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# Trade Fairtimes

●●● AN EXHÍCON GROUP INITIATIVE

ARABIA

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OF THE  
MOMENT

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SAJAN**

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Founder  
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## PUSHKIN AGHA

CEO  
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“**R**emarkable success and achievements in the trade show industry, particularly in the Middle East. It's truly inspiring to witness the impactful role your organization, **TradeFairTimes Arabia**, is playing in fostering industry relationships and setting new milestones.

The recent COP28 in Dubai, with its historic consensus and ambitious response to the Global Stocktake, showcases the region's commitment to accelerating climate action. Your mention of the UAE's pivotal role in mobilizing over \$85 billion funding for climate action is commendable and reflects a dedication to global sustainability.

The success of the 17th edition of the Dubai International Food Safety Conference further demonstrates your organization's influence in addressing critical issues such as the impact of climate change on food safety. With over 3,000 industry experts participating, it's evident that TFT Arabia is at the forefront of discussions shaping the future of food safety and security.

The record-breaking number of visitors at the Big5 Global in WTC is a testament to the growing importance of the region as a global hub. The success of the 5th Global Gold Convention further solidifies the UAE's position in the sustainable gold and bullion markets.

The Middle East Organic and Natural Products Expo's remarkable footfall underscores the potential growth in the organic market, reflecting the region's increasing focus on sustainable and natural products.

Looking ahead to the New Year in 2024, the anticipation of mega shows like ATM 2024, Arabian Travel Market, Arabhealth, and Gulfood is exciting. These events are not only expected to boost the local economy but also contribute to the flourishing tourism and real estate markets.

Your confidence in Trade Fair Times Arabia playing a paramount role in connecting industry leaders and spreading the high-quality work of key players in the trade industry is well-placed.

Wishing you continued success in the upcoming mega shows and the endeavours of TFT Arabia.”



## M Q SYED

Editor-In-Chief,  
**TradeFairTimes Arabia**  
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EDITOR'S NOTE

“Welcome to the second edition of **TradeFairTimes Arabia**, where we have covered the unparalleled and groundbreaking trade-shows industry in the UAE.

In this issue, our spotlights is on the remarkable strides witnessed in December. From the COP 28, demonstrating an unwavering commitment to global sustainability, to influential events like the Dubai International Food Safety Conference.

TFT Arabia has started playing its role in fostering industry connections. We are deep diving into the record-breaking turnouts at significant events like the Big 5 Global in WTC and the Middle East Organic and Natural Products Expo, signalling the region's ascent as a global hub, to anticipating the upcoming mega Shows in 2024, we have not only covered the local economy but also getting to detailed impact on tourism and real estate sectors. TFT Arabia's paramount role in connecting UAE industry leaders and amplifying the voices of key players in the trade fair industry has just begun. And we are committed to disseminating high-quality insights to shape the industry's trajectory.

We invite you to immerse yourself in the stories that illustrate the industry's dynamism, commitment to sustainability, and the remarkable collaborative efforts in this edition. Enjoy the journey of the sector, exploring the impactful narratives that define the thriving trade show landscape in the Middle East.

Enjoy the journey through these pages, exploring the impactful narratives that define the thriving trade show landscape in the Middle East.



Glorious presence of TradeShow Business community & Excellencies during the launch of TradeFairTimes, Arabia in Dubai.

# THE TFT ARABIA

is now official monthly catering to the ever growing Exhibition Sector of UAE.





# Sri Lanka presents significant potential and economic opportunities on a global scale through its organic evolution

- HE ALEXI GUNASEKERA, CONSUL GENERAL OF SRI LANKA



# SRI LANKA



# SRI LANKA



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**Shaneer N Siddiqui :** My first question is, how organic is Sri Lanka?

**HE Alexi Gunasekera :** Sri Lanka in the past was 100% organic, but over time, you know, population growth and all these scientific things, we became using more and more chemical things. Even for tea, rubber, coconut, for all food crops, we started using chemicals, but then the government decided with all these climate change conferences, we are playing a major role in that as well. That we need to go organic. To go organic, you cannot do it overnight with a population of 22 million. Sri Lanka is a net food importer, for a net food importer, it's not that easy to change, but gradually we are changing. Now the government has started that process, a few years back, slowly we are introducing organic food, and we are educating the public as well.

**Shaneer N Siddiqui :** What challenges you are facing while adopting the organic food lifestyle?

**HE Alexi Gunasekera :** When you start introducing this kind of

**HE Alexi Gunasekera ,** the Consul General of Sri Lanka to Dubai and the Northern Emirates, during the organic and natural food expo Dubai, talked to Trade Fair Arabia's residence editor, Shaneer N Siddiqui on Sri Lankan company's participation and role of the organic food industry to support the growth and economy of Sri Lanka.

organic thing, what matters most is the price. If the price is very high, people are people cannot afford to buy organic products, so they tend to go for chemicals. But to reduce the cost of organic production. We must find alternatives. Earlier we were importing organic fertilizer, but now Sri Lanka is producing organic fertilizer.

**Shaneer N Siddiqui :** How many Sri Lankan companies are participating in the organic and natural food expo Dubai 2023?

**HE Alexi Gunasekera :** 16 companies are participating in this expo, out of 16 companies 10 companies are in the organic fertilizers that show interest, and enthusiasm in Sri Lanka for organic fertilizer. People started organic food and surely will go 100% organic, but it will take time.

**Shaneer N Siddiqui :** Sri Lanka has a rich history of spices. In old

**times spices brought traders from all over the world to Sri Lanka. How are you promoting that industry?**

**HE Alexi Gunasekera :** We are promoting Sri Lanka in the tourism arena as a culinary destination. In the past, we were known as a destination that produced the best spices. Now if you look at the history of Sri Lanka, the Portuguese people came to Sri Lanka in the year 1505. They found cinnamon and they said, we are not going to leave. If you look at history, we were known as a spice island in Europe.

Recently cinnamon was renamed Ceylon cinnamon with the geographical indication. The export spice sector is picking up. We want to be exporters of organic food. We want to be self-sufficient in organic food. The agenda to participate in the organic and natural food expo is that we want to showcase to the world that Sri

Lanka has a huge opportunity for import. Our government and other supporting bodies are on one page to promote Sri Lanka as an organic country.

**Shaneer N Siddiqui :** using the term organic food, like so many other countries also coming with their products. How Sri Lanka is different or what especially you are offering to the world?

**HE Alexi Gunasekera :** Why Sri Lanka, so we are organic from basics. The new thing is organic fertilizer for sustainable agriculture, and we are the pioneers in it. Earlier we imported organic fertilizers, but now we are producing them. So you can say Sri Lankan foods are organic from basics.

Sri Lankan food is most authentic and belongs to its geography only. Our organic fruit market is also growing, especially mango and pineapple. We have the island. We are blessed with the soil which gives another flavor to our products. Sri Lankan Chilly is famous for its hotness. Our cashews and tea are always in demand worldwide.

**Shaneer N Siddiqui :** In the coming future, is the government planning to develop any spice route for better import and export business opportunities?

**HE Alexi Gunasekera :** We are graphically situated in a very congested, high-demand sea route between East and West. For that, as you said, Sri Lanka offers a good location for transshipment. We were the transshipment hub in the past, but still, we are a good alternative for it. We have a natural border and port; the Colombo port is ranked among one of the best ports in the world.

**Shaneer N Siddiqui :** In numbers, what are the figures for export in terms of organic food and spices?

**HE Alexi Gunasekera :** The figure for total exports is about 13 billion USD. Apparel comes first with 5.6 billion USD, and spices are about to touch 500 million USD,



but it shows the opportunity of the market but for that, we must start cultivating commercially. In Sri Lanka, there were special people called cinnamon peelers. Now we have GI for cinnamon from WTO, which will help to grow the market.

**Shaneer N Siddiqui :** Apart from Spices and organic food, what are the other areas, which has hidden potential to support the economy?

**HE Alexi Gunasekera :** The essential oil business has huge potential. Sri Lanka is one of the largest suppliers of essential oils to the perfume industry in France. It is good that essential oils become a lifestyle product, which helps producers back in Sri Lanka. Not only for food, but nowadays essential oils is also commonly used for massages and the spa industry.

**Shaneer N Siddiqui :** Tourism is another sector in Sri Lanka, which has huge potential. After the major economic crisis, how the government is reviving it?

**HE Alexi Gunasekera :** Before COVID-19, we were targeting 4.5 million tourists in a year. In 2009, the tourist intake was only 400,000. The Sri Lankan government tried hard and just before covid; we reached 2.2 million. Then a different type of

crisis came, and it hit the tourism industry badly.

This year we estimated 1.5 million and we achieved it. Soon we will touch the COVID era and surpass it. Sri Lanka believes in quality tourism. Sri Lanka has been promoted as a destination with, the best beaches, wildlife safari with mountains and history. We have all the geographical indicators that help promote tourism. Cruise tourism I mean, medical tourism, wedding tourism, adventure tourism and spiritual tourism. Religious tourism also has a big opportunity.

**Shaneer N Siddiqui :** What will be your message to Sri Lankan expats in UAE?

**HE Alexi Gunasekera :** The Sri Lankan community in the UAE, amounting to around 300,000 Sri Lankans, is the second largest community of Sri Lankans abroad, with around one-third of them doing white-collar jobs. The remittances from the diaspora heavily support the Sri Lankan economy. Recently 2000 people celebrated their 36th annual get-together, which shows the Sri Lankan expats' long relationship with UAE. These people have contributed to and supported the development of this country. They are our brand ambassadors. But yes, we must work on the brain drain issue.



**T**he ICAI Dubai Chapter hosted its highly anticipated two-day Annual International Conference was held on December 9th and 10th at the Grand Hyatt Dubai Convention Centre. The event was a convergence of esteemed guests, influential speakers, and industry leaders, providing a platform for insightful discussions, knowledge-sharing, and networking.

The conference began with the distinguished presence of Chief Guest His Excellency Sheikh Nahyan bin Mubarak Al Nahyan, UAE Minister of Tolerance and Coexistence. His address delved into the intricate dynamics of Indian and UAE relations, shedding light on the historical, economic, and cultural ties that bind the two nations. The audience was treated to a comprehensive exploration of the collaborative opportunities and shared visions for the future. Gurudev Sri Sri Ravi Shankar, a luminary in spiritual and humanitarian spheres, took the stage to share profound insights on resilience in adversity. His discourse resonated with the audience, emphasizing the importance of maintaining composure and strength during challenging times. CA Aniket Talati, President of The ICAI, provided an overview of various initiatives undertaken by The Institute of Chartered Accountants of India (ICAI). This segment served as an informative session for conference attendees, offering valuable perspectives on the evolving landscape of the accounting profession.

Faizal Kottikollon, Chairman of KEF Holding, contributed his thoughts on industry trends and emerging opportunities, providing a

## 41<sup>st</sup> Annual International Conference emphasized the key role accountants and CFOs play in sustainability

strategic outlook for the future.

The conference featured an array of speakers, each an expert in their respective fields.

Hardik Seth, Partner & Director, Boston Consulting Group, USA, delved into the realm of digitization in finance and accounting, offering a visionary perspective on the transformative impact of technology in these crucial domains.

Cheenu Gupta, Fund Manager, Equity HSBC, explored the theme of "Risk to Reward, Mastering the Equity Game," providing valuable insights into navigating the complexities of financial markets. Bikash Prasad, President and Group CFO, Olam Agri, emphasized the key role accountants and CFOs play in sustainability. His talk underscored the increasing importance of financial professionals in driving sustainable practices within organizations.

Mohan Das Pai, an eminent figure in the business world, shared his insights on the "India Success Story," shedding light on the remarkable journey of India's economic and technological growth.

Ankur Aggarwal, CEO and founder, of Bricks n Wood Real

Estate, shared transformative moments and challenges in the real estate industry, offering a glimpse into the dynamic landscape of this sector.

Devita Saraf, Chairman and CEO of the Vu Group, captivated the audience with her talk on the "Power of Vision, Turning Dreams into Reality." Her inspirational address motivated attendees to aspire for greatness and pursue their visions with determination.

Panel discussion delved into the nexus of Finance, Sustainability, and Taxation. Moderated by CA Abbas Ali Mirza, the panel featured prominent industry experts: Mr. Anthony O'Sullivan, Managing Partner at EY UAE; Ms. Olga Earmolaeva, Tax Director at Deloitte; and Mr. Omar Saraswala, Partner at PWC ME. Each panelist, drawing on their extensive experience, offered valuable insights into the intersection of finance, sustainability, and taxation. The discussion provided a nuanced exploration of contemporary issues in these domains, enriching the audience's understanding of their interconnectedness. Panel Discussion: Topic: Finance, Sustainability and Taxation.



# COP28 delivers historic consensus in dubai to accelerate climate action

COP28 has concluded with a final consensus that lays out an ambitious response to the Global Stocktake and puts forward a plan to close the gaps to 2030.

“The world needed to find a new way. By following our North Star, we have found that path,” said COP28 President, Dr. Sultan Al Jaber during his closing speech, “We have worked very hard to secure a better future for our people and our planet. We should be proud of our historic achievement.”

COP28 has concluded with a final consensus that lays out an ambitious response to the Global Stocktake and puts forward a plan to close the gaps to 2030. It calls on Parties to transition away from fossil fuels to reach net zero, encourages them to submit economy-wide Nationally Determined

Contributions (NDCs), includes a new specific target to triple renewables and double energy efficiency by 2030, and builds momentum behind a new architecture for climate finance.

The COP28 Presidency took bold and decisive steps to deliver beyond the negotiated text through its ‘Action Agenda,’ which spans the four pillars of the Paris Agreement: fast tracking a just and orderly energy transition; fixing climate finance to make it more available, affordable, and accessible; focusing on people, nature, lives and livelihoods; and fostering full inclusivity in climate action.

COP28 has mobilized over \$85 billion in funding for climate action, secured a historic agreement on Loss and Damage, advanced the Global Goal on Adaptation (GGA) and overseen breakthrough agreements on the energy transition.





This has been the most inclusive COP to-date, ensuring all voices could participate in the process.

Dubai: On December 13, 2023, COP28 concluded with a historic agreement by 198 Parties to deliver a new era of climate action. The Parties agreed on a landmark text named The UAE Consensus, which sets out an ambitious climate agenda to keep 1.5°C within reach. The UAE Consensus calls on Parties to transition away from fossil fuels to reach net zero, encourages them to submit economy wide Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs), includes a new specific target to triple renewables and double energy efficiency by 2030, and builds momentum towards a new architecture for climate finance.

The UAE Consensus, which follows a year of inclusive diplomatic engagements and two weeks of intense negotiations, reflects the COP28 Presidency's goal to provide the most ambitious response possible to the Global Stock take and delivers on the central aims of the Paris Agreement.

"The world needed to find a new way. By following our North Star, we have found that path," said COP28 President, Dr. Sultan Al Jaber during his closing speech. "We have worked very hard to secure a better future for our people and our planet. We should be proud of our historic achievement."

"I promised a different sort

### Major commitments contained in the final negotiated text include

- ❑ An unprecedented reference to transitioning away from all fossil fuels to enable the world to reach net zero by 2050.
- ❑ A significant step forward in the expectations for the next round of Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) by encouraging "economy-wide emission reduction targets."
- ❑ Building momentum behind the financial architecture reform agenda, recognizing the role of credit rating agencies for the first time, and calling for a scale up of concessional and grant finance.
- ❑ A new, specific target to triple renewables and double energy efficiency by 2030.
- ❑ Recognizing the need to significantly scale up adaptation finance beyond the doubling to meet urgent and evolving needs.

of COP. A COP that brought everyone together – private and public...civil society and faith leaders, youth and indigenous peoples. Everyone came together from day one. Everyone united, acted and delivered."

Throughout the COP28 process, Dr. Al Jaber and the COP28 Presidency team have expressed determination to deliver "a plan that is led by the science" and to define a new way for this and future COPs, based on the inclusion of diverse peoples and elevating the needs of the Global South.

"It is a balanced plan that tackles emissions, bridges the gap on adaptation, reimagines global finance and delivers on loss and damage," said Dr. Al Jaber. "It is built on common ground. It is strengthened by inclusivity and it is reinforced by collaboration. It is an enhanced, balanced, but make no mistake, historic package to accelerate climate action."

Outside the Global Stocktake, COP28 delivered historic negotiated outcomes to operationalize Loss and Damage, securing \$792 million of early pledges, providing a framework for the Global Goal on Adaptation (GGA), and institutionalizing the role of the Youth Climate Champion to mainstream youth inclusion at future COPs.

Throughout 2023, the COP28 Presidency has taken bold and decisive steps to deliver beyond the negotiated text through its 'Action Agenda' which spans four pillars: fast tracking a just



and orderly energy transition; fixing climate finance to make it more available, affordable, and accessible; focusing on people, nature, lives and livelihoods; and fostering full inclusivity in climate action.

The scale of achievements delivered under the Action Agenda has been unprecedented for any COP and testament to the willingness of representatives from a huge range of sectors and industries to take positive action.

Under the total Action Agenda at COP28, over \$85 billion in funding has been mobilized and 11 pledges and declarations have been launched and received historic support.

**Major Action Agenda achievements, which sit apart from the negotiated text, include:**

- The launch of ALTERRA, the UAE's \$30 billion catalytic private finance vehicle, which seeks to mobilize a total of \$250 billion for global climate action.
- The 'COP28 UAE Declaration

on Agriculture, Food, & Climate,' embedding sustainable agriculture and food systems in the response to climate change. It has received endorsements from

health systems. It has been endorsed by 144 countries.

- The Global Decarbonization Accelerator (GDA) – a series of landmark energy initiatives across the public and private



Presidency co-hosted a UAE-China-US Summit on Methane and other Non-CO2 Greenhouse Gases, calling for economy-wide, all GHG 2035 nationally determined contributions.

158 countries.

- The 'COP28 UAE Declaration on Climate and Health,' to accelerate the development of climate-resilient, sustainable and equitable

sectors to speed up the energy transition including:

- The Global Renewables and Energy Efficiency Pledge to triple worldwide installed renewable energy generation capacity to at least 11,000 gigawatts and to double the global average annual rate of energy efficiency improvements to more than 4 percent by 2030. It has been endorsed by 132 countries.
- The Oil and Gas Decarbonization Charter (OGDC), which commits signatories to zero methane emissions and ending routine flaring by 2030, and to net-zero operations by 2050 at the latest. To date, 52 companies, representing over 40 percent of global oil production have signed up to it.





- The 'Coalition for High Ambition Multilevel Partnerships (CHAMP) Pledge' to advance the integration of sub-national leaders in climate-related decision making, which has been endorsed by 67 countries.

The COP28 Presidency's receipt of the Global Youth Statement: the collective climate policy demands of children and youth from over 160 countries across the world. Its delivery follows a year of youth engagements championed by H.E. Shamma Al Mazrui, the first official Youth Climate Champion.

The COP28 Presidency has been clear in its intention to ensure that the agreements made at COP28 are delivered and followed through to COP29 and COP30, with mechanisms to track progress against implementation. Already, the Presidency has signed an agreement with Brazil, the host country of COP30, to deepen collaboration and increase climate ambitions by COP30.

Central to the agreement with Brazil will be working with Azerbaijan, the hosts of COP29, to ensure Parties come to COP30 with ambitious updated climate plans for action in this critical decade, as well as whole-of-economy NDCs building on the momentum generated at COP28.

#### **COP28 UAE**

- COP28 UAE was taken place at Expo City Dubai from November 30-December 12, 2023. The Conference convene over 70,000 participants, including heads of state, government officials, international



The world needed to find a new way. By following our North Star, we have found that path. We have worked very hard to secure a better future for our people and our planet. We should be proud of our historic achievement. I promised a different sort of COP. A COP that brought everyone together – private and public...civil society and faith leaders, youth and indigenous peoples. Everyone came together from day one. Everyone united, acted and delivered.

**Dr. Sultan Al Jaber**  
President COP28



The members of the COP28 Advisory Committee for their guidance, counsel, and contribution which helped to shape a historic outcome at COP28. Inspiring collaborative and transformative action, the Advisory Committee brings together climate thought leadership from countries across 6 continents, representing expertise from across policy, industry, energy, finance, civil society, and youth.



industry leaders, private sector representatives, academics, experts, youth, and non-state actors.

- As mandated by the Paris Climate Agreement, COP28 UAE delivered the first ever Global Stocktake – a comprehensive evaluation of progress against climate goals.
- The UAE leads a process for all parties to agree upon a clear roadmap to accelerate progress through a pragmatic global energy transition and a “leave no one behind” approach to inclusive climate action.

||||| MAN OF THE MOMENT |||||

**Rizwan Sajan**, a prominent businessman based in the UAE and the founder of Danube Group, has significantly impacted the real estate market by transforming its dynamics. Shifting from being perceived as having only 1% reliability to earning a full 100% trust and faith, his approach to providing affordable luxury homes offers optimism to emerging earners and young prospective buyers. Beyond his success in the business realm, Rizwan Sajan is recognized for his distinctive style, public image, media presence, and his evident fondness for Bollywood and the entertainment industry. In an interview conducted by Shaneer N Siddiqui, the residence editor at Trade Fair Times Arabia, Sajan delved into discussions about his future plans and shared insights into his business and family philosophy.



**Shaneer N Siddiqui : Dubai has a booming economy. How do you see the role of trade fairs in the growth of the economy?**

**Rizwan Sajjan :** Trade exhibitions, seminars, and conferences greatly influence Dubai's economy. Dubai World Trade Centre (DWTC) hosted 1.98 million delegates in 2022, reflecting a strong growth of 29 percent in visits over the previous year. Visitor growth was boosted by 244 Meetings, Incentives, Conferences, and Exhibitions (MICE), business and consumer events. Every participant in exhibitions spends on exhibition space, hotel stay, food, airfare, and local transportation and they contribute to the economy by securing business deals. So, trade fares significantly contribute to any city's tourism and economy. And thanks to the vision of the rulers of Dubai and the UAE, we have become

the hub of fares, and exhibitions across categories of fashion, real estate, technology et cetera.

**Shaneer N Siddiqui : Recently we have seen Danube in Big5, what was special this year, and how was the response in Big5?**

**Rizwan Sajjan :** Milano by Danube Home was dynamic at the Big 5 Global Exhibition, showcasing cutting-edge sanitaryware innovations. Milano's 5-star energy-rated water heaters stole the spotlight, featuring premium materials, innovative technologies, and a commitment to sustainability. The brand, distributed globally, continues to lead in the design, production, and distribution of sanitaryware, offering environmentally conscious solutions.

**Shaneer N Siddiqui : Danube is participating in Trade**

**Fairs worldwide. As per your experience, how are the UAE's or Middle East Trade fairs different from other countries?**

**Rizwan Sajjan :** We participated in Wetex Dubai, Dubai Design District, Luxury Property Show China, Saudi Cityscape, and Moscow Property Show to name a few.

Trade fairs in the UAE are some of the best industries show events, and in terms of quality of events, they are on par with the best industry events. The number of footfalls and the amount of business generated in these trade shows, make them worthwhile participating. Industry players from other countries come to these exhibitions to meet buyers, sellers, wholesalers, importers, exporters, dealers, suppliers, and other stakeholders. For developing business, these exhibitions play a great role.

**MY PEOPLE, EMPLOYEES, AND CUSTOMERS ARE MY STRENGTH AND THE REASON FOR OUR ROARING SUCCESS**

**– RIZWAN SAJAN**



**Shaneer N Siddiqui : Real Estate is now the biggest in Danube's portfolio and real estate is exploding in the UAE nowadays. What do you think are the key elements responsible for this trend?**

**Rizwan Sajan :** Danube Properties is one of Dubai's largest private property developers, with a portfolio of 14,888 units in 27 projects totalling more than Dh 15 billion. Today, there is no looking back. As the business grew, we hired more people, and slowly our two-person company became what it is today. We are spread over an area of over 5 million sq. ft. in GCC and have 50 branches worldwide and we don't plan on stopping this expansion.

There are several factors – or Unique Selling Points (USPs) – that are helping the real estate sector perform better than others. Dubai is a hub of innovation, has a great infrastructure, with ease of doing business. It is a land of opportunity for those who don't shy away from hard work. It is also a geopolitically important location having access to world-class airlines that connect Dubai to around 250 cities worldwide. Moreover, the quality of life, security, and lifestyle here encourage investors to relocate and invest in the region.

**Shaneer N Siddiqui : So many private local and international real estate fairs are happening in the UAE. Don't you think that it's high time that the government regulates property fairs to make them more credible for customers?**

**Rizwan Sajan :** The UAE believes in freedom – if it is not misused. Dubai is an international hub for business activities. People from all over the world come here to do business and source business. The government already has strong regulations guiding property exhibitions. However, anyone is free to organize any number of exhibitions – as long as it remains economical. If there is a demand, there will be supply. So, I don't think you can or should limit the



number of exhibitions – if the organizers play by the rules.

**Shaneer N Siddiqui : Rizwan Sajan was on the list of Forbes Middle East's "Top 100 Indian Leaders in the UAE". As a business leader, how do you see the role of the Indian and sub-continent population in the growth of the UAE?**

**Rizwan Sajan :** South Asians, especially Non-Resident Indians have been playing a great role in building and expanding the UAE economy for the last five decades. If you take my case as an example, I came to the UAE in the early 1990s to either build a career or a business – almost empty-handed. I worked for a few months for a building materials company and then founded one in 1993 in the name of Danube Building Materials – that was run by me, and my only employee was my wife, who looked after the office while I used to run around to build business. Today we are a family of more than 4500 employees – who receive salaries at the end of every month regularly and manage their families – by spending the money in the economy. So, Danube as a business supports the livelihood of more than 4500 families who spend the money to buy groceries, pay for tuition fees, utility bills, and pay rent – almost all going into the economy. So, we are enablers of the economy – like the private sector of all the countries.

**Shaneer N Siddiqui : You changed the face of the real estate market with the idea of 1% or incorporating luxury names that are not in real estate at all with your projects like FTV, Aston Martin, and Tonino Lamborghini. From where do these ideas come from, what was your inspiration?**

**Rizwan Sajan :** There was a shortage of affordable homes in the UAE. I aspire for every expat in Dubai to possess their own dream home and relish the luxuries this vibrant city has to offer with a 1 percent payment scheme so that they don't have to seek mortgage payments. Besides, affordable homes are perceived to be inferior, unhealthy, etc. To change the perception, we promoted affordable luxury – that meant delivering luxury homes at affordable pricing – and a 1 percent monthly payment. To strengthen the affordable luxury concept, we also signed up with international fashion brands like Fashion TV and Tonino Lamborghini Casa.

**Shaneer N Siddiqui : Before launching any project, what factors do you always keep in mind?**

**Rizwan Sajan :** Location, price, quality, and scalability. Danube Properties maintains a policy of launching one project at a time, selling it out, and then appointing a contractor to build the project, before launching the next one. This way we can focus on every project properly from concept design, approvals, commercial launch, selling out, construction, and delivery.

**Shaneer N Siddiqui : What is the business philosophy of Rizwan Sajan? What are the most important aspects of a company's culture? What principles do you believe in and how do you build this culture?**

**Rizwan Sajan :** I have always said that my people are my strength and the reason for our roaring success. That is why Danube focuses on employees and customers because, without them, there is no business. For

us, their satisfaction is everything. Ultimately that is how we came to expand our business into different sectors : to cater to the diverse needs of our customers. Teamwork, commitment, hard work, transparency, accountability, and integrity – are all key to the success of an organization.

**Shaneer N Siddiqui : When you started the company 30 years back, where did the name Danube come to mind and What was the idea to keep the company name on a river?**

**Rizwan Sajan :** Danube is the name of a river in Europe. It flows through the European heartland. As I have travelled a lot in Europe, I was fascinated by the Danube name. So, I named my business Danube – after the river Danube. As a name it stood and more people know the word Danube due to our business branding, than the actual river Danube.

**Shaneer N Siddiqui : Now the Danube is no longer a UAE company, you are expanding in Europe also, what are the future expansion plans?**

**Rizwan Sajan :** 112 Nationalities have invested with us so far at Danube Properties. We work with hotel partners and brands from all over the world in the Middle East and outside. Danube Home also expanded and opened stores in Bahrain and Qatar this year. This makes Danube a truly global brand.

Having said that, Danube Properties remains a Dubai-based and Dubai-focused international developer, and we believe that the opportunities here will keep us occupied for a considerable period.

Dubai remains a robust destination for global real estate investment due to various factors such as world-class infrastructure and a growth outlook. Despite experiencing significant growth in the last two years, the real estate market in Dubai is relatively one-third of the sky-rocketing prices in London, Singapore, Hong Kong, and to some extent, Mumbai.

**Shaneer N Siddiqui : You will always be an ideal story of rag to riches. What will you advise new entrepreneurs?**

**Rizwan Sajan :** Pick up a job that you like and enjoy doing – so that you are motivated to go to work every day. Develop professionalism in your work and consider yourself equal to others – expatriates who are working hard and follow good examples.

If you want to shine in private or any sector, work with others. The first step is being a team player, and then grooming to be

celebrities and all are now my friends. When they are in town, we happily meet and chat.

**Shaneer N Siddiqui : We have seen you closely, you have a beautiful family with close and distant relatives in Dubai. There were many cases in the past when the money came, it created a rift in families. What is your thought process and how are you carrying them together?**

**Rizwan Sajan :** Family is everything to me. Money is important – but



a team leader. Think and work like other colleagues, mix with them, and develop the necessary skills to upgrade yourself. Always remember, every day is a new day to learn!

**Shaneer N Siddiqui : In UAE, Bollywood is a synonym for Rizwan Sajan, is Mumbai still in your heart and Bollywood is connecting back to you with your hometown? Were you a fan of Hindi cinema since your childhood and who was your favourite actor and actress in those days?**

**Rizwan Sajan :** I grew up in Mumbai – the commercial capital of India and home to the world's largest film industry. I grew up with Hindi movies and music – that are part of my heart. Although I started my life struggle at an early stage, Hindi films and music continued to inspire me throughout my journey. To date, I am a fan of Bollywood. Over the years, I have friended many

not more than its utility. Money helps you buy things and manage your needs. Money should never be given more importance than a relationship – be it family or friends. Family, friendship, religion, society, passion, and your dreams are all way more important in life than money.

**Shaneer N Siddiqui : You are popular on social media also. How do you manage the time for shooting?**

**Rizwan Sajan :** I manage everything with good team players and transparent processes. You hire the people who are smarter than you and then you delegate. People and processes are very important, otherwise you can't manage growth and expansion. My people carry out business for the company. I guide them. I only step in when the team needs my guidance. Otherwise, I sign papers that department heads have approved.



||||| TRAVEL TRENDS |||||



# ATM 2024

## will showcase the latest trends in luxury travel as analysts predict a 7.7% CAGR for the global market until the end of the decade

The Middle East's luxury travel market is evolving rapidly, extending beyond opulent experiences to incorporate heritage, innovation and sustainability. Tourism experts from around the globe will shine a spotlight on the sub-theme of luxury at Arabian Travel Market (ATM) 2024, which will take place from Monday 6 to Thursday 9 May at Dubai World Trade Centre (DWTC).

**H**igh-spending travellers are willing to pay extra for experiences that do not detrimentally impact the communities or ecosystems in which they are located, according to YouGov's Global travel & tourism whitepaper 2023: Luxury travel post-pandemic. More than three-fifths (61%) of UAE residents say they are willing to pay a premium for responsible, eco-friendly and sustainable tourism experiences, demonstrating that consumers no longer see the luxury segment

as being limited to indulgence.

With brands such as Kerzner International's Atlantis The Palm, Mandarin Oriental Dubai (BVI) Limited, Jumeirah International LLC, Air Charter Service, Hyatt International, Mayfair Jets, Minor Hotel Group, Nirvana Holding, The Leading Hotels of the World and Desert Gate Tourism having already confirmed their attendance, ATM 2024 will welcome a diverse selection of luxury travel exhibitors from across the Middle East and beyond. The

exhibition will provide an ideal forum for attendees from every corner of the globe to explore the shifting landscape of luxury travel, including future trends and innovations, entrepreneurial drivers and opportunities for growth.

Danielle Curtis, Exhibition Director, Arabian Travel Market, said: "By incorporating luxury travel as a sub-theme at ATM 2024, we are aligning our event with the future of travel. This segment will act as a lens through which we can view not only extravagant experiences but also eco-conscious choices, cultural preservation, and cutting-edge technologies. ATM embodies a vision where indulgence harmonizes with ethics, setting a new standard for the travel industry."

The value of the global luxury travel sector stood at an estimated \$1.28 trillion in 2022, according to figures from Grand View Research. The market is expected to witness a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 7.7% during the period 2023-30. This upward trend is reflected in the Middle East, where the majority of respondents from both the UAE (74%) and KSA (69%) told researchers from Marriott Bonvoy that they were planning to spend more on their vacations in 2023 compared to previous years.

Innovation is also acting as a major driver within the luxury travel segment. Technologies such as virtual reality (VR) and augmented reality (AR) are revolutionising the way visitors preview destinations, hotels and activities before booking, while artificial intelligence (AI)

and big data are facilitating increasingly personalised recommendations, tailored experiences and anticipatory services for high-net-worth travellers.

“The Middle East has maintained and strengthened its reputation as a global hub for luxury tourism and travel over the past 12 months,” Curtis added. “It has been exciting to see this segment evolve throughout the region as national leaders have continued to invest in the development of luxury tourism infrastructure in a bid to drive economic diversification. ATM 2024 will provide an environment in which to examine these trends in greater detail, and I cannot wait to hear what valuable insights delegates have to offer.”

In line with its theme, ‘Empowering Innovation: Transforming Travel Through Entrepreneurship’, the 31st edition of ATM will once again host policymakers, industry leaders and travel professionals from across the Middle East and beyond, encouraging them to forge new relationships, exchange knowledge and identify innovations that can reshape the future of global travel and tourism. From startups to established brands, the upcoming show will highlight how innovators enhance customer experiences,

- ❑ Middle East’s luxury travel sector is evolving beyond opulence to embody responsible tourism – combining heritage, innovation and sustainability
- ❑ More than three-fifths (61%) of UAE residents say they are willing to pay a premium for more responsible, eco-friendly and sustainable tourism experiences
- ❑ Luxury travel will represent an important sub-theme at ATM 2024, which will see the global tourism community gather at Dubai World Trade Centre from 6-9 May

drive efficiencies, and accelerate progress towards a net-zero future for the industry.

Building on ATM 2023’s ‘Working Towards Net Zero’ theme, environmentally responsible travel will represent another key focus next year. Informed by the UAE’s Year of Sustainability and the 2023 United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP28), which will take place in Dubai from tomorrow 30 November, ATM 2024 will explore how innovation can be leveraged to help achieve the UN Sustainable Development



“

By incorporating luxury travel as a sub-theme at ATM 2024, we are aligning our event with the future of travel. This segment will act as a lens through which we can view not only extravagant experiences but also eco-conscious choices, cultural preservation, and cutting-edge technologies. ATM embodies a vision where indulgence harmonizes with ethics, setting a new standard for the travel industry.

**Danielle Curtis**

Exhibition Director, Arabian Travel Market

Goals (SDGs), creating a greener travel and tourism sector for future generations.

More than 40,000 travel trade professionals, including 30,000 visitors, attended the 30th edition of ATM in May 2023, setting a new show record. The exhibition attracted more than 2,100 exhibitors and representatives from over 155 countries, providing a global platform for unveiling ATM’s net-zero pledge.

Held in conjunction with Dubai World Trade Centre, ATM 2024’s strategic partners include Dubai’s Department of Economy and Tourism (DET), Destination Partner; Emirates, Official Airline Partner; IHG Hotels & Resorts, Official Hotel Partner; and Al Rais Travel, Official DMC Partner.



In an era marked by rapid technological advancements, global interconnectedness, and rising challenges posed by climate change and its impact on future generations, the outlook for healthcare is undergoing a paradigm shift. The link between climate change and its impact on healthcare is undeniable and we must integrate sustainability with innovation into core healthcare operations. It is also essential for the global healthcare systems to be ready not only to support the evolving needs of people but also to manage Black Swan events like the COVID-19 pandemic.

**Dr. Azad Moopen**  
Founder &  
Chairman,  
Aster DM Healthcare



**S**ustainable healthcare systems are a key requirement to reduce carbon footprint on the planet and to build capacity for emergency preparedness created by climate-related disasters. Healthcare systems around the world need to become energy efficient, transition to renewable energy, and ensure effective waste management. For this, stronger collaboration is needed between governments, policymakers, pharmaceutical & technology companies, and care providers, to together overcome the challenges that climate change presents. As the recently concluded COP 28 in UAE proved, there is enough evidence now to

Many of the diagnostic tests and radiological studies like MRI and CT scans are now being read by machines instead of people. Doctors are provided with able decision-making support systems which help in better diagnosis. Genomic studies have helped in the diagnosis and treatment of many of the diseases. Proactive rather than reactive medical practices are gaining center stage. Personalized instead of generalized treatment modalities are now gaining momentum.

#### **Focusing on patient-centricity**

The cornerstone of the future healthcare paradigm is patient-centricity. The industry

well-being.

#### **GCC – A region ripe with opportunities**

In UAE, the country's share of the population above the age of 65 is forecasted to increase to 4.4% by 2030, up from 1.1% at present, according to the World Bank. This is expected to stimulate increased demand for quaternary care and facilities providing advanced healthcare with experts, including geriatric care. The influx of population, changing dynamics, and the UAE government's focus on building the country as the hub for world-class medical tourism will bring in investments from the private sector and open opportunities

# Healthcare Trends in 2024

## Sustainability through Innovation is key to the future of healthcare

correlate climate change with harm to human health. As such it is imperative to build resilient healthcare systems capable of overcoming challenges and supporting sustainable measures.

At Aster, we stand committed to a transformative journey integrating sustainable practices into our operations across India and GCC which is now resulting in efficient use of renewable energy sources. Notably, the incorporation of 3,679,200 KWh of solar energy, 2,300,000 KWh of wind energy, and 3,569,298 KWh of hydro energy within the company resulted in a remarkable 6,824 tCO<sub>2</sub>e reduction in net greenhouse gas emissions. Such initiatives not only contribute to environmental well-being but also reflect a commitment to public health.

#### **Innovation in Healthcare**

Healthcare innovation is key for the future of healthcare. The impact of Artificial intelligence is creating ripples in the field.

is witnessing a shift towards personalized treatment plans, incorporating patient feedback into service development, and empowering individuals in their healthcare journey. The focus has evolved from a one-size-fits-all approach to a holistic model that ensures the well-being of both patients and the planet. Thus, the need for specialist care grows simultaneously, enabled by the integration of technology into the healthcare ecosystem. Patient-provider collaboration is key to staying connected with the needs and introducing solutions that people need. Integrated healthcare offering that combines primary to quaternary care supported by a seamless experience would be essential for providers to stay ahead of the curve.

As we consolidate our footprint in the GCC across physical and digital channels, we create and provide essential health services, preventive care, and health education, aligning with the growing focus on holistic

for digital tech solution providers, innovators, and experienced medical professionals.

Similarly, immense opportunities lay ahead for countries like Saudi Arabia, Oman, and Qatar as the region gears up to meet rising healthcare demands locally, without patients having to travel abroad to seek advanced care. KSA is expected to see massive growth and change in the healthcare sector, with the government focused on improving healthcare infrastructure as a part of its Vision 2030. There is huge potential for primary care operators to expand their network of standardized care and meet public demand. At Aster, with our commitment to expand our pharmacy network in the country, alongside adding capacity to serve more patients at Aster Sanad Hospital in Riyadh, we are looking forward to bringing our legacy of 36 years of clinical expertise and quality experience to serve the people of the Kingdom.

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## IPS 2024 ACTIVITIES



Our 11 activities are designed to provide a comprehensive and immersive experience for attendees, with some of these activities to be organized not just during the three-day run of the event but all year round to enable continuous engagement and knowledge exchange.

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## EVENT IN FOCUS

**A**rab Health 2024, the Middle East's largest healthcare event, officially sold out in November, over three months ahead of the exhibition start date, with a record number of international exhibitors taking to the show floor.

Arab Health, which takes place at the Dubai World Trade Centre from 29 January to 1 February 2024, will welcome over 40 international pavilions, which will not only see Serbia and Hong Kong make their debut at the event, it will also see Australia, Estonia, Italy and Indonesia increase the size of their pavilion exhibition space, ensuring an even greater number of exhibitors from those countries will be able to showcase their latest groundbreaking healthcare products and advances.

Ross Williams, Exhibition Director for Informa Markets,



Arab Health  
2023

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# ARAB HEALTH SELLS OUT as international exhibitors hit record levels

said: "Arab Health continues to underscore its popularity as a leading healthcare showcase by the sheer demand from the global healthcare industry to exhibit at the event. In the last 49 years, we have built an enviable position as the place where professionals from the industry can see the

latest innovations, hear from leading experts in a range of fields critical to the future of healthcare, and as a place to secure deals and do business.

"This year, we will once again provide a platform for the global healthcare market to meet in what will be our biggest show to date

with a truly international focus."

Other returning pavilions for the 2024 edition of Arab Health include India, Germany, New Zealand, South Korea, France, and the US, while Saudi Arabia and Egypt will be among the pavilions representing the MENA region.

In addition to the international attendance, a range of first-time exhibitors have also committed to the event, including Omani-based RAS Markaz, Indian company Innovation Imaging Technologies, and Almana Hospitals, the largest medical company and health care providers in the Eastern Province. They will be joined by leading UAE distribution company Pharmatrade and the UAE's Al Khayyat Investments, both of whom are exhibiting for the first time.

Several marquee exhibitors will also be on the show floor, with Siemens Healthcare, United Imaging, Philips, Olympus, Masimo, Jetro, and Emirates Healthcare Solutions showcasing their latest technology and services.

In line with the theme 'Connecting Minds, Transforming Healthcare', this year's show will focus on the future of healthcare and the game-changing technologies utilised

in the region and globally. This will be highlighted through the show floor being split into nine distinct sectors, including medical equipment and devices, disposable and consumer goods, orthopaedics and physiotherapy, IT systems and solutions, healthcare infrastructure and assets, wellness and prevention, imaging and diagnostics, healthcare and general services and healthcare transformation.

“This improves the quality of leads for exhibitors by generating targeted traffic and fast-tracking connections,” said Williams.

Additional new features this year exploring the future of healthcare include the Smart Hospital and Interoperability Zone and the UAE student-focused competition, Cre8, a one-day event that tasks participating UAE students to imagine, innovate and create a solution for a real-world healthcare problem using an imaginary budget of AED 100,000.

The invite-only Future Health Summit makes a return, bringing together global experts to achieve breakthroughs in reverse ageing and longevity. The Summit offers an unparalleled opportunity for senior government officials and healthcare CEOs to network and gain insights into the forthcoming groundbreaking advancements in the industry.

- ❑ Arab Health will this year welcome over 40 country pavilions, including Serbia and Hong Kong, who will make their debut at the 2024 edition of the event
- ❑ A total of 73 countries will be represented by exhibitors as Arab Health takes over the Dubai World Trade Centre, with a total of 25 halls occupied
- ❑ More than 110,000 healthcare professional visits are expected for the 49th edition of the show when it returns from 29 January to 1 February 2024

Other returning features include the Transformation Zone, which will feature a range of talks and presentations, the popular Innov8 competition and product showcases.

Medical professionals attending the exhibition will have access to 10 Continuing Medical Education (CME) conferences in the areas of total radiology, surgery, emergency medicine and critical care, diabetes, obstetrics and gynaecology, orthopaedics, quality management, public health, infection control and



Arab Health continues to underscore its popularity as a leading healthcare showcase by the sheer demand from the global healthcare industry to exhibit at the event. In the last 49 years, we have built an enviable position as the place where professionals from the industry can see the latest innovations, hear from leading experts in a range of fields critical to the future of healthcare, and as a place to secure deals and do business. This year, we will once again provide a platform for the global healthcare market to meet in what will be our biggest show to date with a truly international focus.

**Ross Williams**  
Exhibition Director for Informa Markets



Central Sterile Supply Department (CSSD).

This year will also see the introduction of a fee for visitors to attend, ensuring the continuation of meaningful business and learning opportunities. Entry will be free for everyone registering before January 4, 2024. Thereafter, the cost will be AED100 and AED200 for those registering onsite.

Arab Health 2024 will be supported by various government entities, including the UAE Ministry of Health and Prevention, the Government of Dubai, the Dubai Health Authority, the Department of Health, and the Dubai Healthcare City Authority. Key sponsors include Pure Health, American Hospital, Emirates Health Services and Dr Sulaiman Al Habib.



# Arab Plast

**strives to raise environmental consciousness and advocate for sustainability within the plastics and petrochemical sectors**

**Arab plast 2023 in Dubai witnessed the signing of agreements for petrochemical companies to establish projects that produce raw materials that serve the environment and sustainability goals, worth more than \$ 88 million.**

- ❑ Received 30,000 visitors and specialists within 3 days
- ❑ Arab plats conclude in Dubai with environmental projects worth \$ 88 million

conjunction with the Year of Sustainability in the UAE, noting that the exhibition was keen to motivate industry leaders by adopting circular practices that enhance efficiency and reduce environmental impact.

For his part, Rashid Moubayed, Director of Arabplast 2023, said that the exhibition in its 16th session witnessed the signing of many important agreements in the field of plastics and petrochemical industries, and the launch of mega projects that serve the goals of environmental protection and sustainability.

He added: "This year's edition was characterized by highlighting the latest developments in plastics and recycling technologies, modern machines that promote sustainability, and environmentally friendly products, such as bio-based plastics and renewable chemicals.

Rashid Moubayed said that the industry giants participating in the exhibition revealed a promising future for the plastics, recycling, petrochemicals, packaging and rubber sectors, as the global market is expected to witness strong growth in the coming years.

Environmental friendliness Eng. Khalid Khalifa Al Kaabi, CEO of Eco Polymers in the UAE, said on the sidelines of the

**A**rab Plast, one of the largest plastics and petrochemicals exhibitions in the Middle East and North Africa, continued its activities at the Dubai World Trade Center for Convention and Exhibition, where the exhibition attracted on its first day more than 8,000 visitors from around the world, an increase of about 10% over last year. The exhibition includes more than 11 international pavilions specialized in plastic, petrochemical and rubber industry technologies, with the participation of more than 750 Gulf, Arab and international companies.

Sheikh Hasher Al Maktoum, Chairman of Dubai Media Incorporated, inaugurated today the Arab Plast at the Dubai World Trade Centre. Conferences & Exhibitions The 16th edition of Arabplast, the largest plastics and petrochemicals exhibition in the Middle East and North Africa. In the presence of plastic industry giants from more than 35 Arab and foreign countries.

Participants in the exhibition predicted that the rate of plastic recycling in the Middle East will

increase by 9.3% by 2026.

Arab plast concluded its 16th edition at the Dubai World Trade Center on Friday, announcing the reception of more than 30,000 visitors, specialists and experts in the plastics and petrochemical industries over a period of 3 days.

The exhibition, which is the largest plastics and petrochemicals exhibition in the Middle East and North Africa, was attended by 750 international companies specialized in the plastics and petrochemicals sector from 35 countries, including Switzerland, Germany, Italy, India, China, Austria, Turkey and Saudi Arabia, while the volume of local companies participating this year increased to more than 40 companies.

Nidal Mohammed, General Manager of Al Fajr Information and Services Company, the organizer of the exhibition, said that the exhibition achieved great success in its 16th session, especially in highlighting sustainability in the plastics and petrochemical industries, and showcasing technologies for recycling and environmental protection, in



exhibition: “Our company was established in 2008 to support the plastics sector and we succeeded in obtaining an international agency for a special material from Britain, which converts plastic products into environmentally friendly products, and we have developed during the previous years remarkably and succeeded in exporting our exclusive environmentally friendly material to several countries such as Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Egypt, Yemen and others.

The plastic sector has proven its importance, especially in the Corona pandemic, because most products depend in their manufacture on plastic, such as bags, detergents and medical materials, and we are constantly working to convert ordinary plastic into environmentally friendly plastic, in order to preserve the environment and serve humanity at the same time.

Productivity levels  
Yasser Al-Dajani, Vice  
President of Marketing and  
Commercial Sector at Tasnee



The exhibition in its 16th session witnessed the signing of many important agreements in the field of plastics and petrochemical industries, and the launch of mega projects that serve the goals of environmental protection and sustainability. This year's edition was characterized by highlighting the latest developments in plastics and recycling technologies, modern machines that promote sustainability, and environmentally friendly products, such as bio-based plastics and renewable chemicals.

**Rashid Moubayed**  
Director Arabplast 2023

National Company, said: “We are one of the first petrochemical companies wholly owned by the Saudi private sector and one of the first companies to participate in Arabplast, and we are pleased to participate this year in the sustainable version of the event, pointing to the increase in the number of visitors and specialists and the partnerships that Tasnee has made on the first day of the exhibition. Despite the challenges faced by the market in the past years, Tasnee was able to maintain production levels, as Tasnee was able in 2019 to work at its production capacity by manufacturing about one and a half million to one million six hundred thousand tons of polymer products.

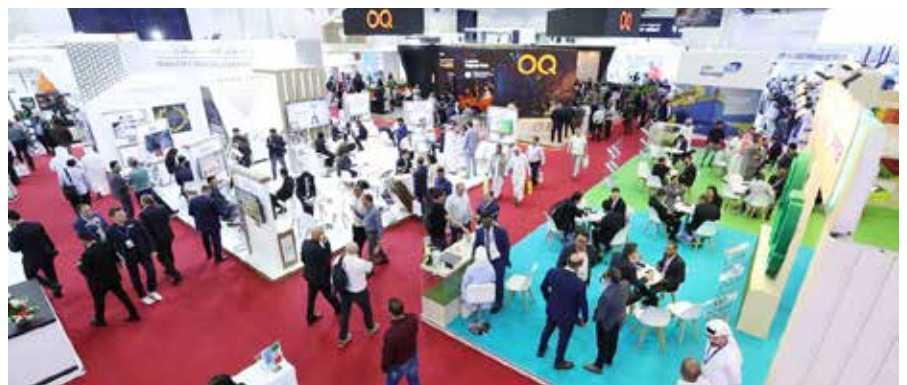
### Partnership

Petra Kalman, Director of Plastics and Rubber at Messe Düsseldorf, said: “We at the German Pavilion are delighted to be in Dubai again, which continues to develop and attract minds, expertise and creative trade exhibitions that enhance economic partnerships between countries and support various sectors, and we are proud to partner with the organizers of the exhibition this year, and I am happy that more than 40 leading German companies will participate in Arabplast this year's exhibition who are showcasing the future of the industry in environmentally friendly ways.

The event showcases a variety of products, technologies and solutions shaping the future of the plastic, petrochemicals and rubber sectors in the region, along with the most environmentally friendly technologies that go into these industries, and reveals cutting-edge technologies in plastics, recycling, petrochemicals and related industries.

Experts expect the petrochemical sector to grow significantly over the next five years to reach 2,031.6 by 2026, especially with about 1,158 plants becoming operational over the next nine years in both Asia and the Middle East.

It is noteworthy that 95% of the manufactured products are based on petrochemicals, including electronics, furniture, appliances, packaging and others, making them important elements that contribute to accelerating the pace of the economy in all countries of the world.



# Clarity in mind, Purity in heart, and Sincerity in approach can resolve any problem in the world

**GURUDEV SRI SRI RAVI SHANKAR**

Globally renowned humanitarian and spiritual leader, Gurudev Sri Sri Ravi Shankar, recognized for his unwavering commitment to causes like peace, environmental stewardship, meditation, and education, delivered a keynote address on the 9th of December 2023 during COP28 at the Faith Pavillion.

During his visit to COP28 in Dubai, Trade Fair Times Arabia's Consulting Editor, Shaneer N Siddiqui, got an opportunity to interview Gurudev Sri Sri Ravi Shankar.



**Shaneer NS :** Welcome to TFT Arabia, and thanks for talking to us. In COP28, all the top leaders and policymakers are gathered to protect the Earth. What is the role of a spiritual leader in COP28, and How a faith community be leveraged for organizers to protect the environment?

**Gurudev Sri Sri Ravi Shankar :** Ideas can be great, but when it comes to the implementation, the faith leaders who can motivate people, make them take it up, and do it accurately. It is the people's participation that makes anything successful. The faith-based organization and public all have to come together to achieve anything significant on the planet. In India for ages, we have always considered nature as a mother and it is part of our growth, so unless we care for the planet, we care for the five elements of nature.

**Shaneer NS :** When we are talking about long-term goals or any other development plans, the policymakers are sitting on the top, they are not aware of the gross root situation. It is always a lack of communication....How do you see this problem and the role of Art of Living?

**Gurudev Sri Sri Ravi Shankar :** Yes, we are very much with the grassroots people. Our work is all on the grassroots. We're not just creating an awareness of media campaigns. What we're doing is reaching out to farmers and training them how to take care of the water, take care of the land, to rejuvenate rivers, which are just on the revenue records, but there is no river and no water. We also trained them on what trees to plant to you know to preserve the groundwater in what happened during the Green Revolution. In India, what they did, they brought a lot of these trees, acacias and other trees which just suck the groundwater and don't give attract rain. So now we are replacing those trees with indigenous trees and the



Gurudev Sri Sri Ravi Shankar and Trade Fair Times Arabia's Consulting Editor, Shaneer N Siddiqui

trees which will attract birds which would attract you know the rain and also see that the groundwater levels are recharged, and we have rechargeable more than 1000 water bodies and 75 rivers in India. This has helped the farmers a lot and organic farming is another thing that helps to rejuvenate our depleted soil. This education needs to happen at the grassroots level and that's what we have been doing.

**Shaneer NS :** We are in the Middle East, and we have seen in the past, that the art of living played a significant role in bringing peace and happiness in Iraq and Syria after conflicts. Currently, another conflict is going on in this region if you get a chance to mediate and bring peace... Will you accept it and what will be your approach?

**Gurudev Sri Sri Ravi Shankar :** I am always ready for peace If someone invites me. Sometimes people ask me why I jump into this type of situation when there's a conflict. You know, what can we do? It's in our nature to either resolve the conflict or to bring peace. That continues for a generation that's come to help people to get rid of that and this work is happening based on volunteers, who have been so daring enough, to go to these regions and they do so much to bring them into the normal situation. They know the psyche of people

that heal them and bring them together.

**Shaneer NS :** We would love to know that magic, wherever you are intervening in Cambodia, either in the Middle East or in India. What techniques did you use, and what teachings were given to the revolutionaries? That they are ready to come for peace and love.

**Gurudev Sri Sri Ravi Shankar :** It's very simple. Clarity in mind, Purity in heart, and Sincerity in approach. That formula is always with us. Once you listen to everybody, understand their mindset and issues. If you listen to both sides, you will find both of them are right. Because there is a communication gap, we always try to find the common thread and bring them together and see how it could be resolved. Clarity,

**Shaneer NS :** You have said that "Diversity is what creates happiness and beauty in the world and that we are experiencing in UAE. If we try to eliminate diversity, then we are mistaken. We are then creating more conflicts." Could you explain it more for our audience, particularly in the context of south asia? As, anywhere in the world conflict starts with the idea of superiority only...

**Gurudev Sri Sri Ravi Shankar :** See if you observe nature, nature has diverse fauna and flora, but this nature loves diversity. Language is diverse and the whole world does not have one language. We have so many languages. So many types of food we use. So here similarly this could be faith and belief systems. Any differences should be honored, instead of just tolerating them. The word tolerates, I don't like it so much because you tolerate what you don't like, you don't appreciate. So, I would say we must learn to appreciate all the different cultures, traditions, and customs in the world. And that's what we are doing in the Art of Living, bringing everyone

together, giving the simple message that the world is one family.

Let me tell you, conflict doesn't come with superiority. If you ever feel superior, you don't care for the inferior. The conflict starts with the perceived threat, where you think that person is going to be a challenge to your existence. So, this perception of threat is erroneous. And when you think someone is out to get you, then you react in a way, or you act in a counterproductive way. So again here, a breakdown of communication, and perceived threat from the other person. Adamancy and illogical thinking are the main factors of conflict.

**Shaneer NS : In today's materialistic world, how spirituality can be relevant for human beings and especially for youths?**

**Gurudev Sri Sri Ravi Shankar :** Today youth are in big numbers, and they want to do something for their mental robustness, nowadays mental health is a very big issue. Youth today want to be relaxed, they want to get rid of anxiety and tension because it has become such a big epidemic in the region. We have that teaching program in 108 universities in America. In many places in India, schools and colleges have introduced yoga, breathing, and meditation.

**Shaneer NS : The darkest line on the globe is the division between East and West. How will you define Progress vs Renunciation (Pargati vs Tyag) or something else?**

**Gurudev Sri Sri Ravi Shankar :** Now the situation is changing. This is not so much with the younger generation. The younger generation is not so consumeristic in nature. They want to care for the planet they are not so rigid. Let me tell you they're more open except in some pockets where people are not given exposure to the whole world. Open-minded society has made it much easier to cross the boundaries between the north and south, east and west. It's all become now a sort of

“

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homogeneous society.

**Shaneer NS : When we are talking about cultural awakening, there is a debate that cultural awakening taking the population backward. How do we guard against that? How do we bring our cultural values in sync with modernity?**

**Gurudev Sri Sri Ravi Shankar :** Cultural awakening does not take one backward, fanaticism and religious thought take people backward or superiority think that I am superior and everybody else is inferior, this type of feeling can push you back until the dark ages. When we don't embrace the diversity of the world, we will

go backward to the days when people are fighting with each other.

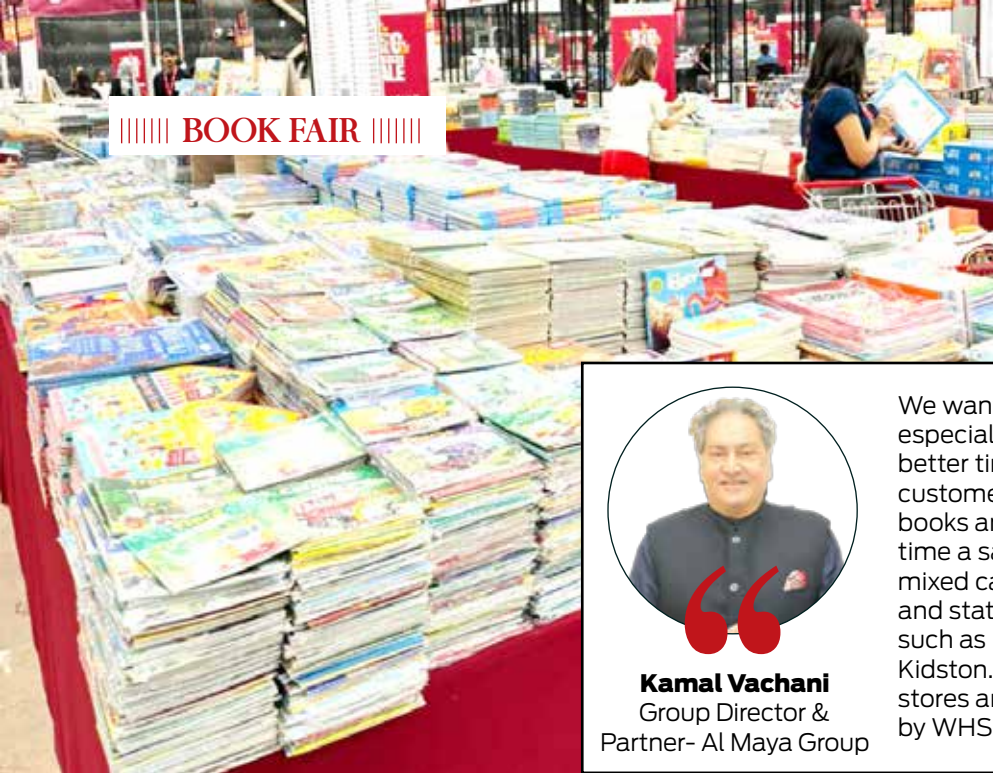
**Shaneer NS : Indian traditional practices like yoga and traditional medicines are in vogue in the West. It is a more commercialized and fashionable thing than its real essence.... How do you see this phenomenon?**

**Gurudev Sri Sri Ravi Shankar :** Yoga or meditation medicine cannot become a fashion. Even if it becomes a fashion, it doesn't matter, as long as everybody uses it for their physical and mental health. I am happy with it because ultimately we want people to be happy. We want people to be prosperous and the planet to be more sustainable.

**Shaneer NS : Culture and religion are an integral part of our lifestyle, but we have seen the good use and misuse of it around the world...What is your take and your message on it?**

**Gurudev Sri Sri Ravi Shankar :** lack of wisdom in life can create a conflict, whether it is domestic conflict or international. Post COVID domestic conflicts have tripled, conflict can be within the religion or between the religions. It can be between different ideologies. People follow the same religion, but not everybody is together. Same-religion followers carry separate identities. Here the main thing is stress. Stress is the enemy of mankind. If a person is free from stress, is happy. He will make every opportunity for progress. Always a good thing can be misused if you're stressed.





even signed WH Smith products from the UK. With discounts ranging from 25% to an impressive 75%, customers could expect substantial savings on popular items such as Barbie, Smiggle backpacks, Lego, Hot Wheels, and more.

Catering to a diverse audience,



**Kamal Vachani**  
Group Director &  
Partner- Al Maya Group

We wanted to do something different, and especially around the holiday season what better time than this to hold a sale and allow customers an experience to buy their favorite books and toys as festive gifts. This is the 1st time a sale at this scale has been held with mixed categories available such as books toys and stationery with big label brands included such as Lego., Smiggle, Paperchase, and Cath Kidston. For the future, we plan on growing our stores and recently have brought in CURIOCITY by WHSMITH to the UAE.

# Grand Shopping Spectacle The Epic 'Big Borders Book Fair'

**BORDERS, the iconic destination for literary enthusiasts, toy aficionados, and stationery connoisseurs, elevated the shopping experience with its much-anticipated "Big Borders Sale." Renowned for its extensive collection of books, toys, and stationery, Borders proudly announced its largest-ever sale event, promising patrons exclusive access to premium products with discounts of up to 75% on over 3 million branded items.**

the "Big Borders Sale" offered something for everyone, from newborns to older adults, ensuring a broad spectrum of products suitable for all age groups.

He also added that Borders had secured 50,000 square feet at Studio City to manage the large influx of eager shoppers, implementing comprehensive security measures to guarantee a safe and enjoyable shopping experience. The sale ran for 12 days, from 20th December to 31st December 2023, providing ample time for visitors to explore the vast array of discounted products.

Beyond shopping, Borders aimed to create a vibrant and engaging atmosphere reminiscent of a funfair. Surrounding the venue, visitors could indulge in culinary delights from food trucks featuring popular brands like Costa Coffee and Baskin Robbins. Additionally, families could enjoy a play area with a bouncy castle provided by Funky Monkey, offering a secure environment for children while their parents shopped.

Anticipating excitement and curiosity, Borders planned special appearances before and after the opening of the sale, encouraging attendees to stay tuned for updates and announcements on their social media channels.

The "Big Borders Sale" poised to redefine the shopping landscape, provided families and individuals an exceptional opportunity to acquire premium products at irresistible prices. The Borders Book Fair was an unforgettable shopping spree!

**V**ivek Bahirwani, Director at BORDERS, Al Maya Group, provided valuable insights into the significance of this extraordinary sale, emphasizing the unique opportunity it presented for customers to acquire top-quality products at unprecedented prices.

This monumental event, which he aptly named the "Big Borders Sale," marked a significant milestone for Borders as it unveiled a never-before-seen magnitude of offerings. Featuring over 3 million products, encompassing books, toys, and stationery, this sale showcased the finest products from acclaimed brands such as Smiggle, Paperchase, Cath Kidston,

Hallmark, and more, all at genuinely discounted prices.

Upon asking "Why has Borders decided to hold such a massive sale now?" Vivek responded that Borders had strategically timed this grand sale to coincide with the gifting season, aiming to provide loyal customers with an exclusive chance to purchase quality products at discounted rates. Recognizing that the joy of giving knows no bounds, Borders extended this opportunity to both new and existing customers as a gesture of appreciation.

The extensive range of discounted products included books, toys, stationery, Smiggle, Cath Kidston, Paperchase, Hallmark, and



# Middle East Welcomed the Inaugural Made-In-Anji Expo A Milestone in Green Home and Industry Collaboration

The inauguration of the first-ever Made-In-Anji Expo in the Middle East marked a leap in international cooperation and trade relations between Anji County and the United Arab Emirates. The exhibition was held from 11th December to 13th December 2023 at Sharjah Expo.

**T**he event, graced by the esteemed Magistrate of Anji County, unveiled a groundbreaking platform fostering exchange and collaboration between 18 green home enterprises, 8 tea and bamboo enterprises from Anji, and over 150 prominent overseas buyers.

During the opening ceremony, key dignitaries including Mr. Chen Zhicheng, Deputy Director General of Zhejiang Provincial Department of Commerce, H.E. Abdalla Sultan Al Owais, Chairman of Sharjah Chamber of Commerce and Industry, and Mr. Fu Haifei, Director of the Anji County Economic and Information Technology Bureau, highlighted the internationalization and globalization of Anji's furniture

industry. Mr. Haifei emphasized Anji's remarkable position as the largest office chair research and development production base worldwide, contributing significantly to China's market share and global exports.

The ceremonious occasion witnessed the signing of four Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs), solidifying strategic partnerships between Anji County and the UAE. These MOUs included collaborations between Anji County and SCCI, Anji Industrial Investment Group and MIE Groups, Henglin Home Furnishing and Danube & Mass

Vision, and KOHO & SSTAR representatives with AMFAH General Trading LLC.

The expo's concurrent conference, moderated by Ms. Eve Hester, assembled industry experts from furniture, interior design, and real estate, deliberating on various topics such as holistic design ecosystems, innovative furniture concepts, and the fusion of aesthetics and functionality in interior design for real estate projects.

Mark Ma – Sales Manager of LIANFENG, who participated in Made-In-Anji Expo, said that in



Anji, they knew the customer's requirements and changing patterns and trends of the market. Before products, their research and development team worked a lot on design, material, and production. They produced all types of furniture, including office and home setups. They did end-to-end production. While production in Made-In-Anji, they always took care of sustainability



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**Mark Ma**  
Sales Manager of LIANFENG

and nature.

In addition to the conference, the event hosted immersive workshops on Chinese tea culture and Bamboo Craftsmanship in Furniture Design.

The evening concluded in a Gala Dinner attended by government officials from Anji County, representatives from the Sharjah Chamber of Commerce, and esteemed international and local VIP buyers, bringing networking opportunities and celebrating the expo's successful commencement.

Anji County expressed heartfelt aspirations for the Made-In-Anji Furniture Expo to have sustained success, generating extensive orders, fostering enterprise growth, and expanding market opportunities. The expo extended a warm invitation to overseas and entrepreneurial communities to explore Anji, engage with enterprises, revel in its natural beauty, and together forge lasting partnerships.

The expo embodied Anji's belief that this collaborative endeavor would deepen and broaden the bond between Anji and the UAE, fostering enduring friendship and mutually beneficial cooperation.





Umm Al Quain, emphasised the UAE's proactive stance toward continual improvement in workplace safety, aiming to set new benchmarks globally and ensure the well-being of its diverse workforce.

Specific UAE laws and regulations dedicated to workplace safety, such as NCEMA 6000-2016, Federal Decree for Employment Relationship Law 33-2021, and Ministerial Decree 32-1982, illustrate an unwavering commitment to safeguarding employee welfare. Dr Hossni highlighted: "Businesses in the UAE prioritise adherence to safety regulations, integrating safety into corporate strategies, policies,

## The Intersec 2024 Safety & Health Conference: UAE is at the forefront of shaping workplace Health and Safety standards, setting global benchmarks

Updated workplace standards herald a new era of safety, sustainability, and proactive risk management across industries in the UAE. Experts from the UAE Ministry of Industry and Advanced Technology and ITALCO Aluminium highlight how safety strategies go hand in hand with daily work, adding value to businesses and saving human lives. The Intersec 2024 Safety & Health Conference will take place at the Dubai World Trade Centre (DWTC) from 16 – 18 January

The United Arab Emirates (UAE) is at the forefront of enhancing occupational and workplace health and safety standards, marking a significant step forward in the region's commitment to

fostering safer workplaces and sustainable industries. Speaking ahead of the Intersec 2024 Safety & Health Conference, taking place from 16 – 18 January at Dubai World Trade Centre (DWTC), Dr Waddah S. Ghanem Al Hashmi, Hon Chairman of the Energy Institute Middle East and Chairman, Federal Occupational Health and Safety Committee and HoD to the TC283 ISO 45001, highlighted that the UAE, along with the broader Middle East, has made substantial strides in developing frameworks and practices for Occupational Health and Safety (OHS).

Notably, sectors like energy, manufacturing, and aviation

showcase advanced systems, while others, like construction, are steadily improving. In December 2022, the Ministry of Industry and Advanced Technology released the voluntary UAE.S 5052:2022 standard, aligning with ISO 45001:2019 and focusing on governance and leadership's top management requirements. This standard aims to strengthen leadership engagement in OHS within organisations.

Dr Al Hashmi said: "These updated standards are expected to drive a shift from mere compliance to a culture of value creation and sustainability. Greater leadership involvement will elevate OHS performance and employee engagement and foster a reduction in incidents across industries. I believe this standard will eventually be adopted internationally, and I see positive thinking developing in the region." Meanwhile, also speaking ahead of Intersec 2024, Dr Hani Hossni, CEO, ITALCO Aluminium,

and daily operations, demonstrating a proactive approach to ensuring a safe work environment. "In addition to self-regulation, culture building, and reinforcement approaches, technological advancements, including AI-enabled safety inductions, drone usage, GIS/GPS systems, and engineering controls, play a pivotal role in preventing accidents and ensuring workplace safety."

Through an immersive two-day programme, the Safety & Health Conference will explore the latest trends, innovative solutions, and best practices that empower organisations to champion workplace safety and well-being. Other notable conference speakers include Dr Hadi Al Badi, HSE Director, Masdar; Salman Dawood, VP HSE and Sustainability, Emirates Global Aluminium (EGA); and Dr Naseem Mohammed Rafee, Director of Health & Safety Department, Dubai Municipality.



The event was timely, coming as it did on the heels of COP 28, where a landmark UAE 'Consensus on Climate Change' was adopted by nearly 200 countries. Extending this to the retail sector was important, and indeed essential, as this was the sector that saw the most interaction between us as consumers and the millions of products and services that The Indian Business and Professional Council hosted its

retail. Special Guest of Honor, H.E. Dr. Mohammed Al Kindi, former UAE Minister of Environment and Water, addressed how Digital transformation empowered retailers not only to optimize operations but also to champion sustainable practices that resonated with conscious consumers; it was a commitment to leveraging digital advancements for a greener, more responsible industry going forward.

# IBPC Retail Conclave Dubai Paved the Path for Sustainable Retail in the Digital Era

signature event, Retail Conclave 2023, at the Anantara Hotel Downtown on Thursday, 14 December 2023. The topic of the event was Digital Transformation and Sustainability in Retail. It was sought daily. No other sector came close, and that underlined the importance of sustainability in retail.

Suresh Kumar, Chairman IBPC, welcomed the gathering and in his keynote address narrated about digital transformation where sustainability was no longer simply an option; it was a strategic imperative for retail success.

H.E. Shri Satish Kumar Sivan, Consul General of India in Dubai, addressed the conclave by emphasizing the intersection of digital innovation and sustainability that would determine the future of

The Event was curated by the Retail and ecommerce focus group of IBPC Dubai, led by Dr. Sahitya Chaturvedi along with Shajan Abraham and Gautam Sengupta that acknowledged a significant representation of thought leaders of Retail, Supply Chain, Technology, Banks, Finance, and government sectors of India and UAE.

Representing the Indian diaspora, IBPC Dubai honored Dubai customs represented by H.E. Ahmed Mahboob Musabih, Director General of Dubai Customs, CEO of Ports, Customs and Free Zone Corporation for Retail Facilitation in all the aspects of doing business in Dubai.

Thanking for the honor, Director General of Dubai customs mentioned the digital developments and benchmarking

the quick and timely processing systems for ease of business. HE Ahmed Mahboob attended the full session and appreciated the panel discussion moderated by Dr. Sahitya Chaturvedi, the convener of IBPC and Accounts head of Ajmal Perfumes.

The conclave awarded the retail recognitions to the next-gen CEO of Ajmal Perfumes Group, Abdulla Ajmal, Chairman of the famous jewelry brand Joy Alukkas, and the director of LULU GROUP INTERNATIONAL for their pathbreaking work in the retail sector.

Presenting the socio-economic facts and digital transformation, Dr. Sahitya mentioned the statistics that 83% of UAE consumers were more likely to shop with retailers that use technology to improve the customer experience; he further highlighted the growth contribution of Dubai in the entire GCC and opportunities unveiled by D33, the vision of doubling the size of Dubai economy to AED 32 trillion with the growth drivers of the digital economy and going green and sustainable.

A panel discussion with very high senior officials from the retail industry, including Vikas Chadha, CEO, Jumbo Electronics; Rajiv Warrier, CEO, T Choithram & Sons; MVK Vijaykumar, Director for Digital Transformation at EY; Joseph Eapen, MEA Head at Asian Paints; Ashish Panjabi, COO, Jacky's Electronics; Prateek Vahie, Chief Commercial Officer of WIO Bank who shed light on the challenges and benefits to organizations from their involvement in digital transformation, and also on imperatives and progress on sustainability in retail. A panel moderated by Dr. Sahitya Chaturvedi, IBPC Convener for Retail and eCommerce. The meeting concluded with a vote of thanks by Gautam Sen Gupta, member of the Organizing Committee, expressing gratitude for the participation of speakers, panelists, the audience, and sponsors of the event. IBPC conducted over 70 events in 2023. This retail conclave promised to be a fitting final event as they approached the new year, informative, educative, and essential.

# Masdar City Square Masdar City

THE BIG SHOW



## Recording the highest number of visitors ever Big 5 Global welcomes over 81,000 construction professionals from 166 countries in its 44th year

The 44th edition of Big 5 Global, the largest and the most influential construction event concluded in Dubai, recording a staggering attendance of over 81,000 high-quality visitors from 166 countries for four days from 4 to 7 December 2023 at the Dubai World Trade Centre.

“This year Big 5 Global surpassed expectations, attracting the highest ever number of construction professionals from various corners of the world, fostering an environment conducive to sharing expertise, developing global partnerships and showcasing new advancements in construction technology and practices,” said Josine Heijmans, Vice President – Construction at dmg events, the organizers of Big 5 Global.

“This milestone reaffirms our commitment to delivering

unparalleled value to our attendees, exhibitors and partners, who are looking to engage in business activities in the MEASA region’s construction landscape.”

### Partnerships and launches draw attention

Bringing together the biggest names in construction in Dubai for four days, Big 5 Global served as a hub for major deals and partnerships, further solidifying the importance of exhibitions in facilitating strong business relations.

- Big 5 Global serves as a hub for major deals and partnerships as Abu Dhabi Airport Free Zone sign 29-year Musataha Agreement for multi-million-dollar project
- Prominent exhibitor secures diverse country distribution deal, confirms their presence for 2024 on the spot, capitalizing on the success of this year’s edition
- 130+ CPD-certified Big 5 Talks remind on the urgent need for the industry to improve the efficiency of materials to reduce the impact of climate change



In one such partnership, Abu Dhabi Airport Free Zone (ADAFZ), an exhibitor at Big 5 Global, signed a deal with Grand Move, to develop a \$17.8mn (AED65.3mn) community mall spanning 35,000m2 in the new Al Falah district. The project's masterplan includes a hypermarket featuring a medical centre and a sports club and other retail and F&B facilities. Maureen Bannerman, Chief Commercial Officer, Abu Dhabi Airports, stated: "We are pleased to announce this Musataha Agreement will contribute to the development of the new Al Falah district, bringing communities together."

Another exhibitor, Floors & Walls secured distribution partners for their brands, namely Richmond and Sintrich, in India, Syria, Iraq and Saudi Arabia. The distribution deals will yield in more than \$20mn annually. "We are so pleased to have exhibited at Big 5 Global this year and have already booked our stand for the 2024 edition," said Valy Ossman, CEO, Floors & Walls.

In addition to new partnerships, this year the event also witnessed many product launches. UAE-based United Motors & Heavy Equipment Company launched three Wacker Neuson Zero Emission products including ACBe modular battery-powered internal vibrator,



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**Josine Heijmans**  
Vice President – Construction  
at dmg events

battery-powered vibratory plates which redefine sustainability and efficiency in construction.

Launching in the UAE for the first time through the event was the RD8200 SG, a survey grade mapping and utility locator by Radiodetection (a Partner of

SIGMA Enterprises, a Big 5 Global exhibitor).

### Retrospection of key features at Big 5 Global

During the four days, Big 5 Global became an important platform for thought leaders, innovators, decision makers and construction enthusiasts to discuss the future of the sector. A series of insightful dialogues and discussions took shape at the Big 5 Global Leaders' Summit where the industry's call for transforming the construction blueprint was addressed.

Also at the event, speakers at the Big 5 FutureTech Summit highlighted critical dialogues on future-proofing the sector for a tech-enabled future. The content programme at Big 5 Global also hosted a day of conversations around the impact of artificial intelligence on design and architecture at Everything Architecture.

Supported by the Dubai Chamber of Digital Economy (DCDE), construction innovation also came to life at Start-up City, where the pitch competition crowned winners for their pivotal role in reshaping traditional practices in the sector. Saeed Al Gergawi, Vice President of DCDE, commented: "Start-up City creates a valuable platform for engagement that brings together emerging industry players to showcase their innovative



in improving our industry by deepening collaboration as individuals and companies.”

Building on support and collaboration from public and private sectors

As it concluded this year Big 5 Global was supported by main Supporting partner the Ministry of Energy & Infrastructure; Supporting Partners Dubai Municipality and Dubai Civil Defense; Platinum Sponsor, Saudi Export Development Authority (SEDA); Gold Sponsor, NG Khutaya; Windows Doors & Facades Event Diamond Sponsor, Schüco Middle East; Windows Doors & Facades Event Platinum Sponsor, Alumil Middle East; Windows Doors & Facades Event Gold Sponsor, Sykon; Silver Sponsors, ECE Marble, Italian Trade Agency and Fresh; Sustainable Development Sponsor, Dubai Investment Park; and Bronze Sponsors, Al Waseef, Rubber World and RAK Bank.

“We’re already anticipating next year’s Big 5 Global, bringing together regional and international exhibitors from 26 – 29 November 2024 to facilitate business activities and foster partnerships in the MEASA region’s construction landscape. As our portfolio expands at the Dubai World Trade Centre, we’ll soon be unveiling some exciting announcements for the event,” concluded Heijmans.

ideas and shape the future of construction. The chamber’s support for this timely event comes as part of our drive to nurture promising technology companies and advance the emirate’s digital transformation agenda. We remain committed to cementing Dubai’s position as a leading global hub for the digital economy in line with the goals of the Dubai Economic Agenda (D33).”

In-depth CPD-certified Big 5 Talks inspire attendees

Covering a broad range of pertinent topics across 130+ CPD-certified Big 5 Talks were held under ten streams including concrete, facades, facilities management, geotechnical, HVAC & MEP, offsite & modular, project management, solar, technology and urban design & landscape. Speakers highlighted

technology adoption, sustainable building methods, geothermal energy adoption and urgent industry needs to efficiently improve materials to reduce the impact of climate change.

“We all know about the climate emergency; we need to be able to make good material selections to reduce the impact. And for all of this, digital tools are going to be very helpful,” said Belarmino Cordero, Managing Director of Eumada, who spoke at Facade Talks.

Echoing the common sentiment on the adoption of BIM at the Technology Talks, Dr. Ing. Ali Ismail, BIM expert at Dubai Municipality, noted: “We do our best to build a community, an interesting group of people and companies who believe in the value of using open BIM standards and believe



# 5th Global Gold Convention Helped UAE Emerge as Global Hub for Sustainable Gold and Bullion Market

**The UAE emerged as the global hub for sustainable gold and bullion markets with the 5th Global Gold Convention bringing the global gold industry onto a single platform for collaborations, investments, joint ventures, and a novel integrated trade flow system with global best practices.**

**T**he 5th edition of the Global Gold Convention 2023, the world's largest hybrid gold conference, was held in Dubai at Armani Hotel, Burj Khalifa, on December 12, 2023, with the theme "UAE, The Global Hub for Sustainable Gold and Bullion Markets". UNDRR (UN Office for Disaster Risk Reduction) was the Sustainability Partner.

The Convention, designed as the world's largest hybrid conference, saw participation by more than 100 countries, ministers, diplomats, regulators, industry leaders, mines, refineries, jewelers, traders, import-export companies, banking, insurance, and logistics companies from across the world, paving the way for collaborations, business promotion, expansion, and diversification.

More than 200 trade delegates and visitors participated physically, apart from virtual participations from 100+ countries in the most sought-after exclusive Global Gold Conference from the region.

Global Gold Convention was organized by IBMC International, UAE-based Economic, Industry & Corporate Advisors, and

eMarketplace Service Providers, which is connected with 100+ countries and integrated with 30+ Sectors.

The event was inaugurated by HE Humaid Ben Salem, Chairman of the International Chamber of Commerce & Industry (ICC UAE) and Secretary-General, Federation of UAE Chambers of Commerce & Industry (UAE Chambers).

The Convention was held in the backdrop of high volatility in global gold prices and the UAE becoming the most attractive and most preferred global gold trade hub.

The theme Sustainability has been chosen in line with the UAE hosting the COP28 Conference on Sustainability," said Mr.

Sajith Kumar PK, Group CEO and Managing Director, IBMC International Group.

In his address, Sajith Kumar said the "UAE is emerging as the Global Hub for Sustainable Gold and Bullion Markets, and IBMC's "Industries Integrated International Trade Flow System" is set to support the entire Gold Industry stakeholders from Gold Mining, Exports, Imports, Refineries, Gold Retail Markets, Jewelry Manufacturing Units, and Re-exports."

Jeffrey Rhodes, industry expert and Founder & Managing Consultants, Rhodes Precious Metals Consultancy DMCC, who delivered the special industry address on COP28UAE, said: "The Global Gold Convention 2023 was an excellent event that gave participants the opportunity to express a wide range of views and opinions about the bullion market, including the impact of COP28 on the global gold industry. This included the efforts being made by many companies, including Gold Clean Processing Initiatives, to turn the ecological tide and help push the artisanal and small-scale gold sector in the right carbon-neutral direction with new technology to eliminate the use of toxic chemicals such as mercury in the gold recovery process while dramatically improving gold yields."

The Convention offered the participants a comprehensive platform to showcase the entire gamut of gold trade and business and explore potential investment and partnership opportunities through networking, interactive sessions, and industry-focused panel discussions.



The 17th Dubai International Food Safety Conference ends with new measures for achieving

# Food security for the world

The 17th edition of the Dubai International Food Safety Conference, organized by Dubai Municipality, at the Dubai World Trade Center (DWTC) under the theme 'Impact of Climate Change on Food Safety.' The event, which ran from 11th December to 13th December 2023, convened over 3,000 industry experts, academics, research institutions, local, regional, and international companies, and organizations to disseminate experiences, knowledge innovations, and shed light on the recent trends in the realm of food safety and security.

**D**uring the event, more than 140 speakers indulged in discussions highlighting the remarkable link between climate change and food security, highlighting the challenges that would impact the global food systems and security. Furthermore, the speakers explored potential solutions through over 80 dedicated workshops, seminars, and working sessions. The event also exhibited best practices, laboratory tests, and artificial intelligence (AI) and data science technologies currently employed in this key sector across the globe.

Dubai Municipality's involvement in organizing the

17th edition of the Conference came in alignment with its active participation in the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP28) as a strategic partner. The collaboration between the two parties led the Municipality to launch a wide array of outstanding projects that further accelerated initiatives focusing on climate action as well as food safety. During COP28, the Dubai Municipality spearheaded efforts to meet safety standards, including ensuring food safety, overseeing food delivery, preparation, and serving at all venues, as well as collecting food samples for testing in laboratories.

H.E. Dawoud Al Hajri, Director

General of Dubai Municipality, remarked the Dubai International Food Safety Conference as a key global event that aligns with the ambitious vision of the UAE to ensure the foremost position in the Global Food Security Index by 2051. He also noted the country's relentless efforts to support global food security, underscoring the Municipality's key initiatives to establish a sustainable environmental, health and food system, along with promoting the sustainability of the food industry by guaranteeing a flexible supply chain, eco-friendly and safe food system adhering to the international safety standards. This commitment seeks to offer the topmost health and food safety benchmarks, ensuring



food security and self-sufficiency, thus elevating the quality of life in the Emirates in alignment with the goals set by the National Food Security Strategy 2051 and the Dubai Food Security Strategy.

H.E. Al Hajri said: "The 17th edition of the Conference held under the theme 'Impact of Climate Change on Food Safety' offered a dynamic platform to address the key issues and challenges revolving around food safety and global food security. It included the key impact of climate change on food systems and their sustainability. The event sought to act as a key driver in the efforts to transition to the path of solutions and treatments, in alignment with COP28, which being held at Expo City Dubai, UAE."

H.E. Al Hajri stated, "The conference supported the UAE's goal of becoming a global leader in the Global Food Security Index by 2051, demonstrating the municipality's efforts to create



We are invited by Dubai Municipality where we talked about the food security in flood-prone areas. We discussed ready-to-eat foods during the natural disaster and harsh conditions. I will congratulate to Dubai Municipality, where the experts from all over the world were gathered at one platform to discuss the issue of food security with different perspectives.

**Professor**

**Dr. Aijaz Hussain Soomro**

Director of the Institute of Food Sciences and Technology – Sindh Agriculture University Tandojam

a sustainable environment and food system in the Emirate of Dubai. We sought to establish a common platform to seamlessly transition towards a stage of problem-solving and addressing the challenges that impact food safety and global food security, with a focus on those related to climate change."

In addition, H.E. explained that the Conference exhibited the unwavering dedication of Dubai and the UAE to embrace sustainable food systems and its constant efforts to encourage more global collaborations and cooperation towards finding a common solution to mitigate the food safety challenges linked to climate change.

**Participation of an exclusive group of regional and international organizations**

The Conference convened a selected group of local, regional, and international organizations to shed light on the critical climate



Pakistan present her research during the food security conference. She talked about the pesticide cleaning from bitter melon, which is a unique idea to clean the pesticide from a commonly use vegetable. As pesticides are one of the biggest threat to food security, to use detergent is a unique idea for the experts.

**Dr. Aasia Akbar Panhwar**

Institute of Food Sciences and Technology – Sindh Agriculture University Tandojam

change challenges in the field of food security, sustainability, and food safety. The lineup of notable participants in the event included the Ministry of Industry and Advanced Technology, Abu Dhabi Agriculture and Food Safety Authority (ADAFSA), the Gulf Standardization Organization (GSO), the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), the Global Food Safety Initiative (GFSI), the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), the International Association for Food Protection (IAFP), the International Commission on Microbiological Specifications for Foods (ICMSF), the Codex Alimentarius Commission, and Campden Laboratories (Campden BRI). This year the conference featured 12 sponsors and 37 exhibitors from across the globe.

**Discussion panels and dialogues**

The Conference witnessed active participation of experts, specialists, and organizations who showcased the latest developments and research in the area of food safety



event also featured speakers who are experts and specialists in the fields of public health and safety.

### DM Food Elite

Dubai Municipality also launched the 'DM Food Elite' initiative, which is curated to identify the remarkable organization in the food industry that adheres to the food safety and nutrition standards, environmental sustainability, social responsibility, innovation, and digitalization throughout its operations. The initiative comes in line with the sustainability efforts of the UAE and Dubai Municipality's strategic framework for creating a sustainable food system, guaranteeing the safety and sustainability of food systems, and improving Dubai's sustainability commitment every day.

During the concluding day of the conference, Dubai Municipality organized several discussion sessions and workshops focusing on public and occupational health and safety, water health, quality and safety, indoor air quality, and consumer product safety. The event also featured speakers who are experts and specialists in the fields of public health and safety.

Over the past 16 years, the Dubai International Food Safety Conference has achieved remarkable success reinforcing its position as a global platform for exchanging experiences, knowledge, and innovations. The conference has been focused on addressing the challenges faced in the food sector, food safety, supply chains, and the global variables impacting this vital industry.

**TFTANN**

and security. In addition, the participants shared the best practices present in the sector that improve food safety concepts and techniques for attaining sustainable development goals and ensuring global food security. Furthermore, the event featured panel discussions highlighting Dubai's key role as a global hub for trade and innovation, promoting international collaborations, disseminating best practices and investing to develop sustainable technologies. There were also sessions underscoring the relevance of food security and restructuring the food trade system as well as for the International Association for Food Protection. The agenda of the three-day event highlighted the contributions of home-grown meat in ensuring a balance between innovation and food safety, as well as for bringing down the ecological footprint of conventional meat production practices.

actually So I you can say about your participation in we this are using in our home conception besties so diabetic horizon exhibition touch detergent important washing crop so detergent from and the what in plane it's patient the which bring washing not so most the I and we team sunrise with use sarazi I the common for is have in Pakistan it's clothes balancing very cleaning duramaul have different to it have what treatment is explain to again from soak bestie with usual to for the road in the and washing the additional removed 5 that suitable the useful vitalga method salt treatment for and this and the minute best most

which chart treatment of then is the that after most for we that the removal'said so the edible we his portion have we to processing dehydrate so wash wash and it's a different The aint we have to frighten the most of the useful in my diplomatic protocol for the layman treatment deliver the knowledge I statement have for done which findings a the are for about not pain the the little fast that detergent the publication giant on educated washing fed wash pesticide is residue with unaware fried removal layman farmers rule language and treatment about edible of the pesticide English users the portion in so of the petrol I guide 99.16% topic the from this this remove my pasty is the side PhD from and a the as well like as I have have a a bad home females that And I have applied for the presentation but they have given me charge for the yeah

During the concluding day of the conference, Dubai Municipality organized several discussion sessions and workshops focusing on public and occupational health and safety, water health, quality and safety, indoor air quality, and consumer product safety. The





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## EVENTS AT DWTC

### Gulf Pack & Gulf Print

9 - 12 JAN 2024

SHEIKH SAEED HALL 1 - 2

Organised By: F&E

The leading exhibition for commercial and package printing in the MENA region, Gulf Print & Pack 2024 will be a buyer's delight, with the latest machinery, materials and software all set to be showcased.

### Light + Intelligent Building Middle East

16 - 18 JAN 2024

ZA'ABEEL HALL 2 - 3

Organised By: Messe Frankfurt Middle East

This year, MENA's premier event for lighting and building technology will shine the spotlight on a theme designed to resonate with these times:

### Japan Kyoto Trade Exhibition

22 - 24 JAN 2024

HALL 6

Organised By: Maico Enterprise

Japan Kyoto Trade Exhibition acts as the ultimate hub for both corporations and individuals to explore opportunities within Japan's diverse industries.

### Dubai International Pharmaceuticals and Technologies Conference and Exhibition - DUPHAT

9 - 11 JAN 2024

HALL 2 - 8,  
SHEIKH MAKTOUM HALL

Organised By: INDEX  
Conferences & Exhibitions  
Organisation

Now established for 28 years, DUPHAT continues to play a central role in the growth and success of MENA's pharmaceutical industry, acting as its leading educational and networking platform. And – as regional government healthcare policies continue to innovate – it is an increasingly essential diary date for C-level executives.

### IFX Exhibition

17 - 18 JAN 2024

ZA'ABEEL HALL 5 - 6

Organised By:  
Ultimate Events

The world's first and largest financial B2B exhibition, iFX has been uniting MENA's online trading, financial services, cryptocurrency and fintech professionals for over a decade.

### Intersec Exhibition

16 - 18 JAN 2024

SHEIKH MAKTOUM HALL

Organised By: Messe Frankfurt  
Middle East

The world's leading event for emergency services, security and safety, 2024 marks a milestone 25 years of Intersec in this region.

### World of Coffee - Specialty Coffee Association 2024

21 - 23 JAN 2024

ZA'ABEEL HALL 4 - 6

Organised By: DXB Live

Following the success of its inaugural event in 2022, the Specialty Coffee Association is now proactively growing this trade show into the region's premier event – ideal both for those working in the UAE's coffee sector, and for those looking to access its growing commercial potential.

### Arab Health Exhibition & Congress

29 JAN - 1 FEB 2024

EXHIBITION PLAZA, HALL 1 - 8,  
SHEIKH MAKTOUM HALL,  
SHEIKH RASHID HALL,  
SHEIKH SAEED HALL 1 - 3,  
TRADE CENTRE ARENA,  
ZA'ABEEL HALL 1 - 6

Organised By: Informa Middle East

# Expo Centre Sharjah Events Calendar 2024



**Arab Rubber Expo**  
08-09 January 2024  
Expo Centre Sharjah



**STEELFAB**  
08-11 January 2024  
Expo Centre Sharjah



**ACRES REAL ESTATE EXHIBITION - SHARJAH**  
17-20 JANUARY 2024  
SHARJAH EXPO CENTRE



**53rd Watch & Jewellery MIDDLE EAST SHOW**  
31Jan - 04 Feb 2024  
SHARJAH EXPO CENTRE



**XPOSURE**  
28 FEBRUARY - 5 MARCH 2024  
SHARJAH EXPO CENTRE



**Ramadan Nights**  
21 March - 10 April 2024  
SHARJAH EXPO CENTRE



**UAE School & Nursery Show**  
18- 20 April 2024  
Expo Centre Sharjah



**Sharjah Children's Reading Festival**  
01 - 12 May 2024  
Expo Centre Sharjah



**Expo Culinaire**  
20-22 May 2024  
Expo Centre Sharjah



**Hive Furniture Show**  
21 -23 May 2024  
Expo Centre Sharjah



**UAE China Tyres Show**  
27-29 May 2024  
Expo Centre Sharjah



**Jewels of Emirates Show**  
30 May - 02 June 2024  
Expo Centre Sharjah



**International Govn Communication Forum - IGC**  
16 - 17 September 2024  
Expo Centre Sharjah



**54th Watch & Jewellery MIDDLE EAST SHOW**  
25 - 29 September 2024  
Expo Centre Sharjah




**Emirates Perfumes And Oud Exhibition**  
04-13 October 2024  
Expo Centre Sharjah



**International Education Show**  
09 - 12 October 2024  
Expo Centre Sharjah



**National Career Exhibition**  
15 - 17 October 2024  
Expo Centre Sharjah



**Sharjah International Book Fair**  
06 - 17 November 2024  
Expo Centre Sharjah



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