

## ELECTRIC CARS

Why the time may finally be right for a green transport revolution

Nikai Group founder **Paras Shahdarpuri** shares his phenomenal success story

## SURVIVAL OF THE FITTEST

The challenges and opportunities facing the UAE fitness industry

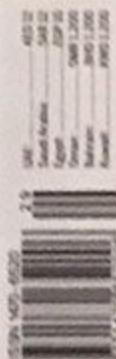
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# arabian Business

ARE CRYPTOCURRENCIES ABOUT TO SHAKE UP THE PAYMENTS INDUSTRY?



**BANKING ON  
BITCOIN**



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2.9  
UAE 453 22  
Saudi Arabia 548 22  
Egypt 229 22  
Oman 2,295  
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# bitcoin



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## 26 RETAIL

**Paras Shahdarpuri**, the chairman of Nikai Group has created one of the largest electronics suppliers in the GCC. But he is not finished yet, with new markets and new sectors to conquer

## 32 HEALTH

The UAE's \$380m fitness market has seen its fair share of disruptions, including a wave of operators that saw traditional gyms face closure. We examine the threats and opportunities that lie ahead

## COVER STORY

### Banking on bitcoin

*Despite fears of a 'Bitcoin bubble', the cryptocurrency is gaining traction in the Gulf, where a handful of operators are promoting the low cost and relative security of virtual transactions*

By Sarah Townsend

Photo: Getty Images, Shutterstock

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Face scans, robot baggage handlers and shopping malls are set to revolutionise the travel sector. Asia-Pacific has been leading the way but faces fierce competition from the Middle East

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Car culture in the UAE favours gas-guzzling super cars and powerful four by fours. But car companies such as Tesla and GM say there is a promising future for electric vehicles here

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## FIRST WORD

Investments in mega-projects that will define a city or industry sector's future for decades to come cannot be timed to coincide with economic cycles that last an average of six years"

**Jeremy Lawrence**

Editorial Director  
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