



CEO Clubs Network®

CEO Clubs Network®

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Burj Global Power 100

Washington, D.C. U.S.A



CEO Clubs UAE *20th* Anniversary Celebration

CEO Clubs Network

Connecting Minds,
Creating Opportunities

Our Services

- **Community Building**
- **Event Marketing**
- **Communication**
- **Trade & Investment Promotion**
- **Leadership & Excellence Award**
- **Entity Formation**

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CEO Clubs Network®

CEO Clubs Network is an award-winning, globally recognized organization specializing in community building, event marketing, communications, entity formation, trade and investment promotion. Our purpose is to nurture relationships, share knowledge, and create opportunities for C-level executives across the private and government sectors. With a strong presence in USA, UAE, and China, we distinguish ourselves by providing tailored advice, fostering strategic collaborations, and empowering businesses to thrive within an influential global network.

Our regional headquarter, CEO Clubs Network UAE, has been in the industry for more than 19 years. Showcasing a list of high-profile members plus 3,000 affiliations, our organization is grateful for the patronage of **His Highness Sheikh Juma bin Maktoum Al Maktoum, a member of Dubai royal family.**

We are a proud winner of the **Dubai Quality Appreciation Awards Cycle 2017 and 2022** which were presented by **His Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice President and Prime Minister of United Arab Emirates and Ruler of Dubai.**

Among our numerous major international awards, we are elated with EXPO 2020 Dubai Recognition by His Highness Sheikh Ahmed bin Saeed Al Maktoum, Chairman & Group **CEO of EXPO 2020 Dubai Higher Committee for our invaluable contribution to the success of EXPO 2020 Dubai.**

MISSION

CEO Clubs Network creates the most effective business platform for CEOs and Seniors Executives to share experiences, explore opportunities and grow business locally and internationally.

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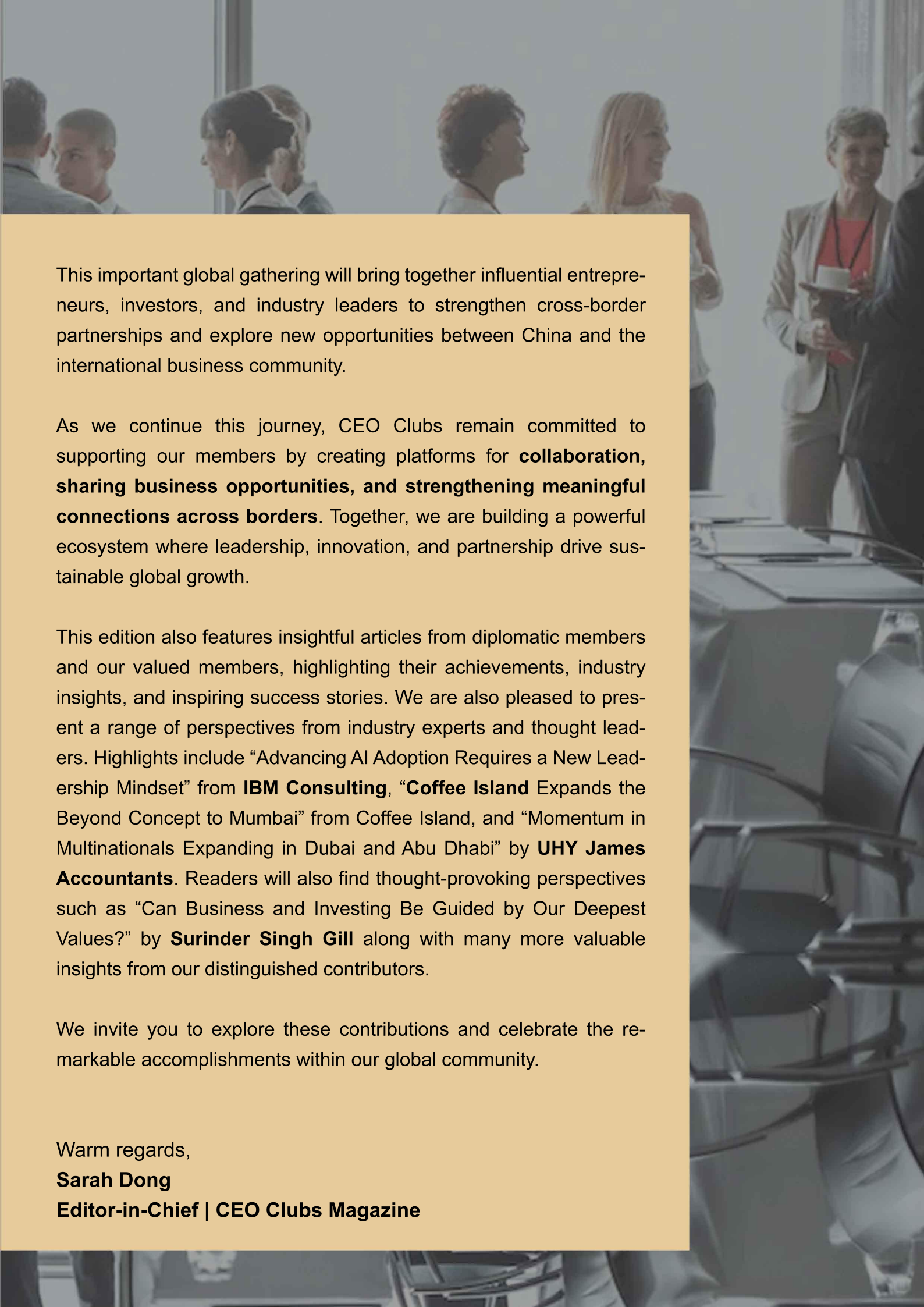
Dear Members & Readers,

February marks another significant chapter in the journey of CEO Clubs Network as we continue to strengthen global connections, celebrate leadership, and create meaningful opportunities for our members around the world.

This month also marks a milestone moment for our organization as **CEO Clubs UAE proudly celebrated its 20th Anniversary**. The grand celebration held in Dubai brought together **diplomatic representatives, distinguished VIP guests, and our valued members** to commemorate two decades of building strong business connections and empowering leaders across industries. The Luncheon celebrated the remarkable journey of our community and the powerful collaborations that have shaped our success over the past twenty years.

Looking ahead, we are delighted to announce that the **Burj Global Power 100** will take place in **Washington, D.C. from March 25–28**. This prestigious gathering will honor influential changemakers, innovators, and global business leaders who are shaping the future of industries and economies worldwide. Alongside the awards ceremony, the Global Power Summit will feature engaging panel discussions and strategic dialogues on leadership, innovation, and global business transformation.

Expanding our international presence even further, we are also excited to announce the **Burj Global Power 100**, which will take place in **Shanghai from April 21–25**.



This important global gathering will bring together influential entrepreneurs, investors, and industry leaders to strengthen cross-border partnerships and explore new opportunities between China and the international business community.

As we continue this journey, CEO Clubs remain committed to supporting our members by creating platforms for **collaboration, sharing business opportunities, and strengthening meaningful connections across borders**. Together, we are building a powerful ecosystem where leadership, innovation, and partnership drive sustainable global growth.

This edition also features insightful articles from diplomatic members and our valued members, highlighting their achievements, industry insights, and inspiring success stories. We are also pleased to present a range of perspectives from industry experts and thought leaders. Highlights include “Advancing AI Adoption Requires a New Leadership Mindset” from **IBM Consulting**, “**Coffee Island** Expands the Beyond Concept to Mumbai” from Coffee Island, and “Momentum in Multinationals Expanding in Dubai and Abu Dhabi” by **UHY James Accountants**. Readers will also find thought-provoking perspectives such as “Can Business and Investing Be Guided by Our Deepest Values?” by **Surinder Singh Gill** along with many more valuable insights from our distinguished contributors.

We invite you to explore these contributions and celebrate the remarkable accomplishments within our global community.

Warm regards,

Sarah Dong

Editor-in-Chief | CEO Clubs Magazine



FROM VISION TO GLOBAL MOVEMENT: CEO CLUBS UAE CELEBRATES 20 YEARS OF LEADERSHIP EXCELLENCE

11 February 2026 – UAE: In a powerful tribute to two decades of leadership, legacy, and global connections, **CEO Clubs UAE proudly marked its 20th Anniversary**, bringing together an esteemed gathering of over 20 diplomats, senior business leaders, and global decision-makers, culminating in an exclusive commemorative lunch.

The milestone reflects twenty years of CEO Clubs Network's dedication to fostering high-level dialogue, strengthening strategic relationships, and advancing cross-border collaboration among influential leaders worldwide.

A special note of appreciation was extended to our patron **His Highness Sheikh Juma Bin Maktoum Bin Juma Al Maktoum and His Excellency Dr. Mohammed Saeed Al Kindi, former UAE Minister**, whose presence and kind words expressed deep appreciation for the role CEO Clubs Network continues to play in uniting global leaders and driving impactful conversations.

Dr. Rizwan Adatia, Founder & Chairman, RAF Global

Mohammed Hakim, President, Crypto.com

Moinudin Lakdawala, Head of Private Clients Practice, InsuranceMarket.ae

Dr. Raza Siddiqui, CEO, Arabian Healthcare Group

Djairaadj Ramkisoensing (Anand), Founder, D World Connect

Gloria, Happiness Ambassador

Dr. Aftab Hasan, Founder & Chairman, Global Association of Insurtech Professionals (GAIP),

Risk Exchange DIFC Limited, Arya Insurance Brokerage Company

Ellen Mannaert, Serial Entrepreneur

Their presence and support were a powerful expression of appreciation toward CEO Clubs Network, reinforcing its reputation as a trusted platform for influential leaders, investors, and policymakers.

Dr. Tariq A. Nizami, Founder & CEO of CEO Clubs Network, reflected on the remarkable journey:

“Twenty years ago in Dubai, this vision began with just two contacts and a simple belief—that leaders grow stronger when they grow together. Today, that belief has evolved into a dynamic global CEO network connecting decision-makers across continents. Our mission remains the same: to inspire leadership, build trusted relationships, and create opportunities that strengthen businesses and communities worldwide.”



Ms. Sarah Dong, Managing Partner of CEO Clubs Network, emphasized the organization’s continued commitment to its members: “Our strength lies in our community. We are dedicated to supporting our members, fostering meaningful connections, and building an environment where collaboration drives success. Together, we grow, together we lead, and together we create lasting impact.”

As CEO Clubs Network UAE celebrates this significant 20-year milestone, the organization looks ahead with renewed purpose continuing to build bridges between leaders, empower meaningful partnerships, and create lasting global impact.











CEO CLUBS NETWORK AT THE PIF PRIVATE SECTOR FORUM, RIYADH, SAUDI ARABIA.

Our Founder & CEO, Dr. Tariq Nizami and Managing Partner Ms. Sarah Dong engaged with key Saudi government leaders and top private sector executives at this prestigious forum hosted by the **Public Investment Fund (PIF)**. **Public Investment Fund (PIF)**

The PIF Private Sector Forum serves as a powerful platform connecting global business leaders with Saudi Arabia's dynamic investment landscape under Vision 2030.

Saudi Arabia is a key focus for CEO Clubs Network in 2026.







SARAH DONG

MANAGING PARTNER | CEO CLUBS NETWORK



CEO Clubs Network

20 YEARS JOURNEY WITH CEO CLUBS IN THE UAE

Many people often ask me how Tariq and I met.

An international marriage with an age difference naturally raises curiosity for those who know us.

I usually smile and say, “We met because of an MOU signing.”

But deep inside, the real story is that **CEO Clubs brought us together.**

In 2006, Tariq came to Shanghai with a CEO Clubs delegation. I was assisting with the collaboration and preparing the MOU for his signature. That moment marked the beginning of our story, and it was also when I first discovered CEO Clubs.

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At that time, CEO Clubs was smaller in scale with fewer community events. In 2007, the year we got married after one and a half years of knowing each other, I was still learning and observing. To me, CEO Clubs felt simply like a club that connected international business leaders. The word “club,” which comes from Western culture, seemed straightforward. I mostly watched and observed what Tariq was doing.

By **2008**, I began to get more involved.

By **2009**, I gradually took on more responsibilities — organizing events, enrolling members, and supporting the community.

Suddenly, many new concepts entered my world: **membership, benefits, event planning, member preferences, member interests, and community challenges.**

I realized that **CEO Clubs was so much more than the word “club.”**

Over the years, we experienced many challenges, including the **COVID economic downturn**. Yet we sustained and remained strong because of our **global network and the unity of the CEO Clubs team and community.**

Together we organized countless member activities - **lunch meetings, breakfast gatherings, dinners, cigar nights, gala dinners, and investment forums.**

Our members are truly inspiring. Many long-standing members have grown their businesses while also helping the club grow.

They are the ones who make this community impactful. Along the journey, we have worked with many talented team members from different cultures who have dedicated their time and effort to building this beautiful community.



And yes, Tariq - my mentor, my partner, and my husband - has always taught me, often without intending to teach. His guidance has been indirect, patient, and constant.

Looking back, I truly believe that **this club became possible because two souls united with a shared vision to create impact for the business community** and the economy. One memorable moment was during **Expo 2020 Dubai**, when we had less than one week to organize a **300-person business forum**. Thanks to the dedication and teamwork of everyone involved, we successfully made it happen.

Over the years, we have built a strong ecosystem around CEO Clubs, including the Burj CEO Awards, Burj Global Power 100, and various FDI, marketing, and PR initiatives. Together, these efforts have made CEO Clubs Network a more sustainable and profitable global organization with hubs in Washington, DC, Dubai, and Shanghai.

Today, CEO Clubs continues to **innovate, create opportunities, and impact people's lives**. And the journey is far from over. There is still tremendous space for growth, and we welcome more people and organizations to join this journey. CEO Clubs will continue to go beyond boundaries, creating opportunities and building a lasting legacy for generations.



Upcoming CEO Clubs Global Delegations

Burj Global Power 100

Washington, D.C. | 25-28 March, 2026

- ◆ Business Summit & Policy Dialogue
- ◆ High-Level Networking
- ◆ Burj Global Power 100 Award Gala
- ◆ Cross-Border Collaboration
- ◆ Cultural & Executive Retreat

[VIEW BROCHURE](#)

Burj Global Power 100 - China

Shanghai & Guangzhou | 21-25 April, 2026

- ◆ Connecting with China's Business Elite
- ◆ Summits, Matchmaking & Cultural Events

[VIEW BROCHURE](#)

CEO Clubs Executive Retreat - China

Avatar Mountain & Guangzhou | 21-28 May, 2026

- ◆ Leadership Retreat in Iconic China
- ◆ Networking & Adventure

[VIEW BROCHURE](#)

Global AFRIC Investment Summit



ANGOLA TAKES PART IN THE 2026 WORLD GOVERNMENTS SUMMIT AND ASSUMES LEADERSHIP IN AFRICAN ECONOMIC DIPLOMACY

The President of the Republic of Angola, **João Lourenço**, participated in the **World Governments Summit 2026**, held from 3 to 5 February in Dubai, United Arab Emirates, including the launch ceremony of the Global African Investment Summit.

The event brought together world leaders, representatives of international organisations, business leaders, and experts to debate innovative solutions to major global challenges and the future of governance.

Angola's participation forms part of a strategy to strengthen economic diplomacy and promote Africa as a priority investment destination, in line with the guidelines of the African Union, which João Lourenço led until recently.

Angola was present at the World Governments Summit 2026, which gathered 27 Heads of State and Government, 6,250 delegates, around 250 ministers, and representatives from more than 150 countries.



President João Lourenço, who was serving as Chairperson of the African Union, delivered remarks during the forum addressing issues related to governance on the continent and prospects for attracting investment to the region.

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During the event, the Global African Investment Summit was officially launched - a platform dedicated to mobilising investment, strengthening public-private partnerships, and promoting sustainable development in Africa. According to the promoters of the initiative - Nigerian Akinwumi Adesina, former President of the African Development Bank Group - this new platform will work to “unlock Africa’s untapped investment potential.” He stated that “**public assets will be converted into de-risked portfolios available for investment mobilisation.**”

Angola was invited to host the first edition of this summit, which will take place in Luanda, further consolidating the country’s role as a regional hub for investment and strategic cooperation.

In his address, João Lourenço reaffirmed the need for changes in the world order and for proactive and responsible governance. He emphasised that this is a moment for collective mobilisation, stressing that Africa is ready to explore new ways to attract global capital, “sharing interests that unite a prosperous, dynamic and interconnected Africa.”

He also praised the vision, passion, determination, commitment, and leadership of Dr. Akinwumi Adesina, in his capacity as President of the African Development Bank, when he first presented the initiative,

as well as Ms. Margery Krause, co-founder of the Global African Investment Summit, for her hospitality and commitment to bringing the initiative to fruition.

Format and Agenda

Following the opening ceremony, the program continued with panel discussions on current issues, with particular emphasis on governance, public policy, the environment, and technological advances. Several Angolan ministers took part in the discussions.

On the sidelines of the Summit, the Angolan President conducted parallel diplomatic engagements in Dubai, meeting with other Heads of State and Government present in the city to strengthen economic and institutional cooperation between Angola and international partners in the search for joint solutions for developing countries.

João Lourenço met with the President of the Swiss Confederation, Guy Parmelin, the Secretary-General of the United Nations World Tourism Organisation, and the Prime Minister of Serbia, Shaikha Nasser Al Nuwais and Duro Macut, respectively.



With the President of the Swiss Confederation (Switzerland), Guy Parmelin



With the Prime Minister of Serbia, Duro Macut



Meeting with the Secretary-General of the United Nations World Tourism Organization, Shaikha Nasser Al Nuwais

Final Remarks

Angola's participation in this high-level forum reinforces the country's strategy of positioning itself as a regional protagonist in economic diplomacy and as a gateway for investment in Africa, with a view to unlocking the value of its sovereign assets to accelerate development and growth and achieve Agenda 2063 — "The Africa We Want."

The Global African Investment Summit initiative in Luanda may expand opportunities for public-private partnerships, technology transfer, and sustainable development across the continent and for institutional investors, moving away from traditional concessional financing. The ambition is clear: to attract capital that shares risk, know-how, and management responsibility, rather than increasing the stock of public debt.



African Union Assumes Central Role

One of the distinctive elements of the initiative is the African Union's leading role as the political and institutional guarantor of the process.

The continental organisation seeks to coordinate national interests, align regional priorities, and present Africa as an integrated economic space capable of negotiating under better conditions with global capital.

The political leadership of the process, driven during Angola's tenure as Chair of the African Union, reinforces the ambition to create a continental investment framework that reduces fragmentation among countries and increases regulatory predictability, one of the main obstacles identified by foreign investors.

More than a one-off event, the summit is presented as a permanent mechanism for dialogue between African states, investors, development banks, and the international private sector.

By **Estanislau Domingos**,
Analyst for Legal and Economic Affairs.

THAILAND DEEPENS HEALTHCARE PARTNERSHIP WITH UAE, SHIFTING FOCUS TO INNOVATION AND RESEARCH

At the **World Health Expo (WHX) Dubai 2026**, Thailand announced a strategic shift in its healthcare collaboration with the United Arab Emirates, moving beyond medical tourism toward innovation, research, and startup ecosystem development.

The Thailand Pavilion at WHX Dubai 2026 was organized by the National Innovation Agency (NIA), in partnership with the Thailand Center of Excellence for Life Sciences (TCELS), the National Science and Technology Development Agency (NSTDA), and Food and Drug Administration, Thailand.

Together, these agencies led the curation of high-potential healthtech startups and facilitated international engagement to strengthen Thailand's role in the global healthcare innovation landscape.

During the seminar held on 11 February 2026, titled "Thailand: The Next Global Medical Innovation & Healthcare Market Potential", Thai health officials emphasized Thailand's ambition to position itself as a global hub for medical innovation, advanced healthcare technology, and international research partnerships. The new direction prioritizes biotechnology, AI-driven diagnostics, advanced medical devices, infection prevention systems, and smart rehabilitation technologies.



With support from the Royal Thai Consulate-General, Dubai, the Thai delegation and participating startups held strategic discussions with the Dubai Health Authority (DHA) and the Dubai Healthcare City Authority (DHCC).

These meetings explored regulatory pathways, market access opportunities, and potential research and pilot collaborations within the UAE healthcare ecosystem, marking one of the most significant outcomes of the mission.

14 Thai HealthTech Startups Ready for the UAE Market

Fourteen Thai healthcare startups showcased scalable, high-innovation technologies at the Thailand Pavilion and are ready to engage with investors and partners in the UAE

- 1. Bangkok Botanica Co., Ltd.** - Herbal wound care and skin care solutions combining traditional herbal knowledge with modern science.
- 2. Baiya Phytopharm Co., Ltd.** - Plant-based biopharmaceuticals, molecular farming, CDMO services, and recombinant protein production.
- 3. K.Bio Sciences Co., Ltd.** - ISO 13485-certified manufacturer of rapid diagnostic test kits including dengue, influenza A/B, malaria combo diagnostics, infectious disease rapid kits, and clinical diagnostics.
- 4. Namwiwat Medical Co., Ltd.** - Sterilization and cleaning systems including autoclaves, laboratory disinfectors, ultrasonic cleaning systems, and medical disinfection technologies.
- 5. Novamedic Co., Ltd.** - ISO 13485 and Thai GMP-certified manufacturer of surgical sutures, advanced wound care, Blu® Smart Advanced Wound Dressings, Circumfix® One Step Circumcision Wound Dressings, and Connek® Surgical Sutures.
- 6. Popolo Co., Ltd.** - Endoscopes and endoscopic accessories including gastroscopes, sigmoidoscopes, and multi-band ligators for minimally invasive procedures.
- 7. Perceptra Co., Ltd.** - AI-driven medical imaging solutions such as Inspectra CXR and Inspectra BRAIN for enhanced detection in X-rays, mammograms, retinal scans, and brain CT scans.
- 8. Pose Health Care Co., Ltd.** - Infection prevention and control solutions including hand hygiene, surface disinfection, and medical device cleaning products.
- 9. Famme Works Co., Ltd.** - AI-powered smart mattress overlay, pressure injury prevention, and AI patient monitoring systems.
- 10. Meditop Co., Ltd.** - M-Link Smart OPD System and TOPPURE reverse osmosis and DI water purification systems.
- 11. AquaTrek Solution Co., Ltd.** - Smart hydrotherapy rehabilitation equipment including PoolRun Underwater Treadmill, PoolBike Aquatic Bike, PowerCube, and PetCube.
- 12. Intern. Healthcare Prod. Co., Ltd. (IHP)** - Medical diagnostic test kits, laboratory solutions, labware, disposables, blood collection equipment, and swab products.
- 13. MT InnoTrex Co., Ltd.** - R&D-based medical test kits including OnSite Leptospira IgM Rapid Test (LEP-M Plus), IVD test kits, and calibrators.
- 14. Orthopeasia Co., Ltd.** - Orthopedic medical devices including internal and external fixation systems, orthopedic implants, trauma solutions, surgical instruments, and the Kepler MIS Percutaneous Posterior Thoracolumbar Stabilization System.



LULA MOHANTY
MANAGING PARTNER, IBM CONSULTING MEA

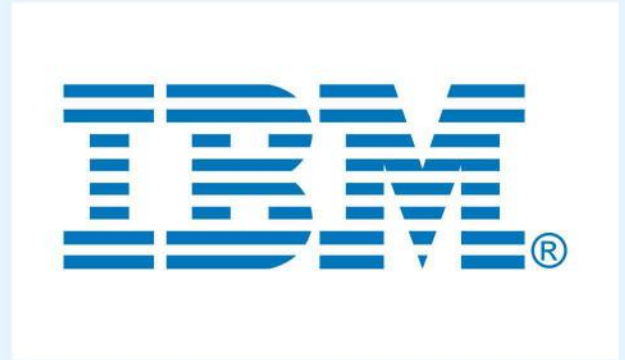
ADVANCING AI ADOPTION REQUIRES A NEW LEADERSHIP MINDSET

AI continues to expand its role across the enterprise, yet many organizations are still grappling with how to translate promise into measurable outcomes. Across industries, leaders are asking the same questions: How fast is AI really progressing? What does it take to scale? And how do we move from isolated pilots to coordinated enterprise execution?

The conversation is shifting, from AI for efficiency to AI for outcomes, and from experimentation to long term value creation. In many organizations, the technology is ready. The enterprise, however, is not.

Business leaders consistently point to two core constraints: access to trusted data and effective AI governance. These fundamentals determine whether AI can be deployed safely, responsibly, and at scale. Yet even when these foundations exist, many organizations find themselves stuck in a familiar pattern, successful pilots that never quite make it into production.

This growing gap between experimentation and execution has created understandable pressure around ROI. Many AI initiatives generate early excitement but struggle to build momentum. The result is hesitation, scepticism, and fatigue. The lesson emerging from the market is clear: progress does not come from perfect models, but from practical momentum.



Organizations that move forward adopt a different mindset. They start with internal use cases, build familiarity, and demonstrate tangible wins. They learn by doing.

Confidence grows not through grand transformations, but through repeatable, visible progress. Over time, this reduces organizational friction and accelerates adoption.

The primary inhibitor is not the technology itself. It is the willingness to accept that work, decisions, and leadership must be done differently.

AI does not simply automate existing processes, it exposes where those processes no longer serve the business.



COFFEE ISLAND EXPANDS THE BEYOND CONCEPT TO MUMBAI

Setting a New Standard for Elevated Café Experiences in West India

Coffee Island marks another important milestone in its international growth with the opening of Coffee Island Beyond in Mumbai. The new store represents the brand's second Beyond concept in India and its first presence in the state of Maharashtra, introducing West India to the most elevated and immersive expression of the Coffee Island universe.

Following the successful introduction of Beyond in the Indian market, the Mumbai opening signals the next phase of the brand's strategic expansion in the country.

Designed as a next-generation café destination, Coffee Island Beyond reimagines premium café culture through a refined, design-led and experience-driven format.

Beyond is the natural evolution of Coffee Island's much-loved neighborhood café model. Richer in experience and broader in offering, the concept integrates seamlessly into contemporary lifestyles. Guided by the philosophy

"Find Your Everyday," Beyond transforms the daily coffee ritual into a more layered and engaging experience familiar in spirit, yet elevated in execution.

At its core, the concept enhances its culinary proposition while staying true to Coffee Island's craft coffee heritage.

The expanded all-day dining menu reflects authentic daily rhythms from quick bites and relaxed brunches to comforting meals and indulgent evening options allowing guests to shape the experience around their own schedule.

Coffee Island Beyond is designed for the rhythm of modern life. It's built for the way people truly live: breakfasts at dusk, caffeine breaks at midnight, quick meetings, post-commute pauses, and those unplanned moments that end up becoming the best part of the day.

People today move fast, juggle more, and constantly search for small moments that feel grounding. Beyond creates space for exactly that: somewhere you can unwind, think, create, chat, or simply exist. Where time stretches just enough to let you breathe.



The ambience that is warm, with touches that make every visit feel effortless yet quietly elevated.

The Mumbai opening further reinforces Coffee Island's long-term vision of building thoughtfully designed café destinations that combine specialty coffee expertise, curated culinary offerings and elevated everyday moments under one cohesive concept.





JAMES MATHEW
CEO & MANAGING PARTNER
UHY JAMES

MOMENTUM IN MULTINATIONALS EXPANDING IN DUBAI AND ABU DHABI: STRATEGIC BUSINESS EPICENTER CONNECTING EAST AND WEST

Marking significant momentum, the United Arab Emirates (UAE) -particularly Dubai and Abu Dhabi - has emerged as one of the most attractive destinations in the world for multinational corporations (MNCs) seeking strategic growth, regional presence, and global influence. This rapid rise is no accident; it stems from a combination of forward-thinking economic policies, world-class infrastructure, and a business ecosystem that maximizes operational efficiency and global connectivity. For multinational companies (MNCs), the UAE offers a compelling value proposition rooted in tax efficiency, ownership freedom, a robust real estate market, and a geographical advantage that seamlessly bridges the East and the West.

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Tax-Efficient Environment: A Magnet for Global Capital

One of the most compelling reasons MNCs gravitate toward the UAE is its tax-efficient environment. The UAE has long been known for offering 0% corporate tax in many sectors, and even with recent corporate tax reforms, it remains one of the most attractive jurisdictions globally for tax planning and optimization. For companies operating across borders, minimizing tax leakage directly boosts profitability and capacity for reinvestment.

This favorable tax landscape is enhanced by double taxation avoidance agreements (DTAAs) with over 100 countries, allowing companies to prevent being taxed twice on the same income.

This encourages international businesses to route regional operations through the UAE, significantly reducing their overall global tax burden.

In addition to corporate tax incentives, individuals and executives relocating to Dubai or Abu Dhabi benefit from zero personal income tax, enhancing the UAE's appeal as a place to attract top talent and incentivize global leadership teams to relocate.

100% Foreign Ownership: A Paradigm Shift

Traditionally, foreign companies in the UAE were required to partner with local sponsors, limiting full ownership.

With landmark reforms in recent years businesses are empowered with 100% foreign ownership in many sectors and activities across the UAE mainland.

This transformative policy has drastically shifted the business calculus for multinationals.

Full ownership brings forth complete control over strategic decisions, financial flows, branding, and intellectual property—a key consideration for companies expanding into the Middle East, Africa, and South Asia.

This reform has not only attracted new entrants but encouraged existing companies to scale up their presence, reinvest profits locally, and expand beyond traditional commercial hubs.

Robust Real Estate Market: Infrastructure That Supports Growth

The UAE's real estate market plays a crucial role in supporting the expansion strategies of multinationals. Both Dubai and Abu Dhabi have made significant investments in modern commercial property developments, free zones, logistics parks, and mixed-use urban districts.

The presence of dedicated free zones such as Dubai International Financial Centre (DIFC), Jebel Ali Free Zone (JAFZA), and Abu Dhabi Global Market (ADGM) offers specialized regulatory environments tailored to sectors like finance, technology, logistics, and manufacturing.

These zones offer streamlined licensing, world-class facilities, and state-backed security, making them ideal bases for MNC regional headquarters.

A Strategic Geographical Location

Geography is destiny, and in the case of Dubai and Abu Dhabi, their location is a strategic masterstroke. Situated at the crossroads of the East and the West, the UAE serves as a natural connecting link between Asia, Africa, and Europe and this central position allows companies to reach over 4.5 billion consumers within an eight-hour flight radius—an unparalleled advantage for regional coordination, supply chain management, and market access.

The UAE's world-class air and sea logistics infrastructure anchored by global gateways like Dubai International Airport, Abu Dhabi International Airport, Jebel Ali Port, and Khalifa Port enables MNCs to optimize distribution, reduce transit times, and respond quickly to market demands across continents.

Multinational Headquarters: The UAE Advantage

For many multinationals, establishing a regional headquarters in Dubai or Abu Dhabi translates into tangible business advantages:

- **Centralized management** of Middle East, Africa, and South Asia operations.
- **Improved tax planning** and optimized global corporate structures.



- **Access to free trade zones** and sector-specific support ecosystems.
- **Talent attraction and retention** through favourable lifestyles and incentives.
- **Enhanced global branding** by associating with a forward-looking economic hub.

UAE: The New Global Business District

As Dubai and Abu Dhabi continue to refine their economic models, the UAE is fast becoming the new business district of the globe - a nexus where East meets West, capital meets opportunity, and innovation meets infrastructure. Beyond a regional hub, the UAE's rise is reshaping global trade, connectivity, and economic networks.



In this era of dynamic globalization, having a presence in the UAE is not just an operational expansion but a strategic imperative.

From tax efficiency and full ownership freedoms to unparalleled connectivity and world-class infrastructure, Dubai and Abu Dhabi offer a blueprint for what the future of global business looks like: efficient, connected, and resilient.

As multinationals continue to make the UAE their base for regional and global expansion, the ripple effects on global economics, global supply chains, and international investment flows will define the next chapter of global commerce.



CAN BUSINESS AND INVESTING BE GUIDED BY OUR DEEPEST VALUES?

Business and investing can absolutely be guided by our deepest values. In fact, when values shape economic decisions, they create not only financial growth but also lasting social impact.

For leaders like **Dr. Surinder Singh Gill**, **Chairman of International Forum USA**, whose life work centers on peace, interfaith harmony, and ethical leadership, this question is not theoretical — it is practical and urgent. The modern economy is no longer judged only by profit margins; it is increasingly evaluated by purpose, responsibility, and long-term sustainability.

Values as a Compass in Business

Business decisions are often complex and pressured by competition, quarterly targets, and shareholder expectations. However, values act as a moral compass. When entrepreneurs prioritize integrity, fairness, and transparency, they build trust — and trust is the foundation of durable success. Companies that treat employees with dignity, respect customers honestly, and contribute positively to society earn reputational capital that money alone cannot buy.

Guiding principles such as honesty, compassion, service, and justice can influence everything from hiring practices to supply chains and corporate governance. Ethical leadership reduces corruption, prevents exploitation, and fosters inclusive growth. In the long run, values-based businesses are more resilient because they are anchored in principles rather than short-term gains.

Values-Based Investing

The world has witnessed the rise of responsible investing frameworks such as ESG (Environmental, Social, and Governance) standards.

Large institutions like the World Bank and global development agencies increasingly emphasize sustainable development, climate responsibility, and social equity. Investors now examine not only financial returns but also environmental impact, labor practices, and community engagement.

Impact investing, socially responsible investing (SRI), and faith-based investment strategies show that capital can be aligned with conscience. Investors can choose to support renewable energy instead of fossil fuels, ethical labor practices instead of exploitative systems, and companies promoting diversity instead of discrimination. Money, when directed by values, becomes a tool for transformation rather than mere accumulation.



Dr. Surinder Singh Gill
Chairman
International Forum USA

The Intersection of Profit and Purpose

A common misconception is that values reduce profitability. In reality, purpose-driven organizations often outperform because they inspire loyalty among customers and employees. Younger generations, especially, prefer to engage with brands that reflect their ethical concerns climate justice, human rights, and social responsibility.

When business aligns with values:

- Profit becomes sustainable rather than extractive.
- Growth becomes inclusive rather than unequal.
- Leadership becomes service rather than dominance.

A Moral Responsibility

Economic power carries moral responsibility. Wealth creation is not inherently good or bad; its impact depends on intention and implementation. When guided by deep values — whether rooted in faith, humanitarian principles, or personal conviction — business becomes a platform for peace, stability, and social progress.

In today's interconnected world, the most successful leaders are those who understand that financial capital and moral capital must grow together.

Business and investing guided by our deepest values do not weaken the market — they strengthen humanity.

Ultimately, the question is not whether values belong in business. The real question is: Can we afford to run business without them?



ARISE UAE is the Private Sector Alliance for Disaster Resilient Societies, is a Network of Private Sector Entities

led by the UN Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNDRR)



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Mr. Shiju Peetambaran Founder & Chairman - Ascentia and **Mr. Antonio Rotondo** Chairman - EEBC

BUILDING INSTITUTIONS, NOT JUST COMPANIES GOVERNANCE, GLOBAL ALIGNMENT, AND THE FUTURE OF SUSTAINABLE GROWTH IN THE UAE

Over the past two decades of working within the UAE's financial and regulatory landscape, I have witnessed a profound transformation. The UAE has evolved from a rapidly expanding marketplace into a globally integrated, compliance-driven economic powerhouse.

In its earlier growth phase, speed defined success. Today, structure defines sustainability.

This evolution represents more than regulatory reform — it reflects a nation aligning itself with global standards of transparency, governance, and long-term economic resilience.

The Evolution of Business in the UAE

The introduction of Corporate Tax strengthened Anti-Money Laundering frameworks, Economic Substance Regulations, and enhanced transparency standards demonstrate the UAE's commitment to institutional maturity.

These reforms are not constraints on growth — they are confidence multipliers.

When economies align with international compliance frameworks and global best practices, they attract stronger capital inflows, institutional investors, and long-term strategic partnerships.

Initiatives such as the Dubai Economic Agenda (D33) further reinforce the country's vision for diversification and global competitiveness.

For business leaders, this shift requires a transition from opportunistic expansion to governance-driven growth.

Global Leadership & Trade Facilitation

Beyond advisory practice, I am honoured to serve as a Global Member and Director (UAE) of the Global Council for the Promotion of International Trade (GCPIT), India.

This role allows me to contribute to strengthening cross-border trade corridors and facilitating international market access for businesses seeking expansion into the UAE and GCC region.

Through GCPIT, we work toward building resilient international trade ecosystems — supporting enterprises with strategic guidance, regulatory clarity, and structured entry frameworks.

My involvement in global trade initiatives reflects a broader belief: economic growth today is interconnected, and advisory leadership must operate beyond national boundaries.

Strategic Milestones & International Collaboration

As part of our continued commitment to facilitating structured international expansion, Ascentia recently entered into a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the European Emirati Business Council (EEBC).

This strategic collaboration focuses on supporting European enterprises entering the UAE market through compliance clarity, governance alignment, and operational readiness frameworks.

Our engagement with Mr. Antonio Rotondo, Chairman of EEBC, reflected a shared vision of enabling seamless and transparent market integration.

Such partnerships reinforce our institutional role in supporting responsible foreign investment.



Engagement with the Ministry of Economy – UAE

We also had the privilege of engaging with the Ministry of Economy UAE team to express our appreciation for their continued guidance and to exchange perspectives on evolving mainland company formation dynamics.

Discussions centred on regulatory expectations, compliance alignment, licensing clarity, and operational preparedness for investors entering the UAE.

Constructive dialogue between the public and private sectors is fundamental to maintaining a resilient and investor-friendly ecosystem.



Collaboration, transparency, and shared objectives are the foundations of sustainable economic leadership.

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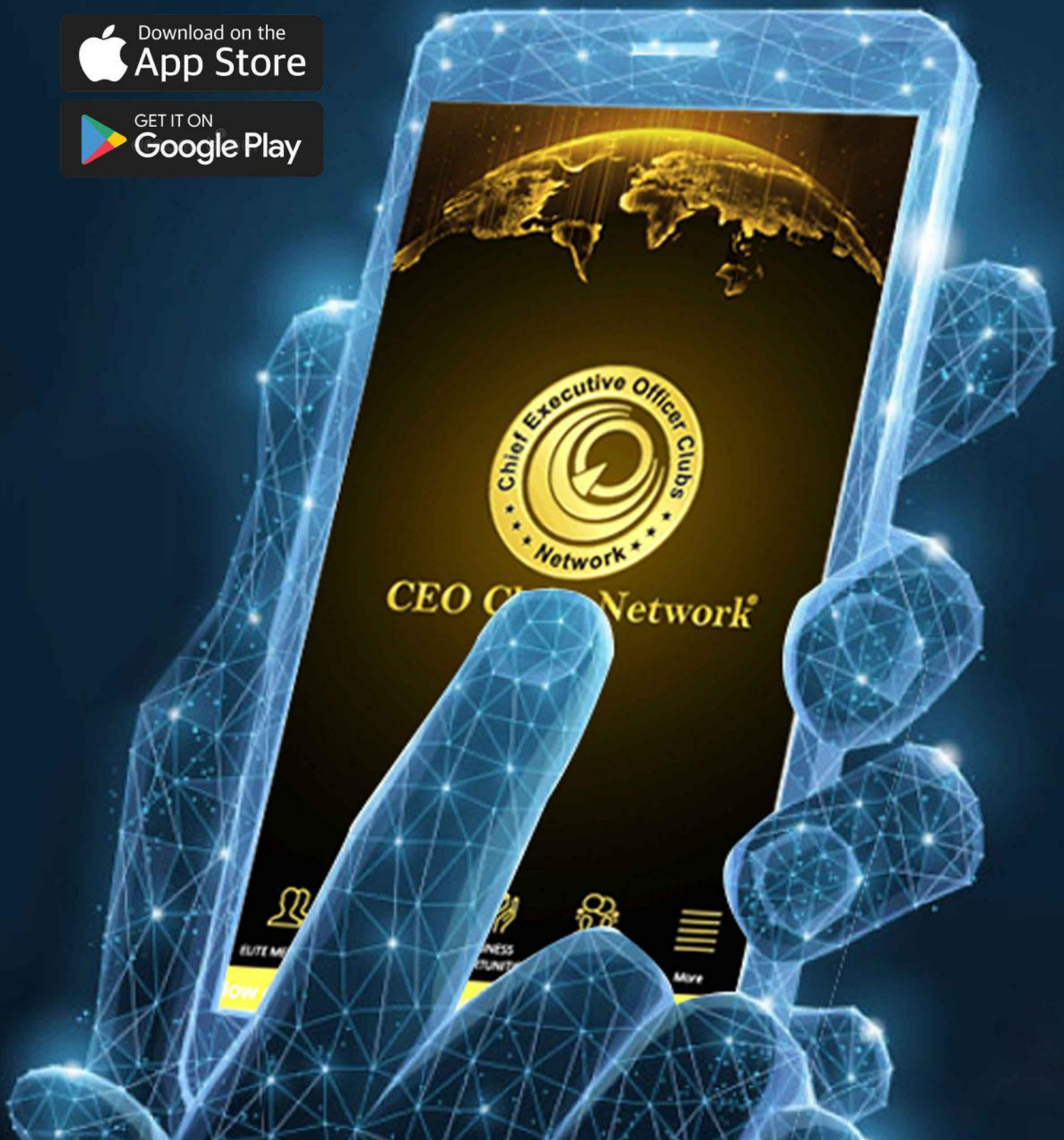
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SUJITH MATHEW
PARTNER, ALBM EXCELLO LAW

A CEO'S GUIDE TO LEADING THROUGH THE MIDDLE EAST'S GREAT TRANSFORMATION

For over five decades, the most important asset in the Middle East was buried deep underground. For the next fifty, as national leaders state with confidence, the region's most prized export would be data.

In addition to massive data centres being developed, the region is investing their sovereign wealth funds to create AI hubs that not only reflect a continuation of the economic diversification strategy but also an investment in the future - both via technology and talent.

Let us step back and study these inflection points in the region: The UAE was the forerunner in driving economic diversification with a strategic focus on creating financial and aviation hubs, establishing the freehold era and massively promoting tourism as growth engines.

By the turn of the millennium, these reforms had reshaped the business landscape. The growth and expansion of the free zones introduced new ownership structures, regulatory frameworks and operational models. Businesses responded with openness and embraced the change with confidence.

The second key inflection point was Saudi Arabia announcing the Vision 2030 agenda, underpinned by

The logo for ALBM Excello Law is displayed on a dark blue rectangular background. The text 'ALBM' is in white, 'Excello' is in a light blue color, and 'Law' is in white. The 'x' in 'Excello' is a darker blue.

several transformational projects, including the mega projects. The preparations and hosting of the FIFA World Cup in Qatar was yet another defining moment.

From a business perspective, the introduction of Value Added Tax (VAT) and Corporate Tax marked the beginning of a new era, all with implications for the business sector, creating new opportunities, but also calling for strategic realignments in how processes are structured and every aspect – from finance to legal counsel - had to be recalibrated.

Increasingly recognized as one of the world's safest havens, the region is attracting capital and direct investment at an unprecedented scale. This influx is acting as a powerful catalyst for growth, clearly reflected in the performance of all core economic sectors - from real estate and finance to retail and hospitality.

Now, with the strategic focus on AI, which is becoming more accessible, the region is set to witness a new era of growth that will have an exponential impact on the economy.

For CEOs, the defining challenge in the fast-evolving era is to have a new playbook. The traditional metrics of productivity, operational efficiency and revenue will no doubt remain critical. But alongside, they need to build new levels of agility and flexibility so that they can sharpen their corporate strategy in response to shifting economic realities.

The question for CEOs then is not 'how to grow' but 'how we can become agile enough to thrive in an era of unprecedented technological innovation and new investment patterns'. The answer lies in five core disciplines:

1. Reading the blueprint for the future:

The national agendas shaping the region – Saudi Vision 2030, We the UAE 2031 – are not just policy documents. They are living blueprints that sets out the direction of long term economic and regulatory transformation. For CEOs, it is important to go beyond the headlines and identify actionable opportunities. While much attention has been focused on giga projects, areas such as food security, renewable energy, digital sovereignty and supply chain resilience are now strategic themes embedded in the vision documents.

Astute leaders align their growth strategies with these future opportunities to become more agile, resilient and fit for the future.

2. Aligning corporate and national vision:

Building further on the first point, the second core discipline is to build competencies for unlocking the opportunities that are aligned with the national agendas. When corporate vision and national priorities move in the same direction, growth gains momentum. This demands deliberate integration — embedding national objectives into board-level strategy, capital allocation, and capability building. By investing in local talent, innovation, and regulatory readiness, CEOs move from passive alignment to active partnership in national transformation.

3. Looking beyond quarterly results:

In one of the recent interviews, Mr. Mohamed Alabbar, Emaar's founder, reflected that the private sector's advantage is the freedom to think for the long-term – by not being tied down to quarterly results. This is a key insight coming from one of the region's visionary business leaders that CEOs must have the courage to make strategic moves that may not pay off immediately but will help build sustainable and scalable businesses.

This means, understanding the legal and commercial landscape of the region – from looking for opportunities for joint ventures to understanding the M&A dynamics.

4. Building a resilient and agile organisation:

In a market that is moving at an unprecedented pace, the importance of being agile cannot be overstated. Corporate hierarchies that were restrictive have no place in the new order.

Decision-making processes must be fast, leadership teams must be empowered to take risks, and the company culture must be underlined by continuous education and adaptation. Building an agile culture is no longer a buzzword but a strategic imperative.

5. Think like an investor:

Finally, the most effective CEOs must adopt the mindset of a savvy investor. They must give weightage to the fact that they are building a valuable, transferable enterprise.

Whether their ambition is a strategic sale, an initial public offering, family succession or simply creating a profit-driven enterprise, every decision needs to be taken through the lens of long-term value creation. This discipline will distinguish the best companies of the future from the truly great ones.

Ultimately, winning in the new era is not merely about embracing technology, but about building for the future across every dimension of the organization. CEOs who combine foresight with courage and disciplined execution will not only achieve growth - they will also define the next chapter of the Middle East's economic story.

Sujith Mathew is a Partner at **ALBM Excello Law**, bringing over 25 years of experience in corporate and commercial law to support clients in achieving their strategic goals.

He specialises in Mergers & Acquisitions, corporate structuring, and contractual negotiations, helping multinational firms and investors navigate complex legal landscapes in the UAE.

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The fast track to XRD analysis

Increasingly strict environmental and low-carbon product requirements drive the need for faster X-ray diffraction analysis. While a fully automated control process presents challenges to XRD analysis by the Rietveld method, researchers are working on a solution.

■ by **Pavel Chizhov**, Moscow State University, Russia, and **Mikalai Rzhetski, Dzmitry Kabanau, and Liliya Bui**, LINEV Systems EU UAB, Lithuania

The continuous development of product quality and economic efficiency, together with increasingly strict environmental limits to support the Net Zero Emissions initiative, requires an effective and precise control process at all stages of cement production. As part of this process, powder X-ray diffraction (PXRD) is a well-established method, used at different process control stages and recommended for clinker and cement analysis.¹ Unlike elemental and chemical analysis, PXRD provides information about the different polymorphs of cement phases that affect cement properties. XRD analysis by Rietveld refinement combined with the G-factor approach also enables plant operators to determine the amorphous phase content, which is key in the production of low-clinker cement and the use of supplementary cementitious materials (SCMs) such as slag and fly ash to support the sector's decarbonisation.

However, the cement industry requires a fast and fully automated control process to achieve this – a challenging task in the case of XRD analysis by the Rietveld method. This article highlights the research that seeks to find a combined solution for such automated PXRD analyses in modern cement plants.

XRD control in the cement industry: key requirements and options

Effective XRD control processes have a range of key features, including:

- **speed of analysis** – Usually the whole analytical cycle is completed in 15-20min, including sample preparation, data collection and processing. This requires full automation of the entire analytical process, including automatic sample preparation lines (crushing, grinding and pressing) and sample transportation using industrial robots.

- **precision** – Cement, clinker and other building materials are regarded as quite complex objects for PXRD due to the interplay between the various polymorphs of the main phases and the overlapping reflections. The high-quality data required for the quantification need to be collected, taking into account the

mentioned time limits. Therefore, fast position-sensitive detectors (PSDs) are the first choice for industrial diffractometers. To obtain the most accurate phase quantification data, the use of full-profile methods is recommended.²

- **personnel risks** – Finding highly qualified laboratory personnel for any cement plant is challenging. XRD analysis is quite complex, so the risk level here is quite high. Automation of all analytical stages solves this issue.

In addition, automated XRD control facilities in the cement industry have to be able to analyse all different parameters listed in Table 1.

Results and discussion

The combined use of Rietveld refinement, G-factor calculation and calibration curves calculation, based on the integral intensity of the reflections (as in the CaO_{free} case) or on phase fractions (as in SO_3 case), highlights the necessity for specially designed software.

Figure 1: the TELLUS automated compact diffractometer by LINEV Systems enables cement plant operators to analyse raw materials, clinker and cement



To fulfil the listed requirements as well as provide fast and precise analysis, LINEV offers an automated solution based on the combination of a compact but very powerful benchtop X-ray diffractometer, TELLUS (LINEV Systems)³, and special data analysis software, XRDFactory.

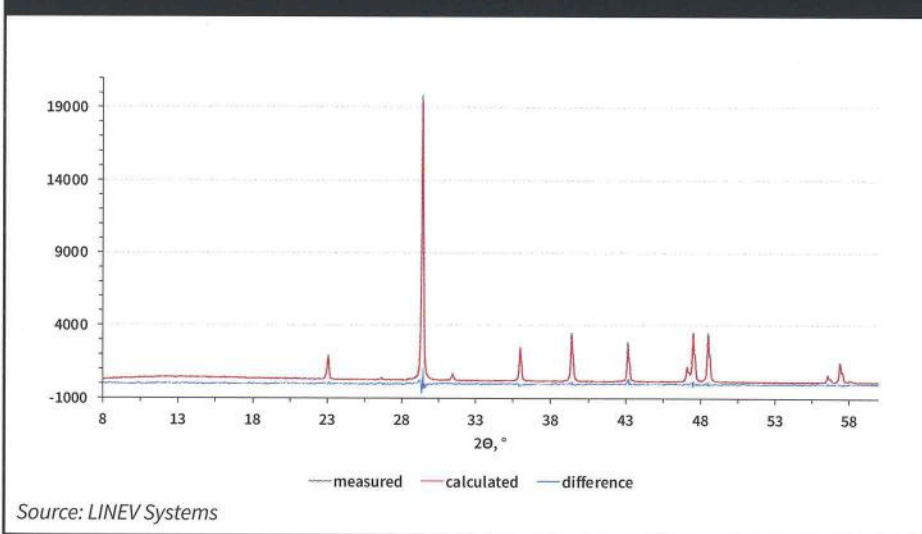
The TELLUS diffractometer implements the vertical θ - θ Bragg-Brentano scheme using a 150mm goniometer. It is equipped with a 600W X-ray source and Timepix3-based single-photon PSD, providing fast measurements and a reasonable 2θ resolution. The detector's two-threshold energy-dispersive mode provides a good signal-to-noise ratio as well as a means of eliminating undesirable fluorescence signals. The relatively large 2θ aperture of the detector ($\sim 5.4^\circ$) makes it possible to measure narrow-range XRD patterns using a very fast single-shot mode without scanning, which is useful, for example, in CaO_{free} analysis.

A distinctive feature of the TELLUS XRD is that it has not only a "conventional"

Table 1: analytical tasks for XRD in cement industry

Material	Analysis parameters	Comment	Method
Clinker	CaO _{free} content	Carried out relatively fast for kiln control and fuel consumption reduction	C(¹²⁰⁰ _{int}) calibration
	Phase composition	Especially important in terms of C ₃ S/C ₂ S/C ₃ A/C ₄ AF contents and polymorphic modifications ratio Portlandite may be analysed in case of clinker storage control	Rietveld refinement
Cement	Phase composition	Gypsum/bassanite/anhydrite ratio for the cement mill control Calcite+dolomite content control	Rietveld refinement
	Slag content	For slag cement mixtures	Rietveld refinement + G-factor ² calculation for amorphous slags
Raw materials			
Sulphate component	Gypsum/bassanite/anhydrite ratio	+SO ₃ content	Rietveld refinement + SO ₃ calibration with phase fractions as analytical signals
Iron-containing component	Fe ^{II} O content	Done by FeO, Fe ₃ O ₄ , Fe ₂ O ₃ , Fe ₂ SiO ₄ , etc quantification for kiln control	Rietveld refinement + Fe ^{II} O calibration with phase fractions as analytical signals
Limestone	Dolomite and quartz content	For fine tuning of raw mix production	Rietveld refinement

Figure 2: limestone routine pattern refinement ($\chi^2=1.856$)



process with many variables may lead to unreliable results, but a decrease in the variables makes the whole process less flexible. LINEV Systems solved this issue by using the multiple starting models approach. XRDFactory applies several starting models, which may differ in variable values, refinement flags and even in qualitative phase composition, for the pattern refinement and takes the result with the best χ^2 value (see Figure 3).

Different objects require different approaches to phase fraction calculation. Phase composition of cement or clinker is normally calculated with normalisation up to 100 per cent, while control of slag cement requires absolute phase fraction determination, using the G-factor approach. The calibration curve may be calculated either for the relative phase content as an analytical signal or for the absolute phase content. Figure 4 shows the latter case for a CaO_{free} calibration curve.

The automated Rietveld refinement combined with the G-factor approach uses the only sample (ie, external

eight-position automated sample changer but also a high-volume robotic sample loader with a 40- or 104-slot magazine, depending on the configuration. The diffractometer is equipped with an external sample transporter specially designed to handle 40 or 52mm ring cuvettes from the robotic sample loader. Depending on the laboratory lay-out and sample preparation line, the robotic loader can have a vertical (see Figure 1) or horizontal storage magazine.

The average scan time for phase composition analysis of clinker, cement or sulphate components is less than 7min, while CaO_{free} calibration can be carried out using the single-shot mode (~60s frame).

Routine data quality can be illustrated by the refinement results for a limestone pattern with 0.5 per cent of quartz impurity (see Figure 2).

Rietveld refinement for complex samples in the automatic mode is a quite challenging task. The intrinsic instabilities of the non-linear refinement

Figure 3: the multiple starting models approach

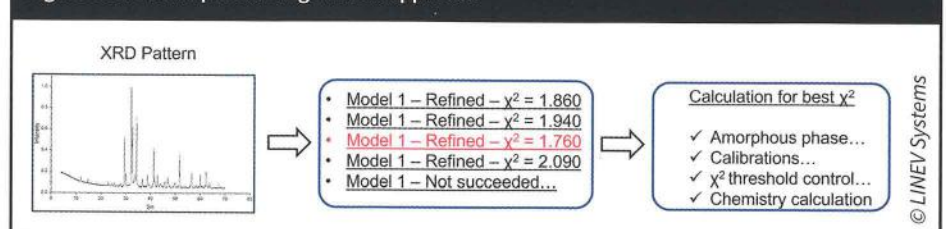
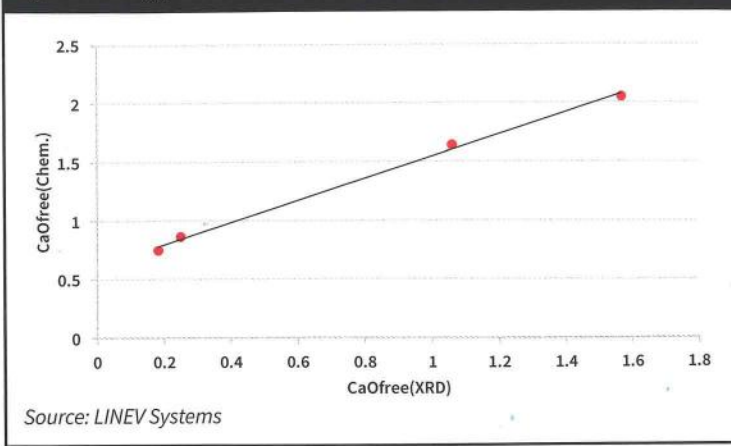


Figure 4: CaO_{free} calibration curve example



standard) to calculate the instrumental constant, resulting in less drift-related error compared with the calibration-curve method. It should be noted, that the G-factor approach requires the chemical composition of the sample for the mass attenuation coefficient calculation: XRDFactory can use the fixed composition for the given type of objects, apply a so-called self-consistent approach (the calculated chemical composition of the crystalline fraction is taken) or get the data from the LIMS.

Every automatic analytical process will have the proper quality control procedures. Each sample processing result is, at first, compared to the user-defined χ^2 threshold value (which can be different for different objects), and, then the chemical composition is calculated from the phase content. The calculated chemical composition can be used to compare with reference data for the samples having negligible amount of amorphous fraction (eg clinker). Figure 5 shows an example of Rietveld refinement of a clinker XRD pattern. Tables 2 and 3 show the XRD analysis results together

with a comparison of chemical compositions derived by XRD and X-ray fluorescence (XRF) measurements.

The differences in calculated and reference oxide fractions (see Table 3) are more or less typical and may be further used as the kind of Data Quality Objectives in quality control process.

Conclusion

A complex hardware and software solution is proposed for automated XRD process control in the cement industry. The TELLUS automated compact diffractometer, equipped with a robotic sample loader and sample transporter, is designed to operate with ring-pressed samples and can be connected to an automatic sample preparation line. The XRDFactory flexible data analysis software allows the calculation of the phase composition via full-profile refinement, G-factor calculation and calibration curves. The analysis can be used to characterise the phase composition of raw materials, clinker or cement, enabling the control of the entire

Figure 5: full-profile refinement of a clinker diffraction pattern ($\chi^2=1.727$)

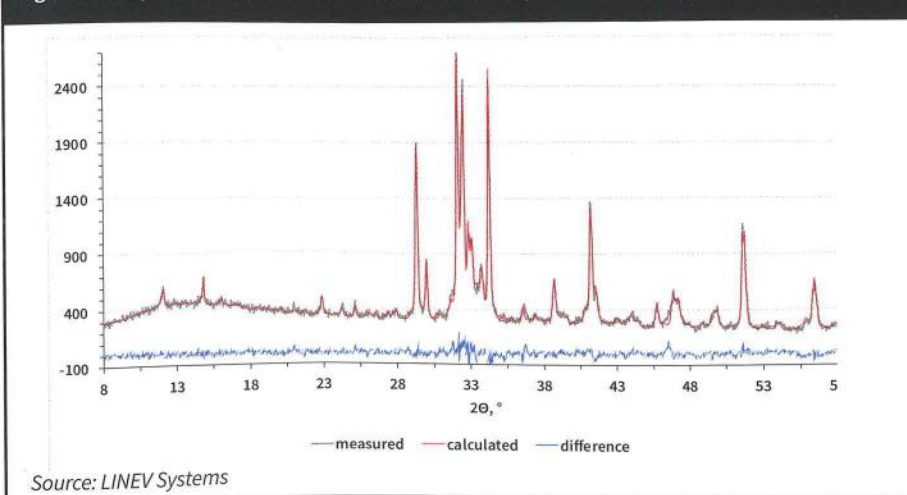


Table 2: clinker phase composition obtained by XRD using Rietveld analysis

Phase	Composition ¹	Fraction (wt %)
C ₃ S (MI)	Ca ₃ SiO ₅	3.31
C ₃ S (MIII)	Ca _{2.92} Mg _{0.05} K _{0.06} SiO ₅	67.27
β-C ₂ S	Ca ₂ SiO ₄	5.25
α'-C ₂ S	Ca ₂ SiO ₄	1.52
Ortho-C ₃ A	Ca _{2.8} Na _{0.4} Al ₂ O ₆	6.19
Cube-C ₃ A	Ca _{2.9} Na _{0.2} Al ₂ O ₆	2.15
C ₄ AF	Ca ₂ AlFeO ₅	12.89
CaO _{free}	CaO	0.6
MgO	MgO	0.25
K ₂ SO ₄	K ₂ SO ₄	0.56
Ca(OH) ₂	Ca(OH) ₂	<0.01

¹ The composition is used for further chemical composition calculations.

production process as well as determining the amorphous phase content, which is important for a state-of-the-art decarbonised cement sector. Data quality is controlled by the χ^2 threshold method and by calculated/reference chemical composition comparison. The solution provides full cycle analysis, including all steps from automated sample capture to the generation of the final report. ■

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Table 3: clinker XRD (calculated) and XRF chemical composition comparison

Oxide	XRD (calculated)	XRF
Na ₂ O	0.33	0.19
MgO	0.84	0.95
Al ₂ O ₃	5.80	5.32
SiO ₂	20.95	21.42
SO ₃	0.26	0.22
K ₂ O	1.14	1.09
CaO	66.45	65.44
Fe ₂ O ₃	4.21	3.98



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RAMADAN, FASTING & THE EXECUTIVE MIND: ANCIENT DISCIPLINE IN A MODERN CORPORATE WORLD

In an age defined by speed, consumption and constant stimulation, one ancient practice continues to command global participation across cultures, faiths and disciplines: Fasting.

During the holy month of Ramadan, over 1.9 billion Muslims around the world observe a daily fast from dawn to sunset; abstaining from food, drink and certain comforts while maintaining their full professional and personal commitments. Yet fasting is not exclusive to Islam. Variations of structured fasting exist in Christianity, Judaism, Hinduism, Buddhism, Jainism, Bahaism, Atheism and increasingly within secular wellness movements.

In recent years, science has begun to validate this fact about a tradition long practiced.

Fasting: A Universal Human Discipline

Across civilisations, fasting has historically served three purposes:

- 1. Spiritual purification**
- 2. Mental discipline**
- 3. Physical detoxification**

Today, what began as spiritual obedience is increasingly validated by medical research. Here are authentic academic references, I would like to cite in my article to support the points about fasting and health, including research connected to Harvard Medical School / Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health and broader scientific evidence:

The Scientific Convergence

The World Health Organisation (WHO) has consistently highlighted that non-communicable diseases such as obesity, diabetes, and cardiovascular conditions are largely driven by lifestyle factors, including dietary patterns and overconsumption.

In its Healthy Diet Fact Sheet (№394, updated 2023), WHO emphasises structured, balanced eating habits as a cornerstone of disease prevention.

Parallel to this, research associated with Harvard Medical School and Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health has examined intermittent fasting and time-restricted feeding. A 2019 review published in The New England Journal of Medicine (de Cabo & Mattson) reported that intermittent fasting can improve insulin sensitivity, reduce inflammation, and enhance metabolic switching, processes associated with improved cardiometabolic health.

More recently, systematic reviews linked to Harvard researchers have shown that intermittent fasting can be as effective as traditional calorie restriction in

improving weight management and cardiovascular risk markers. While Ramadan fasting differs in structure from clinical intermittent fasting protocols, the physiological principles show meaningful overlap.

Ancient discipline, modern validation.

Ramadan Beyond Religion: A Leadership Case Study in Discipline

For corporate leaders, Ramadan represents more than a spiritual observance.

It is a month-long exercise in:

- **Delayed gratification**
- **Emotional regulation**
- **Cognitive discipline**
- **Ethical mindfulness**

An executive who fasts:

- **Wakes before dawn**
- **Abstains for long hours**
- **Maintains productivity**
- **Engages in additional night prayers**
- **Continues family and business obligations**

This is not disengagement from performance; it is performance under constraint. Leadership literature consistently underscores that self-regulation precedes organisational regulation.

Neuroscience further suggests that voluntary restraint strengthens executive function, the prefrontal cortex mechanisms responsible for strategic thinking and impulse control.

Fasting is therefore not deprivation; it is structured self-governance.

The Neuroscience of Restraint

Modern neuroscience suggests that delayed gratification strengthens executive function, the very function responsible for decision-making, impulse control, and strategic thinking.

When individuals voluntarily abstain from immediate comfort:

- The prefrontal cortex strengthens regulatory control
- Dopamine response recalibrates
- Psychological resilience improves

In executive environments where constant access to resources is the norm, fasting temporarily reverses that dynamic. It reminds leaders that control over self precedes control over systems.

Scarcity Thinking in an Age of Abundance

Modern corporations operate in environments of relative abundance, capital, connectivity and data. Yet innovation historically emerges from constraint.

Ramadan institutionalises constraint for one month annually.

It cultivates:

- Gratitude amidst abundance
- Empathy for vulnerability
- Strategic patience
- Heightened ethical awareness

Corporate governance frameworks emphasise transparency, accountability and responsibility. Ramadan reinforces these internally before they are expressed externally. For CEOs and board members, empathy is not sentimental; it is strategic. Understanding human vulnerability strengthens stakeholder trust.

Productivity & Energy: A Misconception

One common assumption is that fasting reduces efficiency. Interestingly, many professionals report the opposite:

- Sharper focus
- Reduced post-meal fatigue
- More intentional scheduling
- Higher mindfulness in communication

Scientific literature on intermittent fasting suggests metabolic switching, where the body transitions from glucose to fat-derived ketones, may support cognitive performance in many individuals. The key variable is moderation and balanced nutrition outside fasting hours. When practised responsibly, fasting can recalibrate both physiology and psychology.

Ethical Alignment in Leadership

Ramadan is also a month of heightened ethics:

- Avoidance of harmful speech
- Increased charitable giving
- Reflection on accountability
- Emphasis on fairness and integrity

When leaders practice internal accountability, external governance improves.

Fasting Across Faiths & Science

It is important to recognise that fasting is not the domain of any single religion:

Fasting transcends religious boundaries:

- Lent in Christianity
- Yom Kippur in Judaism
- Ekadashi and other fasts in Hindu traditions
- Buddhist ascetic disciplines
- Modern intermittent fasting in secular wellness communities

Its universality suggests that fasting speaks not merely to theology but also to human biology and behavioural science. This universality suggests fasting is less about dogma and more about human physiology and psychology. The convergence of theology and biology is not accidental; it reflects deep human wisdom encoded in tradition long before clinical trials existed.



Dr. AFTAB Hasan

Conclusion: Ancient Wisdom for Modern Executives

Ramadan is not merely a religious observance.

It is:

- A physiological reset
- A psychological recalibration
- A leadership laboratory
- A social equaliser

The convergence of spiritual tradition and scientific inquiry, from WHO's public health guidance on dietary discipline to Harvard's research on metabolic benefits, demonstrates that structured fasting is neither archaic nor incidental. It reflects enduring human wisdom. And for corporate leaders, the lesson is clear: In restraint, the leader rediscovers clarity. Mastery over appetite strengthens mastery over ambition.



ANIRUDHE GOSH
HEAD OF SALES, ADECCO UAE



UAE FEDERAL BUDGET 2026: ACCELERATING WORKFORCE READINESS AND ECONOMIC TRANSFORMATION

On 27 October 2025, the UAE Cabinet approved the largest federal budget in the nation's history, allocating AED 92.4 billion for 2026.

Fully aligned with We the UAE 2031, the announcement reinforces the country's long term commitment to economic diversification, human capability development, and innovation driven growth.

For businesses operating in the UAE, this budget is more than a financial plan. It is a strategic roadmap that signals where investment, skills demand, and sector expansion will accelerate in the years ahead.

As a global talent partner, Adecco plays a critical role in enabling this transformation by connecting organizations to the right skills, strengthening local talent pipelines, and ensuring workforce readiness across high growth sectors in the GCC.

Human Capital at the Core of Economic Progress

Human development remains the foundation of the UAE's long term growth vision. A total of AED 34.6 billion, representing 37.4% of federal expenditure, is allocated to social development and pensions demonstrating a clear national priority: empowering people to drive economic resilience.

Investing in Employability and Future Skills

Increased investment in education will expand:

- **Advanced curriculum and vocational pathways**
- **Digital learning ecosystems**
- **Technical and applied skills development**

For employers, this shift will result in stronger pipelines of digitally skilled talent and deeper collaboration between academia and industry.

However, education alone is not enough. To convert learning investments into measurable workforce productivity, organizations will require:

- **Targeted upskilling strategies**
- **Industry aligned training programs**
- **Structured workforce readiness initiatives**

Adecco supports this transition by designing tailored upskilling programs, facilitating talent mobility, and helping employers align their workforce strategies with the UAE's future skills agenda through its wide portfolio of services in the region.

Technology, AI, and Strategic Investment

The UAE's financial commitment to innovation continues to grow, with AED 15.4 billion allocated to sectors shaping the future economy. Priorities include:

- **Artificial intelligence**
- **Digital government services**
- **Advanced manufacturing**
- **Renewable energy**
- **Smart mobility systems**

As these sectors accelerate, organizations will face rising competition for specialist talent. This creates demand for:

- **AI and machine learning professionals**
- **Renewable energy engineers**
- **Digital transformation experts**
- **Advanced manufacturing specialists**
- **Infrastructure and project management talent**

Adecco enables companies to scale efficiently by providing agile talent acquisition models, access to both regional and international talent pools, and project based workforce solutions that convert capital investment into operational delivery.

Infrastructure Growth and Strengthening Emiratization

Infrastructure and logistics remain central to the UAE's economic diversification agenda. Mega projects across transport, utilities, urban development, and industrial zones will drive demand for skilled project based workforce deployment.

At the same time, Emiratization continues to shape national workforce priorities. With its focus on capability building, long term employability, and career mobility, the policy complements the strategic objectives of the 2026 Federal Budget.

Adecco supports these goals by:

- **Enabling companies to enter or expand in the UAE market with robust workforce planning**
- **Delivering skilled professionals for infrastructure, logistics, and technical projects**
- **Designing structured Emiratization pathways with training, assessment, and long term capability development**
- **Supporting employers through compliance aligned nationalization strategies**

The Adecco logo is displayed in a large, bold, red sans-serif font.

Turning National Investment into Workforce Capability

The UAE Federal Budget 2026 reflects a powerful principle: economic growth is sustained when policy, investment, and people move in unison.

While financial capital fuels innovation and development, the true catalyst for progress will be the nation's ability to attract, develop, and deploy the right talent.

As one of the world's leading workforce solutions partners, Adecco is committed to supporting the region's next phase of growth by empowering people, enabling organizations, and building the skills that will shape the region's economic future.



SHEETAL SONI

FOUNDING PARTNER, MICS INTERNATIONAL

WILL AI CREATE THE NEXT GOVERNANCE CRISIS?

Artificial intelligence is no longer a peripheral technology being tested in controlled environments. It has moved into the operational core of governments, corporations, and financial systems, influencing decisions at a scale and speed that traditional governance frameworks were not designed to manage.

The global pace of adoption suggests that the structural shift underway is not incremental but foundational. What is emerging is not only a new technological layer but a new decision architecture. In this context, the question of whether artificial intelligence will trigger the next governance crisis is neither speculative nor alarmist. It is a question that will arise given the observable structural trends across economies, institutions, and regulatory systems.

Data from international institutions illustrates the speed and scale of this transition. Across OECD economies, the share of firms using artificial intelligence rose from 8.7% in 2023 to 20.2% in 2025, representing more than a doubling in adoption within two years. At the individual level, more than one-third of people across OECD countries reported using generative AI tools in 2025, reflecting the rapid diffusion of these technologies into daily economic and professional life.



Comprehensive Financial Services

The scale of economic investment reinforces the permanence of this shift. The global artificial intelligence market, valued at approximately \$391 billion in 2025, is projected to reach \$1.81 trillion by 2030, indicating sustained capital commitment from both private and public sectors.

In the United Arab Emirates, adoption patterns reflect an even more accelerated journey. Surveys indicate that roughly 64% of the working-age population actively uses AI tools, one of the highest rates globally.

Government utilisation levels have reached as high as 97% across certain entities, supported by national readiness frameworks designed to track integration and capability.

Artificial intelligence is no longer a peripheral technology being tested in controlled environments. It has moved into the operational core of governments, corporations, and financial systems, influencing decisions at a scale and speed that traditional governance frameworks were not designed to manage.

The global pace of adoption suggests that the structural shift underway is not incremental but foundational. What is emerging is not only a new technological layer but a new decision architecture. In this context, the question of whether artificial intelligence will trigger the next governance crisis is neither speculative nor alarmist.

It is a question that will arise given the observable structural trends across economies, institutions, and regulatory systems.

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This rapid and systemic adoption aligns with the country's National Strategy for Artificial Intelligence 2031, which aims to embed AI into government services, economic planning, and productivity systems while positioning the UAE as a global centre for AI development.

Government-linked analyses have projected that artificial intelligence could contribute approximately 20% to the country's non-oil GDP by 2031, highlighting the central role the technology is expected to play in economic transformation.

Such widespread integration has profound governance implications. Governance systems, whether corporate or public, are designed around identifiable decision-makers, documented authority, and structured accountability. Artificial intelligence alters this architecture by inserting algorithmic systems into the decision process.

These systems do not simply assist human judgement. They filter information, prioritise outcomes, generate recommendations, and in some cases determine actions that shape operational and strategic direction. When such systems operate continuously and at scale, the locus of decision-making begins to shift away from individuals and towards infrastructure

This structural shift introduces a new form of governance complexity. Traditional governance models assume linear decision chains in which responsibility can be traced from action to actor. Artificial intelligence disrupts that traceability. Decisions are now influenced by layered interactions between data, algorithms, human approval, and automated execution. When outcomes are positive, where the attribution may go is unclear, but this is unproblematic, for now. When outcomes fail, responsibility becomes harder to isolate.

The question of who is accountable for an algorithmically influenced decision does not have a simple answer in most organisations today.

The speed at which adoption is occurring compounds this challenge. Research from Stanford University's global AI index shows that 78% of organisations reported using AI in 2024, up from 55% the previous year. This pattern indicates that artificial intelligence is no longer being implemented in isolated pilot programmes. It is being deployed across departments, functions, and operational processes simultaneously. Such decentralised adoption often precedes the development of centralised governance frameworks. Teams adopt tools to improve efficiency, reduce costs, or increase analytical capability, while institutional oversight mechanisms evolve more slowly.

This sequence creates structural risk. When adoption precedes governance, systems become embedded before accountability frameworks are fully defined. Artificial intelligence becomes integrated into hiring processes, compliance reviews, financial forecasting, fraud detection, and customer interaction systems. Over time, reliance on these systems increases. Decisions become faster and more data-driven, but also more dependent on models that operate beyond the direct visibility of senior leadership.

The governance implications become even more significant when artificial intelligence is embedded within state institutions. OECD analysis indicates that governments are increasingly deploying AI in high-volume public services

and administrative functions. These include areas such as service delivery optimisation, regulatory monitoring, and civic administration. Such deployments promise efficiency gains and improved responsiveness. However, they also increase exposure. A flawed algorithm within a public system can affect large populations, creating systemic consequences rather than isolated operational errors.

The UAE's leadership in AI integration illustrates both the opportunity and the governance challenge. National strategy documents emphasise productivity, competitiveness, and innovation, positioning artificial intelligence as a central pillar of economic diversification.

Significant investments in infrastructure, talent development, and international partnerships reflect long-term commitment. Yet when a technology becomes embedded in national economic strategy, governance must expand in scope and depth to match its influence. Oversight mechanisms must evolve to monitor systems that are dynamic, data-dependent, and continuously learning.

Another dimension of governance risk lies in the concentration of influence created by artificial intelligence systems. AI aggregates vast amounts of data, identifies patterns, and produces outputs that shape organisational behaviour.

Over time, these outputs begin to inform strategic decisions, capital allocation, compliance frameworks, and risk management processes. The more accurate and efficient these systems appear, the more authority they gain within decision-making structures. This gradual concentration of influence within algorithmic systems represents a shift that governance frameworks have not yet fully addressed.

Economic projections reinforce the permanence of this shift. Estimates suggest that artificial intelligence could increase global trade by approximately 34% to 37% and contribute to a 12% to 13% rise in global GDP by 2040. Such projections indicate that AI will not remain a supplementary technology. It will form part of the core infrastructure of global economic systems. As dependence increases, the governance stakes rise proportionately.

Within organisations, another structural challenge emerges from the decentralised nature of adoption. Artificial intelligence tools are often introduced at the functional level. Finance teams use AI for forecasting. Legal departments use it for contract analysis. Marketing teams use it for segmentation and content optimisation. Compliance teams deploy AI for anomaly detection. These deployments occur independently, often using different models, data sets, and controls.

Productivity gains are evident. OECD research indicates that AI adoption can reduce defect rates, improve process efficiency, and enhance operational performance. However, productivity improvements do not resolve governance questions.

Fragmentation increases the difficulty of monitoring risk. Inconsistent data governance, varying model quality, and uneven accountability structures can create vulnerabilities that remain undetected until a failure occurs.

Regulatory environments are evolving but remain uneven across regions. In the GCC, governance approaches to artificial intelligence have largely focused on national strategies, ethical guidelines, and innovation frameworks. This model has supported rapid adoption and positioned countries like the UAE as leaders in AI integration. However, ethical principles, while important, do not substitute for enforceable accountability structures. When adoption accelerates faster than regulatory clarity, organisations operate in a space where standards are still forming.

Public perception also shapes the governance landscape. Rising trust in artificial intelligence accelerates adoption. When individuals and institutions view AI outputs as reliable, reliance increases. OECD data showing widespread individual use of generative AI reflects this shift in behaviour. Trust is a necessary condition for adoption. However, when trust expands faster than scrutiny, oversight mechanisms can weaken.

Governance crises often emerge in environments where confidence in systems outpaces understanding of their limitations

The nature of risk itself changes when artificial intelligence operates at scale. Traditional governance failures are often localised. A flawed decision affects a department, a project, or a transaction.

Artificial intelligence can amplify both success and failure across entire systems. A model used in compliance may screen thousands of transactions daily.

A risk algorithm may influence lending decisions across portfolios. A hiring model may shape recruitment patterns across regions. In such contexts, errors are not contained. They scale.

For boards and senior leadership, this introduces a new form of oversight responsibility. Artificial intelligence intersects with strategy, risk management, compliance, and operational performance. Yet in many organisations, AI is still treated as a technology initiative rather than a governance priority.

This creates a structural blind spot. Decision influence is shifting towards systems that are not fully visible within traditional governance frameworks.

At the national level, the geopolitical dimension adds further complexity. Countries are investing heavily in AI infrastructure, research, and talent development to secure competitive advantage. The UAE's strategy to position itself as a global AI hub reflects a broader international race to lead in the technology.

As AI becomes central to economic competitiveness, pressure to accelerate adoption intensifies. In such environments, governance development can struggle to keep pace with strategic ambition.

Historical patterns suggest that governance frameworks often mature in response to crises rather than in anticipation of them. Financial innovation preceded regulatory reform. Digital platforms scaled before data protection regimes became robust.

Artificial intelligence may follow a similar trajectory if governance remains reactive. However, the scale and speed of AI integration mean that any future governance failure could have far wider consequences.

The emerging governance challenge is not rooted in the technology itself but in the shift in decision architecture that the technology creates. Authority is gradually moving from identifiable individuals to complex systems that process information,

generate insights, and influence outcomes continuously. Accountability structures designed for human decision-making must adapt to environments where decisions are shaped by dynamic models operating across multiple functions and jurisdictions.

The window for proactive governance remains open. Artificial intelligence is still in an early phase of institutional integration. Policies, frameworks, and oversight models are being developed in parallel with deployment. Countries that lead in adoption have an opportunity to embed governance mechanisms at the design stage rather than retrofitting them later. Organisations that treat AI as a governance issue rather than a technical tool will be better positioned to manage risk as adoption deepens.

The central question is not whether artificial intelligence will transform governance. That transformation is already underway. The question is whether institutions will adapt their oversight structures in time to manage the shift. If governance evolves alongside adoption, artificial intelligence will strengthen decision quality, transparency, and efficiency.

If it does not, the gap between decision power and accountability will widen. It is within that gap that the conditions for the next governance crisis may take shape.

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Designed to empower aspiring homeowners and investors, the limited-time Ramadan offer reflects the company's customer-first philosophy. The 0.5% monthly payment plan enables buyers to invest in premium properties with enhanced flexibility and ease. This exclusive offer is valid until March 31, 2026.

The initiative also embodies the vision of Mr. Rizwan Sajan, Founder and Chairman of Danube Group, who has consistently championed inclusive growth and responsible business practices.

Commenting on the initiative, **Mr. Rizwan Sajan** said: "Ramadan is a time of reflection, gratitude, and giving back to the community. At Danube Properties, we believe that true success is measured not only by growth, but by the positive impact we create in people's lives. Our 0.5% monthly payment plan is a humble effort to support families and investors in achieving their dream of owning a home in Dubai, while honouring the spirit of this blessed month."

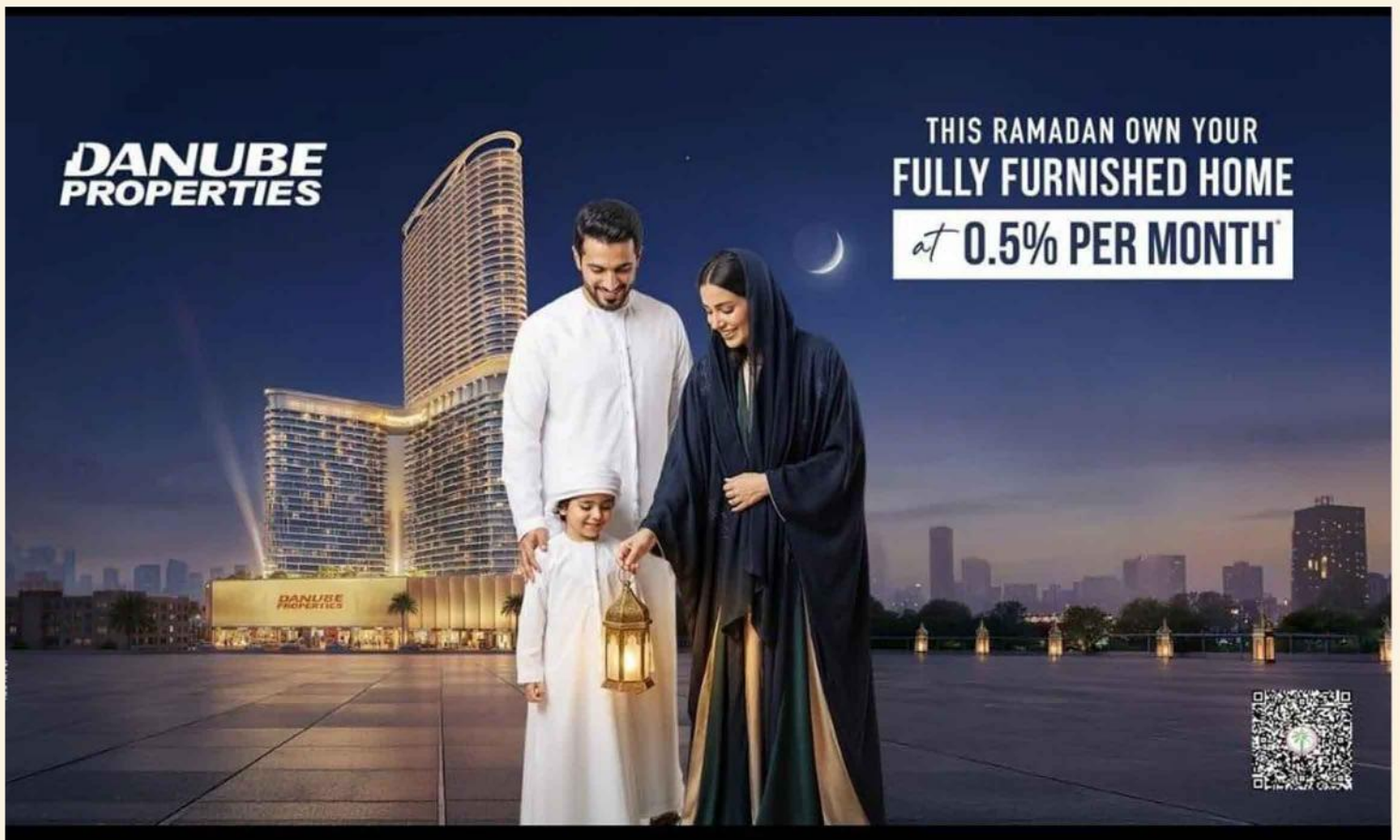
Over the years, Danube Properties has built a strong reputation for delivering high-quality developments supported by attractive and innovative payment structures that cater to a diverse customer base. This Ramadan, the company once again reinforces its promise to provide value-driven opportunities that make real estate investment both accessible and rewarding.

Known for offering fully furnished apartments complemented by more than 40 lifestyle amenities, Danube Properties has earned the trust of customers through its commitment to before time delivery, exceptional build quality, and overall excellence. With innovation, accessibility, and reliability at its core, the company continues to redefine modern urban living across the region.



About Danube Properties

Danube Properties, a subsidiary of the Danube Group founded in 1993 by Rizwan Sajan, is among the UAE's leading private real estate developers. Known for pioneering the 1% payment plan, the company delivers fully furnished apartments complemented by over 40 lifestyle amenities, with a strong track record of quality construction and timely delivery.





LYTEN COMPLETES ACQUISITION OF NORTHVOLT SWEDEN AND ESTABLISHES ITS FIRST LYTEN INDUSTRIAL HUB IN SWEDEN

Lyten, a global leader in lithium-sulfur batteries and energy storage, announced today that it has completed the acquisition of Northvolt Ett and Ett Expansion (Skellefteå, Sweden) and Northvolt Labs (Västerås, Sweden).

The Northvolt Sweden acquisition includes 16 GWh of existing battery manufacturing capacity, more than 160 hectares of land, infrastructure and buildings to support expanded manufacturing and industrial activities, and the largest and most advanced battery research and development center in Europe.

Lyten additionally announced the formation of the Lyten Industrial Hub, located in Skellefteå, at the Northvolt Ett site. The industrial hub will utilize the infrastructure built by Northvolt and access to abundant, clean hydro power to co-locate battery manufacturing with AI data centers and complimentary industrial operations of strategic importance to Sweden and the European Union. Lyten plans to utilize its batteries and energy storage systems as part of the industrial hub's infrastructure.

EdgeConneX, a leading global developer of data centers and a portfolio company of EQT, plans to acquire a data center site from Lyten in Skellefteå. The site has potential to scale to a one gigawatt data center campus, which would be one of the largest data center facilities in Europe.

Dan Cook, Lyten CEO and Co-Founder stated, “With this acquisition, Lyten now operates one of the largest battery manufacturing campuses in Europe and the largest battery R&D center in Europe. We have the infrastructure, talent, and technology to build a thriving battery ecosystem across North America and Europe, supported by local supply chains and local talent, to deliver on the rapidly growing global need for distributed electricity infrastructure.”

Lyten plans to immediately begin the restart process for Northvolt Ett and Northvolt Labs. Ett will produce lithium-ion NMC batteries serving a broadened segment of customers, including battery energy storage systems (BESS), automotive and diverse mobility markets. Lyten expects commercial sales of cells from Northvolt Ett to supply Lyten’s BESS manufacturing facility in Poland, Northvolt Dwa, in the second half of 2026.

Northvolt Labs in Västerås will continue development of long-life lithium ion NMC cells and will collaborate with the Lyten Silicon Valley team to industrialize Lyten’s lithium-sulfur battery technology for gigascale manufacturing.



Kristina Sundin Jonsson, Head of Administration, Skellefteå Municipality, added, “We are pleased that battery production can now resume in Skellefteå. The need for batteries continues to increase and the EU has identified batteries as a strategic product for Europe’s competitiveness in its newly published battery strategy. The prerequisites we have in Skellefteå enable Sweden to take a significant position in this work and contribute to a strong, resilient battery value chain, including suppliers, research and talent attraction.”.

“We truly appreciate the support of the Skellefteå municipality and Swedish government, the U.S. government, and the European Union in helping make this acquisition a reality,” stated Lars Herlitz, Lyten Chairman and Co-Founder. “We fully grasp the potential of these assets and the importance of creating high quality jobs and economic growth in Sweden. Batteries are now a critical part of securing energy independence and supporting the competitiveness of European industries ranging from automotive to aerospace to data centers to grid resiliency. We are bringing the best of Silicon Valley innovation together with Sweden’s engineering and manufacturing expertise to ensure this development is a success.”

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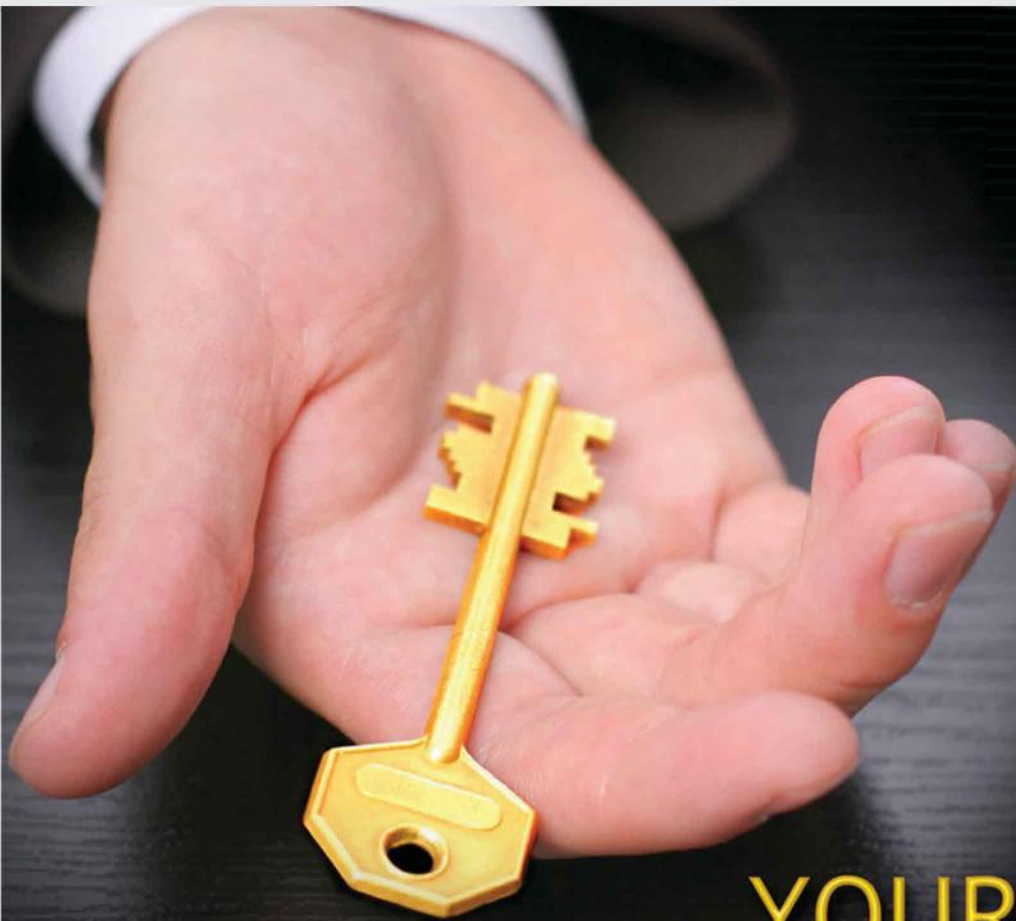
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