Abraham Accord in Washington DC



The signing of the Abraham Accord at the White House on September 15, 2020: HH Sheikh Abdullah bin Zayed Al Nahyan, UAE Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation (R) with US President Donald Trump (C) and Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu (L) at the White House

and Israel. Also, the Kingdom of Bahrain signed the ‘Declaration to Support Peace’ with Israel.

The UAE Government was represented at the White House ceremony by HH Sheikh Abdullah bin Zayed Al Nahyan, Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation. US President Donald Trump and Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu are also signatories to the accord.

The landmark event followed the UAE’s groundbreaking August 2020 deal supported by diplomatic efforts of the US administration, secured Israel’s commitment to freeze its annexation of Palestinian territories. The pact, touted as a bellwether of regional politics and is expected to normalise relations between nations and

establish peace within the Middle East, is the first peace agreement that happened in the region in the last 26 years since 1994.

#### EXTENDING A HAND OF PEACE

HH Sheikh Abdullah bin Zayed during his moving keynote speech at the signing ceremony said that the agreement has realised the innate search of humanity for peace. He added that it would ring in change towards hope.

“The search for peace is an innate principle, yet principles are effectively realised when they are transformed into action. Today, we are already witnessing a change in the heart of the Middle East, a change that will send hope around the world,” the Minister of Foreign Affairs said.

“As for us, in the UAE, this accord will enable us to continue to stand by the Palestinian people and realise their hopes for an independent state within a stable and prosperous region. This accord builds upon previous peace agreements signed by Arab nations with the state of Israel. The aim of all these treaties is to work towards stability and sustainable development,” His Highness added.

In the end, HH Sheikh Abdullah bin Zayed highlighted, “We have come today to tell the world that this is our approach, and that peace is our guiding principle. Those who begin things in the right way, will reap bright achievements, with the grace of God.”

For his part, US President Trump, who opened the historic Abraham Accord ceremony, underscored that the peace

“This peace will eventually expand to include other Arab states and ultimately, it can end the Arab-Israeli conflict once and for all. This is not only a peace between leaders – it’s a peace between peoples



**ISRAELI PRIME MINISTER BENJAMIN NETANYAHU**

pact is set to change the course of history. “Thanks to the great courage of the leaders of these three countries, we take a major stride toward a future in which people of all faiths and background live together in peace and prosperity,” Trump said.

Meanwhile, the pact is “a pivot in history” for Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu, since it could potentially be the key to put an end on the Arab-Israeli conflict.

“First, because this peace will eventually expand to include other Arab states and ultimately, it can end the Arab-Israeli conflict once and for all; second, because the great economic benefits of our partnership will be felt throughout our region; and third, because this is not only a peace between leaders – it’s a peace between peoples. Israelis, Emiratis and Bahrainis are already embracing one another.”

Bahrain’s Foreign Minister Abdullatif bin Rashid Al Zayani, also echoed the same view. “For too long, the Middle East has been set back by conflict and mistrust, causing untold destruction and thwarting the potential of generations of our best and brightest young people,” he said. “Now I’m convinced we have the opportunity to change that.”

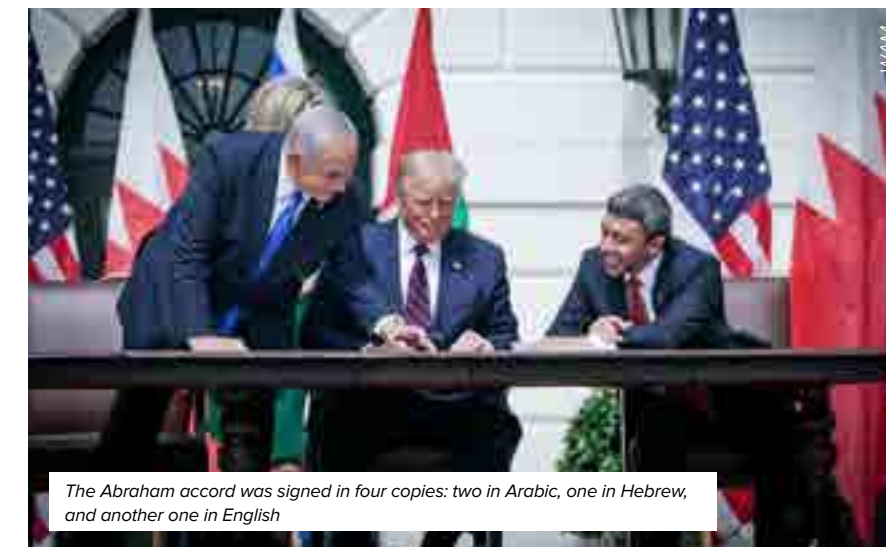
“Thanks to the great courage of the leaders of these three countries, we take a major stride toward a future in which people of all faiths and background live together in peace and prosperity



**US PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP**

#### NEW BEGINNING OF PROSPERITY

August 13, 2020, marked a momentous turn in the relations between the UAE and Israel when President Trump, Prime Minister Netanyahu, and His Highness Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi and Deputy Supreme Commander of the UAE Armed Forces, released their joint statement on the agreement towards full normalisation of relations between the two Middle Eastern countries.



The Abraham accord was signed in four copies: two in Arabic, one in Hebrew, and another one in English

“For too long, the Middle East has been set back by conflict and mistrust. Now I’m convinced we have the opportunity to change that



**BAHRAINI FOREIGN MINISTER ABDULLATIF BIN RASHID AL ZAYANI**

The establishment of direct ties started to turn the wheels of the economy between the two nations, with bilateral agreements that would bring a prosperous economic flow. Areas of growth and cooperation between the UAE and Israel include investment, tourism, direct flights, security, telecommunications, technology, energy, healthcare, culture, the environment, as well as the opening of reciprocal embassies.

“The accord reached between the United States, Israel, and the United Arab Emirates on August 13, 2020, is a courageous step towards a more stable,



integrated and prosperous Middle East. It carries with it the promise of new bridges that will serve to de-escalate existing conflicts and prevent future conflicts,” said Jared Kushner, Senior Adviser and Middle East Chief Adviser to President Trump.

In the UAE, President His Highness Sheikh Khalifa bin Zayed Al Nahyan then issued a federal decree abolishing a 40-year-old law now enables individuals and companies in the UAE to enter into agreements with those who reside in Israel on commercial, financial, and other operations. The new decree opens up thousands of potential avenues of collaboration for progressive development.

Lior Haiat, Spokesperson for the Israel Ministry of Foreign Affairs, stated that the country welcomed the move, calling it a “historic” act that “showed real leadership”. He praised the UAE’s intent to break down walls and build bridges between people. “We hope that [the normalisation] would be a quick process and within a few weeks or months, we would be able to see the fruits of this process. The UAE and Israel are two of the most innovative countries in the region. There is a lot of potential for cooperation in science and research, and also in trade and tourism,” said Haiat.

On the cusp of the normalisation born out of the Abraham Accord, the first ever symbolical direct commercial passenger flight between the UAE and Israel rolled out in August. It was a salute to the opportunities emerging from this historic pact, which can now create a new network of multi-lateral ties in diplomatic, economic, and technological advancements.

#### ANNEXATION HALTED

One of the salient points in the peace accord was Israel’s suspension of

“On the cusp of the normalisation born out of the Abraham Accord, the first ever symbolical direct commercial passenger flight between the UAE and Israel rolled out in August

“This decisive freeze on the annexation of Palestinian territories is a significant diplomatic achievement in enhancing the region’s security and stability



**HE DR ANWAR GARGASH**  
UAE Minister of State for Foreign Affairs

declaring its sovereignty on specific areas of Palestine, in order to establish ties with the Arab and non-Arab Muslim countries in the region.

HE Dr Anwar Gargash, UAE Minister of State for Foreign Affairs, stated that the “decisive freeze” on annexation marked a diplomatic triumph by the Arab nation, affirming the UAE’s belief that peace could be achieved through tolerance, talks and deeper conversations amongst nations. “The UAE has secured Israel’s commitment to halting the annexation of Palestinian territories in order to sustain efforts to achieve a two-state solution. This decisive freeze on the annexation of Palestinian territories is a significant diplomatic achievement and comes in furtherance of the UAE’s belief that establishing normal relations with Israel will enable it to play a



“It carries with it the promise of new bridges that will serve to de-escalate existing conflicts and prevent future conflicts



**JARED KUSHNER**  
Senior Adviser and Middle East Chief Adviser to US President Trump

direct and constructive role in enhancing the region’s security and stability,” said Dr Gargash.

He also reiterated the UAE’s ongoing support for the Palestinian people’s aspiration to establish their own nation. “The UAE’s policy is unchanged, as it supports the efforts to solve the Palestinian issue and the Arab-Israeli conflict, to achieve peace and stability in the region. This is one of the solid foundations of the UAE since its establishment by the late Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan, who said, ‘Our support for the Palestinian people will continue until they achieve their aspiration to establish an independent country,’” recalled the minister.

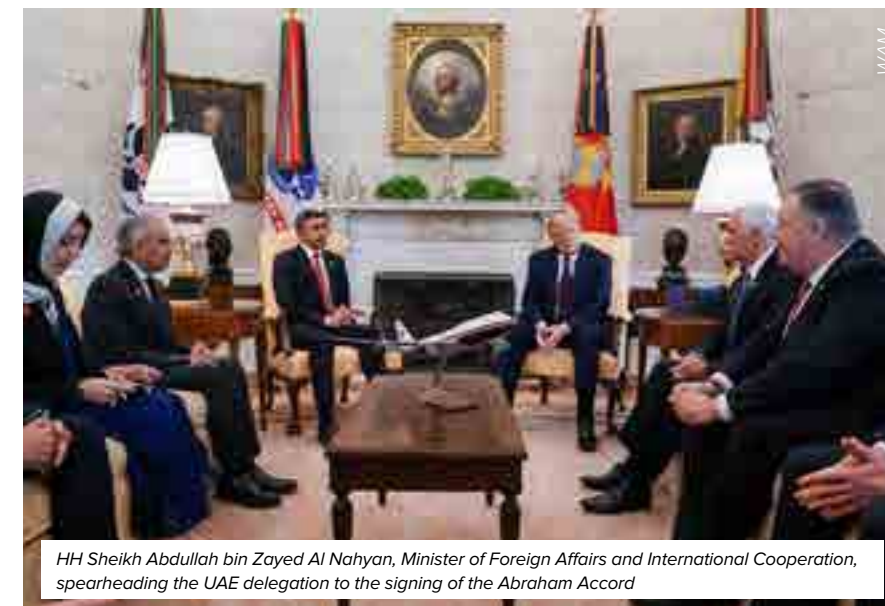
The US administration’s Senior Advisor Kushner said that the focus for now would remain on Israel’s steps towards

“This agreement immediately puts an end to Israel’s plans for the annexation of Palestinian lands and maintains the viability of the two-state solution. Many experts noted that this could provide an opportunity for the Palestinians and Israelis to restart meaningful discussions



**HE YOUSEF AL OTAIBA**  
UAE Ambassador to the US

establishing relationships with Arab countries. “Israel has agreed to suspend the annexation, to suspend applying Israeli law to [West Bank] areas for the time being. But in the future, I am sure it is a discussion that will be had. But not in the near future,” he said.



HH Sheikh Abdullah bin Zayed Al Nahyan, Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, spearheading the UAE delegation to the signing of the Abraham Accord



HH Sheikh Abdullah bin Zayed Al Nahyan, Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation (L) with US President Donald Trump (C) and Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu (R) at the White House

HE Yousef Al Otaiba, the UAE’s Ambassador to the US, said that the agreement represented an opportunity to avoid conflict and begin discussions for a more peaceful solution. “This agreement immediately puts an end to Israel’s plans for the annexation of Palestinian lands and maintains the viability of the two-state solution. Many experts noted that this could provide an opportunity for the Palestinians and Israelis to restart meaningful discussions,” said Al Otaiba.

#### PEACE ACROSS ARABIA

All the accord signatories are optimistic that Israel’s actions on engaging in

harmonious conversations with other nations will result in more diplomatic breakthroughs, similar to what has happened with the UAE.

Kushner express his optimism that all 22 Arab states could soon normalise ties with Israel, following in the footsteps of Egypt (1978), Jordan (1994), and now both UAE and Bahrain (2020). “There are a thousand reasons why it should happen, and very few reasons why it shouldn’t happen. My hope and prayers are that the leaders will have the strength and courage to make the right decisions and to not be discouraged by the vocal minorities,” said Kushner.

#### GLOBAL SUPPORT

The historic Abraham Accord received full support from countries around the world, including Hungary, Greece, Germany, Japan, Costa Rica, Ethiopia, Bahrain, France, Belgium, India, Italy, Oman, Japan, Austria, Britain, along with Egypt and Jordan, the two countries that had normalised ties with Israel decades ago.

United Nations Secretary General Antonio Guterres stated that the joint announcement by the UAE, US, and Israel, effectively suspending Israeli annexation of several territories in Palestine, was a fulfilment of its call for peace in the said area. “[The agreement] will create an opportunity for Israeli and Palestinian leaders to re-engage in meaningful negotiations that will realise a two-state solution, in line with relevant UN



resolutions, international law and bilateral agreements,” said Guterres.

Stéphane Dujarric, Spokesman for the UN Secretary General, affirmed that the UN would support efforts to promote peaceful dialogues. “Peace in the Middle East is more important than ever as the region confronts the grave threats of COVID-19 and radicalisation. The Secretary General will continue to work with all sides to open further possibilities for dialogue, peace and stability,” said Dujarric.

The Global Council for Tolerance and Peace stated that the UAE had

achieved a more peaceful future for the following generations. “In the name of the Council and all its members and partners, we congratulate His Highness Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi and Deputy Supreme Commander of the UAE Armed Forces, for this historic diplomatic milestone, which will chart a more secure and peaceful future for the people of the world, and realise development, prosperity, and a decent life for the whole humanity,” said Ahmad bin Mohammad Aljarwan, President of the Global Council for Tolerance and Peace.

Dr Mohammed Matar Salem Al Kaabi, Chairman of the General Authority of Islamic Affairs and Endowments, said that this was a heartfelt gesture of the UAE’s spirit that promoted love and peace in the world. He said, “The UAE has translated words into action by announcing the peace accord with Israel, in exchange for suspending the annexation of swathes of the Palestinian territories and implementing the two-state solution, according to relevant international laws and the Arab Peace Initiative, as well as permitting Muslims to pray in the Al-Aqsa Mosque and promote peace in the entire region.”

## COMMENCING COOPERATION

*In the days after the accord was announced in August, the UAE and Israel began engaging in talks across different growth areas. They are as follows:*

**INVESTMENT:** The Abu Dhabi Investment Office (ADIO) and Invest in Israel began discussions on how Israeli firms can tap the UAE’s vibrant global business ecosystem. There was an initial virtual meeting between Ziva Eger, Chief Executive of Invest in Israel, and Monira Hisham Al-Kuttab, who leads ADIO’s international promotional activity. Israel also pledged help from its ecosystem, providing fresh insights across sectors such as agricultural technology, energy, life sciences, and clean technology.

*Monira Hisham Al-Kuttab, who leads ADIO’s international promotional activity (L) speaks with Ziva Eger, Chief Executive of Invest in Israel (R) through a virtual meeting to discuss potential collaboration on investments*



**HEALTH:** The two nations have pledged to face the COVID-19 pandemic together by strengthening their cooperation in medical research and pharmaceuticals. HE Abdul Rahman bin Mohammad Al Owais, UAE Minister of Health and Prevention (MoHaP) and Minister of State for Federal National Council Affairs, had a telephone call with Israeli Minister of Health Yuli Edelstein, discussing partnerships on vaccine trials, and treatment for the novel coronavirus disease.



**DEFENCE:** A phone call between HE Mohammed bin Ahmad Al Bawardi, UAE Minister of State for Defence Affairs, and Benny Gantz, Defence Minister of Israel, affirmed the bilateral commitment to enhancing regional security and safety.



**FOREIGN AFFAIRS:** HE Dr Anwar Gargash, UAE Minister of State for Foreign Affairs, has reviewed prospects for consolidating bilateral cooperation with Meir Ben-Shabbat, National Security Adviser and Head of the Israeli National Security Council. Top diplomats from the UAE and Israel discussed the development of strategic ties and reviewed regional and international developments of concern.

*Meir Ben-Shabbat, National Security Adviser and Head of the Israeli National Security Council (L) discusses development of strategic ties with HE Dr Anwar Gargash, UAE Minister of State for Foreign Affairs (R) during the former’s inaugural visit to the UAE*

**FOOD AND WATER SECURITY:** One of the top priorities of countries these days is achieving food and water security. Following the peace agreement, HE Mariam Al Mheiri, UAE Minister of State for Food and Water Security, and Alon Schuster, Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development of Israel, held a virtual meeting, pledging collaboration in areas such as aquaculture, agricultural technology, research and development, and related fields.



**BANKING AND FINANCE:** The UAE and Israel have formalised deals with the signing of a Memorandum of Agreement (MoA) that stipulates future cooperation in the banking and financial sector. The MoA, signed by Abdulhamid Saeed Alahmadi, Governor of the UAE Central Bank, and Ronen Peretz, Director General of the Israeli Prime Minister’s Office, mandates the creation of a working group as well as a bilateral committee to facilitate and establish banking between the UAE and Israel.

*Abdulhamid Saeed Alahmadi, Governor of the UAE Central Bank (R-front), and Ronen Peretz, Director General of the Israeli Prime Minister’s Office (L-front) sign a memorandum of agreement to formalise deals in UAE and Israel’s banking and financial sector*

**BUSINESS:** One of the landmark achievements was the launch of the first Israel operations by a UAE-based business organisation. The company is Abu Dhabi’s Group 42 (G42), a leading Artificial Intelligence and cloud computing firm, which has established a wholly-owned subsidiary in Israel, enabling further collaboration in technology, research and development.







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

## THE TREASURE OF CONTENTMENT IS NOT EASY TO ATTAIN

As we have seen during the pandemic and its economic fallout, it is hard to uplift one's spirits when one's life is weighed down by penury

“True richness is the richness of the soul” – this phrase has been repeated to us since childhood. While we were in primary school, our teachers would try to convince us that money was not everything. We grew up memorising this saying, and we would also bear in mind, that “contentment is a treasure that never perishes”.

However, as the years pass, the innocence of our childhood begins to dwindle away. We face the demands of life and our obligations towards our work and family. We recalculate things, trying to balance the ideals we were brought up on and the urgency of life's demands upon us.

I read a few days ago that MacKenzie Scott, the ex-wife of Amazon's CEO Jeff Bezos, the richest man in the world, had topped the list of the world's richest women with a fortune of \$68 billion (Dhs249.56bn), surpassing the \$66.8bn wealth of Françoise Bettencourt Meyers, the heir to L'Oreal who manages 33% of the world's largest cosmetics company.

I expected that Scott had earned this fortune in a field such as oil trade and other professions that few people are good at. Instead, I discovered that this wealth was the result of her divorce settlement from Bezos. Now, she ranks No. 12 on the global rich list, after Bill Gates of Microsoft, and Elon Musk of Tesla, and Mark Zuckerberg of Facebook.

Is it true that richness is the richness of the soul, and that contentment is the greatest treasure, just like what we learned from our teachers in school?

Ideally and morally, this is correct and unquestionable. In practical terms, some see it as preferable if the richness of the soul comes with the richness of the pocket. This is theoretically

acceptable, but is hard to achieve.

Statistics reveal that rich people get richer and the poor get poorer. This does not apply to individuals alone, but also to countries, according to the book *Capital in the Twenty-First Century* by the French economist Thomas Piketty. The book is based on research that Piketty and several other economists conducted over a decade, digging deep into the details of historical changes that have occurred around income and wealth.

The worldwide economic contraction in the recent months, the travel restrictions, the huge losses incurred by major companies in most business sectors, the bankruptcy of small business owners, all as a result of the spread of COVID-19, make us reconsider many theories that were in our lives before the novel coronavirus came along. Empty bank accounts and safes put pressure not only on our pockets, but also on our nerves. And when the nerves are exposed to this tremendous pressure, our memories may become fuzzy and we may forget the ideas that we believed in when we were young.

Going back to what we started with, and to Scott, who is at the top of the list of the world's richest women, we remember other sayings that we learned while growing up. One such saying was that “Life is all about destiny” – and we see that nothing stands in the way of destiny when a person who has one raffle ticket wins the draw, and the one who had a thousand vouchers won nothing.

It is true that contentment is a treasure, but it may perish for some when the troubles of life are too much for a person to bear. The important thing here is to be convinced that true richness is the richness of the soul, as we were taught in school.

**In practical terms, some see it as preferable if the richness of the soul comes with the richness of the pocket. This is theoretically acceptable but is hard to achieve.**

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

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# COVID-19 VACCINE TRACKER

THE UAE HAS REACHED A MILESTONE IN THE PHASE III CLINICAL TRIALS FOR A COVID-19 VACCINE, AND IT HAS ALSO LAUNCHED A NATIONAL STRATEGY TO RAISE THE OVERALL IMMUNITY OF ITS POPULATION. **999** TRACKS THE PROGRESS OF THESE TRIALS AS WELL AS OTHER VACCINE CANDIDATES ACROSS THE GLOBE

BY NEIL BIE





**T**he COVID-19 crisis brings with it a vital lesson: each country needs to work on increasing its population's immunity through a strategic programme that's proactive and not reactive. September 2020 has been a very eventful month in the worldwide fight against this pandemic, especially with regard to finding a vaccine, and the UAE has played a stellar part in it.

On September 14, in a landmark announcement, the UAE government authorised the emergency use of the COVID-19 vaccine, revealing that the vaccine caused no complications for individuals with chronic diseases.

HE Dr Abdul Rahman bin Mohammad bin Nasser Al Owais, Minister of Health

and Prevention, and Minister of State for Federal National Council Affairs, announced that people authorised to take the COVID-19 vaccine for emergency purposes include nurses, doctors, and other medical frontliners, whose very nature of work put them at a highest risk of contracting the viral disease.

"The vaccine would be available for first-line-of-defense heroes, who are most at risk of catching COVID-19, protecting them from any danger that they may be exposed to due to the nature of their work," Dr Al Owais said. "This emergency use of the vaccine is completely compatible with the regulations and laws that allow a faster review of licensing procedures."

**“The vaccine would be available for first-line-of-defense heroes, who are most at risk of catching COVID-19, protecting them from any danger that they may be exposed to due to the nature of their work**



**HE ABDUL RAHMAN AL OWAIS**  
Minister of Health and Prevention and Minister of State for Federal National Council Affairs

He added: "These steps are taken with the goal of preserving the lives of millions of people and providing health care for the infected."

The same day, Dr Nawal Al Kaabi, Head of the National Clinical Committee for Coronavirus and principal investigator for the Phase III of clinical trials of the COVID-19 vaccine, said that 1,000 out of the 31,000 trial volunteers in the UAE were individuals with chronic illnesses, and none of these 1,000 volunteers suffered from any complications after



**“This emergency approval of the vaccine was given upon meeting a set of criteria and we are working closely with the vaccine's developers**



**DR NAWAL AL KAABI**  
Head of the National Clinical Committee for Coronavirus

taking part in the vaccine trial. She said that this gave hope for the UAE's vaccine candidate for the novel coronavirus (aka SARS-CoV-2).

"This emergency approval of the vaccine was given upon meeting a set of criteria for this specific purpose and we are working closely with the vaccine's developers," Dr Al Kaabi said. "The evaluation was performed under a license for emergency and limited use, considering target groups, product characteristics, clinical studies data, and all relevant available scientific evidence."

In addition, the UAE has reached 8 million COVID-19 swab tests, cementing



its place among the top 10 nations in the world to conduct sufficient tests per 1 million population.

Just a week before its announcement on vaccine authorisation, the UAE Cabinet, chaired by His Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice President and Prime Minister of the UAE and Ruler of Dubai, launched a policy with tremendous foresight on public health. The country, which has one of the best records in enabling global cargo movement of medical kits; of repatriating people stranded due to the pandemic; of testing people for the novel coronavirus; and of attracting tens of thousands of vaccine trial volunteers, launched its National Policy on Vaccinations on September 7.

Approved by the Cabinet, the National Policy on Vaccinations is summarised as a multi-sectoral national framework for combating communicable diseases and reducing their risks to individuals and society. The policy is essentially a battle plan not only for COVID-19 but also for anything that may come after it.

Also in September, the United Nations, speaking on behalf of the World Health Organisation (WHO), called upon the international community to come forward and raise \$35 billion (Dhs128.45bn) more for WHO's Access to COVID-19 Tools (Act) Accelerator. The Accelerator programme aims to provide for the production of 2 billion vaccine doses, 245 million treatments, and another 500 million tests to halt the spread of the viral disease. WHO needs \$38bn in the immediate term – a period of three months – to attain its goals.

The funding appeal, made by UN Secretary-General António Guterres in an online meeting, was followed by a

**“The National Policy on Vaccinations is summarised as a multi-sectoral national framework for combating communicable diseases and reducing their risks to individuals and society**



**“One of the most important features of the National Policy on Vaccinations is providing equal opportunity for all to gain access not just to the COVID-19 vaccine, but to vaccination for other communicable diseases as well**

pledge by more than 30 heads of state and ministers to fully fund the programme. “We acknowledge the urgency of catalysing a step-change in political support and financing for the ACT-Accelerator in order to enable it to deliver on its mission of accelerating the discovery and deployment of new COVID-19 tools to all people, everywhere,” they said in a statement.

#### UMBRELLA POLICY

The UAE Cabinet has affirmed to the public that it would leave no one behind through the approval of the National Policy on Vaccinations, which serves as an umbrella for pulling under it all kinds of resources and organisations that would work together on the COVID-19 vaccine, and then expand the scope of preventive health care. The plan is to bring together the non-governmental sector and community members to support the UAE’s fight against communicable diseases, by promoting a healthy lifestyle; as well as ensuring the delivery of the best quality of vaccination services and preventive care nationwide.

One of the most important features of the National Policy on Vaccinations is providing equal opportunity for all to gain access not just to the COVID-19 vaccine, but to vaccination for other communicable diseases as well. The goal is to immunise the entire population of citizens and expats. The policy would also look into the quality and sustainability of all types of vaccines.

Alongside, the policy covers promoting a healthier lifestyle amongst the public; generating awareness on the importance of vaccines; supporting research and innovation in vaccine development and



health care; and issuing guidelines on protecting public health during similar disease outbreaks and other related health emergencies.

#### GLOBAL COORDINATION

This is the first time that the whole world’s researchers are working simultaneously and sharing knowledge generously to find a vaccine. Such coordination is not only desirable but indispensable, because the pandemic knows no borders.

Thanks to all countries joining hands, the world has witnessed incredible speed in the development of the COVID-19 vaccine, from the launch of Phase I and II tests on limited numbers of individuals to Phase III tests on thousands of volunteers.

The fast-paced development of the COVID-19 vaccine is not without its risks, with many health scientists and experts voicing their concerns and calling upon pharmaceutical companies to be very careful during the human trials.

Statistically, if even one of 10,000 individual volunteers suffers from a serious adverse reaction, it could mean that if 1 billion individuals take the vaccine, there might be 100,000 or more individuals who would experience the same side effects.

History points out that it takes experts several years to measure if vaccines are truly effective for the targeted diseases, along with checking for possible side

effects. And while time is of the essence, haste and missteps may lead to disastrous consequences, similar to the polio vaccine that infected 40,000 children in a western country in 1955 instead of immunising them. However, despite safety and efficacy concerns, producing and procuring a vaccine against COVID-19 remains a top priority amongst governments worldwide, as the pandemic has crippled economies, tourism, businesses, and society as a whole.

#### ACCELERATED AVAILABILITY

The UAE has proven that it is one with humanity with the ongoing success of the world’s first inactivated COVID-19 vaccine trials – 31,000 brave individuals in the country have joined thousands more around the world, taking the initiative of volunteering for clinical trials. If the vaccine is finally approved and goes into manufacturing, the volunteers would be amongst the first to receive it.

After the Phase III trials are done and pharmaceutical companies get the green light from the food and drug bureaus in their respective countries, the final step will be manufacturing enough of these vaccines to ensure global distribution.

The majority of the pharmaceutical companies target the end of 2020 for the initial availability of a vaccine, pledging to produce hundreds of millions of doses for the global population, with billions more to be produced in 2021.





# COVID-19 VACCINE TRACKER

999 presents some of the vaccine candidates currently being tested across the globe:

## SINOPHARM

**NAME:** None

**ORIGINS:** China's Sinopharm entered its initial clinical trials in April 2020. Its inactivated vaccine uses a dead virus to implant an immune cell memory. This induces an immune response against the novel coronavirus when it attempts to enter and affect the body. Experts state that the vaccine has several advantages, including mature production processes and wide-ranging protection backed by controllable, high quality standards.

**STATUS:** Following Sinopharm's successful Phase I and II trials in China, a huge campaign was launched in the UAE to conduct the world's first inactivated COVID-19 vaccine trials, led by the Department of Health in Abu Dhabi, in partnership with Abu Dhabi's Artificial Intelligence and cloud computing company Group 42 (G42) and Sinopharm's China National Biotech Group (CNBG).

The 31,000 volunteers in the UAE who received doses from July to August 2020 included two health officials – Sheikh Abdullah bin Mohammed Al Hamed, Chairman of the Abu Dhabi Department of Health (DoH), and Dr Jamal Al Kaabi, Acting Undersecretary at DoH – reinforcing the leadership's commitment.

"This achievement would not have been possible without the support of our wise leadership and its continuous support of scientific research in the health care sector. [The successful trial] will place our country at the forefront of global research efforts to confront this pandemic," said Al Hamed.

At this point in time, all vaccinated UAE volunteers have completed more than 60 days since receiving the first shot. All volunteers will continue to be monitored through telemedicine and face-to-face check-ups over the next year.

## PFIZER-BIONTECH VACCINE

**NAME:** BNT162b2

**ORIGINS:** The collaboration between Germany's BioNTech and global pharma major Pfizer since March 2020 has led to a vaccine candidate that is a type of messenger Ribonucleic acid (mRNA). It stimulates cells within the body to produce viral proteins that are recognisable by the immune system. With a small part of the genetic code of the SARS-CoV-2 spike protein, the mRNA helps generate an immune system response against the virus, thereby combating COVID-19.

**STATUS:** To date, Pfizer and BioNTech have over 120 clinical trial sites spread over 3 countries, with over 25,000 individuals enrolled for the vaccine programme. Pfizer and BioNTech plan to seek regulatory review in the US and Europe respectively in October 2020, to obtain approvals from the authorities. If approved this month, they target producing over 100 million doses before the end of 2020, scaling up to over 1.3 billion doses by the end of 2021.

## ASTRAZENECA-OXFORD VACCINE

**NAME:** AZD1222 / ChAdOx1 nCoV-19

**ORIGINS:** As announced in April 2020, AstraZeneca and the University of Oxford teamed up to create their own version of the COVID-19 vaccine, called 'AZD1222'. This vaccine uses a replication-deficient chimpanzee viral vector based on a weakened version of a common cold virus (adenovirus) that causes infections in chimpanzees and contains the genetic material of the SARS-CoV-2 virus spike protein. After vaccination, the surface spike protein is produced, priming the immune system to attack the SARS-CoV-2 virus if it later infects the body.

**STATUS:** Preliminary results from the trials of AZD1222 showed a strong immune response with increased antibodies and responses from T-cells with reported minor side effects, including fatigue and headache.

Trials have resumed in the United Kingdom after two voluntary pauses, when two of their volunteers suffered a suspected serious reaction in unrelated incidents. AstraZeneca and University of Oxford plan to produce at least 3 billion doses.

## GAMALEYA NATIONAL CENTRE OF EPIDEMIOLOGY AND MICROBIOLOGY

**NAME:** Sputnik V

**ORIGINS:** Building upon over a century of leading the world in medical research, the Gamaleya National Centre of Epidemiology and Microbiology in Russia has produced the world's first registered COVID-19 vaccine. It is named 'Sputnik V' after Russia's successful launch of the first space satellite in 1957.

The Sputnik V vaccine works through adenovirus vectors, which are vehicles that can induce a genetic material from another virus into a cell. The gene from adenovirus, which causes the infection, is removed, while a gene with the code of a protein from another virus spike is inserted, thereby helping the immune system generate antibodies against the novel coronavirus disease. Russian scientists developed

Sputnik V with two different types of adenovirus vectors: (rAd26 and rAd5) for the first and second vaccination, to boost the efficacy of the vaccine.

**STATUS:** Russian President Vladimir Putin approved the said vaccine on August 11, 2020, revealing that one of his daughters had received the vaccine and was feeling well after getting sick during the first few days.

Sputnik V is funded by the Russian Direct Investment Fund and is being eyed to produce less than 1 million doses by the end of 2020 after Phase III trials in a number of countries. Mass production of Sputnik V is being eyed to start in March-April 2021.

## MODERNA THERAPEUTICS

**NAME:** mRNA-1273

**ORIGINS:** Moderna, a biotech company based in Massachusetts, United States, has collaborated with the National Institutes of Health to create a vaccine candidate that relies on injecting harmless parts (mRNA) of the coronavirus into human cells. The process helps train the immune system to recognise the presence of the virus.

**STATUS:** Moderna's mRNA-1273 is currently in Phase III of trials. Preliminary findings show that healthy volunteers, even the elderly ones, produced sufficient amount of coronavirus antibodies, along with a reaction from T-cells, which is another part of the human body's immunity response.

The pharmaceutical company aims to deliver 500 million doses per year from 2021 as part of its deal with Swiss manufacturer Lonza, which will ramp up production to 1 billion doses per year.

## CANSINO BIOLOGICS

**NAME:** AD5-NCOV

**ORIGINS:** One of China's vaccine candidates involves the use of a weakened version of the adenovirus as a vehicle to introduce the spike protein of SARS-CoV-2 to the body. Preliminary results published in *The Lancet* state that the vaccine produced "significant immune responses" across a majority of the vaccine recipients from a single dose.

**STATUS:** The vaccine was in Phase II of its trials when the Chinese government approved its use, exclusively for the military, for one year only from June 25, 2020. In essence, CanSino was noted as one of the first companies in the world to receive limited approval to use the vaccine for humans. As of August 15, 2020, Petrovax, a biopharmaceutical company in Russia, revealed that it had launched Ad5-nCoV's Phase III clinical trials.





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

## SOCIAL MEDIA AND OUR SOCIAL LIFE

It is a story of transformation, and not necessarily with a happy ending – how online connections have made our real relationships wither away

**D**espite all the positives of social media in our daily life, its contributions to creating virtual relationships between strangers, strengthening and developing existing relationships, and despite its role in bridging distances and connecting people from all around the world, one negative makes us forget all the positives — we cannot avoid social media at any time.

In fact, we miss our real social life, which is unfortunately forgotten by the majority because of social media. These online platforms are created for people to socialise, yet they connect us in communities and in a world to which we do not belong.

In the past, the world in which we were connected was small, in a circle limited to family, friends and neighbours. We used to enjoy our meetings full of laughter and quarrels, as these gatherings were our source of joy. And we do not exaggerate if we say that they were also the largest and deepest source of knowledge and a guide to our behaviours.

Our old way of meeting and connecting represents our true desire of developing the relations that bind us together. We were happy and content with everything we had.

The memory of everyone who was not born in the time of social media is still full of screams of our parents whom we used to annoy through our actions. The question is: how did we arrive at this point wherein our old way of socialising has

completely been replaced?

Today, we know many individuals and families whom we have never met. Through social networks, we began to see what we were not familiar with, and we became accustomed to watching people trying to hide their faults from our eyes and from anyone who might criticise them.

We became more materialistic, liking the things that the

people we follow on social media like. Our thoughts are stuck in what we read and follow in a virtual society, where we do not know the truth of its people and the real depth of the things they say or share.

Now, there is no conversation we enjoy, nor a meeting to make us truly happy. Twenty years ago, when TV channels appeared, we had big concerns, as they became one of our sources of education and knowledge. Today, social media has imposed even more dangers compared to those we used to fear from TV.

Perhaps some people are still immune to social media, but how do we protect generations that have become attached to this technology-based form of communication, and are most affected by its content? This is one of the questions faced by parents who do not have the power to control what happens on social media. Is there a way out? This is what we hope, although it is one of our biggest concerns.

**Our thoughts are stuck in what we read and follow in a virtual society, where we do not know the truth of its people and the real depth of the things they say or share**

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# STICK TO THE STRIPES

PEDESTRIAN CROSSINGS EXIST FOR A REASON: TO KEEP PEDESTRIANS ALIVE. WITH MORE PEOPLE COMING OUT AFTER THE EASING OF COVID-19 RESTRICTIONS, **999** REMINDS ALL ABOUT THE LIFE-SAVING ZEBRA CROSSING – AND TAKES A PEEK INTO JAYWALKERS' MIND

BY MARK NITUMA





One late evening in September 2020, a 28-year-old Asian man in Ras Al Khaimah already had at the back of his mind — just as many of us do — the perils of crossing a road at an undesignated area. Still, he hurriedly crossed a part of Al Wakalat Road without the universally familiar zebra stripes for pedestrians. Before reaching the other side of the road, he was hit by a car. The collision killed the pedestrian on the spot; he would have lived had he spent a few more minutes on finding a designated area for crossing.

The accident was reported around 10:15pm, a time when it would have been difficult for the car driver to spot anyone running across the street. Police patrols and paramedics arrived in the shortest possible time, but they couldn't revive the man hit by the vehicle. "The body was shifted to the

morgue and the accident file was referred to the authorities concerned for legal procedures," said Brigadier Ahmad Al Sam Al Naqbi, Director of the Traffic and Patrols Department of RAK Police.

Talking to the media about the incident, the officer repeated a warning that the police give to people throughout the year. He said, "[Abide by] the consistent reminder of the UAE police forces to everyone, cross at a designated area only. Always bear in mind that one wrong step at the wrong place can be deadly. All pedestrians should ensure that the road is clear before crossing."

This kind of news is the last thing that the authorities want to hear in the midst of tackling a pandemic. Following the easing of mobility restrictions related to COVID-19, more and more people are stepping out of their house and moving around the cities.

**“ Abide by the consistent reminder of the UAE police forces to everyone, cross at a designated area only. Always bear in mind that one wrong step at the wrong place can be deadly**



**BRIGADIER AHMAD AL SAM AL NAQBI**

Director of the Traffic and Patrols Department of RAK Police

When the UAE government has gone to such lengths to keep people alive and well during a global crisis, fatal accidents caused by jaywalking are amongst the most undesirable things.

While people generally acknowledge the dangers of bad driving, fewer people are ready to concede that jaywalking can be just as much a reason for road deaths. The result is also a pandemic of grief, as more than 270,000 pedestrians lose their lives on the world's roads every year, according to the World Health Organisation. This includes



jaywalking—due to lack of safe zebra crossing or unsafe behaviour of pedestrians.

"A jaywalker does not accept the reality that the human body is more vulnerable than metal during a collision," said Major General Eng Expert Mohammad Saif Al Zafeen, Dubai Police Assistant Commander-in-Chief, and Chairman of the Federal Traffic Council, back in 2018. He said that a person hit by a car moving at 30kmph has a 10 per cent risk of dying, but if that car is moving at 64kmph, then the risk of dying is nearly 90 per cent. In other words, the greater the speed of the vehicle hitting the pedestrian, the bigger the impact, and the higher the risk of that pedestrian's death.

Abu Dhabi Police said that 48,000 people had been fined or detained in 2019 for ignoring the zebra crossing and crossing roads at undesignated places. Most of the people penalised were those who dodged speeding cars and blindly raced from one side of the road to the other. As for the other emirates, the statistics vary, but the problem of the careless pedestrian remains.

The grim fact is that most of the run-over cases in the UAE were entirely avoidable—they occurred due to jaywalking or motorists failing to give priority to pedestrians. It was such a serious matter that, when new regulations came into effect on July 1, 2017, amending the Federal Traffic Law No. 21 of 1995, the fine for jaywalking was doubled from Dhs200 to Dhs400.

The Ministry of Interior's Vision 2021 is to place the UAE on top of the list of safest countries in the world, by reducing traffic

fatality rates to 3 per 100,000 people by the year 2021. To achieve this target, authorities in the various emirates are laying a strong emphasis on responsible pedestrian behaviour.

#### FOLLOW THE 'SAFETY PATH'

Now that the foggy days of cooler months are almost upon us — the UAE's National Centre of Meteorology issued a fog warning on September 19 — the country's police forces are ringing the alarm bells for jaywalkers. Through an awareness initiative to sensitise pedestrians against the dangers of the J-habit, Abu Dhabi Police launched in September 2020 a very timely campaign called the 'Safety Path', which calls upon residents to only use footbridges, tunnels, and zebras, and to follow the traffic lights at intersections when crossing the streets. "Traffic police will keep a close eye

**“ A person hit by a car moving at 30kmph has a 10 per cent risk of dying, but if that car is moving at 64kmph, then the risk of dying is nearly 90 per cent**

- Ministry of Interior

on jaywalkers and will maintain zero tolerance against offenders. A number of pedestrians ignore traffic lights and the traffic when they cross the roads, exposing themselves and others to the risk of being run over," said Abu Dhabi Police.

The police force added that the goal of reduced road fatalities could certainly be achieved at a much faster rate, if only people would sincerely abide by road rules. From October until the end of winter, pedestrians are warned that the number of fatalities rises amongst jaywalkers, as drivers have difficulty spotting them through the fog or at night. It has also been observed that many people cross the road at traffic signals even if the light remains red. The police forces are emphasising that everyone needs to follow traffic signals at intersections at all times.

**“ Abu Dhabi Police launched in September 2020 a very timely campaign called the 'Safety Path', which calls upon residents to only use designated areas and to follow the traffic lights at intersections when crossing the streets**



Abu Dhabi Police



## NEW TECHNOLOGY, PROJECTS

On the subject of jaywalkers fined or detained in 2019, Abu Dhabi Police said that aside from traffic patrols' vigilance, the 'catch' was also the direct result of a new traffic radar that could detect people darting through vehicles.

The new smart system of Abu Dhabi Police, called 'Hather', is equipped with two cameras: one for the vehicles that are approaching the zebra crossing; another one for pedestrians, to detect jaywalkers. The camera pointed at the vehicles monitors licence plates; the other camera captures visuals of people for identification.

Dubai Police have also adopted a smart controller that isn't any old radar. Operated remotely by officers, using an app

on their smartphones, its features include high-resolution imagery that can catch people queue-jumping, speeding and jaywalking, amongst others.

In Sharjah, four footbridges in some of the busiest districts of the emirate were unveiled in August 2020 by the Sharjah Urban Planning Council. These pedestrian bridges, built at a cost of Dhs100 million, were constructed to prevent jaywalking, and ultimately to protect lives. The bridges are located in King Faisal Street, King Abdulaziz Street, Al Ittihad Street, and Al Nahda Road. They are complete with overhead shades; have a clean, modern look; and are well lit at night.



Abu Dhabi's new smart system is equipped with two cameras: one for the vehicles that are approaching the zebra crossing; another one for pedestrians, to detect jaywalkers



Dubai Police have adopted a smart controller whose features include hi-res imagery that can catch people queue-jumping, speeding and jaywalking



Footbridges in Sharjah's busiest districts unveiled in August 2020 by the Sharjah Urban Planning Council

## WALK SAFELY NOW, CHILD

An 11-year-old Indian boy in Dubai had his request granted by the Roads and Transport Authority (RTA) this year. His request: to designate a pedestrian crossing in his locality, which has three schools.

Nehan Naseem Ali sent an e-mail to the RTA, telling them about the difficulty of little children like him as well as their parents, who admittedly braved fast cars when crossing the street on their way to school. "I and many other students of these three schools used to cross the road daily while going to and returning from the school," said Ali. "We used to jaywalk in batches so that drivers might stop their vehicles for us. I also used to see a few



11-year-old Nehan Naseem Ali sent a request to RTA to put a zebra crossing for the safety of children walking their way to and from school

mothers running with their little kindergarteners holding one hand and an infant carried on the other arm."

When the zebra crossing was implemented, it was a huge relief for these parents and their young children. "It's really a wish come true for all the residents in this area, especially the children who go to school," Ali said, conveying his thanks to RTA.

Asked about how he thought of suggesting this idea to the RTA, the boy said, "I have always seen the UAE rulers encouraging youngsters and their innovative ideas. They have motivated little children with small gestures like waving their hands or giving the children a smile."



## POLICE IN PLAINCLOTHES



Dhs400 ticket fine for jaywalking

Police officers in civilian clothes are carrying out random inspections and slapping jaywalkers with a hefty fine. An

Asian expat shared one instance from 2019 when he was caught jaywalking by a plainclothes police officer. Showing the ticket issued to him bearing a Dhs400 fine, Alex (name withheld) said, "I happened to be running late for work that day. It would only take me less than a minute to walk to the nearest zebra crossing, but for some reason, I chose to cross in front of our accommodation building.

"I did not realise that it would also cost me my first fine in six years of stay in the country. A plainclothes officer approached me and showed me his police badge. It turned out that he was an undercover police patroller who was tasked to spot jaywalkers."

The police officer took Alex's Emirates ID and gave him a ticket. Alex was directed to settle the fine at the police station so he could take the ID card back. "Never will I do that J-habit again, because it was

an experience that burns a hole in my pocket," Alex said.



An expat shows a fine ticket that a plainclothes police officer issued to him for jaywalking

## EXCUSES FOR THE TRAFFIC CHEAT

Jaywalking is a practice of people trying to cheat in the traffic by quickly cutting across a road when they shouldn't and from where they shouldn't. Meanwhile, behind the wheel, a motorist is constantly processing a range of information all at once — speed, other cars, the condition of the road, distance. The motorist does not expect the pedestrian to suddenly appear out of nowhere and get in the vehicle's way.

The common excuse of jaywalkers is that they're in a hurry and are trying to save a little time — therefore, they avoid the inconvenience of finding the nearest designated spot to cross the road. Talking to rule-breakers, 999 has uncovered what's in their mind:

### 1 "ZEBRA CROSSINGS ARE TOO FAR FROM OUR PLACE"

This is the most common answer that 999 got from pedestrians. They said that having to walk the distance from the doorstep to the designated place to cross the road drives them to jaywalk. Others said that they hesitate to use overbridges, citing the difficulty in climbing the steps as an excuse.

### 2 "NOT THINKING OF RISK WHEN IN A HURRY"

Some people said that they no longer think of the perils of jaywalking when they were in a hurry, especially when they are already running late for work or an appointment.

### 3 "RED TRAFFIC LIGHT TAKES TIME TO CHANGE"

A number of pedestrians look at the traffic and do a quick mental math that tells them that they can trot or

sprint across the road. According to them, the red traffic light, in most cases, took up too much of their time, and they didn't think it was necessary to leave home early or plan their day better.

### 4 "I ONLY FOLLOW THE OTHER PEDESTRIANS"

This kind of pedestrian is dictated by humanity's oldest survival instinct: herd behaviour. Sometime during the wait, somebody in the crowd decides that there's enough distance between the cars for them to sprint across. Once the 'leader' sets off, the other pedestrians follow.

### 5 "NO DRIVER WOULD WANT TO KILL SOMEONE"

Several jaywalkers are confident that drivers would be afraid to run over or kill a pedestrian, and that all drivers would stop for anyone crossing the road. They are also convinced that the responsibility of their lives is on the motorist.



# MASK POLLUTION: BANE OF THE NEW NORMAL

THE HUMBLE FACE MASK IS YOUR LIFE-SAVING SHIELD AGAINST COVID-19. BUT IF DISCARDED IRRESPONSIBLY, IT WILL JOIN THE MILLIONS OF OTHER CARELESSLY TOSSED AWAY MASKS THAT LAND UP IN THE SEAS AND BECOME A THREAT TO THE ENVIRONMENT – AND EVENTUALLY, A THREAT TO US HUMANS

BY MARK NITUMA



In the early months of the COVID-19 pandemic, as human activity came to a standstill globally, planet Earth rested for a while and pollution levels plummeted. But by the time this year rolled into the second half, the fallout of the pandemic in the environment became clear on the seabed and shorelines.

A face with a protective mask on – to keep out the novel coronavirus – is now the most common sight around the world. People in many countries are using disposable surgical masks (made from lightweight synthetic fabric) for what they believe is added protection. That's all very well, but a significant number of these disposable mask wearers aren't so considerate towards nature and seem to care little about protection for the environment.

These surgical masks are often discarded irresponsibly and end up in the sea, adding variety to the existing pile of man-made trash on the seabed and in the sea waters. Thousands of masks, along with latex gloves and hand sanitiser bottles, are polluting the marine environment around the world. Laurent Lombard, founder of the French non-profit group Opération Mer Propre (Operation Clean Sea), wrote on social media that “soon we'll run the risk of having more masks than jellyfish in the Mediterranean”.



Surgical masks and latex gloves are one of the most common trash that Opération Mer Propre (Operation Clean Sea) often finds in their beach clean-up operations since the onset of COVID-19 pandemic

Opération Mer Propre @Facebook

Mask pollution, therefore, is the bane of the new normal.

#### VISUAL EVIDENCE

As per estimates of the World Health Organisation (WHO), 89 million medical masks are needed globally every month while the coronavirus pandemic lasts. To give you an overview of the humongous scale of these face masks, this lot can cover the whole Arabian Gulf more than 11 times;

when lined up, it can almost cover the distance from the UAE to the US; or they can be more than 13,600 times the height of Burj Khalifa, the world's tallest tower.

More than 75 countries have made the use of masks mandatory for people when they step out of the house, in a bid to limit the coronavirus infection. That's not the main problem, though; rather, the problem lies in humanity's disregard for all other species on the planet when they make

## COVID-19 FACE MASKS AT A GLANCE



“Due to COVID-19, the general population have all taken the precaution to wear surgical masks. When you suddenly have people wearing one to two masks per day, the amount of trash generated is going to be substantial

#### GARY STOKES

Co-founder of Oceans Asia

the streets, parking lots, beaches, etc their huge garbage bin.

Opération Mer Propre warned in its post: “[If] nothing changes, it will become a real ecological disaster and maybe even a sanitary disaster.” The post was accompanied by a series of photos that went viral.

As early as March, when countries began enforcing social distancing and border closure, and mask-wearing became a basic precaution, its fallout had become obvious. In the first viral photograph of mask pollution, a man was seen holding



Viral photo of Gary Stokes, co-founder of Oceans Asia, showing a bunch of face masks that had been washed up on the shoreline of an Asian city

Oceans Asia

a bunch of face masks that had washed up on the shoreline of an Asian city. The man in the viral photo was later identified as Gary Stokes, co-founder of the marine conservation group Oceans Asia.

Stokes and his team regularly visit that island, carrying out plastic pollution research and looking for clues to the origin of water pollution in the area. On that visit in March, the team easily noticed one item: discarded face masks, many of them, in the water bodies. He said, “Over time, the team has seen the odd mask here and there; however, this time

they were all along the high tide line and foreshore, with new arrivals coming in on the current. Due to COVID-19, the general population have all taken the precaution to wear surgical masks. When you suddenly have... people wearing one to two masks per day, the amount of trash generated is going to be substantial.”

#### TIP OF THE ICEBERG

The humble face mask has become one of the most sought-after commodities during this pandemic. People of all ages are donning this piece of protective face covering, but its use reveals far more than it hides.

#WorldMaskWeek, a global movement to inspire more people to wear face coverings to help stop the spread of COVID-19, was celebrated in August. Besides, more and more companies are now manufacturing them, as a response to the initial global shortage of masks.

There's no doubt that face masks can limit the impact of the pandemic but

“If nothing changes, it will become a real ecological disaster and maybe even a sanitary disaster

—Opération Mer Propre



## ARAB WORLD'S 1ST OF ITS KIND FACE MASK TESTING IN UAE

The UAE has rolled out in August a mechanism to test face masks which involves a layer of scientific analysis to ensure not only their quality, safety and efficiency, but also their heavy metal contents.

High content of heavy metals such as lead and mercury in face masks is harmful to both humans and the environment.

Considered the first-of-its-kind in the Arab world, the Consumer Products and Commodities Laboratory Section in Dubai Municipality's Dubai Central Laboratory (DCL) announced that it is now subjecting all cloth masks in the market to a 15-way test to ensure that the manufacturing is based on the latest carefully developed international standards.



Dubai Municipality

UAE now subjects all cloth masks in the market to testing in order to check their quality and safety for humans and the environment

This testing is now also being conducted in a few countries including South Korea, Thailand, China and France.

The 15-way test includes analysis of the pH level, heavy metals and formaldehyde contents, air permeability, as well as color stability for wet and dry friction.

**“The materials found in most PPE are non-biodegradable and oftentimes contain fibres such as micro-plastics that are extremely harmful to the environment**



**HABIBA AL MARASHI**

Chairperson of Emirates Environmental Group

depending on the irresponsibility level of their wearers when disposing of the masks, these can lead to another human and animal health crisis.

Mask manufacturing and use will continue, and maybe increase, as economies keep slowly re-opening. So, the only way to avert an ecological disaster is for people to realise that their careless disposal of masks would eventually become a danger to themselves.

The mask-making business is certainly booming. According to the World

Economic Forum, the global market for disposable masks ballooned to \$75 billion (Dhs275.25bn) in the first quarter of 2020, and it is expected to grow at a rate of over 50 per cent for the next seven years.

At the start of the outbreak, US officials estimated that the country needed 300 million face masks to cope with COVID-19. Since then, a US-based manufacturer, which made 550 million masks in 2019, said that it would produce 2 billion masks in 2020 at its plants around the world. That's almost a 400 per cent increase year on year.

In France, 2 billion disposable masks have been ordered by the authorities as part of its measures to protect citizens. China's daily production of all types of masks had increased by more than 100 per cent, from

around 10 million to 115 million, by the end of February; production has expanded 12-fold since the pandemic took hold.

In the UAE, one supermarket alone said in March that it was sourcing 1.6 million face masks daily, on an average.

If even a fraction of these masks finds their way into the sea because of negligent humans, the word “disaster” simply couldn't cover the scale of the fallout.

### EXTREMELY HARMFUL EFFECTS

Since they are lightweight, face masks could be carried by the wind from land and landfills, said Habiba Al Marashi, Chairperson of Emirates Environmental Group, a non-government entity focused on sustainability, speaking to the media.

She added that most of these lightweight



**“Abu Dhabi Police are well aware of the hazardous health and environmental risks that such dumping acts can pose to the community as a whole. Those who would be caught throwing used masks and gloves from their vehicles would get a fine of Dhs1,000 and 6 black points**

—Abu Dhabi Police Health and Safety Committee

masks would remain in the environment as pollutants. “The materials found in most PPE are non-biodegradable and oftentimes contain fibres such as micro-plastics that are extremely harmful to the environment,” said Al Marashi, explaining that face masks are partially plastic, which could take hundreds of years to degrade. The responsibility, she said, lays heavily on the discipline of all segments of society.

As much as we want this pandemic to end and have a sense of normality restored, the environment must not be compromised due to our carelessness. It doesn't take a very keen eye to spot irresponsibly discarded face masks — when you do the shopping at a supermarket, chances are you'll see one discarded in the shopping cart itself. This usually blue-coloured PPE is also an eyesore at parking lots and on sandy beaches or shorelines. People just dump them everywhere without a thought for the health and safety of others, especially the street sweepers and sanitation workers.

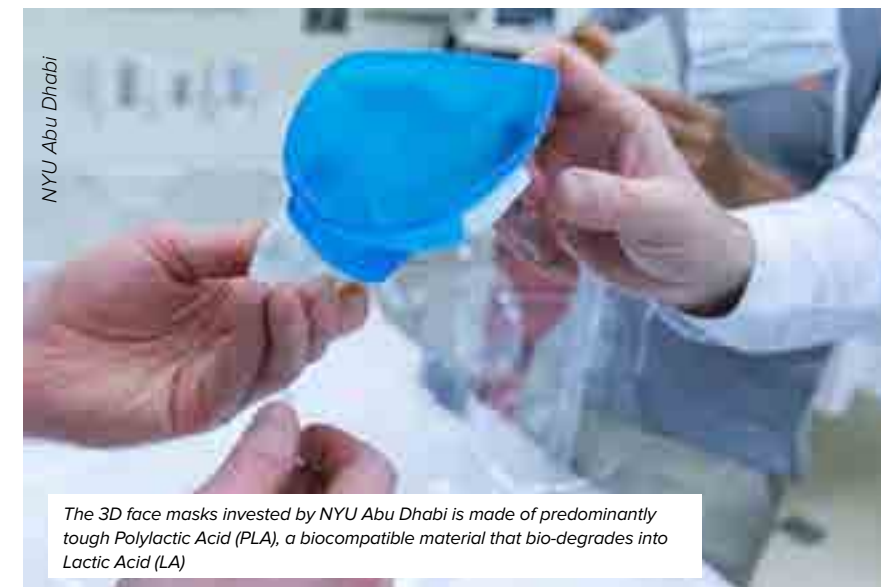
### POLICE HAVE AN EYE ON YOU

The UAE Government has made face masks mandatory in all public places. What's worth praising is how the UAE law enforcement is strictly monitoring those who throw their used face masks on the road. Pedestrians caught doing this by patrol policemen face a hefty fine and other punishment.

In their ongoing initiative to spread a culture of safety amongst residents, Abu Dhabi Police and Ajman Police are urging the public to be responsible while disposing of their used PPE.

“Abu Dhabi Police are well aware of the hazardous health and environmental risks that such dumping acts can pose to the community as a whole,” said Lt Colonel Mohammad Mubark Al Ghafli, Head of the Abu Dhabi Police health and safety committee. “Those who would be caught throwing used masks and gloves from their vehicles would get a fine of Dhs1,000 and 6 black points,” he added.

The correct way to dispose of a face



NYU Abu Dhabi

The 3D face masks invested by NYU Abu Dhabi is made of predominantly tough Polylactic Acid (PLA), a biocompatible material that bio-degrades into Lactic Acid (LA)

mask, Al Ghafli said, is to place it in a used bag and then put it in a dustbin. “People should also wash their hands after handling used masks,” he stressed.

### UAE'S INNOVATIVE FACE MASK

To address the global shortage of face masks and also curb the one-time use of this essential item, New York University (NYU) Abu Dhabi, in coordination with Mubadala Healthcare and Cleveland Clinic Abu Dhabi, has designed a hard-wearing face mask, similar to an N-95 mask, but one that can be reused after sterilisation.

“The idea is to do it locally, in the UAE,” said Ramesh Jagannathan, Vice Provost for Innovation and Entrepreneurship and Managing Director of startAD, the NYU Abu Dhabi's innovation and entrepreneurship programme. “Right now, masks are disposable — you wear them and toss them out. Ours is better in terms of sustainability and cost effectiveness.”

The 3D face masks are treated with heat in order to achieve a smooth surface, and then breathing filters are placed on the mask, straps are tightened, and a simple layer of recyclable, environment-friendly polyurethane is placed on its boundary. It is made of plastic, predominantly of tough Polylactic Acid (PLA), a biocompatible material that bio-degrades into Lactic Acid (LA). As the mask is recyclable, it also minimises pollution caused by waste. The mask is made of a soft material, with a disposable filter. It can be sterilised using UV light, heat, or chemical treatment.

### HOW UAE TREATS COVID-19 WASTE

The UAE Government ensures only the best environmental practices in treating polluted waste, which now includes COVID-19 medical waste, such as single-use PPE.



“ Medical waste possibly contaminated with COVID-19 is sterilised upon arrival at the facility directly, and have priority in treatment over other medical waste for disposal



**ENG ABDUL MAJEED SAIFAIE**

Director of the Waste Management Department at Dubai Municipality

In Dubai, for example, the municipality is managing medical waste taken from public and private clinics, hospitals, health care centres, and laboratories, and then transporting that waste directly to the Jebel Ali Hazardous Waste Treatment Facility. There, the medical waste is treated on a daily basis, using a central treatment system. Since the start of the COVID-19 outbreak until the end of April 2020, this facility has treated more than



Dubai Municipality

Since the start of the COVID-19 outbreak until the end of April 2020, the Jebel Ali Hazardous Waste Treatment Facility has treated more than 350 tonnes of medical waste, at a rate of 5-6 tonnes per day

350 tonnes of medical waste, at a rate of 5-6 tonnes per day.

Eng Abdul Majeed Saifaie, Director of the Waste Management Department at Dubai Municipality, said, “All medical waste is dealt with technically, according to the highest levels of occupational health and safety, except that medical waste possibly contaminated with COVID-19 is sterilised

upon arrival at the facility directly, and have priority in treatment over other medical waste for disposal.”

He added that all equipment, vehicles, and the entire facility were completely sterilised on a regular basis to avoid any infection amongst the staff. Now, all that we need to do, as laypersons, is dispose of our masks correctly.

## TIPS TO DISPOSE OF MASKS PROPERLY

During the 23rd edition of the Emirates Recycling Awards held through a webinar in June, Habiba Al Marashi, Chairperson of Emirates Environmental Group, gave important tips on how people should dispose of the used face masks and other PPE items.

- Commonly used PPE such as gloves and masks should be disposed of in a trash bin as soon as you remove them, to ensure that they do not end up elsewhere in the environment.
- After a shopping trip, remove your gloves immediately and discard them into the waste bins outside provided by the municipality.
- Do not mix PPE waste with recyclable waste. Practise separating your used gloves and masks from other common household waste when disposing of them.
- Although some disinfectant wipes are labelled as flushable, do not flush them down the toilet. This can cause clogging and hazardous backups and overflows to occur in the sewage system.
- Always wash your hands thoroughly before and after handling the items.



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# Women *in* Business

IF THEY WERE A COUNTRY, THE GLOBAL POPULATION OF WOMEN WOULD REPRESENT AN ECONOMY WHOSE GROWTH MARKET IS HIGHER THAN THAT OF CHINA AND INDIA COMBINED. BUT THERE'S STILL A GENDER GAP IN TERMS OF BUSINESS AND FINANCIAL INCLUSION. **999** DELVES INTO THE IMPORTANCE OF CLOSING THAT GAP AND EMPOWERING WOMEN AROUND THE WORLD

BY JAMILLE DOMINGO





**H**igh finance and business have always been associated with men in C-level positions, their palpable presence seemingly reflecting their dominance in the sector. But there actually exists — on the sidelines — a massive and growing number of women showing just the same level of business acumen.

Contrary to popular belief, female entrepreneurs already have a vital role in the world economy and can contribute much more; their contribution is absolutely crucial to ensure global financial stability. According to data released by Harvard Business Review, women actually represent a growth market larger than China and India combined, possibly twice the size. Their participation in the global economy is also expected to increase worldwide GDP by \$28 trillion (Dhs103 trillion) in 2025, as per a report by the World Economic Forum (WEF).

Even in the Middle East, women have been surging forward at the business arena. According to Christina Struller, Vice President of Public Affairs for global

logistics company United Parcel Service (UPS) in the Indian Subcontinent, Middle East and Africa (ISMEA), one in three start-ups in the region is founded or led by a woman — that's a higher percentage than in Silicon Valley, California, one of the global hubs of entrepreneurship.

"Today, one in three start-ups in the Middle East is founded or led by a woman — a higher percentage than in Silicon Valley. This number is expected to continue growing as women entrepreneurs leverage the Internet and turn to digital channels to enter the workforce and start their own businesses. This number is expected to continue growing as women entrepreneurs leverage the Internet and turn to digital channels to enter the workforce and start their own businesses," she said.

#### URGENCY OF FINANCIAL INCLUSION

While women have been proven essential in bolstering the global economy, it is no secret that gender gap still exists, hindering many female entrepreneurs from reaching their full potential and

**“Today, one in three start-ups in the Middle East is founded or led by a woman – a higher percentage than in Silicon Valley. This number is expected to continue growing as women entrepreneurs leverage the Internet to start their own businesses**



**CHRISTINA STRULLER**  
VP of Public Affairs UPS in ISMEA

achieving greater heights in business. This is especially evident in terms of access to financial services, even as simple as banking.

Data from the non-for profit organisation Women's World Banking show of the 1.75 billion women across the globe who have bank accounts, 57 per cent (1 billion) are underbanked or underserved, and only 20 per cent (335 million) have active bank accounts. The organisation also cited that there is still about \$1.7 trillion (Dhs6.2 trillion) worth of unmet credit demand for women-owned Micro, Small & Medium Enterprises (MSME).

This only shows that there is still a huge need for empowering women around the world, according to Ruth Yu-Owen, Co-Founder of Connected Women. She said that women's inclusion in finance and entrepreneurship would bring about increased global productivity and revenue

**“Eight out of 10 women are now involved in small businesses around the world. There is a growing number of women starting businesses in order to provide for their family, especially those whose spouses lost jobs due to the pandemic**



**ELWYN SANSIUS PANGGABEAN**  
Women's World Banking Southeast Asia Advisory Lead

as well as a balanced understanding of all business issues, internal or external. "Statistics indicate that companies run by women are more profitable. Therefore, more women in world entrepreneurship will bring more resources into the global market, generating increased revenue and more money spent in local economies," she said.

Struller also noted that women now have unique opportunities to benefit from new trends in global trade, specifically the rise in services, global value chains, and the digital economy. "Women's inclusion in the



entrepreneurship world is critical because it drives innovation, creates new products and services, increases competitiveness, economic diversification and ultimately economic growth. This is particularly important following the damaging impact of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) on global economies," she said.

Women's World Banking Southeast Asia Advisory Lead Elwyn Sansius Panggabean stressed that closing the gender gap in product access across the retail banking sector could unlock at least \$50 billion (Dhs183.7 trillion) in additional annual revenue.

Analysis by the Goldman Sachs Global Markets Institute in October 2019 also noted that decreasing gender disparity in credit access could improve developing world growth rates by 1.1 per cent.

With the socio-economic effects of

COVID-19, Panggabean added that gender equality in financial inclusion is needed now more than ever, especially as more and more women were setting up their enterprises and needed funding. "Eight out of 10 women are now involved in small businesses around the world. There is a growing number of women starting businesses in order to provide for their family, especially those whose spouses lost jobs [due to the pandemic]," he said, adding that 70 per cent of these small business owners were currently struggling with getting access to adequate finance.

#### WOMEN ARE GREAT BORROWERS

Ever wonder why, despite male professionals seemingly dominating the business sector, the wives and mothers are the ones tasked with managing the household budget? Apparently, they're

#### THE NUMBERS

**8 OUT OF 10** Number of women currently involved in small businesses around the world in order to provide for their family, especially those whose spouses lost jobs due to the pandemic

**DHS103 TRILLION** Expected participation of women in the global economy by 2025, as per a report by the World Economic Forum

**1 OUT OF 3** The ratio of start-up businesses in the Indian Subcontinent, Middle East and Africa (ISMEA) led by a woman, as per United Parcel Service

**20 PER CENT** The number of women with bank accounts across the globe that are active, according to Women's World Banking

**57 PER CENT** The number of women with bank accounts across the globe that are underbanked or underserved, according to Women's World Banking

**DHS6.2 TRILLION** Amount of unmet credit demand for women-owned Micro, Small & Medium Enterprises (MSME) in the world, as cited by Women's World Banking

**1.1 PER CENT** Expected world growth rate if gender disparity in credit access could be reduced, according to analysis by the Goldman Sachs Global Markets Institute in October 2019





better at managing finances. Experts reveal that women have a better knack for monetary management, and that female-controlled finances increase welfare of the family.

According to the 2020 research released by Women's World Banking, women manage to save on an average 10-15 per cent of their earnings despite low and often unpredictable incomes, although their inadequate access to financial instruments forces them to save in informal and unreliable ways.

Women were excellent borrowers as well, stressed Panggabean. The same report by the organisation stated that female borrowers had a very low rate of non-performing loans (NPLs) i.e. a loan that's close to being in default. "Some of our partners report to us that in terms of the NPL percentage of men and women, men have the higher rate," he said. "Hopefully, this indication can motivate financial institutions to focus on providing women more access to finance."

#### CHALLENGES THEY FACE

Women entrepreneurs encounter various hurdles, from inadequate financial support and lack of flexible career opportunities to cultural issues in several parts of the world.

Struller said that these challenges are the reason why only one out of five businesses in the export industry is led by a woman. "Women entrepreneurs face many barriers to finding resources to help them launch and grow successful businesses. These often prevent women from having the same opportunities as men to start and develop businesses," she said.



**“ Experts reveal that women have a better knack for monetary management, and that female-controlled finances increase welfare of the family.**

And then, there are the additional family responsibilities. The onset of COVID-19 and the work-from-home system put an extra burden on women, said Yu-Owen, pointing out that women entrepreneurs now also had to handle “online classes and elder care, while working from home”.

#### TRENDS AND OPPORTUNITIES

COVID-19 has meant unique challenges for emerging markets, especially for women entrepreneurs. They have been impacted by the crisis in three key areas: health, economic, and social. However, there are also various opportunities that they can explore in this new normal.

One opportunity is fortified digitalisation in all aspects of business and finance. There are various analyses that show that this digital connection is integral

to bolstering companies, especially exports. According to the World Trade Organisation, there are now 97 per cent of Internet-enabled SMEs that are engaged in exporting. This is also the reason the pandemic has accelerated the shift to e-commerce, as stores have been forced to close their doors due to social distancing and containment measures.

“Digital trade strategies will be critical for women entrepreneurs’ success. This is a worldwide trend, as illustrated by the projected \$596.8 billion (Dhs2.1 trillion) in year-over-year growth of the global e-commerce market,” said Struller.

She added that while it is difficult for developing countries to get access to the Internet to facilitate orders and payment collection, once digital connectivity and the resulting tools are available, they could offer “leapfrog” opportunities for women’s economic empowerment.

Yu-Owen also stressed upon the importance of advocating technology adoption in the transformed world, a reason the Connected Women community is designed to help its members digitally connect and work with each other.

“Technology is a game-changer for women as it levels the playing field and opens up more opportunities. Our key advocacy is technology adoption for remote and flexible work,” she added.

Panggabean was of the view that the pandemic would spur women into becoming full-fledged professionals, stressing that more women were now



entering the workforce to offset job losses in the family. However, even as digitisation of financial services is growing significantly, he saw women as less connected, less confident, and less prepared than men to use these services. “There remains a large gender digital divide. Women are 14 per cent less likely to own mobile phones, and 43 per cent less likely to engage online than their male counterparts,” he said. This is why it was imperative for organisations and governments to support women in terms of increasing their digital and financial capabilities, he said.

He added that another trend that would arise from this crisis was renewed resilience amongst women. Since women are particularly vulnerable to economic shocks due to their inadequate access to finance, they’ll become even tougher and more motivated to manage finances and save in the post-crisis era.

#### EMPOWERING INITIATIVES

Initiatives undertaken to close the gender gap in business and finance provide hope that the potential of women entrepreneurs would be unlocked, giving them the chances as men.

Women’s World Banking, according to Panggabean, had been powering economies for four decades by implementing advocacy-led strategies to financially assist women, especially low-income women, in emerging markets.



**“ Technology is a game-changer for women as it levels the playing field and opens up more opportunities. Our key advocacy is technology adoption for remote and flexible work**



**RUTH YU-OWEN**  
Co-Founder of Connected Women

engagement group of G20, in order to “develop policy recommendations for governments and private sector, to help eliminate gender inequalities in areas of digital trade, finance, labour, and decision-making”.

Establishing partnerships across the globe is another initiative from UPS to support women. The company has already forged alliances with the International Trade Centre’s SheTrades initiative, Dubai Exports, The World Bank’s Women Entrepreneurs Finance Initiative (We-Fi) programme in the Middle East and North Africa, and WEConnect International. Struller said, “Those initiatives help connect women buyers and sellers in the global supply chain and provide trainings on how to expand their business in the international marketplace.”





# WEAR THE *Pink Ribbon* WITH PRIDE

THIS BREAST CANCER AWARENESS MONTH, THE UAE GOVERNMENT WANTS TO EDUCATE WOMEN THAT EARLY DETECTION AND PROMPT TREATMENT FOR THIS DISEASE CAN MAKE THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN LIFE AND DEATH

BY JAMILLE DOMINGO



For around two years now, UAE-based expat Gie Drew, 60, has been celebrating what she describes as her “second chance” in life. The year 2001 began on a bleak note for her, as she was diagnosed with stage 1 breast cancer; till 2018, her ordeal went on, as the cancer returned and was in stage 3. She has come out stronger from her painful and occasionally dispiriting treatment, and now feels grateful and determined to spread the message of awareness about breast cancer.

Recalling the time when she got the first diagnosis, Drew said that she had never felt so depressed in her life — the upsetting news felt so unreal. “I was so upset the first time I was diagnosed, because I had very little understanding about breast cancer during that time,” she said.

Her first surgery, called lumpectomy, was performed in the UK — that day was her birthday. Following the operation, she was diligent in taking care of herself, but faced the same ordeal once again as the cancer returned in a more advanced stage. “This has been the most painful experience that I’ve had to go through in my life. I nearly gave up, stopped eating and drinking because everything I would take, I’d just throw up,” said Drew. “The most distressing moment I had was when



I started losing my hair.” But she survived the killer disease and cherishes each day.

Meanwhile, another breast cancer survivor Nanny Monteiro, 55, felt like she was detached from reality when she first found out in 2013 that she had breast cancer, especially since she didn’t have any family history of the disease. “When the doctor told me I had cancer, it didn’t sink in immediately. At that moment, I froze. I just couldn’t believe I have it, as we’ve never had anyone in our family who

had cancer,” she said.

Drew and Monteiro are amongst the many women who have suffered from the grave effects of breast cancer — not just physically, but also emotionally and mentally. Breast cancer is a major public health concern in many countries, both rich and poor, impacting millions each year and causing the greatest number of cancer-related deaths amongst women globally.

The latest data released by the World Health Organisation (WHO) has revealed that breast cancer affects 2.1 million women in the world each year. In the UAE, the country’s National Cancer Registry revealed their 2015 data that breast cancer, which recorded 113 deaths at that time, was the leading cause of cancer deaths.

Progress in lines of treatment has been tremendous, but what’s equally important is awareness about what this type of cancer means; ways of early diagnosis, including self-inspection; and rebuilding life after surgery.

Since 1985, October has been observed as Breast Cancer Awareness Month, the result of the global goal to increase attention, highlight the importance of early screening and treatment, and support proper treatment. This annual campaign aims to broaden the discussion about this illness to stand in solidarity with patients, empower survivors, and advance research that could potentially save thousands of lives every year.

“The biggest challenge for women with breast cancer is to gain competence and to have a quality of life



**AILEEN VILLANUEVA**

General Practitioner at Mediclinic AlNoor Hospital in Abu Dhabi and the chairman of Shades of Pink Society

#### UNDERSTANDING BREAST CANCER

Similar to other forms of cancer, breast cancer is an illness wherein cells in the breast grow out of control. Aileen Villanueva, General Practitioner at Mediclinic AlNoor Hospital in Abu Dhabi and the chairperson of Shades of Pink Society, a non-government organisation that advocates breast cancer awareness in the UAE, told 999 that breast cancer could start from different parts of the breasts. It can begin in the ducts (that carry milk to the nipple), in the glands (that make breast milk), and in other tissues in the breast.

“The biggest challenge for women with breast cancer is to gain competence and to have a quality of life,” she said.

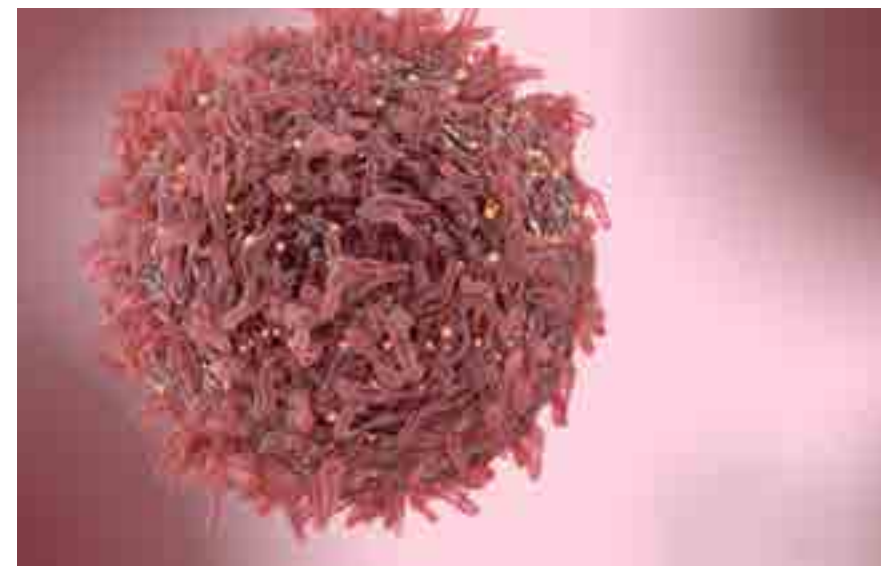
Research undertaken by the Department of Medicine in the University



of Sharjah from March to April 2017 said that breast cancer was the most frequently diagnosed cancer in females amongst UAE citizens (32.16 per cent) and non-citizens (41.41 per cent). The study added that women in the UAE tend to develop this type of cancer at least a decade earlier than their counterparts in Western countries.

#### COMMON RISK FACTORS

There are a number of contributing factors for breast cancer. Experts believe that one way to stay ahead in the fight is to understand each and every factor, so as to plan the right prevention or treatment approach. Experts in the UAE and around the world have laid out the most common risk factors of breast cancer, some of which cannot be changed, while others can be managed.



#### UNCONTROLLABLE RISK FACTORS

##### 1 GENETICS AND HEREDITARY RISKS

Dr Mai Sultan Al Jaber, Medical Director at Healthpoint, Abu Dhabi, said that individuals who had family members suffering from cancer are more likely to develop cancerous cells due to their genes, particularly the well-known gene mutations referred to as BRCA1 and BRCA2. Women with these genes, or those whose mother or sister was affected, are at a higher risk of breast and ovarian cancer.

##### 2 AGE

In an interview with 999, Dr Jemini Abraham Paul, Head of Specialist Obstetrics and Gynaecology department at NMC Medical Centre in Deira, said that the risk of breast cancer increases with age. The US Centers for Disease Control (CDC) said that most breast cancers are found in women aged 50 and above, while Yale Medicine said it occurs in men aged 60 to 70. This type of cancer is very rare in men, but the risk does exist, and so awareness amongst both genders is equally important. According to the US-based National Breast Cancer Foundation: “Less than 1 per cent of all breast cancer cases develop in men, and only one in a thousand men will ever be diagnosed with breast cancer.”

##### 3 PERIODS, PREGNANCIES, AND MENOPAUSAL FACTORS

Women who might have begun their periods early in life (as young as before 12 years old) or menopausal at an older age (as old as after 55) have increased risks

#### THE NUMBERS

##### 1ST

Rank of breast cancer amongst the leading causes of cancer deaths in the UAE, according to the 2015 data collated by the National Cancer Registry

##### 2.1 MILLION

The number of women being diagnosed with breast cancer every year, according to the latest data released by the World Health Organisation

##### 3 OUT OF 10

Ratio of female UAE citizens amongst the total number of breast cancer patients in the country, according to a research of the University of Sharjah from March to April 2017

##### 4 OUT OF 10

Ratio of non-UAE female residents amongst the total number of breast cancer patients in the country, according to a research of the University of Sharjah from March to April 2017





“Women who had the first pregnancy after the age of 30, and those who never had a full-term pregnancy are at a higher risk of getting breast cancer



**DR JEMINI ABRAHAM PAUL**

Head of Specialist Obstetrics and Gynaecology department at NMC Medical Centre in Deira

of developing breast cancer, according to Dr Paul.

“Also, women who had the first pregnancy after the age of 30, and those who never had a full-term pregnancy are at a higher risk of getting breast cancer,” she said.

Not breast-feeding has also been shown to increase the risk.

#### 4 PRE-EXISTING BREAST CONDITIONS

Experts have observed a trend that women who have had some other medical conditions in their breasts are also vulnerable to breast cancer, especially those diagnosed with lobular carcinoma in situ (LCIS) or atypical hyperplasia of the breast.

Having dense breast tissue also puts one more at risk of this disease, according to the US Centers for Disease Control,



because it could mean more connective tissue than fatty tissue, making it hard to see tumours on a mammogram.

#### 1 CONTROLLABLE RISK FACTORS SEDENTARY LIFESTYLE AND OBESITY

Dr Paul said that lifestyle adjustments, such as proper diet and regular exercise, play a crucial role in minimising the risk of cancerous cells in the body. She added that women who are not physically active and/or consumed too much unhealthy food and drinks, as well as those who are overweight or obese, have a higher risk of getting breast cancer.

“Physical inactivity is a well-established risk factor for several types of cancer. Several reasons have been proposed on how physical activity reduces breast cancer risk,” she said.

#### 2 ENVIRONMENTAL RISK FACTORS

The importance of pushing for a green society is truly evident on all fronts, even in preventing breast cancer. Experts say that being exposed to certain elements in the environment could increase the risk of cancer.

#### 3 REPRODUCTIVE FACTORS

Dr Paul said that women who became pregnant after the age of 30, who chose not to breastfeed, and who never had a full-term pregnancy should watch out for early signs of the disease.

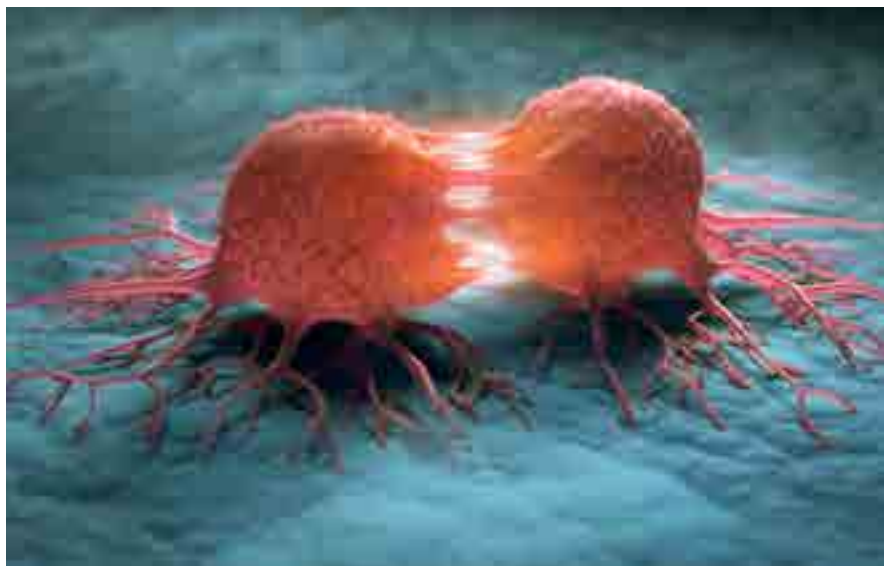
#### 4 TOBACCO

Smoking puts one at a much higher risk of not only lung cancer but also of breast cancer. The chemicals from tobacco can imbalance women’s hormones, according to a 2017 study published in *Breast Cancer Research*, a respected international journal in this field. The study authors stressed that smoking significantly increases the risk of breast cancer, especially for those who began puffing during adolescence or had a family history of the disease.

#### SCREENING AND DETECTION

The importance of screening and early detection of breast cancer cannot be stressed enough — this is women’s best weapon against the disease. Discovering breast cancer at an early stage of 0 to 1 leads to an almost 100 per cent rate of cure, according to experts.

It’s very important to know the warning



signs of breast cancer, and this can be done through self-examination or at screening centres.

“This is a national public health concern [but] many women wait until they experience symptoms before consulting with their doctor. Education and awareness are very important. Women need to know their family’s medical history and their susceptibility to the disease, and they need to understand that, in many cases, symptoms of breast cancer will not appear until the disease has progressed to a more advanced stage. That’s why regular screening is important,” said Dr Suhaila Alameeri, Consultant Anatomic Pathologist at the National Reference Laboratory and member of the National Taskforce for the Breast and Cervical Cancer Screening Programme, speaking to the media.

Indeed, breast cancer patient Monteiro credits her survival to early detection, saying that she immediately went to the hospital when she discovered a lump in her left breast. “Early detection is

“About 30 per cent of women in the UAE admitted that they would be ‘too scared’ to visit a doctor if they suspect they have breast cancer, according to a YouGov survey in 2018

importance of getting checked once abnormalities are noticed in the breast. “My advice to my fellow survivors and to all the women and men out there is to screen themselves. It’s very important to always self-exam your breast,” she said.

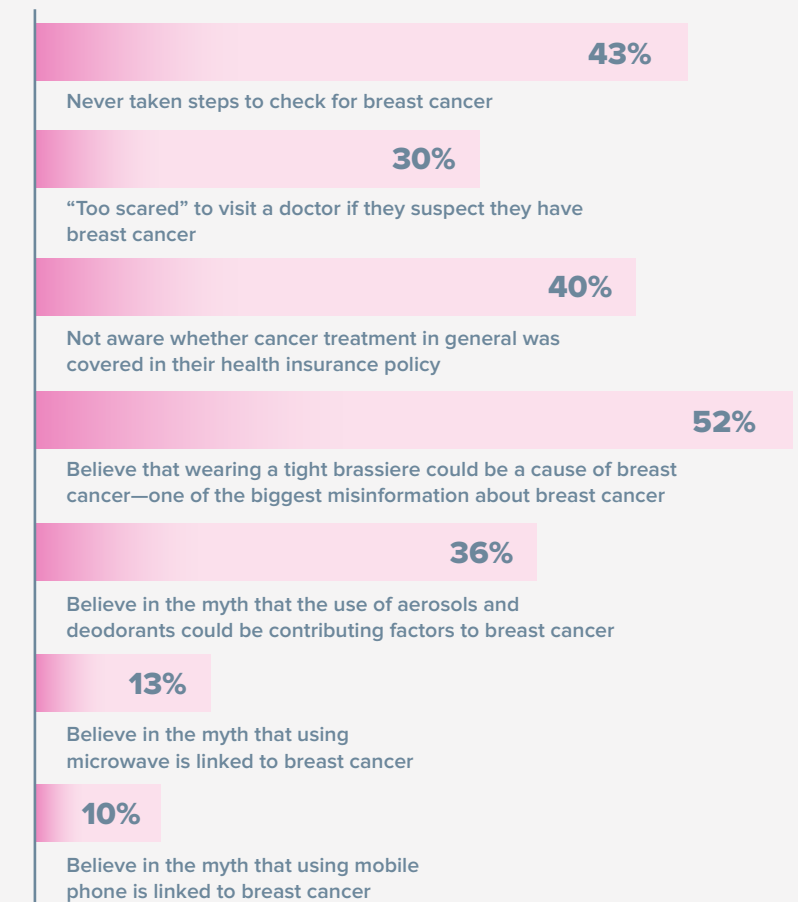
#### DON’T BE ‘TOO SCARED’

Apparently, not everyone can muster the courage to step into a hospital or clinic and get themselves checked — about 30 per cent of women in the UAE admitted that they would be “too scared” to visit a doctor if they suspect they have breast cancer, according to a YouGov survey in 2018. That’s not going to help. Even if you’re scared of undergoing tests right away, make sure to talk to a medical professional for information and advice on the next course of action.

“If you’re nervous about getting a mammogram or other screening, that’s understandable. I recommend having a general chat with your doctor first to discuss any health risks and to decide if

#### WHAT THE SURVEY SAYS?

Source: YouGov survey in 2018





“Cancer taught me to appreciate everything and everyone in my life. I am so blessed for getting a second chance to live my life surrounded by my loving family and friends. I am stronger now



**GIE DREW**

Founder of Shades of Pink Society and a breast cancer survivor

any tests need to be done,” said Dr Nairah Rasul-Syed, Health Medical Director and Consultant in Family Medicine.

The survey, undertaken by global health insurance provider Aetna International, put its questions to 358 women in the UAE aged 18-60 years. Besides the “too scared” factor, it also found that 43 per cent of the respondents had never taken steps to check for breast cancer.

Misinformation is another hurdle. The study showed that 52 per cent of the women believed that wearing a tight brassiere could be a cause of breast cancer; 36 per cent believed that the



use of aerosols and deodorants could be contributing factors; and 13 per cent and 10 per cent, respectively, thought that the use of microwaves and mobile phones were linked to the illness.

The survey revealed that 40 per cent of the women were not aware whether cancer treatment in general was covered in their health insurance policy. Such data highlight the need to build breast cancer awareness in the UAE.

“[During] Breast Cancer Awareness Month, we urge people to think seriously about this, to look out for any signs and to check what their policy covers, especially if there is a history of cancer in the family,” said David Healy, CEO of Europe, Middle East and Africa for Aetna International, following the survey. “We know that when

breast cancer is detected early, and adequate diagnosis and treatments are available, it is a very curable condition.”

#### LIFE-CHANGING CHALLENGE

Drew said that one reason she founded the Shades of Pink Society was because she understood a patient's ordeal. “Being diagnosed with breast cancer can be overwhelming, so it is important to seek help and support. Patients can do this by joining a support group like the Shades of Pink Society. I formed the organisation because as a survivor, I know how important it is to provide the help that patients need,” she said.

About her own experience, she said, “It was a difficult struggle. And even now, every time I think about my fight with breast cancer, I can't help myself but cry.”

The feared disease has changed her perspective. “Cancer taught me to appreciate everything and everyone in my life. I am so blessed for getting a second chance to live my life surrounded by my loving family and friends. I am stronger now,” said Drew.

Monteiro said, “My message to other patients is: you're stronger than you think, never give up and always look at the bright side. With faith in God, prayers, love and support from family and friends, you will win the battle over cancer. You can defeat it.”

#### UAE'S CANCER STUDIES

The UAE has always been committed to combating breast cancer. The leadership's goal is to reduce cancer mortality as part of its National Agenda and Vision 2021.



The Pink Caravan Ride in Abu Dhabi, organised in March 2020 by Friends of Cancer Patients organisation

With this aim, the government calls upon everyone to get tested as early as possible. The country also promotes and invests in advanced cancer research and treatment.

In June 2020, researchers from Gulf Medical University (GMU), in collaboration with the National Cancer Institute (NCI) of the United States, created a novel compound that can inhibit the growth of cancer cells. In various laboratory testing procedures, these experts designed and chemically synthesised this compound, which has the ability to block the growth of several different types of cancer cells (e.g. leukaemia, breast cancer, and colon cancer cells) by inhibiting one of the enzymes implicated in the abnormal growth of cancer cells.

The study was led by Dr Ahmed Thabet Negmeldin, GMUS's Assistant Professor of Medicinal Chemistry, and Dr Ahmed Al-Abd, Associate Professor of Pharmacology.

#### YOU, TOO, CAN SPREAD HOPE

In the awareness drive against breast cancer, everyone has a part to play. Whether you're a fighter yourself or you know someone going through this disease, your role in advocating early detection and prevention measures is crucial.

Emirati student Malath Al Ameri recognised at an early age of 16 her responsibility in promoting the fight against breast cancer. In the Pink Caravan

Ride (PCR) in Abu Dhabi, organised in March 2020 by the non-profit Friends of Cancer Patients (FOCP), the teenager pitched in as an equestrian volunteer — she did so in the name of her mother, Mona Abdulrahman.

“My mom was diagnosed with stage 4 breast cancer, which made the treatment hard on both her and our family,” said Malath. “If she had been detected earlier, the treatment process would have been easier on her. Getting regular screening tests is the most reliable way to find breast cancer early, and that's why I am here at the Pink Caravan Ride, to take this message far and wide to the community.”

She and several other equestrian breast cancer advocates mounted their horses and fanned out across Abu Dhabi, covering a distance of 14km.

They journeyed through the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Abu Dhabi Corniche, Marina Mall, Sheikh Zayed Grand Mosque, reaching Healthpoint, where they concluded their nationwide journey that had begun in Sharjah.

Malath's mother Mona expressed her deepest pride in her daughter, saying, “I call it the ‘Hope Caravan’ — it's a ride that saves lives, literally. People should be aware of breast cancer and the need to be checked regularly, not only for women but for men as well.”

She added that her medical condition wouldn't let her be part of the Pink Caravan, so she was happy that her daughter took the march forward. “As a person who has undergone treatment, I know what breast cancer entails and the woes that come with it,” she said. “That's why my daughter is on horseback; I want her to raise greater community awareness and share our story of cancer so that people take heed and get their screenings done on time.”

Another equestrian volunteer, Mira Ahli, was herself a breast cancer survivor. “Every member of society should know how just a short amount of time spent on a checkup can potentially save lives, reduce the treatment burden and the hardships associated with it,” said the 30-year-old.

She added, “You're never too young to be screened. Both men and women should not think twice or delay getting themselves checked, because diagnosing a disease early improves outcomes greatly. Our goal, through PCR, is to urge people to step forward and take action by visiting the free clinics for screening.”

#### REDUCING THE RISK

Over your lifetime, a lot of contributors can influence your risk of having breast cancer, and while you cannot change some factors, you can definitely make beneficial lifestyle choices. According to Dr Jemini Abraham Paul, Head of Specialist Obstetrics and Gynaecology department at NMC Medical Centre in Deira, these are some of the things you can do:

- Maintain a healthy weight
- Keep an active lifestyle
- Eat several servings of vegetables and fruits per day
- Consult with your doctor before taking certain hormone replacement drugs
- Breastfeed your children, if possible
- For those with a family history of breast cancer, consult your doctor about ways to lower your risk



## EFFORTS IN THE UAE AGAINST BREAST CANCER

### SCREENING PROGRAMMES OF THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

The department offers the Breast Screening Programme, which includes a mammogram every two years and annual clinical breast exam. The programme goal is to reduce mortality from breast cancer, through early detection and treatment.

### DONATION INITIATIVES OF FRIENDS OF CANCER PATIENTS

FOCP encourages people to donate in order to fund its programmes for cancer patients, including entertainment for children with cancer, psychology programmes, birthday celebrations, and treatment for those who can't afford it.

### THE PINK CARAVAN OF FOCP

Pink Caravan offers awareness talks as well as free checkups across the emirates. Data released by Pink Caravan in 2019 revealed that its 64,000+ free clinical examinations done in the past nine years helped detect 73 positive cases.

"We have accomplished a lot, but more needs to be done. To this end, we urge more organisations to come forward and promote a stronger culture of corporate social responsibility in the UAE," said Dr Sawsan Al Madhi, Director General of FOCP and Head of the Pink Caravan Ride Medical and Awareness Committee.

### SHADES OF PINK SOCIETY

The organisation provides programmes that help patients manage their stress as well as cancer awareness sessions, including monthly Zumba sessions, seminars on how to maximise their quality of life after cancer, and the annual 'Walk for breast cancer'.

"In order to help out patients, our organisation is supporting them physically, financially, spiritually and emotionally, giving them the power to choose a happy and normal life after cancer," said Dr Aileen Villanueva, chairperson of Shades of Pink Society.

### ENGAGING MEETINGS OF NMC MEDICAL CENTRE

Dr Mohanad Diab, Head of the Department and Consultant Medical Oncologist at NMC Royal Hospital in Abu Dhabi, told **999** that they usually held board meetings once a week in order to talk about advance treatment for tumours. For patients and survivors, they organise events and gatherings to keep them engaged and feel supported.

## CANCER SUPPORT GROUPS IN THE UAE



### BREAST FRIENDS

Emirates Towers Hotel, Dubai  
Contact: Dr Houriya Kazim  
Tel: 04 332 7117  
Email: houriya.kazim@wellwomancinic.ae | breastfriends@gmail.com

### FRIENDS OF CANCER PATIENTS

Sharjah  
Contact: Dr Sawsan Al Madhi | Mrs Horia Ahmed (Beneficiary Executive)  
Tel: 06 506 5555 or 06 506 5542  
Email: dr.sawsan@focp.ae | Horia@focp.ae | info@focp.ae  
[www.focp.ae](http://www.focp.ae)

### ANGELS OF MERCY

Location: Tawam Hospital, Al Ain  
Contact: Sandy Jaloudi | Seham Manna | Sine MacDonald  
Tel: 03 707 4234  
Email: Sjaloudi1@hotmail.com | Seham3g@msn.com | smacdonald@tawamhospital.ae  
[www.angelsmercyuae.wordpress.com](http://www.angelsmercyuae.wordpress.com)

### PURE HEART PROGRAMME

Dubai  
Contact: Rana Al Khatib | Aisha Abdulla | Rania Amer  
Tel: Rana: 050 654 5284 | Aisha: 055 856 6337 | Rania: 050 913 1032  
Email: info@purehearttoday.com  
[www.purehearttoday.com](http://www.purehearttoday.com)

### BOSOM BUDDIES

Café Arabia, Abu Dhabi (15th Street and Airport Road)  
Contact: Melanie Gobert | Gehan Wheeler  
Tel: Melanie: 050 668 7815 | Gehan: 050 662 4716  
Email: melanie.gobert@hct.ac.ae | gwheeler2@hct.ac.ae

### MOAZZARA - EMIRATES ASSOCIATION FOR CANCER SUPPORT

Headquartered in Abu Dhabi-Al Ain City  
Abu Dhabi-Al Ain City,  
P.O. Box: 87123  
Contact: Dr Afra Al Marri  
Tel: 037804595; Mobile: 0509044288; Fax: 037852797  
Email: moazzara@emirates.net.ae

Source: The Department of Health – Abu Dhabi



euroleleaf







## THORNS OF THE PAST, ROSES OF THE FUTURE

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

We will never find our way unless we savour the beauty of each past, present, and hope-filled future

Our past is like the walls of Pharaohs' temples, a record of inscribed past, present and future. We are naturally nostalgic; we yearn for the scent of the past, for sailing aboard memories' ship, reminiscing about days that are long gone.

The sweet-smelling present and the roses of the future might be fragrant, but the thorns of the past are nevertheless always longed for; thorns that embrace them both.

As the ship of time takes us back to where we had once dwelled, the amount of suffering and neediness becomes futile, for we had coped with them, we had convinced ourselves of coping with them despite all the pain. It is as though we tend to forget or turn a blind eye to the fragrant present and the rose-filled future. Willed and determined, we can, each on our own, succeed in times of technology and advancement and reach heights that even a bunch of people cannot reach.

Is nostalgia a rejection of the present and an escape from the future?

Truth lies not in the beauty of the past, in the present, or in the fear of the future. Every single period of our time is

beautiful. Every single stage has its own people. The bottom line is that it is all about us, not the past, present or future days.

Past suffering is a garden of thorns. The present is a heartwarming fragrant scent. Future ambitious dreams are a path to walk amongst roses. It is wrong to contemplate what have past, present or future days done to us. We should rather ask: what have we done with our days?

Many people had marked the days of our time and shall be recognised as women and men of this or that period, or women or men who changed history. It is not the fault of the past, the mark of the present, nor the hope of the future as we claim. It is the fault, mark, and hope that come from us, the humankind.

When there is a will, there is a way. When we are sluggish, we blame our past for its thorns. When we are hopeful, we picture a rosy future. In between, our present is lost. We will never find our way unless we savour the beauty of each past, present, and hope-filled future. It is only then that the beauty of life will be revealed to us, free from past thorns and welcoming future roses.

**When we are  
sluggish, we blame  
our past for its  
thorns. When we are  
hopeful, we picture  
a rosy future**



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# 7 ways to ace a virtual interview

THE CURRENT GLOBAL SCENARIO HAS CHANGED THE WAY CONNECTIONS AND PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITIES ARE BEING CONDUCTED TODAY — THAT INCLUDES JOB INTERVIEWS. MAKE A MARK IN YOUR ONLINE INTERVIEW WITH THESE TIPS

BY JAMILLE DOMINGO

**A**fter some time searching for new career opportunities, you finally get a call for a job interview. Hooray! However, there's a catch: it will be done through a video call. How do you deal with it, knowing that your usual ways to impress a potential employer will be greatly restricted?

Body language matters a great deal in physical interviews, but in a video interview, it's not quite as effective. So, your strategy will need to be revised.

This kind of scenario is becoming more and more of a

norm today, accelerated by the novel coronavirus disease (COVID-19) and the need for social distancing. Increased use of technology and lockdown measures have given rise to virtual meetings via Zoom and Teams, webinars, and the like. Gone are the days of walk-in interviews and dropping by unannounced to submit your CV. Almost everything now has to be done online, even job interviews.

So how to do you actually impress a potential employer through your computer screen? Check out these tips.



## 1 TEST YOUR INTERNET SPEED AND GADGETS WELL IN ADVANCE

The perfect recipe for a disastrous online job interview includes poor Internet speed and an inefficient tablet/computer/mobile phone. Wi-Fi or Internet connectivity is the very first thing you should assess to make sure you're set up for success. Take the time also to check your camera and microphone (if the image is grainy, or if there is an annoying echo coming from your mic) to make sure the interview goes through without a hiccup. Remember, these are your only weapons to propel yourself towards a real employment opportunity.

Don't do these checks just five minutes before the interview, or you could be stressed with all the last-minute hassles and you might even get late for the interview. Technical glitches during the interview also sends the wrong impression, as it can make the recruiter think you've come unprepared, or worse, not interested in the job enough to fix the problems prior to the online appointment.



## 2 PROFESSIONALISE YOUR HOME SETTING

Do you really want your online interviewer to see your messy bed and your piled-up laundry, with your latest Netflix binge visible in the background? Make sure you fix up the home setting in a professional manner, i.e. a tidy home office or desk, as well as a blank wall or a neat bookshelf behind you. An organised bookshelf creates an atmosphere of intelligence and interest in learning.

From this setting, eliminate all distractions like TV, radio, mobile phone, and noise from the outside. If you have pets, put them somewhere to prevent an unannounced appearance during your interview.



## 3 DRESS TO IMPRESS

Just because you're at home doesn't mean you can face your recruiter looking like you just rolled out of bed. Dressing formally for your online interview shows that you are serious about the position, and it can even exude confidence during the entire interview process.

Treat your online interview like it's an in-person interview. For men, this means polo, blazer, and chinos; and for women, this means dress or a blouse and a skirt. Make sure you put on makeup as well.



## 4 RESEARCH IS KEY

Google is within reach so make sure you research about the company prior to your interview, so that you can appear focused and ready to answer their questions. The physical distance between you two won't allow your recruiter to sense your eagerness for the job. The only way to impress them is to show off your knowledge about the company, and to talk about why you are the one deserving the position. Draw them in with your passion for the company.

In addition, don't just be prepared to answer their questions. Be ready to also make professional queries, such as what does a typical day in the life of this role seem like, their goals, the hiring process, their ideal candidate, and so on.



## 5 PRACTISE

The importance of practising for a job interview — virtual or in-person — cannot be stressed enough. Have a mock interview with your friend or a family member and rehearse with them the questions that the employer may ask you in general, as well as icebreakers and other topics that you can open up to further generate the employer's interest in you. You don't want to sound robotic throughout the engagement, so make sure you practise your communication skills in such a way that it comes off smooth and not awkward.

Make sure you practise as well to eliminate extra words from your sentences, such as "um" and "uh" or "like." Perfect your grammar at all costs.



## 6 LOOK AT THE CAMERA

Since the setting has been greatly restricted in a virtual interview, all the more that your recruiter will pay attention to your body language. Amongst the no-no's are slouching, yawning, or fidgeting.

To exude an ambiance of confidence and professionalism, make sure to sit up straight, smile, look at the camera while answering their questions so as to maintain an illusion of eye contact. Some experts believe that recruiters will likely remember what you said if you maintain your eye contact, so make sure to look at the camera and not on the image of your potential employer when talking.

Also, because you won't have the benefit of a face-to-face connection, your body language becomes even more obvious — and important to manage — in a virtual interview.



## 7 E-WRITE A THANK-YOU LETTER

Within a day after the interview, send a thank you e-mail to your interviewer to let them know your appreciation for them taking their time to accommodate you, as well as your interest in your position. Doing this shows that you genuinely want to become a part of their team, and will increase your chances of getting remembered. It also provides you an opportunity to resell yourself and talk more about your strengths you were not able to address during the interview. Keep it concise yet engaging in order to leave a lasting impression.



## Did you know?



In a research by recruiting software Jobvite in May 2020, 58 per cent of recruiters are now turning to LinkedIn, Facebook, and even Instagram in order to connect with applicants as well as do background checks on people who can be part of their team. In addition, 84 per cent of them are now using video calls to screen and interview candidates, while more firms have started using analytics tools and AI to easily scan CVs and narrow down their applicants.



# KITCHEN KILLERS

THESE INCIDENTS HAVE TURNED WHAT'S  
ESSENTIALLY A SPACE FOR DELICIOUS DELIGHTS  
INTO GRUESOME MURDER SCENES

BY NEIL BIE



## DATING RIDDLE

**WHERE: COWAN, INDIANA, US**  
**WHEN: MARCH 2008**

Wrestling coach Garth Rector, 48, lived alone in a small rented house in Muncie, Indiana, after being separated from his wife. While people saw him as a wildly popular coach, his friends and family remember him going through a midlife crisis.

On March 21, 2008, Rector arrived home with his bag of groceries and a soda. As he stepped inside, someone was already waiting for him with a gun in his hand.

“Looks like he just sat a grocery bag and a cup down and the next thing you know, he was getting shot at,” said Kurt Walthour, Delaware Co. Sheriff’s Department in a media report.

Investigators revealed that Rector was shot five times, execution-style, in his own kitchen. It was the victim’s landlord who found the body. The cops found evidence that there was forced entry, but they were puzzled about the motive of the crime.

Then, the investigators found out that Rector had been dating several women at the same time – one of them was

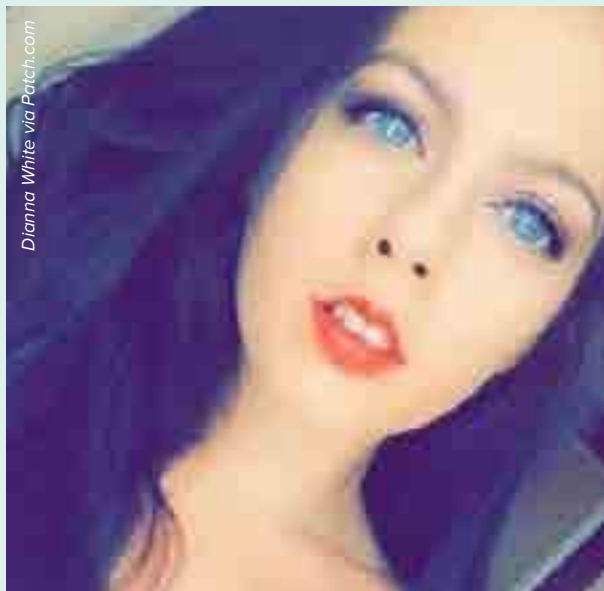


even married during their affair. Authorities speculated that the murder might have been linked to a robbery gone wrong or perhaps a jealous lover seeking revenge. Neither of these has been proven true.

To date, the case remains unsolved, the killer is still on the loose.

## STABBED COUNSELLOR

**WHERE: WORCESTER, NORTH CAROLINA, US**  
**WHEN: MAY 2020**



Traci Swan lived a fulfilling life of helping teenagers recover from addiction – up until her untimely demise on May 26 – marking the first homicide at Worcester, Massachusetts, this year.

Swan’s mother Dianna White, along with her family and friends, are still puzzled as to who could have committed the gruesome murder of stabbing Swan at her own kitchen. The

police have charged a suspect, but her mother has more questions about the case.

At the age of 16, Swan moved from North Carolina to Massachusetts during her junior year in high school. White met her boyfriend whom she eventually married – a man stationed at the Marine Corps Base Camp Lejeune.

While she initially dropped out of senior high school, Swan found a job together with her mother at the Dodge Park Rest Home in Worcester, where she worked for the next seven years. There, she earned her GED and eventually became a Certified Nursing Assistant through tireless efforts.

Swan became a mom herself when she turned 24. Her motherhood years also became her time to shift jobs towards becoming a counsellor for teens who were battling addiction.

Authorities said Swan was stabbed at her own kitchen when she was trying to mediate between a man and 29-year-old Naomi Lawrence, whom Swan knew for around six years. A neighbour called 911 after the voices in the argument grew louder and louder.

Lawrence has been charged with battery with a deadly weapon and assault – but White still thinks that there are details missing as regards the death of her daughter.

“When it came to other people fighting, she would do her best to diffuse it. I have so many questions about it,” said White, who is still left wondering what really transpired in her daughter’s final moments.

## STRAY BULLET

**WHERE: BIRMINGHAM, ALABAMA, US**  
**WHEN: JUNE 2020**

It was a regular, peaceful midnight for 64-year-old Bernice Taylor, as she casually walked through her kitchen to get something for the night. But that turned out to be her final moment when a stray bullet fired outside came in through the kitchen window and struck her.

Her 33-year-old son, Demetrius, called the emergency hotline to report that Taylor was shot. When officers arrived at the scene, he told them that Taylor was already wounded and unresponsive due to a gunshot wound.

“I was sleeping in my bedroom and I heard about four or five shots. I woke up and looked out of my window to see where it came from. I went to check on my mother. I looked in the kitchen, and she was on her back. Once I saw her body, I just freaked out. I kept saying, ‘Mama, Mama,’” recalled Demetrius.

Birmingham Police Department officials state that several shots had been fired at the parking lot outside Taylor’s apartment. The fatal bullet that struck Taylor seemed to be a mere case of the wrong place and the



wrong time as no arrests were made immediately after the shooting.

Demetrius said, “She went to work, and she came home. She was sweet, very, very sweet. She was a hardworking mother who raised us to be good people.”

## KITCHEN BURIAL

**WHERE: KANCHARAPALEM, VISAKHAPATNAM, INDIA**  
**WHEN: FEBRUARY 2013**



Local residents complained of a particular foul smell that emanated from a house located in Kancharapalem, Visakhapatnam in India. When authorities began to dig from the freshly-cemented area in the kitchen, they found a woman’s body buried underneath.

The bizarre incident revealed the killing of 45-year-old Vasupalli Arramma, who was one of the fisherfolk within the community. Police found that Arramma’s body had

several stab wounds and that one of her hands was missing.

Her body was placed within kitchen planks commonly used by locals to store LPG cylinders. The killer apparently sealed the area with cement after killing Arramma.

Arramma’s relatives shared that she had a small-time finance business aside from her business of selling fish. They recalled that she gave a loan of Rs 50,000 (Dhs2,480) to a certain person named ‘Vasu’; when it was time to repay the loan, Vasu defaulted. Arramma was said to have had an argument with Vasu, who then promised to pay her in February 2013. Then Arramma mysteriously vanished after heading towards Vasu’s home. When she failed to return home, her family lodged a missing person complaint in the area. A few days later, the local residents complained of the foul smell and Arramma’s body was uncovered.

The police arrested Vasu, and a murder case was lodged against him.

Arramma’s death caused a clamour amongst the women in her area, with calls for severe action against her killer.



# ADDICTED TO EXCESSES

WITHOUT ANY RESTRAINING INFLUENCE FROM HER WEALTHY PARENTS, A YOUNG WOMAN IS LURED BY A SLY MAN INTO DRUG TRAFFICKING

BY WAGIH HASSAN

**P**ampered by her parents and showered with gifts, 23-year-old Hanadi had turned into a rather spoiled individual. Her parents gave her money, jewellery – anything and everything – without ever asking any questions, such as “When did you go out? Where have you been? Why are you so late?”

In the absence of any parental restraints, Hanadi lost the ability to tell right from wrong – and so began the downward spiral of her life.

She began an affair with a 30-year-old man named Hamad, who faked his love and dragged her into the trap of narcotics. He seduced her and fooled her with common-law marriage. The beautiful Hanadi didn’t have the sense to protect herself.

From the use of narcotics, Hanadi was soon pushed into drug trafficking by Hamad. It was a terrible path that she was treading; eventually, it led to the humiliation and punishment of being arrested and jailed.

In a conversation with her 25-year-old friend Fawzia, the misled Hanadi described how she allowed Hamad to destroy her future.

Hanadi recalled that the worst part of their relationship began when she became addicted to the use of narcotics and also to the excesses of overspending. She said, “After I became addicted to drugs, it was my beloved Hamad who dragged me into this path. The money that I received from my parents wasn’t enough for me, especially after Hamad could no longer buy me material things. He asked me to support him financially and stand by his side in this difficult time.”

Taking a deep breath, shaking her head several times, she added,

“Unfortunately, it was this request that destroyed my life. In an intimate meeting with Hamad, he explained to me that the easiest way to earn money was drug trafficking. In the beginning, I rejected this idea, and also expressed my fear and panic about what he was saying and where it could lead us. He then bluntly told me that this was the only way for us

“

**While I spend my time in jail, I will seek God’s pardon, and will leave those reckless deeds behind me**

to be high and earn money.”

Listening to this story, Fawzia asked Hanadi how she took her first steps into the world of drug trafficking and whether she succeeded in her first attempt.

Hanadi told Fawzia, “Yes, we succeeded. This success obliterated my fear and made me feel stronger. It instilled reassurance in my heart, and I became good in this field, as it became easy to earn money out of it.”

So, then, what got her and Hamad arrested, asked the friend. Hanadi said, “We thought that we were very smart, and that we could compete with everyone in drug trafficking, and that we would never fall into the net of police. But the truth is: we were monitored all the time. The police also had an eye on Saqer, who used to supply us with drugs. I was seen frequently visiting suspicious

places with Hamad. I don’t know how the police knew about it but, eventually, Saqer, Hamad and I were arrested all together.”

As she was fascinated, Fawzia said, “Tell me about the moment you got caught.” Remembering the anguish of that time, Hanadi said, “Those moments were very difficult. I looked like a weak bird with a clipped wing, and Hamad appeared at that time weaker than a fly, frightened and terrified.

“That day, the Drug Control Department knew beforehand that we would receive large quantities of drugs, from one of the stores that sold nuts and spices and was owned by Saqer – it was located in one of the old markets in the emirate. We found ourselves surrounded, with no ways to escape.”

Fawzia then asked how Hanadi’s parents reacted when told about their daughter’s arrest and how she felt upon being sentenced to prison.

A distraught Hanadi said, “It was a huge shock for my parents when they were summoned to the police station, where they saw their only daughter, thrown into one corner of the place, crying and regretting her deeds. They cried painfully, too, as if they knew deep inside that they had over-indulged her, without asking her about the secret of her frequent absence from the house.”

About her trial, she said bitterly, “That’s when I cried so badly, cursing my life and Hamad. I regret the days during which I was tempted with money and could not see the disaster I was walking into.”

Crying while telling Fawzia the story, Hanadi concluded, “While I spend my time in jail, I will seek God’s pardon, and will leave those reckless deeds behind me.”



# EARLY DAYS OF THE EMIRATES

THE BOOK *GULF GUIDE* GIVES US A LOOK INTO THE SOCIAL MIX  
AND COMMERCE IN THE LANDS THAT LATER BECAME THE UAE

BY DR FALEH HANDHAL



The historic Al Jahili Fort in Al Ain

**W**e have been exploring the Middle East through the accounts of John Gordon Lorimer, a British political resident in the town of Bushehr, Persia and author of the 1908 book *Gulf Guide*, reprinted in 1970.

The geographical section in the second part of *Gulf Guide* contained news and descriptions of some areas in Iraq, Oman, as well as the UAE.

About Abu Dhabi, Lorimer wrote: "Abu Dhabi is one of the Arab emirates on the Gulf coast and the largest. The main areas of Abu Dhabi from west to east include: Al Majn, Sabkhat Matti, Al Dhafra, Liwa, and Al Khatim. The islands of this emirate are: Arzana, Deeneh, Dalma, Das, Qarnain, Yas, and Zirkuh. As for the capital, it is the city of Abu Dhabi and is located in Al Jazirah. The largest building in it is the Sheikh Fort. There is also a separate market for Indian merchants, the port is located 2 miles away, and behind the city there are some palm trees. Water is extracted from a place that is 3-4 miles away from the city, at a depth of 4-5 feet from the surface of the

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THE POPULATION OF THE  
ABU DHABI MAY REACH  
ABOUT 6,000 PEOPLE,  
HALF OF THEM FROM  
BANI YAS AND THE REST  
FROM OTHER TRIBES

earth. To the south of the city, there is the large, shallow Khor Al Bateen Lake.

"The population of the Abu Dhabi may reach about 6,000 people, half of them from Bani Yas and the rest from other tribes. The tribes of Bani Yas are as follows: Albu Falaj (40 people), Al Kubaisat (380 people), Al Muharba (300 people), Albufalasah (200 people), Al Qamzan (250 people), Albomhair (500 people), Al Sudan (375 people), Al Murar (200 people), Al Thumairat (120 people),

Albu Amim (number is not mentioned), Al Khmarah (375 people), and Al Halamah (75 people). There is also the tribe of Baharnah, in addition to an Iranian and Hindu community.

"Abu Dhabi residents earn from pearl diving, fishing and simple commercial exchange. They do not have agriculture and palm trees are very few. There are 750 camels and 85 horses; all belong to the sheikh and his family except for five of them. Internal trade is not significant and takes place only with Al Buraimi (Al Ain). In the city, there are about 70 stores, 40 of them for Persians, nine for Hindus, and 10 for Arabs. Hindus import cloth, rice, coffee, and sugar. They also deal in pearl trades. Commercial interests of the Hindu community whose members are from Tata region in Sindh. Most of them accompany their families to India on vacation once a year, and their number doubles in the pearl season.

"In the sheikhdom, there are about 410 pearling ships; 50 of them are in Al Bateen and the rest are located along the



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THE RULER IS SHEIKH ZAYED BIN KHALIFA, THE MOST POWERFUL FIGURE IN THE TRUCIAL COAST OF OMAN AT THE TIME. HIS INFLUENCE NOT ONLY PREVAILS IN THE REGION, BUT ALSO EXTENDS TO AL BURAIMI AND TO THE TOWN OF IBRI IN OMAN

coast, as well as in the islands. There are about 10 ships going to Bahrain, Lengeh, Basra, and Muscat. The ruler is Sheikh Zayed bin Khalifa, the most powerful figure in the Trucial Coast of Oman at the time. His influence not only prevails in the region, but also extends to Al Buraimi and to the town of Ibri in Oman. As for the ruler's financial resources, they are calculated as follows:

- Taxes on pearls: \$57,000 (Dhs209,400)
- Taxes on pearls of Dalma island: \$5,000 (Dhs18,364)
- Taxes on Liwa's agriculture: \$2,500 (Dhs9,182)
- Taxes on Al Ain's dates: \$5,000 (Dhs18,364)
- The financial aid given by the Sultan



A group of Bedouin play music outside a house

of Oman to the Sheikh to maintain the security of the region: \$3,000 (Dhs11,018) Thus, the total reaches about \$750,000 (Dhs2.8 million) annually.

“Speaking of Al Dhafra, it is a large area that includes several separate areas, namely Al-Taf, Bainounah, and Liwa. The water from Al Dhafra's wells is of a good quality, and the wells are all fenced with palm leaves. The population of Al Dhafra is limited to two tribes, the Bani Yas and the Manasir. Bani Yas are a settled tribe, while the Manasir are wanderer Bedouins. Both tribes live in Liwa in villages called Al Wahidah, and the houses are similar to huts made of palm leaves and fronds. Al Dhafra is the main pasture area for Al Manasir, while Bainounah is the preferred pasture area for the Bani Yas, who participate in pearl-diving operations and

have a number of ships that they keep in the port of Radeem and Marfa. The population of Al Dhafra is estimated at about 6,500 people.”

#### A GLIMPSE OF DUBAI

Then, Lorimer described Dubai. He wrote: “Dubai is an independent Arab sheikhdom located between Sharjah and Abu Dhabi. It is connected with Sharjah through the coast of Abu Hail and with Abu Dhabi through Ghanadhah creek. Jebel Ali is located inland for long miles, and it is the only mountain on the coast with a height of 220 feet. The village of Jumeirah consists of 15 houses built of palm fronds, all of whose people are fishing. And the sheikh has about 100 armed men with rifles.

“As for Dubai city it lies on both sides of a shallow creek, whose entrance stretches several miles in the southeast direction. There is a dock for ships and the city is divided into three neighbourhoods, the most important of

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AS FOR DUBAI CITY IT LIES ON BOTH SIDES OF A SHALLOW CREEK, WHOSE ENTRANCE STRETCHES SEVERAL MILES IN THE SOUTHEAST DIRECTION



Camel caravan in UAE desert



Tradition dhows used in the UAE for pearl trade

which is Deira – it is located on a 20-feet-high land tongue, and has a palm farm.

“In Deira, 1,600 homes are resided in by Arabs, Persians, Baluchis, and others, and its market has 350 stores. There is also Al Shindagha area, which is closer to the sea and has 250 houses. All its residents are Arabs, and Indians are not allowed to live there. As for the city of Dubai, it contains 200 houses, 50 stores, the main mosque, and some ruins that are said to be the remains of a Portuguese castle. Most of the Indians live in this neighbourhood, and transport boats operate between Deira and the city. Also, the people of Deira cross on Fridays for free to perform prayers in the grand mosque.

“Dubai's water is safe for human consumption and the depth of its wells is between 5 and 30 feet. The city was surrounded by a wall, but it no longer exists. On the opposite side of the land, there are a number of towers to defend the city. The population of Dubai is 10,000 people, perhaps more, and they are from Albu Falasa of the Bani Yas tribe with 440 houses; Albu Mhair, with 400 houses; and different tribes, especially from Al Mazarei and Al Sudan with 250 houses; in addition to Al Murr, with 30 houses.

“There are some people from Kuwait and Bahrain, and they have 400 houses, and the Baluchis have 250 homes. All of them

“

MOST OF THE RESIDENTS OF FUJAIRAH ARE FROM AL HAFEETAT, AND THEY EARN FROM PALM CULTIVATION, SOME TOBACCO AND GRAINS, AND PEARL DIVING

follow the Maliki school of thought. There are also 67 Hindus and 23 Khaja residents. Dubai has 400 palm trees, but their crops are minimal. The number of pearling ships is 135, in addition to 50 fishing ships and 20 sanbuk and Badan ships. Also, between 10 and 12 ships are annually built.

“Dubai's trade is significant and is expanding very quickly, thanks to the policy followed by former sheikh Maktoum bin Hasher and as a result of the severe customs restrictions applied by the Imperial Customs Administration in Lengeh. Merchants of Lengeh have immigrated to Dubai, which has established its position as the centre of foreign trade in the UAE.

“Indian and Persian ships frequently visit Dubai, while the British visit once every two weeks, and ships from other

countries arrive on an opportunity basis. Local exports are pearls, shells, and dried fish, while imports are dates brought from Basra, Minab, and Al Batinah. The imports also include rice, wheat, spices, minerals, fibre ropes and wood from India. In the city, there are about 400 shops and 300 stores, and there are 23 Hindu merchants and 7 Khaja residents.”

#### OTHER PARTS OF THE EMIRATES

After Abu Dhabi and Dubai, Lorimer described the other lands that form present day United Arab Emirates. His accounts are as follows:

**FUJAIRAH:** “It is located 15 miles south of Khor Fakkan, in a place close to Wadi Ham along the shore and 2 miles from the sea. Its castle is located to its south and at a distance of 7 miles from the sea, and the number of palm trees in Fujairah is about 3,000. The city is surrounded by a 4-feet-high wall, and fresh water is found in wells at a depth of 4 feet. There are also 150 houses, most of them made of mud, stones and a little bit of cement.

“During the date harvest season, residents set up makeshift villages. Most of the residents of Fujairah are from Al Hafeetat, and they earn from palm cultivation, some tobacco and grains, and pearl diving. Fujairah has been ruled by Sheikh Hamad bin Abdullah Al Sharqi



66

## AL DHAID IS RULED BY A WALI WHO RECEIVES ORDERS FROM THE SHEIKH OF SHARJAH AND HIS MISSION IS TO MAINTAIN SECURITY AND DISCIPLINE

since 1901. The subordinate divisions belong to Fujairah, namely, Al Bathna, Al Gharfa, Mirbah, Qadfa, and Sakamkam. In addition, the Sheikh has a good relationship with the Sheikh of Abu Dhabi."

**KHOR FAKKAN:** "Khor Fakkan is located on the southern shore of a sandy bay that is 2 miles wide and 1 mile deep and open towards the northwest, and has a port suitable for docking. There is an island with a height of 240 feet, which is known as Sira Al Khor. In Khor Fakkan, there are also farms that contain 5,000 palm trees, and there are about 150 houses for Al Naqbi tribe and some Persians. Its population is about 800 people who cultivate palm trees, wheat and dive for pearls. Also, there are about 4 or 5 ships that are used for travelling to Muscat. As for the ruler of the city, he is Sheikh Saeed bin Ahmed, the cousin of the ruler of Sharjah."

**RED ISLAND:** "It is also called Zaab Island, located 12 miles southwest of Ras Al Khaimah. The island is 2 miles long and is almost connected to the mainland from its southwestern tip, and when the tide is low in the bay separating the island and the land, it can be crossed on foot. It consists of 500 houses for the Zaab tribe, and it is divided into two neighbourhoods: one in the north, which is small and called Umm Oweimer; and the second in the south, which is large and called Al Manakh. Residents have about 100 camels, 150 cows and 500 goats, and they have 25 pearling ships and 100 small vessels to bring firewood and sell it in Sharjah and Dubai. Generally, the people of the Red Island earn from pearl diving."



A man smoking a shisha pipe in an open market in Dubai while selling lemons

**AL HAMRIYAH:** "It consists of 300 houses and a castle, several towers, and six shops. The residents include the sheikh from Al Darawshah family of the Naim tribe, with some from the Tanij tribe. They have 117 pearling ships and 1,000 palm trees, 60 cows and 150 goats. As for the sheikh, he is Abdul Rahman bin Saif, and he is not recognised as an independent sheikh by the British government, and not given an official salute, and the Sheikh of Sharjah usually accompanies him to meet with British officers. This sheikh collects about \$4,520 (Dhs16,000) a year as pearl tax and has farms in Al Dhaid as well."

**AL DHAID:** "[It is] an isolated town located in the heart of Ru'us al-Jibal and belongs to the emirate of Sharjah, and [is] located about 30 miles to the east and 33 miles to the south of Ras Al Khaimah."

"It is a centre of some political and geographical importance. Al Dhaid contains about 140 houses, of which 70 are for the Tanij tribe, 40 for Bani Qatab, and 30 for Al Khawater from Al Naim tribe. Each of the tribes has a fortified tower, and on the eastern side of the town, there is a castle with four towers for the Sheikh of Sharjah. The palm farms form an area of about 1 mile

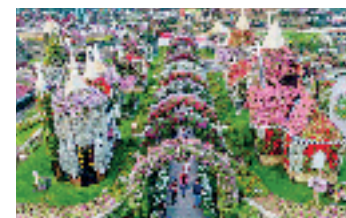
and they are irrigated by a rich well with a width of about 3 feet and a depth of 2 feet. Its water can be counted in preparation for the irrigation process. The water is fresh and transparent; it has a strong flow and is distributed carefully, and the person responsible for distributing water is the representative of the Ruler of Sharjah. Also, palm and wheat are grown on farms."

"Al Dhaid is ruled by a wali who receives orders from the Sheikh of Sharjah and his mission is to maintain security and discipline. He resides in the Sheikh's castle and raises the flag of the Trucial Oman coast on the northwestern tower. The revenues of the Sheikh of Sharjah from Al Dhaid are around 100 pods of dates. He also receives about \$228 (Dhs840) as fees for the water used by farmers. Al Dhaid belongs to the ruler of Sharjah, and Sheikh Salem bin Sultan, the uncle of the ruler of Sharjah, as well as the sheikhs of Ajman and Hamriyah own some palm farms in there."

"According to a report, Al Dhaid can be the best location that British and Indian forces can land in, if needed. The water there is fine and abundant, and there are a lot of camels and other animals. Also, it is possible to reach Al Dhaid from Ras Al Khaimah by carriages."

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**Author:** Kaye Rabel

**Publisher:** SAGE Publications Ltd

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The only way to live a balanced, happy life is to manage your health and wellbeing, as this book discusses. In this guide, readers will learn more about the best resources for a healthy mind, and how to cultivate healthier relationships with friends and loved ones. Highlighting the essential factors that will improve your life and professional skills, this guide underscores the need to set and achieve personal goals in order to succeed and enjoy life.

## PURPOSEFUL LIFE

**Title:** Build Your Best Life: Key Strategies to Help You Start Today, Not Tomorrow

**Author:** Robert Pop

**Publisher:** Robert Pop

**Enterprises**

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**Edition)**



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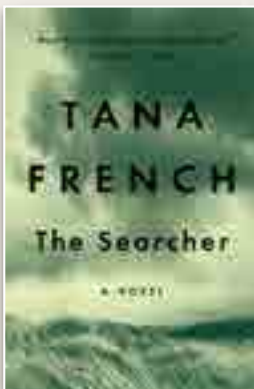
**Title:** The Searcher

**Author:** Tana French

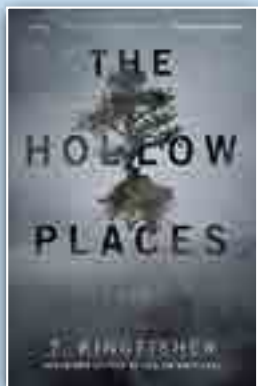
**Publisher:** Viking

**Price:** \$27.15 (Dhs100)

**(Hardcover)**



Cal Hooper, a former detective, decides to live a quiet life in a remote village in Ireland — signing off forever from his police duties. But when a local boy asks for help in finding his brother, he once again feels that restless itch. However, as he digs deeper into the case, he starts to discover that something is off with his new community. Hooper realises that the only way to know for sure is to unleash again the detective in him — even if it jeopardises his safety.



## DISCOVERING MYSTERIES

**Title:** The Hollow Places

**Author:** T. Kingfisher

**Publisher:** Gallery/Saga Press

**Price:** \$16.99 (Dhs62) (Paperback)

This novel follows the life of Kara, a young woman who discovers a strange portal in her uncle's house. As she decodes the cryptic words on this hidden hole, Kara discovers just how powerful and mysterious the portal is — it can lead her to places she never imagined existed in her universe and reality. But as compelling as these places can be, they also have creatures that seem to feed on fears. And as Kara delves deeper into the portal, she must find a way to defeat her fears, in order to prevent these foes from taking hold of her.



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## UAE's aquaculture industry sees rise in yield

**THE** UAE witnessed a growth in fish catches during the first half of 2020 across certain species of economic importance, buoyed by the implementation of seasonal fishing and trade bans.

Arabian safi (emperor) catch saw a 30.8 per cent increase while sheri (rabbitfish) catch witnessed an increase of 17.4 per cent compared to the same period last year.

HE Dr Abdullah Belhaif Al Nuaimi, Minister of Climate Change and Environment (MOCCA), praised the compliance observed amongst fishermen and businesses, stating that the seasonal fishing and trade bans had been effective in both the regulation and propagation of the UAE's aquatic resources.

"Achieving food security and sustainability is a strategic priority for the Ministry. Therefore, we work to develop all local food production sectors, including fisheries. Our success in this regard depends on the awareness of fishermen about the importance of fishing regulations



for ensuring the sustainability of the fishing occupation in the UAE, and the extent of their compliance and cooperation with the Ministry and concerned local authorities," said Al Nuaimi.

He highlighted that MOCCA intends to further boost these numbers and introduce new initiatives to motivate fishermen for their contributions with subsidised equipment such as boat engines, and collaboration with local authorities to develop fishing ports and facilities

in the country.

The Ministry will also aid in the rehabilitation of several marine habitats through the installation of 3,200 artificial caves, an initiative to plant 30,000 mangroves, fish hatchery projects in select coastal areas, and coral culture.

To date, there are 12 aquaculture farms registered with MOCCA. They produced 3,223 tonnes of fish in 2019.

## Drones put UAE at the forefront of food security—eco protection integration



**THE** UAE's adoption of drones in agriculture has made it one of the firsts in the world to integrate technology in food security and environmental protection, according to Falcon Eye Drones Services (FEDS), the Middle East's leading and one of the world's top Drone-As-A-Service (DaaS) companies.

FEDS' statement comes on the heels of the announcement of His Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice President and Prime Minister of the UAE and Ruler of Dubai, that the UAE is amongst the first in the region to prioritise environmental protection and climate change as part of its food sustainability programme on a national scale.

Earlier, His Highness Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi and Deputy Supreme Commander of the UAE Armed Forces, also stressed the value of utilising agricultural technology approach—also known as AgTech—to enhance home-grown food production.

Underscoring how the UAE has been a pioneer in the region for massive drone-planting initiatives, FEDS CEO Rabih Bou Rashid emphasised how drones are revolutionising the agricultural sector in response to rapidly evolving needs of our time and how technology-driven projects in the country have proven that drones are a more cost-effective and faster alternative to traditional farming

methods being practised for millennia.

In partnership with the Ministry of Climate Change and Environment, FEDS had undertaken a massive drone seeding initiative in 2019 that saw the planting of 250,000 Ghaf seeds and 6 million Samar seeds in 150 square kilometres of land in a few days—a process that used to take decades to complete through traditional farming methods. This feat has made the UAE one of the very first countries in the world to conduct a drone-planting project on such an expansive scale.

"With the changing calls of our time, such as the repercussions of COVID-19 ringing in amongst nations to produce more of what they eat, countries see the need to explore newer solutions to boost their agricultural sector. If we look at the future of farming in the UAE, drone systems would be as common as tractors, unleashing the benefits of precision agriculture to ramp up farming," Bou Rashid said.

He added that drones' ability to conduct seeding, land surveying initiatives will propel the UAE's goal of environmental protection and National Food Security Strategy 2051. The country ranks 21st globally in the latest Global Food Security Index 2019 report, achieving a 10-place leap from 2018, and besting other nations in the West and in the Middle East.



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## UAE surpasses target number of volunteers for COVID-19 vaccine trial



for those receiving the second shot of the inactivated vaccine.

Commenting on the achievement of securing this many volunteers, HE Abdul Rahman bin Mohammed Al Owais, Minister of Health and Prevention and Minister of State for Federal National Council Affairs, said, "From the very onset, the UAE leadership was totally committed to overcoming the COVID-19 pandemic through a global collaborative effort. The public-spirited nature of citizens and residents and their willingness to volunteer is a powerful endorsement of the proactive approach the UAE has taken in what is a world-leading inactivated vaccine trials programme.

"Everyone involved in the trials, from the volunteers to the clinical and administrative staff, can be enormously proud of what has been achieved already, showing once again the sense of unity and shared purpose that has driven the nation for the past five decades."

The vaccine passed the first two phases of clinical testing without causing any side effects to the volunteers.

**THE** UAE's Phase III trial of inactivated vaccines for COVID-19 has set a new global record after recruiting 31,000 volunteers, surpassing the required target of 15,000 – that's more than 200% of the goal met.

Participants in one of the largest vaccine trials in the world were from more than 120 nationalities.

The Department of Health – Abu Dhabi (DoH) confirmed in the latter part of August that there was already a sufficient number of volunteers required to complete the clinical trial, so no new registrations would be accepted. The vaccine centres at ADNEC and Al Qarain Centre in Sharjah have stopped receiving volunteers. They remain open, however,

## University of Sharjah gets grant to develop COVID-19 antiviral drug

**THE** University of Sharjah has won financial backing for its bid to develop an antiviral drug against the novel coronavirus disease (COVID-19).

The university received grants for two projects that aim to alleviate the spread of COVID-19. It also undertook a sponsored agreement with a UAE enterprise fund named Sandoq Al Watan to support their research.

Led by Dr Sameh Soliman and co-investigators Dr Ahmed Almejdi, Dr Rania Hamdy, and Dr Mohamed Haider from the University of Sharjah, the initiative is expected to produce a dual-inhibitor antiviral drug to combat the transmission and presence of the disease. Researchers aim to do it through blocking the enzymes necessary for viral infection.

Ahmed Fikri, Acting Director General of Sandoq Al Watan, said, "As a national initiative supporting research projects for the post-oil era, the recent major disruptions



caused by the novel COVID-19 outbreak have made it even more imperative that we aid innovative and forward-thinking projects

to support national efforts to curb the spread of the virus and ensure business continuity in the UAE."



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# WHAT THE MONTH HAS IN STORE



## Aries (March 21 – April 19)

"It takes a lot of courage to be the same person on the outside that you are on the inside." Author Barbara De Angelis made that observation. During the coming weeks, you may be strongly tempted to be different on the outside than you are on the inside. In fact, you may ultimately create more congruence between your inside and outside than you have in a long time.



## Taurus (April 20 – May 21)

"People who deny the existence of dragons are often eaten by dragons. From within." Fantasy author Ursula K. Le Guin once said. Acknowledge the existence of metaphorical dragons; locate where they hang out in your inner realms; study them and get to know them better; and devise a strategy for dealing with them safely.



## Gemini (May 22 – June 20)

"Don't let them tame you," advised Gemini dancer Isadora Duncan. In accordance with astrological omens, Gemini, take a survey of what influences might wish you were more docile, mild, or manageable. And then meditate on how you could consistently express the healthiest kind of your imagination.



## Cancer (June 21 – July 22)

The heart organ that pumps blood through our bodies is called okàn. Within the okàn is the second heart: a power center that regulates the flow of emotions. It's called ègbè. Your ègbè will be exceptionally strong and clear and generous in the coming weeks, Cancerian. Your capacity to feel deeply and truly will be a gift to all those with whom you share it.



## Leo (July 23 – August 22)

Ancient Greek philosopher Plato once said, "Do not train children to learn by force or harshness; but direct them to what amuses their minds, so that you may be better able to discover with accuracy the peculiar bent of the genius of each." The same principle applies to all of us adults who are committed to the goal of life-long learning.



## Virgo (August 23 – September 22)

Author Frederick Buechner writes, "We are commanded to love our neighbors as ourselves." Let's make his thought your keynote for the next two weeks. As you do attend to this poignant work, be generous with each of your old selves. Forgive them for their errors and praise their beauty.



## Libra (September 23 – October 22)

Seventy-nine-year-old Libran poet Robert Pinsky has had a triumphant life. He has published 19 books, including his own poems and essays, as well as translations of Italian and Polish poetry. Get in touch and commune with the primal roots of the things you love to do. Reconnect with the original expressions of your passion for life.



## Scorpio (October 23 – November 21)

Author Gore Vidal wrote, "Since no one can ever know for certain whether or not his own view of life is the correct one, it is absolutely impossible for him to know if someone else's is the wrong one." Blessings will flow your way if you follow your heart. As you refrain from questioning your own opinions, you will generate good fortune for yourself.



## Sagittarius (November 22 – December 21)

"It's a rare gift, to know where you need to be, before you've been to all the places you don't need to be." Author Ursula K. Le Guin wrote that. In the coming days, you don't have to engage in endless evaluations of the numerous possibilities. Your clear, strong gut hunches will tell you exactly where you need to be and how to get there.



## Capricorn (December 22 – January 19)

Novelist Henry Miller described himself as being "in love with love, always in search of the absolute, always seeking the unattainable." Feelings like those are why your astrological symbol is the mountain goat. At your best, you're determined to keep striving for the brightest, the strongest, the truest.



## Aquarius (January 20 – February 18)

"Go catch a falling star," wrote poet John Donne in his poem "Song." He went on to say, "Teach me to hear the mermaids singing." He wasn't being literal, but rather was indulging in poetic fancy to stretch his readers' imaginations. Aquarius, you're ripe to transcend your limited notions about what's plausible and implausible.



## Pisces (February 19 – March 20)

Our body naturally produces at least one quart of mucus every day. You might not be aware of it, because much of it glides down your throat. Regard mucus as your prime metaphor in the coming weeks. Be on the alert for influences and ideas that might empower you even if they're less than beautiful and pleasing.

Horoscopes by Rob Brezsky (freewillastrology.com)

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