

TECHNOLOGY: THE AUTOMATION MANIFESTO

HOSPITALITY: OVERSUPPLY CRISIS OR THE NEXT BIG OPPORTUNITY?

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Business

SPECIAL ISSUE

Indian Aces

FIFTY MEN AND WOMEN WHOSE TALENT AND TENACITY HAVE SET THE STANDARD FOR ENTREPRENEURIAL EXCELLENCE



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INDIAN ACES 2018 CELEBRATING SUCCESS

In our inaugural edition of Indian Aces, we present the accomplishments of Indian entrepreneurs in the UAE, who created their own destinies over the course of countless months, years and decades



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Chairman of
HOTTEL

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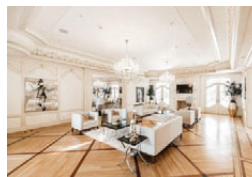
Berluti's style guide for the contemporary man

The Italian fashion house revealed its Fall/Winter 2018 collection last week



Say it with \$23,000

Fairmont Dubai's Valentine's Day package includes a diamond jewellery set worth more than \$4,000



\$80m French Chateau on sale in Beverly Hills

The baroque-style mansion boasts a garage that can accommodate 40 cars



How exciting is Ford's bestselling truck?

The 3.5-litre EcoBoost engine in the 2017 F-150 does not fail to impress

14 GCC MAP



Economy

The International Monetary Fund (IMF) has raised its economic growth forecasts for Saudi Arabia as oil prices rise

WESTERN DIGITAL TARGETS SECURITY AND SURVEILLANCE SYSTEMS INTEGRATORS

Storage and security solutions vendor Western Digital used its participation at Intersec 2018 to showcase its purpose-built products for surveillance applications.

The company also used the security and safety trade show to demonstrate its best in class technology and solutions for surveillance integrators and systems vendors' environments for capturing, preserving, transforming and accessing video as part of comprehensive surveillance solutions.

According to BIS Research, increasing demand for security cameras will push the global video surveillance market to reach \$62.62bn by 2023. The increasing demand for video content analytics (VCA) and video surveillance, and integration of surveillance with technologies such as drones and body-worn cameras have been identified as the key opportunities that could escalate the market growth in the coming years.

For the Middle East, video surveillance is one of the largest areas of growth



▲ *Saifuddin said security and surveillance trends will see a rise in smart storage solutions in the region*

within both the homeland and commercial security markets.

Khwaja Saifuddin, senior sales director, Western Digital India, Middle East and Africa, said the new evolving security and surveillance trends will see a rise in smart storage solutions in the region.

Saifuddin said that's why Western Digital is empowering its customers to take control of their surveillance storage with WD's Purple surveillance-class hard drive family that offers high performance, efficiency and capacity that has been tested in harsh surveillance environments.

He explained that WD's Purple surveillance-class hard drive family includes special technology called (AllFrame in this case) that improves playback performance and works with ATA streaming to reduce errors and frame loss.

"At Intersec 2018, Western Digital showcased its wide range of purpose-built WD Purple hard drives," he said.

"We recognise the increasing value of surveillance across this region and we always endeavour to help our customers attain the most return on investment from their surveillance investments with the right storage technologies to realise their goals. We have seen strong, continued interest in our WD Purple drives from individuals and property

owners, as well as from leading public and private sector organisations, as the demands from surveillance systems evolve beyond monitoring to offering real time, quality video for analysis and insights," he added.

Saifuddin added that aside from promoting the WD Purple surveillance array, the company used Intersec to unveil Surveillance myWD programme, a specialised programme for the security and surveillance channel.

"In the Middle East, the systems integration and solution provider channels are very critical when we are talking about our security surveillance products," he said.

He said under the umbrella of the Surveillance myWD programme, the company has started to rollout partner training initiatives that are more enhanced and focused because Western Digital is educating partners not only on installing hard drive into a DVR, but also on the dos and don'ts when it comes to software integration, compatibilities and troubleshooting.

"We are also aligning systems integrators and solution providers with different stakeholders be it software vendors or security and surveillance companies and getting them jointly trained," he said.



PO Box 500024, Dubai, UAE
Tel: +971 4 444 3000
Offices in Abu Dhabi, Dubai & London

ITP MEDIA GROUP

CEO Ali Akawi
MANAGING DIRECTOR Sue Holt

EDITORIAL

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF Rob Corder, rob.corder@itp.com
EDITORIAL DIRECTOR Jeremy Lawrence, +971 4 444 3252, jeremy.lawrence@itp.com
EDITOR Eddie Taylor, +971 4 444 320, eddie.taylor@itp.com
CHIEF REPORTER Bernd Debusmann, +971 4 444 3145, bernd.debusmann@itp.com
REPORTER Shayan Shakeel, +971 4 444 3845, shayan.shakeel@itp.com
SENIOR REPORTER Lubna Hamdan, +971 4 444 3466, lubna.hamdan@itp.com
SUB EDITOR Edward Liamzon, +971 4 444 3474, edward.liamzon@itp.com

ARABIANBUSINESS.COM

EDITOR Neil Halligan, +971 4 444 3605, neil.halligan@itp.com

STUDIO

CREATIVE DIRECTOR Adrian Luca
DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY Patrick Littlejohn
SENIOR IMAGE EDITOR Emmalyn Robles
SENIOR PHOTOGRAPHERS Rajesh Raghav, Efraim Evidor, Richard Hall,
STAFF PHOTOGRAPHERS Lester Apuntar, Aasiya Jagadeesh, Ausra Osipaviciute,
Grace Guino, Fritz Asuro, Ajith Narendra

PRODUCTION & DISTRIBUTION

GROUP PRODUCTION & DISTRIBUTION DIRECTOR Kyle Smith
PRODUCTION MANAGER Basel Al Kassem
PRODUCTION COORDINATOR Imad Aad

EVENTS & MARKETING

DIRECTOR OF AWARDS & MARKETING Daniel Fewtrell +971 4 444 3684, daniel.fewtrell@itp.com
EVENTS & MARKETING MANAGER Joanna Farrer +971 4 444 3328, joanna.farrer@itp.com

CIRCULATION

HEAD OF CIRCULATION Vanessa D'Souza

ADVERTISING

GROUP COMMERCIAL DIRECTOR George Hojeige, +971 4 444 3203, george.hojeige@itp.com
HEAD OF SALES - AGENCIES Mario Saaiby, +971 4 444 3592, mario.saaiby@itp.com
SALES MANAGER Dima Mousseli, +971 4 444 3589, dima.mousseli@itp.com

DIGITAL

GROUP COMMERCIAL DIRECTOR George Hojeige, +971 4 444 3203, george.hojeige@itp.com
GROUP SALES MANAGER Joe Chidiac, +971 4 444 3121, joe.chidiac@itp.com
SALES MANAGER Sarah Saddouk, +971 4 444 3693, sarah.saddouk@itp.com

ITP GROUP

CHAIRMAN Andrew Neil
CEO Ali Akawi
CFO Toby Jay Spencer-Davies
CORPORATE WEBSITE itp.com
CIRCULATION CUSTOMER SERVICE +971 4 444 3000
WEB arabianbusiness.com



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Property of the week

5 BR Villa in Meadows 2; fully upgraded, huge plot

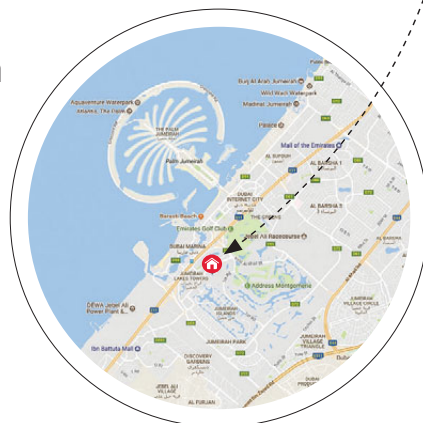


**VILLA
FOR SALE**
in Meadows 2
AED 8,250,000



This property has been fully upgraded six months ago.

Downstairs, the kitchen has been extended and the walls removed to create a spacious living space. The original windows have been replaced by large picture windows offering you the best view of the overflow swimming pool. Downstairs, there is also a fully renovated maid's room. Upstairs, you will enjoy a family room and four bedrooms with three bathrooms.



For more info visit:
propertyfinder.ae

FACTS

Price: AED8,250,000
Type: Villa
Reference: DP-S-27786
RERA Permit No.: 6958
Bedrooms: 5
Bathrooms: 5
Area: 381sqm/4,100sqft
Price/sqft: AED2,012

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Driven Properties
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AMENITIES

Maids room, private garden, covered parking, kitchen appliances, balcony, private pool, built-in wardrobes, pets allowed



“THE BOTTOM LINE IS, THE WAY EMIRATES IS POSITIONED IN THE REGION, IT IS HARD TO SEE IT LOSE”

Emirates just keeps winning

With planes filled to capacity, a successful start to the Flydubai deal and a new fleet of aircraft on its way, last week's A380 order puts Emirates even further ahead of the pack

LAST WEEK, EMIRATES AIRLINES announced a \$16bn deal to buy 20 Airbus A380s, with an option for 16 more at a later date. The order is a big win for the carrier – especially considering that this figure is the list price; Emirates must have received steep discounts to secure a deal of this size and importance. And it's giving the A380 a whole new lease of life, which could prove to be the gift that keeps on giving.

Tempted by the prospect of similar discounts, British Airways has emerged as a candidate to add to its A380 fleet. Chinese airlines have also expressed an interest, if some of the plane's four million parts can be produced locally – which Airbus is willing to do. And last week Malaysian Airlines said a trial service taking pilgrims to Saudi Arabia on its A380s has been successful enough for it to consider spinning the model off into a new group; a plan that has surely caught the ears of other airlines looking to boost revenues.

A win both ways

Airbus' sales chief, and arguably the most successful aircraft salesman ever, John Leahy, is confident he can win “at least one more order this year,” as he told Bloomberg TV last week. If he does, Emirates wins even bigger. The key point of contention in Emirates' negotiations with the European manufacturer was to keep the programme running for a decade at



▲ **The giant reawakens** *The A380 has a big future thanks to Emirates*

“IF OTHER CARRIERS ADOPT THE SUPER-JUMBO, EMIRATES STILL HAS FAR MORE OF THEM, FLYING TO MORE DESTINATIONS”

solves the capacity-constraint issue in the short-term, but airports will need to develop their infrastructure to accommodate an increase in superjumbo flight frequencies. Some will want to do so just to lure more of the aircraft away from other hubs. Once again, Emirates carries more passengers on the A380 than anyone in the world, and would be able to secure first mover advantage at any airport that wants additional passengers filing through its gates.

If airports aren't able to modernise fast enough, Emirates has the partnership with Flydubai to rely on. The budget carrier's narrowbody fleet will grow exponentially following an order for 225 Boeing 737 Maxs at last November's Dubai Airshow. Both airlines will soon operate out of a new hub at Dubai World Central, and by feeding into each other, are sure to reach any destination faster and with more strength at the back than any would be competitor.

The bottom line is, the way Emirates is positioned in the region, it is hard to see it lose, whatever the competition. **ab**

Arriving soon Emirates' other orders



150

Boeing 777Xs, valued at \$56bn, from 2020

40

Boeing 787-10 Dreamliners, valued at \$15.1bn, from 2022

36

Airbus A380, valued at \$16bn, from 2022

minimum. Emirates won that argument, and more sales to other airlines guarantee production for even longer.

Saj Ahmad, chief analyst at Strategic Aero Research, is less gung-ho than Leahy, and doesn't believe Airbus will attract further substantial orders. Even if he's right then Emirates still wins, as that would ensure the continuation of its “biggest and grandest” proposition. Passengers enjoy flying in the A380, and will continue to do so given Emirates' customer pitch to “upgrade your airline”. And if other carriers adopt the superjumbo, Emirates still has far more of them, flying to more destinations than anyone else, and thus able to capture any incipient demand.

Luring in the traffic

One problem the A380 faced is that it was built in response to congested airspaces and runways across the world. More A380s in the skies

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THREE REASONS WHY



▲ Majid Jafar, CEO of Sharjah-based Crescent Petroleum, interviewed in Davos last week

Oil might hit \$80 this year

An industry exec makes a bold prediction at Davos

1 Tight supply. In an interview with CNBC at the World Economic Forum in Davos, Crescent CEO Majid Jafar said that “unprecedented coordination, not just from within OPEC, but with non-OPEC” has tightened supply to the point where prices could rise by a further \$10 in the coming months. “I said here, last year, \$60 over that year. We’re almost \$70. We could be up to \$80.”

2 Threat of oil shocks. Jafar also noted, “The concern is, a shock like Venezuela, one country, with a major outage of production, could see a shock to prices, and... because of the huge under-investment we had over the last few years, the concern is, as global growth continues, and the balance happens in the market, you could see a shock upwards on oil prices.”

3 Return of shale. Price rises have come as a welcome relief to Gulf producers, where budget deficits soared to record levels after oil fell from \$110 in 2014 to below \$28 in early 2016. However, Jafar noted that higher prices could lead to competition from a resurgent US shale industry. “What’s that noise I can hear?” he joked. “It’s a tap running. Is it a shale tap?”

The 23rd edition of the **Dubai Shopping Festival (DFS)** has seen a 10 percent increase in footfall at malls, according to event participants.



PHILADELPHIA ENERGY SOLUTIONS



The owner of the largest oil refinery serving the New York Harbour gasoline and diesel market filed for Chapter 11 bankruptcy protection last Monday. The company’s debt is between \$1bn and \$10bn.

WEEK IN NUMBERS

2.5%

The expected rate of UAE emirate Ras Al Khaima’s GDP growth between 2018 and 2021, according to Moody’s Investors Service.

HEALTHCARE FORECASTS

\$8.7tr

The projected worldwide spending in healthcare by 2020, according to a study by financial experts Deloitte.



Diabetes worldwide is projected to rise to 642 million incidents by 2040 due to urbanisation and rising obesity levels.

HEALTHCARE MARKET BY 2021

\$28bn

The size of the UAE’s healthcare market by 2021, according to a study by MENA Research Partners (MRP).



PERSON OF THE WEEK

“ WITH EMAAR SETTING IMPRESSIVE PROPERTY SALES LAST YEAR, THE RESPONSE TO OUR FIRST LAUNCH THIS YEAR IS A POSITIVE STATEMENT ON THE ROBUST PERFORMANCE OF DUBAI'S PROPERTY SECTOR”

10 million

The area in square metres of the Emaar Beachfront project.



Emaar Development has recorded total sales worth over \$270m (AED1bn) at the launch of the first residences in Emaar Beachfront, the Miami-style residences with exclusive access to a private beach.

Mohamed Alabbar, chairman of Emaar Properties

DIARY



BUSINESS EVENTS ACROSS THE REGION

DUBAI

Arab Health Exhibit 2018

What: The 2018 edition of the event is expected to welcome more than 4,200 exhibiting companies and 103,000 attendees from 150 countries.

When: January 29 - February 1

Where: Dubai International Convention and Exhibition Centre

ABU DHABI

Red Bull Air Race World Championship

What: It is a global series that features the world's best racing pilots in a pure motorsport competition that combines speed, precision and skill.

When: February 2-3

Where: Abu Dhabi Corniche

BAHRAIN

DreamLand Expo

What: DreamLand Expo is the largest gaming and e-sports destination in Bahrain. The expo will also include other fun activities such as live entertainment and car show.

When: February 2-3

Where: Bahrain International Circuit, Sakhir

LEBANON

Digital Marketing Tactics and The tools of Internet Marketing Seminar

What: This event is designed for companies and professionals aiming to develop their existing business, increase their sales and to anyone willing to master online marketing techniques.

When: February 2-3

Where: Riviera Hotel & Beach Lounge Beirut

CONSTRUCTION



UAE CONTRACTOR TO DEVELOP SEVEN-STAR HOTEL IN ABU DHABI UAE-based contractor Dhabi Contracting has revealed that it is looking to build a seven-star hotel in Ruwais, in the Western Region of Abu Dhabi as part of the company's foray into property development. The project is now being reviewed by the Abu Dhabi Urban Planning Council.

UP/DOWN

ISSAM KASSABIEH, EXPERT AT MENACORP, ANALYSES TWO FIRMS TO WATCH OUT FOR IN THE COMING WEEKS



Emaar Properties has managed to lose investor appetite with an unattractive special dividend and no declarations on operational dividends, in addition to gradually shifting its structure to a "holding company" rather than a developer. This has significantly shifted investors' perception of the company's profitability and redirects investments towards its subsidiaries.

Prediction: AED6.75 by early March



ADCB's most recent nine-month financials have not shown significant growth and are expected to show a minor improvement. ADCB has last reported a 1.68 percent increase in its nine-month net profit and a 0.51 percent increase in assets, which could indicate that investors are in reality banking on its generous dividend history of 40 fills which could explain the recent increase in the stock's price to AED7.38 (+43 Fils YTD).

Prediction: AED7.35 by January 28

FIRST LOOK

Aloft Palm Jumeirah

What is it: A new budget-friendly hotel from the Aloft brand located on The Palm, perched between Anantara The Palm Dubai Resort and Rixos The Palm, designed with the hyper-connected, “always on” global traveller in mind.

How does it do that: Well, in each of the hotel’s airy guestrooms there is free wi-fi and a 49-inch LCD TV linked to a Plug & Play connectivity panel. There are no less than six dining and social spaces, including its signature 24-hour café Re:Fuel, which should appeal to laptop-wielding creatives with apps to build. The property also features two on-site meeting rooms and outdoor function spaces equipped with A/V equipment.

Why it’s great: At less than AED800 (\$218) a night in high



season, it’s one of the more budget-friendly hotels in the neighbourhood, while the combination of bars, lounges, swimming pool and colourful, informal design palette means it loosens the collar of The Palm’s generally more upscale hospitality offerings – but it still offers the expansive sea-view setting. All the rooms can be accessed by the guest’s mobile phone, too.

Where it could be better: Situated near the end of The Palm’s Eastern Crescent, it’s still a heck of a drive from the airport – and more than 20 minutes from Media City. Might be more of a weekend break than a working retreat.

Why stay: It’s a refreshing break from the usual Palm palaces and provides a youthful, funky and social experience that younger business people will welcome.

WHAT THEY SAID



“I am talking about extending the framework that we started, which is the declaration of cooperation, beyond 2018”

Saudi energy minister Khalid Al Falih says global oil suppliers will consider whether to extend their cooperation beyond 2018, but such a deal would not mean extending current output levels.

COMPANY OF THE WEEK



▲ **London-listed NMC Health is continuing to grow its presence in the region**

NMC HEALTH SPENDS \$200M ON TWO ACQUISITIONS

NMC Health Plc announced two new acquisitions and the completion of a new operating and management (O&M) contract in a busy few days last week.

Among the acquisitions include a 70 percent stake in CosmeSurge, a cosmetic surgery and aesthetic medicine provider.

The deal involves 17 operational clinics and is reportedly worth \$170m. It also acquired an 80 percent stake in the Riyadh-based Al Salam Medical Group and includes the 100-bed Al Salam Medical Hospital, the Al Salam Medical Centre and the Ishbilila Medical Centre.

SHORTS



500

The target kilometres for cycle paths in Dubai by 2021

DUBAI PROPERTY PRICES TO REBOUND IN 2018

The oil price rally in the last four weeks means there may be more reason to be bullish on the UAE’s real estate market, according to Propertyfinder.



“Kuwait’s fiscal position is better than its peers given the substantial buffers and strong sovereign ratings”

National Bank of Kuwait (NBK) chairman Nasser Al Sayer says the bank has been the main beneficiary of strong public spending as the government pushes ahead with multi-billion dollar schemes.

LONG-TERM SOLUTIONS FOR UNCERTAIN TIMES

Q&A with *Gautam Duggal*, Regional Head of Wealth Management for Africa, the Middle East and Europe, and Head of Wealth Management for the UAE, Standard Chartered Bank

How does Standard Chartered help clients preserve and grow their wealth?

At Standard Chartered, we always value our relationship with clients. That is why, before we discuss about products and solutions, we first assess the client's suitability through our Customer Investment Profiler (CIP) for investment solutions and Financial Needs Analysis (FNA) for insurance solutions. Profiling the client is very important to fully understand their needs and concerns, and his attitude towards risk. Post which, we provide clients a wide range of solutions that will allow them to save, protect and grow their wealth.

Our products are highly competitive in the market and we play a crucial role in contributing effectively towards greater wealth creation in each of our regions, coming up with innovative ideas and differentiating ourselves with our digital capabilities which fits well with our clients especially those technology-savvy millennials.

How can wealth management solutions help during the time of economic uncertainty?

Because of the market volatility around the world in general, it is important to consider the wide range of wealth management solutions to diversify clients' wealth and exposure. Diversification is key to lower the risk of a portfolio and smoothen the returns. Therefore, one must look at investing in different geographies (local and international), across different asset classes and currencies.

We encourage investments through a regular savings plan on a relatively medium- to long-term basis. It encourages discipline, enables the clients to enjoy the benefit of dollar-cost averaging and mitigates the risks of market timing. This we believe is the best way to invest in times of uncertainty. Additionally, we do offer lending facilities against Investment Products to our clients. The clients can use these facilities to meet their short-term needs while they remain invested.

How is Standard Chartered helping customers to diversify their investment portfolios?

At Standard Chartered, aside from our wide range of local and internal investment solutions, our Global Advisory unit of asset class and portfolio construction



▲ *Gautam Duggal, Regional Head of Wealth Management for AME Region and Europe, Standard Chartered*

specialist delivers the bank's investment insights and ideas through our wealth specialists and relationship managers. This trusted advisory platform guides the clients on where and when to invest based on their investment profile. Our product platform carries significant breadth and depth across multiple asset classes and geographies, providing our clients with multiple options to diversify their portfolios. Our

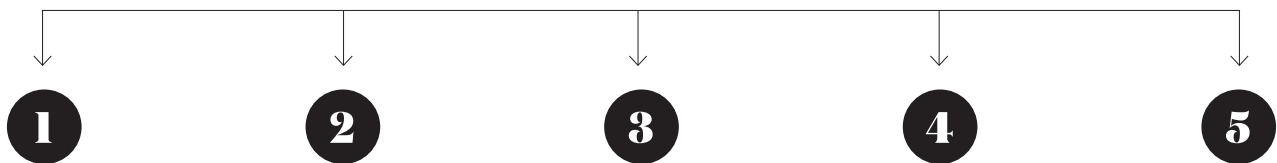
investment advisors work closely with clients to help them select the appropriate instruments to bring in this diversification in their portfolios, in line with their investment needs. We also keep our clients updated on our views on the asset classes and markets through our "Market view on-the-go". This helps the clients to get advantage of our views to stay diversified and rebalance their portfolios.



Things to know about...

The GCC and international debt

Bond issuance is expected to continue this year as governments and businesses look to boost liquidity



1

Kuwait



Kuwait is weighing plans to sell dollar-denominated bonds, joining other GCC states also said to be considering sales, according to people familiar with the matter. It is believed that the bonds are likely to be in line with – or even higher than – Kuwait’s last issuance of \$8bn in March 2017.

2

Saudi Arabia



Saudi Arabia has been struggling to close its budget deficit since oil prices collapsed; for 2018, the shortfall might exceed \$87.5bn. Raising debt via bonds is one way to address the issue and it’s believed that 12 percent of the deficit would be plugged by a \$20bn bond sale this spring.

3

Oman



Earlier in January, Oman’s government issued a \$6.5bn bond – its largest ever. Oman issued its first triple-tranche bond last year, raising a total of \$5bn in five-, ten- and 30-year notes. The bonds are a sign of increasing investor confidence in the Gulf’s energy exporting countries.

4

Emirates Airlines



Emirates, the world’s biggest airline by international passenger numbers, is negotiating with banks about raising as much as \$1bn through an Islamic bond sale that could materialise in the first half of this year. Emirates has been a regular borrower in the aircraft-financing loan market.

5

Bahrain



In September, Bahrain raised \$3bn, about 10 percent of its economic output, in a three-part international bond sale that may help narrow a gap in its finances left by a more than 50 percent drop in oil prices since 2014. The sale includes an \$850m Islamic bond, according to reports.



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SAUDI

IMF raises Saudi growth prospects

The International Monetary Fund (IMF) last Monday raised its growth projection for the deficit-hit Saudi economy on the back of higher oil prices, but retained its estimates for the region.

In its World Economic Outlook update, the IMF said the Saudi economy – which shrank 0.7 percent last year – is expected to grow by 1.6 percent in 2018, up 0.5 percent on its October estimates. The Saudi economy is also projected to grow by 2.2 percent in 2019.

The IMF, however, maintained its October projections for growth in the Middle East, North Africa, Afghanistan and Pakistan (MENAP) region at 3.6 percent and 3.5 percent for 2018 and 2019 respectively.

“While stronger oil prices are helping a recovery in domestic demand in oil exporters, including Saudi Arabia, the fiscal adjustment that is still needed is projected to weigh on growth prospects,” the IMF said.

Last year, the Saudi economy contracted for the first time since 2009.

\$260bn

Saudi Arabia’s budget deficit over the last four fiscal years

SAUDI

Saudi players head to Spain for World Cup boost



▲ Saudi winger Salem Al Dawsari

Saudi Arabia are gearing up for their first World Cup Finals appearance since 2006 by sending a number of players on loan to Spain to gain experience. At least six players have joined Spanish clubs following an agreement between Spain’s La Liga and the Saudi Arabian Football Federation.

Villarreal, Leganes and Levante from the top flight, alongside second division outfits Gijon, Valladolid and Rayo Vallecano, each simultaneously announced last Sunday that they had signed a Saudi player.

Villarreal have taken winger Salem Al Dawsari, Leganes have signed up attacking midfielder Yahia Al Shehri, while Levante have signed forward Fahad Al Muwallad.

The loans come less than five months before the World Cup in Russia begins. Saudi Arabia have been drawn in a tough group alongside the hosts, Uruguay and Egypt.

KUWAIT

Kuwait scores high on environmental performance

Kuwait surged 52 spots on the Environmental Performance Index to reach 61st out of 180 countries, the Environment Public Authority (EPA) said last Wednesday.

According to the new assessment, Kuwait recorded the “second highest score in the Gulf and Arab regions,” EPA director general and chairman Sheikh Abdallah Ahmad Al Humoud Al Sabah said in a statement.

The index is a joint effort between Yale University and Columbia University in collaboration with the World Economic Forum (WEF).

On its website, the EPI, which measures environmental health and ecosystem vitality over several performance indicators, said the improvement was due to the “establishment of areas protecting biodiversity and habitat.”

“JEBEL ALI PORT AND FREE ZONE CONTINUES TO INVEST IN INFRASTRUCTURE TO DIVERSIFY SOURCES OF INCOME AND BUILD A SUSTAINABLE ECONOMY BASED ON KNOWLEDGE AND INNOVATION”

Sultan Ahmed Bin Sulayem, chairman and CEO of DP World Group

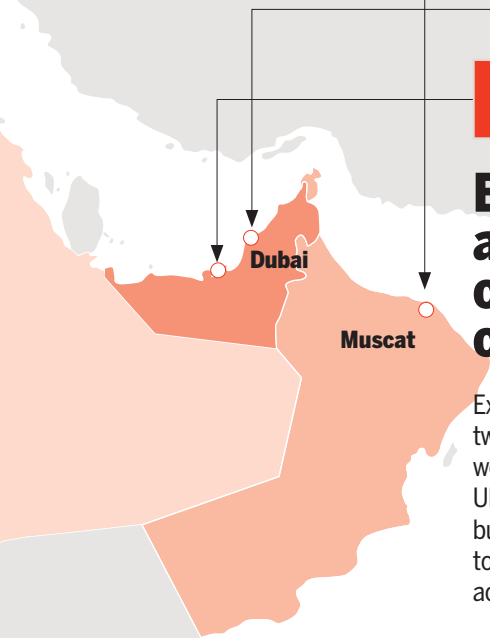


▲ Kuwait is laying out plans for sustainable development



“OMAN REPRESENTS OUR LARGEST TOURISM DEVELOPMENT PRESENCE IN THE WORLD AFTER SWITZERLAND”

Samih Sawiris, chairman of Orascom Development Holding



UAE

Expo 2020 awards \$182m construction contracts

Expo 2020 Dubai has awarded two major construction contracts worth AED670m (\$182.4m) to UK-headquartered international building company Laing O'Rourke to build two pavilions and an access road for the event.

Under the terms of the agreement, Laing O'Rourke will build the Expo's Leadership and Media pavilions, as well as the "Hammerhead" access road to the Al Wasl Plaza as well as landscaping works.

The company will also be responsible for carrying out the mechanical, plumbing and engineering works associated with the projects.

"We are on track to deliver an exceptional site for an amazing Expo," said Ahmed Al Khatib, senior vice president of real estate and delivery at Expo 2020.

"We are delighted to announce Laing O'Rourke as the main contractor for these important two contracts."

Al Khatib added that Laing O'Rourke was selected "due to its keen understanding of our technical and commercial requirements".

180

The number of countries expected to participate at Dubai Expo 2020

OMAN

Oman tourism expenditure set to cross \$1bn

Having already invested \$650m in its tourism sector, Oman's bid to become a world-class tourism destination will see that figure exceed \$1bn in the next few years, investors say.

A decade ago, Oman's government formed a joint venture with Egypt's Orascom Development Holding to spearhead expansion in the sector. The resulting Muriya has since overseen \$650m of infrastructure projects built around five Integrated Tourism Complexes (ITCs), which are providing a suite of attractions for regional and international visitors while also meeting the increasing demand for first-rate facilities in the country.

The five complexes are Jabal Sifah, with its shoreline boutique hotels; Hawana Salalah, with three resorts and a brand new water park; the new Oman Convention and Exhibition Centre; a luxury resort in Mirbat and City Walk along Muscat's shoreline.

"Oman represents our largest tourism development presence in the world after Switzerland," said Samih Sawiris, chairman for Egypt's Orascom Development Holding. "We've contributed \$300m of the \$650m invested so far, and I think the total spend will soon cross \$1bn."

UAE

New Jafza bridge a "game changer" for Dubai logistics

A new road link over Sheikh Zayed Road is set to smooth the flow of traffic between Jebel Ali Port and Dubai's Al Maktoum International Airport.

Jafza Bridge, a project undertaken by the Jebel Ali Free Zone (Jafza) in collaboration with the Dubai Roads and Transport Authority (RTA), is now open for traffic and will further enhance the flow of goods between the two logistics hubs – all operating under a single customs environment – and the Jebel Free Zone, in what has now become known as Dubai's "Logistics Corridor".

Jebel Ali Port is the now sixth-largest container port in the world, while Jebel Ali Free Zone is home to more than 6,500 companies. Al Maktoum International Airport is also set to be the world's largest airport in both size and volume when it's fully operational in around 2022 – and air freight volumes increased 9.1 percent during the first nine months of 2017.

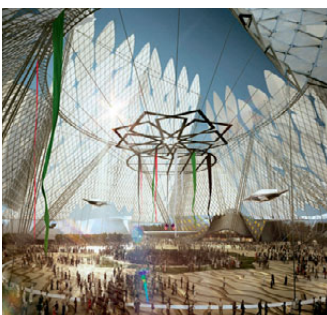


Jebel Ali Free Zone is playing a key role in Dubai's economic growth



“WE ARE ON TRACK TO DELIVER AN EXCEPTIONAL SITE FOR AN AMAZING EXPO”

Ahmed Al Khatib, senior vice president at Expo 2020



Al Wasl Plaza will form the centrepiece of the 4.38-sq km site

ARAB WORLD

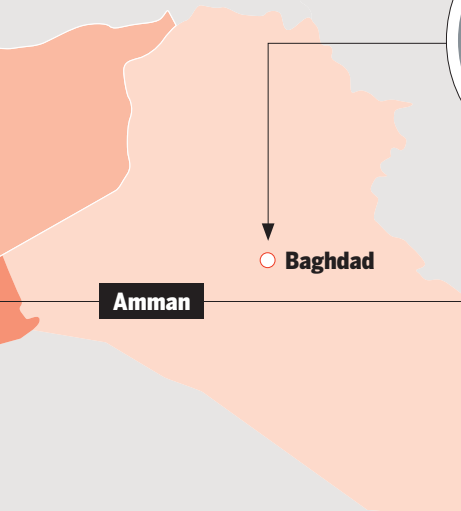
Foreign direct investments, 3G services and Oscar nominations





“IRAQ IS A COUNTRY WITH RICH HERITAGE AND STRATEGIC IMPORTANCE FOR THE REGION”

Mudassir Sheikha, co-founder and CEO of Careem



Amman

Baghdad

JORDAN

Tourism revenues up by 12.5% in 2017

Jordan’s tourism revenues in 2017 increased by 12.5 per cent, up to \$4.6bn, compared to \$4.1bn in 2016, the Central Bank of Jordan (CBJ) announced last Thursday.

CBJ said in a statement, carried by the Jordan News Agency, Petra, that the increase was mainly due to an 8.7 percent rise in the total number of tourists in 2017.

In December 2017, the kingdom’s revenues from tourism went up by 9.1 percent, reaching a total of \$340.9m, compared to the same month in 2016. The number of tourists increased by 6.2 percent compared to the same month in 2016.

The number of overnight tourists until the end of November 2017 amounted to 3.911 million visitors, compared with 3.574 million during the same 11 months of last year, according to Tourism Ministry figures.

Tourism has historically been a key contributor to Jordan’s economy.



“THE E2 AIRCRAFT FAMILY REPRESENTS THE MOST ADVANCED TRAVEL SOLUTION TO COMPETE EFFICIENTLY AND PROFITABLY”

Jorge Ramos de Oliveira, CEO of Embraer in EMEA



▲ Jordan’s tourism revenues reached \$340.9m last month

8.7%

The growth in the total number of tourists visiting Jordan last year

JORDAN

Embraer presents partnership offer to RJ

In response to Royal Jordanian’s (RJ) request for proposals for a renewal of its fleet, Brazil’s Embraer last Wednesday presented in Amman its value proposition for the Jordanian airline and introduced the latest updates of its new E2 aircraft.

Jorge Ramos de Oliveira, CEO of Embraer in Europe, the Middle East and Africa (EMEA), noted that “the E2 aircraft family represents the most advanced travel solution to compete efficiently and profitably, while offering unmatched remarkable experiences to the passengers”.

RJ expressed enthusiasm although questioned Embraer’s ability to service a MENA country.

IRAQ

Careem announces launch of Iraq operations

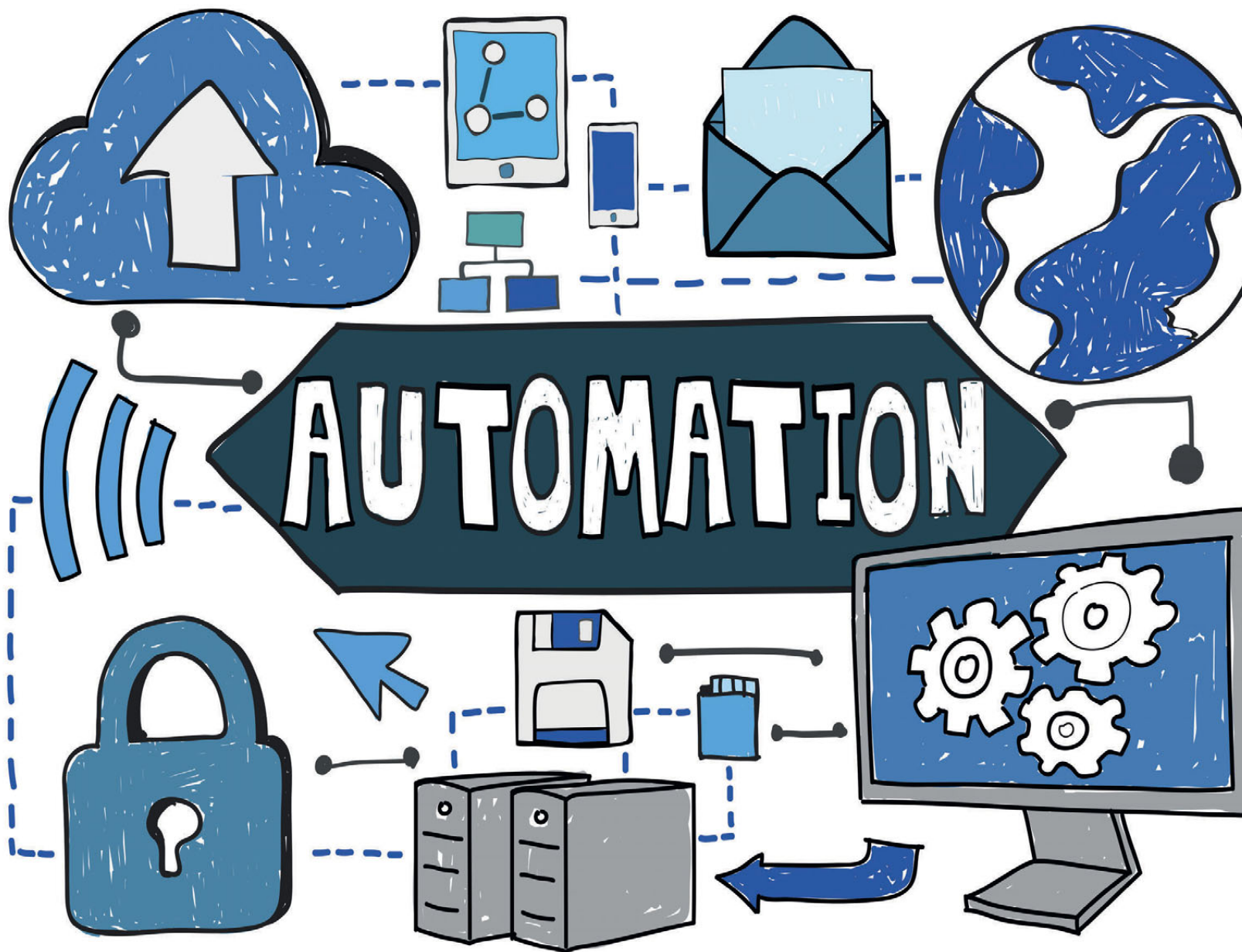
Ride-hailing service Careem has launched its services in the Iraqi capital of Baghdad. Through flexible payment options – including cash, credit card, or Careem credit – residents will be able to avail of the service 24/7 via the app that uses GPS technology to ensure accurate pick-ups.

Careem, which operates in more than 13 countries across more than 13 countries, plans to expand in more cities across Iraq in the near future. The Dubai-based company said the move will help towards its goal of creating one million jobs across the MENA region by 2018.

IN FOCUS



▲ Khaled Ali, the 45-year-old human rights lawyer seen as the last real challenger to Egypt’s Abdel Fattah El Sisi, last Wednesday quit the race to be president, the latest in a string of potential candidates to withdraw.



An automation manifesto

With this new technology making its way in industries across the world, are we ready for the inevitable change?

AUTOMATION HAS THE ability to transform society for the better. Every day I see the powerful impact it can have, whether revolutionising the way business and everyday tasks are done, saving time and money, or delivering

game-changing economics. It will increase productivity, which is essential for future growth and prosperity. It will also see the end of employees spending time on mundane, repetitive tasks, and free up time to engage in more

meaningful and enjoyable strategic or creative work.

The news around automation tends to be centred on its impact on employment, with most of the discussion focused on what is happening. But instead of

the “what”, we need to talk about the “how”. Automation is here, so how can we best prepare for the future?

To ensure automation delivers on its huge potential, we need to lay the foundations for success. To that end, here are five rules – the beginning of an automation manifesto – that I believe will lay the groundwork for a future where automation can be embraced, not feared.

“AUTOMATION IS ALREADY HAPPENING, AND IT WON'T STOP. BUT IT CAN DELIVER IN A WAY THAT WORKS FOR EVERYONE”

1. Fight the fear

Automation isn't scary. Change can be. But like any change, if explained, managed and executed with care, it can be powerfully positive. Despite many studies showing that automation will create jobs, recent studies have suggested that employees still fear it. It's important to remember that automation isn't new. It has happened throughout history, and we wouldn't have the modern world – from farming to transport and energy to entertainment – without it. It's time for us to rebalance the debate around automation to reassure the wider public that, done in the right way, automation can benefit us all.

2. Think collaboratively

Governments, educators, businesses and consumers all have a role to play in shaping the future of automation. Action in isolation will only help with some of the answers. I believe it's necessary for governments and businesses to show joint leadership, coming together to discuss and develop the policies, processes and practical guidance that will set the Middle East on the path to success.

3. Education, education, education

Technology is dramatically changing how we view and interact with the world, so the development of skills needs to keep up. By and large, education curriculums around the world need to develop alongside industry, and some are already doing so. In Vietnam, computer science lessons begin at age

seven. By age ten, students learn coding. Skills are so advanced that a visiting Google engineer found kids in Grade 11 (16-17 years old) would have passed the notoriously hard Google interview process.

We need to be moving to a model where everyone entering the world of work has at least basic coding competencies. Doing so has the potential to transform industries that many see as “at risk” from automation. We are already seeing manufacturers shift their workforce from the assembly line to developer roles, leading to increased outputs and staff numbers, and allowing the “reshoring” of jobs that would otherwise be outsourced.

4. Develop new skills

Businesses also have an important role to play in re-educating and retraining all areas of the workforce. Large companies should consider spending a percentage of turnover on retraining programmes

in areas where we know automation is likely to have a larger impact, such as logistics, retail and repetitive clerical work.


Investment in research and development will also be crucial: currently about five percent of companies undertake 54 percent of R&D spending. For automation to succeed, this needs to change – and fast.

5. Educate for empathy and champion creativity

Emotional intelligence (EI) plays a role in everything. People skills are already incredibly important, but will be in even higher demand in the future. Any job that benefits from the EI that only humans can provide will be in high demand. We need to look at ways to educate for empathy, so that the workforce of tomorrow will have the soft skills to thrive in the future.

The same is true of creativity, where humans will still be in charge of most creative industries. Even in an automated world, creativity will be essential.

These five rules for automation will not provide all the answers, and they won't cover everything. They are intended as a starting point; a call-to-arms to organisations to unite and begin this journey.

Automation is already happening, and it won't stop. But it can deliver in a way that works for everyone, with careful planning, co-operation and considered thinking. A new year is always a good time to make resolutions, so let's start this journey together. 

Where will automation strike next?

The sectors where it's already having an impact

Insurance

In Japan, Fukoku Mutual Life Insurance laid off 30 of its medical insurance representatives, replacing them with an artificial intelligence (AI) system based on IBM's supercomputer Watson to analyse and interpret unstructured data faster than a human.

Banking

New AI smart apps can now conduct cash transactions, open accounts and process applications at a fraction of the cost and time it takes for a human employee equivalent to do them.

Construction

Yes, even bricklayers are under threat. Robot SAMs (semi-automated masons) can lay up to 1,200 bricks per day – compared to the 400 average that a human can do.

Transportation

This is already here in the UAE, both on the Dubai Metro and Masdar City. Taxis are next in line, and Uber is already testing its own fleet of self-driving cars.

Manufacturing

China's Foxconn recently replaced over 60,000 workers with automation robots. In the last two years, 505 factories across Dongguan – in the Guangdong province – have invested \$500m in robots, aiming to replace thousands more workers.

Sector in numbers

47%

The percentage of jobs in the US “at risk” of automation, according to a report from Citibank and Oxford University

\$15.7tr

The estimated global market value of AI in 2030



▼ The new Bulgari Hotel is the centrepiece of Dubai's Jumeirah Bay development



Why the region's hotel boom doesn't have to lead to bust

HofTel's chairman looks at a sector impacted by supply, diversification and increasing competition

ACCORDING TO FIGURES from hotel data company STR, Dubai currently has the largest hotel room pipeline of any city in the world, standing at over 50,000 rooms on an existing room count of less

164,000

The anticipated number of hotel rooms in Dubai by the start of Expo 2020

than 100,000. What's more, it is concentrated at the top end of the market, with around 14,000 upper-upscale rooms (a 60 percent increase), around 13,000 upscale rooms (a 56 percent increase), and

over 8,000 upper-midscale rooms (a whopping 99 percent increase) planned.

Other surveys offer similar results. Ernst & Young show an increase from 94,000 rooms at the start of 2015 to 164,000 by Expo 2020; while Lodging Econometrics suggest a construction pipeline of 194 projects in the UAE totalling 55,264 rooms.

Interestingly, although the market has generally softened in 2017, especially in terms

🔊 THERE ARE MORE DEMAND DRIVERS BEING CREATED – NEW THEME PARKS, NEW SHOPPING EXPERIENCES AND SPECTACULAR NEW BUILDINGS LIKE THE DUBAI FRAME”

of average rates, the impact has yet to be fully felt. In 2017 up to November, according to STR, annual room supply in Dubai grew less than six percent. So if hotel owners are starting to feel the pinch, one has to fear that the worst is yet to come.

The RevPar squeeze

The question being asked now is whether there will be a significant downturn in RevPar in 2018/2019. Being realistic, it's likely. No market in the world, with the exception of Las Vegas in the boom times, at least to my recollection, has added 50 percent room inventory without seeing an impact on hotel performance metrics.

Moreover, there are some strong potential headwinds for Dubai in 2018 – increased competition from new attractions in Abu Dhabi and RAK; the implementation of five percent VAT, which hotels in a weakening market may not be able to pass on to consumers; and the gradual recovery of Turkey and North Africa from internal turmoil, which had diverted tourists to the safe haven of the UAE.

Does that make it all doom and gloom? Not really. I remember asking a head of strategy for a major Dubai firm in 2009 how the emirate would fare, given the meltdown in financial and property markets and its lack of oil and gas. “We’re not worried,” he said. “Basically, if you live between Cairo and Karachi and you want to have fun, you’ll come to Dubai”.

The market has of course borne out that prediction over the past decade, recovering spectacularly from the global financial



▲ Renaissance Downtown Hotel opened to great fanfare in November, 2017

The Gulf and Indian Ocean Hotel Investors' Summit

Some of this year's seminars

Investing in frontier markets – dangerous hype or solid profits?

When: Monday, January 29

Time: 3.05pm-3.45pm

What value beyond distribution can OTAs offer owners and hotel operators?

When: Monday, January 29

Time: 3.45pm-4.15pm

Is Dubai in danger of being overbuilt and could it be heading for a hard landing?

When: Tuesday, January 30

Time: 9am-9.40am

From motor oil to tanning oil – can the Gulf markets successfully diversify?

When: Tuesday, January 30

Time: 2.10pm-2.45pm

The merging of hotel and residential offerings – a good extension to our business or a mortal threat to it?

When: Tuesday, January 30

Time: 3.25pm-4pm

crisis. Moreover, there are more demand drivers being created – new theme parks, new shopping experiences, spectacular new buildings like the Dubai Frame and of course, though a few years off yet, another record-breaking new airport. Nor is it clear that RAK's push into adventure tourism or Abu Dhabi's into cultural tourism will be a negative – they may well offer families the scope for more varied and longer stays in the UAE.

Equally, the decline in oil and gas prices which hit the business side of the visitor equation is also coming to an end, which should help midweek occupancies as well. So even if there is a short-term dip, it will correct itself.

The medium term

Looking further ahead, the competition will only grow. If Saudi Arabia really develops a string of islands in the Red Sea, that will be a challenge for the “sun, sea and sand” European and Russian markets. Sri Lanka and Zanzibar, as they develop, may pull away potential Chinese guests and they have

a historical offering which Dubai can't match.

However, the biggest determinant of success in the long-term may be Expo 2020. It will see a surge of visitors during the year but many markets fare badly after a major event like an Expo, Olympics or World Cup. Why? Because too many hotel rooms and serviced apartments get built to cater for that short-term rush of demand, leaving a big overhang afterwards.

How a market fares in the aftermath depends a lot on how good an impression it has made during the event itself. I recall trying to sell a hotel in Barcelona in 1994, two years after the Olympics, when city-wide occupancy had fallen to 48 percent. It all looked grim. However, the city had done an amazing job in positioning itself for the Olympics and became one of Europe's favourite short-haul destinations thereafter. So, it's all to play for if Dubai can do the same.

Given the Emirates' track record of success to date, my strong feeling is that it will do just fine. Of course, billions of dirhams of investment depends on that and for a more in-depth discussion on the market and the challenges faced by hotel developers and investors, the upcoming Gulf and Indian Ocean Hotel Investor Summit will provide the perfect forum, with 90 senior executives locking horns to debate the best way forward. [EAB](#)

Gulf and Indian Ocean Hotel Investor Summit

When: January 29-30

Where: Yas Viceroy, Abu Dhabi

Tickets: giohis.com



INDIAN ACES POWERED BY: BENTLEY

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Indian Aces



FIFTY INSPIRATIONAL MEN AND WOMEN WHOSE TALENT AND TENACITY SET THE STANDARD FOR ENTREPRENEURIAL EXCELLENCE



Over the next 40 pages you will notice a few recurring themes. Firstly, many of the entrants have shown a restless urge to innovate at every stage of their careers. If they see an opportunity they will go for it, even if it is in a seemingly unrelated field. This restless energy has paid rich dividends.

Related to that point, their drive is not solely about money. If that were the case, why would they invest so much time and capital on new ventures, when they are already lauded for being a success on their home turf?

One final thought: there are not enough women on this list. Many of these leaders started out in a different time, when women simply did not have the same opportunities to shine.

Thankfully, these men succeeded in a country that values the contribution of women. And we know that the future of these companies is being entrusted to daughters as well as sons. Future editions will reflect this fact.

So, once again, we heartily congratulate the 50 who made the list. It is, as ever, just a snapshot of this diverse, ambitious, energetic place we call home.

JEREMY LAWRENCE

Editorial director

RESEARCHERS:

Samer Batter
Anees Dayoub
Bernd Debusman
Tamim Hakim
Neil Halligan

Lubna Hamdan
Jeremy Lawrence
Edward Liamzon
Shayn Shakeel
Eddie Taylor





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Hussein Adam Ali

Chairman

SWISS ARABIAN
PERFUMES GROUP

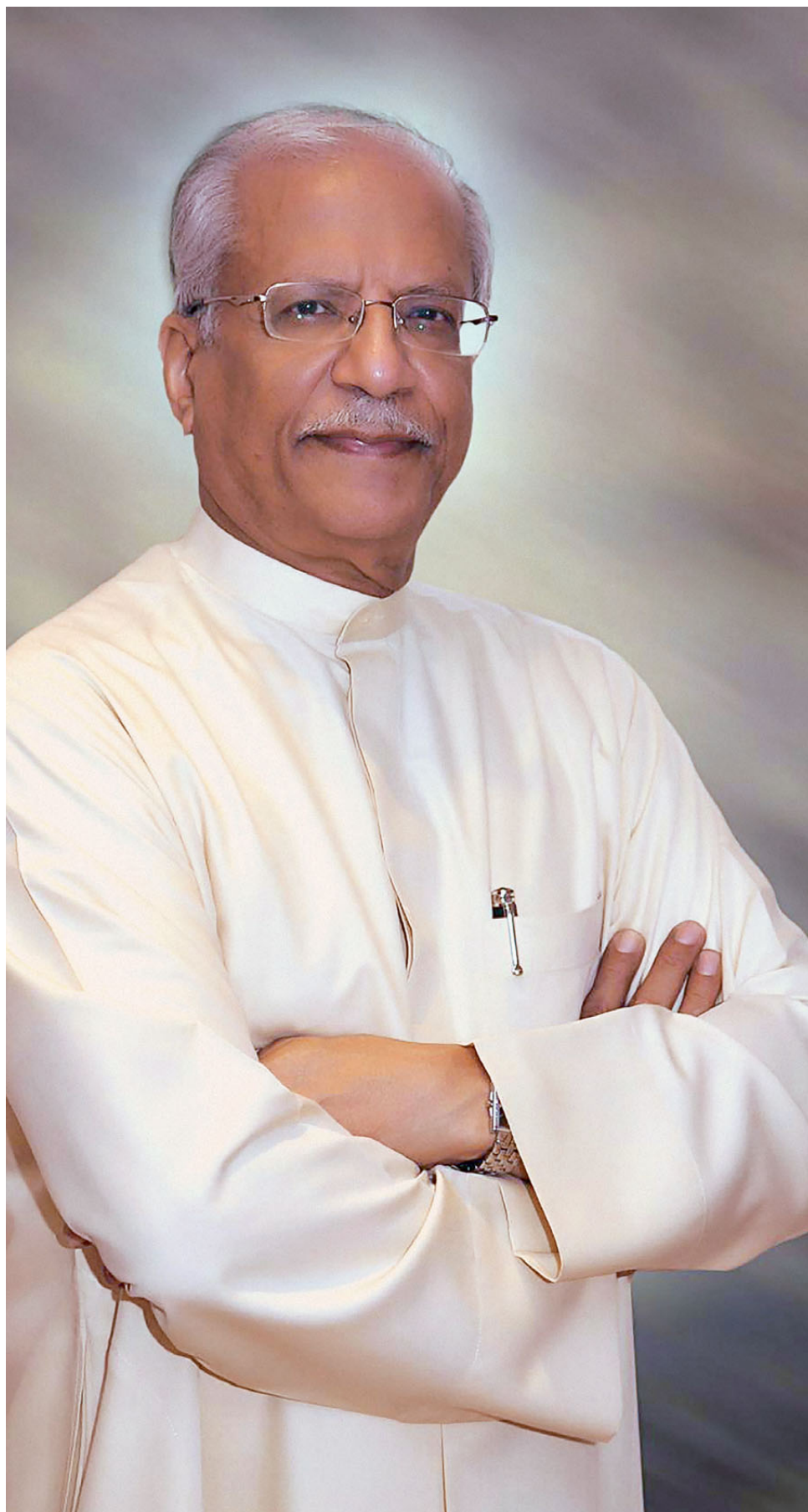
Retail

IN SEPTEMBER 1974, A THEN 30-YEAR-old Hussein Adam Ali arrived in the UAE from Yemen – where he was born and raised in an expatriate family – to look for ways to continue his family’s long tradition of involvement in the perfume industry and start his own venture. He realised this dream the following year in association with famed Swiss perfume maker Givaudan SA, one of the world’s largest and most respected manufacturers of perfumes.

From these humble origins, Swiss Arabian has grown into an international giant that exports to more than 80 countries. It now produces more than 35 million perfumes annually at five high-tech manufacturing facilities spread across a total area of 165,000 sq ft.

In a bid to keep up with the pace of change in the modern age, the company also has implemented its well-known Mashkoor cardless customer loyalty programme for registered customers, which now has amassed a still-growing membership base of more than 150,000 people. Under Ali’s guidance, the company has also recently refreshed its brand identity and adopted a user-friendly approach to buying perfumes online.

He is also a shareholder and chairman of the Abu Dhabi-based Star Paper mills, and he and his family are involved in humanitarian projects and school constructions across India, Afghanistan and Africa.





Adeeb Ahamed

Managing Director
LULU EXCHANGE HOLDINGS
Finance, F&B, Hospitality

A MULTIFACETED ENTREPRENEUR, Adeeb Ahamed's contribution to the UAE economy can't be distilled into a single role or a single sector. Perhaps best known as a dynamic board member of the Lulu Group International Management, he founded Lulu Exchange in 2009 and went on to oversee its expansion into a global company with more than 170 branches in just eight years. He was then invited to initiate other divisions within the Group, such as Tablez, which operates restaurants such as Peppermill, Famous Dave's and Pancake House, and Twenty14 Holdings, the hospitality entity that introduced The Steigenberger Hotel brand to the UAE.

Adeeb's growing stature as a business leader has also earned him a position on the senior advisory board of the South Asia Regional Strategy Group (RSG) at the World Economic Forum (WEF). The invitation-only flagship group and its members are committed to the shared mission of accelerating the regional transformation of South Asia through public-private cooperation. The RSG provides strategic guidance on the forum's regional agenda, and is the highest-level decision making body for the WEF's activities in South Asia.

He is also committed to social projects and has built a girls' hostel in Kerala and helped fund the Indian School in Oman. Adeeb also supports the parents of young children needing heart operations and facilitates the treatment of such infants aged one to five.

“WE ARE HERE IN THE MARKET TO LEAVE A MARK WITH OUR UNPARALLELED CUSTOMER SERVICE”





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Syed Tahir Ali

Entrepreneur and industrialist
VARIOUS
Energy

AFTER RECEIVING A DEGREE IN mechanical engineering from India's Nagpur University, Ali began a career working as a graduate for Voltas Ltd, one of India's leading multinational companies. Soon after, though, Ali decided to follow the entrepreneurial route by launching an electrical panel-building workshop in Mumbai which then developed humidifiers and other industrial products.

In 2000, he began a project to construct a widely praised Dubai pharmaceutical factory, and soon after began manufacturing power and distribution transformers, including the highest rated (230kV/63MVA) transformer in the entire Middle East.

Additionally, he diversified by starting a mechanical, electrical and plumbing (MEP) contracting company which worked on a number of high-profile projects including the Hazza bin Zayed Stadium in Al Ain, which became an instant landmark in the city.

More recently, Ali founded a silico composite insulator manufacturing factory in China, and has also established a number of schools and funds to help youngsters in India pursue secondary and tertiary education.

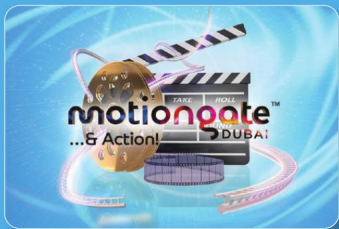


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Neelesh Bhatnagar

Owner and CEO
NB VENTURES
Venture capital

SUCCESS SEEMS TO BE A HABIT for Neelesh Bhatnagar. He arrived in Dubai from New Delhi in 1986 to work with Xerox, and also had stints with Inchcape Shipping Services, MMI and TNT, but it wasn't until he took up a role with retail giants Landmark Group – and in particular their nascent operation in Saudi Arabia – that his business drive and ambition finally found an accommodating home. An assignment that began in 1997 was so successful that it remains one of the largest retail groups in the kingdom 20 years later.

In 2005, he moved to Dubai to help the Landmark Group launch its consumer electronics retail brand Emax – a challenging and competitive field in which Landmark had no exposure but one that personally interested Neelesh. It was a move that, he says, he attributes to the vision of his boss, Micky Jagtiani, whose flexibility and openness to new ideas is something he has always tried to impart to his own teams.

After 19 years with Landmark, he then decided to forge his own path and launch NB Ventures, a venture capital fund to invest in Indian and Middle Eastern start-ups. The vision, he says, is to invest in Indian companies which can then be brought to Dubai and the wider Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region. The objective is to be an active investor and use Neelesh's 30 years of management and leadership experience to mentor young entrepreneurs in India. In 2016, for instance, he invested \$1m in tech company HealthifyMe.

Neelesh is also director of Foundation Holdings, an investment company focusing on healthcare, education and consumer products.



“ YOU SHOULD HAVE A PASSION FOR WHAT YOU DO. THERE'S NO POINT BUYING OR MANUFACTURING SOMETHING UNLESS YOU FEEL IT WILL MAKE A REAL DIFFERENCE IN YOUR CUSTOMERS' LIFE ”



Aswini Kumar Borkotoky

Owner and Managing Director
CARLEASE
Transport



ASWINI K BORKOTOKY HAS BEEN behind the wheel of two car lease companies in the UAE, steering both to impressive growth in his time in the driving seat. He first pressed the accelerator at Diamondlease, expanding it from a fleet of fewer than 25 cars in 1996 to more than 8,800 cars in 2008 – and an employee base of more than 650. In doing so, he created one of the best known automotive brands in the UAE and the largest locally branded car leasing company in the UAE. It’s hardly an exaggeration to say that Aswini single-handedly helped champion the concept of car leasing in the UAE.

In 2009, he switched seats and started Carlease, and with the same focus and tenacity it too became one of the fastest and most dynamic independent car rental companies in the UAE. Its annual growth averages in excess of 30 percent, with Borkotoky pushing relentlessly for higher targets and bigger goals.

Borkotoky was a naval cadet in India before studying at the Naval College of Engineering and then completing an MBA. He also organises eye treatments for the needy and supports children in his home state of Assam.



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Tauseef Chaman Khan

Chairman
TOWER REAL ESTATE
Property management

A BORN ENTREPRENEUR, TAUSEEF Chaman Hayat Khan established his real estate business in the UAE in 1997. Having acquired its maiden property that year, City Tower Real Estate now has a portfolio of more than 90 buildings across the UAE and has, over the past two decades, made an impeccable mark in the property management landscape in the country.

City Tower Real Estate has built its success on the basis of providing a full suite of property management services, whether on a partnering basis or through management service contracts with the property owners, and brokerage services for freehold clients. Since its inception, City Tower Real Estate enjoys the continued confidence of satisfied and assured landlords across the expanse of the UAE.

In 2016, Khan diversified his business interests into property development and launched his new venture, City Properties Development. Its primary focus is the burgeoning affordable housing segment, in which it strives to be the market leader. Today, City Properties has plans for developments in key areas of Dubai and the rest of the Middle East and Asia, each backed by the superlative experience of City Tower Real Estate and its reliable management services.



“ WE ARE GRATEFUL FOR THE OPPORTUNITIES DUBAI HAS GIVEN US, AND WE HAVE TAKEN THEM TO BUILD CITY TOWER REAL ESTATE INTO A FIRM MARKET PLAYER”



Dhahanjay Datar

Chairman and Managing Director
AL ADIL TRADING
Retail

GROCERY STORE MAGNATE DR Dhahanjay Datar arrived in the UAE at the age of 19 to work alongside his father, Mahadev Data, in a small shop in Bur Dubai. This morphed into the import-export firm Al Adil Group, which is well known for its spices sourced from his Mumbai-based Masala King Exports.

In December, the UAE's "Masala King" opened his 39th store – in Bahrain – and now has outlets spread across the GCC and India. The group also trades in food items and has expanded into cosmetics. Additionally, the company has a manufacturing unit in Dubai's Al Quoz, where it produces a range of foodstuffs under the Peacock brand.

Success was not handed to Datar – he recalls never having breakfast while growing up and walking barefoot to school, a far cry from the custom-made Rolls-Royce he now drives.



Zulekha Daud

Founder and Chairperson
ZULEKHA HEALTHCARE GROUP
Healthcare

FIRST ARRIVING IN THE UAE IN THE early 1960s, Dr Zulekha Daud began her medical career working in rudimentary facilities in a country that, at the time, still had no hospitals. Setting up her clinic in 1964, Dr Daud later opened Zulekha Hospital in Sharjah in 1992, followed by the establishment of a second hospital in Dubai in 2005.

As well as running hospitals in Dubai and Sharjah, Zulekha also oversees a number of medical centres and pharmacies across the UAE. In December

“ I WAS DETERMINED TO GIVE RESIDENTS A HEALTHCARE FACILITY THAT IS EASILY ACCESSIBLE AND AFFORDABLE LIKE IN THEIR OWN HOME COUNTRY”

2016, the group announced its first foray into the overseas market through the \$43.6 million Alexis Multi-Specialty Hospital in Nagpur.

Dr Daud is also well-known for her support for CSR initiatives, which have included education and vocational training programmes for women, clean drinking water initiatives, and public health awareness campaigns such as the “smear, don’t fear” cervical cancer awareness campaign and the “Pink it Now” breast cancer campaign.





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Prasad Galla

Managing director
RGI
Construction

UNDER PRASAD GALLA'S LEADERSHIP, RGI – which was once primarily involved in small- and medium-sized infrastructure contracts in India – has become one of the Middle East's premier turnkey contracting companies, primarily for industrial projects. The company has also diversified away from traditional contracting and is now involved in steel buildings, the electromechanical field, firefighting and refrigeration.

Over the course of the last three years, the company has witnessed significant expansion, and has become a dominant force in the industry as it builds manufacturing plants, cold storage units and distribution centres across the UAE. With offices in Dubai and Sharjah and another one soon to be inaugurated in Abu Dhabi, the company today employees nearly 1,000 people for its various engineering projects and industrial verticals.

Additionally, the company has expanded to include six independent clusters to handle its business interests in the region. Aside from steel building and civil construction in the low rise and industrial segments, these clusters include firefighting systems and service specialists, industrial grade flooring contracting, industrial refrigeration, facilities maintenance, industrial products, logistics and shipping.

Looking to the future, Galla has established a "2020 vision" for the company, with bold plans to expand operations in Oman, Africa and the Commonwealth of Independent States.



Anil Gehani

Managing director
ZABADANI REAL ESTATE
Real estate



IN 1990, ANIL GEHANI FOUNDED Zabadani Real Estate, which over the last 25 years has grown into one of the most successful and trusted names in real estate. Just over 28 years from its inception, Zabadani Real Estate is now made up of 25 experienced team members who provide the gamut of real estate and advisory services, including the selling and leasing of apartments, serviced apartments, villas, luxury properties, office, retail warehouses and staff accommodation, as well as more specialised services such as feasibility studies and surveys.

Notably, over the years Gehani has been personally involved in a number of important deals and negotiations, and made national headlines in 2014 for his work in selling five “world islands” off the coast of Dubai, which saw him negotiate with an unnamed Bollywood star on a \$19m deal.



Renuka Jagtiani

Vice chairperson and CEO
LANDMARK GROUP
Retail

IN 1993, RENUKA WAS THE MAIN player behind the creation of Splash, the high-street fashion brand, and has been involved with Landmark Group, one of the region’s largest retailers for over 20 years. At Landmark, she has guided the group’s corporate strategy, helped strengthen its fashion and hospitality businesses, and spearheaded the company’s international expansion and moves into the world of e-commerce. The group currently has 2,400 outlets and a customer base of more than 30 million people across the Middle East, North Africa and the Indian subcontinent.

In April 2017, Jagtiani and her husband, Micky, were inducted into the Retail Hall of Fame at the World Retail Congress. “At Landmark, our focus is value, and we value those whose lives we touch,” she said.

200

The number of Splash stores that are now open across 14 countries in the MENA region

Sunil John

Founder and CEO
ASDA'A BURSON-MARSTELLER
Media



LAST DECEMBER ASDA'A BURSON-Marsteller picked up two major wins – Middle East Consultancy of the Year and Social Media Communications – at the Gold Standard Awards in Hong Kong. The awards were for the social media campaign #AvayaEngage, which said a lot about the company’s founder, Sunil John, who is constantly pushing his company forward to ensure it stays ahead of the competition and responds to evolving market needs.

At the heart of the public relations business in the Middle East for more than two decades, John has shaped ASDA'A Burson-Marsteller to be the benchmark PR consultancy in the Arab World. Its Arab Youth Survey has become a key agenda-setter for Middle East businesses and policymakers, revealing the attitudes and opinions of more than 3,000 Arab youth. A unique thought leadership initiative, and one of the most widely cited pieces of public opinion research on the region by media throughout the world, its importance can’t be overstated.

Last year, the company picked up a raft of new clients, including ADNOC, Visa, Roche Diagnostics, HTC and the UAE Federal Tax Authority.





INDIAN ACES POWERED BY: BENTLEY

BENTLEY EMIRATES

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“ EVERYWHERE IN THE WORLD, THE BUSINESS ENVIRONMENT IS UNDERGOING UPHEAVALS AND CHANGES, BUT WE ARE CONFIDENT THAT DUBAI WILL ALWAYS BE A KEY INVESTMENT HUB FOR SERIOUS PROPERTY INVESTORS”

Parvez Khan

Chairman
PACIFIC VENTURES
Real estate

DESCRIBING HIMSELF AS “AN entrepreneur at heart”, Parvez Khan has become one of the most well-known and successful developers of real estate in the UAE. His company Pacific Ventures has developed some of the most elite real estate projects in Dubai, with a portfolio that is able to boast the likes of Burj Pacific, Pacific Edmonton Elm, Royal Estate By Shahrukh Khan and Point Residencia, to name a few.

The successful template for Pacific Ventures was first established in Pune, Maharashtra. Right from the company’s inception to its geographical expansion to the Middle East, Parvez Khan has been able to thrive in extremely competitive markets using a combination of energy, enthusiasm and bold, innovative ideas. The company continues to strive to be the benchmark for innovation and a provider for cost-effective, inspirational development concepts.

He is not only a passionate developer but also an avid cricket follower, and he is on the list of some of the very

few people who have worked with all three Khans of Bollywood. Parvez Khan launched Royal Estate By Shahrukh Khan in Dubai, working very closely with the Badshah of Bollywood. He also has close ties with Sohail Khan and produced Salman Khan’s Jai Ho.

Another feather in his cap is the formation of the Pacific Sports Club and his association with former Indian captain, MS Dhoni. The club owns all rights to MS Dhoni Cricket Academy in UAE and will soon spread its wings to other Gulf countries as well as South Africa, UK and Canada. Since its launch in 2017, the sports club has created a buzz and is one of the top-notch sports clubs in Dubai.

Parvez Khan, along with Sohail Khan, owns the Maratha Arabians team in the fastest format of cricket ever, the T10 League, of which he is also on the board of directors. Playing for his team are legendary cricketers such as Virender Sehwag, Mohammed Amir, Imad Wasim and Dwayne Bravo.

For someone who swam against tide following his passion, Parvez Khan has built an empire based on hard work, perseverance and dedication.

AED2.3bn

Pacific Ventures’ investment in their Royal Estates mixed-use development in Dubai Investment Park



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Faizal Kottikollon

Founder and Chairman
KEF HOLDINGS
Manufacturing

HAILING FROM A FAMILY OF industrialists in Kerala, Kottikollon started Sharjah-based foundry Emirates Techno Casting to manufacture valves for the oil and gas industry. In 2012, the expanded facility was sold to Tyco International for \$400m – capital which was used to found KEF Holdings.

The DIFC-based firm specialises in offsite manufacturing technology in several industries, including healthcare, education, sports and agriculture.

In December 2016, KEF Infra (a KEF Holdings subsidiary) opened the world's largest fully integrated offsite manufacturing park in the Indian state of Tamil Nadu and produces everything from precast products and prefabricated room to windows, furniture, marble and granite. The facility is able to construct buildings in half the time and 25 percent of the cost, the company claims.



Yusuffali MA

Founder and Managing Director
LULU GROUP
Retail

THE ASTUTE BUSINESS VISION and strategic mind of Kerala-born businessman Yusuffali MA have consistently delivered ambitious growth for Lulu Group. It's little wonder, then, that he was chosen for a prestigious *Arabian Business* Achievement Award in 2018. Headquartered in Abu Dhabi, Lulu Group is best known for its chain of hypermarkets, which have long served a wide segment of Gulf residents.

The growth continues, too. Just last week it opened its 12th outlet in Saudi Arabia, its 143rd branch in total. It plans another six before the end of the year, bringing its total investment in the kingdom to SR500m by the end of 2019. In the same few days, Lulu Group International announced a partnership with the World Economic Forum (WEF) on a food security project.

“ I BELIEVE IN MY MANAGEMENT SCENARIO OF DELEGATING POWER TO MY PEOPLE. I STRONGLY BELIEVE IN MY PEOPLE, MY COLLEAGUES”

Twenty14 Holdings, the Group's hospitality investment arm, has also completed the acquisition of a Waldorf Astoria property in Edinburgh, Scotland, for \$120m. The Caledonian joins a portfolio of \$650m worth of luxury property across the UK, the Middle East and, of course, India.

It is no wonder, then, that Deloitte last year ranked Lulu Group as the top retailer in the Middle East and 27th in a list of the fastest growing retailers in the entire world.

\$6.2bn

The retail revenue that Lulu Group now rakes in annually across its operations in nine countries



Prasanth Manghat

CEO and Executive Director
NMC HEALTH
Healthcare



PRASANTH MANGHAT LEADS THE largest private healthcare company in the UAE, which is now among the top three fertility providers in the world. Prasanth was promoted to the role of Chief Executive Officer of NMC in March 2017 and now enjoys the responsibility of building on the achievements of his predecessor, BR Shetty. His promotion marked the launch of NMC's growth strategy; one that encompasses capacity creation and capability building to expand into more complex segments of the healthcare industry.

Prasanth has been with the company for the last 14 years, serving in key roles within the NMC portfolio of companies, including the roles of Deputy CEO, CFO at NMC Healthcare, and CFO at Neopharma. As CFO, he spearheaded the company's landmark IPO in 2012, raising \$187.5m in less than 100 days. As Deputy CEO, Prasanth also helped NMC acquire niche healthcare companies such as ProVita International Medical Center (Long Term Care), Americare Home Health Services and, in 2016, Fakhri IVF Fertility Centre – the latter earning him "Deal Maker of the Year" at the 10th CFO Strategies Forum MENA.

As Deputy CEO, he steepened the company's growth curve, with its market capitalisation increasing by almost 100 percent year-on-year until it crossed \$9bn. Prasanth has also guided NMC's first forays outside the UAE with the acquisition of Clinica Eugin, a leading provider of infertility treatment, based in Spain and Colombia. Subsequently, Prasanth has been steadily expanding the Eugin business to cover key markets of Italy, Denmark and Brazil.

“ THE NEXT BIG DISRUPTION WILL BE IN HEALTHCARE. WE ARE WORKING TOWARDS THAT JOURNEY OF BECOMING A PART OF THIS CONSTRUCTIVE DISRUPTION IN HEALTHCARE”



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Promoth Manghat

CEO
UAE EXCHANGE GROUP
Finance

OVER THE LAST DECADE, PROMOTH Manghat has overseen the development of UAE Exchange into one of the leading providers of remittance, foreign exchange and payments services in the country, transforming it into a truly global entity and building category leaders from various brands within the group.

Today, UAE Exchange has close to 800 direct offices in 31 countries, which are able to serve more than 15 million customers – the largest global network in its class. In 2016, UAE Exchange handled \$29m in remittances globally, which represents 6.5 percent of the total remittance market share. It also handled \$64bn in foreign exchange.

One of its brands, Xpress Money, a global money transfer service, now enjoys a presence in more than 160 countries and over 180,000 agent locations, and offers account credit, mobile wallet, door delivery, ATM Payout and credit-to-remit card facilities. Its focus on digital innovation resulted in Xopoto, the world's first app that enables money transfer through social networking sites.

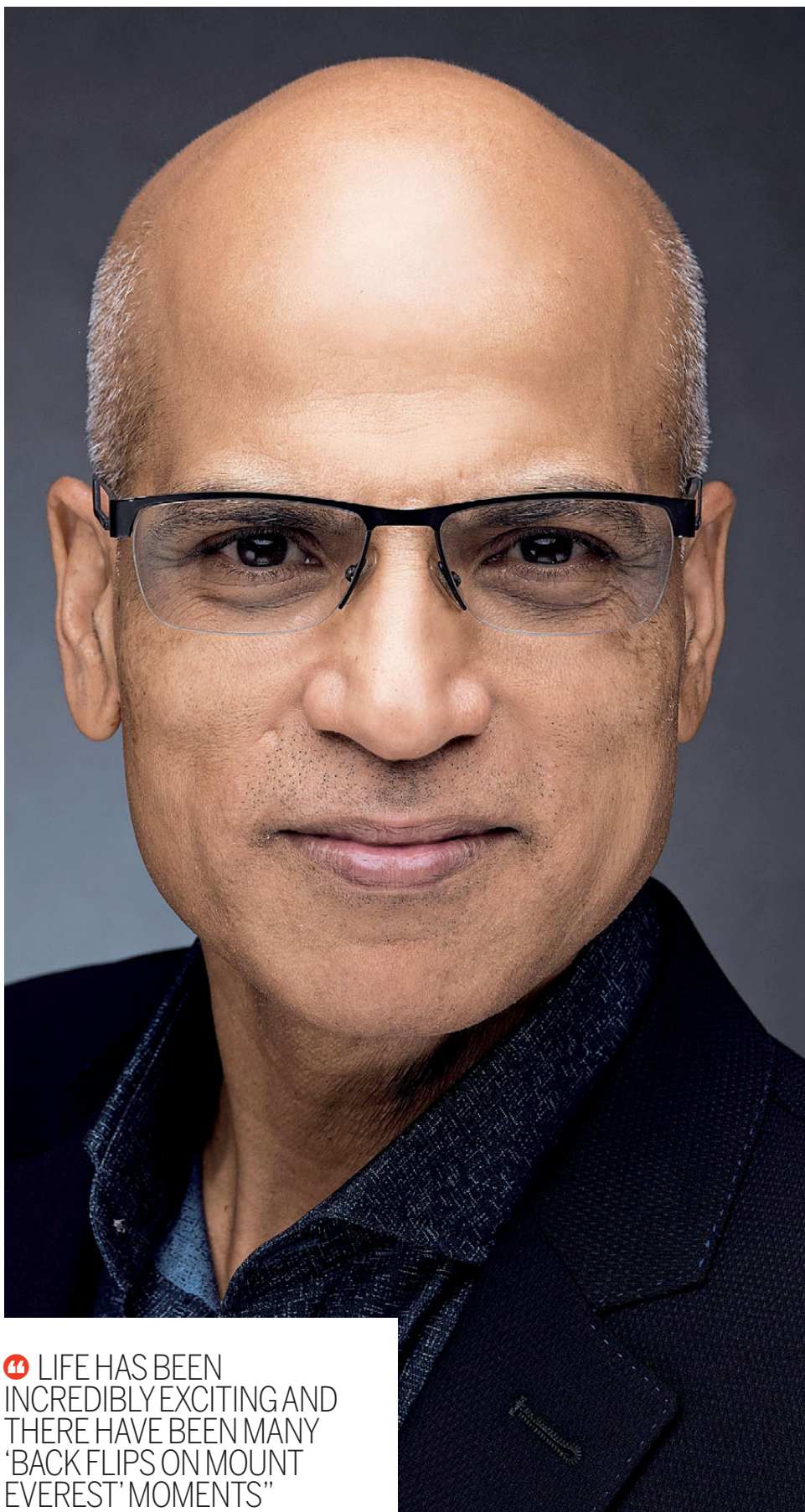
Travelex, the world's leading independent foreign exchange specialist, has a 13 percent share in the retail forex market globally. It has a global footprint including 1,500 stores and 1,300 ATMs across 27 countries. The presence includes all major international airports, seaports, rail and tourist locations of the world.





BENTLEY

BENTLEY EMIRATES



Michael Mascarenhas

Group CEO
DESERT GROUP
Diversified



MICHAEL MASCARENHAS HAS BUILT a career around revitalising businesses that have, for whatever reason, lost their way. With clear insight and hard-won experience of the UAE business landscape, he is able to see through a company's complexities, rediscover their core values and bring them back to life. Take Desert Group, for example, a company that designs, landscapes, builds and manages golf courses, as well as delivering a range of services centred around water, green and sustainability.

Since 2012, when he took the helm, Mascarenhas has driven it forward with renewed purpose, enabling it to expand its portfolio, broaden its scope and increase its workforce to 3,200.

Hailing from a small town in Rajasthan called Ajmer, he says his simple upbringing surrounded by the Thar Desert instilled a sense of respect and humility. Recalling a childhood of rushing outside to catch a glimpse of passing plane, it also fostered a sense of the curious, of always "wanting to know", a trait that continues to propel his business life to this day.

His embrace of diversity and inclusion is also evident at Desert Group, which has one of the most integrated work inclusion programmes for people with learning, development and cognitive disabilities in the world.

Prior to Desert Group, the art enthusiast transformed the Wall Street Group into a global power house and grew its US operations at a time when money remittance was taboo.

“LIFE HAS BEEN INCREDIBLY EXCITING AND THERE HAVE BEEN MANY 'BACK FLIPS ON MOUNT EVEREST' MOMENTS”



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Ashish Mehta

Founder and Managing Partner
ASHISH MEHTA & ASSOCIATES
Law



AN INTERNATIONAL ATTORNEY, currently practicing from offices in Dubai, India and Singapore, Ashish Mehta is licensed to practice law in the UAE, including before the Courts of Dubai International Financial Centre, the UK, India and Singapore.

His law practice includes some of the largest ongoing projects in the Middle East, India, Pakistan and other Asian countries. He has worked with international and commercial legal procedures providing analysis and counselling on complex legal documents and policies. Clients have come from across the world, giving him a great working relationship with all cultures and ensuring he has obtained a vast knowledge of international transactions.

Mehta has written columns on politics and current affairs. He is a Fellow at the Indian Council of Arbitrators, New Delhi, and an accredited Arbitrator on the panel of the Indian Council of Arbitrators.

As part of its corporate social responsibility programme, his firm renders pro bono legal services to Indians residing in the UAE through the offices of the Indian Workers Resource Centre (IWRC) in Dubai.



Yogesh Mehta

CEO
PETROCHEM MIDDLE EAST
Energy

YOGESH (YOGI) MEHTA IS A driven man who has come a long way but constantly has his eye on what comes next. He established Petrochem Middle East in 1995 with friend and business partner David Lubbock. The company has since gone from strength-to-strength to become one of the largest independent petrochemical distributors in the region, with a state-of-the-art storage terminal for bulk and drum chemicals in Jebel Ali.

A Harvard Business School alumnus, he believes that his organisation's success has been based on anticipating market and customer needs. He constantly asserts that his employees are the business's greatest assets, and once told *Arabian Business* how he will sit with everyone from the cleaning staff to board members in his company canteen so that he can gauge their views.

\$500bn

The planned investment in energy projects by oil and gas producers in the Gulf by 2025

PNC Menon

Founder and Chairman
SOBHA GROUP
Construction and real estate

ORIGINALLY HAILING FROM THE INDIAN state of Kerala, Menon has built up a formidable reputation since starting his career working as an interior designer. That was in Oman in the 1970s, on projects that included the sultanate's famed Qaboos Grand Mosque. After moving to Dubai, he founded Sobha Group, which is currently hard at work on two of the emirate's most significant projects: the \$10bn Mohammed Bin Rashid District One development – which he's described as the "most exciting" project in his life – as well as the \$4bn Sobha Hartland. Today, Menon's son Ravi has taken the helm, allowing Menon to focus on expanding the group's Middle East operations.

Firoz Merchant

Chairman
PURE GOLD GROUP
Retail

KNOWN AS THE "MERCHANT WITH a heart of gold", Pure Gold chairman Firoz Merchant has become famous throughout the UAE and India for his philanthropy, specifically for helping secure the release of thousands of people held in UAE jails due to unpaid debts. "My philosophy is simple... How can I pay back the [host] country? Saying thanks is not enough. How good a human are you? You have to prove it," he told *Arabian Business* in 2015.

His philanthropy has cost him well over \$4m. In January 2017 alone, he paid over \$40,000 worth of prisoners charges, bringing the total number of prisoners he has helped since 2011 to over 4,000.



BENTLEY

BENTLEY EMIRATES



“OUR ADAPTABILITY, INNOVATION AND CUSTOMER-CENTRIC APPROACH IS WHAT MAKES US AS A COMPANY STAND OUT”



WITH FOUR DECADES OF EXPERIENCE in the oil, gas and construction industries, Nazimuddin Mohammed continues to head UAE-based PetroGas, which he founded in the Emirates in 2006.

Headquartered in Dubai, it has a number of branches across the region, including in Saudi Arabia, Kuwait and Oman. But it did not stop there, further expanding to the US, Singapore, India and China.

The group specialises in piping products and related services such as project supply management, operating in sectors including oil, gas, power, construction and water. It made much of its revenue in the oil-dependent GCC by providing products used during the exploration and production of oil, gas and natural gas liquids. It also offers what it calls value-added services, including project trailers, which it claims reduces costs in the supply chain.

One of the company’s main targets is to use new technologies to help reduce carbon footprint, with particular focus on its hydrocarbon and power industries. Moreover, it focuses on helping its clients optimise costs and control risks on their capital projects.

In October last year, it took part in the Kuwait Oil & Gas Show and Conference as an exhibitor. In 2015, it was recognised as one of Dubai’s top 100 SMEs, and given an award by Sheikh Ahmed Bin Rashid Al Maktoum, chairman of the Mohammed Bin Rashid Foundation.

Nazmuddin Mohammed

Founder
PETROGAS PIPING
Oil, gas and construction



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Thumbay Moideen

Founder and President
THUMBAY GROUP
Diversified

IT WAS IN THE MID-1990S THAT Mangalore-born Thumbay Moideen decided to trade the timber and construction industry for healthcare and establish Gulf Medical University in Ajman. This venture was the first in what would mushroom to become GMC Hospitals, with state-of-the-art medical facilities in Ajman, Fujairah and Sharjah.

In 1998, Moideen became the founding president of the Thumbay Group, which delivered an expansive portfolio of healthcare services through Thumbay Clinics located in Dubai, Ajman, Umm Al Quwain and Ras Al Khaimah. His background in the construction industry helped Thumbay launch a subsidiary which, in 2016, announced plans to build \$326m of new healthcare and residential projects in the Gulf, including six new hospitals and 12 clinics in the UAE, Egypt and India.

The group said it was embarking upon a massive recruitment drive to support its planned growth, targeting 25,000 new employees by 2022 in addition to the 5,000 current staff.

A third-generation entrepreneur, Moideen was primed for business from an early age, handling the India-based conglomerate established by his father Ahamed Hajee Mohiudeen, and grandfather Yenepoya Moideen Kunhi before him. Moideen has used his talents to expand the firm even further.

Following numerous business trips to the UAE, he decided to establish the Thumbay Group in 1998. It has since ventured into health education, healthcare, research, diagnostics, retail pharmacy, health communications, information technology, retail opticals, wellness, hospitality, distribution and real estate. His son, Akbar Moideen Thumbay, is vice-president of Thumbay Group's healthcare and retail division.





BENTLEY

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Azad Moopen

Chairman and Managing Director
ASTER DM HEALTHCARE
Healthcare



STARTING FROM A SINGLE DOCTOR practice in Dubai, over the last 30 years Azad Moopen has turned Aster DM healthcare into one of the UAE's largest private healthcare providers, with 323 hospitals, clinics and pharmacies across the Middle East, India and as far afield as the Philippines. As of last September 2017, the company directly employs nearly 16,000 people, including 2,308 doctors and 7,549 nurses and paramedics.

Currently, Aster DM Healthcare is exploring expansion opportunities in new markets including Egypt, Iraq, Syria and the African continent, as well as within its traditional UAE market, where Dr Moopen plans to fully contribute to Dubai's aim to become one of the world's foremost destinations for medical tourism.

Dr Moopen is also a well-known philanthropist who has earmarked 20 percent of his personal wealth for philanthropy. Aster DM is also heavily involved in a number of not-for-profit projects, such as early disease and cancer screening centres in India, "doctor on wheels" mobile clinics, local empowerment programmes for women and children in India, and free or subsidised treatments for the underprivileged.

“ IN THE LAST 30 YEARS, WE HAVE DONE WELL, THANKS MAINLY TO THE SUPPORT OF THE UAE'S RULERS AND THE HARD WORK OF THE PEOPLE AT ASTER DM MEDICAL ”



INDIAN ACES POWERED BY:

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“IT WAS THE COMPETITIVE SPIRIT THAT DROVE ME TO EXCEL AT WHATEVER I TOOK UP. I ALWAYS WANTED TO ACHIEVE THE BEST – BE IT IN SPORTS OR ACADEMIC ACTIVITIES”

Nawab Shaji Ul Mulk

Founder and chairman

MULK HOLDINGS

Manufacturing

NAWAB SHAJI UL MULK HAILS FROM the aristocratic family of Nawabs of Kurnool and is the founder and chairman of Mulk Holdings, a global business powerhouse with diversified interests in the manufacture of building facades, facade contracting, healthcare, plastics and sports assets. The company employs a workforce of more than 7,000 globally and has operations and manufacturing bases in the US, Europe, India, the UAE, Oman and Ghana.

He chairs the Mulk Foundation, the active CSR wing of the group, and is responsible for various philanthropic initiatives in UAE and India, offering free medical clinics, free libraries, support for disabled children and an orphan marriages programme.

The flagship product of the group is the manufacture and distribution of the A2 fire-rated aluminium composite panel under the brand name of Alubond A2. The brand has grown into the world's largest aluminium composite panel manufacturer with an installed capacity of 25m sqm and installations in more than 100 countries. Mulk Holdings is ranked eighth among the Most Admired

Companies in GCC index and in the top 10 best employers of GCC.

The company under Mr Mulk has won numerous national awards such as Sheikh Mohammed's MRM Excellence Award in 2009 for the Largest Foreign Manufacturer in UAE, a Sharjah Excellence Award in 2011 for the Largest Manufacturer in Large Scale Industry, and an Ajman Chamber of Commerce Award as Ajman's Largest Manufacturer in 2010 and Power Brand in GCC.

An avid cricket enthusiast, he is the only Indian member of the Emirates Cricket Board, headed by HH Sheikh Nahyan bin Mubarak Al Nahyan. The latest passion of Shaji Ul Mulk is the T10 cricket league, which has created history and become a global phenomenon.

Mr Mulk was honoured to be invited by the crown prince of Abu Dhabi HH Mohammed bin Zayed Al Nahyan to be a part of a delegation of UAE businessmen to accompany His Royal Highness during his visit to India.

Family comes first to Shaji and he is vocal about the harmony and peace it brings him. His wife Farha Mulk and son Adnan Ul Mulk, with fiancée Noorie, and daughter Nida Mulk and son-in-law Bilal Khan with grandchildren Hazza and Hassan and youngest daughter Sania Mulk, are his biggest treasures.





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▶ Dr Nawab Shafi Uf Mulk has become known as a "Pioneer in Teleradiology"

“ I FEEL BLESSED TO HAVE EMBARKED ON THIS JOURNEY WITH THE SUPPORT OF EXCELLENT AND DEDICATED STAFF, SAVOURING THE CHALLENGES EACH DAY BRINGS IN A HEALTHCARE ENTREPRENEUR’S LIFE ”

Dr Nawab Shafi Ul Mulk

Owner and Founder
GLOBAL HAWK
Healthcare

A HEALTHCARE ENTREPRENEUR AND pioneer, Dr Nawab Shafi Ul Mulk has forged a path in medical innovation, particularly in the field of teleradiology, where his achievements have received an unending supply of awards and recognition in recent years.

His journey began with the establishment of Global Hawk and the development of his Global Hawk Telemedicine and Teleradiology technologies. From here, he developed the Global Hawk Imaging & Diagnostic Centres which, from a single branch in Deira, grew rapidly into a chain with multiple locations – all with state-of-the-art radiological technology, the main imaging modalities, including open and closed MRI, CT scan, CBCT, 2D, 3D/4D ultrasound, digital mammography and bone densitometer, as well as top-rated clinical laboratory diagnostic devices.

The centres are today considered as one of the best in terms of high-quality diagnostic imaging services and patient-centred care. With its goal of becoming a dedicated healthcare provider

and imaging resource and research centre across the globe, GHID serves as a gateway to international-expert-standard diagnostic opinions – while also streamlining management and investigative recommendations.

Dr Mulk’s company has spearheaded an AED250m expansion plan, which includes a chain of Global Hawk Diagnostic Centres with dedicated PET-CT/MRI and Cyclotron units across the GCC, India and Eastern Europe, and a chain of Global Hawk multi-speciality Polyclinics and Medical Centres. The group is also looking to start a 50-bed Mulk oncology charity hospital in India, as well as Mulk speciality hospitals in the UAE.

In 2017, Dr Mulk scored a double win at the Annual Health Awards in the UAE, securing the Distinguished Achiever award in Healthcare and Innovative Technology. The same year he was also named World Healthcare Innovative Entrepreneur of the year by the Global Association of Physicians of Indian Origin and the Indian Business Excellence Awards from HH Sheikh Nahyan Bin Mubarak Al Nahyan.

Dr Mulk and his company have also been honoured and lauded with the “World’s Greatest Brands” and “World’s Greatest Leader” awards in 2017.

\$200m

The current value of Global Hawk’s healthcare empire



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Kabir Mulchandani

Chairman and Group CEO
FIVE HOLDINGS
 Construction and hospitality



KABIR MULCHANDANI IS A hands-on developer who famously forwent his air-conditioned office in Downtown Dubai for a construction site while building his flagship FIVE Palm Jumeirah Dubai. The completion of the \$1.17bn hotel sealed his successful comeback in the Dubai property industry. Not only did the hotel hand over its 220 stunning residences and 450 hotel rooms but it was also opened ahead of schedule.

Mulchandani and FIVE Holdings recently announced they have completed 60 percent of the construction of another five-star hotel, this time in Jumeirah Village Circle. The award-winning project, which is slated for completion in Q4 2018, will feature 247 hotel rooms and suites, 221 hotel apartments and 33 four-bedroom hotel apartments, all with private pools.

Mulchandani, who won a *CEO Middle East* award at the end of 2017, is a keen philanthropist. In the same month that FIVE Palm Jumeirah Dubai opened, he launched Project Udaan with the aim of saving a life a day in India. The project is funded by FIVE Hotels and Resorts and provides daily life-saving surgery to cure children who are born with congenital heart defects.



LT Pagarani

Chairman
CHOITHRAMS GROUP
 Retail

LT PAGARANI'S SUPERMARKET empire started long before the brand established itself in the UAE three decades ago. It was initially set up in Sierra Leone in the 1940s by Thakurdas Choithram Pagarani, who grew it into an international giant spanning Europe, North America, Africa and finally, the GCC.

Today, it has over 25 stores in the Gulf. But the younger Pagarani has done just as good a job in expanding the group as his predecessor, developing it to cover sectors such as hospitality, clothing, logistics and distribution.

The group continues to grow in the UAE, where it opened its new flagship supermarket in Mirdif in 2016, followed by its Marketplace by Choithrams concept in October last year at Jumeirah Golf Estates. The 16,441 sq ft supermarket is spread across two levels and houses a range of fresh foods and non-food products.

59.2m

The UAE's annual food consumption by 2025, according to the UAE Food Industry Report

Jacky Panjabi

Founder
JACKY'S GROUP
 Retail

DESPITE HEADING FAMILY FIRM Jacky's Group for 45 years, founder Jacky Panjabi is as involved in the business as ever, often referring to the phrase, "Players keep on changing, but business is always young." The businessman started the firm as a small mail order business for television and typewriters in 1970, and grew it into a \$550m wholesale electronics company operating across Africa, the Middle East and the Far East.

In 2013, it launched Jacky's Retail in partnership with Samsung, to open the electronics giant's branded stores across the UAE. The first store in Mall of Emirates continues to be one of Samsung's most successful in the world.

Dr Sanjay Parashar

Founder and plastic surgeon
COCOONA CENTRE FOR AESTHETIC TRANSFORMATION
 Healthcare

DR SANJAY PARASHAR HAS BEEN in the plastic surgery industry for 20 years, having started his career in India before moving to Dubai in 2005 to launch the Cocoon brand, which offers everything from weight loss surgery to dental. Its most popular procedures, of course, are plastic and cosmetic surgeries – something the doctor refers to as "art". So far, he has four centres in Dubai and two in India, with a specialised hospital currently being built on Jumeirah Beach Road.

He has performed over 10,000 surgeries in the region, many of which are aimed at helping victims of acid attacks, particularly women.



KS Parag

Managing Director
FVC INC
Information technology

A VISIONARY PIONEER AT THE forefront of regional technology innovation in the communications and information technology sectors, Parag is currently the Managing Director of FVC Inc – the region’s leading new generation value added distributor (VAD), which operates offices in the UAE, Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Kenya and Morocco. The firm is also establishing an on-the-ground presence in Pakistan, Nigeria and the Ivory Coast.

Armed with almost three decades of experience in transforming the telecommunications landscape across the Middle East, Africa and West Asia, Parag has evolved FVC from a start-up specialising in rich-media solutions and pioneering video streaming technology, into a full-spec networking and information security solutions provider.

FVC has a stated commitment to increasing clients’ productivity and commercial profitability through innovative enterprise technology solutions. It delivers on this promise via top quality products and services licensed through the world’s leading suppliers in their fields.

Parag is also a partner at education start-up Nischint Technologies that offers parental guidance and security applications for families. It allows parents to monitor, manage and protect their children’s phones and tablets. The firm has successfully brought 900,000 subscribers to the global Nischint Consumer portal.

He is also a board member at SILEX Corporation, a technology innovator headquartered in the US and Lebanon, and is the president of non-profit association TiE Dubai Chapter, which was founded in Silicon Valley in the 1990s and encourages the development of entrepreneurs through networking events and mentorship programmes.





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Dr Ravi Pillai

Chairman
RP GROUP
Construction

DR RAVI PILLAI WAS BORN TO A FAMILY of farmers in Kerala, but today has a reported \$3.5bn net worth. Moreover, his private firm RP Group completed over \$25bn worth of projects, covering more than one million sq ft of real estate projects alone, despite the Saudi-based conglomerate covering eight sectors including construction, infrastructure, retail, hospitality and healthcare.

And the projects do not end there. The group's successful subsidiary Taj RP International has almost completed the Crowne Plaza Dubai Marina, set to open this year, with RP Global also developing two projects in Business Bay and on Sheikh Zayed Road, worth \$1.5bn.

But the sky is the limit for Pillai, who told *Arabian Business* he has plans to expand the company across the GCC and abroad. In Saudi Arabia, he made headline news when he revealed he would hire 3,000 Indian workers who lost their jobs in the Kingdom's construction downturn last year, when the government suspended payments due to budget curbs.

The billionaire, who started his first business at the age of 14, resides in Dubai, where he also made headlines after spending \$8.5m on his daughter's wedding in 2015. It was allegedly the most expensive wedding to ever take place in Kerala, India.





“RUGGED DETERMINATION AND PATIENCE HAVE BECOME KEY MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES FOR MGT OPERATIONS”

MGT GROUP WAS ESTABLISHED IN 1988 in Dubai with a mission to become the region's leading supply house for seamless procurement services.

Thirty years later, MGT is represented in 11 countries, calling on a 1,500-strong team that has a wide range of skill sets and enjoys a very high rating of credibility in the financial sector.

MGT's main areas of business include construction, joinery, logistics support, shipping, oil and gas supplies, safety, security and surveillance. MGT also works in close consonance with the UN on turnkey missions.

Ashok Puri is the man behind this three-decade march toward global influence. The Kenyan national of Indian origin earned his degree from the University of Delhi in Business and International Affairs, then did his ACCA from London and is today a Fellow of the British Institute of Management.

In 1975 he joined the well-known Mehta Group in Kenya and worked with them till 1981. He was instrumental in setting up the South Nuanza Sugar in Awendo in Kenya in 1979. Before that he jumpstarted his career working with the World Bank in Kenya.

He set up Maitha General Trading (MGT) in the 1980s in Dubai, fast-tracking it to becoming a multi-purpose entity. Puri became known as a hands-on leader who would travel to war zones if necessary to set up his services and be with his teams. This trait has given him great loyalty, a dependable support staff, and has become the trademark for MGT in delivering on its promises and constantly pursuing excellence.

Ashok Puri

**Founder
and Chairman**
MGT GROUP
Logistics





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Leena Parwani

Founder and CEO
iCare Insure
Finance

LEENA PARWANI HAS SURGED TO the forefront of the insurance and financial planning scene in the UAE with her company iCare Insure, which she launched in 2014. Positioned as a boutique consultancy, its services span family estate planning, liquidity creation for business owners, group health insurance, income protection, life insurance and child education plans for UAE residents.

Having moved to Dubai in 2004, when she took up a position within the HR department of the Al Futtaim Group, Leena has based her company around her familiarity with the UAE's work environment, diverse culture and labour policies – and her determination to add some warmth and a genuine personal touch to what is seen, perhaps, as a cold, automated industry.

She is also known for her customisation of complex insurance structures and resourcefulness, given her 12-plus years of experience in various positions at high-profile organisations in Dubai.

Parwani has become known for her philanthropy, particularly relating to non-profit organisations that promote care for families with special needs children. She is proud to be a member of the Million Dollar Round Table and has qualified as a Top of the Table advisor for four consecutive years. She also finds time to write for her blog and a column called "Beautiful Money" on Masala.com.





“WE SET OURSELVES UP NOT JUST TO EXCEL LOCALLY, BUT TO EXCEL IN THE INTERNATIONAL SPHERE. WHATEVER WE HAVE BUILT, IT HAS BEEN CREATED TO INTERNATIONAL STANDARDS”

K Rajaram

CEO

Al Nabooda Automobiles
Automotive

HEADING THE WORLD'S LARGEST Audi car showroom and one of the biggest Porsche centres on the globe is not the easiest job in the world, but with over 40 years in the transport industry and over a decade in the UAE, K Rajaram has got it all under control.

In fact, the chief executive of Al Nabooda Automobiles, the sole distributor of Volkswagen in Dubai and the Northern Emirates, led a \$245m expansion programme that saw the company launch both showrooms in 2012. The firm made international headlines when Rajaram brought singer Jennifer Lopez for the Sheikh Zayed Road Audi showroom opening. It is no wonder, then, that he is dubbed the “Motor Man”.

Rajaram has also directed the November partnership with RTA-backed car sharing app Ekar, which will see 100 Volkswagen Passat and Jetta models added to the company's fleet. It will increase Ekar's current 100 vehicles by 300 cars during the initial phase.

Rajaram says car sharing has a “very positive effect” on mobility, the economy, the end-user and the environment due to its reduction of the carbon footprint.





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Mushtaq Shaikh

Founder

Lobo Tailors
Retail

IT'S HARD TO BELIEVE THAT Mushtaq Shaikh only had 300 rupees – equal to AED19 today – in his pocket when he first landed in Dubai as a teenager in the 1960s. Today, the tailor has an 8,000 sq ft factory next to Dubai International Airport, where he makes clothes for around 35 international airlines, including Emirates, as well as corporations such as Al Tayer Motors.

More impressively, perhaps, his other clientele include a number of former cricket stars including the likes of Ian Botham and Imran Khan.

Shaikh's story is, indeed, a genuine rags-to-riches tale, as the founder initially slept on the streets – and sometimes inside dhows – when he arrived in the city by boat. His first job? Working at a construction site.

But his days of scrabbling for work opportunities are over, as he now employs over 100 workers at his factory alone. Even more notable is his abstention from using any advertising to advance his business, relying solely on word of mouth.

His bespoke tailoring services cater to both men and women.





Lalu Samuel

Chairman and Managing Director
KINGSTON HOLDINGS
Industrial

KINGSTON HOLDINGS WAS established in 1996 by industrialist Lalu Samuel, and is headquartered in Sharjah, UAE. The business comprises manufacturing, distribution, logistics, system integration, headhunting, smart home solutions, advertising and media promotions and project development.

The company owns a large logistics facility, along with office space and a manufacturing floor in Sharjah that produces around 1,200 products. It also distributes a vast range of products for home and industrial use through its retail and distribution network.

As the chairman of Kingston Holdings, Samuel has consistently pushed the company to greater heights. "We have been resilient and have made good progress," he says. "We believe in forward thinking, innovation and a constant desire to achieve."

Kingston Holding also endeavours to give back to the community through a robust CSR strategy. Its company mission statement says: "We believe it is the only way through which we can achieve sustainable growth. This is why we are committed to working closely with our technology partners in order to further our research and development efforts, and also to find a way to operate in a manner that not only meets the needs of today, but also to cause no harm to future generations."

Samuel is a member of the managing committee of the Indian Business and Professional Council in Sharjah. In 2013, he received the SAIF Zone Excellence Businessman Award from the Sharjah Airport International Free Zone Authority.

“ WE HAVE BEEN RESILIENT AND HAVE MADE GOOD PROGRESS. WE BELIEVE IN FORWARD THINKING, INNOVATION AND A CONSTANT DESIRE TO ALWAYS ACHIEVE ”





INDIAN ACES POWERED BY: BENTLEY

BENTLEY EMIRATES

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▲ Rizwan Sajan arrived in Dubai with nothing, having been forced to flee Kuwait in 1991



“ DUBAI HAS ESTABLISHED ITSELF AS THE CENTRE OF THE WORLD AND CONNECTS THE WEST WITH THE EAST. DUBAI STILL OFFERS THE GREATEST GROWTH OPPORTUNITY”

Rizwan Sajjan

Founder and Chairman
DANUBE GROUP
Real estate and construction

RIZWAN SAJAN'S ENTREPRENEURIAL journey began in the 1990s when he was forced to flee Kuwait following the invasion of the country by Iraqi forces. On arriving in the UAE, he started working for his uncle but quickly branched out on his own to establish a brokerage business buying and selling building materials.

This led to the establishment of Danube, the company with which he would establish his name as one of the most prominent businessmen in the country. Danube started as a supplier of building materials to hundreds of projects during the Dubai construction boom, and he built his company into the undisputed market leader in his sector, expanding to 38 offices across the Gulf as well as in India and China, and employing in excess of 1,800 employees.

From this position of strength, the group was able to diversify and seize

exciting new opportunities in Dubai's ever-lucrative real estate sector. It launched development company Danube Properties and its first scheme, Dreamz by Danube, sold out within hours of its 2014 launch. The company targets the burgeoning – and much needed – affordable housing sector in the UAE and currently has eight projects under development, including the trio it launched in 2016: Glamz, Starz and Miraclz.

In addition to this, three Glitz towers are under construction in Dubai's Studio City and there are plans for a new development called Resortz, a neoclassical-designed residential development near Miracle Gardens.

In 2017, Danube Properties stated that 75 percent of its Bayz project in Business Bay was sold out within four months of the project's launch. Officially breaking ground in May, the 29-storey Bayz, which is valued at \$122.5m, will comprise 456 fully furnished apartment units and will be completed by 2019.

AED2.8bn

The total value of Danube Properties' development portfolio in Dubai



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“ I BELIEVE THERE’S ALWAYS A SPACE IN ANY INDUSTRY; IT JUST DEPENDS HOW GOOD A FIGHTER YOU ARE, HOW COMPETITIVE YOU ARE, HOW ENERGETIC YOU ARE”

Paras Shahdarpuri

Chairman
NIKAI GROUP
Retail

THE ENTREPRENEURIAL JOURNEY of Paras Shahdarpuri has become the stuff of legend in the UAE business community. Perhaps the very definition of a late bloomer, Paras was edging towards his 50th birthday when he decided to risk it all and leave a long-term diplomatic career with the Indian Ministry of Foreign Affairs to embark on a career in the corporate sector. In the 20-plus years since, he has continued to prove that it was not only the right decision, it was an inspired one.

He initially intended to import pre-branded electronics to the UAE and sell them at a profit, and that would surely have been a successful, if small, enterprise. However, a Japanese supplier had a different idea: instead of simply importing the products of existing companies, why not create a new brand and sell the products under that? So, the Nikai company and product line was born – and three decades later, despite the rise of Apple and Samsung, it remains one of the top-selling electronics brands in

the UAE’s major retailers. It has even managed to penetrate the US.

Today, Shahdarpuri heads up all 12 companies of the Nikai Group, a conglomerate that deals in appliances, food products, outsourcing and restaurants from their offices spanning China, KSA, Georgia and Russia.

His achievements haven’t gone unnoticed. From 1999 to 2001, the Indian business community elected Shahdarpuri the UAE chairman of the Overseas Indians Economic Forum, with the job of promoting Indian companies and investment abroad.

In 2005, he was awarded the prestigious Bharat Shiromani Award by former Prime Minister of India I.K. Gujral in recognition of his business career.

60

The number of countries around the world in which you can buy Nikai products



BENTLEY

BENTLEY EMIRATES



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Dr BR Shetty

Founder and chairman
NMC HEALTH
Healthcare

ONE OF THE PRIMARY MOVERS IN shaping the healthcare landscape in the UAE, BR Shetty may have moved on from his role as CEO of NMC Healthcare, but he is still one of the most important figures in the local business community. Indeed, in his final year, NMC was able to announce a 38.6 percent rise in revenue to \$1.22bn.

Under his stewardship, NMC became the UAE's largest private healthcare provider and now has a presence of over 135 facilities across ten countries treating more than 8.5 million patients a year. NMC employs in excess of 2,000 doctors and was the first healthcare company from the GCC to list on the London Stock Exchange. Part of the FTSE100, its current market cap is almost \$9.5bn.

Shetty arrived in the UAE in 1973 from his native Udupi in Karnataka and began a career as a serial entrepreneur, contributing to a wide variety of service-sector fields such as healthcare, financial services, pharmaceuticals, food and beverage, education, distribution, infrastructure and hospitality. His first venture was UAE Exchange, one of the largest exchange houses in the world and an enterprise where he remains managing director and CEO.

Dr Shetty also has a passion for education. He is the Honorary Chairman of the Board of Trustees of the largest community school in Abu Dhabi, the Abu Dhabi Indian School. He owns and operates a number of other schools including BrightRiders School, Deira Private School, Al Gharbia School, International Community Kindergarten and Sara Nursery.



“THE SATISFACTION OF SURMOUNTING A DIFFICULT CHALLENGE IS ALWAYS THE MOST FULFILLING”

Raju Shroff

Managing director
REGAL GROUP
Diversified



LONG AGO, IN 1952, VASU SHROFF founded the Regal Group on the banks of Dubai Creek. In the decades that followed, the company – now with Raju at the helm – has grown to become one of the region’s most successful textile companies. The company, however, has moved far beyond its traditional core business, and has expanded into spots, technology, investments, industry and real estate.

Raju – a graduate of the London Business School – has a keen eye for what the company’s next steps should be. Among the best example is the firm’s partnering on the UAE’s first Vivanta by Taj, a 46-storey combination of hotel rooms and branded apartments currently under construction in Dubai’s Jumeirah Lakes Towers area. According to Regal Group, the project will be completed by the end of the year.

Driven by the familiar business maxim of “keep it simple” – Shroff is also working to ensure Regal Group remains a strong player in all its business verticals, ensuring that a longstanding company continues to be successful in the future.



Gaurav Sinha

CEO
INSIGNIA WORLDWIDE
Media

A VIBRANT THOUGHT LEADER, Gaurav Sinha has been working in the media industry for the past 24 years and is known as an innovator in creative strategy and a protagonist in his field. His company, Insignia Worldwide, offers integrated strategy, branding, design and communication services for travel, hospitality and destination brands.

Headquartered in Dubai, the agency provides its services to over 180 hotels across 20 countries, nearly 165 restaurants and 30 wellness and leisure brands. It has been ranked among the 30 Most Admired Companies by *Arabian Business* and in the Top 100 SMEs by Dubai Government. Not content with all that, in 2016, Gaurav established Quillon, a development advisory and white-label hotel management company, which currently represents approximately \$2.4bn worth of real estate projects in Asia and Africa.

\$9.8bn

The revenue forecast for the UAE hospitality by 2020, according to investment bank Alpen Capital

Harmeek Singh

Founder and Managing Director
PLAN B GROUP
Media

HARMEEK SINGH KNOWS HOW TO work his way up the ladder. The Indian-born businessman is the founder and managing director of Plan B Group, which manages some of the UAE’s biggest public events, including Dubai Rugby 7s and the Standard Chartered Dubai Marathon. But his career in the UAE started with an AED2,000 salary in 2003, when he came to the Gulf country following the closure of his family’s business in India. In the span of just two years, he was earning as much as AED200,000 a month. Shortly after, he opened Plan B, where he was the sole employee. Fast forward to less than a decade after, and Singh’s firm employs over 500 workers.

Vardaraj Shetty

Chairman
RAMEE GROUP
Hospitality

VARDARAJ SHETTY HAS BUILT ONE of the region’s largest home-grown chains, the Ramee Group of Hotels, Resorts and Apartments, with over 30 properties across the UAE, Bahrain, Oman and India; in addition to a shopping mall in Chennai.

Last year he acquired 100 percent of Bahrain’s Ramee Grand Hotel and Spa, where he previously owned 40 percent. He also built the \$18m Juffair Views apartments in the island kingdom.

The group will open a \$95.2m Ramee Grand Hotel and Spa in Dubai’s Business Bay by 2019, and add three more hotels in Oman, as well as eight in India. Ramee Group also revealed it is looking at Iran for possible hotels.





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Harish Kumar Lal Tahiliani

Managing Director
Arab & India Spices
Food

ARAB & INDIA SPICES LLC HAS established itself as a pioneer in the global agriculture trade, becoming one of the first millers that catered to the entire Middle East with a wide variety of high-quality pulses and ground spices. It also has its own market-leading brands, 777, Ameera and Nallari.

Spices and pulses are in the Tahiliani family DNA; the company was originally born in 1947 in India and it sustained successive generations until the 1980s when Tahiliani's father decided to explore opportunities in the Gulf. In 1986, the company was re-branded as Arab & India Spices, and from a 400 sq-ft facility in Sharjah it focused on importing spices from India. In 1990, the company switched to its current base in Ajman and, in 2016, opened the Middle East's largest food production facility, a 400,000 sq-ft factory costing AED350m to build.

Having been with the company since he was 22, Harish Tahiliani has witnessed this growth first-hand – and, as managing director, steered its most recent course. Today, it is one of the largest importers of raw pulses from most of the major producing countries, including Myanmar, Australia, Canada, USA, China, UK, and India.

One of the company's major milestones was receiving its ISO 22000 certification, an international standard that defines requirements for a good safety management system covering all organisations in the food chain.



“ WE HAVE DIVERSIFIED OUR OPERATIONS FROM MILLING AND GRINDING TO PROCESSING WHOLE SPICES AND PACKAGING. WE ARE ALWAYS MAKING INVESTMENTS TO DRIVE SUSTAINABLE, LONG-TERM GROWTH”

Khurshid Vakil

Co-founder
MARINA HOME INTERIORS
Retail



HAILING FROM THE PICTURESQUE Kashmir region of India, Vakil began his career at a US Fortune 100 company. But the self-described perfectionist decided to turn his back on his previous career in 1997, and instead joined two brothers to launch Marina Home Interiors the same year.

While he admits that giving up a high-flying corporate career was a tough decision, it turned out to be a good one. Within a year of Marine Home Interior's founding, the UAE experienced a real estate boom, which came with thousands of customers in need of attractive, inspired furniture to adorn their homes.

Taking advantage of the UAE's transient expat population, Vakil rapidly expanded and opened stores across the GCC and South Asia. The retail magnate's personal ambition has also seen double-digit growth year-on-year as he sets up more shops in the GCC and beyond.

With a keen eye for detail, Vakil led Marina Home Interiors' drive to become synonymous with quality, creativity and innovation, with each of the store's signature large-scale showrooms designed to provide the customer with an immersive and memorable experience.



Sunny Varkey

Founder and Chairman
GEMS EDUCATION
Education

GEMS FOUNDER SUNNY VARKEY is a man who needs no introduction to parents in the UAE. His own parents – both teachers – first came to Dubai in 1959 and, 21 years later, Sunny opened his first school in the emirate, starting a career that would lead him to be a household name across the UAE. Under his leadership, GEMS has become one of the world's leading players in private education, with 49 schools spread across more than 10 countries, with new schools frequently being announced as the company continues to expand.

GEMS long-standing commitment to the field of education has been matched by its success as a company. In December 2017, GEMS Education announced that revenues rose 17.3 percent year-on-year to \$926.2m, with enrolments rising 10 percent to 114,000 students, and capacity going up to 132,000.

11.3 million

The projected student population in the GCC by 2020

Sunil Vaswani

Chairman
STALLION GROUP
Industry

WITH A NET WORTH CALCULATED at \$7.48bn in 2017, Jaipur-born Vaswani has topped the *Arabian Business* Indian Rich List for three years running. His company, which was founded in 1969, is one of the largest conglomerates in sub-Saharan Africa.

Vaswani, a long-time Dubai resident, is one of the biggest investors in Africa and is a keen promoter of the opportunities for other GCC-based businesses to tap into. His point that there is money to be made in Africa is proven and his African investments have made him the richest Indian in the GCC. His power and influence are set to further grow as GCC countries look to expand their operations.

Nilesh Ved

Founder and chairman
APPAREL GROUP
Retail

STARTING WITH JUST ONE BRAND in 1999, under Ved's leadership Apparel Group now has the rights to more than 75 brands – including big names such as Tommy Hilfiger, Juicy Couture, Nautica, Aldo, Nine West and Aeropostale – which it sells at nearly 1,800 outlets in four continents, which collectively employ over 12,000 people.

The group has a presence far from its base in the UAE, with outlets across the GCC, India, South Africa, Poland, Singapore, Jordan, Indonesia, Thailand and Malaysia, with plans to expand into other markets across Europe, Asia and the MENA region. In August 2017, Ved announced that Apparel Group pledged to invest over \$26m in Saudi Arabia.



FASHION: Berluti's style guide for the contemporary man

The Italian fashion house revealed its Fall/Winter 2018 collection last week



Haider Ackermann, creative director of Italian menswear brand Berluti, said, "In a world that is louder than ever, I like the idea of a quiet man. Serene, cool, collected, yet standing on his own two feet." Hence, the latest collection blends vintage styles with a quietly modern edge.

1. The Andy Démesure loafer was originally created for Andy Warhol in the 1960s in an avant-garde style. Today, it is reworked into a modern look with alligator leather. **AED11,100**

2. Designed with the brand's famed signature, this Scritto pocket square was inspired by an 18th century manuscript that pays tribute to calligraphy. The colourful square can also be used as a handkerchief. **AED490**

3. Also inspired by pop artist Andy Warhol, these rounded Rue Marbeuf sunglasses combine the vintage style of eyewear designer Oliver Peoples with Berluti's classic colour palette. **AED1,575**

4. Simple yet detailed, Berluti's Scritto cufflinks boast the brand's signature inspired by an 18th century manuscript. **AED1,830**

5. A leather foldover cigarette case is what every modern

man needs, showcasing an engraved logo, a burnt-out look and push stud fastening. **AED1,500**

6. You do not have to choose between a silk or knit tie with Berluti's two-tone piece made with both materials. **AED560**

7. Berluti's Incisione reversible belt is a wardrobe essential, offering two styles in one. The 35mm-wide belt features a plate buckle engraved with the emblematic Scritto signature. **AED2,880**

8. The Deux Jours leather briefcase was introduced in 2005 as part of the brand's first leather goods collection. Today, the large-capacity design remains one of the most popular models. **AED12,900**

9. This extra-slim Assao mini leather billfold is compact and functional, with a central clip that holds cards and notes. **AED2,180**



DINING

Say it with \$23,000

Fairmont Dubai's Valentine's Day package includes a diamond jewellery set worth more than \$4,000

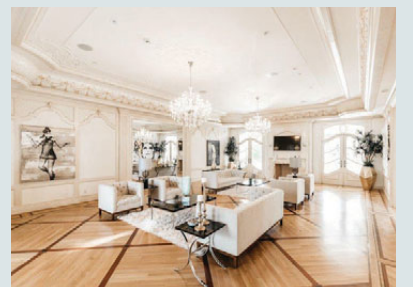


Fairmont Dubai revealed a \$23,141 (AED85,000) Valentine's Day package that includes a two-night stay at the 548 sq m Imperial Suite, a \$4,084 (AED15,000) diamond jewellery set, 100 red roses, a professional makeup and hair styling session, a helicopter ride over the city, and a seven-course dinner on the hotel's rooftop, with a live violinist. The big question: how do you top that in 2019?

PROPERTY

\$80m French Chateau on sale in Beverly Hills

The baroque-style mansion boasts a garage that can accommodate 40 cars



Want somewhere to park a spare \$80 million? Literally? This 28,000 square foot French Chateau not only boasts 11 fireplaces, a European spa with wet and dry sauna, a screening room, a fitness centre and a game room, but there's also a grand motor court to accommodate 40 cars. It's all surrounded by luscious, lawned gardens that lead to an additional three-bedroom guest house.

REVIEW

How exciting is Ford's bestselling truck?

The 3.5-litre EcoBoost engine in the 2017 F-150 does not fail to impress

By Lubna Hamdan



▲ The 2017 Ford F-150: the toughest, smartest and most capable ever built

Ford announced last November it will accelerate its electrified vehicle plan in the Middle East by launching four new hybrid vehicles over the next four years. The Ford F-150 Hybrid is the first car confirmed for launch in the Middle East, further proving the best-selling model's popularity in the region.

While we did not get our hands on the hybrid model yet, we decided to try the petrol-powered 2017 F-150, allegedly the toughest, smartest and most capable in the line's long history. It boasts a new 3.5-litre EcoBoost engine and an all-new 10-speed transmission.

The V6 engine delivers 50lb/ft more torque for a total of 470 lb/ft, making it extremely

grounded on turns. It is worth noting, however, that the car's aluminium structure saves it from feeling heavy. While it is large in size, it is effortless to drive, with the steering being extremely smooth and rather light for a truck.

Still, we feel its stability on the roads, as we take the beast for a ride to test out its freshly

added 10 horsepower over the previous engine.

Unlike its more expensive Chevrolet Silverado rival, it starts at a value-priced AED155,000 (\$42,000). It focuses more on efficiency than design. On the outside, it is big, blocky and rather simple. But the interiors, while also basic, can be customised

with a wide range of options, including massage seats.

It is also incredibly spacious, with both its driver and passenger cabins boasting substantial room, making it extremely comfortable for short and long rides.

One of its strengths is its visibility, in spite of its large form. Surprisingly, we found it easy to navigate and, more importantly, to park – a key issue for many drivers when it comes to bulky trucks.

Though we did not get the chance to experience long-haul trips in the F-150, we reckon it would be quite practical to drive to, say, the other emirates. If anything, America's bestselling truck is an exciting, reliable and overpowering choice.



▲ Comfort inside, pure aggression outside



▲ HH Sheikh Zayed Bin Sultan Al Nahyan was well known for his generosity at home and abroad

A legacy of leadership

A long-time Dubai business leader shares his views on why the UAE has become a beacon for success and tolerance

I HAVE ALWAYS HAD THE utmost respect and admiration for the rulers of the UAE, and I like the fact that HH Sheikh Zayed Bin Sultan Al Nahyan is being remembered and honoured in The Year of Zayed initiative.

When I arrived in Dubai in July 1983, I have to admit that I knew little about the people of the UAE – but that was quickly to change. I was part of a team from Aer Rianta (the Irish Airport Authority) whose job it was to set up Dubai Duty Free at Dubai International Airport. After some initial meetings with senior airport and government officials, it became clear that their “can do” attitude was going to transform the country.

The Emiratis had a desire to grow the UAE to be a major commercial, leisure and cultural capital, and this was

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being driven by the vision and leadership of the UAE rulers – and in particular by HH Sheikh Zayed Bin Sultan Al Nahyan and the then Dubai Ruler HH Sheikh Rashid Bin Saeed Al Maktoum.

In addition to being struck by the positive attitude that I encountered in those early days, I was impressed by how open the rulers were to meeting and greeting their subjects on a daily basis. I liked very much the idea of the Majlis, whereby residents can meet with the


ruler directly and either give their good wishes or make a request. I know that Sheikh Zayed was particularly fond of meeting with residents, both local and expatriate, to find out more about their lives. He was often seen driving around Abu Dhabi, waving to passers-by and even stopping to investigate something that caught his eye.

I was impressed, and in fact continue to be impressed, by the benevolent and tolerant nature of the UAE’s rulers, something which continues to this day. The fact that education was so important to the rulers, especially Sheikh Zayed, ensured UAE nationals had access to third level education, making them eminently qualified to carry out the ambitious expansion plans for the country. Third level education

was made equally available to female Emiratis and this commitment to equality is, I’m pleased to say, ongoing.

The benevolent nature of Sheikh Zayed and, in my own experience, Sheikh Rashid, was evident among expatriate groups as well. They wanted us to be happy and have a good standard of life while working here in the UAE. Schools and places of worship were built for expatriate children and worshippers of all faiths, and local societies, such as the Dubai Irish Society, were encouraged and supported and they thrive to this day.

The role that the UAE has played in supporting and endorsing so many charitable causes derives directly from the generosity of the rulers and in particular from Sheikh Zayed. His desire to help those less fortunate resulted in the setting up of the Zayed Bin Sultan Al Nahyan Charitable and Humanitarian Foundation back in 1992 with a donation of \$1m. Since that time the foundation has contributed AED1bn (\$272m) in aid to causes both inside and outside of the UAE. The support for worthy causes has seen the establishment of many additional foundations and the UAE is recognised internationally as one of the world’s most generous donor countries.

As we celebrate the centenary of Sheikh Zayed, we can look back on the remarkable role that he has played in ensuring the growth of the UAE into a leading light on the global stage. The fact that the ruling families continue with this legacy of generosity, tolerance, leadership and humanitarianism means that the future is bright for the people of the UAE. 



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