

# 999

SECURITY AND SAFETY FOR ALL

ISSUE 126 JULY 2022

ABU DHABI BEATS  
TRAFFIC  
CONGESTION

SAFETY MEASURES  
TO WARD OFF  
THE BLAZE

**SPOTLIGHT:**  
5 POST-PANDEMIC  
TACTICS FOR  
JOB-SEEKERS

## CRIME DETECTION GOES HI-TECH

UAE POLICE'S LATEST INNOVATIONS HELP SOLVE CRIMES



UAE	5.000	AED
KSA	5.000	SAR
Kuwait	0.500	DK
Bahrain	0.500	BD
Oman	0.500	OR



IN THIS ISSUE: HIRING UNDOCUMENTED WORKERS POSES DANGER TO YOUR SAFETY AND SECURITY

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*Within the 50  
short years of its  
life as a nation,  
the UAE has  
turned itself into  
a global role  
model when it  
comes to using  
technology for  
maintaining  
security*

## Cutting-edge anti-crime tech

**R**ecreating a crime scene in all its details long after the crime has been committed. Looking into the brain of a suspect to find proof of guilt. Digitally remodelling and identifying a face whose lines have all but disappeared because of the corpse's exposure to the elements. A colony of insects found on a dead body helping forensic experts to accurately determine the time of death.

These science-fiction scenarios are being used every day by security agencies in the UAE, as the country increasingly supports traditional human detective work with new-age methods. Our cover story on crime-busters this month takes you through all the fascinating new technologies, some of them enabled by Artificial Intelligence, that are making the UAE even more efficient in solving investigative mysteries.

Within the 50 short years of its life as a nation, the UAE has turned itself into a global role model when it comes to using technology for maintaining security. That takes many forms: from criminal investigations to traffic safety. Technological solutions such as AI-powered predictive data analysis and real-time dissemination of traffic information to the public through the mobile app 'Darb' have made Abu Dhabi the least congested capital city in the world. The ability to decongest the roads of a busy city is a major achievement, especially in a country with a very high rate of private vehicle ownership. Along with the ramping up of technology, Abu Dhabi has taken other measures, e.g. more city buses, introduction of toll gates, to encourage people to use public transport. A decongested city is one where people's days are professionally productive and personally fulfilling — those are also amongst the national goals of the UAE.

Technology once again comes to the aid of humans as the full force of summer bears down on the UAE. Fires are a menace at any time of the year, but more so in this season, because the excessive use of poorly maintained air-conditioners or heat-induced chemical instability in badly stored flammable materials often start a blaze here. That's why the UAE has created Hassantuk, a revolutionary system that allows houses and buildings to call the fire brigade automatically. In this issue, we outline all the fire-fighting measures taken in the country, including the use of a robot fire-fighter, to save lives and property.

Another security-related feature in this issue draws your attention to the risks of hiring domestic help illegally, bypassing the set procedure that includes background check and identity verification. If your house is robbed and the crime is committed by an undocumented worker you hired, then who is to blame for it?

Yet another security-related menace, experienced by people more and more these days, is digital impersonation. This is a particular sub-branch of digital fraud in which people are contacted in some way — phone or e-mail or perhaps an SMS with a weblink that the message recipient is asked to click on — and the fraudsters pose as government officials, police officers, courier agency personnel, or even a representative of the "UAE Central Bank". Once the target complies with whatever the fraudsters ask for, money is siphoned off the victim's account.

There are other troubles that the UAE's national apparatus has to deal with, and they're of an international scale. One: the stream of refugees being created by the endless conflicts around the world. Two: the stealthy return of COVID-19, with positivity numbers again rising across the world, though with very few fatalities, thanks to the global vaccination rates.

We have two features that outline what these two situations mean for the UAE, and how the country has responded — with speed, organisation, and compassion for the refugees; and with disciplined health safeguards and a booster dose drive to check the novel coronavirus.

As always, the UAE remains a dynamic and proactive country, no matter how events unfold, and each of us has a constructive role to play in this. With that, **999** takes your leave until the next month.





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United Arab Emirates**

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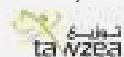
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Since its inception, the country has always been committed to providing unconditional humanitarian assistance to alleviate suffering and protect human dignity in times of crisis. With the UAE now represented by a new head of state, **999** looks at the myriad ways in which the legacy of Sheikh Zayed has been carried forward

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On the very first day of their honeymoon, a husband cajoles his spouse into taking a narcotic pill, and then threatens her with violence unless she keeps taking more drugs



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TECHNOLOGY HAS LONG BEEN AN ALLY OF LAW ENFORCEMENT IN THE UAE. **999** PRESENTS THE MOST IMPORTANT INNOVATIONS IN THE FIELD OF FORENSIC SCIENCE THAT HELP SOLVE EVEN COLD CASES AND BRING PERPETRATORS TO JUSTICE

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



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**Dr Samar Al-Shamsi**  
Internationally respected artist

## President, Vice President swear in three new UAE ministers

**PRESIDENT** His Highness Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan and His Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice President and Prime Minister of the UAE and Ruler of Dubai, administered the oath of office of three new ministers.

HH Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed wished the new officials success in their respective mission to building a generation that's well-equipped with the requisite knowledge and skills for the future.

"Our interest in enhancing the quality of education stems from our belief in the importance of this vital sector in shaping the future, as a main source of development that provides qualified national competencies to serve the nation," said the President.

For his part, HH Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid stressed: "The future of our country begins with our schools, and the trust is great, may God guide them."

The newly appointed officials consisted of HE Dr Ahmad Belhou Al Falasi, Minister of Education; HE Sarah Al Amiri, Minister of State for Public Education and Advanced Technology and Chairwomen of the Emirates Schools Establishment; and HE



HH Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan and HH Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum during the oath-taking of new ministers



Al Falasi



Al Amiri



Musallam

Sara Awad Issa Musallam, Minister of State for Early Education.

Their appointment came following the

UAE Cabinet's decision in May 2022 to implement major structural changes in the country's education system.

## President announces Expo City Dubai as official venue of COP28

**PRESIDENT** His Highness Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan has announced that the 28th United Nations Climate Change Conference of the Parties (COP28) will be hosted at Expo City Dubai.

The selection of Expo City Dubai as the official venue for COP28 builds on its legacy and message of sustainability, opportunity, and mobility—which are in line with the objectives of COP28 in addressing global challenges.

The global conference, which represents a moment of vital significance as the world seeks to maximise progress since the Paris Agreement, is expecting over 45,000 participants daily.

Earlier, His Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice President and Prime Minister of the UAE and Ruler of Dubai, announced that the former Expo site will be transformed into a model city that preserves the UAE's legacy as an active contributor to

the progress of the region and the world.

The UAE has established itself as a world-class destination for hosting high-level international events focusing on climate action and sustainable development. It is the permanent host country for the International Renewable Energy Agency, the first country in the region to sign and ratify the Paris Agreement, and the first in the region to commit to a country-wide reduction in carbon emissions.

## Mohamed bin Zayed reviews details of Emirates Lunar Mission

**PRESIDENT** His Highness Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan has reviewed the details of the Emirates Lunar Mission, which is a key programme in the country's strategy for exploring outer space.

"The Emirates Lunar Mission translates our confidence in moving forward in the field of space. It is a great confirmation that the historic achievement of the Hope Probe was

only the beginning of the UAE journey of space exploration," said the President.

His Highness also reaffirmed the UAE government's staunch support for scientific research programmes as a main driver of development.

Meanwhile, His Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice President and Prime Minister of the UAE and

Ruler of Dubai, extolled the Emirati youth and scientists for achieving the UAE's ambition in the field of space science.

"The Emirates Lunar Mission constitutes a new era of the UAE's success in the field of space. Our ambition in the space sector has no limits. International cooperation with various partners during the coming period is very important," stressed the Vice President.

## VP leads first Cabinet meeting under UAE's new leadership

**HIS** Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice President and Prime Minister of the UAE and Ruler of Dubai, has spearheaded the first Cabinet meeting in the new era of UAE's prosperity under the leadership of President His Highness Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan.



**WAM**

HH Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid.

His Highness added: "The Cabinet will always be a supportive team for the UAE President in his mission in consolidating the foundations of the Union, empowering its institutions, developing its path and enhancing the quality of life."

The Vice President underscored that focus on building the competencies of the UAE's human capital, boosting the economy and enhancing the country's position in various fields— which form part of HH Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed's vision—will now be the guiding force for all institutional endeavours at the federal level.

"The UAE started a new era of prosperity and

growth, under the leadership of His Highness Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan. We confirm that the vision of the UAE President will form the roadmap for all strategies and projects of all ministries and federal institutions. His Highness's reign started with fieldwork, directing his first projects and initiatives to the wellbeing and happiness of the people," said

meeting, the UAE adopted several environment and health-related policies, including the reformation of the Education and Human Resources Council. It also approved the reformation of the Higher Committee for People of Determination Services, and a policy for Federal Government Revenues by commercial banks in the country.

## Vice President unveils Expo City Dubai's opening in October 2022

**HIS** Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice President and Prime Minister of the UAE and Ruler of Dubai, announced the opening of Expo City Dubai in October 2022, which aims to be a futuristic destination for business and innovation.



than 24 million visitors and left an indelible mark in the 170-year history of World Expositions, today we announce the transformation of the exhibition site into Expo City Dubai, a city that represents the most beautiful ambitions of Dubai."

With an array of diverse attractions, the comprehensive city will home to a world-class exhibition centre and museum, offices, leisure facilities, food and

Expo City Dubai – the legacy plan of Expo 2020 Dubai and part of the Dubai 2040 Urban Master Plan – builds on the momentum and resounding success of the six-month World Expo to create an environmentally-friendly, tech-enabled city of the future.

His Highness stated: "After the historical success of Expo 2020 Dubai, which was visited by more

entertainment venues, sports facilities, and a shopping mall.

## Mohammed bin Rashid inaugurates region's biggest library

**HIS** Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice President and Prime Minister of the UAE and Ruler of Dubai, has inaugurated the Mohammed bin Rashid Library—the biggest of its kind in the Middle East and the region's newest cultural beacon.



The Mohammed bin Rashid Library, which was built with an investment of Dhs1 billion, aims to cultivate a culture of reading, while supporting the development of creativity, knowledge and arts in the UAE.

His Highness said: "Today, we launch a cultural and intellectual edifice for our new generations, through which we aim to promote reading, spread knowledge and support

researchers and scientists. Our goal is to illuminate the human mind."

The Vice President added: "The economy needs knowledge. Politics needs wisdom. Nations need to learn. And all of that can be

found in books. Through this library, we have brought together millions of books to develop our path, consolidate our identity, culture and roots, and create our future."

Across its seven floors, the Library houses more than 1 million printed and digital books in Arabic and foreign languages, over 6 million dissertations, around 73,000 music scores, 75,000 videos, approximately 13,000 articles,

and more than 5,000 historical print and digital journals within an archive covering 325 years, along with about 35,000 print and digital newspapers from around the world, and nearly 500 rare collectables.



## Saif bin Zayed leads Happiness and Positivity Council meeting

**HIS** Highness Lt General Sheikh Saif bin Zayed Al Nahyan, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior, spearheaded the Happiness and Positivity Council meeting at the Ministry of Interior (MoI) building.

The meeting was attended by top MoI officials, police commanders-in-chief, as well as senior police officials. Amongst them were Lt General Dhahi Khalfan Tamim, Deputy Chairman of Police and Public Security in Dubai; Lt General Abdullah Khalifa Al Marri,



**MoI** General Staff Pilot Faris Khalaf Al Mazrouei, Commander-in-Chief of Abu Dhabi Police.

High on the agenda was the review of key performance indicators and several initiatives related to developing police work—all aimed at fostering customers' happiness through an enhanced level of excellence at the Ministry.

Moreover, a number of programmes in line with providing comprehensive and pioneering services to customers were also discussed.

Commander-in-Chief of Dubai Police; Major

to customers were also discussed.

## Interior Minister calls on tighter child protection measures at global summit

**HIS** Highness Lt General Sheikh Saif bin Zayed Al Nahyan, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior, has called on tighter child protection measures, especially in the digital world, at the recently concluded 'We Protect 2022 Global Alliance Summit', held in Brussels, Belgium.

In his keynote address, HH Sheikh Saif bin Zayed underscored the need to come up with clear recommendations, enhanced international cooperation and coordination

in safeguarding children from all forms of crime.

His Highness highlighted that the UAE's wise leadership puts an utmost priority on securing a supportive and child-friendly digital environment. He added: "President His Highness Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan stressed that protecting the rights of children and ensuring their proper upbringing will always rank high amongst the UAE's priorities."

The Interior Minister also stressed that

the health and safety of every child is "crucial to the development and upbringing of a normal family and society".

"All of us must be keen to provide a healthy and safe environment for children, so that they become positive and active individuals in their communities. Protecting and supporting them must be a top priority for us, as well as for policymakers and decision-makers," said HH Sheikh Saif bin Zayed.

## Saif bin Zayed, President of Madagascar bolster security cooperation

**HIS** Highness Lt General Sheikh Saif bin Zayed Al Nahyan, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior, has met with Andry Rajoelina, President of Madagascar, who recently visited the UAE.

The meeting focused on bolstering cooperation in the fields of safety and security, and tackled ways to enhance bilateral relations between the two countries.

HE Dr Thani bin Ahmed Al Zeyoudi, Minister of State for Foreign Trade, and Dr Ali Muhammad Al Khoury, Advisor of Arab Economic Unity Council and Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Arab Federation for Digital Economy, attended the meeting.





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## Fujairah Ruler receives Mol's Al Faraj Fund delegation

**HIS** Highness Sheikh Hamad bin Mohammed Al Sharqi, Supreme Council Member and Ruler of Fujairah, received a delegation from the Board of Directors of Al Faraj Fund of the Ministry of Interior (Mol).

His Highness was briefed by the delegation about the goals of the humanitarian fund and its achievements.

With the support of His Highness Lt General Sheikh Saif bin Zayed Al Nahyan, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior, Al Faraj Fund has become one of the most prominent models of the UAE's humanitarian community work.

HH Sheikh Hamad bin Mohammed Al Sharqi conveyed his appreciation of the role played by Al Faraj Fund, its work in promoting the values of solidarity, tolerance, and fraternity in the UAE society, as well as its humanitarian vision.

During the meeting, HE Khalil Daoud Badran, Chairman of the Board of Directors of Al Faraj Fund, gave a brief explanation



about the course of the Fund's work and its major accomplishments in helping financially insolvent inmates at the Penal and Correctional Establishments and their families.

The meeting was attended by Mohammed Saeed Al Dhanhani, Director of the Emiri

Court in Fujairah, and the delegation of the Board of Directors of Al Faraj Fund, including Mohammed Al Awadi Al Menhali, Dr Rashid Al Dakhri, Hamad Abdul Rahman Al Nuaimi, Burgan Ahmed Abdullah, and Saleh Muslim Al Ketbi.

## Mol, MCY bolster cooperation in work best practices

**MAJOR** General Staff Khalifa Hareb Al Khaili, Undersecretary of the Ministry of Interior, met with HE Mubarak Ibrahim Al Nakhi, Undersecretary of the Ministry of Culture and Youth (MCY).

The meeting touched upon ways to enhance cooperation between Mol and MCY in

excellence and best practices in the workplace.

Attended by senior officials from both Ministries, the meeting also focused on all areas of joint projects that pertain to security work. Both sides reviewed their collaborative initiatives and discussed ways to maximise the results.



Major General Staff Khalifa Hareb Al Khaili during a meeting with HE Mubarak Ibrahim Al Nakhi

## Mol launches traffic campaign for e-scooter users



Federal Traffic Council officers and representatives of strategic partners during the launch of Mol's safety campaign for e-scooter users

**THE** Federal Traffic Council of the Ministry of Interior (Mol) has launched a campaign on the traffic safety of electric scooter users, in collaboration with Auto Pro of ENOC group and several strategic partners.

Brigadier Ahmed Al Sam Al Naqbi, Director of Traffic and Patrols at Ras Al Khaimah Police, and Head of Traffic Awareness and Safety at the Federal Traffic Council, underscored that the nationwide campaign aims to spread awareness about the road regulations and guidelines for e-scooter users.

Al Naqbi said that a committee to regulate e-scooters was formed under the directives of Major General Engineer Counsellor Mohammed Saif Al Zaffin, Assistant Commander-in-Chief for Operations Affairs at Dubai Police, and Chairman of the Federal Traffic Council at the Mol.

Colonel Jumaa Salem bin Suwaidan, Acting Director of the General Directorate of Traffic at Dubai Police, said that the campaign aims to caution e-scooter riders to only use paths and lanes designated for them.



## Al Mazrouei, Mongolian envoy boost security cooperation

**MAJOR** General Staff Pilot Faris Khalaf Al Mazrouei, Commander-in-Chief of Abu Dhabi Police, and HE Odonbaatar Shijeekhuu, Ambassador of Mongolia to the UAE, discussed ways to enhance collaboration in the fields of policing and security.

The meeting was attended by Major General Mohammed Suhail Al Rashidi, Director of the Criminal Security Sector at Abu Dhabi Police, and Colonel Khalfan Abdullah

Al Mansoori, Director of the Strategy and Institutional Development Centre



Major General Staff Pilot Faris Khalaf Al Mazrouei presents a token of appreciation to Mongolian Ambassador HE Odonbaatar Shijeekhuu

at Abu Dhabi Police. Meanwhile, a French security

delegation also visited the External Police Directorate of the Criminal Security Sector at the Abu Dhabi Police General Headquarters. They were briefed on the best development practices applied by the police force.

The delegation was received by Brigadier Salem Ada Al Baqmi, Deputy Director of the Directorate for Administrative Affairs and Operations, and the French side was led by Brigadier Hass Laurent, Commander-in-Charge of the French Gendarmerie.

## Al Rashidi, Al Muhairi inspect police services

**MAJOR** General Muhammed Suhail Al Rashidi, Director of the Criminal Security Sector at Abu Dhabi Police, inspected police services at Falaj Hazaa Police Station in Al Ain and the Traffic and Patrols Directorate of Abu Dhabi Police.

Al Rashidi participated in the processing of customer transactions at the Falaj Hazaa Police Station and received several customers to find out their needs and expectations. He commended the police force's interest in providing efficient



Major General Muhammed Suhail Al Rashidi greeting a customer

services to the public. Meanwhile, as part of the government's

"In the Field" initiative, Major General Ahmed Saif bin Zaitoun Al Muhairi, Director of the Central Operations Sector at Abu Dhabi Police, visited the police force's Traffic and Patrols Directorate.

During his interaction with a number of customers, Al Muhairi highlighted that Abu Dhabi Police aim to ensure the well-being of society through continuous work and training, and by promoting quality and institutional excellence.

## Dhahi Khalfan meets Beit Al Khair delegation

**LT** General Dhahi Khalfan Tamim, Deputy Chairman of Police and Public Security in Dubai, met with a delegation from Beit Al Khair Society, led by its Deputy Director General, Saeed Mubarak Al Mazrouei.

In the presence of Major General Ahmed Ateeq Al Maqoudi, Director General of the Office of the Deputy Chief of Police and Public Security in Dubai, the meeting discussed ways to bolster collaboration between the two entities and reviewed the results of their joint initiatives.

Dhahi Khalfan praised the efforts of charitable associations and institutions in Dubai, and the active role played by Beit Al Khair Society in establishing the values of humanitarian work and community service.

Al Mazrouei conveyed the greetings of Abdeen Taher Al



Lt General Dhahi Khalfan Tamim (centre) during his meeting with a delegation from Beit Al Khair Society

Awadi, Director General of Beit Al Khair Society and praised the role of Dubai Police in maintaining safety and security in the emirate. He also

presented Dhahi Khalfan with the books *Zayed the Good* and *The Soft Power in the Leadership Qualities of Zayed*.

## Sharjah Police hold meeting on emergency response, security plans

**MAJOR** General Saif Al Zari Al Shamsi, Commander-in-Chief of Sharjah Police, chaired the 5th meeting for 2022 of the Permanent Higher Command Committee in Sharjah Police.

The meeting was held in the presence of Brigadier Abdullah Mubarak bin Amer, Deputy



Major General Saif Al Zari Al Shamsi (centre right) leads the 5th meeting for 2022 of the Permanent Higher Command Committee in Sharjah Police

Commander-in-Chief of Sharjah Police, and members of the

Permanent Higher Committee. The topics discussed included dealing with site accidents and hazardous materials.

The meeting reviewed several security plans aimed at enhancing performance,

including the strategic plan of Sharjah Police for 2023-2026.

## Ajman Police can now meet customers in Metaverse

**AJMAN** Police have launched the Metaverse project to meet with customers virtually—making it the first police general command at the national level and the first government agency in the emirate to launch this initiative.

The initiative collects opinions and suggestions of customers on the police services provided, and then it

finds ways to improve them.

Lt Colonel Mohammed bin Abdullah Abu Shehab, Head of the Service Development team at the Al Nuaimiya Comprehensive Police Station, said that the idea of the project came within the framework of facilitating transactions with customers through a virtual reality platform.

He added that the virtual world of

Metaverse simulated the real world and ensured the provision of proactive services that would fit the needs of the future.

The Metaverse experience involves the use of virtual reality (VR) headsets, smartphones, and access to desktop and personal computers. Ajman Police employees have also been trained in using VR glasses.

## Al Marri reviews progress on Smart Police Stations

**LT** General Abdullah Khalifa Al Marri, Commander-in-Chief of Dubai Police, spearheaded the 31st meeting of Dubai Police Officers Club.

The meeting was attended by Major General Abdullah Ali Al Ghaithi,

Acting Assistant Commander-in-Chief for Operations Affairs; Brigadier Jamal Salem Al Jalaf, Director of the Criminal Investigations Department; Brigadier Khalid Nasser Alrazooqi, General Director of Artificial

Intelligence; and members of the Executive Committee of Smart Police Stations (SPS).

Al Marri was briefed on the results of the implementation of decisions taken at the previous meeting; the

Executive Committee and commended the opening of more centres in various parts of Dubai, as these smart police stations provide very fast services to the public without any human intervention.



The 31st meeting of Dubai Police Officers Club spearheaded by Lt General Abdullah Khalifa Al Marri (centre right)

approved designs of SPS; work progress on establishing more smart centres by 2025; and the level of completion for those under construction during 2021 and 2022.

He praised the efforts of the SPS

## Fujairah Police host Ajman Customs team

**THE** Traffic and Licensing Services Centre of Fujairah Police hosted a delegation from Ajman Customs as part of visits to review best practices and mechanisms for improving services.

The visit served as an opportunity to review the level of excellence in customer service, aligned with the strategic objective of the Ministry of Interior to enhance customer satisfaction and promote institutional excellence.

The delegation was welcomed by Brigadier Ahmed Mohamed Kasib Al Hamoudi, Director of Resources and Support Services at Fujairah Police; Colonel Saleh Mohammed Abdullah Al Dhanhani, Director of Traffic and Patrols at Fujairah Police; and several other officers.



Officials at the Traffic and Licensing Services Centre of Fujairah Police during a meeting with Ajman Customs' delegation

## RAK Police organise preparedness drill

**BRIGADIER** Abdullah Khamis Al Hadidi, Acting Commander-in-Chief of Ras Al Khaimah Police, participated in an exercise to raise the level of preparedness for security events.

Al Hadidi highlighted the importance of holding such training exercises to keep Ras Al Khaimah Police personnel at the optimal level of competence in dealing with crimes and emergencies.

The preparedness drill involved several federal and local authorities in Ras Al Khaimah.

## Umm Al Quwain CID bust car thief gang

**THE** Criminal Investigations Department (CID) of Umm Al Quwain Police arrested an Asian gang involved in stealing vehicles' exhaust assembly.

According to Colonel Saeed Obaid bin Arran, CID Director, an investigation team had been formed after receiving several reports of car exhaust theft in the emirate.

In cooperation with the Criminal Investigation Branch at the Al Salama Comprehensive Police Station, the team managed to identify and arrest the perpetrators within 24 hours, and the suspects confessed to their crime.



# 1st

Top global ranking of the UAE on the list of economies projected to attract the most number of high-net-worth investors this year, according to the Henley Global Citizens Report 2022. The report tracked private wealth and investment migration trends worldwide.

# 1st

Regional ranking of the UAE in the 2022 Foreign Direct Investment Confidence Index by strategy and management consultancy firm Kearney. It affirms that the country is in a strong position to attract more foreign investors in the next three years. The UAE placed 14th globally, up from 15th last year, in this index.

# 1st

Top ranking of the UAE on the list of the most competitive economies in the Middle East and North Africa region, based on the IMD World Competitiveness 2022 Report. The UAE topped several sub-indices, including basic infrastructure, adaptability of government policy, immigration laws, and income distribution, amongst others. The country placed 12th globally in this index.

# 1st

Outstanding global position of the UAE on the list of countries with excellent business skills proficiency amongst its workforce. The Coursera's Global Skills Report 2022 found that the UAE's workforce is highly proficient in marketing (92%), accounting (90%), sales (80%), and has competitive skill sets in finance (56%).

# 1st

UAE's regional ranking in the Environmental Performance Index 2022, published by Yale University and Columbia University, United States. The index scores countries based on several indicators related to environmental sustainability, such as efforts to combat climate change. The UAE placed 39th globally in this index.

## BE IN THE LOOP

### UAE TAKES PART IN BOLSTERING REGION'S ANTI-HUMAN TRAFFICKING STRATEGY



As part of the UAE's staunch commitment to combat cross-border crimes, the Ministry of Interior (MoI) has participated in a meeting of the General Secretariat of the Arab Interior Ministers Council, to reformulate the region's anti-human trafficking strategy. The UAE delegation was spearheaded by Brigadier Mohammed Ali Al Shehi, Director of the Human Rights Department at MoI, along with Major Mohsen Ayed Al Ketbi of Abu Dhabi Police General Command, and Captain Dr Hawa Youssef of the MoI Human Rights Department.

### MOI PARTICIPATES IN REGIONAL SUMMIT ON PENITENTIARY, CORRECTIONAL INSTITUTIONS




The Ministry of Interior (MoI) has participated in the 21st Arab Conference for Heads of Penitentiary and Correctional Institutions, which was organised by the General Secretariat of the Arab Interior Ministers Council. The summit was held to discuss vital issues, such as efforts and programmes of member states for their respective penal and correctional systems. The MoI delegation was led by Brigadier Ahmed Abdulaziz Shuhail from the General Administration of Punitive and Correctional Institutions, accompanied by Captain Tariq Abdullah Al Shehhi, and several MoI officers.

### MOI HOSTS 9TH INTERPOL DEVOPS CONFERENCE



The Child Protection Centre of the Ministry of Interior has hosted the 9th meeting of the Interpol DevOps Working Group, a sub-agency of the international organisation's Specialists Group on Crimes Against Children. Over 40 experts and participants attended the conference, which was aimed at bolstering the child protection measures of Interpol member countries.



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# UAE NEWS BULLETIN

POLICE NEWS, PEOPLE, NUMBERS AND EVENTS

## ABU DHABI

# DHS70,000

The Al Ain Court of First Instance has ordered two young men to pay Dhs70,000 to a man they physically assaulted. The duo had beaten up the victim and threatened to kill him after a heated argument. The assault put the victim in hospital for weeks and resulted in a permanent disability. The accused were also told to pay for the victim's legal expenses.

## AJMAN

# 10 YEARS

An Arab man has been sentenced to 10 years in prison for drug possession and drug abuse. He was also ordered by the Ajman Criminal Court to pay a fine of Dhs100,000 for the same charges. A tip-off led to his arrest and the confiscation of narcotic substances such as tramadol, cannabis, and crystal meth during a raid at his home.

## DUBAI

# 3 MONTHS

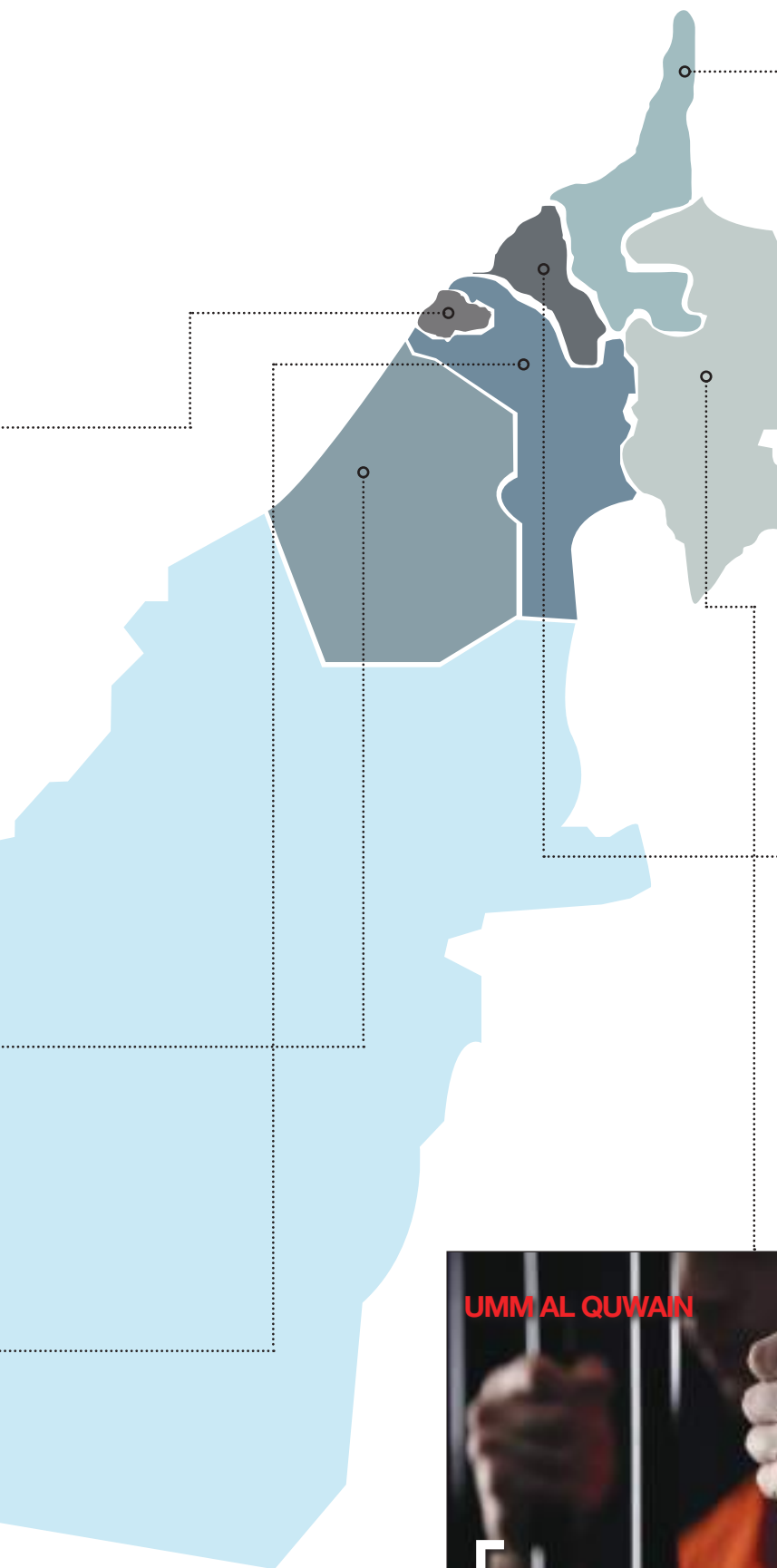
A female expat in Dubai has been sent to three months in jail for forging an Emirates ID and causing damage to property of another resident. The fake identity card came to light when an Arab man reported the 34-year-old woman to the police for slamming the door of his house and breaking his car's windshield for undisclosed reasons. The woman will be deported after serving her jail sentence.

## RAS AL KHAIMAH

# 72,000

As many as 72,000 narcotic pills and 428kg of illegal drugs had been seized by the Anti-Narcotics Department of Ras Al Khaimah Police in 2021. The force had also foiled 185 drug smuggling attempts last year. Meanwhile, the authorities urged members of the community to report any instances of drug abuse, smuggling, or possession.





## FUJAIRAH

2

A collision between a car and a school bus in the Al Siji area in Fujairah killed two students and injured three others. According to initial investigations, the car driven by a female driver crashed on to the bus. The students who died in the crash were 4 and 6 years old. The injured were brought to Al Dhaid Hospital for treatment.

## SHARJAH

4:15 PM

Firefighters from Sharjah's Civil Defence have managed to put out a huge blaze in a paint factory in the Hamriya area. The authorities were alerted about the incident at around 4:15 pm, and the fire was completely brought under control by 5:45 pm. An investigation is under way to determine the cause of the incident.

## UMM AL QUWAIN

5

Umm Al Quwain Police have arrested a gang of five thieves who were responsible for a series of carjacking incidents in some parts of the UAE. The gang used the "rent and steal" modus and targeted mostly car rental service companies. They were netted during their recent operation in Umm Al Quwain. Several stolen luxury cars were recovered from the gang members.

# HI-TECH CRIMEBUSTERS

TECHNOLOGY HAS LONG BEEN AN ALLY OF LAW ENFORCEMENT IN THE UAE. 999 PRESENTS THE MOST IMPORTANT INNOVATIONS IN THE FIELD OF FORENSIC SCIENCE THAT HELP SOLVE EVEN COLD CASES AND BRING PERPETRATORS TO JUSTICE

BY IRFAN HAJI



## MICRO-CT TOOL

Dubai Police



A forensic expert at Dubai Police analyses tool marks on victim's bones with the use of a state-of-the-art Micro-CT scan

**F**orensic science plays an integral role in law enforcement and criminal justice, especially in solving cold cases. The UAE police forces, in addition to their traditional detective skills, constantly equip their ranks with the latest technologies and state-of-the-art programmes and software to fight crime.

The police forces have been adopting the most reliable, modern, scientific techniques of criminal investigation, including DNA profiling; forensic entomology; crime scene 3D imaging; and 3D forensic facial reconstruction, amongst others.

Major General Dr Ahmed Eid Al Mansouri, Director of the General Department of Forensics and Criminology at Dubai Police, said that they were able to provide a solid link between the weapons used in a crime and the markings on a victim's bones and cartilage with the help of micro-CT (computed tomography) scan. "The successful application of micro-CT tool mark analysis reflects

Dubai Police's keenness on keeping pace with the latest technologies in doing police work," said Al Mansouri.

According to the authorities, a specialised team was dispatched to the crime scene upon the discovery of a corpse in a remote desert area in Dubai. Post mortem showed that the victim was stabbed to death, even though no such knives were found nearby. Further investigations led the police to six suspects believed to have attacked the dead person with white weapons (knives and similar weapons). Though the weapons were missing at first, the diligent police force continued looking for the knives and found them buried somewhere far away from the desert where the body was left. Then, there was another problem: all bloodstain traces on the weapons had been wiped out by natural processes, making it impossible for the police to match any stains with the victim's blood.

The forensic analysts used micro-CT technology to match the injury marks on the victim's bones and cartilage with the type of weapons used in the killing. "After collecting tool mark prints

**“The successful application of micro-CT tool mark analysis reflects Dubai Police's keenness on keeping pace with the latest technologies**



**MAJOR GENERAL AHMAD EID AL MANSOURI**

Director of the General Department of Forensics and Criminology at Dubai Police

from the victim's wounds and bones and comparing them to the weapons, specialists were able to link them to the murder case and provide convicting evidence that could stand in court and serve justice," said Lieutenant Eng. Mohammad Al Shamsi, Head of Firearms and Tool Marks Section at Dubai Police.



## 3D SCANNING/PRINTING



Leica RTC360 3D laser scanner and a 3D printer

**A**bu Dhabi Police started using 3D printing in the handling of criminal evidence as early as 2018.

The 3D-printed dioramas help the investigators to thoroughly assess a crime scene, or communicate to the court a series of events. The 3D printing initiative is part of the 2057 Plan of Abu Dhabi Police, for a city powered by technology in line with the UAE's vision of the future. It's also helpful in training exercises and customer service activities that help promote the force.

Recently, Dubai Police introduced a 3D scanner to test its future applications for crime scenes. The police force used the technology to solve a cold rape case, in which the suspect was unidentified.

"You put a camera in the middle of the crime scene and scan everything in 3D. It will create a virtual world that looks like a video game. So the idea behind this is that even if the crime scene has been closed and cleaned up, you can revisit it over and over again virtually to see details that you might

**“A 3D laser scanner can provide an accessible way to revert to the details when needed, even if the incident happened weeks or months ago**



**MAJOR DR MOHAMMAD A. ALQASSIM**

Head of Forensic Engineering Section at Dubai Police

have missed. This is very impressive technology," said Hanan Al Mulla, one of the UAE's young scientists and a forensic DNA expert at Dubai Police.

Major Dr Mohammad A. Alqassim, Head of Forensic Engineering Section at Dubai Police, explained that 3D laser scanner is also being used in post-fire investigations. "It helps

**“Even if the crime scene has been closed and cleaned up, you can revisit it over and over again virtually to see details that you might have missed**



**HANAN AL MULLA**

Forensic DNA expert at Dubai Police

investigators overcome the laborious and hazardous process of manual collection of evidence on the scene. Results of the data analysis, which can be easily accessed from computers in the crime/fire laboratory, can provide an accessible way to revert to the details when needed, even if the incident happened weeks or months ago."

## DNA PROFILING



n May 2022, Dubai Police forensic experts had utilised DNA profiling to match the genetic fingerprints of several suspects in a murder case that happened last year, even though the touch prints found at the crime scene had minimal DNA specimens.

DNA profiling was a tool for determining the identity of a specific DNA sample or assessing the relatedness between samples obtained from a person or sample of bodily tissue, said First Lieutenant Mohammed Khalid Al Rahma, Assistant Expert in the Biology and DNA Section at the General Department of Forensics and Criminology, Dubai Police. At the crime scene, DNA is often discovered during police investigations, after which persons of interest may be asked to provide their DNA samples.

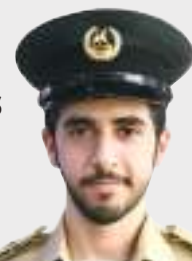
"The first step in DNA profiling is to procure relevant DNA samples. Only a small number of cells from a person's skin or the root of a hair — or from bodily fluids — is needed

to build a unique DNA profile, which significantly aids investigations," he said. "One forensic method we've also utilised is Touch DNA, also known as Trace DNA, which aids investigators [to] crack cases where very small biological samples are left at the crime scene. This involves recovering cells from the scene, then using a process called polymerase chain reaction (PCR) to make lots of copies of the genes."

Lt Colonel Dr Rashid Al Ghafri, Director of the Dubai Police International Centre for Forensics at the General Department of Forensics and Criminology, and Chairman of the Dubai Police Scholars Council, also said that "DNA profiling" was a precise scientific specialisation used in complex cases, indicating that it gave accurate results for the work of investigators.

Al Ghafri said, "We're able to use DNA profiling to prove the presence of genetic fingerprints for several suspects in a murder that took place last year. [The suspects] left their fingerprints by touch, but they contained only a limited percentage of DNA, so advanced technology

**“One forensic method we've also utilised is Touch DNA, which aids investigators to crack cases where very small biological samples are left at the crime scene. This involves making lots of copies of the genes**



**FIRST LIEUTENANT MOHAMMED KHALID AL RAHMA**

Assistant Expert in the Biology and DNA Section at Dubai Police's Forensics and Criminology Department

was used to intensify DNA, which contributed to finding the perpetrators and proving their presence at the crime scene."

# BRAIN FINGERPRINT



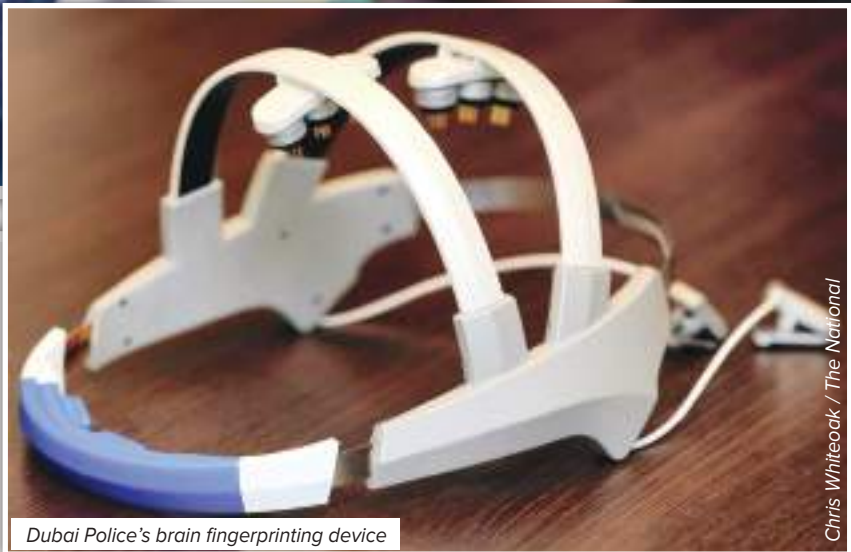
L

ast year, Dubai Police had used the “brain fingerprint” technology for the first time to crack a murder case.

Its forensic team used the smart analysis device, which measures the brain waves when the suspect sees the images of the tools used in the crime or the location and provides a thorough image of the crime scene.

Lt Colonel Muhammad Issa Al Hammadi, Director of Dubai Police’s Criminology Department, said that Dubai Police used the “Memory Print” technology to crack the murder case that happened in a warehouse where several people worked. The police showed pictures of the crime scene to those present at the place, and there was one person whose brain emitted strong waves when he was shown a tool used in the crime.

Al Hammadi said that police experts had carefully selected the photos so that they were related to the incident, and so that only those people who were present or were involved in the crime would be



Dubai Police’s brain fingerprinting device

Chris Whitehead / The National

**“Dubai Police measure these waves originating from the brain after a person sees images related to the crime, in order to provide an accurate analytical reading about whether the person or suspect was present in the location of the crime**

able to identify the images. When the sessions ended, the agency issued a detailed report to the experts about the identity of the criminal, who confessed to the details of the crime and the way he had planned it.

“Dubai Police measure these waves originating from the brain after a person sees images related to the crime, in

order to provide an accurate analytical reading about whether the person or suspect was present in the location of the crime,” said Al Hammadi.

This hi-tech crimebuster was launched after the forensic psychology experts in the General Department of Forensics and Criminology conducted many experiments for a year.



## BIOMETRICS



An officer at Dubai Police's Fingerprint Department transfers a fingerprint sample to a biometrics device

**T**he Fingerprint Department of the General Department of Forensics and Criminology at Dubai Police has developed a new device to remove fingerprints from the crime scene and send them directly to the expert. The expert would compare them technically in record time with reference to the consolidated database of biometric fingerprints, using the latest Artificial Intelligence techniques.

Major General Dr Ahmed Eid Al Mansouri, Director of the General Department of Forensics and Criminology, Dubai Police, said that the device represented an important shift and reduced the likelihood of offenders fleeing the country. He said that this device was a more effective alternative to the traditional method of lifting fingerprints by "gelatin", and then manually transferring them to laboratories, which took longer and could give the perpetrators time to escape.

This hi-tech crimebuster contributes to achieving the objectives of the Dubai Police General Command by speeding up investigations and providing material evidence to support the police case, thereby helping the judicial authorities to deliver justice.

The General Department of Forensics and Criminology has been working on tech projects since 2018, to raise the level of performance, obtain fingerprint match results faster, and identify perpetrators more accurately.



## 3D FACIAL RECONSTRUCTION



**L**ast year, the UAE's police forces had recreated the face of a decomposed body using 3D facial reconstruction.

Initially, Dubai Police sought public assistance to determine the identity of the man in the digitally reconstructed picture. The decomposed remains were found at sea, and experts of the General Department of Forensics and Criminology at Dubai Police successfully utilised the 3D facial reconstruction technology to build the face.

Major General Ahmad Eid Al Mansouri, Director of the General Department of Forensics and Criminology at Dubai Police, said, "Reconstructing the deceased's face was very challenging as the body was almost completely decomposed, especially in the face, whose features and lines had disappeared. An elite team of coroners, digital forensics experts, and professionals from the General Department of Artificial Intelligence at Dubai Police worked tirelessly to compile an identikit of the deceased, using the latest technologies in digital facial reconstruction."

The primary objective of forensic facial reconstruction was to produce an image from a skull, with a sufficient likeness of the living individual, when there are no other means available to identify the dead person.

**“The primary objective of forensic facial reconstruction was to produce an image from a skull, with a sufficient likeness of the living individual**



Dubai Police

Digitally reconstructed picture of a man who was found dead at sea by Dubai Police in 2021

## BONE SAMPLE ANALYSIS



**T**he Forensic Evidence Department at Abu Dhabi Police can now identify bone samples recovered at crime scenes, even if they are not in pristine condition.

In 2015, the police force had achieved a complete DNA profile match of two bone powder samples. One of the samples was approximately 150 years old, while another dated back to around 400 years.

The department's laboratory was one amongst 13 — out of a total of 18 asked to take part in the case study — to identify the first sample and one amongst three to achieve a 100 per cent match of the DNA profile of the second sample.

Both samples were collected from archaeological excavations and provided by the National Museum and Institute of Archaeology in Prague, Czech Republic.

Tests were conducted at the Faculty of Medicine at Charles University, in collaboration with the Forensic DNA Service (FDNAS) institute and other international forensic research institutes in Prague.

The case study was designed to test the efficiency of old bone sample analysis at various forensic laboratories worldwide. The laboratories were asked to conduct DNA profiling from two different bone powder samples, dating back 150 years and 400 years, respectively.

A total of 13 laboratories had identified the complete DNA profile of the first sample, and it was a match to the DNA typing stored in their database. Only three laboratories, including the Forensic Biology Laboratory of the Forensic Evidence Department at Abu Dhabi Police, were able to achieve a 100 per cent match of the DNA profile of both samples.

This proves the high quality of performance of the laboratory in conducting such tests and positions the Abu Dhabi Police lab amongst the world's most advanced laboratories.

## FORENSIC ENTOMOLOGY



A forensic expert at Dubai Police trains a group of university students in the laboratory of the General Administration of Forensic Evidence and Criminology

**T**he UAE police forces keep a forensic entomology database that provides investigators with solid scientific materials and evidence support. The database contains the scientific details of insects and other arthropods that are found on the surface of, and also inside, decomposing bodies.

The database helps forensic experts as they investigate the insects, the larvae morphology, growth histories, species distribution and toxic contents in their tissue — the assessment of these helps the forensic entomology experts to pinpoint the time of death, which is one of the deciding factors in a murder case.

Forensic entomology is defined as the study of insects in death investigations. When a person dies, nature quickly begins to work: the body starts to decompose, and if it's left unattended, insects use the body to feed, breed, and live. For the forensic investigators, these insects (and their life stage) can indicate the time of death and also give some clues as to whether it was a natural death or a criminal act.

The first recorded case of forensic entomology was used in a criminal investigation nearly a thousand years ago in China. In the past 30 years, things have advanced tremendously in this field, and the police in the UAE have taken full advantage of this scientific progress.



Insect larvae under study at the laboratory of Dubai Police's General Administration of Forensic Evidence and Criminology

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

## JUST AN EXAM, NOT THE END OF THE ROAD

Today, we stand at a key stage in the education process. We can look forward to a qualitative leap in learning as the UAE restructures its educational system

**“D**ear Parents,  
“Soon, your children’s exams will begin. You are worried about your child’s performance, but remember that amongst the students who will sit in exam halls could be an artist who doesn’t need to understand math or an entrepreneur who doesn’t care about history or English literature. There surely are musicians for whom chemistry holds no interest, and there are athletes for whom physical ability trumps physical sciences.

“If your child gets the full grade, that’s wonderful, but if not, please don’t destroy their self-confidence or injure their dignity. Assure them it is only a test so they can achieve greater things in life. Tell them you love them regardless of their grades, and you won’t judge their abilities.

“If you do this, you’ll get to see how your children change the world, and they won’t be able to give up on their dreams due to a bad exam score. Remember, engineers and doctors are not the only ones who are happy in this world.”

Above is a letter sent by the principal of a school in Singapore to the parents of his students before the exam. This is an eloquent message, not only because of the language used, but also because of its idea and wisdom.

Our children must not be discouraged; developing their self-confidence and helping them achieve their dreams is imperative. Many of the great inventors and scientists struggled in the subjects they studied.

Several sources, including Einstein’s confessions, claim that he had learning difficulties in his youth. Even to the point that his Greek language teacher wrote in his academic record that he was of no use to anything and that he would not succeed in life. Einstein even failed, at the age of 16, to clear the entrance exam for the Technical Institute in Zurich, Switzerland, a prestigious

scientific institute, in his first attempt.

During a recent meeting of HE Dr Ahmad Belhoul Al Falasi, Minister of Education, with editors-in-chief and media professionals in the UAE, the minister stressed that we are at an exceptional stage, which requires serious work to strengthen education leadership in the UAE and to achieve a radical transformation within the framework of national strategies.

HE Sarah Al Amiri, Minister of State for Advanced Technology and Chair of the Board of Directors of the

Emirates Schools Establishment, stressed the importance of preparing the next generation with knowledge and skills that can keep pace with the spirit of progress in our country.

As Minister of State for Early Education, HE Sarah bint Awad Issa Al Musallam emphasised the importance of building a child’s personality, which begins with the acquisition of basic skills during the first months and years of life.

After consultation with President His Highness Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, a revamp of the UAE’s educational system was announced by His Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice President and Prime Minister of the UAE and Ruler of Dubai, last May 2022.

The restructuring aims to review regulations, laws, and policies in the field of education, and to set up institutions that support the development of the public education sector, in

line with future-oriented needs.

Today, we stand at a key stage in the education process; we can look forward to a qualitative leap in the education of the UAE, which is moving towards its 100th anniversary. The exam will now become a test in which a person is hailed rather than humiliated. In the next 50 years, trust will be the most important component of the state, while the abortion of dreams is rejected, because, in the end, it is just a test.

**Several sources, including Einstein’s confessions, claim that he had learning difficulties in his youth. Even to the point that his Greek language teacher wrote in his academic record that he was of no use to anything and that he would not succeed in life.**

# ABU DHABI BEATS TRAFFIC JAMS

THE UAE CAPITAL HAS BEEN RANKED THE LEAST CONGESTED CAPITAL CITY IN THE WORLD ON A RECENT GLOBAL INDEX.

**999** LOOKS AT ALL THE FACTORS THAT HAVE MADE THIS POSSIBLE AND WHAT THE FUTURE WILL BRING

BY ANURIMA RUHEL





**T**he UAE has topped a global index anew, and once again, the capital city Abu Dhabi emerged as the winner. It has managed to put a very tight leash on that universally feared and notorious urban development challenge: traffic jams.

In a global survey of traffic congestion in 404 cities, Abu Dhabi stood at No. 389 in overall ranking — on this index, the lower the ranking, the better the position. None of the cities that are less congested than Abu Dhabi are national capitals, and that makes the capital of the UAE also the least congested capital city in the world (with only 11 per cent congestion rate).

Several other UAE cities — Al Ain (No. 383), Ras Al Khaimah (No. 376), Fujairah (No. 375) — are in the green band of the report (with congestion under 15 per cent). Dubai is in the yellow band (with congestion at 15-20 per cent).

The survey, named TomTom Traffic Index 2021, was released in June 2022 by TomTom International BV, a location technology company based in The Netherlands. The latest index has covered 58 countries across all the continents, and the congestion rankings take into account the population bands of the cities; they're divided as "megacity" (population above 8 million), "large" (population above 800,000), and "small" (population below 800,000).

The percentage number next to each city's ranking indicates the percentage of extra time (because of

## THE NUMBERS

### 1st

Global ranking of Abu Dhabi on the list of the most uncongested capital cities, based on the TomTom Traffic Index 2021

### 404

The number of cities across all continents covered by the TomTom Traffic Index 2021

### 11 per cent

Level of Abu Dhabi's traffic congestion, according to the TomTom Traffic Index 2021. The highest congestion rate (62 per cent) was recorded in Istanbul, Turkey

congestion) taken for a person to finish a trip that would normally take 30 minutes under that city's "baseline uncongested conditions". This baseline figure is arrived at by analysing "free-flow travel times of all vehicles on the entire road network — recorded 24/7, 365 days a year", as per the TomTom report.

It's no mean feat to keep congestion levels down to less than 15 per cent — as Abu Dhabi has done, despite being a busy capital city — because decongestion increases productivity, improves quality of individual life, contributes to a happier social

## GLOBAL RANKING OF UAE CITIES IN TOMTOM TRAFFIC INDEX 2021

*(On this index, which covers 404 cities worldwide, lower ranking means lesser traffic congestion)*

**389**

Abu Dhabi

**376**

Ras Al Khaimah

**375**

Fujairah

**244**

Dubai

*Only four UAE cities were included in the survey*

atmosphere, cuts pollution, curbs road rage, and so on. The figure of a mere 11 per cent congestion means that a resident of Abu Dhabi needs only 3.3 minutes extra (or 33.3 minutes total) during regular traffic hours to cover a distance that'd take 30 minutes during "free-flow" hours. Happiness is guaranteed!

The Capital has been exerting all efforts to decongest its roads. Measures include more city buses; 'park and ride' facilities (to drive a private car up to a point, park it, and then take a public bus); and toll gates on arterial roads.

**“The figure of a mere 11 per cent congestion means that a resident of Abu Dhabi needs only 3.3 minutes extra (or 33.3 minutes total) during regular traffic hours to cover a distance that'd take 30 minutes during “free-flow” hours**



To encourage cycling as an alternative mode of transport, the city started a bus service in March 2022 that allows cyclists to board a bus with their bike. That enables a person to use a bicycle for commuting and still get a bus, if necessary.

Indeed, promoting the use of public buses is one of the easiest ways to decongest cities, because buses don't require any surface or underground tracks; they can go almost anywhere; they can run on electricity these days; and they can also come in different sizes, depending on the passenger volume on certain routes or times of the day, so that the buses don't have to burn too much fuel to transport too few people.

The results are even more dramatic if a city can create a successful BRT or a bus rapid transit system, one that gives priority to public buses on certain routes.

In a piece titled 'How to decongest and depollute the world's mega cities', published on the World Economic Forum website in December 2015, article author Nicolas Peltier-Thiberge, Practice Manager for Transport, The World Bank, covering the Middle East, North Africa and West Africa, wrote about the BRT as one of the "excellent alternatives" to private transport or an expensive Metro network, as explored in World Bank-funded urban development projects. "One of these alternatives is the so-called Bus Rapid Transit system. Invented in Latin America and since then spread all over the world, BRTs have a particular relevance for fiscally-constrained, developing nations because of their relatively modest cost but also their dramatic benefits in terms of urban mobility and air pollution reduction," he wrote.

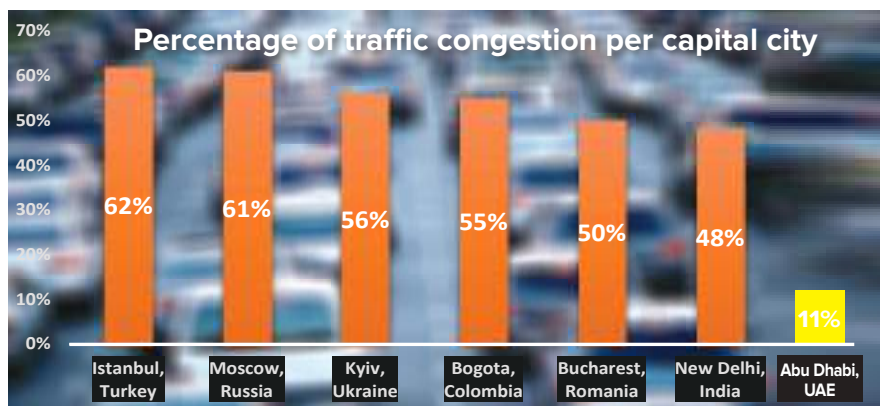
Both Abu Dhabi and Dubai have been investing in BRT projects for several years now, and the efforts are clearly yielding results.

### UAE'S SUSTAINABLE SOLUTIONS

In the UAE, the government's relentless endeavour to transform its road networks and upgrade its traffic management system involves the use of smart and sustainable solutions.

Alongside promoting public transport suitable to the needs of each city, including environment-friendly electric

## CAPITAL CITIES WITH HIGHEST CONGESTION RATES TOMTOM TRAFFIC INDEX 2021



## SNARLS AROUND THE WORLD



Traffic congestion has become a persisting blight of our modern times. Although an inevitable part of urbanisation, the rate at which it has been intensifying threatens the quality of urban life in many cities and costs the global economy billions of dollars annually.

While transportation is meant to satisfy the need for faster mobility due to rapid industrialisation, the unabated desire for private vehicle ownership — to the extent that vehicle supply overwhelms road space — defeats this most basic objective.

The problem of traffic snarls, especially during peak hours with very slow last-mile speed (LMS), has significantly worsened over recent years in many parts of the world. Apart from leaving commuters exhausted, it also increases air pollution, as the vehicles stuck on the road or crawling through traffic emit greenhouse gases for a longer duration.

A traffic snarl hurts — it can make people late to work, disrupt deliveries of essential goods and other products, exacerbate noise and air pollution, and increase stress levels all around.

In London for example, traffic congestion at LSM of 14mph wastes 148hrs of an average driver per year, which is equivalent to \$1,210.65 (Dhs4,443). In New York City, hours lost in congestion per driver is 102hrs at LSM of 12mph, which is equivalent to \$1,594.75 (Dhs5,852), based on the 2021 Global Traffic Scorecard of the leading transportation analytics firm INRIX.

The nightmare of traffic gridlock is not an isolated case for wealthy nations alone; it impacts both industrialised and developing countries alike. For example, the 310km travel from Chandigarh to Manali, northern India, which is usually an 8-hour drive, now stretches up to 15 hours due to frequent jams, according to media reports. In Baghdad, the capital of Iraq, a cabbie's usual six trips daily is being cut to just three-four trips a day, as a result of traffic.

In Dhaka, the capital city of Bangladesh, traffic jams have reached epic proportions, and the snarls are costing this developing nation 6-10 per cent of the national GDP, according to a report in the Dhaka Tribune newspaper in March 2022.

buses, the traffic authorities in different emirates are making use of big data and predictive analysis to estimate where the traffic jams could start, and then they prevent those jams from forming in the first place.

In May 2021, a new tool for predictive analysis had been developed in Abu Dhabi. "The predictive traffic tools co-developed at NYU Abu Dhabi (NYUAD) may allow traffic engineers to identify traffic patterns early in the day by monitoring the traffic performance of a few roads. As a result, they will be able to develop better traffic management schemes tailored for specific traffic conditions that will be observed on any given day," said a media report.

The Abu Dhabi Police traffic control room is equipped with AI-powered tech solutions, and the emirate's Department of Transport utilises an Intelligent Transport System, alongside various other measures to manage traffic. This is the hard work that has led to Abu Dhabi's recent success in the TomTom rankings.

According to the TomTom index, amongst the most congested capital cities in 2021 were Istanbul, Turkey (62%); Moscow, Russia (61%); Kyiv, Ukraine (56%); Bogota, Colombia (55%); Bucharest, Romania (50%); and New Delhi, India (48%).

Speaking of the Capital's efforts to improve

## “ Building an integrated transportation infrastructure is a vital pillar of the emirate's continued efforts to improve the quality of life on par with the best cities globally



**FALAH AL AHBABI**

Chairman of the Department of Municipalities and Transport, Abu Dhabi

traffic flow, Falah Al Ahababi, Chairman of the Department of Municipalities and Transport (DMT), Abu Dhabi, told the media, "Building an integrated transportation infrastructure is a vital pillar of the emirate's continued efforts to improve the quality of life on par with the best cities globally. We've always followed a long-term strategy and taken a proactive approach to the future, focusing on responding to the residents' needs. TomTom's new ranking serves as an encouragement to continue accomplishing DMT's strategic goals."

Abu Dhabi has, for several years now, been ranked "the safest city in the world" by the crowdsourced information website Numbeo. The status of being the least congested capital in the world is yet another significant achievement.

These are all markers of the success of 'Plan Abu Dhabi 2030', a strategic roadmap to making

the city a modern society that provides an unparalleled quality of life for all its residents, thereby making it one of the best places in the world to live and work in, as well as transforming the emirate into a world-class tourist destination.

### ROAD TO MOVE FORWARD

The transformation of Abu Dhabi's road system was spearheaded by the UAE's founding father, the late Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan. The country's economy had sharply grown in the 1970s as an outcome of the burgeoning oil trade, and Sheikh Zayed saw the necessity of building a major road infrastructure system to move forward.

The government recruited experienced engineers and urban planners from across the globe to sketch a well-conceived road network plan, according to Sheikh Zayed's vision of a modern city. But due to the UAE's arid condition, the durability of the roads to be built became a primary concern.

Layers of rock sub-base were added to the old roads made from *sabkha*, to prevent salt corrosion. Today, the emirate's roads are made of structured asphalt, a unique type of road surface mix from bitumen and aggregates unique to Abu Dhabi, to withstand extreme heat.

This, along with myriad government investments in building robust road infrastructure and facilities,







National Centre for Documentation and Research

Sheikh Zayed presented with Abu Dhabi's master plan in 1974 by Dr Abdulrahman Makhoul, the founder of the Abu Dhabi planning department

such as air and seaports, tunnels and bridges, has contributed to improving the general traffic flow and mobility.

The emirate first saw a major road facility expansion when Al Maqta Bridge was constructed in 1968. The Capital witnessed the rise of more bridges in the following years, including Musaffah Bridge (1978); Sheikh Khalifa Bridge (2009); and Sheikh Zayed Bridge (2010).

#### TRAFFIC EQUILIBRIUM

A huge part of Abu Dhabi's efficient and scalable traffic management system involves balancing the number of vehicles with commensurate growth in infrastructure development.

In total, the UAE has around 3.5 million cars on the road, with a higher percentage of SUVs compared to other countries in the world at 43 per cent, based on a 2021 study by Glasgow Consulting Group. While the car market in the country keeps gaining significant sales year on year, the speed of the traffic stream in Abu Dhabi has remained fast and convenient despite having 250,000 registered vehicles, as per the latest data of its police force. Primarily, this is the result of extensive road works; at present, the emirate boasts more than 25,000km of road infrastructure.

**“The speed of the traffic stream in Abu Dhabi has remained fast and convenient despite having 250,000 registered vehicles. Primarily, this is the result of extensive road works; at present, the emirate boasts more than 25,000km of road infrastructure**

Incidentally, the Global Competitiveness Report, issued each year by the World Economic Forum in Davos, has ranked the UAE first in a global index of road quality for consecutive years since 2014.

Even the Centre for Economics and Business Research, amongst the leading economic consultancies in the world, has found the UAE to be at the top in road-building. Surface texture, road quality, and road architecture have been improving, and so has traffic safety. Drivers in the UAE don't have to stress over potholed and badly constructed roads.

According to a report by Anthony Davis, a construction industry expert, in *Highways Today*, “It is no surprise that given the remarkable transformation of the UAE's roads, the number of vehicles that use them each day has increased.”

Davis added, “Just like any nation in the world, road safety is paramount in the UAE. To prevent accidents, the

government follows the ‘Three Es’ principle — Education, Enforcement and Engineering.

“Education by creating awareness through different platforms, whether digital or traditional media and seminars on the importance of driving safely. Enforcement by possessing a team of highly experienced and talented police officers to curb driving violations. Engineering that focuses on building and maintaining smart highways and roads with regular evaluations for improvement.”

#### STRINGENT TRAFFIC LAW

Major General Eng. Mohammad Saif Al Zafeen, Head of the Federal Traffic Council at the Ministry of Interior (MoI) and Assistant Commander-in-Chief of Dubai Police, said that alongside increase and upgrade of monitoring equipment, the MoI had implemented a slew of changes in the traffic law to



**“Fines for some offences have been reduced, which is strong evidence that our aim is to reduce the number of accidents and fatalities on the roads**



**MAJOR GENERAL ENG. MOHAMMAD SAIF AL ZAFEEN**

Head of the Federal Traffic Council at the Ministry of Interior

make deterrents more effective. “In 2008, when the then traffic law was amended, the road fatality rate dropped from 21 for every 100,000 people to 15 within two years,” he said.

Another traffic law amendment followed on July 1, 2017. Al Zafeen had said then, “The new traffic law has stiffer punishment for dangerous offences such as reckless driving, using mobile phone when driving, and speeding.”

He clarified that the strict laws were for the benefit of the motorists: “A number of drivers think that we increase traffic fines in order to collect more money, but that’s not the truth. Under the new law, fines for some offences have been reduced,

**“The use of technology helps control traffic violations. We have more than 250,000 vehicles in Abu Dhabi, and we have to ensure that they are all insured and inspected**



**MAJOR ENG. AHMED SUROUR AL SHAMSI**

Head of the Safe City Department at Abu Dhabi Police

which is strong evidence that our aim is to reduce the number of accidents and fatalities on the roads. The law works only in the favour of people and to save lives.”

The authorities have also taken the approach of partnership. Campaigns and rewards for positive traffic behaviour include encouraging motorists to take an online pledge and giving good drivers white traffic points.

#### SMART TRAFFIC TECH

The roads around Abu Dhabi are dotted with thousands of CCTV cameras streaming real-time feed to catch drivers who are speeding, tailgating, or rubbernecking, as well as pedestrians who

endanger their lives by crossing roads irresponsibly.

Abu Dhabi Police have been maximising the power of Artificial Intelligence for years now, as part of its Safe City Project. During the Arab Traffic Week 2022 in May, Major Eng. Ahmed Surour Al Shamsi, Head of the Safe City Department at Abu Dhabi Police, said, “The use of technology also helps control traffic violations and road fatalities. We have more than 250,000 vehicles in Abu Dhabi, and we have to ensure that they are all insured and inspected. This can only be done through data provided by the smart system.”

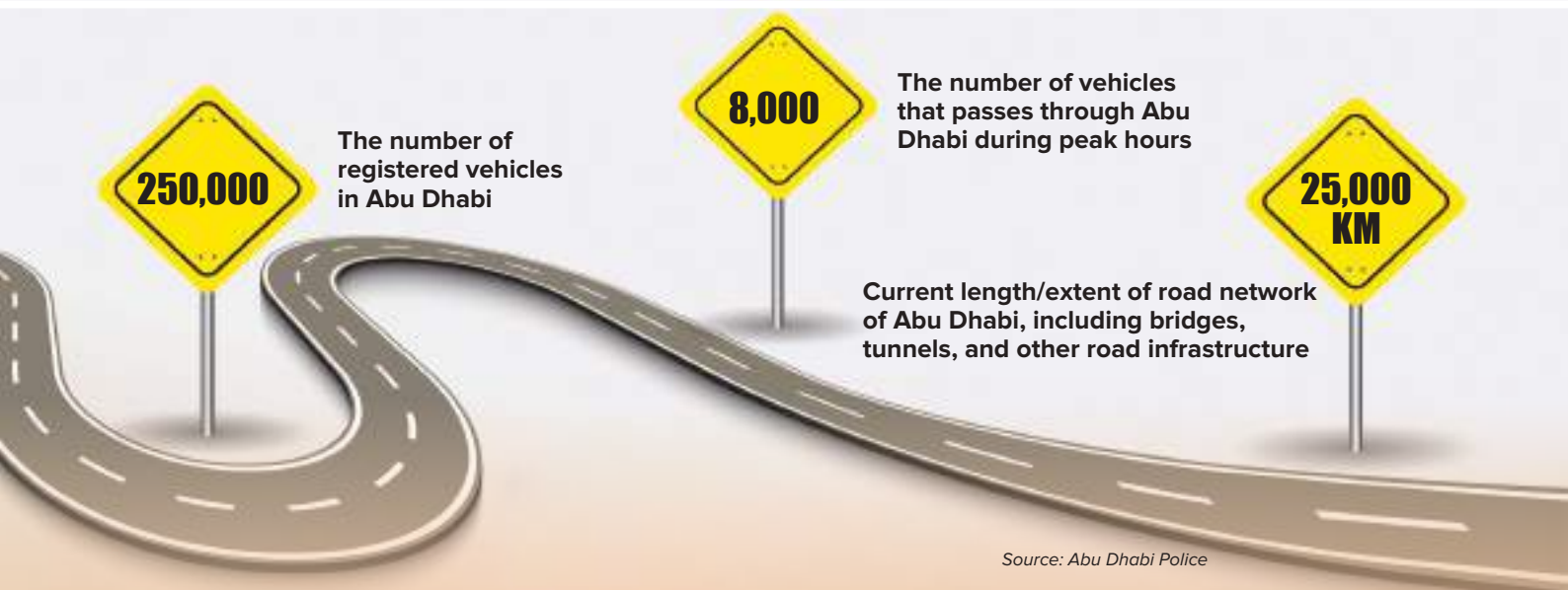
High-tech traffic radars are also being utilised to catch traffic rule-breakers. Some of these are the first of their kind in the world, such as the noise-measuring radar and speed radars that flash if drivers exceed the maximum speed limit. The Hunter, locally known as “Al Qannas”, is a classic handheld laser speed camera used by Abu Dhabi Police to spot speed limit violators.

In February 2022, Abu Dhabi Police also switched on new smart cameras and radars to catch motorists who change lanes at traffic light-controlled intersections or turn from the wrong lane. Previously, the job of spotting such breaches and handing out fines was being done manually by a police officer on duty.

#### INTELLIGENT TRAFFIC SYSTEM

Besides supporting local development and improving the quality of life in Abu Dhabi, DoT utilises a modern technology called Intelligent Transport Systems (ITS),

## VEHICLES & ROADS IN ABU DHABI



Source: Abu Dhabi Police



Abu Dhabi uses a multimodal platform to collect up-to-date traffic information



Abu Dhabi Police officers monitoring traffic situation

to work towards the realisation of a safe, smart and uncongested transport system.

This multimodal platform is responsible for collecting up-to-date traffic information from various transport modes in real-time and disseminating it to the public via the smartphone application 'Darb' — this minimises traffic problems and reduces travel time.

The traffic data gathered by ITS are also flashed on large screens installed on main highways and arterial roads in the emirate, in the form of message warnings of hazardous conditions and alternative routes.

### TOLL GATE SYSTEM

As the emirate promotes itself more and more, infrastructure development has been necessary to manage the influx of local and international tourists. In October 2019, four toll gates became functional in the Capital, in a move to better regulate vehicle flow and encourage the use of public transport.

"The toll gate system encourages the

community to plan and organise their routes in advance and decide on the most appropriate time to drive. This will have a positive impact on traffic flow, help maintain infrastructure, and reduce adverse effects on the environment," said the DoT.

Explaining the deeper objective of the toll gate system, Ibrahim Sarhan Al Hamoudi, Acting Executive Director of Surface Transport Sector at DoT in Abu Dhabi, said, "If an ambulance could reach the hospital five minutes earlier, would you be happy or not? If your kid goes to school and spends 15 minutes less on the bus, would you be happy or not? Residents of Abu Dhabi should answer these questions. If the community understands the benefits, they will be happy."

To put this into context, Al Hamoudi said, "The number of vehicles that passes through Abu Dhabi is at 8,000 during peak hours. The primary aim of the toll system in the capital is not to generate revenue but to encourage residents and tourists alike to utilise our public transport."

### MULTIFACETED URBAN FRAMEWORK

One of the pillars of 'Plan Abu Dhabi 2030' is to establish two city centres in the emirate — this is now gradually gathering pace. One of these centres will be built in the downtown area; and the other in the new Capital District. The plan is to facilitate balanced traffic flow in two directions, thus minimising traffic congestion.

Meanwhile, the emirate has rolled out key connectivity projects to link Abu Dhabi with the rest of the emirates. Amongst these projects is Etihad Rail, a national railway network. Once completed, the 256km rail line is expected to significantly reduce the number of cars on the road and reduce the country's carbon footprint. It's also expected to pave the way for a new phase of logistic and economic integration across the country. The rail line encompasses 29 bridges, 60 crossings and 137 drainage channels.

In the next 40 years, Etihad Rail is expected to deliver up to Dhs84 billion in transport cost savings and Dhs10 billion worth of time saved in travelling. It will also reduce accident rates and repairs amounting





Etihad Rail

to Dhs20 billion per year, with an average prevention of 670 car accidents and 52 fatalities annually. Since fewer people will be on the roads, as they opt for the train service, an estimated Dhs7 billion will be saved from road maintenance costs.

Also under way are high-speed trains, trams and metro projects; and plans for the world's first commercial Hyperloop. When it opens, Hyperloop will drastically reduce travel times between Abu Dhabi and Dubai.

Since walking is part of people's daily lives, even with the most advanced transit planning in the world, the emirate continues to invest in maintaining the beauty of the streetscapes and making pedestrian safety and comfort an absolute priority. Old streets are getting wider sidewalks and shading structures, to encourage more and more people to walk or use alternative modes of transport.

"No matter what form of transportation people ultimately choose, every journey begins and ends with a walk, so provisions for walking are key to the Transportation Framework Plan. The regular grid of boulevards running through Abu Dhabi has the virtue of distributing traffic evenly through the core, allowing congestion on one street to dissipate through the grid," stated the Abu Dhabi Urban Planning Council.

### DESIGNATED LANES

Abu Dhabi is the only emirate with dedicated roads for heavy vehicles such as trucks, to reduce the risk of cars being involved in accidents with larger vehicles and to prevent trucks carrying essential goods

from being caught up in rush hour traffic. These trucks-only roads run parallel to existing routes, to help with the flow of essential goods carriers along the main north, south, east and west routes of the emirate.

Meanwhile, the move to have dedicated lanes and regulate safety compliance of bicycles, e-bikes, and e-scooters in April 2022 was part of Abu Dhabi's mobility approach to further decongestion and carbon emission reduction, by allowing people to take advantage of a mobility hub, rather than take out their private cars and sit through traffic.

Abu Dhabi's new mobility regulation is designed to restrict the users of alternative means of transport from accessing certain roads with speed limits below 60kmph. They're limited to running at a speed of 30kmph on dedicated tracks, and 20kmph on those shared with pedestrians — this is usually applicable to tourist areas, public parks, or residential neighbourhoods. They're prohibited from moving on jogging or walking tracks.

Additionally, Abu Dhabi's Integrated Transport Centre (ITC) banned the use of seated scooters in June 2022. "Electric bikes that are not authorised for use by members of the community are not safe for use in pedestrian paths and public sidewalks, as their technical specifications, like bike size, weight and speed, may cause accidents and damage to the bike user and pedestrians on public sidewalks," stated ITC.



Hyperloop

### SUSTAINABLE ROADS

Abu Dhabi continues to construct and maintain roads not only in accordance with international standards and the use of the best technology, but also based on the country's heritage and environmental and sustainability goals. Hence, roads here have been uniquely designed in a way that protects the natural environment and promotes ease and safety of the public at the same time.

This is one of only few places in the world where you can see crossing routes for animals, especially camels. Animals here are protected through the construction of dedicated underpasses for vehicles so that the animals can roam freely.

What's more, as part of preserving the beauty of the streets, the landscape of the emirate's road network is decorated with plants and trees, even on the most remote desert routes. These plants are well-maintained throughout the year, using irrigated wastewater collected from around the emirate. This recycled water is treated and used to boost the natural environment.

Abu Dhabi's utility infrastructure has been built via purpose-built tunnels underneath the main roads. As a result, there's no need to dig up roads, close lanes, or disrupt traffic when it's time to repair or replace parts of the utility network. At night, power-saving LED lamps illuminate the emirate, which contributes to lower carbon emission goals. They also have a longer life of up to 10 years and save 50 per cent of consumed energy, too.



# 8 AMAZING FACTS ABOUT ABU DHABI ROADS

## 1 PREMIUM ON SAFETY

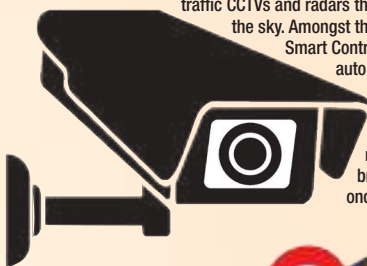
With strict traffic safety rules, Abu Dhabi roads have controlled-access highways and intersections to prevent the risk of various accidents, such as head-on collisions.

The utility infrastructure has purpose-built tunnels underneath the main roads. So, there's no need to dig up roads, close lanes, or disrupt traffic when it's time to repair or replace parts of the utility network.

**SAFETY FIRST**

## 2 HAWK-EYED MONITORING SYSTEM

The roads in the capital are dotted with high-tech traffic CCTVs and radars that literally act as eyes in the sky. Amongst the more advanced is the Smart Controller, a device that moves automatically for short distances and can read plate numbers, catch drivers using the hard shoulder, record jaywalkers, and even broadcast audio messages to oncoming motorists.



## 4 INTELLIGENT TRAFFIC SYSTEM

The Department of Transport — Abu Dhabi employs the Intelligent Transport Systems (ITS), to make the roads safe, smart and uncongested. This multimodal platform is responsible for collecting up-to-date traffic information from various transport modes in real-time and disseminating it to the public via the smartphone application 'Darb'.



## 6 TRUCKS-ONLY ROADS

Abu Dhabi is the only emirate that has dedicated roads for heavy vehicles and trucks. These lanes are meant to reduce the risk of cars being involved in accidents with larger vehicles and to prevent trucks carrying essential goods from being caught up in rush hour traffic.



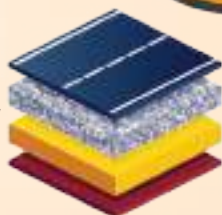
## 7 REGULATED USE OF TWO-WHEELERS

In April 2022, Abu Dhabi announced dedicated lanes and new safety compliance rules for bicycles, e-bikes, and e-scooters. Users of these alternative means of transport are restricted from accessing roads with speed limits below 60kmph. The allowed speed on dedicated tracks is 30kmph, and 20kmph on those shared with pedestrians.



## 3 UNIQUE ROAD CONSTRUCTION

The emirate's roads are made of structured asphalt, a unique type of road surface mix from bitumen and aggregates unique to Abu Dhabi, to withstand extreme heat as well as the impact of heavy trucks.



## 5 TOLL GATE SYSTEM

To encourage the public to utilise the existing public transport network and reduce the use of private vehicles to decongest the roads, Abu Dhabi activated four toll gates in October 2019. Abu Dhabi's Integrated Transport Centre collects a toll as each vehicle crosses any of the four toll gates on Sheikh Zayed Bridge, Sheikh Khalifa bin Zayed Bridge, Al Maqta Bridge, and Musaffah Bridge.



## 8 ENVIRONMENT-FRIENDLY

Camel crossing signs are visible in many parts of the emirate. These are meant to protect these precious animals from getting hit by vehicles and allow them to roam freely. Scores of plants and trees embellish all roadsides and road dividers. They're well-maintained throughout the year, using a smart irrigation system that converts wastewater collected from around the emirate.





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# WARD OFF THE BLAZE

PEAK SUMMER IS UPON THE UAE AND THE YEAR HAS ALREADY SEEN MANY FIRE INCIDENTS. TO AVOID THE HORROR OF BEING ENGULFED BY FLAMES IN THE HOTTEST MONTHS, FOLLOW ALL SAFETY MEASURES RECOMMENDED BY THE AUTHORITIES.

**999** PRESENTS AN OVERVIEW

BY RALPH SAMUEL LEE



**E**ven if a country were to be relatively crime-free, there would still be the risk of any number of mishaps — the most dreaded of them all is fire.

Summer in the UAE has for years been a high-alert season for firefighters, but steadily increasing adoption of technology, including the highly innovative Hassantuk system, has brought this menace significantly under control. Even so, one can never emphasise too much fire safety, since a moment's carelessness, such as a cigarette tossed away while it's still burning, can destroy homes and lives.

In June 2022, the UAE was again reminded of the need for utmost precautions against a blaze. Fires in the UAE can start for many reasons: poor AC maintenance or leaving the machine running for too long without any rest, leading to overheating; very high summer temperatures making flammable materials unstable unless stored properly in warehouses; cars not being serviced properly, resulting in spontaneous combustion, or flammable materials left inside cars and catching fire in the extreme heat, and so on.

Drawing vehicle owners' attention to what could happen, First Expert Ahmad Mohammad from the Fire Section at the General Department of Forensic Sciences and Criminology at Dubai Police said, "Don't leave liquids containing flammable material inside a vehicle. Motorists must also remember to disconnect all electrical devices in a car before leaving the vehicle, because these devices can later overheat, especially when ambient temperatures are high, and cause a fire."

Ajman Civil Defence said on Twitter: "The increase of the engine temperatures can cause a fire in cars as well as leaving flammable materials inside the vehicle. Traffic accidents can [also] cause fires. Monitoring the engine oil, regular maintenance and avoiding smoking inside the vehicle can prevent fires."

Also in June 2022, the authorities in Sharjah undertook inspections to minimise fire incidents in the emirate. The impetus for the inspection drive came from a massive blaze at a paint factory in the Al Hamriya area on June 8. The scale of the fire was visible in the fat column of dense

black smoke rising to the sky from the factory premises. The firefighters did a herculean job of controlling the flames, and brought the situation under control within about 90 minutes — the distress call came to the civil defence operations room at 4.15pm and the fire was put out by 5.45pm.

#### **FIRE IS A GLOBAL MENACE**

Fires are a danger even in the cooler climates of Western countries; the risks are higher in Arab nations.

In the United States, building fires caused an estimated 2,620 civilian deaths on an average annually from

**In June 2022, the authorities in Sharjah undertook inspections to minimise fire incidents in the emirate. The impetus for the inspection drive came from a massive blaze at a paint factory in the Al Hamriya area on June 8**





**“ We always roll our sleeves to achieve appropriate readiness, including trained staff and state-of-the-art equipment, to perform the responsibility of protecting and saving lives and properties**



**MAJOR GENERAL JASSEM MOHAMMED AL MARZOUQI**

Commander-in-Chief of Civil Defence at the Ministry of Interior

Major General Jassem Mohammed Al Marzouqi, Commander-in-Chief of Civil Defence at the Ministry of Interior, told **999** that they always strived to support the overall progress of the nation. This is achieved through optimisation of the civil defence response and action systems; enhancement of staff efficiency and performance; and upgrade of equipment and mechanisms.

No less attention is given to building, motivating, and empowering national capabilities to push forward with excellence in this vital sector, according to Al Marzouqi. “We always roll our sleeves to achieve appropriate readiness, including qualified and trained staff and state-of-the-art equipment, to be able to perform the responsibility upon our shoulders of protecting and saving lives and properties,” he stressed.

Al Marzouqi said, “Through the best employment of capabilities and advanced technologies, qualification of manpower, rapid response, constant readiness, raising awareness and promotion of prevention efforts, threats and challenges can be successfully confronted.”

2015 to 2019. The estimated annual average of 346,800 home structure fires during this period led to direct property damage losses of \$7.3 billion (Dhs26.79bn), according to recent data from the US National Fire Protection Association.

In the United Kingdom, there was a total of 280 fire-related fatalities in 2021, representing an increase of 27 per cent compared to 220 in the year 2020, according to the UK Home Office.

In the UAE, besides the Sharjah factory blaze in June 2022, there was a major fire incident in the emirate around the midnight of May 19, 2022, when two diesel tanks went ablaze.

On May 23, 2022, a loud blast startled residents of the Khalidiya area in Abu Dhabi, as a gas cylinder exploded at a restaurant in the middle of the day. The fire killed two people and injured 120.

Before that, on April 27, 2022, anxious Dubai residents living near Burj Khalifa watched black plumes of smoke rise from a hotel in the area.

#### **QUICK ACTION MECHANISM**

Efficient fire prevention, widespread public awareness, and quick civil defence response time are key elements of protecting life and property and are central to a nation’s peace and development.



**“One of the most common causes of fires that occur in homes and apartments is failing to follow prevention and safety requirements**



**COLONEL SAMI AL NAQBI**

Director General of Sharjah Civil Defence

#### FAILURE TO COMPLY

Colonel Sami Al Naqbi, Director General of Sharjah Civil Defence, told the media that a common denominator amongst the majority of the fire incidents in the country was that the places didn't follow the country's fire prevention measures. "One of the most common causes of fires that occur in homes and apartments is failing to follow prevention and safety requirements," said Al Naqbi.

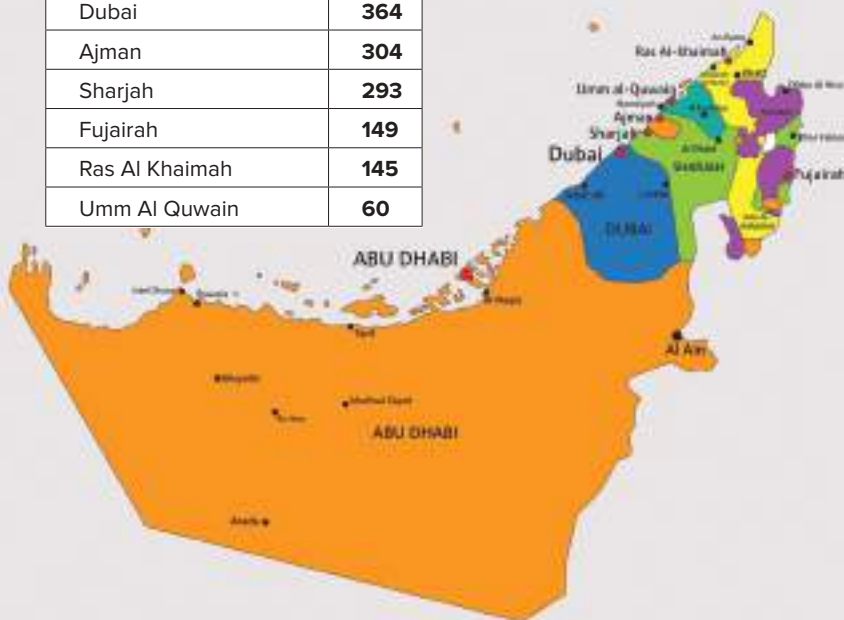
He urged people to check their electrical appliance, cable connections, and power supplies to ensure they were not overloaded. He stated that this was especially important during the hot summer months, when air-conditioners were used more frequently. "All these can cause short circuits that lead to fires," he added.

Al Naqbi also said that several fire incidents occurred only because of people smoking inside their rooms — what residents often don't realise is that they have lots of flammable materials within their rooms as well. "Statistics have revealed that smoking inside bedrooms, using incense burners inside wardrobes, and poorly stored flammable materials are other main causes of fire outbreaks in homes," he said.

The silver lining is that the UAE's firefighting force is prepared at any time of the day or night. In 2021, of the 2,090 fire incidents reported, 1,110 were limited, 921 were minor incidents, 32 were moderate cases, and 27 incidents were major fires. "A quick response is significant because fires spread fast. Therefore, we worked on reducing our response time from 5.1 minutes in 2020 to 4.86 minutes in 2021," said Al Naqbi.

## 2021 FIRE INCIDENTS IN THE UAE

Abu Dhabi	775
Dubai	364
Ajman	304
Sharjah	293
Fujairah	149
Ras Al Khaimah	145
Umm Al Quwain	60

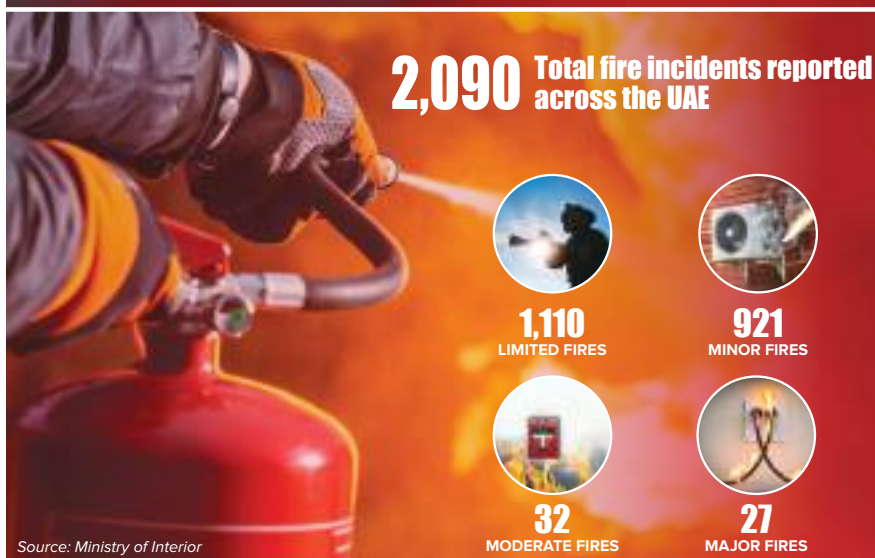


RISE IN FIRE INCIDENTS	
Year	Incidents
2020	1,968
2021	2,090
Year-on-year increase of 6.2%	

DEATHS AND INJURIES	
9	Number of casualties
89	Number of injured, of which: 71 civilians 18 civil defence personnel

SOURCE: Ministry of Interior

## BREAKDOWN OF FIRE INCIDENTS IN THE UAE IN 2021



#### VEHICLE FIRES

Apart from buildings, vehicles are also at risk of fire incidents. From January to April 2022, Dubai Police reported 94 incidents of vehicle fires, long before

the intense summer heat that usually starts in June and peaks in July-August, as per weather trends for the past decade.

First Expert Ahmad Mohammad of





Dubai Police said that more often than not, vehicles weren't inspected thoroughly as per the country's standards. "Blazes were reported in

cars, buses, and trucks this year. The main cause was poor inspection or getting the servicing done from non-certified garages," he said. "Drivers should have regular service checks. They must ensure to take their cars for servicing at reputable garages and avoid unauthorised modifications or using parts that are not compatible with the electrical system of the vehicle. Faulty wires, especially in old cars, lead to a malfunction in the car's electrical system and inevitably cause fires, even if the car is parked and the engine is not running."

Cautioning people against leaving highly flammable products, such as electronic items and certain liquids, in their cars under the blazing heat, Mohammad explained that if a fire did start in the vehicle, the presence of flammable materials could "quickly escalate the danger".

## **Faulty wires, especially in old cars, lead to a malfunction in the car's electrical system and inevitably cause fires, even if the car is parked and the engine is not running**

The expert added: "Once they smell something burning or see smoke coming from their vehicles, they need to step out of their vehicles immediately and call Dubai Civil Defence."

Additionally, people should have some basic fire-fighting knowledge and be mindful of the safety of children, he said. "People should know how to use car fire extinguishers and what to do during car fires. It's [also] important not to leave children alone in cars."

### **STRICTER FIRE SAFETY CODE**

To enhance public safety, the UAE revised its Fire and Life Safety Code of Practice in 2017, with stricter penalties for violators. The guidelines for the code have doubled from 707 pages in 2011 to 1,562 pages in 2017.

The revamped fire safety code provides that all new establishments must use fire-safe external cladding,

and existing buildings will also have to comply with new maintenance standards. Included in the code are 20

chapters and 784 3D illustrations to help engineers comply with regulations and plan safer buildings. Around 1,000 buildings across the UAE are covered in older cladding panels. Building developers shall now ensure that the cladding on an existing building is code-compliant and safe.

### **6-YEAR PLAN FOR HASSANTUK**

In October 2018, the UAE Ministry of Interior (MoI) officially launched a new smart fire safety project in Abu Dhabi, called 'Hassantuk for Villas'. This is an initiative to provide end-to-end fire safety solutions in every villa in the UAE, by linking these homes to the civil defence operations rooms and enabling them to send an automated signal in case of a fire.

The initiative 'Hassantuk for Villas' will cover 400,000 homes across the country in six years.

## WHAT TO DO IF YOUR VEHICLE IS ON FIRE

The sight of your car ablaze will trigger instincts of survival and panic. Should that ever happen, keep calm, and follow these 12 tips from RoadSafetyUAE:

1. Maintain as much calm as possible. Panic will cause you to waste precious seconds and make potentially fatal mistakes.
2. Signal and move to the side of the road if the vehicle is moving.
3. Ensure that everyone exits the vehicle safely.
4. Turn off the engine.
5. Put the car in parking mode or apply the emergency brake.
6. Step back at least 30 metres. Keep an eye on the traffic and keep everyone together. There is danger not only from the fire but also from other vehicles in the area.
7. Signal to oncoming traffic.
8. From a safe distance, call **999** for emergency services.
9. Never get back into a burning vehicle.
10. If you suspect a fire under the hood or trunk, do not open it. Air may rush in, enlarging the fire and causing injury.
11. Avoid attempting to extinguish a



vehicle fire on your own because there is a risk of explosion and toxic fumes. The most common cause of fire-related death is the inhalation of toxic fumes.

12. Use your extinguisher only if the fire is small and in the interior of the vehicle.

Pop the release but do not lift the hood if there is even a small amount of smoke coming from under the hood. Spray through the gap quickly from a distance of several feet away, aiming for the base of the fire rather than the flames.

Residents, commercial outlets, and offices can have their buildings linked to Hassantuk by registering on the website ([hassantuk.moi.gov.ae/index-en.html](http://hassantuk.moi.gov.ae/index-en.html)). Its official website contains further details and instructions for linking residential and commercial establishments to the centralised service system. The registration fee includes installation charges and monitoring/ maintenance by civil defence for two years.

According to MoI, those who can't afford the installation cost of Hassantuk will receive assistance. All properties, including residential villas, warehouses, hotels, residential blocks and towers, commercial properties, educational institutions, shopping malls, retail outlets, offices, banks, medical centres, industrial premises, and government entities can register for the service.

### INTENSIFIED CAMPAIGN

Major General Al Marzouqi highlighted that the UAE Civil Defence accorded top priority to promoting the safety culture amongst community members. "We have continuous informational tools for different media channels and social networks, besides initiatives, programmes, and activities to make people understand the necessity of complying with fire safety preconditions. Air-conditioners and other electrical appliances can start a fire unless periodic safety checks are done."

Al Marzouqi added that the establishment of a safe environment for all community members was the ultimate goal of all civil defence staff. He said, "We inform people about the need for maintenance, the risk arising from overloading the electrical supply line, and urge them to give up unsafe habits such as using poor quality electrical items, being careless with combustible items, and so on. People are urged to do everything possible to keep houses, shops, and vehicles safe from fire."

## WHAT SHOULD I DO WHEN I HEAR A FIRE ALARM?



**Guidelines from the UAE Fire and Life Safety Code of Practice, launched by Dubai Civil Defence in 2017, outline the step-by-step process to follow when residents hear the alarm. It is as follows:**

- If anyone is in the immediate vicinity of the fire, and smoke and heat are enveloping the area, they shall leave the area without delay, using the safe fire exits.
- Occupants shall not wait for lifts, elevators, and escalators and shall not be used during fire emergencies unless guided and operated by Civil Defence.
- Occupants shall not re-enter the building until instructed and guided by the fire response team.
- Occupants shall follow the strategy as per the instructions of the Fire Warden, Incident Fire Commander, or emergency response team member.
- Residents are advised to call **997** immediately for fires, however small the fire incident is.



# UAE'S FIREFIGHTING TECH

**HERE'S A ROUND-UP OF ALL THE TECHNOLOGY THE UAE HAS ADOPTED — FROM FIRE-ALERT BUILDINGS TO FIRE-FIGHTER ROBOTS — TO RAISE THE SAFETY BARRIER FOR PEOPLE AND PROPERTY AROUND THE COUNTRY**

## 1 HASSANTUK PROJECT



A smart emergency response system for fire hazards at homes and commercial establishments, Hassantuk was launched in implementation of the directions of His Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice-President and Prime Minister of the UAE and Ruler of Dubai.

It is the region's biggest integrated automatic system for fire and general safety emergency alerts and rapid intervention at homes and commercial/ office establishments. The service is jointly provided by the Ministry of Interior, Etisalat, and Injazat.

Using the most up-to-date smart technologies and linking them to smoke, heat, and flame detectors, the Hassantuk system ensures that any emergency alert is automatically transmitted in a few seconds to civil defence operations rooms for the appropriate response to be dispatched to the emergency location.

Also, the Hassantuk system has an internal alarm whistle for immediate evacuation of all building residents as an initial response.

The system's automated signal to the civil defence operations

room is instant — it means that a building linked to the smart Hassantuk system knows that there's a fire long before the human eye can see anything or the human nose can smell any smoke. It would be a lifesaver in situations when a fire might start in a house where everyone is asleep.

## 2 FIRE-FIGHTING ROBOT

The UAE has its very own 'robotic fireman', which complements its fire-fighting teams on the ground. Known as 'Thermite Robotics Systems 3' or 'RS3', this heavy-duty equipment is capable of shooting 9,400 litres of water per minute and is capable of covering up to 50 kilometres of distance to help douse a blaze, especially in high-rise buildings.

At present, the RS3 is used by both Abu Dhabi Civil Defence and the US Army. Meant to endure long battles against the blaze, the RS3 is flame-resistant and heat-resistant for up to 10 hours, thanks to its large fan that helps absorb smoke and combats flames at the same time.

The RS3 is outfitted with high-definition video and infrared cameras to aid in the search for survivors as well as to identify the source of the fire. Human fire-fighters may operate the RS3 remotely,

using a portable controller, or they can be attached to the robot when battling fires. The



equipment can tolerate temperatures of over 200°C and it has a front shovel for clearing huge obstructions such as debris pile-ups.

## 3 FIRE-FIGHTING DRONE



To achieve the UAE government's vision of integrating a culture of innovation into daily practices, a special team from the Civil Defence General Command and local departments across all emirates has been formed for launching the fire-fighting drone project.

This team is assigned to the development of civil defence capabilities to use drones for fire suppression in high-rise buildings and conduct the studies required for the upgrade of these drones. The team is also responsible for developing and using smart systems for fire data analysis in order to detect people at fire locations and places where smoke and flames started.

The UAE General Civil Aviation Authority has approved the acquisition of 180 fire-fighting drones. This revolutionary emergency response vehicle has been in the works for some time. The federal authority has already granted approval for the drones to begin operations.

These flying vehicles will assist firemen by reaching high-rise structures, restricted spaces, and hazardous-materials warehouses. Drone systems are anticipated to enhance response time as well.



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

## WELL PLACED TO CARRY THE BURDEN OF TRUST

The UAE's 50 years under the first two presidents have paved the way for HH Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed to now steer the next phase of progress

**W**e have been mourning the late Sheikh Khalifa bin Zayed for 40 days, and everyone remembered all the achievements made during his reign, reflecting the early founding fathers' approach to establishing the UAE in the position it deserves at the regional and global levels.

These achievements are present in all fields without exception, and by looking at them in light of the nation's age and its capabilities, it is obvious that the achievements are like miracles, since a period of 50 years is not enough time to reach Mars or plan a trip to the Moon.

The 50 years were not enough for dozens of nations to achieve the competitiveness that the UAE has accomplished despite their rich history and capabilities. A country like the UAE, in every aspect, from its political, economic, and cultural progress, serves as a global model.

Also, the UAE's achievements cannot all be attributed to oil wealth. Indeed, there are neighbouring countries, as well as those separated by thousands of miles, that have oil wealth twice as much as the UAE, but the UAE has advanced beyond them by recognising its human and material capabilities, allowing others to contribute to the nation-building process.

Having adopted a national policy of moderation and tolerance, the UAE has become the preferred destination for all.

The work done in the past 50 years is a great achievement, which may explain the statement made by President His Highness Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, may God protect him, after the death of his brother, in a tweet: "May God have mercy on my brother Khalifa. The trust is heavy. We ask God for success and help."

No one can deny the weight of the trust left by the founding

father and carried forward by his sons and brothers, the Rulers of the Emirates, but the UAE was built on solid foundations, and the path it took will serve as a guide for the next phase, even if challenges emerge.

With our determination and our conviction, we will be able to overcome any crisis in the future, as we did with the COVID-19 pandemic.

**The UAE was built on solid foundations, and the path it took will serve as a guide for the next phase, even if challenges emerge**

The appointment of three ministers in the education sector, as part of a recent ministerial shuffle, indicates good news. Countries that place a high priority on education and focus on its outcomes are undoubtedly concerned with the development of minds that ensure steady progress.

This also applies to the President's directive for all housing applications to be fully processed and to ensure the stability of Emirati families.

Future stages will bring more decisions and changes, which are unquestionably in the best interests of the country and its people. The

preparations for the next 50 years and the UAE's centenary have begun early, and what has been accomplished so far will help us fulfil the trust and enable us to achieve both what we have planned and what we seek, regionally and globally.

The UAE's ambitions and push to be truly global have been reflected in the hosting of events such as Expo 2020 Dubai, the United Nations Climate Change Conference, and other global actions. Throughout its history, the UAE has never been shy about getting involved in global events, taking pride in its determination.

Our prayers are with the President His Highness Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed and his brothers. We pray to be of assistance and support to the leadership and a homeland worthy of our admiration.



# UAE ON THE FRONTLINE FOR REFUGEES

SINCE ITS INCEPTION, THE COUNTRY HAS ALWAYS BEEN COMMITTED TO PROVIDING UNCONDITIONAL HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE TO ALLEVIATE SUFFERING AND PROTECT HUMAN DIGNITY IN TIMES OF CRISIS. WITH THE UAE NOW REPRESENTED BY A NEW HEAD OF STATE, **999** LOOKS AT THE MYRIAD WAYS IN WHICH THE LEGACY OF SHEIKH ZAYED HAS BEEN CARRIED FORWARD

BY SANCHITA GUHA





HH Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed visits Afghan families at Emirates Humanitarian City in September 2021

Ministry of Presidential Affairs

“Great ambition is the passion of a great character. Those endowed with it may perform very good or very bad acts. All depends on the principles which direct them.” These are the words of Napoleon Bonaparte, one of the greatest political and military leaders in the world, and they apply as much to nations as to individuals.

The UAE is a country with great ambition, and the principles that direct the UAE guides it towards performing very good acts. “Ambition” is understood here as not just national infrastructure development and economic growth, but also as achieving milestones at the international level through diplomatic and humanitarian missions that benefit the world community.

Amongst those humanitarian endeavours is the UAE’s assistance to refugees. It facilitates safe passage of refugees to other countries, offering them temporary shelter, and assisting them in various other ways.

That commitment to action is set to become only stronger under the UAE’s new head of state, President His Highness Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, who succeeds the late Sheikh Khalifa bin

Zayed Al Nahyan and takes forward the humanitarian legacy of Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan, the UAE’s founding father.

In January 2022, an incredible gesture made by HH Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed made headlines — he asked government officials to fly a family of Afghan refugees, then living in Emirates Humanitarian City in Abu Dhabi, to the United States for the cancer treatment of their toddler. The family was assured of all the support and care they’d need on this trip.

In June 2022, a week before the annual World Refugee Day was observed on the 20<sup>th</sup> day of the month, a *Forbes* report cited a grim figure: the conflict between Russia in Ukraine “has created 5 million refugees”. These were Ukrainians fleeing the effect of the war on their cities. The UAE, on June 18, sent 27 tonnes of food and medical supplies to Ukraine through a safe base in Poland; it was the fourth such aid consignment since the first one was sent by the UAE in March 2022, within days of the start of the conflict.

The first UAE aid consignment for Ukraine was of 30 tonnes in March. This was followed by two more consignments

totalling 80 tonnes in April. All these flights landed in Eastern Europe, close to the war zone, from where the aid supplies could be distributed as needed.

The UAE had established an “air bridge” in March to maintain relief supply. The air bridge was used to send both food and medicines. “Since the start of the [invasion] crisis, the UAE has been supporting international efforts to ease the hardship of Ukrainian refugees fleeing to neighbouring countries,” said UAE Ambassador to Ukraine HE Eng Salem Ahmed Al Kaabi.

The UAE’s humanitarian work, including the assistance provided to refugees, truly transcends borders — it just sends help where needed, regardless of geographical or cultural or political proximity.

#### **ZAYED’S LEGACY HELPS ROHINGYAS**

This commitment to the welfare of people in need anywhere in the world is part of the legacy of Sheikh Zayed, whose humanitarian principles were legendary.

At the beginning of 2018, the year designated by Sheikh Khalifa as the ‘Year of Zayed’ to mark the birth



**“ The UAE is always keen to care for and protect refugees and supports the voluntary return of refugees to their homes**



**HH SHEIKH HAMDAN BIN ZAYED AL NAHYAN**

Ruler's Representative in Al Dhafra Region and Chairman of Emirates Red Crescent

centenary of the founding father, it was reported that doctors from the UAE had treated more than 9,000 Rohingya refugees from Myanmar who had taken shelter in Bangladesh. The treatment was given to the refugees — the patients were mostly children and the elderly — at the Zayed Humanitarian Field Hospital in the Cox Bazaar area of Bangladesh, which began operating in September 2017. In the same month, Emirates Red Crescent began giving emergency assistance to the displaced Rohingyas.

The Zayed Humanitarian Field Hospital was the first Arab-run hospital to provide diagnostic, treatment, and preventive services to Rohingya refugees. It was a joint programme of the Zayed Giving Initiative, the Dar Al Ber Association, the Sharjah Charity House, and the Saudi-German Group of Hospitals, under the supervision of the Emirates Programme for Community and Specialised Volunteering, in partnership with the Hope Association for Motherhood and Childhood in Bangladesh, and in co-ordination with local authorities.

On June 19, 2018, on the eve of World Refugee Day, HH Sheikh Hamdan bin Zayed Al Nahyan, Ruler's Representative in Al Dhafra Region and Chairman of Emirates Red Crescent, said that the UAE always aimed to protect refugees and their dignity. He also urged the international community to try harder to solve the refugee crisis. “The UAE is always keen to care for and protect refugees and

**“ Since the start of the crisis, the UAE has been supporting international efforts to ease the hardship of Ukrainian refugees fleeing to neighbouring countries**



**HE ENG SALEM AHMED AL KAABI**  
UAE Ambassador to Ukraine

supports the voluntary return of refugees to their homes,” he said.

#### **EVACUATING AFGHANS AND UK CITIZENS**

Since its very beginning, the UAE has been actively engaged in global humanitarian work, which takes many forms, including facilitating the progress of refugees from their country of origin to a third country where they can seek asylum, after a temporary stay in the UAE.

In order to help displaced people or those in acute distress, the UAE often works in collaboration with global bodies, such as agencies of the United Nations.

Not being a signatory to the 1951 Refugee Convention, the multi-lateral UN treaty, the UAE is not legally obligated to allow refugees to stay on its land. However, it makes every effort to help refugees reach a country that'll let them apply for asylum. It helps even those who aren't refugees, but are fleeing a war zone and trying to get home.

For instance, in August 2021, after the Taliban seized control of Afghanistan, and the people

of that country made desperate attempts to flee, the UAE brought in a large group of refugees and semi-refugees from Afghanistan — the group was a mix of Afghans who'd be eligible for relocation assistance from the British government, because of the services rendered; some British citizens; and embassy staff.

In the afternoon of August 19, 2021, the UAE's military evacuation flight landed at Dubai World Central (aka Al Maktoum International Airport). Within a day or so, the rescued people would be put on a commercial flight to Britain.

The UAE's rescue operation was praised on Twitter by Dominic Raab, then Foreign Secretary of the United Kingdom and current Deputy Prime Minister. He said, “[I] spoke to HH Sheikh Abdullah bin Zayed (UAE Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Co-operation) to thank him for the UAE's support to deploy UK staff and military personnel to Afghanistan and bring home UK nationals and those who have supported the UK's work for the last 20 years.”

Following the regime change in Afghanistan, thousands of refugees have been living in the UAE — in Emirates Humanitarian City, Abu Dhabi, and other locations — waiting for resettlement in the United States while their applications are vetted and processed.

#### **NODAL POINT FOR AID TO AFRICA**

In 2020, the year when the COVID-19 pandemic swamped the world, the UAE marked World Refugee Day by ordering that an aid-laden plane be sent to Burkina Faso, the West African country rocked by violence at that time, making life even harder for the displaced people, coming on top of the novel coronavirus crisis.

Upon the order issued by His Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice-President and Prime Minister of the UAE and Ruler of Dubai, the first aid flight went to Burkina Faso on June 19, carrying 100 tonnes of relief



An Afghan woman registers to seek asylum in another country, after a temporary stay in the UAE



UAE sends relief supplies to Ukrainian refugees in Moldova in April 2022

material, including 88 tonnes of core relief material from UNHCR – the UN Refugee Agency and 12 tonnes of COVID-19 aid supplied by the World Health Organization.

The dispatch of the aid material was facilitated by Dubai International Humanitarian City (IHC), the largest humanitarian hub in the world. It was founded in 2003 by HH Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid through the merger of Dubai Aid City and Dubai Humanitarian City.

IHC is a non-profit, independent, humanitarian free-zone authority, which hosts a community of around 80 member entities, including UN agencies, non-profits and non-government organisations, and commercial companies. IHC has a workforce of about 500 people from at least 68 nationalities.

The UNHCR Global Stockpile is stored in the IHC warehouses, because the UAE is the perfect nodal point for sending aid on an urgent basis to any destination in Africa, where the conflict zones are many and people frequently become refugees. UN aid material stored in IHC is sent to other parts of the world as well.

#### LEADING ROLE DURING PANDEMIC

While refugee movement has been taking place across the world since time immemorial, continuing well into the 21st century because of never-ending regional

conflicts, the year 2020 was when the UAE took the centre-stage of global humanitarian work. Its aid planes were flying to all corners of the world, and its aircraft were rescuing a new category of displaced people: temporary 'refugees', left stranded and anxious by the pandemic.

Emirates Humanitarian City in Abu Dhabi came up in a matter of days, ready to temporarily house people who had been stranded by border closures and flight cancellations during the early days of the pandemic. These people needed to get home but had no way of doing so; the UAE gave them a lifeline.

In the first week of March 2020, a special Etihad flight had evacuated a large number of people stranded in the Chinese city of Wuhan, from where the novel coronavirus first began its wildfire spread.

The evacuees were housed in Emirates Humanitarian City, where they underwent medical testing and monitoring, and

remained in quarantine for 14 days before being sent home. The whole evacuation was done in co-ordination between the UAE Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Co-operation and the UAE Embassy in China, plus the embassies of the countries whose citizens were being airlifted.

#### 'SALVATION FROM THE SKY'

Speaking to UAE media following the evacuation, one of the rescued temporary 'refugees' stated how thankful he was to the UAE government — he was grateful not only for being rescued, but also for being made to feel so welcome in his temporary refuge, Emirates Humanitarian City.

Ahmed Fath Al Alim, a 34-year-old PhD student at Wuhan University of Technology, said in an interview with *Gulf News* that the UAE had brought hope back into his life and that of all the other Wuhan evacuees. "We were stranded in Wuhan for months with no thought of leaving the city until we were told

**The UNHCR Global Stockpile is stored in the Dubai IHC warehouses, because the UAE is the perfect nodal point for sending aid on an urgent basis to any destination in Africa, where the conflict zones are many and people frequently become refugees**



that the UAE will evacuate us. When I saw the airplane on the runway in Wuhan, I felt it was salvation from the sky,” said Al Alim.

At Emirates Humanitarian City, he got a refreshingly clean, tidy, and welcoming living space, with everything he needed to continue with his ‘new normal’ life for the next few days.

At Emirates Humanitarian City, he got a refreshingly clean and welcoming living space. Al Alim recounted that in Wuhan, he had witnessed the evacuation undertaken by other countries — the evacuees were kept at a physical distance from the rescuers, and were sprayed with disinfectant before being airlifted. Al Alim felt saddened by this. But the UAE’s rescue method left him “pleasantly surprised”. He said, “Smiling faces greeted us and we were repeatedly told we’re guests and more than welcome in the UAE. It was unbelievable.”

#### VACCINATION DRIVE FOR REFUGEES

Refugees are amongst the people least likely to be able to access healthcare, which is why Emirates Red Crescent (ERC) takes medical assistance to them. Affiliated with the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, ERC is a worldwide humanitarian organisation that was formed in 1983 during the reign of Sheikh Zayed.

In May 2021, with COVID-19 vaccination well under way all over the world, ERC undertook a vaccination drive for thousands of refugees in Jordan and Iraq. This was in implementation of the directives of Her Highness Sheikha Fatima bint Mubarak, Chairwoman of the General Women’s Union, President of the Supreme Council for Motherhood and Childhood, Supreme Chairwoman of the Family Development Foundation, and Honorary Chairwoman of ERC. A follow-up on the vaccination campaign was done by HH Sheikh Hamdan bin Zayed.

According to a statement released at that time by the UAE Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Co-operation: “The medical assistance — provided in partnership with the Department of Health — Abu Dhabi, and in co-ordination with the health ministries in Iraq and Jordan as well as the UNHCR, the UN Refugee Agency — will benefit 12,000 Syrian refugees in Jordan and 15,000 Iraqi displaced people and Syrian refugees in Iraqi Kurdistan. In the meantime, the ERC is forging ahead with providing essential humanitarian supplies to the refugees and displaced in both countries.”

## PHILANTHROPY WITHOUT BORDERS

Here are some of the most notable initiatives undertaken by the UAE in terms of global humanitarian work during the rule of the late Sheikh Khalifa bin Zayed Al Nahyan:

### 48,000 PEOPLE TREATED AT UAE FIELD HOSPITAL IN EGYPT

The Emirati-Egyptian Humanitarian Field Hospital in Egypt was launched in December 2017, on the cusp of the ‘Year of Zayed’ starting from January 2018. To date, the hospital has treated more than 48,000 children and elderly patients, within the UAE’s ‘Campaign to Cure One Million Children and Elderly People’ in Egypt. The campaign is being carried out by Emirates Red Crescent, Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan Charitable and Humanitarian Foundation, and Khalifa bin Zayed Charity Foundation.



### DHS206BN IN AID GIVEN OVER A DECADE

From 2010 to 2021, the UAE has distributed more than Dh206 billion in international aid, according to data from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Co-operation. The UAE was the world’s No. 1 development aid donor for four consecutive years, and 2nd and 4th during the same period in some other years, according to the Development Assistance Committee of the Organisation of Economic Cooperation and Development.

### 2,250 TONNES OF MEDICAL AID SENT DURING PANDEMIC

Since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic in early 2020, the UAE has sent more than 2,250 tonnes of medical aid to at least 136 countries. The UAE has also supported the World Health Organization and the World Food Programme by providing half a million PCR test kits, valued at Dh36.7 million.

### DHS2.6 BILLION IN AID GIVEN FOR REFUGEES OVER 5 YEARS

Between 2009 and the first half of 2014 — a period of five years — the UAE gave Dh2.6 billion in emergency aid for refugees and displaced people in 71 countries. These refugees were displaced by both natural disasters and armed conflict.

### DHS58.4BN GIVEN FOR 349 DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS

In the first half of 2013, the Abu Dhabi Fund for Development (ADFD) distributed loans and grants worth Dh58.4 billion, thereby financing 349 projects in 62 countries in the Middle East; North, East and Central Africa; South and Central Asia; and other regions. This was one of the most significant periods of work done by ADFD.

### DHS192MN FOR THE PEOPLE OF PALESTINE

In 2014, Sheikh Khalifa bin Zayed Al Nahyan ordered the allocation of an additional aid amount of Dh192 million for the suffering Palestinians in the Occupied Territories. The funds, which complemented the UAE’s steady support for the people of Palestine, were spent on urgent humanitarian aid in the Gaza Strip.

### DHS1.95BN IN AID GIVEN FOR SYRIAN REFUGEES

Since 2011, the UAE has given aid — totalling about \$530 million (Dhs1.95 billion) so far — to help the Syrian refugees. The money funded the Marajeb Al Fhood refugee camp in Jordan, operated by Emirates Red Crescent and housing more than 4,000 Syrian refugees, and supported refugee camps across Turkey, Jordan, Lebanon, and Iraq. Between 2011 and 2015, the UAE took in more than 100,000 Syrian nationals, helping them join the 140,000 Syrians already living in the UAE.

**“With humanitarian work, you have no idea where to start and where to end, particularly under the name of the UAE. With humanitarian work, we do not look at gender, religion, colour or anything”**



**DR MOHAMMED ATEEQ AL FALAHI**  
Secretary General of Emirates Red Crescent

#### UNIVERSAL SPIRIT OF HUMANITY

In 2013, celebrating 30 years of ERC, Dr Mohammed Ateeq Al Falahi, Secretary General of Emirates Red Crescent, said that the organisation had distributed aid worth more than Dhs6 billion during this period. Speaking at a majlis hosted by HH Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed, the ERC chief said, “With humanitarian work, you have no idea where to start and where to end, particularly under the name of the UAE... With humanitarian work, we do not look at gender, religion, colour or anything.”

While speaking of the achievements of ERC and the challenges faced during humanitarian missions, e.g. ERC volunteers being attacked by bandits while they were helping tsunami-affected people in an Asian country, the secretary general recalled an anecdote. He was visiting Giza, in Egypt, during a period after the death of Sheikh Zayed, when he had a conversation with an Egyptian about the UAE's founder.

Addressing the majlis, Dr Al Falahi said, “An Egyptian told me they were more upset over the passing of Sheikh Zayed than us. He said that thanks to Sheikh Zayed's aid, millions [in Egypt] were living in buildings he had built. He said [many people] passed their condolences to him daily.”

Another time, Dr Al Falahi was asked by a Libyan elderly man in 2011 why ERC was there. When the secretary general said that the organisation had come to help, the Libyan senior said, “No, it's [your] inheritance of Sheikh Zayed's kind heart.” Dr Al Falahi recalled, “He said [Zayed's] spirit was in all of us.”

With a new president in charge of the UAE, Sheikh Zayed's spirit will continue to work through him, with the country taking its humanitarian missions further afield.

## SHEIKH ZAYED: THE HUMANITARIAN LEADER

When the late Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan became the first President of the UAE in December 1971, a new era of humanitarian work began, not just in the Middle East and North Africa, but all over the world.

Sheikh Zayed was more than a visionary leader; he was first and foremost a humanitarian. His contributions to charitable and development works around the world are too many to list here, but some of the most notable instances of giving aid and grants are:

- A sum of \$50,000 (Dhs183,500) given soon after the establishment of the UAE to support the activities of the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF).
- Sums of \$424,000 (Dhs1.56mn) given to the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP); \$100,000 (Dhs367,000) again to UNICEF; and \$54,000 (Dhs198,180) to the United Nations Refugee Agency (UNHCR).
- Increasing the capital of the Abu Dhabi Fund for Arab Economic Development to \$500 million (Dhs1.8bn).
- Dhs15 million given for the Sheikh Zayed Suburb Project in Jerusalem; Dhs100 million given for the reconstruction of Jenin Camp, a major Palestinian refugee camp in the West Bank; and Dhs220 million given for the construction of Sheikh Zayed City in Gaza. During his rule, Sheikh Zayed launched hospitals, schools, health centres, and centres for the disabled in Palestinian villages, camps and cities, in both Gaza and the West Bank.
- Before the war in Syria, three industrial project agreements, worth Dhs911 million, were signed in Damascus by the Abu Dhabi Fund for Arab Economic Development.



UAE's aid flight to support the delivery of UNHCR's humanitarian assistance to Burkina Faso in June 2020



## THE LETTER THAT MOHAMED BIN ZAYED WROTE



SUNA

A letter sent by HH Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan to a Sudanese student (right) who was rescued and brought to Emirates Humanitarian City in Abu Dhabi from the COVID-19 hit Chinese city of Wuhan in 2020

Sudanese PhD student Ahmed Fath Al Alim thought that nothing could be better than his rescue — along with that of 214 others — from the locked-down Chinese city of Wuhan, the first one to be hit by COVID-19. The whole group was evacuated by a special Etihad flight, in co-operation with the Chinese authorities, and brought to Emirates Humanitarian City in Abu Dhabi.

The student's great relief turned to great joy and amazement when he received a letter from HH Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, then Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi and now President of the UAE. The letter said: "We know the difficulty of leaving a place where you had a safe home, especially as you are leaving because of an unexpected crisis on a new land where you may not know anyone.

That's why we would love to welcome you in person.

"We want to assure you that you are amongst your family and friends, and that you are a dear guest and we will provide you with complete healthcare and all you need to continue the trip to your home country when that is safe for you."

An overwhelmed Al Alim shared the news of receiving this letter on his social network account.

## UAE'S EDUCATION FUND FOR REFUGEES

The UAE government's assistance and relocation efforts for refugees are supported by some private sector initiatives, such as the Abdul Aziz Al Ghurair Refugee Education Fund, which awards grants to high-impact education programmes for refugees.

In June 2022, the Fund ([www.refugee-educationfund.org](http://www.refugee-educationfund.org)) called for the fourth round of proposals. It was reported that the first three rounds had benefited about 48,000 young people in the UAE, Jordan, and Lebanon.

The Fund was established in 2018 by Abdul Aziz Al Ghurair, Emirati businessman and philanthropist. It concentrates on upskilling refugee youth, giving them access to secondary education, and supporting post-secondary programmes as well. The beneficiaries include the youth from conflict-affected countries



staying in the UAE.

Upon receiving the proposals, the Fund disburses grants to educational institutions and non-government organisations that work with refugee

youth and other vulnerable youth.

Originally designed to support 20,000 young people, the Fund has exceeded its target by 140 per cent.



## THE CORDS OF DARKNESS

**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.

Darkness fills our world while the sun of hope rises on the other side

**A**s the day wore off, darkness filled the universe. Heartbeats became a shock of life since the seagulls flew away, biting death off of a silent heart. When repeat images flash across your memory, they throw you on the altar of the soul, and oblivion offers a sacrifice—in conspiracy with your pains.

Have you ever wondered who made the corpse a ghost? Did it cast off its soul so that you go back to your original state, when your soul was a wanderer in every memory of fear? Has the jinn of the unknown barged in onto you and snatched away the joyful emotions and dwelled in oblivion? I swore to fight you in the fields of the heart when you flew the flags of love.

How would you free the army of affection from the prison of distances and build a conflict-free nation? How would you get through to a chest that has escaped darting bullets that pierced into the heart and left it full of deep holes? Would you ever let go of your arrogance and fill yourself with passion? Or are you the first and the last victory? How do you allow anger to sneak into days and memories after being touched by jealousy? Or would you let your cosmic resurrection carry me away, forgetting the passion that radiates from the verses of my poems and burn them with cinder? Who would shoulder the tonnes of letters and turn their writer into a poem that did nothing wrong except wanting to peacefully sleep on your chest?

It was enough for me to see the dawn up in the sky so that both of us realise that the invading knights have arrived on white horses, cutting into the heart of the clouds. As they came closer with neighing wings and bannered the flags of victory at the horizon, it declared the first revolution and conquest of the left side with the bravery of a poet who had embraced the seas, cast out by the waves upon the land.

**They came closer  
with neighing wings  
and bannered the  
flags of victory at  
the horizon**

Darkness fills our world while the sun of hope rises on the other side heralding the eruption of volcanos within. A long, never-ending fervent, flaming embrace ensued. Do you think that the memory of the soul fades into oblivion wearing off like a ferocious fall that has snapped at a bulgy summer in the fields of sorrow?

Then, you spread the seeds of feelings over those fields that stretched like oceans up to the fences of affection to free them from the chains of imprisonment. I let down my guards as my weapons were poorly made and the raids of your love wrecked my twilight shadows. Only you were my home that you kept safe from the pegs of death. Only you made my passion a prayer and chants for the mass of your light, when you fired the canons of victory on my birthday on the cradle of your heartbeat and it started playing the chants of hope on the cords of darkness.





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# A RIPPLE, NOT A WAVE

CASES OF THE NOVEL CORONAVIRUS INFECTION ARE INCHING UP AGAIN GLOBALLY, THOUGH MASS VACCINATION IS LARGELY PROTECTING PEOPLE. AS THE UAE'S SUMMER TRAVEL SEASON BEGINS, **999** LOOKS AT WHAT THE DEVELOPMENT MEANS AND HOW TO STAY SAFE DURING THE HOLIDAYS BY TAKING THE BOOSTER SHOT

BY SANCHITA GUHA





**T**wo summers of living with the pandemic have now given way to a rush of joy — and summer travel — around the world, as people in most countries, feeling fortified by their vaccinated status, have got their bags packed and tickets ready. Tourism this year is set to see a global rebound to something close to pre-pandemic levels, according to the International Air Transport Association (IATA).

In a statement on June 20, 2022, the Association said that air travel this year was likely to reach 83 per cent of what it was in 2019, and that profits might return by 2023. This is a complete reversal of fortunes for a sector that had been decimated by the COVID-19 outbreak — even more than that, the volume of passenger traffic is an indication of public confidence that the pandemic is well and truly over. But is it, really?

In many countries, there's a slow but noticeable rise in the number of people testing COVID-positive, such as India, one of the biggest source markets for UAE tourism; the United States; the United Kingdom; and France and Germany in Europe.

Countries in the South and Central Americas are also seeing significant case spikes and deaths, with Brazil being one of the most affected.

In the UAE, a statement released on June 19, 2022, by the Ministry of Health and Prevention (MoHAP) announced that 1,489 new coronavirus cases had been detected, bringing the total recorded

cases in the UAE to 927,387. The Ministry also announced one death from COVID-19 complications in the previous 24 hours, bringing the total deaths in the country to 2,309.

MoHAP emphasised that its main goal was now to widen and deepen nationwide testing in order to detect new coronavirus cases and begin treatment quickly. The June 19 statement said that the Ministry had conducted 324,266 additional COVID-19 tests in the previous 24 hours.

So, as we see, the novel coronavirus hasn't been completely subdued yet, though it can't take lives now as it has done for the past couple of years.

### HOW SERIOUS IS IT NOW?

"[It's] a ripple, rather than a wave" — that's how the current COVID-19 situation in India was described by Prof. Manindra Agarwal of IIT Kanpur in India, who has been monitoring the pandemic through his SUTRA (Susceptible, Undetected, Tested (positive), and Removed Approach) mathematical model. "It is better to call the recent rise a ripple, rather than a wave. Also, eventually, coronavirus will become a common flu," he said.

There's a possibility that caseloads are rising again because a lot of people worldwide have skipped their second vaccine. In April 2021, *The New York Times* reported: "Millions of Americans are not getting the second doses of their COVID-19 vaccines, and their ranks are growing." The report added: "The

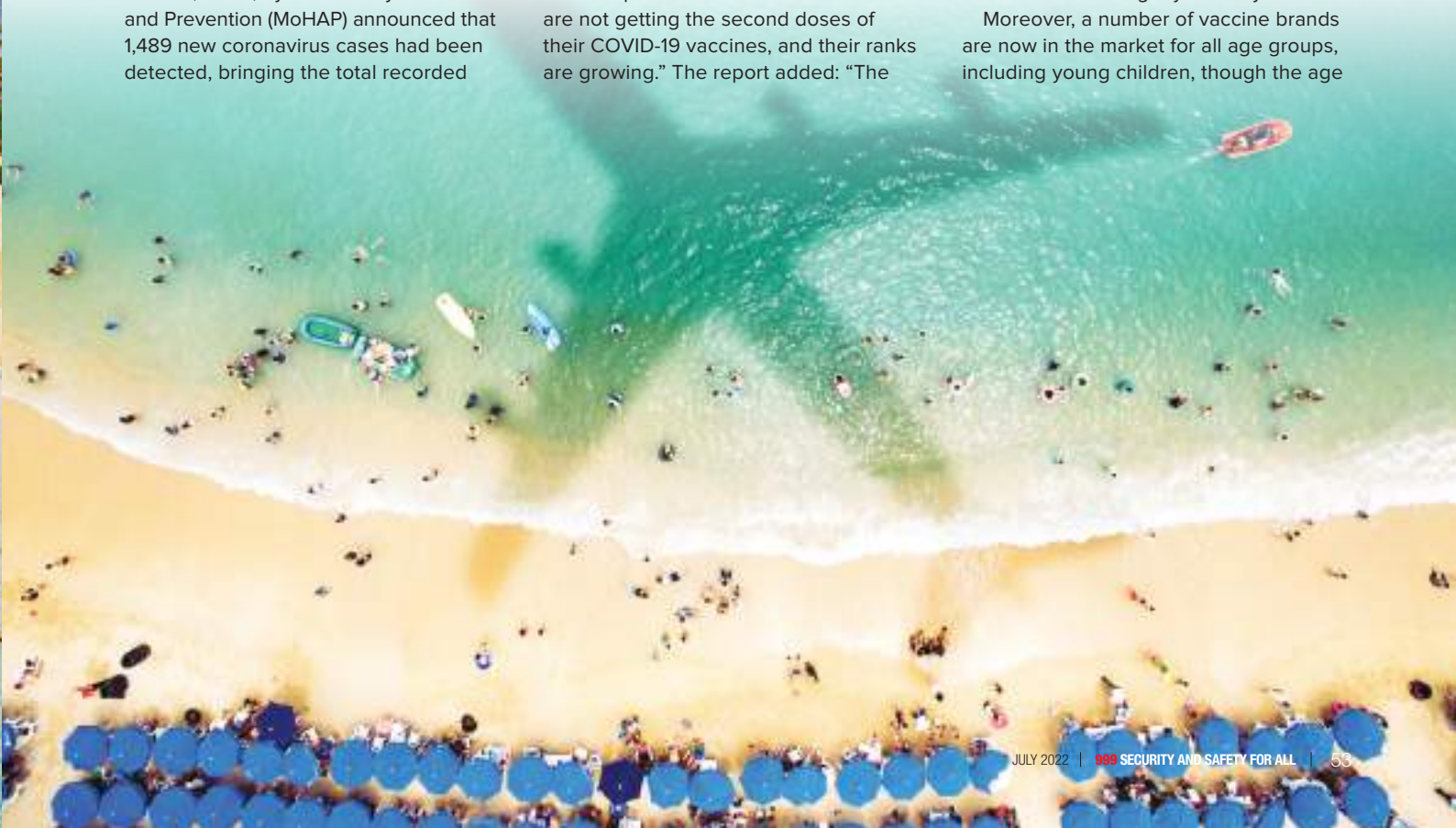
reasons vary for why people are missing their second shots. In interviews, some said they feared the side effects, which can include flu-like symptoms. Others said they felt that they were sufficiently protected with a single shot."

In India, too, hundreds of thousands of people had skipped their second dose of the vaccine, it was reported in October 2021 by the news agency Reuters. This was despite the fact that an abundant quantity of vaccines was available and the Government of India's Co-WIN platform sent everyone an automatic SMS to remind them that their second dose of vaccine was due.

This behaviour points to a very unwelcome and irrational tendency: accusing national institutions, especially the governments, of failing to control the pandemic when death numbers rise; and then refusing to fulfil personal responsibility, such as taking the full vaccine, when death numbers fall.

The way the COVID-19 vaccine works is that the second dose strengthens the immunity provided by the first, and makes that immunity last longer. A third dose — the "booster shot" — is also available in many countries now, and this one strengthens and extends the immunity even further. Think of immunity as an army of antibodies; the more vaccines you take at correct intervals, the higher the antibody count and the stronger your army.

Moreover, a number of vaccine brands are now in the market for all age groups, including young children, though the age



groups targeted aren't uniform across the countries.

The UAE had, in October 2021, greenlighted the Sinopharm vaccine for the 3-17 age group.

In Europe, in May 2021, the Pfizer shot was approved for the 12-15 age group.

In India, in April 2022, two vaccines — Covaxin and Corbevax — were cleared for children in the 5-12 age group.

In the United States, the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) approved, in June 2022, two vaccines — Pfizer-BioNTech and Moderna — for infants as young as 6 months old.

Therefore, each country or continent has ensured a scale of vaccination that covers a substantial part of the population and achieves herd immunity.

### CAN VACCINATED STATUS 'EXPIRE'?

The aviation, retail, and hospitality sectors in most countries are at pains to highlight the vaccinated status of their staff and the fact that their operations are COVID protocol-compliant, because that's essential to their business survival.

It's the customers — the travellers — who need to be aware of whether their vaccination status holds good for their destination or not. Carrying a vaccination certificate is mandatory for all international travellers, but it has to be kept in mind that some countries have set an "expiry date" for the vaccination status of visitors.



**In November 2021, the European Commission had proposed a nine-month validity period for COVID-19 vaccination. The nine-month "expiry" deadline was confirmed in December 2021 and was scheduled to take effect from February 1, 2022**

In November 2021, The European Commission had proposed a nine-month validity period for COVID-19 vaccination. That would mean a person would be able to travel within EU territories with a certificate

that proved complete vaccination (two doses) within a period of nine months before the travel date. The rationale was that the immunity afforded by the vaccine starts declining after about nine months.

The nine-month "expiry" deadline was confirmed in December 2021 and was scheduled to take effect from February 1, 2022. That could very well mean that people from the UAE travelling to European destinations this summer might have their vaccination certificates questioned, if their second vaccine dose was taken more than nine months before the arrival at a European airport.

Initially, the European Commission had wanted to make it a six-month validity period before one's fully vaccinated status would "expire", but revised that to nine months, reportedly in order to give countries a chance to implement booster shots for COVID-19.

The booster shot is given six to nine months after the primary vaccination is completed, depending on the vaccine brand. This third shot acts as a "booster" for the immunity levels that begin to wane in most people after those many months, as the antibody count starts going down.

An "expiry" date for vaccine-backed immunity from COVID-19 has also been

## AL HOSN PASS AGAIN TIGHTENS VALIDITY

With the rise in COVID-19 cases, the UAE's Al Hesn app, which gives each COVID-free individual a "green pass" for public spaces, reimposed some restrictions by cutting the green pass validity period from 30 days to 14 days, with effect from June 15, 2022.

Earlier, the validity period had been relaxed and extended from 14 days to 30 days, but the current scenario requires tighter measures.

The Al Hesn app was originally created to track and trace COVID-19 cases, but its scope was soon extended to the national vaccination drive. With the app, a user can show proof of vaccination or a recent test in order to gain entry into public spaces or buildings.

The "green pass" holders include people who are fully vaccinated; people who have received a booster dose; and partially vaccinated/unvaccinated people who can show a negative PCR test every 7 days to maintain their "green" status.





**“As the health sector follows the best ways to protect society, it was critical to provide vaccines to control the pandemic, including the booster shot, given after the main doses to stimulate immunity**



**DR FARIDA AL HOSANI**

Official Spokesperson of the UAE Health Sector

set by the Ministry of Health in Singapore, one of the most popular destinations in the world. With effect from February 14, 2022, the island nation made nine months the limit for a person's "fully vaccinated" status after the completion of the primary dose of vaccination. This measure nudged Singaporeans towards the booster dose.

Singapore Health Minister Ong Ye Kung said, "The full vaccination status accorded after two doses of mRNA vaccines and three doses of Sinovac/Sinopharm vaccines, cannot last in perpetuity. The protection will wane after a few months and needs to be restored with a booster."

#### WHY BE A VACCINE DODGER?

Keeping in mind the public health requirements, and also vaccine certificate requirements during international travel, being a vaccine dodger or not taking the booster dose — where it's available and when one is eligible — is a big mistake.

The UAE had announced booster shots a year ago, in July 2021, to support the country's world-leading vaccination rates. At the time, explaining the need for the booster dose, Dr Farida Al Hosani, Official Spokesperson of the UAE Health Sector, had said, "As the health sector follows the best ways to protect society, it was critical to provide vaccines to control the pandemic, including the booster shot, given after the main doses to stimulate immunity.

"These shots are [also] provided in other kinds of vaccines, like the seasonal

**“The full vaccination status accorded after two doses of mRNA vaccines and three doses of Sinovac/Sinopharm vaccines, cannot last in perpetuity. The protection will wane after a few months and needs to be restored with a booster**



**ONG YE KUNG**

Singapore Health Minister

flu vaccine. We recommend that eligible individuals take the vaccines after consulting a specialised doctor so as to protect themselves and support the national effort in combating the pandemic."

In January 2022, Abu Dhabi became the first emirate to make the booster shot

mandatory for entry through its border. That was the time when the Omicron variant of the novel coronavirus was spreading fast, creating the third wave of the pandemic, though a lot milder than the second wave.

The Abu Dhabi Government's health app informed that visitors were no longer considered fully vaccinated unless they had taken the booster shot at least six months after their second dose.

By the beginning of this year, the UAE had fully inoculated about 90 per cent of its population against COVID-19. However, by now, many of those people would probably have started entering the "expiry" zone — at least, for the purpose of travel — unless they've received the booster dose.

There's no advantage in being a vaccine dodger, and every advantage in taking the booster dose now, especially as the novel coronavirus continues to spread and might overcome the declining immunity afforded by the full vaccination taken more than nine months ago.

International travel holds a lot of promise in 2022, with most destinations fully open after a long, long hiatus and two years of fluctuating restrictions. The best way to be an explorer this summer is to keep your vaccination status as water-tight as possible in order to breeze through immigration everywhere.

## MASKING UP AFTER FULL VACCINATION

The summer heat tempts us to take the mask off, but though many countries have officially or unofficially relaxed mask rules, people who haven't received their booster shot yet or families with unvaccinated children would do well to keep the mask on, especially when travelling out of the UAE.

Indeed, even after the booster dose, it wouldn't hurt to keep the mask on in crowded places and air-conditioned indoor spaces, though they can be taken off in open-air spaces with thin crowds.

People who've had COVID-19 in recent times might have compromised immunity because of "long COVID" despite their fully vaccinated status. Besides, there's monkeypox to consider. Even though this virus isn't airborne as such, it can still reach your mouth or nose if you sit very close to someone, and that person accidentally sneezes or coughs in your face. That's when a mask can protect you.

The habit of keeping your hands sanitised at frequent intervals should also continue during your travels, as good-quality sanitisers are capable of killing a number of germs besides the novel coronavirus.



## Don't blame the COVID vaccine for monkeypox

With the emergence of a new threat, monkeypox, there's a fear in some regions of the world — driven largely by conspiracy theories — that this may be the result of the COVID-19 vaccine, but that's a completely unfounded fear.

Monkeypox is a disease related to the feared smallpox, which was eradicated from the world by the end of 1979 through vaccination. Protection against monkeypox, therefore, is also vaccination. Two licensed vaccines available in the United States for smallpox are ACAM200 and JYNNEOS (also known as Imvamune or Imvanex).

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, United States, says: "Because monkeypox virus is closely related to the virus that causes smallpox, the smallpox vaccine can protect people from getting monkeypox. Past data from Africa suggests that the smallpox vaccine is at least 85 per cent effective in preventing monkeypox. The effectiveness of JYNNEOS against monkeypox was concluded from a clinical study on the immunogenicity of JYNNEOS and efficacy data from animal studies.

"Smallpox and monkeypox vaccines are effective at protecting people against monkeypox when given before exposure to monkeypox. Experts also believe that vaccination after a monkeypox exposure may help prevent the disease or make it less severe.

"The sooner an exposed person gets the vaccine, the better. CDC recommends that the vaccine be given within 4 days from the date of exposure in order to prevent onset of the disease. If given between 4-14 days after the date of exposure, vaccination may reduce the symptoms of disease, but may not prevent the disease."

## Spread of monkeypox

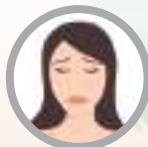
Monkeypox spreads in different ways. The virus can spread from person-to-person through:



Direct contact with the infectious rash, scabs, or body fluids



Touching items (such as clothing or linens) that previously touched the infectious rash or body fluids



Pregnant people can spread the virus to their foetus through the placenta.



Respiratory secretions during prolonged, face-to-face contact, or during intimate physical contact

Source: CDC

## Monkeypox key facts

- Monkeypox is a viral zoonotic disease that occurs primarily in tropical rainforest areas of Central and West Africa and is occasionally exported to other regions.
- Vaccines used during the smallpox eradication programme also provided protection against monkeypox. Newer vaccines have been developed, of which one has been approved for prevention of monkeypox.
- Monkeypox is less contagious than smallpox and causes less severe illness.
- Monkeypox typically presents clinically with fever, rash and swollen lymph nodes and may lead to a range of medical complications.
- Monkeypox is caused by the monkeypox virus, a member of the *Orthopoxvirus* genus in the family *Poxviridae*.
- Monkeypox is usually a self-limited disease with the symptoms lasting from 2 to 4 weeks. Severe cases can occur. In recent times, the case fatality ratio has been around 3-6 per cent.

Source: WHO



# Warmest Congratulations to President



## His Highness Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan

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

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

# RISKY RECRUITMENT

**999** EXPLAINS THE DANGERS OF HIRING UNDOCUMENTED  
DOMESTIC HELP AND THE BENEFITS OF CHOOSING THE  
STREAMLINED PROCESS OF LICENSED CENTRES, WHICH ENSURE  
THAT PROPER EMPLOYMENT CRITERIA ARE MET

BY NEIL BIE





**T**he average person in the UAE wouldn't expect to get hired off the street without any documentation or a proper background check, and also wouldn't expect to be employed without health insurance.

In every case of undocumented domestic help hiring, the reason is to keep the costs down. But this could lead to a dangerous situation for both the employer and the employee. There have been numerous cases of such unregistered domestic help robbing employers and there have also been cases where employers have abused the help. For either party to seek redress, the employment arrangement must be a registered one — the identities have to be recorded and verified for any step to be taken.

In several instances, these undocumented domestic workers, usually women, run away from their original sponsors — they become “absconders” — in order to work for hourly wages in more than one household, thereby making more money. This is a violation of work rules in the UAE.

Recently, Dubai Police reiterated their warning against hiring absconding workers, stating that they had arrested 948 absconding workers over a period of three months in early 2022.

The risk of hiring such an absconding worker isn't just financial loss; it could be something far more serious than that. For instance, there's the 2016 case of an expat named Munjeeb, whose wife got a job, and so the couple began



## **Dubai Police reiterated their warning against hiring absconding workers, stating that they had arrested 948 absconding workers over a period of three months in early 2022**

looking for a nanny for their one-year-old baby. However, even their combined income wasn't enough to reach the income threshold of Dh\$25,000 to privately sponsor a maid; nor were they willing, or able, to shell out Dh\$3,000-Dh\$5,000 per month for a maid hired through a registered manpower agency.

Therefore, they resorted to hiring a maid that offered her services, despite the lack of documents. Their sense of urgency for childcare prompted the family to hire her without further background checks or any form of vetting. A few weeks later, Munjeeb found out that the maid had been showing signs of mental instability. One

afternoon, she jumped off the balcony of their third-floor flat.

Fortunately, the maid survived. However, the suicide attempt prompted police investigations and when they asked Munjeeb for his maid's official papers, he failed to produce any legal document in front of the authorities. Munjeeb had to pay a hefty fine of Dh\$50,000 for hiring a housemaid illegally, and the maid was deported back to her home country after she recovered.

### **SAFETY JEOPARDISED**

The Ministry of Human Resources and Emiratization (MoHRE) has warned UAE nationals and residents against hiring absconding workers, especially household help, not only due to issues of labour violations and legal accountability but also because of possible dangers employers may encounter.







The employer's safety, for example, can be jeopardised if the domestic worker is someone with a criminal record. Such undocumented hiring also doesn't give the family an official channel to report violations. The hiring family might also contract infectious diseases due to the absence of measures taken to assess the medical fitness of the person being hired.

The absconding workers themselves are at risk, because they might end up working for abusive people, and they might even be forced into the flesh trade because of the vulnerability of their unregistered status.

### THEFT OF GOLD JEWELLERY

The most common risk in such an employment arrangement is of theft by the help — if the maid isn't registered anywhere, it'd be that much more difficult to trace her and recover the loot; but if she is registered to begin with, the police can track her down even years after the crime.

In 2021, Dubai Police arrested a maid and recovered the jewellery she had stolen from her employer years ago. The story began in 2013, when a Dubai-based expat named Abigail hired a domestic help

named Emma, who was then 39 years old. The help was entrusted with taking care of her employer's daughters. Emma served Abigail's household for the next five years until the family decided not to renew her contract in 2018. During this time, Abigail and her daughters had started growing their jewellery collection — but to her surprise, some of the pieces went missing during this period.

She recalled, "From 2013 to 2018, I discovered that my gold jewellery was going missing from different places around the house, including my daughters' jewellery." When Abigail asked Emma if she knew where the jewellery might be, the latter denied seeing the said pieces at all.

Fast forward a few years, and Abigail was browsing her social media feed when she saw a post from Emma, flaunting eerily familiar earrings, necklaces, rings, and bracelets. "In April 2021, I noticed pictures of the maid on her Facebook account wearing some of the stolen gold. My family reported the incident to the police to retrieve the missing jewellery," shared Abigail.

The family filed a theft case and the

police quickly figured out Emma's physical location. Not only was the thief arrested and jailed, but the jewellery she had stolen was also recovered and soon back in Abigail's possession. The items included a gold necklace that had her daughter's name carved in it.

Abigail was fortunate enough to have kept Emma's records and she was also lucky that Emma had stayed on in the UAE since she worked in the country through legal means. If, back in 2013, she had just hired her without securing relevant documents, she might have never seen that special necklace again.

The police would have had a hard time pinning down Emma if Abigail discovered that her household help, who had lived under their roof for nearly five years, had a false identity and used a fake passport.

Another incident of betrayal by the domestic help was far graver and condemnable. A woman named Raifa, 50, was attacked by a former maid and received such a blow to her head that she fell bleeding and unconscious onto the floor. Investigations revealed that the perpetrator was a former housemaid named Sharifa, a 28-year-old woman.

This maid never worked for Raifa; she had worked for another family that lived in the same building where Raifa was staying. Being in the same building, she knew that Raifa was well-off and that her husband went out to work early in the morning.

One day, Sharifa had intended to rob her former employer's family. She came armed with a heavy copper mortar, but when she found — to her great surprise — that her former employers had moved elsewhere, she decided to still carry out the robbery, but she zeroed in on Raifa.

It was a well-planned attack, in which Sharifa first asked around to find out the name of the housewife on the floor above, meaning Raifa. Then Sharifa went upstairs and called Raifa by her name, so that the latter would open the front door without any great suspicion.

When the husband of the severely injured Raifa came home, he got the shock of his life seeing his wife in that state. The police were called, the case was investigated, and upon raiding Sharifa's home, they found Raifa's gold, money, and other valuable possessions, all hidden within a metal box under an old carpet on top of the iron cupboard in the bedroom. Sharifa confessed to her crime and was given the punishment she deserved.

**“Runaway maids can pose a security risk to society and those dealing with them. They choose to escape from their sponsors so that they can work at different households and get paid hourly, under fake names and without legal documents**

— Infiltrators Department at Dubai Police

#### ROUNDING UP ABSCONDERS

The arrest of 948 absconding workers by Dubai Police came as part of the police force's campaign against foreign nationals who breached their employment contracts, without following the UAE's due process.

Colonel Ali Salem, Director of the Infiltrators Department at Dubai Police, said that these absconding individuals put the lives of residents at risk, since they were unable to produce proper documents, which would give their employers a hard time in case of a criminal incident. “Runaway maids can pose a security risk to society and those dealing with them. They choose to escape from their sponsors so that they can work at different households and get paid hourly, so they make a lot of money in a short period under fake names and without legal documents,” said Colonel Salem.

The Dubai Police General Command has urged the public to immediately report runaway domestic workers and avoid hiring them to discourage this trend, which spreads amongst other domestic workers.

Hiring maids by converting their visa status from visit/tourist to employment is illegal and is highly discouraged. According to Sharjah Police Commander-in-Chief Major General Saif Al Zari Al Shamsi, this method could pose a security risk to families. Employing workers on a tourist visa is risky not only because



Domestic workers undergo free training at Tadbeer Centre

**Employing workers on a tourist visa is risky not only because these individuals are not vetted by local recruitment companies, but they might also commit crimes and flee with no means for the employer to chase them**

these individuals are not vetted by local recruitment companies, but they might also commit crimes and flee back to their home countries with no means for the employer to chase them.

#### WORKING COMMITMENT

The UAE's Federal Law No. 10 of 2017, otherwise known as the Domestic Workers Law, stipulates measures as to how and when an employer could determine that their employee/s have already absconded from work. This is supported

by Cabinet Decision No. 22 of 2019 or the “Domestic Workers Regulations”.

Dr Hassan Elhais, Partner and Legal Consultant at Al Rowaad Advocates & Legal Consultants, told **999** that an employee missing either 10 consecutive days or 15 intermittent days at work would be considered a legal ground for the employer to file an absconding case. He added that the employer was obliged to report this immediately to MoHRE within five days of the worker's absence.

“The employment contract between the domestic worker and the employer will terminate under Article 22/1/h on the domestic worker's absence without any justified







**“The Domestic Workers Law clarifies that the domestic worker will not be entitled to his end-of-service gratuity under Article 27 if the employment contract was terminated on account of his unlawful absconding from work without a legitimate reason**



**DR HASSAN ELHAIS**

Partner and Legal Consultant at Al Rowaad Advocates & Legal Consultants

reason for 10 consecutive days or 15 intermittent days. The Domestic Workers Law also clarifies that the domestic worker will not be entitled to his end-of-service gratuity under Article 27 if the employment contract was terminated on account of his unlawful absconding from work without a legitimate reason,” explained Dr Elhais.

Before the employer can file the ‘Registration of Unexpected Work Abandonment (UWA) Absconding Report’, the employer must make every effort to contact the worker. If the employer is still unable to contact him or her, then it would be an absconding employee case.

However, the case would not go immediately to the courts. Article 21 of the Domestic Workers Law states that a dispute between the parties should be first resolved through amicable settlement within two weeks of the complaint.

“In case of failure to resolve the dispute, the dispute should be referred to the Ministry. The Ministry will notify both the parties to appear before it and hear statements from both parties under Article 16 of the Domestic Workers Regulations. The investigator will then propose conciliation under Article 16/2/b of the Domestic Workers Regulations. In case settlement is not possible, the ministry will transfer the matter to the competent court.

Article 21/3 of the Domestic Workers Law and Article 16 of the Domestic Workers Regulations state that no lawsuit will be allowed to be filed before a court unless the settlement procedure is completed as above,” advised Dr Elhais.

#### PROPER CHANNELS PROTECT

The menace of illegal recruitment and human trafficking in many parts of the world is being exacerbated by the proliferation of bogus online recruitment. Often, those in menial jobs fall prey to such modus, which is why going through the proper channels of employment is crucial. Without the correct paperwork, a maid would find it hard to prove that she was abused by a certain recruiter or employer, since no document of such employment existed.

In one such case, a 15-year-old girl told the police that a woman from her country enticed her to work as domestic help in the UAE under a fictitious name and passport. However, when she arrived in the country with the promise of working in a household, she was shocked when she was taken into an apartment as a prisoner, and was forcibly engaged in illicit acts.

After the Dubai authorities rescued the girl and prosecuted the gang of six people responsible for the teenager’s predicament, the Dubai Court of Appeal increased the

## UAE LAW FOR DOMESTIC WORKERS’ RIGHTS



The Domestic Workers Law and the Domestic Workers Regulations set out the rights of the domestic workers. Some of the key protections given to domestic workers under these laws are highlighted as follows:

1. According to Article 6 of the Domestic Workers Law, once a domestic worker is hired, the parties must execute an employment contract, a copy of which must be forwarded to MoHRE. Under Article 7, the employment contract should clearly state the duration of the contract, the type of work expected, the wage, the rest period, and the terms that may lead to contract termination, amongst other things.
2. Domestic workers are entitled to weekly rest days, annual leave, a trip once every two years to their home country (or a cash allowance in lieu of this), sick leave, and an end-of-service gratuity (Articles 12, 13, 14 and 26 of the Domestic Workers Law).
3. According to Article 15/5 of the Domestic Workers Law, the employer is obligated to treat the worker well, preserving the worker’s dignity and the safety of his/her body.
4. According to Articles 15/6 and 15/8 of the Domestic Workers Law, the employer may not employ the worker in a profession other than the nature of his work or engage him in any work with a third party.
5. Under Article 9/1 of the Domestic Workers Regulations, the worker has the right to leave the job while retaining his rights if the agreed-upon salary is reduced or the employer fails to comply with the employment contract. This is conditional on the worker informing the Ministry of these conditions two weeks before leaving the job.

sentence of four out of six individuals from 7 years to 10 years, while the other two had their sentences increased from 3 years to 7 years.

In another case, two Asian nationals, named Samantha and Tanya, had been working in Ajman as household service help for several years and hoped to leave their employer. When they were sent outside for chores, they approached a 38-year-old man and a 36-year-old woman, who promised to hire them instead.

Samantha and Tanya absconded from their original employers, with high hopes that their life would take a turn for the better. What they didn't expect was that they were getting lured into a deeper trap of prostitution by a group of foreign human traffickers.

Tanya and Samantha found themselves locked up in an apartment by the woman who had promised to get them jobs as company cleaners. The deceitful woman told them that they'd have to work as prostitutes because there were no other jobs just then.

By February 2022, the two imprisoned women hatched a plan to escape by tying up bedsheets together and climbing down the building's outer wall. In doing so, Samantha broke her pelvis and lost a lot of blood, while Tanya suffered a fall with minor injuries.

Neighbours rushed the injured women to the hospital, and the two racketeers who had trapped them were arrested by Ajman Police. According to investigations, the accused enticed victims by offering them jobs and helping them to abscond from their legal sponsors. They made the same promise of a "cleaning job" to all the victims, and all the victims were then locked up in an apartment like Samantha and Tanya. The victims were snared from Ajman and other emirates, too.

Dr Elhais stated that an abused employee was allowed, as per the law, to leave the employer for her/his own safety, but the employee was obligated by the law to report such an incident within three days of leaving her/his employer.

The legal expert said, "If a housemaid is being abused (including by way of being hit, verbal insults, or sexual abuse in any form, which is punishable by law in the UAE) by the employer or his representative, the housemaid should immediately notify the competent authorities. In such cases, the housemaid is entitled to leave the job without notice and has to inform the Ministry within three days of leaving the job under Article 9/2 of the Domestic Workers Regulations."

## 4 WAYS TO HIRE HOUSEHOLD HELP LEGALLY IN THE UAE



Individuals seeking to hire household help should approach any of their nearest Tadbeer centres. These are duly regulated by MoHRE and are in charge of managing domestic help recruitment agencies that provide household service workers with a visa, orientation, and training. Four packages available for would-be employers of domestic help are as follows:

### 1. DIRECT SPONSORSHIP PACKAGE TO RECRUIT DOMESTIC HELP

Tadbeer centres, in this package, recruit domestic help from outside the UAE and guarantee their performance and loyalty for 180 days, while their visas are sponsored directly by the employing family.

### 2. DIRECT SPONSORSHIP AFTER 6 MONTHS TO RECRUIT DOMESTIC HELP

This package allows families to hire a temporary worker for six months, after which the domestic worker's visa can be transferred under family sponsorship, if both parties agree.

### 3. TADBEER SPONSORSHIP TO RECRUIT DOMESTIC HELP

The third package includes the option of hiring workers through the Tadbeer centre's sponsorship.

### 4. TIME-BASED PACKAGES TO RECRUIT DOMESTIC HELP

This package offers on-demand services that allow families to hire a help through the sponsorship of Tadbeer centres, in order to provide flexible services based on the needs of the customers.

Expats may also directly hire domestic help under their sponsorship, provided that they fall under one of the following categories, as deemed by Executive Regulation of Federal Law No. 10 of 2017, otherwise known as the Domestic Workers Law. The categories are:

- Individuals and families earning Dhs25,000 per month from known legal sources
- Individuals authorised to sponsor domestic workers under UAE Cabinet decisions
- Patients with accredited medical coverage, if their family members earn more than Dhs15,000 per month
- Senior designation holders, such as consultants of various specialities, judges, and legal counsellors
- Any other cases defined by the competent minister in accordance with labour regulations



# SHUT THE DOOR ON DIGITAL CRIMES

IN THE UAE, IMPOSTER FRAUD IS SEEING SCAMMERS POSING ON THE PHONE AS POLICE OFFICERS, CENTRAL BANK EMPLOYEES, OR OTHER GOVERNMENT STAFF. IT'S JUST A NEW WAY TO SEPARATE VICTIMS FROM THEIR MONEY, AND PEOPLE NEED TO BECOME A LOT LESS TRUSTING IF THEY WANT TO SAVE THEMSELVES

BY SANCHITA GUHA

**M**ost people's closest relationship these days is probably with their favourite digital devices, given how much attention is lavished on those gizmos. Life in the 21st century now revolves around cutting-edge new gadget models, exciting new apps, services going increasingly online and, unfortunately, a corresponding increase in digital fraud.

The attacks come from so many fronts that even the smartest people slip up at times and become fraud victims; those who are less than completely vigilant stand no chance against the fraudsters. Compared to what today's con artists can come up with, the "419 e-mail scam" of the past decade seems like child's play. All the more reason to stay clued into what kinds of scams are out there now, and how one can avoid falling into a trap.

In the UAE, one of the latest digital fraud trends is the impersonation of officers/staff of some kind of a public service entity, e.g. a government department or a bank. Physical impersonation, such as crooks dressed up as cops, isn't new in the UAE and there's a certain level of public awareness about it. But digital impersonation, stealthier and more harmful, can still catch people off-guard.

On March 14, 2022, speaking at an Abu Dhabi Police press conference, held to launch the 'Be careful' campaign, Emirati content creator Maitha Mohamed spoke of her experience of getting a call from a man who claimed to be from Dubai Police.

Maitha got the call about two weeks before this press conference, and the caller asked for her Emirates ID details. Addressing the media, she recalled, "The man was speaking in Arabic. The fraudster used a legit Dubai Police number, and it was difficult to suspect it was a scam. He asked for my Emirates ID details and OTP (one-time password), claiming that he wanted to update my details in the system. I then suspected that it could be a scam, as he kept

referring to me by 'Mum' (ma'am). When I asked him for my name, he just yelled and hung up."

Shaken by this experience, Maitha decided to warn others — she made a video message about phone scams and related digital fraud, and put that video up on her social media accounts, which have significant following. The message went viral, bringing home the seriousness of the problem. The widely

praised video was shown at the police press conference, too.

Maitha's video urged people not to share their important personal details with shops (which often request a phone number and date of birth for their store loyalty programmes). In her video, she encouraged people to promptly go to the police if they suspected being scammed, even if they weren't completely sure of a scam.





“The man was speaking in Arabic. He asked for my Emirates ID details and OTP, claiming that he wanted to update my details in the system. I then suspected that it could be a scam, as he kept referring to me by



**MAITHA MOHAMED**  
Emirati content creator

‘Mum’ (ma’am). When I asked him for my name, he just yelled and hung up

on digitalisation. Just as digitalisation brings innumerable benefits to law-abiding people, it also leads to many scam opportunities for lawless people.

A blog published at the end of December 2021 by IBS Intelligence, which specialises in global financial technology perspectives, predicted a three-fold rise in “imposter scams” in 2022. At the time of publishing the blog, titled ‘9 Types of Fraud the FinTech Industry Needs to Beware of in 2022’, imposter scams were the second most common type of scam.

The blog said: “Identity fraud is the act

of using stolen information of a person’s personal or financial information. This crime affects [the person] whose identity has been stolen and the businesses where the stolen identity has been used to make forged transactions. Imposters use identity details to obtain credit cards, state benefits, loans, take over the existing accounts, open bank accounts, etc.

“Criminals commit such crimes by stealing your information by contacting you and pretending to be from a legitimate organisation. There is no denying that the Internet creates smarter ways for our day-to-day activities with each passing year. Digitisation in every aspect has made this easier for criminals today.”

It added, “Imposter scams, currently the second most common type of scam, will triple.”

In March 2021, a report titled ‘Global Fraud Trends: Device Insights Highlight Increased Threats Since Onset of Pandemic’, published by TransUnion, a global information and insights company, said: “...our latest Global Consumer Pulse Study found [that] more than one in three global consumers have recently been targeted by digital fraud.”


#### BE VERY SUSPICIOUS

The digital ‘scamdemic’ has reached such a level that our default position, when we get any request to divulge any personal or semi-confidential information, should be of deep suspicion.

It’s hard for the human mind to have its protective shield up 24/7, but there’s not much else to be done, if we don’t want to be parted from our precious money because of one small mistake. For every

#### IMPOSTER SCAMS TO RISE

Impersonation through electronic means of communication is expected to rise sharply in 2022, as the past two years have been all about a greater thrust



Central Bank of the UAE

few who get their lost money back thanks to law enforcement efficiency, there are a thousand others who get no redress at all.

One such man is an Abu Dhabi-based expat, who lost Dh\$140,000 in a phone scam in early 2022. It took the police just one month to recover the entire amount. On March 25, the police broadcast a video in which the expat outlined the incident. The video was meant to raise public awareness on similar phone scams.

The modus operandi here was very much like what Maitha Mohamed faced. But while she had been able to sidestep the trap, this victim walked right into it.

This man said that at first, he had received an e-mail asking for his Emirates ID. Then, scammers called him posing as police officers, and asked him to verify his details. "I gave them all my details and, subsequently, I found that an amount of more than Dh\$140,000 had been siphoned from my bank account," he said.

The police were immediately informed. The victim was assured of a prompt investigation. Within a month, he got a call from the police; the officer said that the entire stolen amount had been recovered and would be credited into his account within a couple of days. "I am extremely grateful to Abu Dhabi Police and their Criminal Investigation Department," said the man.

#### 'CENTRAL BANK CALLING'

The fertile imagination of digital scammers is a many-splendoured thing. Retail banking consumers have nothing to do with their country's central banks, but in the UAE, fraudsters in recent years have managed to convince victims that they were "calling from the UAE Central Bank". These victims were told that their bank account had been hacked, and were asked to reveal data related to their bank account. Handing over that information had only one outcome: money loss.

In June 2021, Abu Dhabi Police highlighted this particular sub-type of the imposter scam. They added that sometimes, victims also got a text message supposedly from the police, intended to lull the victims into believing



that they were dealing with genuine government agencies and that it was okay to reveal whatever data was being requested.

Another sub-type of the imposter scam involves a text message that appears to be from a UAE government institution. The text message contains a website link and the message recipient (i.e. the targeted victim) is invited to click on that link to get some kind of a benefit. Clicking on that link takes the victim to a website that's most certainly fake — copycat of the original government website — and is designed to steal the victim's data. This is a variation of the "phishing" scam, in which scam e-mails pretending to be from banks or other reputable companies are sent to targeted victims.

In their awareness message, Abu Dhabi Police advised the public not to share their confidential information: bank account or bank card number; netbanking passwords; ATM PINs; CVV (Card Verification Value) number; or any other password. They reiterated that bank employees and banks would never ask for this information.

#### INTERNATIONAL SCAM TREND

It's not that imposter scams are only happening in the UAE. It's a global trend, and in fact, the scammers may not even be in the UAE. Digital crimes are borderless crimes.

In April 2022, the UK-based bank TSB revealed that impersonation fraud accounted for 33 per cent of all fraud cases since the start of this year. A

**In April 2022, the UK-based bank TSB revealed that impersonation fraud accounted for 33 per cent of all fraud cases since the start of this year**

report on Insider.co.uk said that in 2021, impersonation fraud "accounted for more than half (52 per cent) of TSB customer transactions to fraudsters by value".

The report said: "TSB categorises impersonation fraud as an attack in which a criminal impersonates a company, business, organisation or an individual as the key component of the scam."

Reportedly, TSB has seen a 300 per cent spike in impersonation fraud since 2019, with the average loss per customer being nearly £4,000 (Dhs19,119), with the said consumers being "bombarded with scam calls, text and e-mails every day".

Imposter fraud aka impersonation fraud can affect not only individuals but companies, too. A blog titled 'The real truth about imposter fraud' from the US-based financial services MNC Wells Fargo warned: "Imposter fraud is a growing threat to your business and can infiltrate your tech company in a number of ways."

The blog gave a few examples of how this could happen: "One of your accounts





payable employees, authorised to make payments, receives an e-mail from you marked 'urgent and confidential', along with a request and instructions to send a wire transfer. The e-mail appears legitimate.

"Or, your accounts payable department gets a phone call from a highly valued vendor who recently changed banks and now needs to update their company's bank account information.

"In each case, your employees do what's asked of them. The problem is... you didn't send that e-mail, and the person on the phone wasn't actually your highly valued vendor. Both were imposters."

#### **UAE POLICE STEP UP THEIR GAME**

To combat the rise in cyber-scams, police forces around the UAE are stepping up their game and reinforcing the law enforcement machinery. That's getting results.

In March 2022, Abu Dhabi Police returned Dhs21 million to victims of

### **In March 2022, Abu Dhabi Police returned Dhs21 million to victims of all kinds of financial fraud, including phone scams and other cyber-crimes, that took place in the previous seven months**

all kinds of financial fraud, including phone scams and other cyber-crimes, that took place in the previous seven months.

This huge amount of money was retrieved through the police force's new contact centre, which deals with financial fraud complaints within the Criminal Security Sector. The centre received more than 1,700 complaints from August 2021 to March 2022.

Giving an example of the nature of fraud cases, Major Mohammed Rashed Al Aryani, Head of the Fraud Sector at Abu Dhabi Police CID, said, "People claiming to be employees of courier services call residents and tell them they want to deliver their packages or shipments. They then ask them to pay the delivery fee, which is just a small amount, using

their credit card or debit cards. The fraudsters then use the card details through the payment to steal money from [victims'] bank accounts."

In January 2022, Dubai Police had drawn people's attention to phone scams. A Twitter post by the police force listed a number of steps that could help people avoid being scammed. For instance, "Do not disclose your bank information", "Do not disclose your personal information", "Do not accept attractive offers", and "Report e-crime".

As per research by the UK technology comparison website Comparitech, cyber-crime in the UAE led to \$746 million (Dhs2,737 mn) in losses a year. This figure was based on 166,667 cases recorded between 2018 and 2020.

Those dollars or dirhams belong to people who have to work very hard for them. Since compassion for victims isn't a characteristic of criminals, it's up to people to draw the first line of defence and at least try to close the door on digital crimes.



## PROTECT YOUR COMPANY FROM IMPOSTER FRAUD

Individuals can control their own actions, but for an organisation, staving off imposter fraud requires a system in which all the staff members know the drill. Here are some tips from a blog published by the financial services multi-national company Wells Fargo:

- **Alert your staff and business partners:** Anyone at your company — and the companies with which you do business — can be a target. This includes executives and managers, accounts payable staff, departments that communicate with your vendors, and trading partners.
- **Ensure your company uses proper fraud-fighting controls:** Internal controls include using dual custody, daily account monitoring, and verification of unusual payment requests. Be aware that while these controls may help, these measures alone will not protect your assets.
- **Consider changes to your usual processes:** Changes may include prohibiting executive payment requests by e-mail. Other changes may include policies to authenticate all payment requests made by e-mail, made outside normal channels, made to new accounts or new countries, along with those asking to change bank account information.
- **Empower your staff to question payment requests:** Let your staff know it's appropriate and expected that they question requests for payment or changes to account information.



## THIS CON STILL HAPPENS



Be aware of digital impersonation, but don't let your guard down on physical impersonation. Con artists are still prowling our surroundings, ready to pounce whenever they sense a weakness. Towards the end of April 2022, the Dubai Court of Appeal upheld the two-year prison sentence given to a man who had disguised himself as a female CID officer, and robbed an Asian man of Dhs6,700. The criminal simply let himself into the victim's car and took the front passenger seat. The victim was surprised but too intimidated to protest.

After showing the victim a white card with the Dubai Police logo, the fake cop told the victim to start driving. The cop's half-covered face had make-up on and the clothes were of a woman, but the voice was that of a man.

Nonetheless, the nervous victim complied and began driving without demanding to see any proper ID. Once the vehicle was in a narrow, deserted street, the 'cop' told the victim to take out his wallet. When the scared victim did so, the con artiste punched him in the neck, snatched the wallet with all its money, got out of the car, and told the victim to drive off.

Later, when the police arrested the imposter, the victim was able to identify him despite having seen only half his face earlier.

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# 5 POST-PANDEMIC TACTICS FOR JOB-SEEKERS

AS MORE AND MORE EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES CONTINUE TO OPEN UP, **999** GIVES YOU SOME ESSENTIAL TIPS TO NAVIGATE THE HIGHLY COMPETITIVE JOB MARKET IN THE POST-PANDEMIC ERA

BY STACEY LOMBARD





**A**s a result of the expected global economic rebound from the pandemic, job opportunities are growing right now, and the UAE is one of the top destinations for job-seekers from different parts of the world.

Owing to the country's dependable digital infrastructure, as well as the comfortable and secure life that expats get to enjoy here, the UAE is listed as the No. 1 go-to country in the Middle East and 4th worldwide for global nomads who live and work in a remote setting, according to HSBC's 14th Expat Explorer study published in October 2021.

Most expats, 82 per cent, are optimistic that their life in the UAE will reach pre-pandemic normality this year — which

is well above the 75 per cent global average. Incidentally, the UAE recently became the first nation in the world to shorten the workweek by ending it on Friday afternoon, and moving its Friday-Saturday weekend to Saturday-Sunday, aligned with the global format.

But how can job-seekers really maximise their chances in the growing job market? According to experts, it's not about sending CVs for every opening; rather, getting hired these days involves some strategic homework, such as expanding one's network. For example, the new skills acquired during the pandemic would boost a person's employability, as most organisations have re-evaluated the types of roles and skills they need for the future.

**The UAE is listed as the No. 1 go-to country in the Middle East and 4th worldwide for global nomads who live and work in a remote setting, according to HSBC's 14th Expat Explorer study**

Here are some job-seeking tactics you can master to be successful in your new dream career in the post-pandemic era:





**1**

## LEARN TO LEAD



The work disruptions caused by the pandemic have compelled many people at all levels to work independently and, in many ways, increase their own capacity to lead. Such a change has taught everyone to become accountable for their individual performance, especially in a work-from-home (WFH) setup.

“Taking responsibility for both successful outcomes and mistakes is a strong sign of leadership. To show leadership, be accountable for your contributions, even when they lead to poor results. Identify which systems could use improvement and spend time revising them. By demonstrating that you can accept praise and criticism equally, you demonstrate stability as a leader,” said Indeed.com, a worldwide employment website.

**2**

## ACTIVATE CAREER NETWORK

Career networking should be part of the daily endeavour of those searching for jobs and those who want to move up the career ladder. It involves building the right connections with people in the industries you’re interested in. It doesn’t have to be in-person meetings; you can utilise the power of social media, as well as employment-oriented online platforms. It includes reaching



out to people in your academic or professional circle. By expanding your career network, you’ll have the edge to be in the loop about new job opportunities in companies you’d like to work with.

**3**

## REFINE YOUR ONLINE PRESENCE

One of the things that characterise the new generation of employees is being digital natives. Thus, they’re referred to collectively as the “iGen”. According to Blair Williams of Forbes’ Young Entrepreneur Council, “Now more than ever, people rely on content



from social media to give them information about a candidate. Take control of what information is available about you.”

A person’s online existence doesn’t always equate to having a strong online presence that would show a deeper layer to potential employers. Create a concise, polished profile of yourself, join relevant communities, and be active on networking websites. “Your online activity can make it easy for hiring personnel to know more about you and it could make them feel more comfortable hiring you,” Williams advised.



#### 4 GROW YOUR SKILLS

The pandemic has pushed many companies to change their business models, as well as the types of roles and skills they need. As evident during the height of COVID-19, not only were they forced to swiftly implement WFH, but they also required employees to evolve their skill sets to be able to work independently with the same level of output or even higher.



The skills you've gained during the WFH period are key to staying relevant and being in demand in the post-pandemic job market.

LinkedIn CEO Ryan Roslansky wrote in a World Economic Forum blog, "The changes underway in the workforce are going to be constant. That means you will need to keep learning to keep pace." He added, "Life-long learning can be as simple as listening to a podcast, reading an interesting article or book, keeping up with trends and thought leaders, or taking online courses."

#### 5 BE FLEXIBLE AND ADAPTABLE

Once associated with geographical mobility, "flexibility and adaptability" has become a workplace catchphrase, some sort of a mindset, during and after the pandemic. Since most of us set up our own work nook in our homes in 2020, the pandemic taught us not only to grow skills but also to increase our ability to adjust to changes at work.



Working optimally despite the isolation and taking on additional responsibilities became the norm, and this is predicted to continue

in the coming years. According to an analysis of the leading global management consulting firm McKinsey, "Workers across industries must figure out how they can adapt to rapidly changing conditions, and companies have to learn how to match those workers to new roles and activities."

### Did you know?

Getting no response after sending CVs for job vacancies is worse than getting your application rejected outright. You ask, "Was there a technical error?" "Did my submission accidentally get lost?" A 2022 study of the job search portal Monster, titled *Emerging Workforce Survey*, found that 67 per cent of employers said that they had never ignored a job application, but 34 per cent shed light on some reasons why they'd do that. Amongst the topmost reasons are the following: candidate was underqualified (44 per cent); candidate no longer seemed interested in the position (43 per cent); and the job opening was closed before being filled (36 per cent).



Source: Monster Jobs





# FORCED INTO ADDICTION

ON THE VERY FIRST DAY OF THEIR HONEYMOON, A HUSBAND CAJOLES HIS SPOUSE INTO TAKING A NARCOTIC PILL, AND THEN THREATENS HER WITH VIOLENCE UNLESS SHE KEEPS TAKING MORE DRUGS

BY WAGIH HASSAN

All types of addictive substances have a direct effect on the brain and always keep it in a state of craving. Here's one of those tales of this dangerous affliction, and the protagonist is a 24-year-old girl named Manal, who was forced into addiction by her ex-husband Sarhan.

In a conversation with Wafaa, a dear friend whom she met after a long time, Manal recalled that horrible episode of her life: "My ex-husband Sarhan was the reason for my drug abuse, Wafaa. I didn't know anything about smoking or drugs. I don't smoke at all, and I see cigarettes as my enemy, even though a number of my classmates in high school and university used to ask me to smoke and to enjoy it, but I always refused."

Manal explained that she avoided cigarettes and hookah, because she wanted to have "a sound respiratory system, lungs, heart and liver".

Then came her marriage. She took a deep breath and told her friend, "I married Sarhan and entered the 'golden cage', as they call it. This cage had been a space of pain, loss, destruction, and distress for me. I travelled with my husband to one of the Asian countries to spend our honeymoon in that green, beautiful country that's world-famous for its wonderful tourist places. My husband had told me about its beauty and charm in advance, and he visited this country three times before with a group of bad companions."

On the very first day of their honeymoon, things started going wrong. "In the evening of the first day, while we were in the hotel, my husband asked me to try some kind of a drug," said Manal. "He told me in soft, sweet words, 'You will feel the truth, exhilaration, happiness, and vividness; do not be afraid. Try it while I'm next to you. Come on!'"

At first, she resisted but he kept cajoling her and even began to sound angry. "I refused. But he asked again in a violent and grumbling tone. Then he insisted in a kindly manner, 'Your emotional and intimate life, my dear, will be the sweetest, the most beautiful. Try it, and let's not regret it.'"

Recalling that moment of distress, when she didn't want drugs but also didn't want to upset her husband on the first day of their honeymoon, Manal told her friend, "Under his pressure, I took one of the pills. After a few minutes, I felt like I was in a coma."

Continuing her story to Wafaa, she

said, "The next day, he asked me to try a cigarette that actually contained a type of drug, which I hadn't guessed at that time." But Manal refused the cigarette anyway, without realising that it had a narcotic substance because she didn't like even regular cigarettes.

"I refused over and over again, but he threatened to beat me up, and eventually, he forced me to smoke the drug-laced cigarette. I did it out of fear of his threats. My husband continued to give me drugs, while we were still on our honeymoon," said Manal.

Soon, she became an addict. "I started to request my husband to give me drugs in any form and type. I wasn't satisfied with a little."

As it became increasingly difficult for Manal to live a day without narcotics, Sarhan's nasty manipulation had grown alarmingly deep. Speaking to Wafaa, she

“

**I married Sarhan and entered the 'golden cage', as they call it. This cage had been a space of pain, loss, destruction, and distress for me**

shared the worst part of her ordeal: "In the beginning, Sarhan responded to my request for drugs and my urgency. But then, he started asking me for money in return for offering drugs to me. As he insisted that he wouldn't provide drugs without money, I was compelled to sell what gold and jewels I had."

Wafaa was thoroughly shocked. She asked in disbelief, "Did you really sell your gold jewellery just to buy drugs? How could you waste such wealth so recklessly?"

Manal replied sadly, "That's exactly what happened to me, Wafaa."

Wafaa then asked how her friend managed to procure drugs when she ran out of money from the sale of her jewellery and her husband refused to sell her any more drugs.

Manal said, "From that day, I began to borrow money from my colleagues at work, and my friends and relatives. Since

my father is the owner of a huge company that sells heavy machinery, I asked him for money, too. When my friends, colleagues, and relatives realised that I use drugs, they all stopped giving me a penny and I started to lose my friends."

"Sarhan started beating me severely and expelled me from the house, so I returned to my family's house with a broken heart," said Manal. "And when I returned to my father, I told him frankly about my story with my husband."

At one point, while Manal was telling her father about her ordeal, he collapsed from distress. She said, "When I told my father the whole truth, he fell to the ground, and we urgently called a doctor to examine and treat him. As soon as my father recovered, he took me to the nearest police station to report my husband, who was an addict and a drug peddler, who has practised physical exploitation and violence against me."

"We also filed a lawsuit to request a divorce. Immediately, a patrol went from the investigation department to my husband's house. He was caught red-handed with a big amount of narcotics in his house, and admitted to possession with intent to use and promote it," she recounted.

Since Manal had herself come forward as an addict and voluntarily went to law enforcement, and since she had been forced by Sarhan to become an addict against her will, she was treated with consideration by the police. "I was treated in one of the centres designated for the treatment and rehabilitation of drug addicts in the country. The competent court, in this case, sentenced my husband to imprisonment for misdemeanours, drug addiction, and drug trafficking, and committing domestic violence against me," she told Wafaa.

"After the court ruled in favour of my divorce petition, my father and mother took me to Europe to complete my treatment journey from the effects of drugs," she concluded.

Despite the great efforts of government and non-government agencies across the globe to combat drugs and avert their destructive effects, cases of narcotics abuse are still rampant amongst young people of both genders. This leads to crimes, diseases such as hepatitis and AIDS, and the breakdown of familial relationships — all of which are setbacks for society.



# FALSE IDENTITY

FOR MONEY, FAME, AND INFLUENCE, THESE INDIVIDUALS PUT ON A MASK AND THE PERFORMANCE OF THEIR LIFETIMES. HERE'S HOW THEY EVENTUALLY GOT THEIR COMEUPPANCE

BY STAFF REPORT

## THE CHAMELEON

**WHEN: JUNE 1994**

**WHERE: TEXAS, UNITED STATES**

A missing person enquiry was immediately launched by the family of 13-year-old Nicholas Barclay, when he vanished without a trace from their San Antonio, Texas neighbourhood in June 1994.

Nicholas wasn't found for three years until the Barclays got a startling phone call. A teenager had been discovered at a train station and got sent to a youth shelter in Linares, Spain. He was identified as Nicholas Barclay, using a picture from the missing person register after weeks of inactivity.

The youngster who returned said that he was abducted on his way home, transported to the airport, and thrown into an aircraft bound for Europe. He claimed that his abductor put him into a human trafficking ring, but he was able to leave until he was apprehended by European authorities.

All of this culminated in his return home, but he wasn't the same boy he was before. Still, the relieved Barclay family overlooked the anomalies in his conduct and looks.

A few members of his extended family, though, began to suspect the young male claiming to be Nicholas. What took him all the way to Spain? What caused his hair and eye colour to change? His kidnappers, he alleged, had dyed his hair and tinted his eyes to make him unrecognisable. He also possessed something only Nicholas Barclay and those close to him could recognise: tattoos. When Nicholas went away, he had three tattoos, and he returned with the same three.

Private investigator Charlie Parker became sceptical of the new Nicholas and noticed three contradictions in his tale and behaviours: his scarring



Alchetron

Missing San Antonio boy, Nicholas Barclay (L), and his imposter Frédéric Pierre Bourdin

experiences, which demonstrated maturity over trauma; his rapid hair colour change; and the very impossible element of altering his eye colour.

Parker decided to compare images of Nicholas when he was younger with the current teenage male identified as Nicholas, and he discovered that their ears were different shapes and sizes.

These contradictions were exacerbated by the new Nicholas' refusal to provide fingerprint and blood samples. Nonetheless, based upon Parker's conclusions, the court ordered Nicholas to present both. They discovered a disturbing truth: the Nicholas Barclay who had returned home was not the lost youngster. Instead, it was Frédéric Pierre Bourdin, a serial impostor from France who had assumed over 500 different identities in his brief life. Prior to being identified — wrongly — as Nicholas, he was known as "The Chameleon" and was wanted by Interpol. When Frédéric was discovered, he was arrested and sentenced to six years in prison.

## FAKE SCION

**WHEN: SUMMER 1993**

**WHERE: MASSACHUSETTS, UNITED STATES**

In the summer of 1993, Sandra Boss was a student at Harvard Business School and she was enthralled by the charms of Clark Rockefeller, a surname that made waves in the United States due to the family's business success. Clark shared with Sandra that he had faced multiple struggles in his childhood when he had amnesia and couldn't talk as a youngster after tumbling down a flight of stairs, and that his parents were murdered in an accident when he was in college. He claimed that with his sheer intellect, he had managed to enter Yale University through an early admissions programme when he was 14. Since then, he had been assisting foreign governments in renegotiating their debt, he told the girl.

Sandra later stated that Clark proposed to her on a trip to Maine in the spring of 1994. Soon after she finished business school, they married in a Quaker ceremony on Nantucket island. Her spouse was quite supportive in the early days of their marriage, she recalled, but that quickly changed.

"He began to show temper. He wanted to walk me to and from work every day. He began to be less supportive of my seeing my friends. It became a very stressful relationship from my point of view," said Sandra about Clark.

Despite having a child together in 2001, their marriage eventually failed, and the pair divorced in January 2007. Sandra had always been the primary breadwinner and she admitted that, at this point, she began to suspect if her



Sandra Boss with her former husband "Clark Rockefeller"

IMDB

husband was indeed a Rockefeller.

She employed a private investigator who discovered almost nothing on "Clark Rockefeller". But he discovered something else. Clark's real name was Christian Karl Gerhartsreiter, and he had used many identities since migrating to the United States from Germany in 1978.

On June 12, 2009, Clark was found guilty of kidnapping his daughter as well as one count of assault and battery with a dangerous weapon for directing his getaway driver to start the kidnapping vehicle, even as his daughter's social worker was desperately hanging on to the vehicle.

He was acquitted of a second assault charge as well as providing police with a fake identity. The judge sentenced him to four to five years in state prison on the kidnapping charge and two to three years on the assault charge concurrently.



## SMOOTH CON MAN

**WHEN: MAY 1925**

**WHERE: PARIS, FRANCE**

Victor Lustig saw an opportunity to earn money by using the name of the Eiffel Tower in May 1925. At the time, he had read a newspaper article that the tallest tower was in a state of disrepair, and that the tower's maintenance and repainting would be very expensive. One part of the article focused on public opinion, where people stated that it was time for the Eiffel Tower to be demolished — Victor used this information for what would become one of the most controversial scams of the century.

He began to contact his close connections to help him forge government credentials in order to be known as France's Deputy Director-General of the Ministère de Postes et Télégraphes. Victor then addressed letters to the city's five most renowned scrap iron traders. The ambiguous but official-sounding letters asked each of the five men to meet with Victor in a posh hotel suite to address an important problem.

During their meeting, Victor said that the government had chosen to demolish the Eiffel Tower and that the ensuing 7,000 tonnes of scrap metal would be auctioned off to the highest bidder amongst them. He reminded each listener that the Tower was created as an entry arch to the 1889 World's Fair and was never intended to be permanent.

The scrap iron traders submitted their proposals a few days later. But Victor had already made his choice: André Poisson. He notified André that he had obtained the right to the metal of the Eiffel Tower — but there was one minor issue.

Victor stated that while public workers like himself were



Victor Lustig (centre) dubbed as the "smoothest con man ever" by Philadelphia newspaper

expected to dress elegantly and entertain lavishly, they were paid a pittance. André realised he was being asked for a bribe to seal the transaction, and he agreed and paid up.

The scammer went to Austria with the trader's money in his possession. He enjoyed the good life there, at the expense of his victim. Victor also scanned the French newspapers for any report of his Eiffel Tower scam, but there was none. He was correct in his belief that André would be too ashamed by how easily he fell for the hoax to go to the authorities.

Six months later, Victor returned to Paris and performed the same ruse on five different scrap iron dealers. He somehow sold the Eiffel Tower again. This time, though, his target went to the police, and the tale made news. Victor quickly left Europe for the United States.

While Victor never got arrested during his Eiffel Tower con, he was eventually apprehended in 1936 on a counterfeiting charge and spent 11 years in prison before dying in 1947.

## FAUX CELEBRITY

**WHEN: 1983**

**WHERE: NEW YORK, UNITED STATES**

In 1981, David Hampton travelled from Buffalo to New York City to pursue a career in dancing and acting. Two years later in 1983, he decided to pretend to be the son of famous actor-director Sidney Poitier, while his friend pretended to be the son of superstar Gregory Peck — they did this to gain access to the iconic club Studio 54. They went to a hotel nearby, rented a limo, and got immediately ushered into the club as celebrity sons.

From that day, David took on his new identity as 'David Poitier' and began going into restaurants, telling managers that he needed to meet his father, Sidney — who, incidentally, only had daughters. However, the general public back then was none the wiser. After finishing all he wanted to eat, David would lament the fact that his father was probably away on business. The management would then pay the bill.

In addition, David also tricked his way into the homes of some of Manhattan's glitziest socialites, stating that he had been robbed and needed a place to stay for the night. He managed to obtain their addresses from an address book belonging to an Upper East Sider whom he had briefly known.



David Hampton

He received money and clothing from these individuals, regaled his hosts with stories about his renowned "father", and promised them tiny roles in a reportedly Poitier-directed film.

On October 18, 1983, David Hampton, then 19, was arrested in Manhattan for impersonating Sidney Poitier's non-existent son to get entrance to the homes of prominent New Yorkers.

# Warmest Congratulations to President



## His Highness Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan

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

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



# MEETING THE RULER'S FAMILY

EXPAT WIFE AND MOTHER SUSAN HILLYARD BECAME WIDELY KNOWN AS 'UMM DEBORAH' AND HAD THE PRIVILEGE OF MEETING SHEIKHA SALAMA, MOTHER OF SHEIKH SHAKHBUT BIN SULTAN, THE RULER OF ABU DHABI

BY DR FALEH HANDHAL

DEBORAH HENLE

**A**n expatriate woman who lived in Abu Dhabi just before the emirate's oil era, Susan Hillyard was the author of an insightful book titled *Before the Oil: A Personal Memoir of Abu Dhabi 1954 – 1958*, which was published in English in 2002. She died in 2014, before the Arabic translation was published in August 2018. Her account, enriched by 24 pages of photographs, remains a valuable addition to the library of expat writing on personal experiences in the Arabian Gulf.

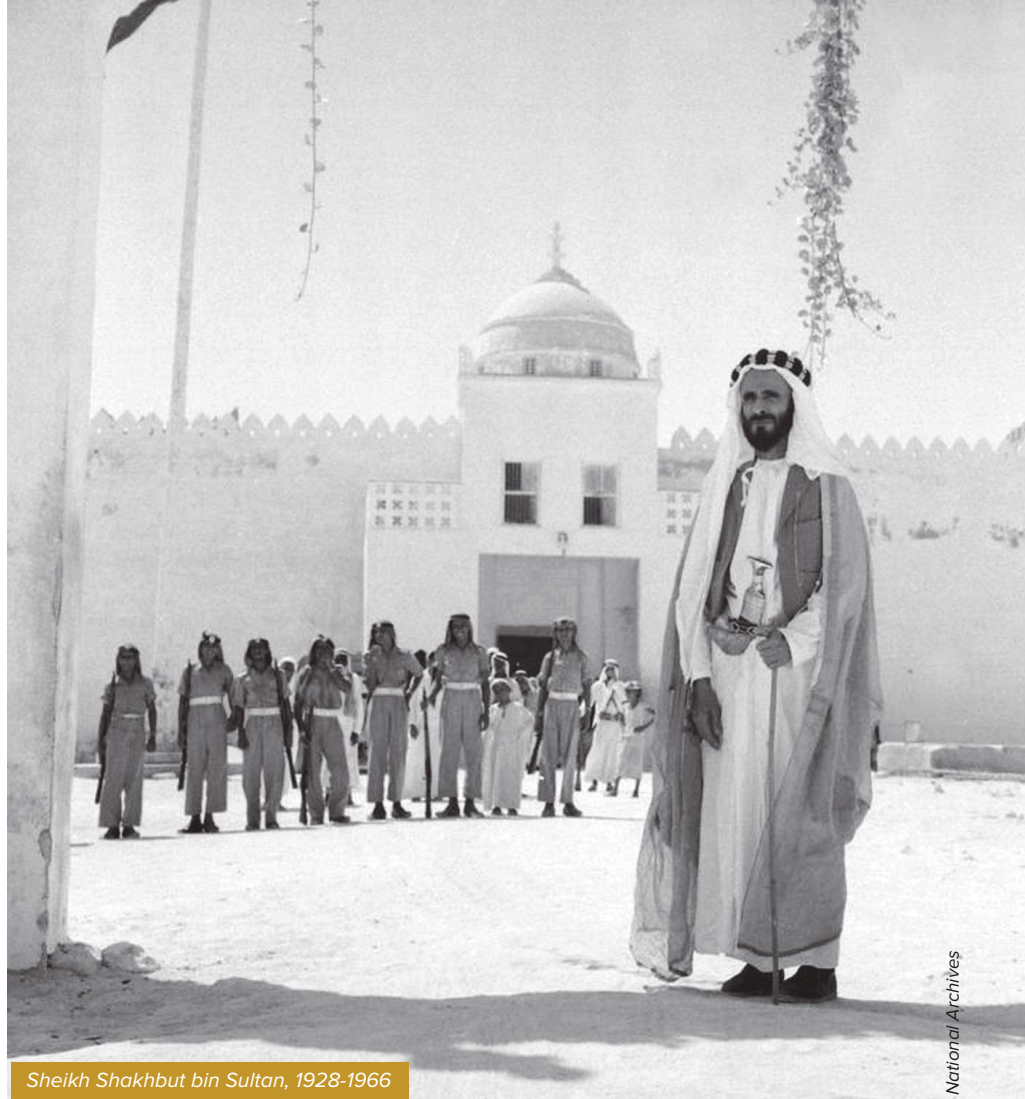
The wife of an oil executive named Tim Hillyard, Director of ADMA Oil Company, Susan was known affectionately as “Umm Deborah”, meaning “Mother of Deborah”, and she revisited the emirate in 1980 with her daughter.

On this visit, she was sent a welcome message by the UAE's founding father and Ruler of Abu Dhabi, the late Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan, who urged her to write her memoir and document the era on the threshold of oil wealth — Abu Dhabi struck oil in March 1958, the year when Susan left the emirate.

The first excerpts from her book, as presented in the previous part of this column, were about Susan's interactions with the local women of Abu Dhabi and her meeting with Sheikh Shakhbut bin Sultan, Ruler of Abu Dhabi (1928-1966). At the meeting, Sheikh Shakhbut asked Susan why she hadn't called on his family — the Sheikh's wife and daughters — and the expat woman immediately realised that she should have shown them this courtesy. Accordingly, she arranged to pay the visit as soon as possible.

In her book, Susan described her arrival at Sheikh Shakhbut's family residence: “As planned, I arrived at the palace without my baby. As soon as I reached the gate, I exchanged greetings with the guard, who asked one of the maids to accompany me into the palace. We then walked up to a balcony that overlooked the left side of the palace. There was a verandah with a roof made of a series of arches. The windows were long-shuttered, and the roof was topped with semi-circles. We then entered one of the rooms.

“There was a large bed in the far corner of the room, and the nearer corner was crowded with women. Sheikh Maryam bint Rashid Al Otaiba, the wife of Sheikh Shakhbut, sat with her back against the



Sheikh Shakhbut bin Sultan, 1928-1966

National Archives

wall separating the room from the balcony. She invited me to sit next to her, so I did. Then they introduced themselves. Though she wore a burqa, Sheikh Maryam was elegant and beautiful and very shy.

“As the Sheikh's daughters asked me questions, the food was served in bowls and pots. Each bowl was covered with a hat made of coloured material to keep pests away. A second maid arrived with a large bowl, a metal jug, and a towel and poured water on my hands which I rubbed vigorously, and then dried with a towel. The Sheikh said, ‘Mother of Deborah, please.’ So we began eating together, and I expected to leave the place when we finished eating and drinking coffee, but there was a surprise waiting for me. I was given a small, sweet-smelling incense burner by the Sheikh, and when I was confused about what to do, they helped me. And finally, I left, and everyone

escorted me to the top of the stairs, shouting, ‘Come back again, please come see us soon.’”

Susan wrote that she felt more surprised when Sheikh Shakhbut and his brothers Zayed and Khaled visited them in their home and wished them a “Happy New Year” in 1955.

#### MEETING WITH SHEIKHA SALAMA

Susan's book described the circumstances of her first meeting with Sheikh Maryam bint Butti, the mother of Sheikh Shakhbut and his brothers.

She said: “It all started when the Sheikh in Al Ain asked to return home to Abu Dhabi for a few months. In consideration of her age, Sheikh Shakhbut asked ADMA to send one of its planes to Al Buraimi Airport.”

The plan was that the ADMA aircraft would bring Sheikh Maryam from Al

**Susan wrote that she felt more surprised when Sheikh Shakhbut and his brothers Zayed and Khaled visited them in their home and wished them a “Happy New Year” in 1955**





Sheikh Shakhbut bin Sultan

BP Archives

Buraimi to Abu Dhabi.

Susan wrote: “[Sheikh Shakhbut] inquired about this possibility with my husband, Tim, who said yes and that Susan (Mother of Deborah), too, was willing to fly with her. Sheikh Hazza bin Sultan, who is the ruler’s brother, was also invited to join on this trip because he knows the location of Al Buraimi Airport. So we took off by aeroplane, and upon landing, there was a large crowd waiting for us. Sheikh Zayed was standing in front of them while many women and children stood in the back to say goodbye to Sheikh Salama.

“Then Sheikh Zayed drove me with Sheikh Hazza to meet their mother in an open-top Jeep. Upon arriving at her residence, Sheikh Zayed told me to stay in the car, and the mother blew her son Hazza a kiss before he and his brother left. While her outfit was simple, she was

ornamented with gold, and her most beautiful piece was a necklace made from large and harmonious natural pearls. Sheikh Zayed introduced me to her, and I bowed in respect.

“Our next step was to board the plane and fly, and after we had got close to Abu Dhabi, I saw all the huts and flags that had been raised by everyone welcoming Sheikh Salama, and so the city became a mixture of colours that fluttered in the air, and when we reached the landing strip, Sheikh Shakhbut was waiting in his Cadillac given to him by Kuwait’s ruler.”

#### INVITATION TO A GRAND WEDDING

It was through that meeting with Sheikh Salama that Susan was able to meet later with several other sheikhas and women of the community, and she was able to mix with them and be associated with them in friendship and love.

The expat woman was also invited to the wedding ceremony of Sheikh Sultan bin Shakhbut. Susan described the wedding celebrations, saying: “At the time of Sheikh Salama’s arrival at Abu Dhabi Airport, one of the happy events was the wedding of Sheikh Sultan bin Shakhbut, the ruler’s youngest son. I was invited to attend the women’s day celebration, so I wore a dress made of damask brocade, which is very expensive.

“On my way to the celebration place at 9 o’clock in the morning, I saw a long line of women and children, all carrying baskets, bowls, mattresses, and blankets on their heads. Upon asking the driver about them, he informed me that they carry the bride’s dowry, and then the Sheikh will present her with gold and jewels.

“Sheikh Saeed bin Shakhbut, who was the eldest of his children, came to ask me, ‘Are you heading to the wedding, Mother of Deborah?’ I replied, ‘Yes, Your Highness.’ He said, ‘I will accompany you.’ He was driving his own car, and he had a dagger in his belt... and he was carrying a rifle, which he gave to my driver. And we drove to the village where the wedding celebration was being held.

“Suddenly, I heard five shots being fired, and then the Sheikh said, ‘We have arrived, Mother of Deborah.’ When we got out of the car, he led me to the entrance of a large tent. It wasn’t long before a woman noticed me and escorted me up to the guest of honour, Sheikh Salama, who was sitting silently on a luxurious carpet. I exchanged greetings with her and with the attendees. The Sheikh sat silently and didn’t speak, while my dress and shoes were well received by the audience.

“Then three or four girls came and began to dance to the beat of drums and tambourines. Their dance was characterised by their heads bobbing so much that sometimes they tipped their heads to their knees, so that their long hair touched the ground. While the girls had finished dancing and were walking around with a tray asking for tip money, I felt embarrassed since I didn’t have any money. I don’t know what I would do if I didn’t contribute, especially as I am sitting amongst the sheikhs. A hand touched my palm and put money in it at that moment. Upon turning to the person doing this, I saw a woman who told me

**I saw all the huts and flags that had been raised by everyone welcoming Sheikh Salama, and so the city became a mixture of colours that fluttered in the air**



Qasr Al Hosn, Abu Dhabi (1940s)

that this money was from Sheikh Saeed. I turned half a turn, and I saw Sheikh Saeed standing outside with his smiling face, and the woman told me that, 'Sheikh Saeed thought you did not have any money with you, so he sent you this money.' Indeed, it was a thoughtful and timely gesture.

"Around four in the afternoon, a large plate of rice, covered with a whole lamb and decorated with nuts and onion rings, was served, and the bearers placed it before Sheikha Salama. I thought this dish was for us, but Sheikha Salama placed two fingers in it and ordered it to be carried to the farthest corner of the tent for the guests.

"As the Sheikha and the rest of the notable women rose, I followed them to an adjacent room where we sat together. When the bride arrived, she was very young and was not wearing a burqa on her face; she sat down in front of Sheikha Salama, who began talking with her. Then we ate, and the party ended that day, and I went home."

#### GLIMPSE OF LOCAL HOUSES

In her book, Susan described a popular house with the name "Arish", what it looked like and how it was made, as well as what the tools inside the house were. She wrote: "In the course of strengthening my relationship with people, I occasionally visited their homes — often the huts of the 'Barasti', where most of the people lived in large spaces big enough to build a house



The Hillyard family with Sheikh Shakhbut and Sheikh Khalid, 1957

or two. Due to the houses' proximity to the sea, each courtyard had a well, whose water was used only for washing. Each

house also had a round pottery tank, into which drinking water was collected."

The book described the construction

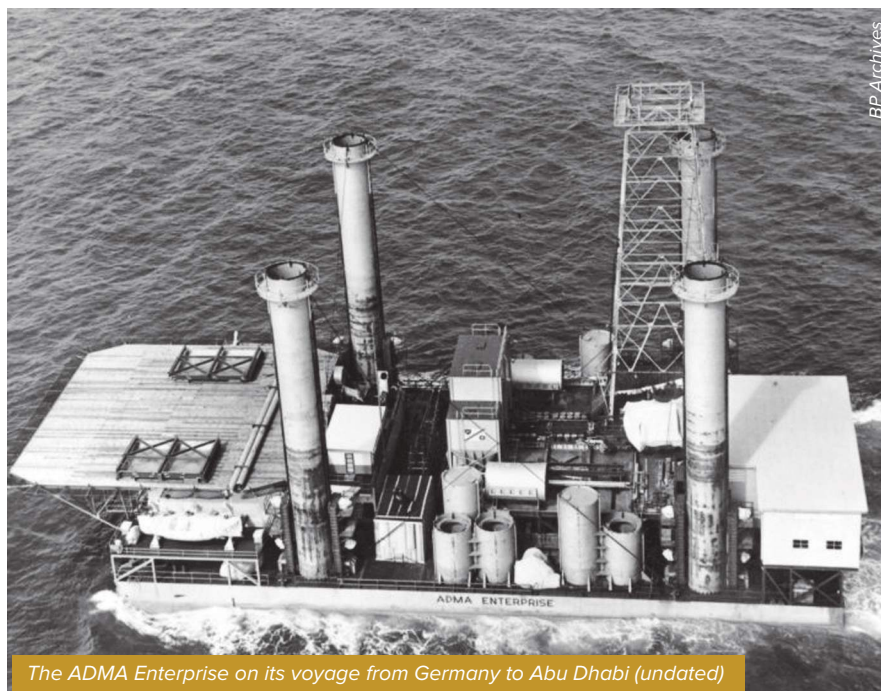


and interiors of the simple local homes of that time: “A hut is constructed by preparing palm leaves and palm fibre ropes, arranging the leaves on walls, and then roofing the hut. Occasionally, windows are built into the walls.

“Inside the house, instead of carpets, the floor is covered with a rug and the floor is cleaned with a brush made of palm fronds. This is also the way the courtyard is maintained. They were very clean, they were throwing rubbish in the landfill.

“The bed was the most prominent piece of furniture inside the house. A rope called ‘Ghadan’ is used to hang clothes. The rest of the furniture consists of metal boxes for storing clothes.

“Inside, there are also a number of pillows placed against the wall to lean on and a small cupboard in which the woman keeps her personal belongings. Also, there is the ‘Al-Kajoujah’, a cylindrical pillow that is used to make the ‘Al-Talli’, which adorns the necks and sleeves of women’s clothes as well as the ends of their pants. Also, the ‘Al-Manz’ baby bed consists of a box that is open from the top and hung from the ceiling. I liked the shape of the hut and its simplicity, so we made one like it and set it in front of our house. We put some



The ADMA Enterprise on its voyage from Germany to Abu Dhabi (undated)

furniture inside, and I used to sit in it when the weather was good.”

#### SHEIKH SHAKHBUT'S THOUGHTS

On a meeting she had with Sheikh Shakhbut bin Sultan, the expat woman

wrote: “Sheikh Shakhbut was in an unenviable position because of the difficult situation at the border of Abu Dhabi, Oman, and Saudi Arabia. As oil excavations began, it became necessary to consider economic and social aspects.

“Sheikh Shakhbut realised that the emirate he ruled, knew, and loved would change. Because he was very intelligent, he realised that he would not be able to stop this change, as one cannot control the tides. He then became increasingly nervous. His whole way of life was changing, and he could not tell if it was for the betterment of his people or not.

“He told me once, ‘Mother of Deborah, when I visited the West for the first time in my life and saw all the marvels that you had created, including planes, trains, elevators, water that you could have whenever you wanted it, and power that you could control with one click, and all the different kinds of food you had produced, I was deeply impressed. When I realised you might be just as deceitful and violent as we are or even just as unfair or greedy, I think it was the worst time of my life.’

“I responded, ‘Your Highness, I beg your pardon, for we are just human beings.’

“‘Yes, all this has made me realise that all technical wonders are worthless compared to what lies within human beings,’ he said, letting out a long sigh, before standing up and leaving the room.”

**Sheikh Shakhbut realised that the emirate he ruled, knew, and loved would change. Because he was very intelligent, he realised that he would not be able to stop this change, as one cannot control the tides**



The Hillyard's in Abu Dhabi, 1957

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

## SPACE EXPLORERS

It has been 25 years since the very first Asus laptop leaped into space —laptop users can enjoy this milestone with a newly-released **Zenbook 14X OLED Space Edition** that commemorates this occasion.

It's a premium limited-edition model with magnificent space-themed artwork on the lid and keyboard, as well as a futuristic 3.5-inch OLED companion ZenVision display on the lid that displays customised notifications, animations, or text. It boasts a 1610 2.8K OLED NanoEdge PANTONE® Validated 14-inch display, with an incredible 92 per cent screen-to-body ratio and TÜV Rheinland-certified eye care for stunning images.

Connectivity ports include Wi-Fi 802.11 a/b/g/n/ac/ax, Bluetooth, 3 USB ports, Thunderbolt 4 (Type C), HDMI Port, Multi Card Slot, Headphone and Mic Combo Jack connections. It is equipped with a Core i9 CPU and 32GB of RAM to ensure smooth processes for multi-taskers. The SSD storage capacity of the Asus Zenbook 14X OLED Space Edition (UX5401) is 1TB, providing users with a huge space for their files, especially videos and high-resolution photos.



Image credit: Asus

PRICE: Dhs7,350

WEBSITE: [www.asus.com](http://www.asus.com)

## BEGINNER'S 3D PRINTER



PRICE: Dhs1,110

WEBSITE: [www.anycubic.com](http://www.anycubic.com)

Families that have teenagers eager to explore the wonders of 3D printing can now allow their kids' imagination to prosper with the entry-level 3D printer from AnyCubic — the **Anycubic Kobra**.

The printer is optimised with a maximum printing speed of up to 180mm/s. It also has a large touchscreen allowing simple operations, and a spring steel heated bed to ensure secure adhesion.

Anycubic LeviQ, a self-developed function, will automatically correct the unevenness of the heated bed. Levelling your heated bed has never been easier thanks to a 25-point smart and exact calibration. The printer, which is compatible with flexible materials, can eliminate jitter in filament transfer and assure printing precision.

The models may be removed after printing by gently bending the spring steel magnetic platform. The platform is corrosion resistant and can endure high-intensity printing, saving you money on maintenance.

## CHROMATIC FOLD

Huawei levels up its newest entry to the foldable smartphone arena with the **Huawei Mate Xs 2** featuring its new 'Falcon Wing' design, a less-reflective 7.8-inch display, and flagship-level photography of Huawei's XD Optics.

The Huawei Mate Xs 2 has a double-rotating Falcon Wing Hinge that provides full-angle constant length control, ensuring that the display and hinge are perfectly aligned.

When unfolded, the 7.8-inch True-Chroma Foldable Display has 424 PPI, delivering true colours and seamless pictures from end to finish. The Anti-reflection Nano Optical Layer on the screen maintains the image clear even in direct sunshine.

The True-Chroma Camera System works miracles in every shot, from Huawei XD Optics technology, which captures more light and increases detail, to the XD Fusion Pro True-Chroma Image Engine, which produces realistic colours that dazzle at a glance.



PRICE: Dhs7,700

WEBSITE: <https://consumer.huawei.com>





## NOTE COMPANION

The **Galaxy Tab S6 Lite** is the ideal note-taking and on-the-go companion. It has a huge 10.4-inch display on a small and light design, One UI 2 on Android, and a ready-to-use S Pen. This is the tablet for being in the moment, whether you're sketching, studying, or gaming.

Because of its smooth, metal unibody, the Galaxy Tab S6 Lite is thin and light. It effortlessly fits into a compact bag for ultimate mobility and minimalist design. It's available in Oxford Grey, Angora Blue, and Chiffon Pink.

Its accompanying accessory, the S Pen, is a collection of writing implements in one. Its natural grasp, minimal latency, and high-pressure sensitivity will make it your go-to tool for anything from drawing to document editing.

**PRICE:** Dhs1,030

**WEBSITE:** [www.samsung.com](http://www.samsung.com)

## OPTIMISED FRAMERATES

Ask any enthusiast of fast-paced, action-packed activities, and you'll know that the framerate for video recording is a crucial matter to capture the best moments. Now, even those who enjoy these activities as an occasional hobby can capture and keep their memories on smooth videos with the GoPro's latest bundles for the **Hero10 Black**.

The Hero10 Black has an all-out speed and maximum convenience. It is powered by the new GP2 processor, which captures 5.3K video at double the framerate, 23MP pictures, improved low-light performance, and game-changing HyperSmooth 4.0 video stabilisation in all modes. Furthermore, the Hero10 is cloud-connected, so your film is instantly uploaded to the cloud the minute you charge it.



**PRICE:** Dhs1,290

**WEBSITE:** <https://gopro.com>

## SUPERB AUDIO



Working, doing exercise, studying, or travelling all require you to concentrate – and this is where the **EarFun Air Pro 2** comes in handy.

The EarFun Air Pro 2 has EarFun's most recent QuietSmart™ 2.0 hybrid active noise-cancelling technology, which can dynamically filter out undesirable external sounds up to 40dB. When you need to hear what's going on around you, switch to 'Transparency mode', which employs exterior facing microphones to blend the noises around you for a more natural listening experience.

Only noises from your lips are picked up by the voice pick-up microphone. They'll capture every word, even when there's a lot of noise around you, thanks to the other two professional noise reduction mics and an increased signal-to-noise ratio – providing an exceptional call experience.

**PRICE:** Dhs300

**WEBSITE:** [www.myearfun.com](http://www.myearfun.com)



UNLOCK OPPORTUNITIES FROM COLLABORATIVE EFFORTS AMONGST PEOPLE WITHIN AND OUTSIDE YOUR MENTAL WAVELENGTH,  
AND EXPLORE HOW YOU CAN MAKE YOUR REGRETS A SPRINGBOARD TO A SUCCESSFUL FUTURE

## WORK HAPPINESS

**TITLE:** Love + Work: How to Find What You Love, Love What You Do, and Do It for the Rest of Your Life

**AUTHOR:** Marcus Buckingham

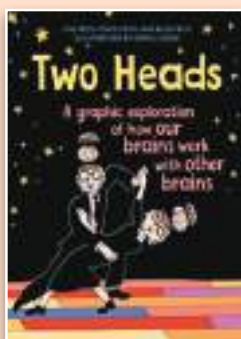
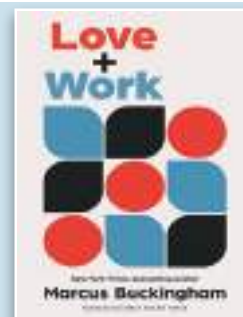
**PUBLISHER:** Harvard Business Review Press

**PRICE:** Dhs78

We've designed the love out of our workplaces, and our schools, too, so that they fail utterly to provide for or capitalise on one of our most basic human needs: our need for love.

Marcus Buckingham shows in this eye-opening, uplifting book, that love is an energy, and like all forms of energy, it must flow. It demands expression — and that expression is work. Whether in our professional accomplishments, our relationships, or our response to all the many slings and arrows of life, we know that none of this work will be our best unless it is made with love. There's no learning without love, no innovation, no service, no sustainable growth. Love and work are inextricable.

Today, too often, love comes last at work, and we're living the painful consequences of this. *Love + Work* powerfully shows why love must come first — and how we can make this happen.



## COOPERATIVE MINDS

**TITLE:** Two Heads: A Graphic Exploration of How Our Brains Work with Other Brains

**AUTHORS:** Uta Frith, Chris Frith, Alex Frith, Daniel Locke (Illustrations)

**PUBLISHER:** Scribner

**PRICE:** Dhs110

Professors and husband-and-wife team Uta and Chris Frith have pioneered major studies of brain disorders throughout their nearly 50-year career. In this book, their distinguished careers serve as a prism through which they share the compelling story of the birth of neuroscience and their paradigm-shifting discoveries across areas as wide-ranging as autism and schizophrenia research, and new frontiers of social cognition, including diversity, prejudice, confidence, collaboration, and empathy.

Working with their son Alex Frith and artist Daniel Locke, the professors examine the way that neuroscientific research is now focused on the fact that we're a social species, whose brains have evolved to work cooperatively.

Using an engaging and approachable style, they delve into a wide range of complex concepts and explain them with humour and clarity. You'll discover what happens when people gather in groups, and how people behave when they're in pairs — either pitted against each other or working together. Is it better to surround yourself with people who are similar to yourself, or different? And, are two heads really better than one?

## HUMAN EMOTIONS

**TITLE:** Atlas of the Heart: Mapping Meaningful Connection and the Language of Human Experience

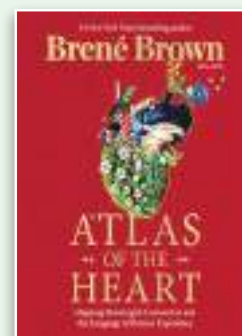
**AUTHOR:** Brené Brown

**PUBLISHER:** Random House

**PRICE:** Dhs66

The author takes us on a journey through 87 of the emotions and experiences that define what it means to be human. As she maps the necessary skills and an actionable framework for meaningful connection, she gives us the language and tools to access a universe of new choices and second chances — a universe where we can share and steward the stories of our bravest and most heartbreaking moments with one another in a way that builds connection.

This book shows us how accurately naming an experience doesn't give the experience more power, it gives us the power of understanding, meaning, and choice.





## REGRET INTO OPPORTUNITY

**TITLE:** The Power of Regret: How Looking Backward Moves Us Forward

**AUTHOR:** Daniel H. Pink

**PUBLISHER:** Riverhead Books

**PRICE:** Dhs66

Everybody has regrets. They're a universal and healthy part of being human. And understanding how regret works can help us make smarter decisions, perform better at work and school, and bring greater meaning to our lives.

Drawing on research in social psychology, neuroscience, and biology, the author of this book debunks the myth of the "no regrets" philosophy of life. And using the largest sampling of American attitudes about regret ever conducted as well as his own World Regret Survey — which has collected regrets from more than 15,000 people in 105 countries — he lays out the four core regrets that each of us has. These deep regrets offer compelling insights into how we live and how we can find a better path forward.

Packed with true stories of people's regrets as well as practical takeaways for reimagining regret as a positive force, this book shows how we can live richer, more engaged lives.



## START THEM YOUNG

**TITLE:** 10 at 10: The Surprising Childhoods of Ten Remarkable People

**AUTHOR:** Carlyn Beccia

**PUBLISHER:** Carolrhoda Books

**PRICE:** Dhs73

Notable, renowned grown-ups were once small toddlers who had no idea they would grow up to be so wonderful. Carlyn Beccia has done an outstanding job portraying 10 of these renowned people. Roberto Clemente, Raven Wilkinson, Bruce Lee, Audrey Hepburn, Zitkálá-Sá, Albert Einstein, Andre the Great, Louis Armstrong, Eugenie Clark, and Frida Kahlo are amongst those who have made a name for themselves. They all grew up to be who they were eventually supposed to be, overcoming adversity and huge hurdles.

This book stresses that many successful persons had childhoods that offered no indication of the major contributions that they'd make as they grew older, sending a clear message that no one should sell oneself short. Each of the 10 renowned men and women is detailed across three pages, powerfully illustrated using mixed media such as collage and computer graphics, and a graphical chronology emphasises major events in their lives.

## CHANNEL OPTIMISM

**TITLE:** The High 5 Habit: Take Control of Your Life with One Simple Habit

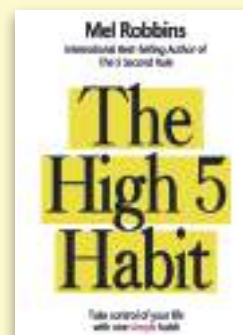
**AUTHOR:** Mel Robbins

**PUBLISHER:** Hay House Inc

**PRICE:** Dhs67

It's time to give yourself the high fives, celebration, and support you deserve. Using science-backed wisdom, deeply personal stories, and real-life results, this book teaches you how to make believing in yourself a habit, so that you operate with the confidence that your goals and dreams demand.

The author introduces simple yet profound explanations that can change your attitude, your mindset, and your behaviour. Be prepared to laugh and learn as you take steps to immediately boost your confidence, happiness, and results.



## EVERYTHING ICONIC

**TITLE:** How Do I Un-Remember This? Unfortunately True Stories

**AUTHOR:** Danny Pellegrino

**PUBLISHER:** Sourcebooks

**PRICE:** Dhs77

Danny escaped the pains of growing up by submerging himself in a sea of pop culture — bingeing on *The Nanny* until he had the confidence of Fran Fine, belting out Brandy songs until his heartaches were healed.

Now, as a successful podcaster interviewing the same iconic personalities that he idolised as a kid, Danny's life has only become more entertaining and delightfully chaotic.

Heartfelt and hilarious, this book is a collection of real-life stories exploring Danny's journey to becoming a big-time podcaster in Los Angeles, and all the amusing moments life threw at him in between. With remarkable honesty and his trademark humour, Danny discusses his struggles alongside his love for all things pop culture in a way that's equally emotional and uplifting. And of course, it's all sprinkled with a little 90s nostalgia and a whole lot of comedy.

## Abu Dhabi rolls out single-use plastic ban for greener future



A ban on single-use plastic bags came into force in Abu Dhabi last June 1, in a bid to protect the environment and help address the high rate of plastic bag use across the country.

This move was first announced in April 2022, in line with the Environmental Agency – Abu Dhabi's (EAD) call for a greener future.

The ban applies to single-use plastic

shopping bags, which means shoppers will either have to bring their own or pay for a reusable bag. However, the thin ones kept on a roll in supermarkets and are used for meat and vegetables are exempt.

"Retailers in the emirate are encouraged to offer environmentally friendly reusable bags with a nominal fee to encourage positive

behavioural change in the community, and support emirate-wide efforts for a greener future," the Abu Dhabi Media Office tweeted.

A 2021 study of EAD showed that 80 per cent of the rescued sea turtles in the Capital had ingested plastics. Researchers found that turtles often mistake plastic bags for jellyfish, which can cause blockages in their digestive tract.

## Dubai eyes to divert 60 per cent of DXB's waste from landfills



Dubai has kicked off a new waste management initiative that targets to divert 60 per cent of Dubai International Airport's (DXB) waste from entering landfills by 2023.

As part of the new programme, an innovative food waste treatment strategy was devised by Dubai Airports. This strategy is expected to

capture and compost more than 2,000 tonnes of food waste annually from food and beverage outlets, lounges, and hotels across DXB terminals and concourses.

Decomposing food waste in landfills results in the emission of methane gas which is 72 times more harmful to the environment than

carbon dioxide.

The DXB waste diversion strategy is designed to sustain a resilient waste management system. To date, the programme has already achieved more than 40 per cent waste reduction, including a special initiative to convert cooking oil used in F&B outlets at the airport into biodiesel fuel.



## Height may be a risk factor for multiple health conditions—study



A new study published in the journal *PLOS Genetics* has found that taller people have higher risk for multiple health conditions.

The research, which was deemed the largest of its kind to date, used medical health records from more than 270,000 adults. Overall, the researchers looked at more than 1,000 medical conditions.

Based on the analysis of data obtained from the United States Veterans Affairs Million Veteran Program, people with greater

height have increased risk of atrial fibrillation, which is an irregular and often rapid heart rhythm that can lead to blood clots in the heart; nerve damage in the arms and legs; and skin and bone infections.

Dr Sridharan Raghavan, lead author of the study, said, "Using genetic methods, we found evidence that adult height may impact over 100 clinical traits, including several conditions associated with poor outcomes and quality of life — peripheral neuropathy,

lower extremity ulcers, and chronic venous insufficiency."

"We conclude that height may be an unrecognised non-modifiable risk factor for several common conditions in adults."

People in the study had a mean height of 5 feet 9 inches and were 91.6 per cent male.

The researchers said more studies with a larger, more diverse, and more international study group were needed to clarify some of their findings.

## How many hours of sleep does our body really need?

Have you ever noticed that even after a marathon bout of sleep, you'll still wake up feeling groggy? A new study explains that it's because there's an optimal sleep level, and too little or too much isn't good for you.

Published in the *Journal of the American College of Cardiology*, researchers from the United States and the United Kingdom found

that even when you have low risk factors, e.g. you don't smoke and have no family history of a major disease, you might still be at risk of a heart attack if you don't get the right amount of sleep. The findings reinforced the conventional wisdom that 6-9 hours of sleep is the right amount for the average individual.



"This provides some of the strongest proof yet that sleep duration is a key factor when it comes to heart health, and this holds true for everyone," said senior author Celine Vetter, Assistant Professor of Integrative Physiology. Vetter and her colleagues from the Massachusetts General Hospital, US, and the

University of Manchester, UK, first assessed genetic data, self-reported sleep habits, and medical records of 461,000 people aged 40-69 years and with no medical history of a heart attack.

The researchers then followed these subjects for seven years. They found that less than 6 hours of sleep increased their heart attack risk by 20 per cent, while more

than 9 hours of sleep increased their risk by 34 per cent.

After this, they looked at another set of data from people who had a genetic predisposition to heart attack, and discovered that in their case, 6-9 hours of sleep cut their risk by 18 per cent.

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# WHAT THE MONTH HAS IN STORE



## Aries (March 21 to April 20)

"The whole point for me is to change as much as possible," says Aries actor Keira Knightley. Is she serious? Her number one aspiration is to keep transforming and transforming and transforming? It's not an entirely unexpected manifesto coming from an Aries person. Her extra bold approach to life requires maximum resilience and resourcefulness. If you think that such an attitude might be fun to try, the coming weeks will be one of the best times ever to experiment.



## Taurus (April 20 – May 21)

Poet Elizabeth Bishop noted that many people are "addicted to the gigantic". She said that today, the people live in a "mostly huge and roaring, glaring world". As a counterbalance, she wished for "small works of art, short poems, short pieces of music, intimate, low-voiced, and delicate things". That's the spirit you ought to imbibe in the coming weeks, Taurus. You will be best served by consorting with subtle, unostentatious, elegant influences. Enjoy graceful details and quiet wonders and understated truths.



## Gemini (May 22 – June 20)

In the coming weeks, you will need even more human touch than usual. Your mental, physical, and spiritual health require you to have your skin in contact with people who care for you and are eager to feel their skin against yours. A Tumblr blogger named Friend-Suggestion sets the tone for the mood I hope you cultivate. They write, "Make excuses to feel my arm by drawing pictures on my skin. Lean into my space."



## Cancer (June 21 – July 22)

Author John Banville wrote what might serve as a manifesto for some of us: "To be concealed, protected, guarded: that is all I have ever truly wanted. To burrow down into a place of wombly warmth and cower there, hidden from the sky's indifferent gaze and the harsh air's damaging. The past is such a retreat for me. I go there eagerly, shaking off the cold present and the colder future." If you are a Crab who feels a kinship with Banville's approach, you ought to refrain from indulging in it during the coming months.



## Leo (July 23 – August 22)

"We wish to make rage into a fire that cooks things rather than a fire of conflagration," writes author Clarissa Pinkola Estés. That's good advice for you right now. Your anger can serve you, but only if you use it to gain clarity—not if you allow it to control or immobilise you. So here's a piece of advice: Regard your wrath as a fertilising fuel that helps deepen your understanding of what you're angry about—and shows you how to engage in constructive actions that will liberate you from what is making you angry.



## Virgo (August 23 – September 22)

Virgo author Jeanette Winterson was asked, "Do you fall in love often?" She replied, "Yes, often. With a view, with a book, with a dog, a cat, with numbers, with friends, with complete strangers, with nothing at all." Even if you're not usually as prone to infatuation and enchantment as Winterson, you could have many experiences like hers in the coming months. Is that a state you would enjoy? You ought to welcome it. Your capacity to be fascinated and captivated will be at a peak.



## Libra (September 23 – October 22)

Libran lexicographer Noah Webster (1758–1843) worked hard to create his dictionary, and it became highly influential in American culture. He spent over 26 years perfecting it. To make sure he could properly analyse the etymologies, he learned 28 languages. He wrote definitions for 70,000 words, including 12,000 that had never been included in a published dictionary. You are well underway with your own Webster-like project, Libra. This entire year is an excellent time to devote yourself with exacting diligence to a monumental labor of love.



## Scorpio (October 23 – November 21)

"Shouldn't the distance between impossible and improbable be widened?" asks poet Luke Johnson. It should – and you should take the first step to do the job. You now have the power to make progress in accomplishing goals that some people may regard as unlikely, fantastical, and absurdly challenging. (Don't listen to them.) This isn't to say that you will always succeed in wrangling the remote possibilities into practical realities. But you might. And even if you're only partially victorious, you will learn key lessons that bolster your abilities to harness future amazements.



## Sagittarius (November 22 – December 21)

Sagittarian novelist George Eliot wrote, "It is very hard to say the exact truth, even about your own immediate feelings—much harder than to say something fine about them which is not the exact truth." Sagittarius, you will be exempt from this rule during the next seven weeks. You will be able to speak with lucid candor about your feelings—maybe more so than you've been able to in a long time. And that will serve you well as you take advantage of the opportunity that life is offering you: to deepen, clarify, and refine your relationships.



## Capricorn (December 22 – January 19)

Author bell hooks (who didn't capitalise her name) expressed advice you ought to heed. She said, "Knowing how to be solitary is central to the art of loving. When we can be alone, we can be with others without using them as a means of escape." As you enter a phase of potential renewal for your close relationships, you'll be wise to deepen your commitment to self-sufficiency and self-care. Here are two more helpful gems from bell hooks: "You can never love anybody if you are unable to love yourself" and "Do not expect to receive the love from someone else you do not give yourself."



## Aquarius (January 20 – February 18)

In April 2005, a 64-year-old woman named Cha Sa-soon made her first attempt to get her driver's license. She failed. In fairness to her, the written test wasn't easy. It required an understanding of car maintenance. After that initial flop, she returned to take the test five days a week for three years—and was always unsuccessful. She persevered, however. Five years later, she passed the test and received her license. It was her 960th try. Let's make her your role model for the foreseeable future. While you might not have to persist as long as she did, you'll be wise to cultivate maximum doggedness and diligence.



## Pisces (February 19 – March 20)

In the eighth century, Chinese poet Du Fu gave a batch of freshly written poems to his friend and colleague, the poet Li Bai. "Thank you for letting me read your new poems," Li Bai later wrote to Du Fu. "It was like being alive twice." In the coming weeks, you will enjoy a comparable grace period, Pisces: a time when your joie de vivre could be double its usual intensity. How should you respond to this gift from the Fates? Get twice as much work done? Start work on a future masterpiece? Become a beacon of inspiration to everyone you encounter? Sure, if that's what you want to do. And you could also simply enjoy every detail of your daily rhythm with supreme, sublime delight.

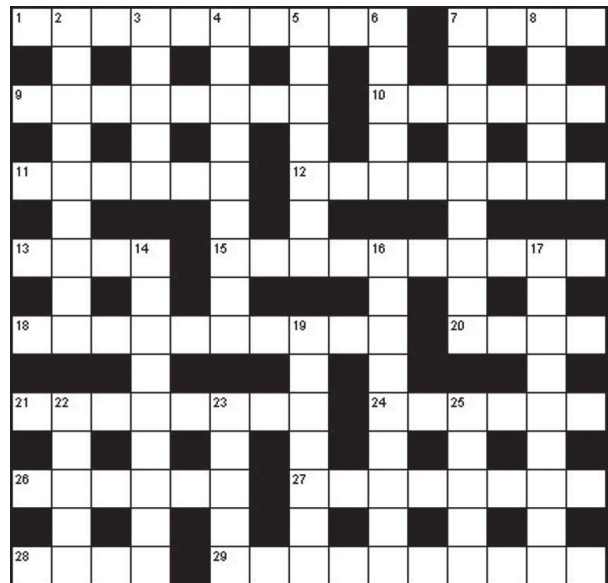
# PUZZLES

## ACROSS

- 1 Old car (10)
- 7 Singular sponge (4)
- 9 Poetic language (8)
- 10 Modern art (6)
- 11 Copper turner (6)
- 12 Being unpretentious (8)
- 13 Part of a corset (4)
- 15 Bird call (10)
- 18 Waves (3,7)
- 20 Diary of a nobody (4)
- 21 University journey
- 24 Enjoy the flavour (6)
- 26 Composer of La Mer (6)
- 27 Extra leftovers (8)
- 28 Scolded child (4)
- 29 4,21's Generation symbol (10)

## DOWN

- 2 Boiling asphalt (9)
- 3 University poem (5)
- 4 Axed general (9,3,5)
- 5 Hearing problems (7)
- 6 Changing sides (5)
- 7 Capital (9)
- 8 New statement (5)
- 14 Bickering over a sin (9)
- 16 Fast vessel (5,4)
- 17 Garment to stitch (9)
- 19 Troubled centre (7)
- 22 Old man (5)
- 23 Residential area (5)
- 25 Student studying priesthood (5)



## Easy

8							1	
	7						5	9
5		2	7			8		
				6			2	4
	2		3		1		8	
1	8			4				
		3			2	7		1
2	1						4	
	5							2

## Medium

	3		7		6		1	
2		7					6	
					8	7		
					9	2	5	
7		2				6		3
	9	6	2					
		1	6					
	4					1		9
7		3		4		2		

## SOLUTIONS

SOLUTIONS FOR THE JUNE ISSUE



[www.alberichcrosswords.com](http://www.alberichcrosswords.com)

[www.dailysudoku.com](http://www.dailysudoku.com)

## easy

4	1	6	9	8	7	3	2	5
3	8	5	4	1	2	7	6	9
7	2	9	6	3	5	8	4	1
1	6	4	5	2	3	9	7	8
2	5	3	7	9	8	6	1	4
8	9	7	1	6	4	2	5	3
6	7	8	3	4	1	5	9	2
5	4	2	8	7	9	1	3	6
9	3	1	2	5	6	4	8	7

## medium

5	1	4	9	7	2	3	6	8
6	7	2	4	3	8	5	1	9
3	8	9	6	1	5	4	2	7
1	6	8	2	9	4	7	3	5
9	3	7	5	8	1	2	4	6
2	4	5	3	6	7	9	8	1
7	5	3	8	2	6	1	9	4
4	2	6	1	5	9	8	7	3
8	9	1	7	4	3	6	5	2

B	L	I	N	D	T	R	U	S	T	S	C	O	M	M	O	N	S	E	N	S	E
L	T	O	A	P	E	A	U	V	T	O	D										
A	R	S	O	N	C	A	R	A	M	E	L	F	R	E	M	A	N	T	L	E	
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S	O	R	B	O	N	N	E	D	I	S	A	P	P	O	I	N	T	M	E	N	T
E	T	O	F	O	Y	O	L	F	E												
C	I	N	C	H	V	I	R	T	U	E	I	N	F	L	E	C	T	I	O	N	
E	U	E	U	S	H	E	Y	N	C												
S	I	M	P	L	I	S	T	I	C	G	A	N	N	E	T	P	A	B	I	D	E
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P	R	E	S	S	U	R	E	C	O	O	K	E	R								
O	R	C	A	U	M	M	E	E	O	A	N										
O	V	E	R	R	U	N	P	O	P	C	O	R	N								
I	D	E	G	R	I	D	U	T	T												
A	R	E	N	L	E	S	S	A	G	R	I	P	P	I	N	A					
A	N	W	O	H	E	N	G	A	C	N											
M	U	L	T	I	T	A	S	K	E	C	L	O	Q	U	E						
O	T	N	Y	Y	N	L	E	O	I	E	L										
S	M	O	R	G	A	S	B	O	R	D	E	R	R	O	N	E	O	U	S	L	I





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