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I join the nation in congratulating Sultan Al Neyadi as he begins his pioneering mission aboard the International Space Station. His inspiring achievement is a source of great pride to the UAE and another milestone in the journey of our nation and the ambitions of our people.”

President His Highness Shaikh Mohammad Bin Zayed Al Nahyan

Today marks a historic moment as Sultan Al Neyadi, a true son of the UAE, embarks on a six-month mission to ISS, becoming the first Arab space pioneer in such a long mission. The UAE people are truly a source of pride and inspiration, paving way for Arab youth to pursue paths filled with hope and knowledge.”

His Highness Shaikh Mohammad Bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice-President and Prime Minister of the UAE and Ruler of Dubai



SULTAN TAKES UAE'S DREAMS TO SPACE

UAE astronaut and three other crew members travel to the International Space Station in historic voyage, marking 'longest Arab mission in space'

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■ Nasa's SpaceX Crew-6 team wave as they head for the launchpad in Florida. Reuters



AFP

AL NEYADI BEGINS NEW ERA IN ARAB SPACE ODYSSEY

Leaders hail 'Sultan of Space' Al Neyadi, who is to reach ISS this morning, as a 'true son of UAE'

DUBAI
BY SAJILA SASEENDRAN
Senior Reporter

Arabs' dreams and 'Zayed's ambition' lit up the night sky in Florida in the US in the wee hours yesterday when Nasa's SpaceX Crew-6 mission blasted off for space carrying UAE astronaut Sultan Al Neyadi, marking the start of the longest Arab mission in space.

The UAE made another giant leap into space when the SpaceX Falcon 9 rocket carrying Al Neyadi and three other crew members in the Crew-6 Dragon 'Endeavour' lifted off at 9.34am UAE time from the Launch Complex 39A of Kennedy Space Centre in Florida.

The country became only the eleventh in the world to feature in a long duration mission at the International Space Station (ISS) as Al Neyadi's launch for UAE Mission 2 (also called Zayed Ambition 2) became a success in the second attempt after a scrubbed launch on Monday.

Yesterday's launch became possible after SpaceX replaced a clogged filter that had caused the unusual data signature related to the ignition fluid, known as triethylaluminum triethylboron (TEA-TEB), which is used to start the Falcon 9's first stage kerosene and liquid oxygen Merlin engines.

The milestone achievement, which incidentally fell on the fancy date 02/03/23, heralded a new era in Arab space history, with the UAE making its message of readiness for the space age loud and clear. "... We are here to be active players and we are here to stay," Salem Al Marri, director general of the Mohammad Bin Rashid Space Centre (MBRSC), the agency behind the UAE Astronaut Programme, said after the successful lift-off.

"There wasn't a lot of active human space flight in the Arab region, and we think that needs to change," said Al Marri. He also announced that the country plans to send astronauts for human space flights every three to five years.

'Source of great pride'

President His Highness Shaikh Mohammad Bin Zayed Al Nahyan and His Highness Shaikh Mohammad Bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice-President and Prime Minister of the UAE and Ruler of Dubai, led the nation in congratulating "Sultan of Space," who is set to arrive at the ISS at 10.17am today, referring to him as a "source of great pride" and "true son of the UAE."

"I join the nation in congratulating Sultan Al Neyadi as he begins his pioneering mission aboard the International Space Station. His inspiring achievement is a source of great pride to the UAE and another milestone in the journey of our nation and the ambitions of our people," tweeted the President.

Shaikh Mohammad Bin Zayed noted that the participation in this mission reflects the country's vision and direction in strengthening its contributions to future sciences.

"The participation of Emiratis in this mission is seen as a step closer towards achieving our vision of ensuring a better future for generations and strengthen their



"The participation of Emiratis in this mission is seen as a step closer towards ensuring a better future for generations and strengthening their role in building the future. Al Neyadi's inspiring achievement is another milestone in the ambitions of our people."

President His Highness Shaikh Mohammad Bin Zayed Al Nahyan

"The UAE people are truly a source of pride and inspiration, paving the way for Arab youth to pursue paths filled with hope and knowledge. Our ambition in exploring space sciences is limitless, and we are keen to strengthening our position in this promising sector."

His Highness Shaikh Mohammad Bin Rashid Al Maktoum

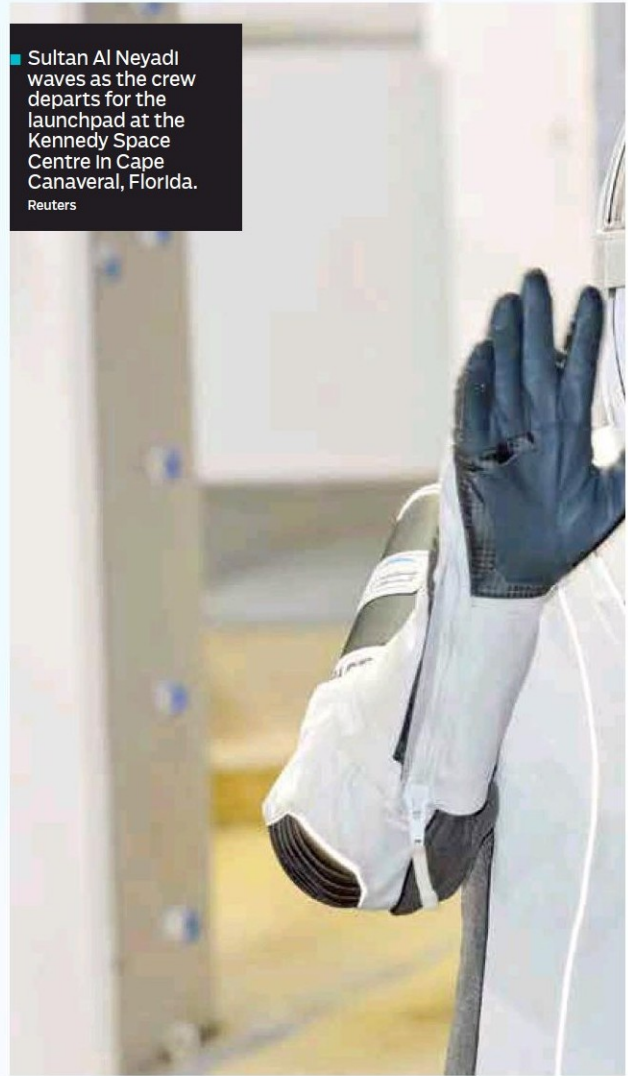


ON GULFNEWS.COM

Space jargon to know about International Space Station
What will Sultan Al Neyadi do on the ISS for six months?



Pictures & video: See how the UAE's space mission 2 unfolded in Florida



Sultan Al Neyadi waves as the crew departs for the launchpad at the Kennedy Space Centre in Cape Canaveral, Florida. Reuters



The UAE is the 11th country to feature in a long duration mission to the ISS as Zayed Ambition 2 became a success in the second attempt after a scrubbed launch on Monday.

participation in building the future."

The President also highlighted the national strategy the UAE adopts to develop its scientific manpower and prepare young Emiratis to contribute in scientific research to serve humanity.

'Limitless ambition'

Shaikh Mohammad Bin Rashid tweeted: "Today marks a historic moment as Sultan Al Neyadi, a true son of the UAE, embarks on a six-month mission to the International Space Station, becoming the first Arab space pioneer in such a long mission. The UAE people are truly a source of pride and inspiration, elevating our standing in the world and paving the way for Arab youth to pursue paths filled with hope and knowledge."

Shaikh Mohammad Bin Rashid

affirmed that the ambitions of the UAE in the space sector are a clear reflection of its vision of shaping the future. "Our ambition in exploring space sciences is limitless, and we are keen to strengthening our position in this promising sector."

He also affirmed the UAE's keenness to complement the ambitions of the late founding father Shaikh Zayed Bin Sultan Al Nahyan. "We are always inspired by the ambitions of our founding father ... This can be seen most clearly today by our participation in 'Zayed Ambition 2', the longest Arab Space Mission in History."

Shaikh Hamdan Bin Mohammad Bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Crown Prince of Dubai, Chairman of the Executive Council of Dubai and President of MBRSC, was personally present to witness

the launch of the Emirati astronaut for the historic Arab mission in space.

Applauding Al Neyadi as he blasted off to space, Shaikh Hamdan was seen congratulating the MBRSC team members at the ground station in Al Khawaneej. Sharing a video capturing the highlights of the day, Shaikh Hamdan tweeted: "Congratulations to the UAE & the Arab world for achieving a historical milestone. Today, we start a new mission to explore space and achieve the impossible. We wish Sultan Al Neyadi success in this new journey."

Shaikh Maktoum Bin Mohammad Bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Deputy Ruler of Dubai, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, also took to Twitter and posted: "Congratulation to @MohamedBinZayed & @HSHskMohd on @Astro_Alneyadi historic mission

to the International Space Station. His inspiring journey will remain a beacon for all Emiratis to achieve exceptional feats in space exploration. From Zayed's ambition, we set out for the future."

Amusing farewell

It was rather an amusing farewell for the crew members as they bid by to their loved ones for the second time in three days.

"Yalla! We are going today," Al Neyadi told his family, laughing.

Once again, the crew loaded up inside a caravan of black Teslas customised for the Dragon Crew-6 mission. Since SpaceX is owned by Elon Musk, it is a custom for the crew flying on its spacecraft to be escorted to the launch pad in Teslas.



■ Above: Shaikh Hamdan Bin Mohammad watches the live stream of the Falcon 9 rocket lifting off at Mohammad Bin Rashid Space Centre in Dubai, yesterday. Sharing a video capturing the highlights of the day, Shaikh Hamdan tweeted: "Congratulations to the UAE & the Arab world for achieving a historical milestone. Today, we start a new mission to explore space and achieve the impossible. We wish Sultan Al Neyadi success in this new journey."
Courtesy: Dubai Media Office

MBRSC: UAE to launch astronauts every 3 to 5 years

'We are here to stay', Salem Al Marri says post Crew-6 launch to ISS with Al Neyadi

DUBAI
BY SAJILA SASEENDRAN
Senior Reporter



With the successful lift-off of Emirati astronaut Sultan Al Neyadi for the longest Arab space mission, the UAE has sent out a clear message — the country is ready for the space age!

"I think we'll be the 10th or 11th country that does a long term space flight to the ISS. And I think that sends a clear message that we are here to be active players and we are here to stay," said Salem Al Marri, director-general of the Mohammad Bin Rashid Space Centre (MBRSC).

Al Marri was speaking at a NASA press conference held after the successful lift-off of the SpaceX Falcon 9 rocket with the Crew-6 Dragon Endeavour that carried Al Neyadi along with three other crew members to zero gravity.

"Firstly, we have our attention firmly focused on this mission. Of course, looking at the future, we have four astronauts who are currently training at NASA. Our objectives are to fly them," said Al Marri. "Beyond that ... as a relatively small country and a new entrant in human space flight, I would expect us to look at our flight every three to five years, something like that."

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Salem Al Marri
MBRSC director-general

Spaceflight Programme, SpaceX] and his team for all the dedication at SpaceX."

SpaceX praises UAE

Talking about the partnership with the UAE, Reed said it was "so cool to have these kinds of partners"

Calling it an awesome time in spaceflight, Reed said: "If we're going to open the space age, we're going to make life multi-planetary, it has to have a big ecosystem, a lot of people doing things. And I mean it goes back again, we're talking about our new partners like, the UAE."

Ambitious space plans

From becoming the first Arab nation and fifth country ever to reach Mars to launch the first long-duration Arab space mission, the UAE has made incredible strides in space.

The Emirates Mars Mission Hope Probe and the Emirates Lunar Mission Rashid Rover are milestone achievements of the country in its ever-growing space expeditions.

To develop a sustainable astronaut programme, the UAE intends to obtain several spaceflights in the future. Also, the country is in discussions with NASA about taking part in the Artemis programme, which aims to establish a human presence on the Moon.

With the ambitious space missions, it is likely that the country's future astronauts will be part of the upcoming missions to the Moon, Mars and other planets.

■ Right: Members of the SpaceX Dragon Crew-6 mission, Sultan Al Neyadi (right), Andrey Fedyaev, Warren Hoburg and Stephen Bowen wave from the inside of their Dragon Endeavour spacecraft ahead of liftoff yesterday.
AFP

■ Left: The SpaceX Falcon 9 rocket with the crew capsule Endeavour lifts off at the Kennedy Space Centre in Florida. Crew-6 lifted off on the fourth anniversary of Dragon's Demo-1, SpaceX's first test flight to the ISS.
AP



9:34am
SpaceX Falcon 9 rocket carrying the Crew-6 spacecraft lifts off at Kennedy Space Centre in Florida

6 Crew is scheduled to dock at ISS' Harmony module at 10.17GST today. Hatch opening is scheduled at 11.55am UAE time

657 people have been to space so far. This is the first crewed launch of 2023.

1st UAE is the first Arab nation and fifth country to reach Mars with its Hope probe

Who is Suhail, Al Neyadi's companion on ISS?

Astronaut makes surprise announcement from space about MBRSC mascot on ISS mission

DUBAI
BY SAJILA SASEENDRAN
Senior Reporter

When UAE astronaut Sultan Al Neyadi spoke from space for the first time after a successful lift-off yesterday, he sprang a surprise.

Al Neyadi introduced a fifth crew member on board Crew-6 Dragon Endeavour. "Allow me to introduce our fifth crew member. His name is Suhail," he said, adding that Suhail is the Arabic name for the star Canopus.

But who is Suhail? Al Neyadi did not explain it. However, the Mohammad Bin

Rashid Space Centre said Suhail is the mascot of MBRSC and a stuffed toy of the mascot is accompanying Al Neyadi to the ISS. "It will be the zero-gravity indicator during the UAE Mission 2," said MBRSC.

Suhail's second mission

Speaking further, Al Neyadi said: "In the Middle East, we anticipate the appearance of Canopus because it marks the end of the summer and the beginning of cool times ... It is actually the second brightest star in the night sky."



Al Neyadi said it was the second flight for Suhail as he had accompanied the first Emirati astronaut Hazzaa Al Mansoori in the UAE's first space mission to ISS in 2019.

"Many people think that Suhail is an alien," Al Neyadi said.

The audio broke when Al Neyadi said what Suhail meant to him by beginning with "but to me." "He is in a spacesuit with high ambitions," is all that could be heard next. A video released by MBRSC showed the tiny mascot floating near Al Neyadi while the four crew-member remained strapped aboard the Dragon spacecraft.

WHY THE UAE SPACE PROGRAMME MATTERS

History in making as Sultan Al Neyadi becomes the first Arab astronaut to embark on a space mission spanning six months

BY SADIQ SHABAN | Opinion Editor

The Crew-6 mission has launched into space with the help of SpaceX's Falcon 9 rocket. Yesterday, the company's Dragon Endeavour spacecraft lifted off from Nasa's Kennedy Space Centre in Florida, carrying four astronauts, including the UAE's Sultan Al Neyadi, Nasa's Stephen Bowen and Warren "Woody" Hoburg, and Russian cosmonaut Andrey Fedyayev.

Their six-month stay at the International Space Station (ISS) will include conducting various research projects to help "prepare for human exploration beyond low-Earth orbit and benefit life on Earth."

The Crew Dragon Endeavour are expected to dock with the ISS roughly 24 hours after launching.

Space is the ultimate frontier for humans. Venturing beyond our planet and discovering what lies outside our imagination is inherently exciting and inspiring.

The vastness and beauty of the universe can inspire a sense of wonder and awe. Exploring space has helped mankind understand our place in the universe, the origins of the cosmos, and the fundamental laws of nature.

Many of the most important scientific breakthroughs in recent history have also been related to space exploration.

A significant milestone

Sultan Al Neyadi's space mission represents a significant milestone for the UAE's ambitious space programme.

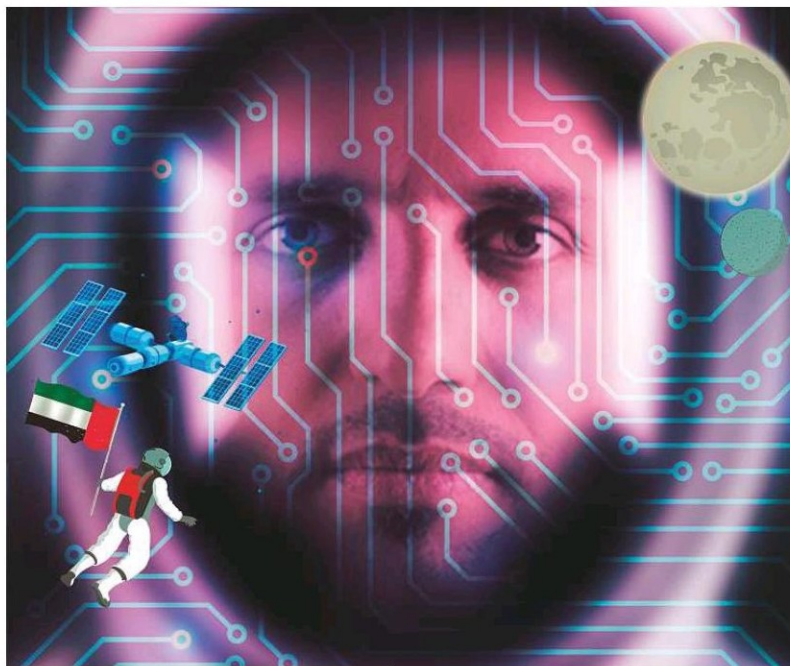
Firstly, the UAE is investing heavily in the development of space technologies and infrastructure to advance space exploration and promote scientific research in the region. Al Neyadi's trip to the ISS is a demonstration of the country's full commitment to advancing scientific research.

Secondly, Al Neyadi's trip is inspiring future generations to pursue careers in STEM fields by showing that anyone can pursue a career in space exploration, regardless of their background.

Thirdly, the UAE space programme is building partnerships with other countries and organisations involved in space exploration, such as key players like the United States, Russia, and Japan. This collaboration helps to strengthen the UAE's global standing in the coveted space industry.

Fourthly, the UAE's space programme is contributing to economic development in the region by investing in space technologies and infrastructure that has the potential to create new jobs and stimulate economic growth.

Lastly, Al Neyadi's mission to the ISS carries immense scientific value, as the crew will conduct several key experiments related to



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medicine, biology, and physics that contribute to the advancement of scientific knowledge and pave the way for future space missions. It also includes researching how some substances burn in the microgravity environment and investigating microbial samples.

Big responsibility

A graduate in Electronics and Communications Engineering, Al Neyadi is the first Arab astronaut to spend six months in space. During his stay on the ISS, he will be involved in a variety of activities and experiments aimed at advancing scientific knowledge and understanding of space. As part of a team of researchers and crew

members, Al Neyadi will conduct experiments to study the effects of space flight on the human body and test new technologies and equipment, among other things. The Al Ain boy's mission to the ISS is inspiring young learners around the globe at a time when the UAE has been investing heavily in its space programme, with a particular focus on developing local talent and building capacity within the country's space industry.

The UAE's Mohammad Bin Rashid Space Centre (MBRSC) is vital to the nation's space programme, and is responsible for a variety of space-related activities, including developing and launching satellites, conducting research and development, and training astronauts.

From the development of the Emirates Mars Mission, also known as the Hope Probe to playing a crucial role in Al Neyadi's selection and training for the ISS mission, MBRSC is spearheading the UAE's efforts to become a major space force.

For millions of young people across the world following these developments, this is a special moment. For the Arab world too, this is a proud moment. They know that with determination and vision, it is possible to reach for the stars and beyond.