

The International

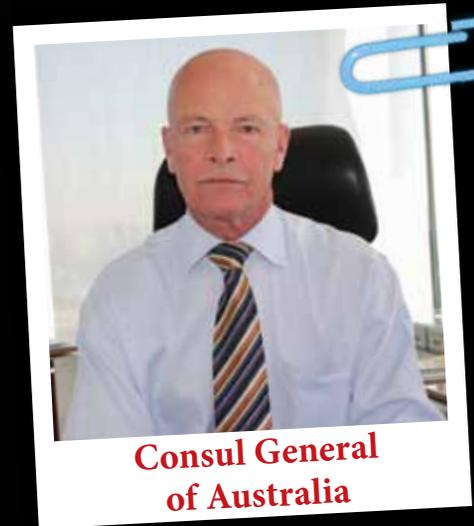
February 2012 - Vol: 01 Issue: 03

Diplomat

First Diplomatic Magazine in the UAE and the Region



Ambassador of India



Consul General of Australia

Feature

Chinese Premier visits UAE

Dubai

A JEWEL IN UAE'S CROWN

Diplomatic News

UAE - Turkey Forum

Sport Diplomacy

UAE hosts England- Pakistan



World Future Energy Summit

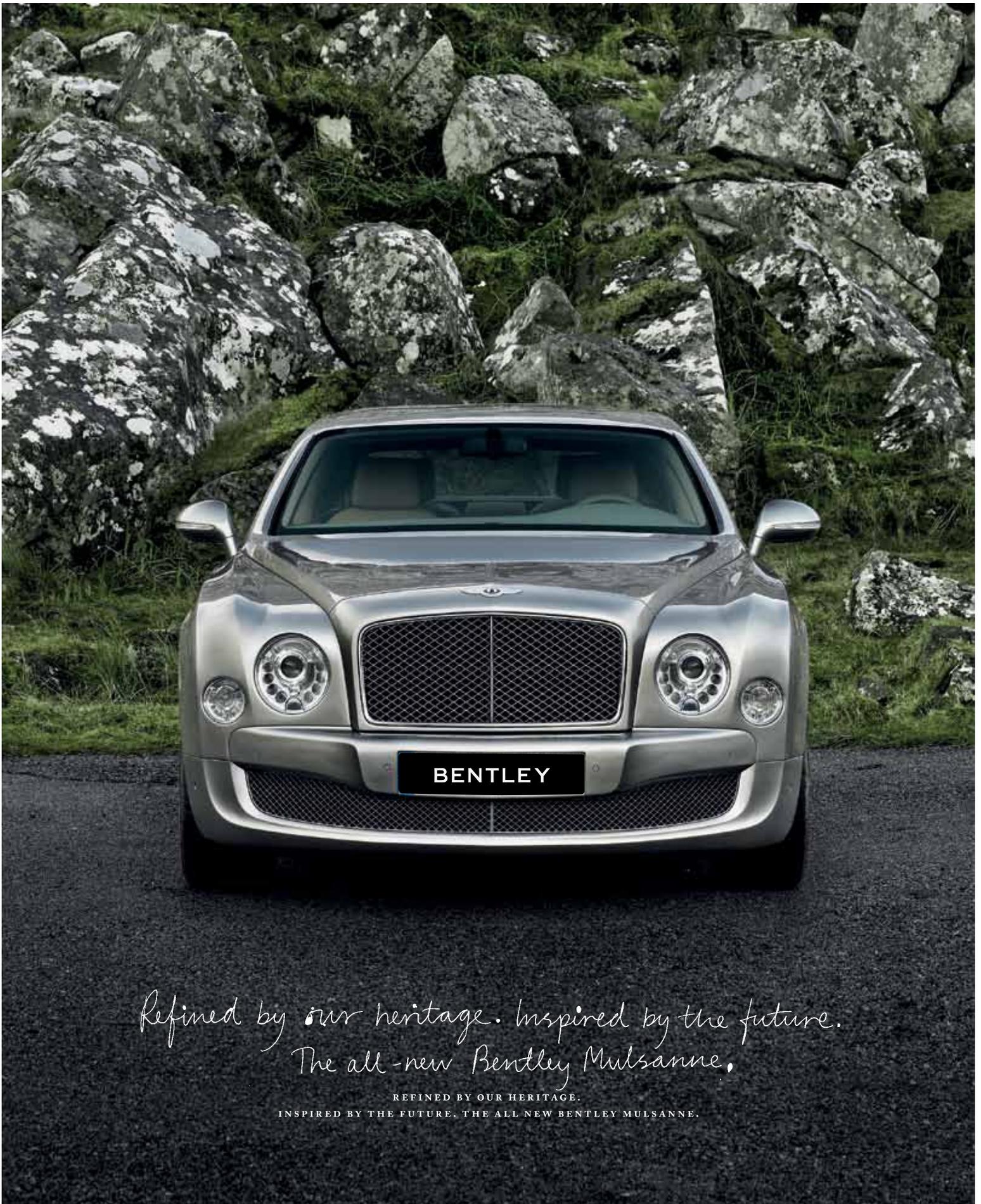
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In This Issue: National Day Receptions in UAE - Diplomatic News - Business Diplomacy - Diplomatic Ladies





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DUBAI – JEWEL OF THE UAE

Exclusive

Pakistani Naval Ship Docks In Dubai Page

Special Article by the Australian Ambassador
H.E. Pablo Kang

Interview with Mr Raymi van der Spek,
Chairman of the ABCD



About the Cover:
The Iconic Burj Khaleefa –
Tallest building in the world
a majestic addition to Dubai's
skyline

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Diplomat Photo Section



Exclusive



Special Report on Visit by Chinese Premier
to UAE



Turkish President Visits the UAE



The International Diplomat speaks to
Sahar Al Madani, wife of the Saudi Consul
General and Prisedent of Diplomatic Ladies
Group about combining her roles and how
much she enjoys living in Dubai

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From the Publisher



Dear Readers,
Welcome to the third issue of the International Diplomat. - UAE's first diplomatic magazine. This month we have covered high profile visits by the Chinese Premier His Excellency Wen Jiabao, the Turkish President, His Excellency Abdullah Gul, as well as Her Majesty Queen Beatrix of Netherlands, in addition to a special report on the World Future Energy Summit 2012. Our report on the growing relations between UAE and China is particularly also highlights the important aspects of the Premier's visit.

Australian Day coverage includes an exclusive article by the new Australian Ambassador and an interview with the Australian Consul General in addition to the coverage of the celebrations in Abu Dhabi. The Egyptian Ambassador hosted an impressive ceremony to mark their revolution day that also included performances by Egyptian artists. Indian expats form UAE's largest expat population, and when they celebrate their Republic day, it is always an occasion featuring high in the diplomatic calendar. Our coverage of Indian republic day includes an exclusive interview with the Indian Ambassador, and a special feature highlighting India's long standing relationship with UAE that also includes comments from some distinguished members of the community. Due to UAE's strategic location ships from friendly countries often dock here, and when Pakistan's illustrious ship PNS Khaibar docked at Mina Rashid we were there to cover the impressive ceremony. This month we also introduce you to the President of the Diplomatic Ladies Group of Dubai, Sahar Al Madani the wife of the Saudi Consul General. UAE also hosted the England v. Pakistan cricket series and our sport diplomacy section is a welcome addition in this regard. While we congratulate Pakistan for their tremendous win in the test series all eyes are now set on the ODIs to get underway at the Dubai Sports city.

Finally, I am delighted to share with you that as The International Diplomat steadily grows in popularity, we are now available at all good book stores in UAE. Our website, E-Magazine, and social media presence further expands our reach and you can follow us by scanning the links below.

Javed Malik.
Publisher & Editor-in-Chief.

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CHINA – UAE

Chinese Premier Meets President and UAE Leadership

Abu Dhabi: The President, His Highness Sheikh Khalifa bin Zayed Al Nahyan received the visiting Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao at Al Mushrif Palace where both leaders held bilateral talks and expressed their determination to solve regional and international problems based on respect for international laws and interests of all countries. President Khalifa said, “We are looking forward that Mr Jiabao’s trip to the UAE will constitute an advanced step towards greater cooperation and further enhancement of economic partnership between the two friendly countries. The Chinese Premier also lauded the stellar progress the UAE is witnessing under the leadership of President Khalifa. He hailed the UAE-China cooperation as an example of international collaboration and said, “We aspire for a stronger one in the coming period”.

NETHERLANDS

HM Queen Beatrix Visits the UAE

Abu Dhabi: President His Highness Sheikh Khalifa bin Zayed Al Nahyan welcomed Her Majesty Queen Beatrix Wilhelmina Armgard of the Netherlands at Al Mushrif Palace. The meeting was also attended by UAE’s Speaker of the Federal National Council H.E. Mohammed Ahmed Al Murr, Group of Ministers, top officials from UAE and members of delegation accompanying H.M. This included HRH Willem-Alexander, Prince of Orange, his spouse Princess Maxima of the Netherlands and Dutch Foreign Minister Uriel Rosenthal. During the talks, Sheikh Khalifa and Queen Beatrix praised the ever-growing UAE-Netherlands ties and expressed hope that the visit would deliver a new qualitative leap in the distinguished bilateral relations. Both the leaders exchanged views on topics of mutual concern, latest regional and international developments and exchanged honors. President Khalifa also hosted a luncheon in honor of the visiting Queen of The Netherlands.

TURKEY – UAE

Turkish President Visits the UAE

Abu Dhabi: The President of Turkey, His Excellency Abdullah Gul visited the UAE and held detailed talks in an effort to expand the scope of relations between the two brotherly nations. At the Airport the President was received by H.H Sheikh Mansour Bin Zayed Al Nahyan, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Presidential Affairs, Sheikhs and other important officials including Turkish and UAE ambassadors. President Gul was later Welcomed at Al Diyafhah Palace by His Highness Sheikh Khalifa who expressed the hope that the current visit would contribute to the strengthening of friendly relations and cooperation between the two countries, and further contribute to making a qualitative jump in the distinguished relations between the two countries through the activation of economic, investment and trade partnership in new areas. For his part, President Gul said the multi-faceted boom in the UAE gave it the current prominent regional and international stature thanks to the wise leadership of President His Highness Sheikh Khalifa bin Zayed Al Nahyan. President Gul was also welcomed by His Highness Shaikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice-President and Prime Minister of the UAE and Ruler of Dubai, at Zabeel Palace where both leaders and their delegations discussed ways of expanding horizons of the strong trade and investment relations to cover all sectors. Later President Gul also addressed the UAE – Turkish Business Forum in Dubai.

UAE GREEN ECONOMY

The Prime Minister Unveils UAE's Strategy for a Green Economy

Dubai: His Highness Sheikh Mohammed, Vice-President and Prime Minister of UAE and Ruler of Dubai has launched a long-term national initiative to build a Green Economy under the slogan 'A green economy for sustainable development'.

The initiative includes a range of programs and policies in the areas of energy, agriculture, investment and sustainable transport that aim to raise the quality of life in the country. Sheikh Mohammed speaking on the occasion said that the UAE seeks to become a global hub and a successful model of the new green economy. He added that, "Our goal from this national initiative is clear, that is, to build an economy that protects the environment as well as an environment that supports the growth of the economy.

We in the UAE, within the vision 2021, are striving to strengthen our competitive position in global markets. I ask everyone to prepare for a new phase in the growth of the UAE".

ABU DHABI AWARDS

Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed honors Exceptional Individuals with Abu Dhabi Awards

Abu Dhabi: His Highness General Sheikh Mohammad bin Zayed Al Nahyan, Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi and Deputy Supreme Commander of the UAE Armed Forces, presented awards to 10 exceptional individuals during the biennial Abu Dhabi Awards special ceremony held at the Emirates Palace Hotel.

Over 22,000 nominations were put forward for the sixth edition of the awards for contributions in various sectors which included the environment, health, community awareness, education and culture and heritage.

The 10 individuals that clinched the award were; Aqeeda Ali Al Muhairi, Dr. Jamal Ali Sanad Al Suwaidi, Alain Saint-Hilaire, Dr. Maha Taysir Barakat, Abdul Muqet Abdul Mannan, Sultan Rashed Al Dhaheri, Salem Rashed Al Mohanadi, Dr. Taisser Atrak, Al Sayed Abdulla Al Sayed Mohamed Al Sayed Al Hashimi and the late Al Sheikh Ahmed bin Abdul Aziz.

DUBAI - ISLE OF MAN SIGN MOU

Dubai and Isle of Man Sign MOU to Boost Economic Ties

Dubai: Dubai Department of Economic Development (DED) and the Government of Isle of Man have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) aimed at promoting closer business, economic and trade relations. In this context, a Delegation from the Isle of Man Government led by its Chief Executive Mr. Colin Kniveton visited the Dubai Department of Economic Development. Mr. Colin Kniveton held wide ranging discussions with his counterpart His Excellency Sami Gamzi, the Director General of DED. The meeting was also attended by International lawyer, Dr Mansour Malik, whereas high officials of the Dubai Government including H.E Mr. Khalid Alkasim Deputy Director General of the DED, H.E Mr. Ali Ibrahim Deputy Director General, as well as Mr. Fahd Gargawi, the CEO of Foreign Investment

DUBAI - UAE

17th Dubai Shopping Festival Brings Glare to Dubai

Dubai: The 17th Dubai Shopping Festival (5th Jan- 5th Feb, 2012) is being held in Dubai. Founded in 1996 under the directives of His Highness Sheikh Mohammed, Vice-President and Prime Minister of the UAE and Ruler of Dubai, to position Dubai as a leading tourist destination, Dubai Shopping Festival (DSF) offers one of the best shopping experiences in the world. This year DSF 2012 is being celebrated under the slogan "Dubai at its Best" in line with the theme "One World – One Family – One Festival". The event is attended by celebrities from Hollywood, the sporting world and royalty. For all ages and nationalities, DSF features multiple events that include local and international sporting, theatrical and musical programmes, street carnivals, night souks, art exhibitions, fashion shows and cultural and heritage activities. True to its theme, Global Village at DSF is also hosting cultural shows and sells products from across the world.

ARAB HEALTH EXHIBITION 2012

Ambassadors Present Credentials



Abu Dhabi: President H.H. Sheikh Khalifa Bin Zayed Al Nahyan, received the credentials from the ambassadors of Vietnam, Turkmenistan, Germany, Sweden, Djibouti, Morocco and Australia at Al Dhiyafa Palace.

President Khalifa welcomed the envoys, wished them success in their new jobs and expressed keenness of the UAE to help upgrade relations between the UAE and their countries.

Also present on the occasion were H.H. General Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed Al

Nahyan, Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi and Deputy Supreme Commander of the UAE Armed Forces, H.H. Sheikh Hamdan bin Zayed Al Nahyan, Ruler's Representative in the Western Region, H. H. Lt. General Sheikh Saif bin Zayed Al Nahyan, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior, H. H. Sheikh Mansour bin Zayed Al Nahyan, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Presidential Affairs, and number of senior officials of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs as well as the Presidential Court

WORLD ECONOMIC FORUM

UAE Minister of Economy Attends World Economic Forum 2012



Davos: UAE Minister of Economy, H.E Sultan Al Mansoori attended the World Economic Forum 2012 held in Davos. Speaking to the Media at the event H.E said that the UAE, as a stable, secure state, will see some immediate short-term benefits as investment flows to safe havens, but in the longer term, all economies in the Middle East will benefit. He expected UAE economy to grow by 4 per cent considering this will be a perfect result within the current conditions at regional and global levels, particularly in light of the euro and the U.S. crisis. He added that we must be optimistic and look forward to growth and overcome various challenges.

Al Mansoori also met with high level officials on the sidelines of the forum to discuss key economic issues and explore new cooperation opportunities with countries that are considered strategic for the UAE.

ARAB HEALTH EXHIBITION 2012

Arab Health Exhibition 2012 Addresses GCC's Health issues



Dubai: Sheikh Hamdan Bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Deputy Ruler of Dubai and UAE Minister of Finance and Industry, inaugurated the 37th edition of the Arab Health Congress and Exhibition 2012 in Dubai. The world's second largest healthcare conference this year attracted over 71,900 healthcare professionals and hosted over 3,000 healthcare exhibitors from 70 countries. The event highlighted the current challenges and its solutions to tackle the growing public health issues across the GCC and showcased new seminars on haematology track at Medlab, biomedical engineering, medical education, m+Health and wound care conferences. Abdul Rahman Mohammad Al Owais, Acting UAE Minister of Health hailing the conference said, "The congress has a significant impact as it is raising health awareness among the residents in the UAE and the region". Simon Page, managing director of Arab Health organizers Life Sciences-Infoma Exhibitions said, "the health congress continues to build on its conference portfolio offering a scientific and educational platform that comprises the world's largest CME (Continuing Medical Education) accredited multi-track series of conferences".

Al Habtoor Group to Launch AED 4.8 Billion Development on Sheikh Zayed Road

Chairman of Al Habtoor Group, Khalaf Al Habtoor has announced the launch of one of the most luxurious hotels & entertainment developments which will be built on its prestigious and prime location on Sheikh Zayed Road. The magnificent new complex (of one million square feet), will be situated opposite Al Safa Park which currently houses the Metropolitan Hotel, one the first few hotels built in Dubai over 30 years ago.

Speaking on the occasion, Khalaf Al Habtoor, Chairman of Al Habtoor Group, said “Parting with the Metropolitan Hotel, our first hospitality venture is not easy as it is filled with great memories, but I always believe in looking forward. The tourism industry in the United Arab Emirates and Dubai in particular, is constantly and steadily growing, and we have to be prepared to cater for the growing need of its visitors and residents alike”. He added, “an investment of this magnitude will encourage other like-minded businessmen to regain their faith and will definitely send a very strong and positive message to the national and the international communities that will help stimulate foreign direct investments from institutions and individuals alike.” Expressing his faith in the economic conditions in UAE, Mr. Habtoor said, “My faith in our country’s economic strength and our resilience has always been strong and now it is time to prove it. A good environment for investment provides security, economic stability and strong infrastructure, and for an investor like myself, no place provides all that the way Dubai does!”

The development will comprise of two tall elegant towers rising from an imposing grand 5 storey podium, and will have 3 luxurious hotels that will offer over 1,600 rooms and suites and will cost AED 4.875 Billion (USD\$ 1.33Billion). It will also include a 5-star serenity spa, multiple-themed restaurants, 50,000 sqft state of the art banqueting and meeting facilities, a shopping arcade and a unique multi-media theatre with over 1,000 seats, and a hydraulic central stage, water features and movable floors.





Dubai:

A JEWEL IN UAE'S CROWN

Seven stars of the UAE: A series of features highlighting the seven emirates of the UAE

Dubai is truly a land of positive extremes where traditional dhows sail the same ocean as luxury yachts, women wearing the latest designer creations rub shoulders with the glamorous abaya swathed ladies and people who do not speak a single word of the same language tread the same ground. Dubai allows people to be whoever they want to be, as long as success is part of their vocabulary. From a small fishing village to a metropolis that is home to the world's tallest building, a 'seven star' hotel and some of the finest restaurants; Dubai is a modern day success story.

History

Centuries ago Dubai's strategic location meant that it was an important trading hub but by the beginning of the 20th century it had industrialised and transformed itself into a vital port. By 1966, following the lead of its neighbour Abu Dhabi oil was discovered, setting the wheels in motion for the predictable oil boom to begin. Foreign companies and foreign workers flocked to the region and the city began to swell in size. In 1971 after the British left, the United Arab Emirates was formed, marking a new era for the city which was expanding in all directions and paving the way for its transformation

into the city we know today. Dubai, which was undeniably fast tracked due to the oil discovery, has forged its own path as an economic, business and tourist hub. Much of which is down to the innovation and drive of the Maktoum Family who made Dubai what it is today, and will be in years to come. But don't be fooled by Dubai's daring architecture and five-star flash, the small region still has its soul. Traditional seaside villages, desert Tribes and souks that conjure images of Aladdin can all be found if you just look beyond the glitter and sparkle. Leaving you with a melting pot, where there is room for everyone and where the word 'impossible' isn't even whispered.

Over the last two decades Dubai has positioned itself as a financial center and academic hub boasting an internet city and free media zone, it is a hub for service industries, IT and finance firms flood the city. Recently there has also been a special focus on helping developing communities, the distribution of humanitarian aid has increased and charity awareness has been at the forefront of Dubai's media. The city is taking huge steps to protect the environment and funding is being steered into projects that are eco-friendly, solar plants are popping up, self powered buildings are being built and the metro has done a lot to decrease traffic



pollution in the city. One must always remember that the genius of Dubai was its ability to transform itself from a resource-dependant region into a city that is so economically diverse that it has out-grown even its most oil wealthy neighbours. Oil now makes up less than 5% of Dubai's GDP, its economy is growing at a tremendous pace and is now classed as one of the fastest growing in the world. Retail, tourism, construction, financial services and real estate are at the forefront of the economic boom now, not oil.

Tourism is a huge part of Dubai's economy, each year it attracts visitors from all over the world who come to spend in the 'shopping capital of the middle east', relax in the crystal clear waters of the Arabian gulf and soak up the Bedouin traditions of 'old Dubai'. In 2011 Dubai was named the 7th most visited city in the world and with over 70 shopping malls and man made islands it's hardly surprising. However, Dubai strives to keep its old world charm, cross over the Creek on an Abra (traditional wooden boat) and you are transported to centuries gone by, winding streets lined with shops are piled high with treasures. Dubai cherishes its culture and past, the narrow lanes of the Bastakiya Quarter, an old village, have now been restored. The area gives visitors a glimpse of the city's roots, a time where life moved at a much slower pace and where the houses boasted wind towers.

Numerous city's have used an architectural symbol to forge a cultural identity; we needn't look further than Paris where the Eiffel Tower was erected for the world to see or the Statue of Liberty in the United States of America. In the case of Dubai the Burj Khalifa is the new favourite, standing 2712 feet tall it is by far the tallest in the world. The delicate needle like structure glistens on the Dubai skyline, punctuating it elegantly and has become a symbol of what can be achieved, if only we believe. The structure opened in 2010 and the design was based on the Hymenocallis flower, which influenced the triple lobed footprint. The Y-shaped floor plan maximizes the views of the Arabian Gulf and is reminiscent of the onion domes often seen in Islamic architecture. Another iconic building was the Burj Al Arab, Dubai's first architectural monument. The luxury hotel sits on a man mad island just off the coast and was designed to mimic the shape of a Dhow's sail, paying homage to the city's routes as a fishing village. The Palm and the World series must also be mentioned, the project created three man made islands in the shape of palm trees and one of the world has





been a huge feat of engineering, the creation of the foundations was in itself a mammoth task, but one that proved to be well worth it. The artificial peninsulas were created by sand dredged from the bottom of the ocean. Another innovative idea was Ski Dubai, the first Indoor Ski resort in the Middle East. It is located at Mall of the Emirates and houses 22, 500 square metres of snow covered slopes. There are five different levels of runs to be enjoyed, including a black run.

There has been a new wave of creativity sweeping over Dubai in the last few years and the number of creative and artistic establishments have been growing. The Al Quoz area has become an unofficial art district and houses numerous art galleries, studios and workshops. The Art Dubai show has fast become a pillar of the Middle East's art community and is part of Dubai Art Week, an initiative to promote contemporary art, design, galleries and exhibitions. The Dubai International Film Festival sees Hollywood stars flood the city; huge blockbusters are showcased alongside the low budget creations from the city's emerging directors. Since its creation in 2004 the festival has served as an influential platform for both Arab filmmakers and emerging talent at an international level. The Dubai Cultural and Art Authority has been established especially to ensure that Art and Culture remain at the center of the Dubai's social fabric, and there is a full calendar of events that ensure the

richness of culture.

Sport is another sector that has undergone a makeover in the region, which plays host to some of the major worldwide sporting events. From the Dubai Desert Classic, a major stop on the PGA Tour, the rugby Sevens, The Dubai Open Tennis Tournament to The Dubai World Cup, which has been hailed the 'Richest Horse Race in the World' Dubai has plenty to offer the sporting world. Dubai football has also shot into headlines recently with the appointment of Diego Maradona,

former football number one, as a manager of Al Wasl Football Club.

Dubai is a city with it's eyes firmly on the future, after all, it has achieved so much in such a short space of time, the tallest, the vastest, the biggest, it has all been covered! But slowing down doesn't seem to be an option in the emirate and there are a number of new and exciting projects underway. One ambitious project is The Dancing Towers, designed by Iraqi architect Zaha Hadid the towers will be intertwined and rotate to



maximize the views, and are sure to be a new benchmark for Dubai architectural standards. The Dubai Hydropolis is another project in the pipeline will be an underwater resort just off Dubai's coast and will mark a reinvention of living concepts worldwide.

Over the last few decades Dubai has emerged as a city with a can-do attitude, striving for success at every turn, and always achieving it. In Dubai, people single-mindedly pursue their dreams and ultimately achieve what was deemed the 'impossible'. It is a city that has been working for the past two decades, with no rest and one aim: to succeed. Dubai is a unique and rare example of both economic and social diversity within the Arab world. It is a place where east meets west. Its success has begun to penetrate and it is being held up as an example not just to the Arab region, but to the world.



All Images in this article by: creativei photography



National Day of Australia

Ambassador of Australia His Excellency Pablo Kang and his wife Rebecca Kang, hosted Australia Day in Abu Dhabi which was attended by a large number of Ambassadors and diplomats representing various countries, UAE nationals as well as Australian expats. The ceremony took place at the Hiltonia Beach Club and the guest of Honor was His Excellency Humaid Mohammed Obeid al Qattami, UAE Minister of Education.

More images of this event are on our website: www.thediplomatmagazine.com

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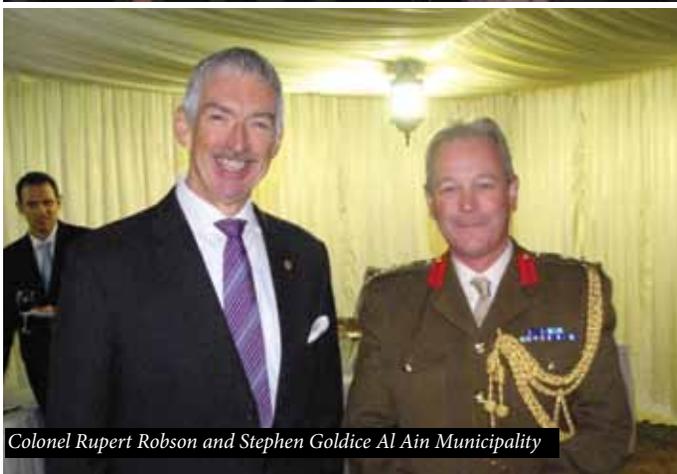
Receiving line with H. E. Pablo Kang, Ambassador of Australia



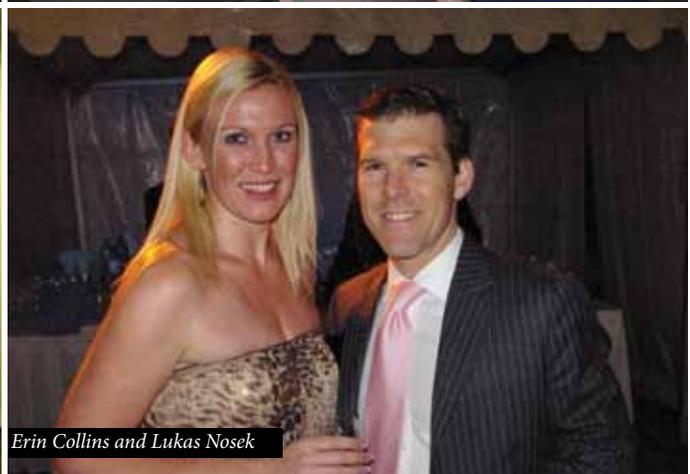
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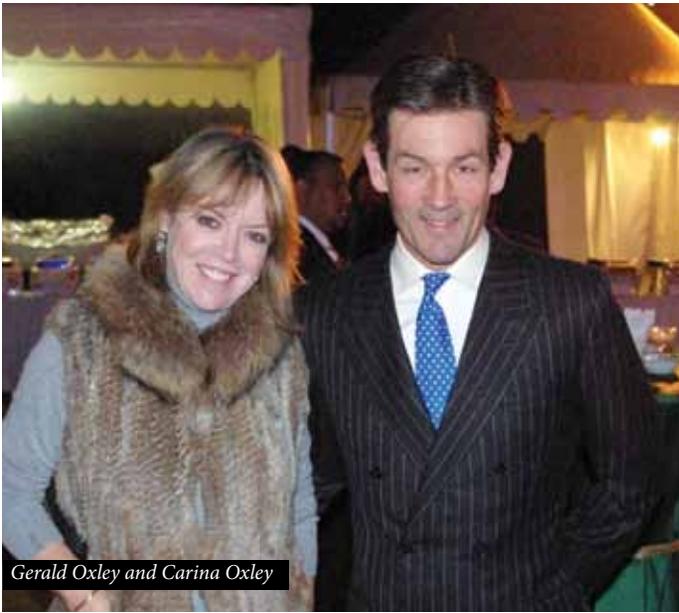
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Distinguished Guests



Distinguished Guests



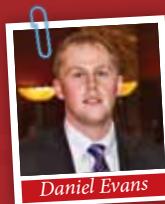
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Nicola Swan and Millicent Drabble



Daniel Evans

WORLD FUTURE ENERGY SUMMIT

World Leaders Hail Importance of Renewable Energy Sources



The World Future Energy Summit (WFES) was held in Abu Dhabi under the patronage of His Highness General Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed, Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi and Deputy Supreme Commander of the UAE Armed Forces, between January 16th-19th.

Hosted by Masdar, a leader in non-polluting energies and technologies, the summit is now considered the world's foremost conference regarding renewable energy resources for future generations.

Established in 2006, Masdar is a commercially driven enterprise that operates to reach the broad boundaries of the renewable energy and sustainable technologies industry – thereby giving it the necessary scope to meet these challenges.

Masdar operates through five integrated

units, including an independent, research-driven graduate university, and seeks to become a leader in making renewable energy a real, viable business and Abu Dhabi a global centre of excellence in the renewable energy and clean technology category. The result is an organisation greater than the sum of its parts and one where the synergies of shared knowledge and technological advancement provide this commercial and results-driven company with a competitive advantage that includes an ability to move with agility and intelligence within an industry that is evolving at great speed.

Now in its sixth year, the summit addresses issues such as international policy, finance of future energy, all renewable energies, sustainable buildings, green cities, carbon capture and future strategy. Many prominent world leaders attended, and speakers during

the opening address included UN Secretary-General Ban-ki Moon, Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao and South Korean Prime Minister Kim Hwang-sik. The 2012 summit was expected to exceed the already respectable figures shown in the 2011 iteration. The 2011 summit attracted around 26,000 attendees, 200 plus high level speakers and was represented by 112 countries.

Sustainable Development

Ban-ki Moon delivered a powerful message during his opening address and particularly highlighted the importance of energy to sustainable development and marked 2012 as the 'International Year of Sustainable Energy for All.'

"This is the right time for this Initiative," said the Secretary-General. "Across the world we see momentum building for concrete action

that reduces energy poverty, catalyzes sustainable economic growth, and mitigates the risks of climate change. Achieving sustainable energy for all is both feasible and necessary. My Initiative will help us meet these objectives simultaneously. It can be a triple win for all."

United Nations 2030 Objectives

The Secretary-General also highlighted what the United Nations hopes to have achieved by 2030. The first, and arguably most pressing, of these objectives is to ensure worldwide access to modern energy services. The second initiative is to double the rate of improvement of energy efficiency and, finally, to double the share of renewable energy forms. Moon has also appointed a top-level group of world leaders from the realms of business, civil society, government and finance to lead initiatives to improve conditions right from the ground all the way up to corporate board rooms



and government policy.

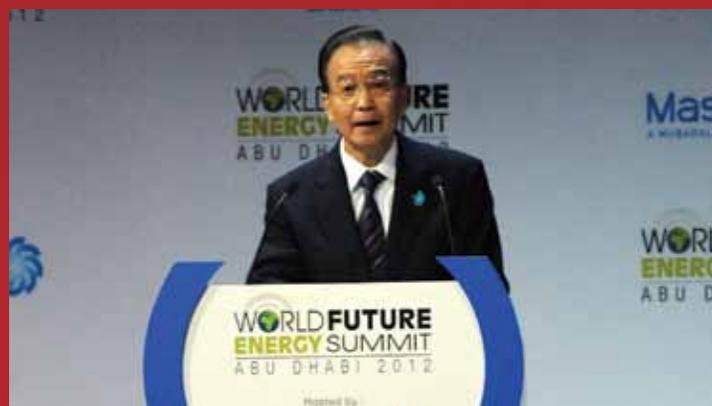
Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao also outlined a four step process in regard to the world's future energy demands and called for priority to be given to energy conservation and energy efficiency.

"To save energy does not mean simply to cut energy use, nor does it compromise people's quality of life," Premier Wen told delegates. "What is needed is to rely on science and technology to increase energy efficiency, build a circular national economy featuring low input, high output and low energy consumption and emissions, and drive sustainable economic and social development with minimum energy and resource consumption."

UAE Partnership

The summit marked the start of a strong partnership between the United Arab Emirates and Scotland in regard to an action plan that will aim to lead the two countries to develop a thorough renewable energy program. The First Minister of Scotland, the Right Honourable Alex Salmond and His Excellency Dr Sultan Ahmed al Jaber, CEO of Masdar, put pen to paper on the framework that follows discussions held previously in Abu Dhabi and the United Kingdom.

Mr. Salmond championed the agreement saying that, "The signing of this agreement with Masdar is a rapid and valuable outcome of the high-level discussions I held with Dr Sultan Ahmed Al Jaber and senior Government representatives less than six weeks ago in Abu Dhabi. This outcome is testament to the fact that Scotland is a world renewable energy champion and is continuing to play a major role in driving the global adoption of renewable sources of power, innovations in grid technology and research and development in wind turbine development.

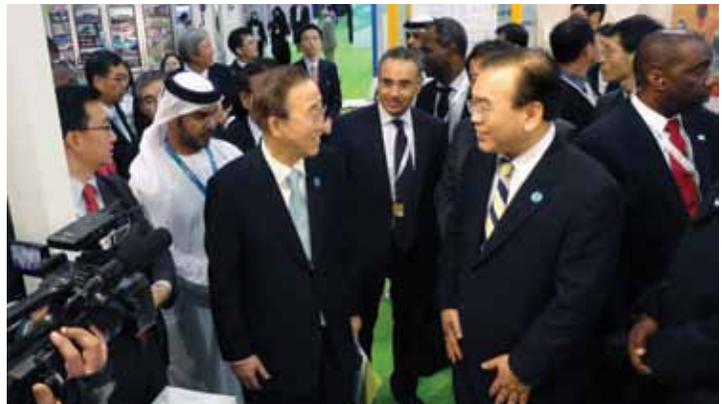


“The innovative work being undertaken at the Masdar Institute is further indication that other nations are recognising the need to move to preserve the quality of the natural environment, which is one of the major global concerns facing us today and one of the most critical challenges of the 21st century,” said the First Minister, “This ground-breaking agreement provides vitally important investment and development opportunities for both partners. It also enables us to work closely together, to share our respective expertise to help push and promote alternative energy sources at a global level, as the world seeks to address a broad range of climate change issues”.

“As the world moves towards a low-carbon economy, there is mutual benefit to be had from working in collaboration to create these technologies. Together Scotland and Masdar have much to contribute to energy policy and economic and social development beyond just our two countries and I look forward to our partnership flourishing.”

His Excellency Dr Sultan al Jaber re-iterated the partnership and spoke of his pride at welcoming Mr. Salmond once again to the nation’s capital stating that “our countries share a similar vision where new forms of power will compliment and help balance the global energy mix. This partnership further unites our nations.”

The Summit also boasted a comprehensive list of key note speakers in a program designed to educate, influence and encourage the audience to think about how companies and governments can do



more to make sure that future energy technology is at the forefront of policy. Speakers included Farooq Abdullah, the Indian Minister of New and Renewable Energy, Walter Steinmann, the Swiss State Secretary for Energy, and Andris Piebalgs, the Commissioner for Development of the European Union.

Some of the topics covered within the key note speeches were sustainable energy for all, action towards universal energy access and the role of government institutions in accelerating the transition to a global energy economy. There were also forums for business and policy, technology and innovation and finance and regulation.

An overriding theme of the forum was that the key to improving the renewable energy market will be to invest heavily in education and innovation. During his address to the attendees, Steve Bolz, Senior VP, President and CEO of GE Power and Wind said that “given the times, technology investment has to be the long-term differentiator in the sector” and that only companies investing heavily in R&D and innovation would succeed. Renewable energy is fast becoming an extremely competitive business and is an industry that is undergoing a major transition period as governments increasingly focus on the development of sustainable, green initiatives. The industry is one that is certainly facing its share of difficulties, a point made by James Brown, President of Utilities Business Group at First Solar who openly admitted that the industry “was in chaos” last year in reference to oversupply of, in particular, the photovoltaic (solar energy) sectors. However, technological advances had hugely helped the industry with First Solar producing an unheard of 14.4 percent

efficiency in their products.

Abu Dhabi is a particularly good location for the summit as the government sees renewable energy resources as becoming key to the future plans of, not only the emirate, but also for the entirety of the United Arab Emirates. Recently, Bani Yas Island in the nation’s capital installed a wind turbine which is a first for the Gulf region and Masdar, Abu Dhabi’s state-owned clean energy firm, plan to invest \$15 billion in renewable energy projects such as the world’s flagship carbon free city in the capital.

Australia – UAE Relations on the Upswing

Special Article by the Australian Ambassador H.E. Pablo Kang



Cooperation between Australia and the UAE has expanded considerably since the establishment of an Australian Embassy in Abu Dhabi in 1999. Bilateral relations are dynamic and of strategic importance to both countries, extending across a wide range of areas such as defence, security and law enforcement, trade, aviation, health, education and tourism. The broad scope of this collaboration is reflected in the significant number of Australian government agencies present in both Abu Dhabi and Dubai. Five of the six Australian state

exports to the UAE are alumina, motor vehicles, meat and wheat, while crude petroleum constitutes dominant exports from the UAE. Australia currently invests more than \$1 billion in the UAE economy, and more than 300 Australian companies have a presence in the UAE. Some 17,000 Australians, many of them qualified professionals across many fields such as law, construction, health, education and finance, are based in the UAE and are making an important contribution to the UAE's ambitious development agenda. At the same time, Australia continues to work

governments also maintain representative offices in the UAE.

The UAE and Australia also share strategic interests in the security and development of the Gulf region, with the UAE hosting the Australian Defence Force headquarters for the Middle East. Australia enjoys extensive trade relations with the UAE, with approximately \$5.3 billion in two-way merchandise trade recorded in 2010-11.

The primary Australian

with the UAE to pursue a comprehensive Free Trade Agreement between Australia and the Gulf Cooperation Council, which will bring significant economic benefits to both countries and to the broader Gulf region.

The bilateral relationship is further underpinned by high level contact between the UAE and the Australian Government. Australia has welcomed a number of high level visitors from the UAE, including visits by Foreign Minister H.H. Sheikh Abdullah bin Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan in 2010 and 2011 and by Minister of Economy H.E. Sultan bin Saeed Al Mansouri in 2011. Before that, H.E. Lubna Al Qasimi, UAE's Minister of Foreign Trade also led a business and trade delegation to Australia in 2008. The visit stressed on the keenness to strengthen the bilateral cooperation between Australia and the UAE, especially in the areas of trade and investment. In January 2009 and April 2010 the United Arab Emirates hosted visits by the Governor-General of the Commonwealth of Australia, Her Excellency Ms Quentin Bryce AC.

The Prime Minister of Australia, the Hon Julia Gillard MP, Senator the Hon Nick Sherry and Senator the Hon Kim Carr also visited the United Arab Emirates in 2010, as did the Premier of Victoria, the Hon John Brumby. The Foreign Minister, the Hon Kevin Rudd MP, has also made numerous visits to the UAE, including three visits in 2011 alone. The Australia-UAE relationship also benefits from warm people-to-people links between Australians and Emiratis. In addition to the 17,000 Australians who live in the UAE, more than 1,700 Emiratis study at Australian institutions. Many Emirati and Australian tourists visit each other's countries every year. These human links enhance understanding and goodwill between the two countries.

The Australian Embassy in Abu Dhabi and the Australian Consulate-General in Dubai look forward to continuing close and friendly cooperation with the UAE across a range of bilateral, regional and multilateral issues over the coming years.



Interview with **H.E. MK Lokesh** Ambassador of India

The Indian expatriate community in the UAE is by far the largest, numbering an estimated 1.75 million people. On the occasion of the Indian Republic Day, the International Diplomat spoke to His Excellency M.K. Lokesh, the Ambassador of India in the UAE, about the close historical ties between India and the UAE, and how their relationship has evolved over the years to create the mutually beneficial economic, political and cultural bonds they share today.



H.E. Mr Lokesh has been a diplomat for a noteworthy 34 years and has experienced a variety of different cultures during diplomatic assignments in South Africa, America, Nigeria and Sri Lanka. He has represented India as Deputy Chief of Mission in Belgium to begin with and then Ambassador in Slovakia, before reaching Abu Dhabi as Ambassador in 2009, his first posting in the Middle East. His impression of the UAE is immensely positive and he describes his admiration for a country that has transformed itself with the right balance of progress and traditionalism. 'The UAE is a blessed country. It has followed the right amount of modernism and conservatism. It is a country that has been guided by visionary leaders and it has used the right combination of wealth and leadership. The UAE also has a large expat community who contribute to its progress and a stability that makes it attractive for foreigners and foreign investment.'

Historical Trade Relations

The Indian expatriate population in the UAE is the largest in the country and the Indian presence here dates back many centuries, as Mr Lokesh explains, 'we have strong historical relations with this region because in the past there were vibrant trade relations between us which led to the mingling of our people and cultures. We established strong diplomatic relations with the UAE as soon as the UAE was formed and we were one of the first countries to do so. Since then, the relationship has evolved further to keep apace with the rapid transformation of the UAE.'

Geographically, the UAE is a busy transit point for India and acts as a link for India to the rest of the world. The earliest trade links between the two countries involved the trading of spices, tea, food items and pearls, which were collected in the coast of various Emirates, returned to India and sold all over the world, as Mr Lokesh remarks, 'these pearls were of high quality and sought after'.

Following the discovery of oil, and the subsequent formation of the UAE in 1971, the country began its transformation and the region became the land of opportunity for one of its closest providers of manpower – India, as Mr Lokesh points out. 'As the UAE had to develop their facilities from scratch they needed this manpower and the closest

was from India. Indians form the largest expat community here because historically the Indian sub-continent always had good relations with this region and a large number of Keralites saw the opportunities opening up in this country after the discovery of oil.'

Of the estimated 1.75 million Indian residents in the UAE, 60% are from Kerala, which has a special place historically here. Like the UAE, the State of Kerala is small and it's people looked for employment outside the region, as Mr Lokesh reiterates, 'The Gulf was the closest place to migrate to. The opportunities were tremendous here.'

UAE - A Magnet for Professionals

Today, the UAE remains a magnet

“The Gulf was the closest place to migrate to. The opportunities were tremendous here.”

for Indian investors, professionals and businessmen. The Indian workforce is distributed across all the Emirates and has diversified over the years. India is renowned for its jewelry, textiles, machinery and medical resources, and increasingly, more and more professionals have flocked here, as Mr Lokesh describes, 'about 30% of Indians are professionals working in many areas, technical, manufacturing, oil and the civil service. There are a large number of doctors and a very significant number of chartered accountants. Indians form the backbone of the corporate sector here and in virtually every business establishment you will find an Indian accountant here!'

There are also, unsurprisingly, a large number of longstanding and high profile Indian businessmen in the UAE, with a substantial number of well known companies who have, over the years, made a significant

“I am generally upbeat about business prospects for Indians. There are many groups operating in the retail sector....”

impact here, as Mr Lokesh mentions, 'I am generally upbeat about business prospects for Indians. There are many groups operating in the retail sector, the Lu Lu Group, Fatima stores and Jumbo Electronics. Jashanmal too has been in the region for more than 90 years. The UAE Exchange and the NMC Medical Group are led by Indians. Companies have and continue to make a huge contribution towards construction, building the metro, working on roads and lately, extracting sulphur from petroleum and building oil-rigs

in Abu Dhabi.'

The contribution from India's expats, is appreciated by the UAE, who promote India by the sheer virtue of their presence. 'These brotherly relations have continued to this day as trade between the two countries continues to flourish', comments Mr Lokesh and the numbers speak for themselves. In 2010-2011 trade between India and the UAE reached \$ 67 billion – the largest figure for any other nation and a trend that Mr Lokesh believes will remain healthy for the foreseeable future, 'People come from all over India and currently India is the largest trading partner for the UAE and the UAE is our largest trading partner. The UAE has established itself as a commercial hub. India's trade is also

expanding and the UAE offers a gateway to the rest of the world in terms of logistics, so trade will continue.'

India's Investment Initiative

One area earmarked for growth by Mr Lokesh is to increase mutual investments between the two countries, as he explains, 'although UAE is among the top ten investing countries in India, investment has not kept pace with the growth seen in trade, but given the potential of this country, we feel we can expand investment'.

Measures to increase investment are a high priority for both countries. The focus for India is on infrastructure, roads, power plants and airports. The government of the UAE is also investing in the private sector of India as share options have opened and this is an exciting area. An important visit, of Shaikh Hamed Bin Zayed Al Nahyan, Managing

Director of ADIA is taking place during 16-20 January, 2012 to promote investments.

High Level Exchanges

A number of high level visits and meetings take place regularly between leading members of the UAE government and ministers and leaders from India. Mr Lokesh recognizes the importance of such collaborative ties, 'we would like to maintain high-level exchanges to cement our relations.'

In November 2010, Her Excellency,

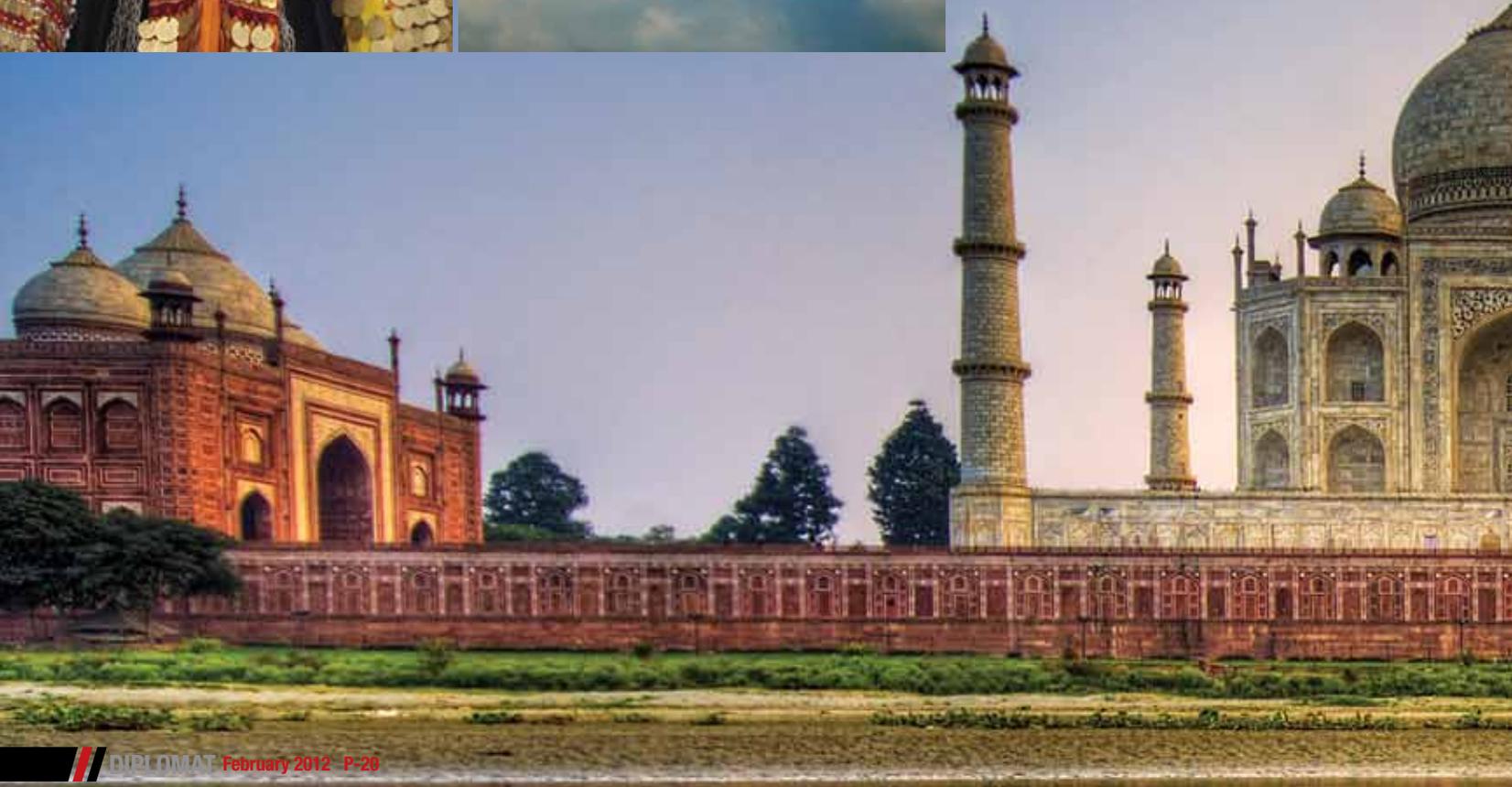


the President of India, Shrimati Pratibha Devisingh Patil visited the UAE for five days and was warmly received by the community. As well as spearheading important discussions, this was also the first time a President of India had been to Sharjah and met the Ruler, H.H. Sheikh Sultan bin Mohammed Al-Qasimi III. The Deputy Prime Minister and the Minister of the Interior, Sheikh Saif Bin Zayed Al Nahyan recently went to India and Sheikha Lubna bint Khalid Al Qasimi, UAE Minister of Foreign Trade visited India in 2009 and again in January 2012 to participate in the CII partnership Summit.

Within Mr Lokesh's remit is the job of maintaining these visits, as he states, 'my intention is to promote these high level visits as it is very important for our relationship.'

Incredible India

India has a diverse tourism industry and with over 450 flights a week connecting the UAE to many different parts of India (in only three hours), it is a popular destination. Visitors to India have the opportunity to see monuments, architecture and famous attractions such as the Taj Mahal and Mr Lokesh describes the great range of sights and experiences that India offers, 'there are a large number of forts and palaces, eco-tourism, tiger and lion game reserves and bird sanctuaries. There are also religious attractions and old temples. It is a very



diverse country and for the tourist, a very important place.'

Not forgetting, India has a long and beautiful coastline with lots of attractive beaches in Kerala and Goa, for instance. Mr Lokesh mentions too the health benefits of visiting his country, 'There are wonderful hill stations where people can go and forget themselves.'

With tourism in mind, Mr Lokesh returns to his focus on investment, mentioning that in order to improve their tourism industry there is a 'need to develop our infrastructure.'

Shared Agenda

The relationship between India and the UAE has evolved on many levels, economically, politically and culturally and as history has dictated. His Highness, the late Sheikh Zayed and the then Indian Prime Minister Gandhi were close and today these political ties remain strong and India and the UAE co-operate in many areas. 'We share similar views in a large number of areas. We appreciate the UAE's role in global affairs and they recognise the UAE as a major power and we support their political position in this region.'

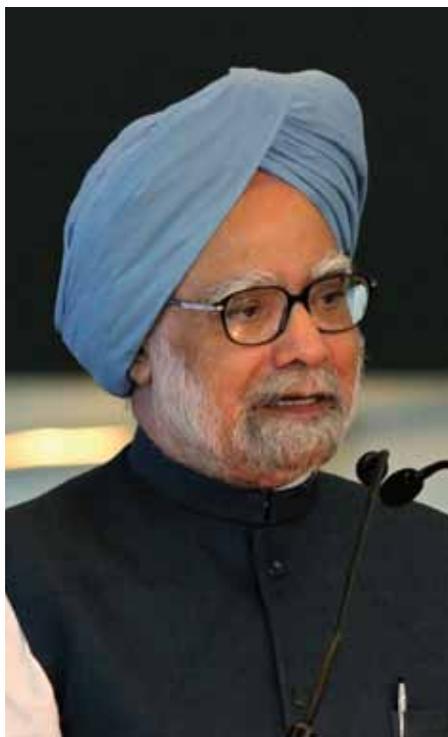
As emerging nations, another similarity is that both countries are changing, as Mr Lokesh sums up, 'For the UAE, as it's a small country the changes here are more visible, but for a large country like India it will take some time to perceive the changes.'





A Friendship Through the Centuries

Ties between the Emirates and India have remained strong since as early as the 1800s and today, expatriates from the South Asian country make up nearly 40% of the UAE's population



It is a relationship that dates back at least over a century. Ties between the United Arab Emirates and India are based on a history of political, economic and cultural links that have served to strengthen relations to the point they are at now. Today, Indians make up nearly 40% of the UAE's population and according to 2009 statistics, there are 1.75 million Indians residing in the Emirates — a significant number when compared to numbers from just 50 years ago. With such a large expat population, elements of the Indian culture have penetrated the Emirati way of life so much so that it's bound to leave an impact for centuries to come.

The Past

The region has maintained strong relations with the Subcontinent for a long time. For the most part, what has strengthened ties is trade. Indian merchants frequented the Gulf, bringing in exotic spices from the Subcontinent in exchange for pearls and dates. The relationship was furthered during

the 19th century, when both nations were governed by the British Raj. At this point in time, the Indian currency was widely accepted within the borders of the region that is now the UAE. The discovery of oil in the 1960s is what attracted a mass movement of expatriates who were looking to find a job in this flourishing new industry. And in just over 25 years from 1975-2000, the population of Indians in the country grew by almost 4000%. Some of these expats who moved here during the post-oil boom are the ones that have established big businesses here in the Emirates. Today, Indians make up a bulk of the UAE's expat labour force, working in a wide-range of fields from construction and manufacturing to IT and the service industry. Reflecting the origin of the early traders, a large percentage of the expats are from Kerala, but Indian residents are also from Maharashtra, Delhi, Bengal, Gujarat and other parts of the country. To establish roots here in the UAE, wealth has obviously been a motivating factor and some entrepreneurs have managed to set

up established businesses in the Emirates, bringing in big bucks. There's quite a few of them from billionaires Mickey Jagtiani from the Landmark Group to Yussufali MA from the Emke group to millionaires and Sunny Varkey of GEMS. A 2005 Merrill Lynch report estimated that there were approximately 33,000 Indian millionaires living in the UAE. Many expats have set up some of the Emirates' most successful franchises, including the Lal's supermarket chain, New Medical Centre, jewellery chain Alukkas as well as several other big names. But it's more than just about being enterprising, India and UAE share a history of strong trade relations that is valued at over \$18 billion today. Many Indian companies have warehouses based in the UAE and the Emirates is a large market for products from the Subcontinent, including cotton, jewellery, machinery and instruments as well as marine products.

"What's best is the opportunity the Gulf provides so many of us expats. It's not too far from home and the opportunities are endless, providing a chance for ordinary people to make strides in their careers," says Mr. Deepak Dharamdas, who established his own steel trading business here in the UAE after moving here from India. It's a sentiment echoed by many expats — happiness that they have been able to make a difference for their country by achieving prosperity that they can then share with their loved ones back home.

Integration into Emirati Society

Nearly half of the UAE population can speak or at least understand Hindi/Urdu. With such a large percentage of the population being from the Subcontinent, elements of Indian culture has penetrated all aspects of life in the Emirates. Bollywood films, packed with the characteristic song and dance routine and all, are extremely popular with residents, even Emiratis. In fact, many locals have grown up watching these movies and are familiar with the likes of Amitabh Bachchan and Shah Rukh Khan. The annual Dubai Film Festival also throws light on the best of Indian cinema and most of Bollywood's glamorous celebs have made



including Keralites, Goans, etc. And at anytime of the year when there's a festival, whether it be Diwali or Onam, they come together to host all-out celebrations. There's even a Hindu temple and gurudwara in Dubai and churches can be found in Abu Dhabi, Dubai, Sharjah and Ras Al Khaimah. Expatriates also have an Indian Workers' Resource Centre that is

at least one appearance in the country while for others, visits to the shopping capital of Dubai are frequent.

Similarly, Indian foods are just as popular among long-term residents, whether it be from the small cafeterias that dot the street corners of most residential areas or the chic restaurants at 5-star hotels. There are *dosas* and *idlis* on one end to *pani puri* and *bhel* on the other and a choice of everything from *malai kofta* or *chicken curry*. Even then, this covers only just a few of the foods that can be found in the popular food joints across the country. In fact, flavours from the Subcontinent have become such an integral part of local culture that when Emirati brothers founded Wild *Peeta*, a fusion *shawarama* restaurant, *makhani tikka*

expatriates who are facing legal, financial or even medical problems. And while there's currently only one in Dubai, there are plans to expand the operation of such a centre across the country, catering to the large population of workers.

But in setting up roots in a foreign country, community members have gone beyond ensuring there are places of worship and cultural centres. They've made sure they're children have the right schools to go to, there are enough shops where they can buy traditional clothes, and that the city that they're living in has everything to make it a home away from home. In Dubai alone, there are over 40 Indian curriculum schools and every emirate's got its own share of schools



following the CBSE curriculum. Several Indian universities have also opened up satellite campuses here in the UAE, including Manipal University and BITS Pilani.

According to many expats, living in Dubai brings them closer to their fellow Indians than living in India does. Nishant Ravi, who was born and brought up in Dubai, says, "When people are in India, they become conscious of which city they're from, whether they're Keralite, Punjabi or Gujarati. Whenever I go back, it becomes clear that people are more aware of this. But here, when they're away from home, then everyone's connected, you know? Because at the end of the day, they're all Indian." This spirit is best observed during major festivals or even when there's an important cricket match, during which expats can be found gathered at café's or sports clubs, cheering on their national team.



sauce was one of the options made available alongside the *Khaleeji* variant.

But it's not just the locals that have been accepting of Indian culture. During all major holidays, including the UAE National Day, it's possible to see just as many Indians and other expats rejoicing in the festivities as Emiratis. Since the majority of the expats here are Muslim, they also engage in celebrations on Islamic holidays, including Eid.

It's clear that the relations that the two nations now share run far deeper than their economic ties. And culturally, Indians have established their own networks in the Emirates. Indian associations are aplenty with most targeting specific sub-groups





Guests stand for the National Anthem



H.E. M.K. Lokesh Amb of India speech

Republic Day of India

His Excellency M.K Lokesh, the Ambassador of India to the UAE hosted the 63rd Republic Day of India in Abu Dhabi at an impressive ceremony that included traditional dances by talented performers. The Guest of Honor HH Sheikh Nahyan Bin Mubarak Al Nahyan, UAE Minister of Higher Education and Scientific Research was accompanied by a number of dignitaries. Also present on the occasion were Ambassadors and Diplomats representing a number of countries who thoroughly enjoyed the captivating cultural program. Emirati Artist Samar Al Shamsi presented her painting of the Indian President on the occasion.

*More images of this event are on our website:
www.thediplomatmagazine.com*

If you would like us to cover your events, please contact us



Ashok K Bhatnagar, H.E. M.K. Lokesh Ambassador of India



Claudine Mager and Veronique Siklosi, Consul Embassy of Belgium



Emirati Artist Dr. Eng. Samar Al Shamsi



Graeme Mullin and Lucy Cowan, British Embassy



Pankaj, Manvi Gupta, Bhauna and Chandra Sen Hada



H. H. Sheikh Nahyan Bin Mubarak Al Nahyan, Minister of Higher Education and Scientific Research



H.E. M.K. Lokesh and H.H. Sheikh Nahyan Bin Mubarak Al Nahyan



H. E. Askar Mussinov Ambassador of Kazakhstan with Spouse



Marko Erakovic, H. E. Aleksandar Erakovic Ambassador of Montenegro and H. E. Vahagn Melikian Ambassador of the Republic of Armenia



Marco Martinez, Consul Deputy Head of Mission Embassy of Chile; Raul Chirinos and Ciro Bandres

Icons of Indian Community

As India celebrates its Republic Day, The International Diplomat spoke to some distinguished members of the Indian community in the UAE. Indian's are the largest expatriate population in the UAE and have contributed extensively to the growth of this country and in the process have also achieved success and recognition.



Mr Maghanmal Pancholia
Chairman, Arabian Trading Agency

On this great occasion, I would like to remind my fellow citizens to be law-abiding and continue to sustain the unity amongst various community groups. For decades now, the Indian community has walked step by step with the UAE and contributed to its development. It is my earnest wish that this synergy is further nurtured for the mutual benefit of both the UAE and India. Indians have been an integral part of the UAE entrepreneurial fabric. From starting out as financiers for the local natural pearl industry, we forayed into the textile, food stuff and electronics industry during the 1950s. Today, Indians are well-recognized for their contribution to any sector – from construction and manufacture to trade and investments and IT. Professionals from India have also made their mark in banking, finance and the media sectors. The relationship between India and the UAE has been established on rock-solid foundation and we will continue to build upon this foundation.



Mr Yousuf Ali MA
Managing Director EMKE Group (Lu Lu)

First of all I take this opportunity to thank and salute the visionary Rulers of this great nation for their far-sight and determination in making this country a land of Cultural and Religious harmony, for showing us the true meaning of Freedom and for allowing the large expatriate community here to live and earn their livelihood with utmost dignity in a safe and secure environment. I sincerely wish that on the occasion of Indian Republic Day, each one of us renews our pledge and dedicates ourselves to improving the UAE and at the same time do our bit in further strengthening the historical friendly ties between both the countries. Indians were among the first to land in the shores of UAE and the fact that they are today in almost every sphere of activity here speaks a lot about their honesty, hard work and dedication. From being a labourer to CEOs of Multinationals to running big business groups, Indians are setting benchmarks in every field. Their sincerity and adaptability have earned them huge respect from the local citizens and royal families. We must always learn to respect local culture and heritage which only teaches us to love and give respect.



Dr Ram Buxani
President, ITL-Cosmos Group

Indian National day is a strong reminder of the struggle put in by our leaders and forefathers to leave legacy of self-rule and breath of independency for the present generation. It should not be taken lightly. The fact that Mahatma Gandhi refused to occupy any position in the Government is another reminder to reflect that we should not ruin our precious democracy with corruption and power-craze. Indian citizens form the largest expatriate population in UAE. We are thankful to the UAE government for their hospitality and confidence bestowed for the development of this beautiful country.



Mr Joy Alukkas
Chairman of Joyalukkas Group

As Indians we need to ensure we maintain the dignity and culture of our nation where ever we are. Every non-resident Indian should consider themselves a brand ambassador for India and do the nation pride with their actions and deeds at all times so that every other nation looks up to India. Indians have been able to contribute and do well in the UAE thanks to the visionary leaders of the UAE. UAE is one of the few countries that has allowed almost 189 nationalities to live and prosper in their country. All nationalities i feel have reciprocated this generosity by working hard towards the growth and prosperity of this great nation. Indian's consider UAE the land of opportunity and it is truly so! I myself came to the UAE with a dream and managed to achieve it thanks to the dynamic nature of the country and its drive for growth and prosperity. Whatever i am today, i owe it to the UAE. I would like to take this opportunity to wish all Indians a grand Republic Day celebration.



Mr Rizwan Sajjan
Chairman
Danube Group

The Republic Day of India is a fitting testament to India's emergence as one of the bastions of democracy for the free world. Today not only marks our birth as a nation but also shows us of the extreme dedication and patriotism that our forefathers exhibited, which culminated in the creation of our very own constitution. Where we are now, we owe to the men and women who came before us and strived to gain our independence. Today, we join our fellow countrymen in celebrating this historic event, paying tribute and giving credit where it is due. India today has ably positioned itself as a global economy that is ready to do business with the rest of the world and is backed by a workforce that is world class, highly trained and fully committed. I congratulate my fellow countrymen on this great day



Mr Raza Beig
CEO, Splash (Landmark Group)

I would like to wish and congratulate all my fellow Indians on the occasion of the 63rd Republic Day of India. We as proud Indians believe in unity, in diversity and not only respecting but learning from the culture and tradition of the country we live in. On this platform, it is also quite imperative for us as Indians to owe our success to the UAE for the trust and opportunities provided. It has undoubtedly been a great journey for us and we should continue to learn, contribute and grow with our great nation, India. As Indians, we have strong values and ideals which have always helped us to create benchmarks and overcome any challenge. It is this spirit and the umpteen opportunities that the UAE has provided us with that we have been successfully able to contribute to the growth of this nation. I believe that no contribution and achievement is complete without the support of its leaders and the society we live in.



Mr Kamal Vachani
Group Director Operations, Al Maya Group

India is a great country and one of the largest democracies in the world. India's exports of Electronics hardware, software and services have crossed USD.60 billion mark. This is a great achievement. I wish Indian exporters all the very best for this great achievement. UAE is a very important country for India as Indians have been living here for the last three to four decades and a sizeable number of Indians expatriates over here. Dubai is a great place to live and all the nationalities are living here with peace and harmony. The Indian community has played a major role in the economic development of the UAE, and is the largest expatriate community in the

UAE. There is also a significant business community from India who carve a name for themselves in various fields in the UAE.



Mr Ishwer Chugani
Executive Director Giordano Group

Our heartfelt congratulations to India as it celebrates its 63rd Republic Day. India in these years has had many successes and many moments of glory. As Indians we all should remain united and committed to face the challenges collectively and work to ensure that we all grow and prosper. As a nation of 1.2 billion citizens with over 20 official languages and multiple vibrant cultures and communities we must continue to coexist in unity under a single constitution. We take this opportunity to wish, the large and dexterous entrepreneurial Indian community in the Middle East, all the very best. The Indian Community's contribution to the UAE

is quite important and integral. Across the board, the Indian expats represent many industries and businesses and have contributed significantly to the nation's growth. Some of UAE's biggest commercial enterprises were founded by members of the Indian community and have played an important role in contributing to the rise of UAE and in particular, Dubai, as not just a regional, but also a global centre of trade, commerce, finance, education, healthcare, transportation and tourism. We wish the Indian community all the best for the coming years.



Dr Bharat Butaney
President, Indian Business & Professional Council

UAE is home to a large Indian community. Indian entrepreneurs have invested in all sectors in UAE. The Emirate and the Emiratis have supported the Indian community in furthering its businesses. But on the other hand, the current level of Foreign Direct Investments (FDIs) from UAE to India is far below potential of the Emirates. Currently UAE is ranked tenth with only one percent of the total FDIs in India. India and UAE have enjoyed historical relations and have been dynamic partners in the trade and economic fields. India-UAE trade, valued at US\$ 180 million per annum in the 1970s, is today in excess of US\$ 50 billion making the

UAE one of India's leading trade partners. Major Indian exports included gems & jewelry, petroleum & products, machinery & instruments. Major imports included Gold, precious stones & gems, machinery and electronics. Indians have contributed significantly to the economic fabric of Dubai. Northern Emirates of Dubai, Sharjah, Ajman and Ras Al Khaimah together have over 35,000 Indian companies registered with their Chambers. There are nearly 1.75 million Indians in the UAE employed. So, Let us salute our glorious nation with pride on Republic Day.



Neelesh Bhatnagar
CEO - Emax Electronics (Landmark Group)

I would like to congratulate my Indian community for putting up a great show in UAE and becoming an integral part of culture and economy of this great country. We should continue to support the economy of this country which is indirectly helping the economy of our country. Indians make a very significant contribution to the UAE in every sphere of life here, from construction workers to top business leaders, Indians occupy critical positions in most companies. Over the last 25 years that I have personally spent in this Region I have seen the growth of Indian companies and contributions that my Colleagues have made. In the last 10 years a lot of

Indian investment has also gone into the property market of the UAE and many Indians now own houses in the UAE and consider it as their home.



Mr Paras Shahdadpuri
Chairman, Nikai Group of Companies

26th January is of very special significance for India and for all Indians as it was on this day that we adopted the Constitution of India and declared it as a Republic, with

President as the Head of the State and every Indian was empowered with the Fundamental Rights. I urge all my compatriots back in India and huge Diaspora abroad to commit themselves to highest standards of values, ethics and integrity for the development of India and also for the development of the country of their chosen home. India and UAE have a very special bonding and historic relationship encompassing all areas -- cultural, political, economic, trade and investment. This has been achieved thanks to the very close and comprehensive ties between India and UAE and also by the contributions made by the Emirati and Indian Community residing in UAE. I personally would like to whole-heartedly thank the Rulers of all the Emirates of UAE for affording this opportunity and hosting Indian community, which is the largest expatriate community in UAE. In turn, I am proud to say that Indians have handsomely contributed to the growth of this blessed country. Let us celebrate this great event of the Republic Day of India with our dear brothers and sisters in UAE.



Mr Siddharth Balachandran,
Chairman of India Club

Today is the Republic Day of our great country. The significance of this date cannot be understated in any manner. It is on this date that the people of India and the first elected

governing body swore to adapt the ideal of governance "By the people, For the people and of the people". in today's times nothing has become more significant than we, the people, being accountable and responsible for our motherland. I would like to reinforce the message to every Indian citizen and expatriate that we should forge ahead together. There is no limit to the success we can achieve as a nation if we stand together. There exists very strong ties between India and this great nation, the UAE. It is no wonder that, among the expatriate communities in the UAE, the Indian community is the largest. In the past, the Indian community consisted of trading entrepreneurs, mainly confined to the textile, construction materials and electronic goods sectors, and also individuals seeking better opportunities in the employment provided by these sectors. Subsequently, as the UAE started making giant strides in the world of holistic development, the profile of the Indian expatriates coming here also endured a significant shift. The opportunities were taken by high level management and technology professionals as well.

Chinese Premier's Visit Boosts Relations with UAE



Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao wrapped his three-day visit to the United Arab Emirates after holding high level talks with the UAE leadership and witnessing the agreement signing ceremony of the strategic pacts between UAE and China. He also addressed the opening session of the World Future Energy Summit 2011 and gave a keynote address. Premier Wen Jiabao's recent visit to the UAE holds paramount importance as it saw a significant upgrade of ties between UAE and China. The bilateral co-operation between the two countries extends to multiple fields of economy, trade, technology, education, culture, health, politics, non-governmental

exchanges, sports, and aviation. Some of the major agreements signed by the two states include; Sino-UAE Agreement on Cultural Cooperation (1989), Agreement on Medical and Health Technical Cooperation, Sino-UAE Agreement on Judiciary Extradition (May 2002), Sino-UAE Agreement on Information and Cultural Cooperation (2001), Sino-Sharjah Bilateral Aviation Agreement (1980) and Sino-UAE Agreement on Civil Air Transportation (1989). The efforts of building a strong partnership have persisted over the years and have shown positive inclinations.

21-Gun Salute

To keep the tradition alive, the Chinese

Premier was greeted with a 21-gun salute and he also inspected the guard of honor along with the UAE Prime Minister, His Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum.

Meeting with President His Highness Sheikh Khalifa

The President, His Highness Sheikh Khalifa bin Zayed Al Nahyan also welcomed the visiting Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao at Al Mushrif Palace where the two leaders held summit level talks and discussed the regional and international developments. Praising the UAE-China relationship, President Khalifa said, "We are looking forward that Mr Jiabao's trip to the UAE will constitute an advanced step towards greater cooperation and further enhancement of economic partnership between the two friendly countries." He added that "the UAE has the sincere desire to bolster its relations of cooperation with China in pursuit of more progress and development in both countries and further stability in the world economy." Wen Jiabao thanked the UAE for its co-operation and said, "China and the UAE have witnessed great progress in bilateral relations since they established diplomatic ties in 1984. They have treated each other with respect and trust, and have been confident in each other's development. The decision to establish a strategic partnership between the two nations is in line with the fundamental interests of both sides and will create a broader prospect for them in the expansion of bilateral cooperation in various areas."

Meeting with Prime Minister of the UAE

Premier Wen Jiabao also met with the UAE Prime Minister, His Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum and the two leaders discussed the steps being undertaken by both governments to expand the scope of relations between the two countries. Expressing his gratitude for the UAE Premier Wen said, "China is willing to expand cooperation with the UAE in trade and exploration of oil and gas as well as in the field of developing new energy resources, with the aim to establish a long-term, stable and comprehensive energy partnership between the two sides." He added that, "the Chinese government encourages Chinese businessmen to further invest in key



UAE infrastructure construction projects of transportation, telecommunication and electricity'. For his part, H.H Sheikh Mohammed echoed the Premier's views on the bilateral relations, saying that cooperation between the two sides has greatly boosted the economic development in the UAE and Dubai, and brought closer the links between the two peoples. He said, 'Chinese companies are very much welcomed to establish businesses and expand their investment in the UAE, adding the UAE is willing to serve as a bridge for China and the Gulf region to enhance exchanges. After their talks, the two leaders signed a joint statement on establishing strategic partnership and witnessed the signing of a series of cooperation agreements. After their talks, the two leaders signed a joint statement on establishing strategic partnership and witnessed the signing of a series of cooperation agreements. The significant agreements include strategic agreement between National Oil Company

(ADNOC) and China National Petroleum Corporation (CNPC) to collaborate in upstream projects in undeveloped areas. The agreement will promote cooperation between the two nations on the production and storage of oil, and on issues pertaining to training and research. The deal came two days after Saudi state oil giant Aramco sealed a deal with the Chinese company to build an oil refinery in the Red Sea city of Yanbu that will process some 400,000 bpd.

Meeting with Abu Dhabi's Crown Prince

Premier Wen Jiabao also met with Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed Al Nahyan and the two leaders discussed bilateral ties and issues of common concern. The Crown Prince welcomed the Premier to the UAE and expressed the hope that both countries would work together in cooperate in a variety of fields. Speaking on the occasion, Premier Wen said that 'A

peaceful and stable Gulf region is of great significance to world peace, and China highly values its ties with Gulf region nations and recognizes the important role played by the UAE in regional affairs'.

Tour of Dubai

The Chinese Premier also visited Dubai, and toured Burj Khalifa and other tourist and business areas in Dubai. From Khalifa Burj, he viewed the landmarks of Dubai City, and expressed his admiration about the progress of the UAE. The Chinese Premier also met huge crowd of Chinese people who cheered him at the Chinese Dragon Mart at Al Warsan district, which is the biggest market at the Middle East level.

Meeting with UN Secretary General

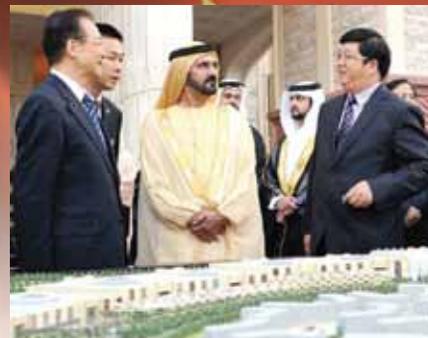
Visiting Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao also held talks with the UN Secretary General and Icelandic President who were also attending the WFES at Abu Dhabi, UAE. During the talks with UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon, Wen Jiabao said the United Nations had played an indispensable role in boosting international cooperation and coordinated actions among related parties. China supports the UN and its secretary general to play a bigger role in international affairs and achieve greater success, he said. Ban said China had played an important role in helping attain the UN Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and settle regional hot issues. Appreciating China's support for the UN, Ban said the United Nations stood ready to advance contacts with China and



make concerted efforts to safeguard world peace and promote sustainable development.

They also exchanged views on the situation of West Asia and North Africa and other regional issues of common concern. Wen then met with the Icelandic President Olafur Ragnar Grimsson and lauded the significant progress in China-Iceland relations, saying that China has eyes on maintaining high-level exchanges, cementing consultation at various levels with Iceland, and consolidating mutual political trust. He added that "In coping with the global financial crisis, the two countries should seek opportunities to boost market confidence, expand bilateral trade, promote mutual investment and deepen communications in culture, education and tourism. China and Iceland share huge potential of cooperation in such fields as energy conservation, carbon emission reductions, geothermal power and glaciers." Agreeing with Premier Wen's views on bilateral relations, Grimsson expressed his appreciation of China's support for Iceland as well as other European nations in tackling the global financial crisis and reaffirmed his confidence in future bilateral cooperation. Before concluding the visit, Wen addressed the participants of a joint Chinese-Arab business conference in Sharjah where he has called for the speedy conclusion of talks on a free trade pact with Gulf States. Wen told participants, "Both sides need to show political will to sign the agreement as soon as possible. The negotiations have been going on for seven and a half years, while business communities on both sides would like to see an agreement concluded". He added, "The launch of a free trade area will bring benefits to both sides".

China is playing an active and significant role in the Gulf region and is seeking to further expand its ties. Xinhua news agency while describing the "great significance" of Wen's regional tour stated that, "Against the political and economic backdrop of the international landscape today, China has a particularly useful window of opportunity to present itself as the ideal partner for the Middle East in the "common task of warding off the negative impact of the global economic malaise" so that the two sides can take "full advantage of their respective strengths and jointly strive for common development". Contemporarily, China's trade with the UAE exceeds \$36 billion and the sheikhdom is emerging as a major trans-shipment point for Chinese exports to Africa and Europe. Chinese engagement with UAE is based on the principle of equality, equity, mutual respect and mutual benefit. China interaction with the UAE has been increasingly welcomed along with its support to resolve regional and world issues based on respect for international laws and interests of all countries.



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H.E. Tamer Mansour, Ambassador of Egypt, H.H. Sheikh Nahyan bin Mubarak al Nahyan and Mahmoud Saad, Egyptian Military Attaché

Revolution Day of Egypt

His Excellency Tamer Mansour, the Ambassador of Egypt to the UAE hosted the Egyptian Revolution Day reception at the Egyptian Embassy in Abu Dhabi, which was attended by His Highness Sheikh Nahyan bin Mubarak Al Nahyan, UAE Minister of Higher Education and Scientific Research along with a large number of Diplomats representing various countries. The outdoor event also included an impressive cultural celebration and performers entertained the guests with traditional Egyptian dances and music, along with warm hospitality extended by officers and staff of the Embassy.

*More images of this event are on our website:
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Ahmad Razini, Sheikh Ahmad Al Qasimi



H.E. Vahagn Melikian, Ambassador of Armenia with Spouse and H.E. Niculaie Goia, Ambassador of Romania with Spouse



H.E. Dr. Julius Lauritsch, Ambassador of Austria; H. E. Costas Papademas, Ambassador of Cyprus; H.E. Ephraim M. Hlophe, Ambassador of Swaziland



Traditional Egyptian Performers



H.E. Jaime Leitao, Ambassador of Portugal with Spouse



H.E. Tamer Mansour Ambassador of Egypt and H.E. Sheikh Nahyan bin Mubarak al Nahyan



H.H. Sheikh Nahyan bin Mubarak al Nahyan Minister of Higher Education and Scientific Research



Salwa Ibrahim, Gihane Ibrahim Sadek, Nagla Lotfy and Omneya al Sadat



Malak Naguib and Hadeel Mansour



Interview with
H.E. Kym Hewett

Australian Consul General & Senior Trade Commissioner

His Excellency Kym Hewett, the Australian Consul General combined his diplomatic role in the UAE with that of Senior Trade Commissioner for Australian's business development organization Austrade. Bound for Jakarta this February, Mr Hewett spoke to the International Diplomat about his last four years in a region he describes as, 'a sparkling jewel' and about the strong economic ties between Australia and the UAE.



HE Kym Hewett arrived in the UAE, his first Middle Eastern posting, in September 2007, having spent most of his career in East Asia, serving as Senior Trade Commissioner in Beijing, Seoul and Kuala Lumpur. As Consul General to the UAE and Austrade's Senior Trade Commissioner, his focus is clear, as he explains 'my job is to expand Australia's business profile in the Middle East and Northern Africa, but in addition, I have the role of Consul General in Dubai and I head up Austrade regionally.'

He went on to add how the two entities are intrinsically interlinked,

'Austrade fills the role of Consul General in major commercial centres which are not the national capital for example, in cities such as Frankfurt, Sao Paulo and San Francisco.'

Emergence of Australia's Consulate

In the mid-1980s, the Australian Consulate in Dubai emerged out of a solid trade relationship that existed between the two countries, as Mr Hewett describes, 'we first started with a "trade office". Originally we had a representative in Abu Dhabi and then we relocated to Dubai. We converted to a Consulate in the early 1990s.'

There are currently 60 people working for the Australian Consulate, with over a half working for their Department of Immigration and Citizenship.

The core role of a Consulate General is to support the resident Australian community in Dubai, processing passports and helping distressed Australians.

Economic Relations

The UAE is Australia's largest trading partner in the Middle East and trade between both countries for imports and exports remains buoyant, as Mr Hewett explains. 'Our two-way trade here is worth about 4.3 billion Australian dollars. Exports and

imports are pretty near balanced and are growing (reasonably) strongly.'

Australian exports into the UAE market

it, of the UAE's trade growth has shifted slightly over the years (from a past focus on Abu Dhabi's growth and later to Dubai and so

“The UAE is very attractive to expats from all backgrounds which is why it is such an interesting and international place. It is well developed, has first world infrastructure and is an accommodating and tolerant place”

are extremely diverse, from alumina to motor vehicles, meat, livestock, horticultural produce, processed food and a variety of advanced manufacturing goods. Mr Hewett predicts this healthy trade exchange will continue, commenting that 'business confidence here is on the rise and is reflected in Australian business interests in Dubai and the whole UAE. The prospects are very bright because the country is stable, solidly governed and in a great location. The UAE's position will go from strength to strength.'

The 'centre of gravity', as Mr Hewett terms

forth). Australian's input traditionally in the UAE was in the building and construction sector and in building infrastructure. Mr Hewett explains, 'Dubai is Australia's pre-eminent commercial centre and is where most of our business focus has been. An important part of our strategy has been to work with the companies that are in the UAE already and attract new ones and encourage them to use the UAE as a platform and a springboard to expand into the region.' Austrade has 11 offices across the MENA region stretching from Morocco to Oman.





Business confidence here is on the rise and is reflected in Australian business interests in Dubai and the whole UAE. The prospects are very bright because the country is stable, solidly governed and in a great location.

Australian Focus

Many Australians continue to work in all aspects of building and construction and at the top end, the largest construction company, the Hochtief Leighton Group employs a large number of Australians.

There are also many skilled consultant engineers, a substantial number of Australian architectural practices and various specialists, such as landscape architects, facility managers and planning advisers.

Mr Hewett continues, 'the biggest employer of Australians would be the services centre broadly defined. Emirates Group employs about 1,500 Australians and there are lots of Australians working in hospitality, the food and beverages sector and banking.'

Growth Area

Australians are also keen to expand their business interests here, as Mr Hewett states, 'we've tried to expand our footprint here in a variety of areas. We are always interested in expanding our presence.'

One of our core areas is "clean technology", which includes green building and energy efficiency. We see relevance in Australian expertise and we do whatever we can to connect Australian companies.'

Methods of promoting bilateral ties between the two countries is achieved through high-level Australian visitors and a number of conventions and events which are held throughout the year, as Mr Hewett mentions, 'there is a strategic dialogue between Australia and the UAE.'

There was a noteworthy visit from their Prime Minister Julia Gillard recently and Australia's Minister for Foreign Affairs, Kevin Rudd, is a frequent visitor.

Australian Community

There are approximately 16,000 Australian nationals in the UAE, with around 75% in Dubai, although this number doesn't include dual nationalities so the figure could be higher. What the number does indicate though is, that from a country whose population is 22





it is such an interesting and international place. It is well developed, has first world infrastructure and is an accommodating and tolerant place.'

He is pleased as well that his two adult daughters shared this view. 'Dubai has been kind to our family. My daughters came to visit us the first Christmas. They took one look and moved here.'

example fly there 70 times a week). The most popular destination is the Gold Coast and Mr Hewett says it shares similarities with Abu Dhabi and Dubai, 'it looks a bit the same, it is high-rise and Emiratis enjoy the lifestyle, the range of dining options, theme parks and there is good shopping. It caters well to Emirati's taste and they can spend the hottest part of the summer there.'

This month, Mr Hewett leaves Dubai bound for Jakarta, where he is looking forward to becoming their Senior Trade Commissioner. He is pleased that before he left, he had a chance to catch the screening of the new Tom Cruise film premiere, "Ghost Protocol", where the actor famously scales the world's tallest building, Burj Khalifa. He agrees the film illuminates to the world 'what the UAE has achieved and highlights what an amazing place it is.'

Mr Hewett will be replaced as Consul General in Dubai, by Gerard Seeber, a long term Austrade staff member with extensive international experience.

million, their expat community in the UAE is high, as Mr Hewett acknowledges, 'for a relatively small country, our expatriate cluster here is significant. It is one of the largest expat communities we have and by far the largest in the Middle East.'

When asked why the UAE is so attractive for Australians, Mr Hewett didn't hesitate to explain, 'the UAE is very attractive to expats from all backgrounds which is why

Tourism

When it comes to tourism, an estimated 300,000 Australians travel through Dubai annually, with an increasing number taking their time to visit the UAE as a destination in its own right.

As well as 1,700 Emirati students in Australia, Emiratis also enjoy visiting Australia, taking advantage of an astonishingly number of flights (Emirates airlines, for





Ilyas Sultan, General Ibrahim Salem, Capt Alam



Captain Alam

Reception onboard Pakistan Naval Ship

Pakistan Naval Ship Khaibar docked in Dubai at the Al Rashid Port during the course of its voyage. Keeping in line with marine traditions, the Captain of the ship, Captain Alam, hosted a reception onboard, which was attended by Defence Attachés from different countries, along with the guest of honor General Ibrahim Salem from the UAE armed forces. Pakistan and UAE share a long standing relationship and cooperate very closely in various spheres. The Defence Attaché of Pakistan Embassy Air Commodore Sultan Ilyas was also present to welcome the guests on behalf of the Pakistan Embassy in UAE.



Captain Alam cutting the cake



Guy Black Burn and Captain Alam



Lieutenant Mc Coll, Lieutenant Lagos



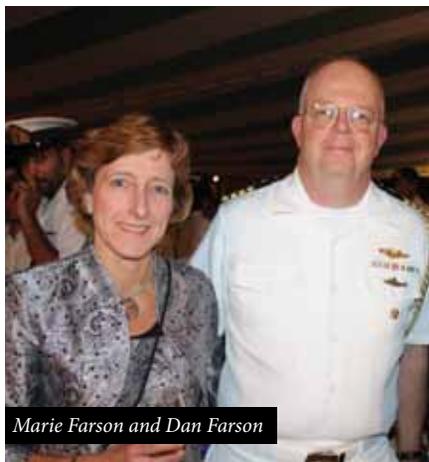
Captain Alam, General Ibrahim Salem and Ilyas Sultan



Cleophas Kaseza (Consul, Commercial Affairs, Consulate of Tanzania) and Wife



Basit, David and Martin



Marie Farson and Dan Farson



Mrs Shahid, Hina Khawaja Bayat and Roger Dawood Bayat

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Sangeeta Verma, H.E. Humaid Obaid Al Qatami, H.E. Sanjay Verma Consul General of India

Republic Day of India

The Consul General of India His Excellency Sanjay Verma hosted the Indian Republic Day celebrations in Dubai at an impressive ceremony which was attended by His Excellency Humaid Mohammed Obaid Al Qatami, UAE Minister of Education along with Dubai based Consul Generals and the distinguished members of the Indian community.

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Sameera Sajjan and Farooq Sheikh



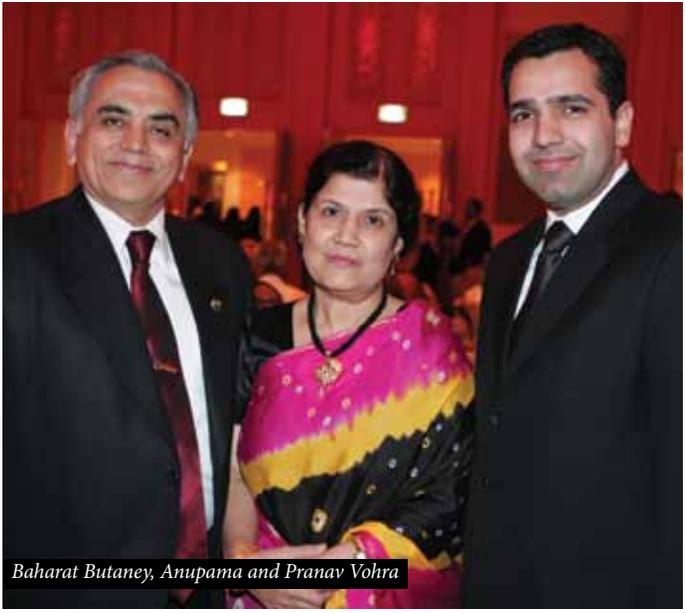
Kamal Vachani and Ramesh Cidambi



Sangeeta Verma, Talmiz Ahmed and Sunita Ahmed



Poonam, Paras Shahdarpuri and H.E. Justin Siberell, Consul General of USA



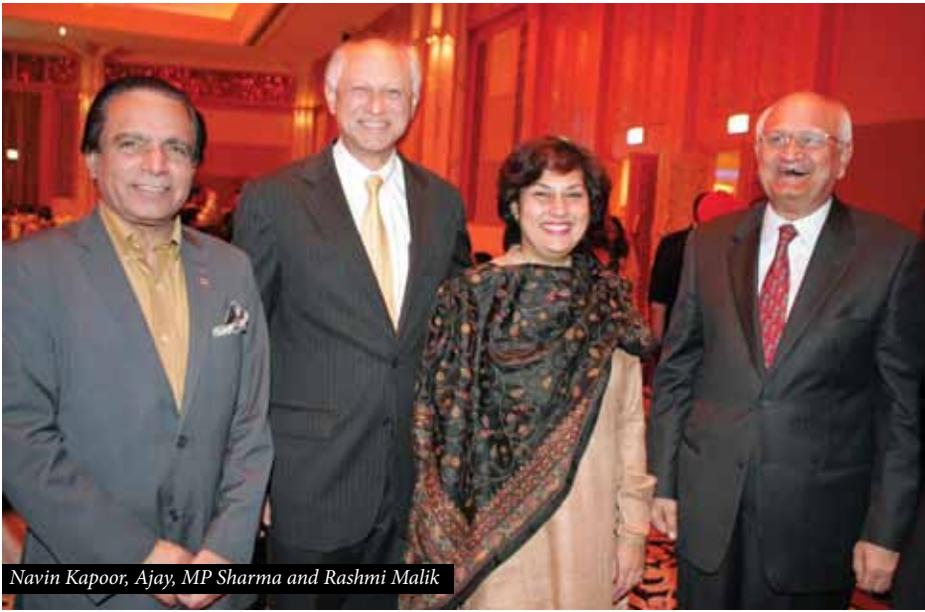
Baharat Butaney, Anupama and Pranav Vohra



Payal and Adil Choksi



Fay Jehan Ara, Amla, Prem Prinja and Rizwan Sajan



Navin Kapoor, Ajay, MP Sharma and Rashmi Malik



Umej Bhatia, CG of Singapore & Yogesh Mehta



Australian Business Council in Dubai

Interview with

Mr Raymi van der Spek,
Chairman of the ABCD

Here, the International Diplomat speaks to Mr Raymi van der Spek, Chairman of the Australian Business Council Dubai (ABCD), about his role as ABCD's figurehead, promoting the diverse Australian business interests in the region.

The Australian Business Council Dubai (ABCD) was established in 1993, the same year as one of their founding members, the University of Wollongong (UOWD) where Mr van der Spek is also Executive Director of Administration and Strategic Development. As ABCD's Chairman for over 18 months, he describes

the Australian Ambassador is one of two Patrons. The other patron being H.E. Hussain Lootah who had an early bond with ABCD, as Mr van der Spek mentions, 'H.E. Hussain Lootah's connection with our business Council began because he was the original sponsor for a former, large Australian company



Steve Smith COO ARN, HE Doug Trappett Australian Ambassador, The Hon. Steve Bracks, Raymi van der Spek and Kassem Younes



Kym Hewett, CG Australian Consulate

his role, 'I drive the strategic direction of the Council, ensuring that we deliver on our objectives in terms of what we can provide for our members. To me, that's about driving member growth and securing the financial basis upon which the council works.'

ABCD was established to promote Australian economic interests alongside the Australian Business Group in Abu Dhabi, which is chaired by Mr Kelvin Templeton. On a wider platform, Australians have always worked hard to support their business interests here, as Mr van der Spek explains, 'Historically

called Multiplex. Multiplex was a founding member of the Council in 1993.'

Expanding Membership

Inspired by the success of the British Business Group (BBG) in Dubai, Mr van der Spek is confident ABCD can elevate the membership and sponsorship numbers of his council, as he explains, 'The BBG is by far the most successful of the western business groups. I see them as a strong example of where the Australian Business Council can be. The financial footing of our council is driven

grown well in the last 12 months. The next step for the council is to try and develop stronger relationships back in Australia. When somebody lands on the ground they come and look for us. I want people to come and look for us before they leave. Joining up as a member and seeking help before they come.'

One way to achieve this has been to link in more closely with the Arab/Australian Chamber of Commerce, based in Sydney and Melbourne, by exchanging membership information and data and advising prospective expats on who they might want to contact when they reach the UAE.

Historically the Council's role was to provide assistance to Australian businesses and Australian-connected businesses in the region.

the Council's role was to provide assistance to Australian businesses and Australian-connected businesses in the region.'

ABCD meets once a month and consists of an executive Board with a maximum of 11 members. Constitutionally, the Australian Consul General has a fixed position on the Board and attends meetings regularly, while

by membership and sponsorship. They go hand-in-hand. You need members to attract sponsors and you need sponsors to attract members, because they help to fund things.'

With over 500 active members, the organization continues to grow with a new initiative to attract members before they arrive in the country, as he says, 'ABCD has

Business Growth

The Australian expatriate community, at its height in recent years has numbered between 15-20,000 across the UAE, with the vast majority working in Dubai. Not surprisingly, the UAE is the largest community of Australian throughout the Gulf region. Australians work across a range of industry sectors and there is a lot more diversification now, as Mr van der Spek confirms, 'There has been a shift up and down between Abu Dhabi and Dubai. A lot more business growth is going on in Dubai because it is a lot more diversified. We did a country focus forum

Country Focus
Australia 2011



with the Dubai Chamber of Commerce and it is difficult to say where Australian business growth lies. Some key areas have been in construction and engineering. There will continue to be growth in engineering because even without construction there is a lot of engineering going on within the oil sector.'

Education and healthcare are two areas where there will be significant growth in the region and he expects that Australia will play a key role in that growth. There is business growth in other areas too such as in the environmental landscape and also in the food sector and the food security industry, as Mr van der Spek points out, 'Australia is a major food producer and exporter and can play a key role in food security issues as well, such as in the management of livestock and animal trading.' However, it is the small to medium-sized business enterprises that are on the increase, as he adds, 'that is where all the growth is.'

“The financial footing of our council is driven by membership and sponsorship. They go hand-in-hand. You need members to attract sponsors and you need sponsors to attract members, because they help to fund things”

ABCD has a number of annual business-driven events and, at least, one a month. Recent large events included the Melbourne

Cup, sponsored by Australia's Victorian State government. Each State in Australia has its own representative in the UAE and pursue their own, often different, economic interests, with the strongest being Victoria and Western Australia, as Mr van der Spek clarifies, 'Victoria focuses on the Emirates Melbourne Cup as it has a successful motor assembly industry. All the Toyota Corolla UAE taxis are built in Victoria. Western Australia has mining, engineering and wheat produce, while Queensland is very horticultural, because it is more tropical but it varies across the States.'

Close Diplomatic Ties

ABCD also ties in closely with the Embassy and the Trade section of the Consulate to attract high-level visitors from Australia and to coordinate meetings and events for their members across the UAE, as Mr van der Spek explains, 'The Consul Generals and

the Ambassador will give us the heads up of what's happening and who's visiting. Part of what we are doing with the Dubai Chamber

is a far greater engagement with the Chamber, who then act as a conduit through to the government in terms of our business concerns.'

Ambassadors' Golf Cup Tournament

As well as a number of business and social gatherings throughout the year, where members are given the opportunity to share contacts, network and forge business deals, there are also inter-business council events. One such event, the Ambassadors' Golf Cup Tournament, held its inaugural event in February/March and October 2011. Mr van der Spek describes the success and aim of this new Tournament, 'as an event involving different business councils as well as the Embassy of those countries, where the focus is on the diplomatic core as this has been a very successful engagement between councils and consulates.'

An Emirati team took part (sponsored by the Dubai Chamber of Commerce) and Ambassadors and Consul Generals attended a finale dinner from a variety of countries. The Indian Business Council were the 2011 winners and will defend their trophy this year.

Unique Business Environment

Mr van der Spek recognizes that business is facilitated differently in the UAE and offers sound advice to individuals and companies alike on engaging in the UAE's unique economic environment, 'business anywhere is about relationships and trust. I think the importance of relationships is even greater here. The relationship is a key component to getting the deal done.'

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Lisa Crowther



Mrs Madani has lived in Dubai (her husband's first posting as a Consul General) for three and a half years. Prior to this, she lived in Washington DC in the United States for 20 years, where her husband was the Chief of Protocol. Mrs Madani is a mother to four sons who were all born and raised in the US.

Learning Young

After her marriage, Mrs Madani became a diplomat at the tender age of 21. Her first years as a diplomat's wife in the US were a huge learning curve, as she describes, 'Back in the States, I was one of the youngest diplomats. Being very young, you observe and you learn. The role is a big responsibility as we have an image and we are role models.'

Although her role as a diplomat's wife is challenging, it is a role Mrs Madani has adapted naturally to, with her love of travelling and friendly persona, 'Some of my friends and family tell me you were born to be a diplomat!' Unsurprisingly, Mrs Madani's life here is fast-paced. Referring to Dubai as the 'New York' of the UAE, she likes the multi-cultural mesh of the city. There are also comforting similarities between her home country and Dubai which made moving here easy. 'The transition to Dubai wasn't very hard. It was like leaving home and going home because the traditions here are very close to Saudi Arabia. I didn't feel like I was going to a country with a different background. Here, they welcome all nationalities and whatever you want is available.'

Diplomatic Ladies Group (DLG) President

Mrs Madani has been DLG's President since 2010. Founded 11 years ago, the group now boasts 35 members and has a Committee with three Vice-Presidents each representing Arab, European and Asian

Sahar Al Madani,

Wife of the Saudi Consul General

President of the Diplomatic Ladies Group, Dubai.

As President of the Diplomatic Ladies Group (DLG) and wife of the Saudi Arabian Consul General, Mrs Sahar Al Madani leads a busy life. Here, she tells the International Diplomat about combining her roles and how much she enjoys living in Dubai, a place comparable to her native Saudi Arabia and 'one of the most active, multicultural cities in the world.'

countries. Meeting every two months, Mrs Madani responds to the Group's numerous formal invitations and acts as their point of contact, as she says, 'it is much easier to communicate with the Government and the Rulers wives if we are a group. We receive many invitations not only in Dubai but also in Abu Dhabi, Sharjah, Ajman and Ras Al Khaimah, as well as the Rulers wives' events, if they have any kinds of activities. Sometimes, I feel like I am out of the house more than my husband! I am very busy and some days we have two activities, running from Sharjah to Dubai and on to Ras Al Khaimah. The women here are very active.'

DLG also welcomes the wives of incoming Consul Generals and sees off wives who are leaving Dubai. 'The purpose of the Group is to unite. In each country in the world, there is the same group for women and there was a need here to create this group amongst the Diplomatic Ladies. We do many activities together and participate in exhibitions and events.'

One trip that Mrs Madani is looking forward to organizing for the DLG is a visit to the Ruler of Sharjah, His Highness, Sheikh Sultan bin Muhammad Al Qasimi's museum to see his renowned collection of books, artifacts and learn about the history

of Sharjah. Mrs Madani adds, 'the DLG will be initiating this visit as we do in some cases to keep communication open with the Diplomatic Group, locals, the government, Rulers Wives and their events.'

The DLG collaborate too with the Dubai Women's Association and are closely supported by their Chairwoman, H.H. Sheikha Amina bint Humaid Al Tayer, wife of H.H. Sheik Hasher Maktoum bin Juma Al Maktoum.

Fundraising Efforts

DLG supports natural disasters around the world. Pakistan's Consul General's wife held an event to raise funds for flood victims and, when there were problems in Gaza, the DLG were invited to help by sending packages to the devastated area. They also support organizations across the Emirates and the work of charities associated with ladies within the group, as Mrs Madani explains, 'when one of our colleagues has this kind of fundraising event, we all stand by her.'

Art and Abayas

When she 'steals some spare time', and as a US-trained Fine Arts Major and Graphic Designer, Mrs Madani also channels her energy into art and fashion, something she

has relished since she was a child. 'I have a creative mind and I like to do things differently. Two years ago I started to design abayas and dresses. It's a hobby and a business.'

With her own shop and bespoke tailor, Mrs Madani's designs are inspired by the colourful abayas of Saudi Arabia, her Western travels and the taste of Emirati women. 'I introduced the Saudi style and cater to the UAE. People like the combination of both and I have a western touch too.'

Women's Empowerment

As well as being DLG's President, Mrs Madani founded her Women's Empowerment (WE) Group in 2009. She organises gatherings to enable women from all walks of life to meet and share views on subjects of interest and topics shared universally by women. 'I organize professional speakers for many different subjects, including medical, art, fashion and self-esteem and women are invited to come together to inspire and learn from each other. I felt because this is my first post as a Consul General's wife that I had a responsibility to give back. I wanted to do something positive while I am here.' Mrs Madani is certainly busy making her mark.



Pakistan Beats England to Clinch Series in UAE

Abu Dhabi: The UAE was the venue of the historic victory by Pakistan when they beat England in the second Test at the Zayed Cricket Stadium in Abu Dhabi. England suffered a 2-0 Series defeat and had no answer for the Pakistan's spinners, who bowled England out for 72 while chasing a modest 145 to win on the fourth day. Left-arm spinner Abdul Rehman picked up six wickets, whereas Saeed Ajmal claimed 3. In the past, England had only lost on four occasions in Test history when presented with a victory target of 145 or fewer.



Pakistan cricket captain **Misbah ul Haq**, with the winning trophy. Below some of the memorable moments of Pakistan cricket team.



Losing England Test Captain **Andrew Strauss**





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