

Dubai Internet City: A Vision with New Millennium Business Model

by Ahmed Salman

DUBAI Internet City Stand was relatively quiet in comparison to other well-branded ones at Gitex'99. Because it is simply a new concept to people what might not be understood at first glance. But taking a closer look, it is a surprising realisation that a Titanic vision is coming to light!

This writing ventures to highlight some key strategic issues of Dubai Internet City, which are to be analysed carefully to make the gigantic vision materialise successfully.

It goes without saying that Fortune 500 companies should be targeted first to make it globally attractive. Their acceptance and co-operation will help a lot. All major blue chip companies and big consultancy groups can be approached on one to one basis to seek co-operation. Special conference can be convened for their involvement, support and advice.

Major critical success fac-

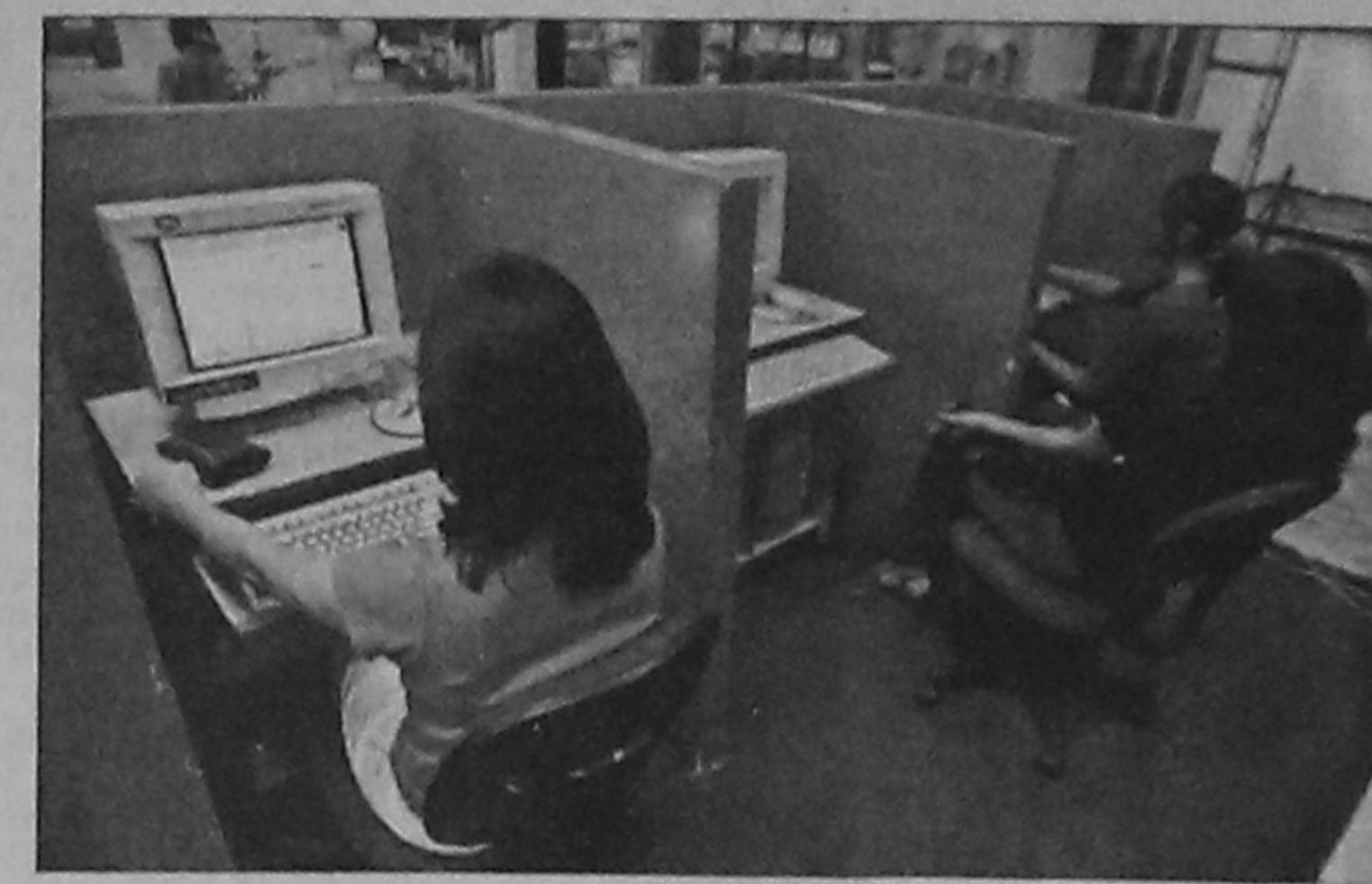
tors have already been identified and emphasised — Strategic Location, Tax Free Environment, Research and Development, Education Backup, Infrastructure, 100% Foreign Ownership, 0% Problem promised regarding Government Clearness. Including those pertaining to trade license and work permit, World Class Logistics and other facilities that a modern city should have on offer.

Preemptive core competencies must be identified and nurtured. One might find it useful to analyse Silicon Valley, Bangalore, Hyderabad etc. for developing deep insight into reasons behind the success of such big projects. E-business means much more than just software industry and that is why Dubai Internet City project is more complex and has wider implications. Singapore Trade Net can also be analysed to identify the cohesive roles of Government, Business Com-

munities and Public with particular focus on outsourcing policy to avoid risk and bestowing much bargaining power upon strategic partners. One can learn valuable lessons from Hong Kong Trade Net in terms of not achieving its target.

E-marketing to build up e-branding and strategic alliance with most often visited websites will help them considerably. Strategic alliance with airlines that cover world's most significant routes for business can be taken into account for advertising. Venture capitalist will be out there and Netpreneurs or Inpreneurs can be attracted substantially with successful e-marketing.

Bill Gates says that companies and organisations must put the net right at the centre of their strategic plan. E-business is heading towards convergence; it means cross industry customer / supplier relationship where Supply Chain Man-



Users log in at an internet kiosk.

agement, Enterprise Resource Planning and Customer Relationship Management (putting in a simple way) will work together cohesively to integrate e-commerce system with back office. The focus will be upon cus-

tomers and scalability as critical success factors. Time and cost of integration is a big issue where few Gulf companies even have proper ERP system, the platform from which integration with e-commerce system is

easier. That can be a big threat to local companies and since E-business is an inevitable event not an option, companies will face serious trouble. Dubai Internet City will have to do a lot to tackle the problem. But companies who are in Jebel Ali Free Zone will have good advantage for mass training in e-commerce for local companies or should there be government policy to standardise and align all training centres and other educational institutions to provide mass training?

Dubai Internet City

consultancy group can help local companies in redesigning business processes, aligning e-commerce strategy and corporate one, managing business process change, building learning organisation and training new skills. The major reasons behind e-commerce project failure in western world are the incoherence between e-commerce strategy and corporate strategy and the project managers who have business background but not proper IT knowledge or vice versa. That is why consultants should have hybrid skills—sound knowledge and expertise in Business as well as in IT. But hybrid professionals are not abundant as survey predicts that there will be shortage of 10,000 hybrid managers in UK alone by 2000.

Therefore, attracting world-class talents and retaining them will be challenging. If people are paid rather low in Gulf in comparison to western world that must be handled properly.

Besides, India, China, Philippines, Mexico are entering into software industry as powerful country with low cost advantage and they might emerge as rival countries in E-business as well. But Dubai Internet City will have extra advantage for having good infrastructure and being a tax heaven country. But how 'Dubai Internet City' will compete with them and rest of the world for world class intellectual power is a challenging subject that must be managed effectively. Knowledge of Egypt might be helpful to some extent. Quality should be pursued instead of positioning for price competitiveness, as other developing countries will have better advantage out there.

Will that Internet University

be enough for mass training in e-commerce for local companies or should there be government policy to standardise and align all training centres and other educational institutions to provide mass training?

Regarding infrastructure, banking and telecommunication system will have to integrate with e-business system. E-cash system is coming into existence in banks where as Etisalat will have to increase capacity for coping with Internet Protocol based traffic with recourse to bandwidth rich optical network. Potential threat and tremendous opportunity are lying out there. High access cost of network should be addressed accordingly.

The legal issue surrounding e-commerce in general is intricate and still in its initial stage. Some people express their concern that legislators might introduce unworkable laws that might stifle infant e-business industry. Proper and standard legal system is precondition for growth of digital economy.

The usage and awareness of Internet is not well distributed among Gulf or Middle Eastern countries. Few countries like UAE, Saudi Arabia, Lebanon, and Egypt are coming up with more awareness and growth rate of usage.

The mismatch among regional countries might undermine regional e-business potential especially the business to business one. Private sector cannot compete with their existing business model in e-business environment.

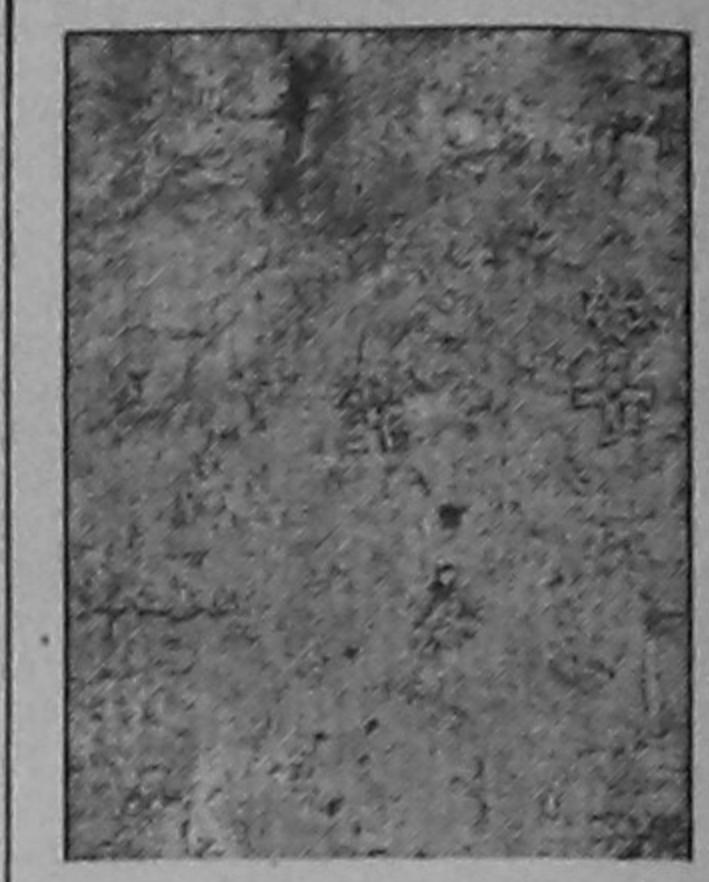
Potential threat is too imminent to ignore and bury it among corporate agenda.

Dubai Internet City aspires

to lead the regional business to the realm of new millennium business model; the vision is worth extolling. But every one should uphold the view by coming forward with helping hands. Successful vision is the outcome of right strategic decisions and proper implementations. We got to do a lot over there! Are you ready? Is your company ready for that sea of change? Please remember that in this world of constant change, complacency is fatal.

Culture

RECOMMENDATIONS

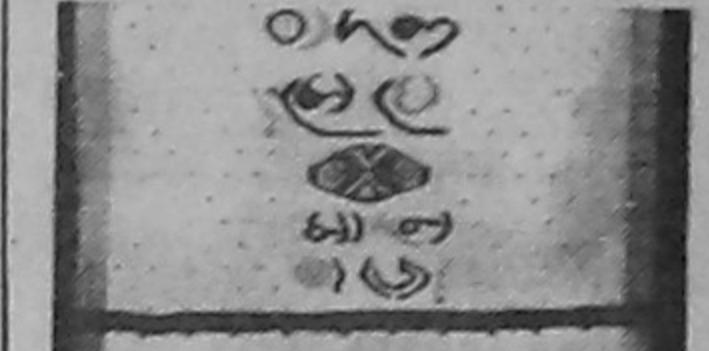


Kazi Ghiyasuddin

Kazi Ghiyasuddin is an artist who figures among the few Bangladeshi who have carved their own niche in the international art scene. Bengal Gallery of Fine Arts has organised the first ever solo in Bangladesh by Kazi Ghiyasuddin on May 5.

The inauguration of the exhibition will be held at 6.00pm. Eminent artist Mohammed Kibria will inaugurate the exhibition as chief guest.

The exhibition will remain open for viewing from 3.00pm to 9.00pm everyday and 11.00am to 8.00pm on holidays till May 20.



Shatabdi

The second exhibition of sari, salwar kameez and panjabi by design house Shatabdi was inaugurated on May 5 at the Alliance Francaise de Dhaka.

In this exhibition some of the saris are designed with Tagore's lyrics:

'Badal Diner Pratham Kadam Phool', 'Rang Lagale Bone' and 'Badal Mege Madal Baje'. Some of the saris are also designed in the Shantiniketan tradition.

The exhibition will remain open to all from 4.00pm to 8.00pm till May 7.



Dry Point 2000

The inaugural ceremony of a printmaking exhibition titled 'Dry Point 2000' by artist Professor Bulbon Osman was held at the Divine Art Gallery on May 5 at 5.30pm.

Professor A K Azad Chowdhury, vice chancellor, University of Dhaka inaugurated the exhibition as chief guest.

The exhibition will remain open from 10.00am - 8.00pm till May 14.

Bangladesh Heritage

The opening ceremony of the solo painting exhibition titled 'Bangladesh Heritage' by Mohammad Ali was held on April 28 at the Alliance Francaise de Dhaka.

Muzaffar Hossain Paltu, joint secretary Bangladesh Awami League inaugurated the exhibition as chief guest.

The exhibition will remain open every day from 9.00am till 8.00pm till May 11.

Chandra Shekhar Dey

A ten daylong exhibition by Chandra Shekhar Dey started at the Gallery 21 on April 21. Artist Mostafa Monwar inaugurated the exhibition as chief guest while artist Rafiqul Nabi, Monirul Islam and Syed Abdullah Khalid was also present as special guests.

The exhibition will remain open to all from 10.00am till 8.00pm till May 9.

People and Cash to Strain Forests beyond 2010

by Juan L Mercado

HEFTY profit margins from permanent crops and food needed, by growing populations will divert 36 million hectares, by the year 2010, from dwindling reserves of arable land in Asia and the Pacific.

Persistence of high deforestation rates would slice 17 million hectares from forest and other wooded lands, the Food and Agriculture forecasts. And permanent pastures will shrink by 48 million hectares. (See table on page 2.)

FAO presents these projections in its new study: Asia-Pacific Forestry Towards 2010. In this 242-page analysis, the United Nations agency foresees:

The region's natural forests will decline by 35 million hectares: from 490 million has. in 1994 to 465 million has. in 2010.

As a result, pressure is building up in countries, including those in ASEAN, to increase

forests under legally-protected status.

To make up for the drain, industrial forest plantations is likely to expand: from 40 million hectares (in 1994) to about 64 million hectares in 2010, most will consist of fast-growing short-rotation plantations, many for pulpwod use.

Demand in the region for all forest products will increase significantly due to population growth and the easing of the Asian economic crisis.

Estimated Land Use, Asia-Pacific Region, 1994-2010		
Land-use type	Area in 1994 (million ha)	Estimated area in 2010 (million ha)
Arable land	404	413
Permanent crops	51	78
Permanent pasture	974	926
Forest and other wooded land	806	789
Other land	613	640

Source: FAO/DEPTHnews

dependence on imports for all industrial wood products" will

decrease.

By 2010, the region will find

itself a net importer of all forest products. Today, Asia-Pacific is already the world's largest net importing region.

For the region as a whole, imports are expected to supply 16% of the region's industrial roundwood; 18% of sawwood; 28% of wood-based panels; 9.2% of paper and paperboard; and 11.6% of fiber-furnish.

Consumption of wood-based panels and paper and paperboard here, by 2010, will exceed North America and Europe combined. "Consumption of sawn wood in this region will be second only to that in North America."

Regional production of paper and paperboard will likely increase to 126 million metric tons, up from 75 million metric tons.

Use of wastepaper will con-

tinue to expand. Countries here will increasingly re-use paper collected in domestic recovery operations. Imports will, however, continue to be significant.

At present, only Japan, and possibly the Republic of Korea, are utilizing the full potential of the wastepaper resource.

Similarly, use of non-wood fibers can potentially expand beyond the People's Republic of China and India.

Growth of "other fiber" pulp

will be modest due to environmental concerns and adverse market preferences, particularly in China.

"Relative stagnation in sawn wood production is likely to persist until 2010. Declining availability of large diameter logs, improved technologies for manufacturing engineered wood products and panels, will reinforce the shift away from sawn wood.

— DEPTHnews

Special 8:30 MTV Top 2000 9:30 MTV Hit Film Music 10:00 House Full VJ Nafisa 10:30 Non-Stop Hits 11:00 MTV Loveline VJ Malaika 11:30 The Grind 12:00 MTV Unplugged 1:00 Non-Stop Hits Continue

MUSIC ASIA

7:30 Aalaap 8:00 Ta Ra Rum 9:00 Brake Fail 10:00 Dil Se 10:30 Hit

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8:30 Serial: Half Chocolate #10 9:00 Serial: Nil Chander Alo 9:30 Serial: #41 (Mostafa Siraj) 3:00 Khubsoror (Fashion Tips Show) 3:30 Cinema Hits-Hindi Film 6:30 Gaane Anjane 7:00 Disney Hour (Cartoon) 8:00 Gudgudee 8:30 Hindi Film: Arzoo (Akshy Kumar, Saif Ali Khan, Madhuri) 11:30 Alvida Darling 12:00 Basera 12:00 Daag 12:30 Bharat Bhroo 1:00 Grihosastra 1:30 Bangla Movie 4:00 Serial: Reen 4:30 Serial: Shoni-Robi Mogar Chobi

Nestle- Jhatpat Kazana 1:30 Vijay Jyoti 2:00 Hum Paanch 2:30 Daayre #41 (Mostafa Siraj) 3:00 Khubsoror (Fashion Tips Show) 3:30 Cinema Hits-Hindi Film 6:30 Gaane Anjane 7:00 Disney Hour (Cartoon) 8:00 Gudgudee 8:30 Hindi Film: Arzoo (Akshy Kumar, Saif Ali Khan, Madhuri) 11:30 Alvida Darling 12:00 Basera 12:00 Daag 12:30 Bharat Bhroo 1:00 Grihosastra 1:30 Bangla Movie 4:00 Serial: Reen 4:30 Serial: Shoni-Robi Mogar Chobi

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7:30 Aatma 8:00 Sant Asaram Wani 8:30 Ramayan #56 9:30 Music Mantra (Trailer Show) 10:00 Chartbusters 10:30 The Good Home Show 11:00 Cook It Up With Tarla Dalal 11:30 Archana Talkies 12:30 Cine Matinee Hindi Film: Chhala 4:00 Udaya 4:30 Mahayaga 5:00 Heena #71 (Rakhi Bhajan, Simran Singh, Rahul Bhatt, Nina Kulkarni) 5:30 Kanyadaan #28 (Kiran Kher, Poonam Narula) 6:00 Saaya #74 (Achintay Kaur, Anup Soni, Aar Mahadev, Monisha) 6:30 Star Yaar Kalakar 7:30 C.I.D. Files 8:30 Hidi Film: Karan Arjun (Shahrukh Khan, Salman Khan, Kajol, Mamta Kulkarni) 12:30 Mickey & Donald

7:00 Anhad/Bhakti Sagar 7:30 Saturday Wake Up Show 8:00 Business Mantra 8:30 Cinema Scene 9:00 The First Edition 9:30 The Millennium Journey 10:00 I.T. Digest 10:30 Top Job 11:00 Serial: We Love You 11:30 Serial: Rehne Ko Ghar Nahi 12:00 TV Brand 12:30 Serial: Baje Payal 1:00 Be Happy 1:30 Fun In The Kitchen 2:00 Vividha 2:30 Hindi Feature Film 2:55 News In Urdu 5:00 Circus 6:00 Dennis The Menace 6:30 Mickey & Donald

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