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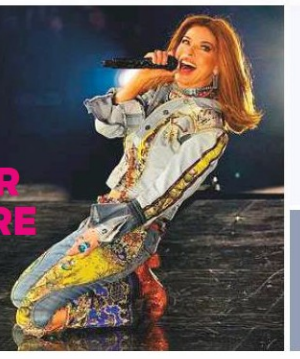

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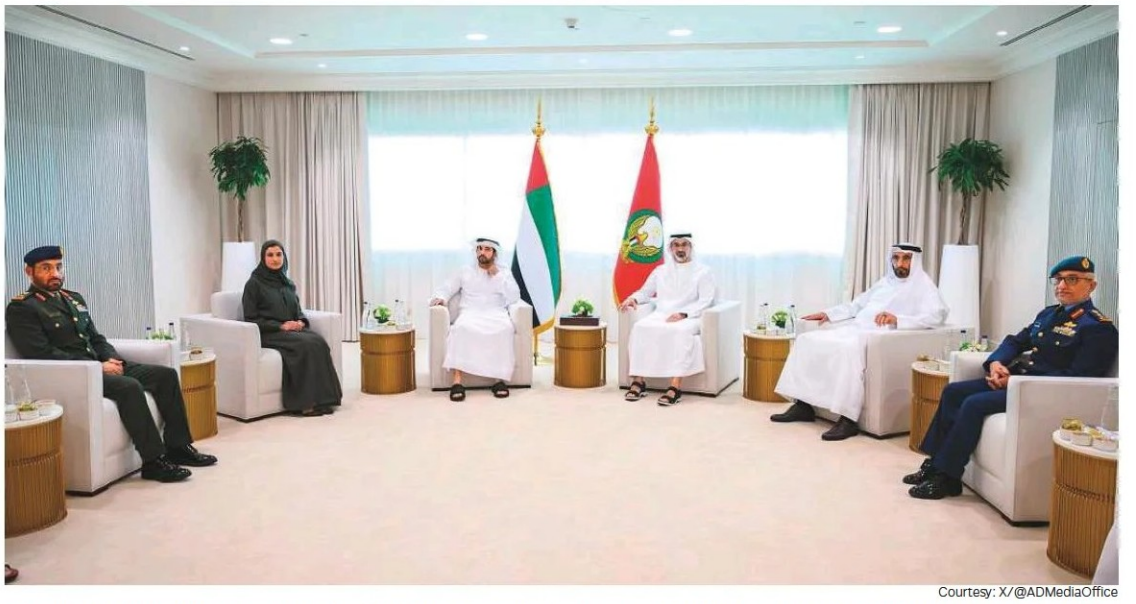

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■ Shaikh Khalid Bin Mohammad Bin Zayed Al Nahyan and Shaikh Hamdan Bin Mohammad Bin Rashid Al Maktoum at an event marking the launch of the execution phase of the Sirb satellite programme to study climate change and other topics.

Sirb satellite programme takes flight

Khalid and Hamdan launch execution phase of project seen as historic for UAE

ABU DHABI
Gulf News Report

Shaikh Khalid Bin Mohammad Bin Zayed Al Nahyan, Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi and Chairman of the Abu Dhabi Executive Council, and Shaikh Hamdan Bin Mohammad Bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Crown Prince of Dubai and Chairman of the Executive Council of Dubai, have launched the execution phase of the Sirb satellite programme, marking a historic moment in the development of the country's space sector.

The Crown Princes received a comprehensive overview of the project's objectives and the advanced technology slated for development in the satellite programme. They were also briefed on the project's milestones and the mechanisms for developing and operating the satellites by a national industrial consortium under the supervision of the UAE Space Agency.

Radar satellites

The first satellite, which will be launched in 2026, will complement the UAE's investment in remote sensing technologies that serve different sectors using various satellite images. Radar satellites have the capability to capture images, day or night, and irrespective of atmospheric conditions. This groundbreaking project marks the pioneering development of a constellation comprising three synthetic aperture radar (SAR) satellites, utilising state-of-the-art imaging technology to achieve high-precision results in all weather conditions.

> **We will enhance local expertise in the field of space to support our ambitious vision for the UAE to become a global hub for manufacturing and operating satellites."**
>
> **Shaikh Khalid Bin Mohammad Bin Zayed Al Nahyan**

Aiding climate pursuits

The project aims to enhance the UAE's efforts to find solutions to climate change challenges and environmental sustainability, contribute to urban development, integrate efforts to tackle natural disasters, and support food security challenges, by relying on qualified national talent and UAE companies.

Commercialisation of data

Central to the Sirb programme is the commercialisation of the satellites, and the data they generate, on both national and international fronts. These highly accurate space radar satellites will support a wide range of scientific and commercial applications, from monitoring environmental changes to natural disaster management and mapping.

It also aims to nurture partnerships with global institutions and offer incentives, as an extension of the Space Economic Zones project, to consolidate the UAE's position as a global hub for talent, investment and innovation.

> **Sirb marks a strategic turning point in the UAE space sector, transitioning from a governmental and academic sector to an integrated governmental, private and academic sector."**
>
> **Shaikh Hamdan Bin Mohammad Bin Rashid Al Maktoum**

UAE as global satellite hub

Shaikh Khalid said, "We will enhance local expertise in the field of space to support our ambitious vision for the UAE to become a global hub for manufacturing and operating satellites. We are focusing on creating opportunities for national companies and the private sector to be part of this significant journey, and to support the development of the space sector's infrastructure."

Shaikh Hamdan said: "Sirb marks a strategic turning point in the UAE space sector, transitioning from a governmental and academic sector to an integrated governmental, private and academic sector that supports the development of microtechnology and progresses the space sector's industrial development. Empowering start-ups, SMEs and entrepreneurs tops our priority list, as they are the main drivers for economic growth."

Sarah Al Amiri, Minister of State for Public Education and Advanced Technology and Chairperson of UAE Space Agency, said, "The launch of the execution phase of Sirb is a milestone in our space journey that embodies the UAE's determination and persistence to lead the comprehensive renaissance of the space sector in all its fields and sectors. Today, we chart a course aligned with the UAE's unwavering commitment and tenacity in advancing the space sector and ensuring its prosperity and sustainability, with the steadfast backing of our leadership."

Space consortium

EDGE assumes the role of a strategic partner to manage the programme with an added focus on the Synthetic Aperture Radar (SAR) payload development. Yahsat and Bayanat will both manage satellite operations and data, while NSSTC will contribute by providing assembly, integration, and testing (AIT) operations.

The consortium will continue to expand its collaboration with other industry players, SMEs and start-ups to further enhance the collective expertise and capabilities of the programme and support the growth of the space private sector.

EDGE will also work on the development of strategic alliances for technology transfer, knowledge exchange, and expertise development in satellite systems.