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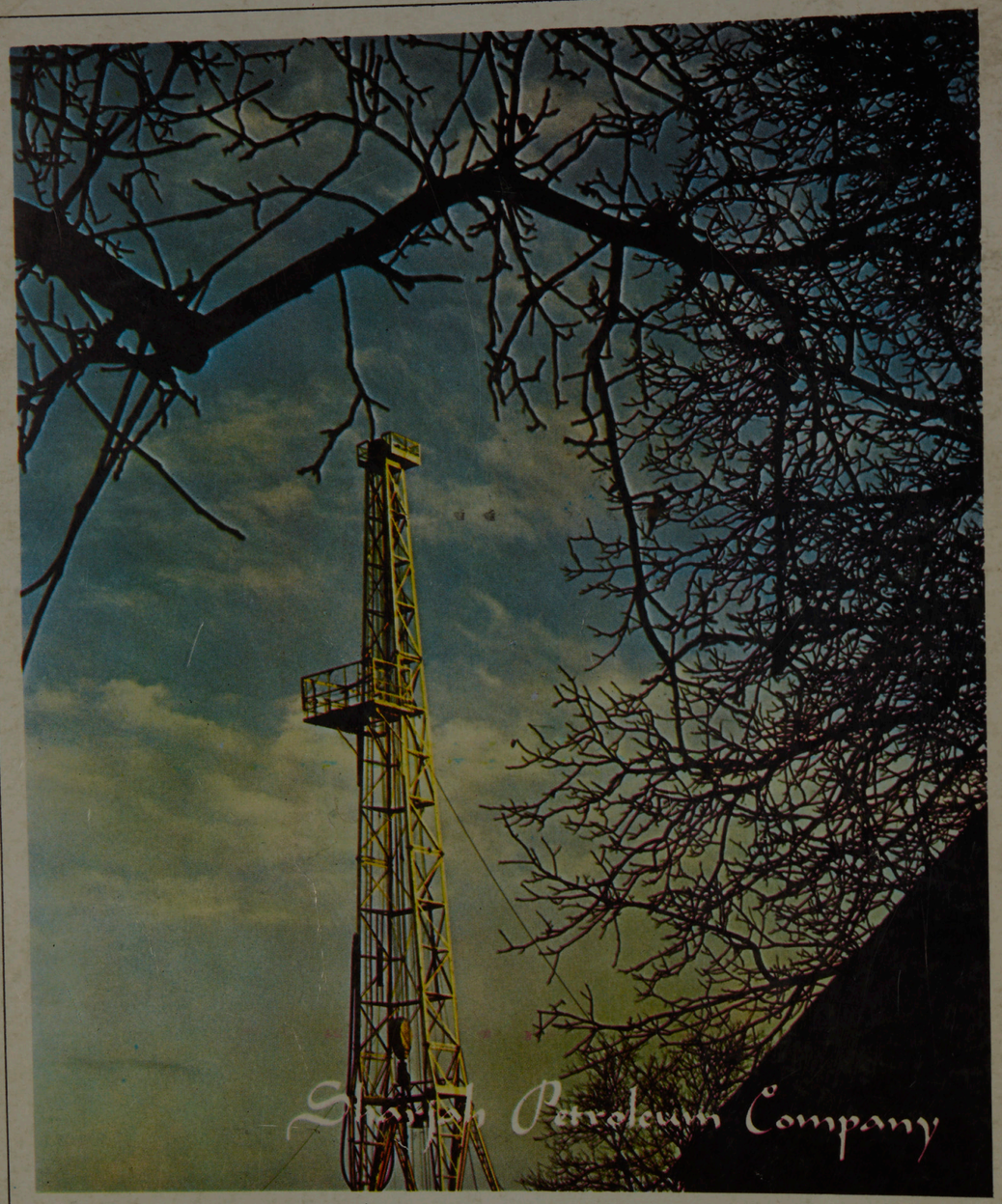

Sharjah Petroleum Company (subsidiary of Buttes Gas and Oil Company) takes this opportunity to congratulate His Highness Sheikh Khalid bin Mohammed Al Qasimi on the Fifth Anniversary of his Accession and wishes the Sharjah Government and its people continued prosperity under his guidance and leadership

SHARJAH 1970

Prepared and published by the Middle East Economic Digest to commemorate the Fifth Anniversary of the Accession of His Highness Shaikh Khalid bin Mohammad Al-Qasimi, Ruler of Sharjah and Dependencies.

UK: 62p (12/6d); US $ 1.50; QDR 7; £Leb 5.00. Bulk order prices on request.

UAE 3
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It makes me very happy to write this brief foreword to the *Middle East Economic Digest's* special review of Sharjah and its Dependencies. This publication is known to me as one which diligently provides regular information on all important aspects of the economic and business developments of the Arab world.

First, a word to my own hard-working and forward-looking people, who faithfully stand at my side as we persevere in the building of our beloved country. To them, my beloved people, who have so positively and constantly shared with me, and continue to share, the labours of advancing this flourishing country and pushing forward the wheel of progress in our precious land, I give my sincere greetings. I greet them with great esteem and a heart full of love, joining hands with them in fruitful work for the benefit of all our sons and for humanity at large.

Nor do I forget the many friends who have shared with us this period of building, development and work: I sincerely thank them all, and especially my brother, His Highness, Shaikh Zayid bin Sultan Al-Nahayyan, Ruler of our brother Emirate of Abu Dhabi, who has extended to us his most open-hearted generosity; also our brother State of Kuwait which has shared – and continues to share – in an active and tangible way in building those most important bases of a modern state, education and health; also my thanks go to all the other Arab countries and the other Arab Emirates who have extended help, each in their own way. I also extend my appreciation to the Trucial States Council for their assistance to Sharjah in development projects and other services. My thanks also go to the institutions and companies working in my country as well as to all the sincere hands who have shared in the work of building the country.

Our policy emanates from the strong brotherly ties which bind us to the other Arab Emirates and we are striving, along with them, for the establishment of the Union of Arab Emirates, because in unity lies strength, prosperity, dignity and progress. We believe in the principles of good neighbourliness, mutual respect and fruitful co-operation with all nations as we believe in peace, justice, love and equality. Another important fact I would like to mention about our country is its firm belief in planning, study and research as a means for preventing mistakes and errors. Our country also welcomes all who would like to invest in its future and we believe that the fundamental requirements for profitable investment are stability, freedom and trust. These are the important elements we are striving to create and maintain by all the means at our disposal. It is our intention to smooth and simplify all possible complications which may arise to hinder profitable investment by businessmen. Everything we have accomplished in the last five years is the result of hard work, sincerity and the feeling of great responsibility which we have tried to bear with patience, fortitude, sacrifice and self-denial.

My people can without reservation be very proud indeed of the great achievements which their country has made in a very short period of time. To them I also promise that I will exert my uttermost efforts to be a faithful and mindful leader. I will take their hand, asking the Almighty God to crown our efforts with success and victory, to march forward with the Arab and Islamic nations to achieve a peace built on justice and right.

In the Peace of Allah

His Highness Shaikh Khalid bin Mohammad Al-Qasimi,
Ruler of Sharjah and Dependencies.

His Highness Shaikh Khalid bin Mohammad Al-Qasimi,
Ruler of Sharjah and Dependencies.

صاحب السمو الشيخ خالد بن محمد القاسمى
حاكم الشارقة و ملحقاتها

b15689244

KALBA

The fruit gardens of Kalba on the East Coast welcome the desert traveller. Horticulture flourishes in the East Coast Dependencies, and farmers enjoy a surplus of many kinds of fruit and vegetables, especially limes, melons and the paw-paws shown here.

SHARJAH TOWN

Flowers bloom in the graceful public garden of Majlis Square, where only a few years ago there was nothing but sand. This urban oasis is the calm heart of the capital's busy administrative area. In the foreground is the Police Headquarters, formerly the Royal Palace; to the left are new Government and commercial buildings and to the right the Ruler's audience hall, the Majlis, from which the square derives its name.

overleaf: KHOR FAKKAN

This ancient fishing village, the shining jewel of Sharjah's East Coast territory, has grown around a superb natural harbour, the only deep-water harbour on the East Coast. Today it is gaining a new lease of life as a base for modern fisheries.

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WE ARE HONOURED THAT HIS HIGHNESS HAS CONSENTED TO BECOME CHAIRMAN OF THE COMPANY AND PLEDGE OURSELVES TO FULFIL OUR ROLE IN THE GREATER DEVELOPMENT AND PROGRESS OF SHARJAH.

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express their congratulations
on the fifth accession
anniversary of
His Highness The Ruler
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1980

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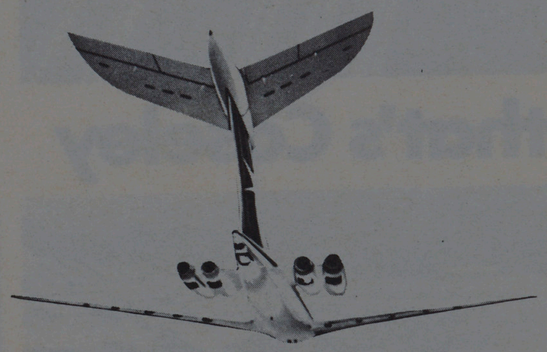

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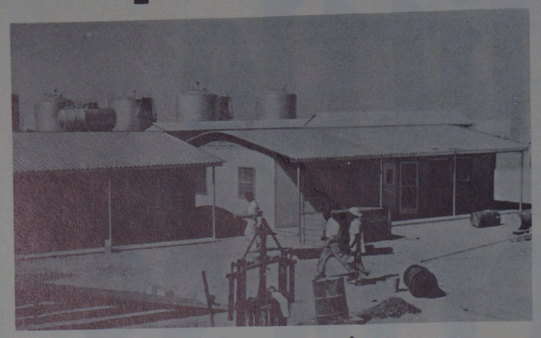

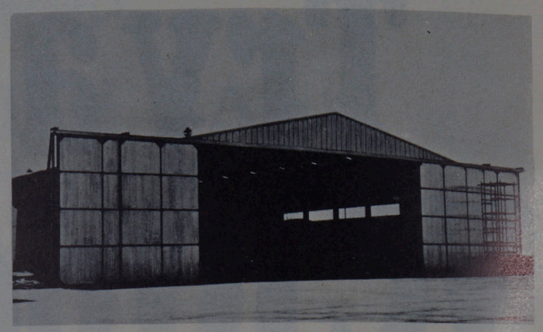

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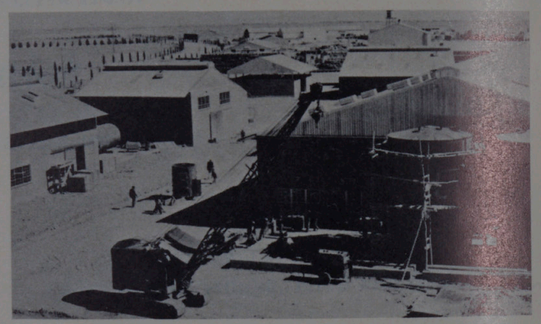

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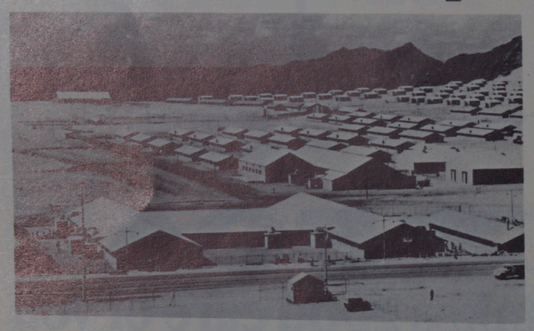

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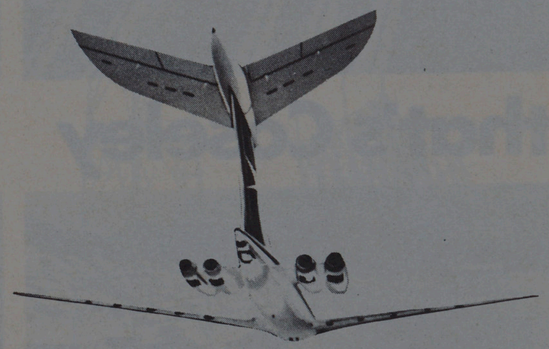

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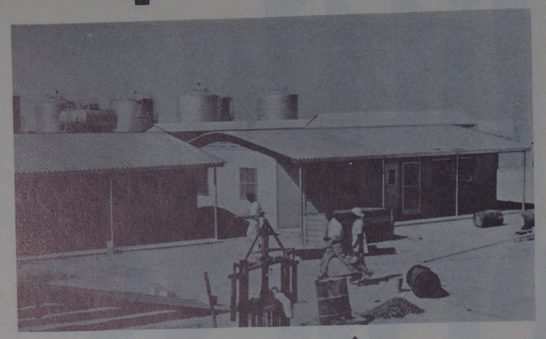

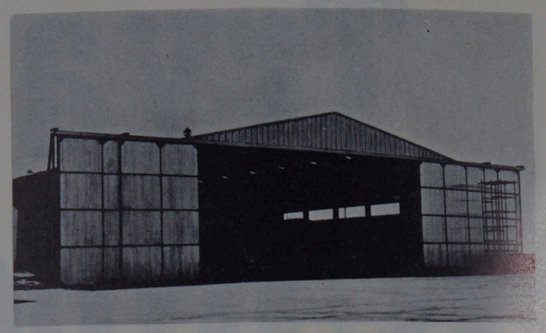

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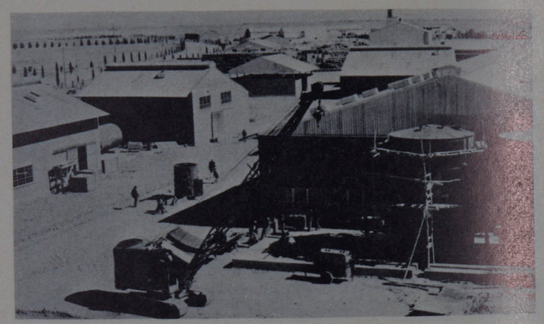

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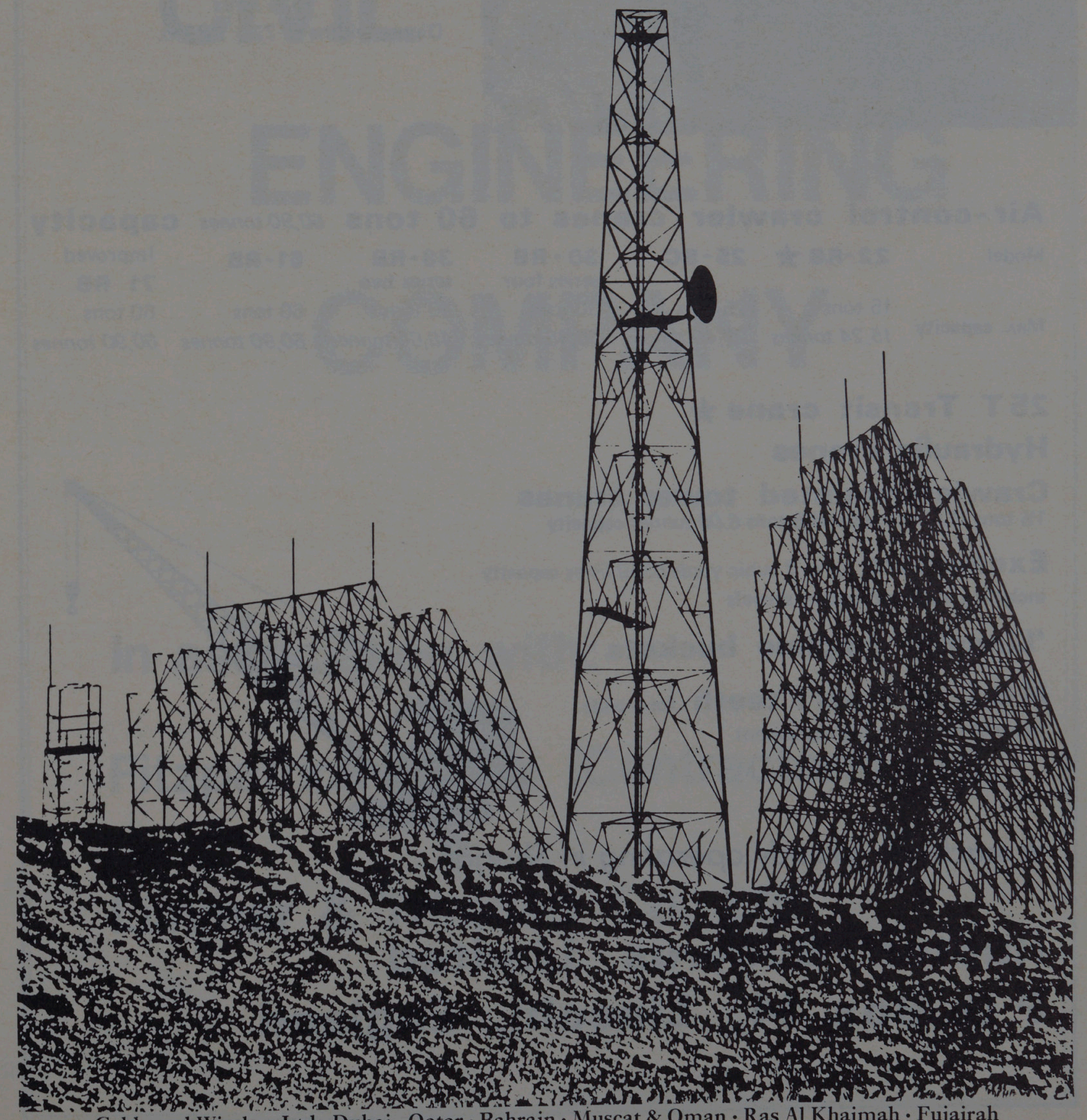

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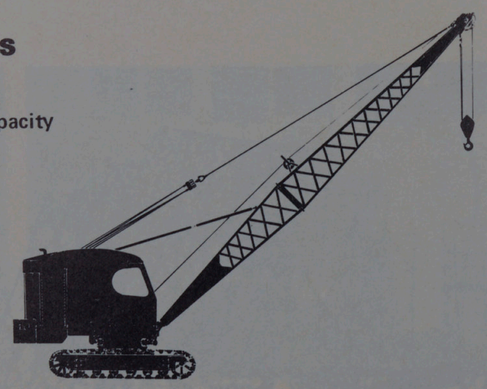

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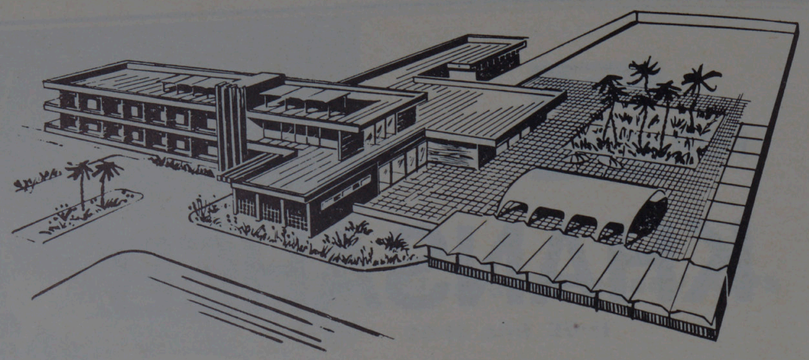

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on the Fifth Anniversary of his accession.

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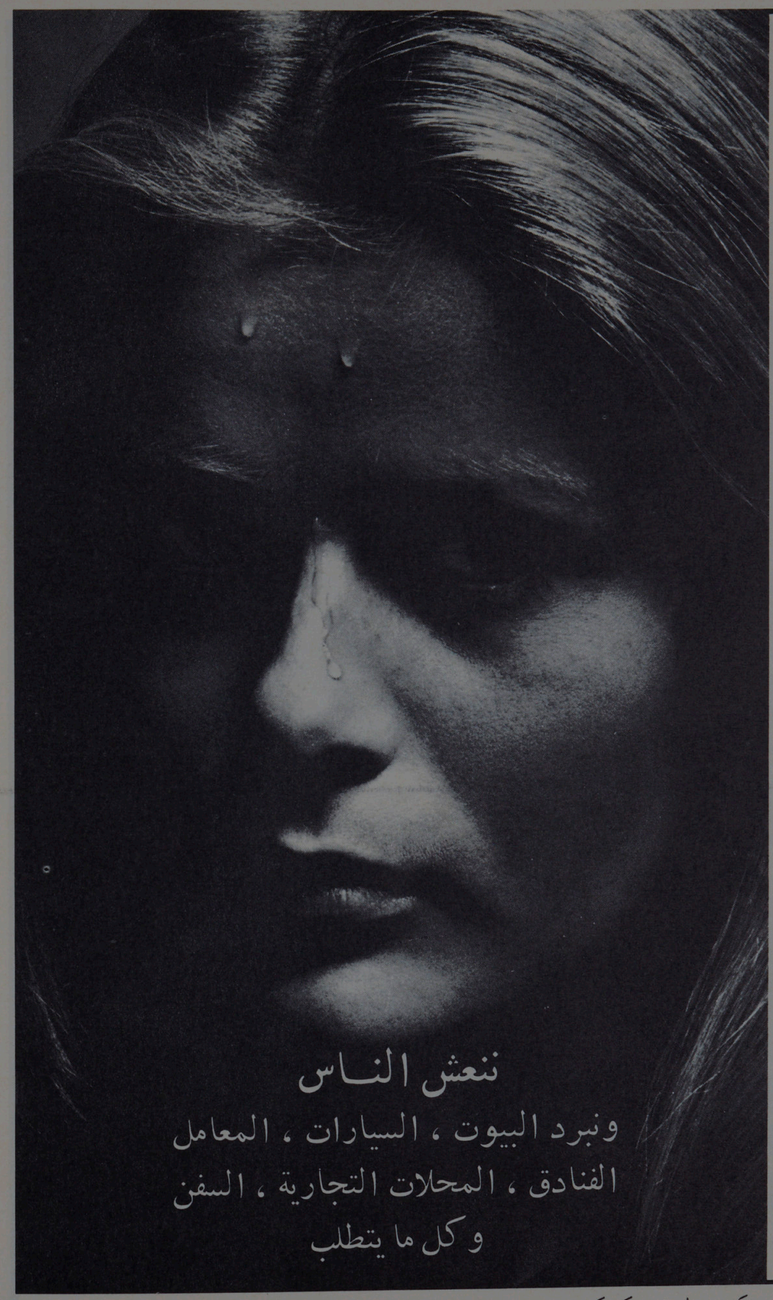

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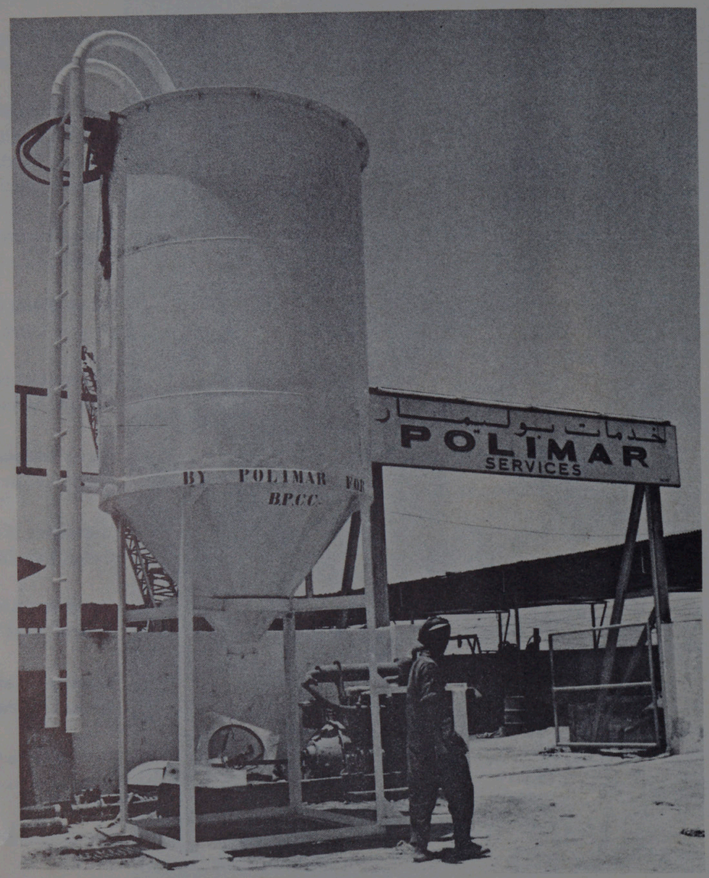

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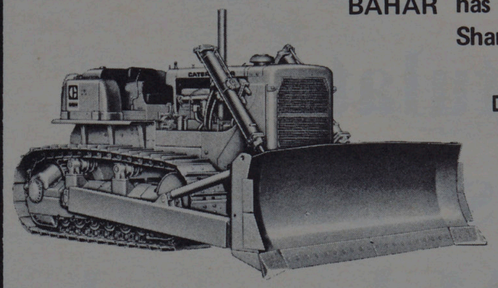
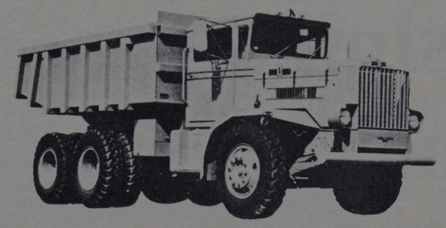
  - Sharjah/ Ras al-Khaimah road
  - Sharjah/Dubai road
- ☐ the provision of quarrying equipment for the Sharjah/Ras al-Khaimah road
- ☐ the provision of Caterpillar equipment for the Sharjah port development scheme
- ☐ the provision of most of the machinery for major works in the Trucial States including heavy-duty earth trucking, transport of bitumen by tanker, cranes in various ports, and oilfield services.
- ☐ the provision of Caterpillar marine engines.



Caterpillar – earth moving machines, electric sets and marine engines.



Oshkosh – desert earth moving trucks and load carriers.

and Bantam cranes.

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MIDDLE EAST
ECONOMIC DIGEST
congratulate
His Highness Shaikh
Khalid bin Mohammad
Al-Qasimi
on the
Fifth Anniversary
of his Accession
and are proud to publish
SHARJAH 1970

SHARJAH 1970

Prepared and published by the Middle East Economic Digest to commemorate the Fifth Anniversary of the Accession of His Highness Shaikh Khalid bin Mohammad Al-Qasimi, Ruler of Sharjah and Dependencies.

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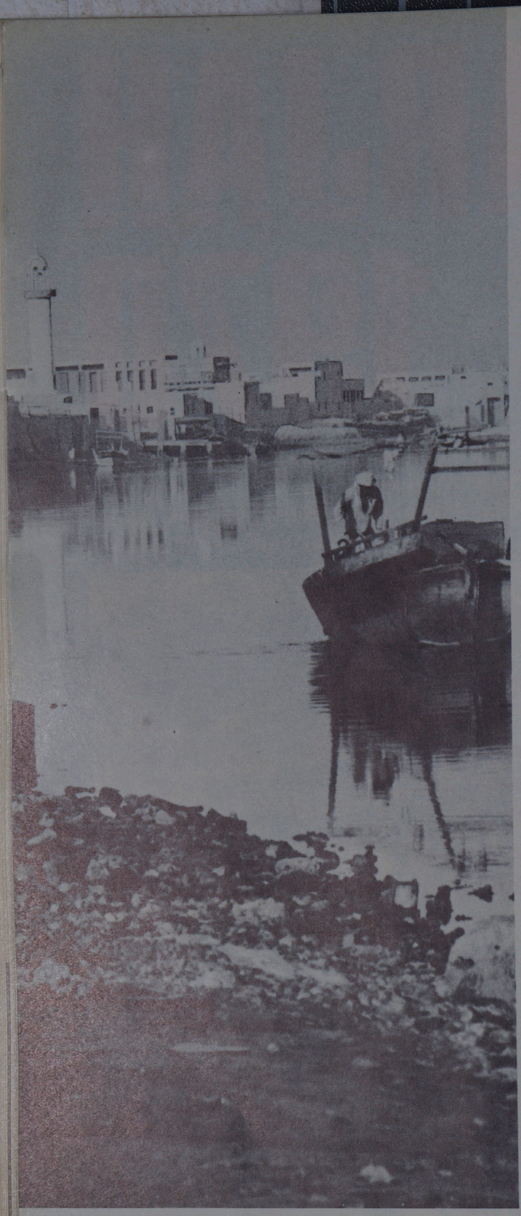
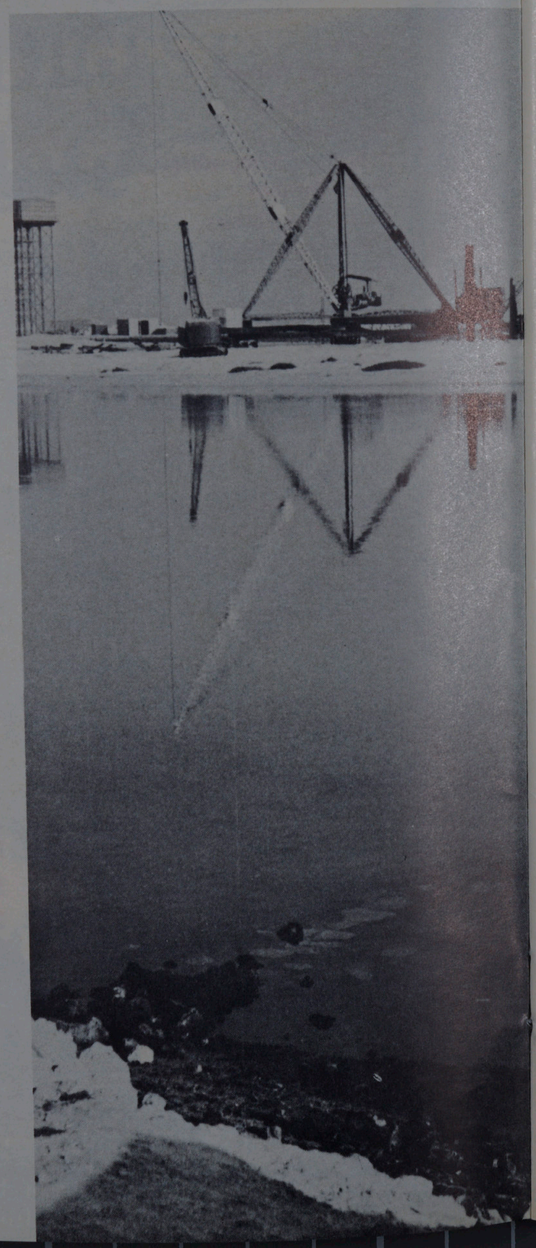


A few yards but many centuries separate these still reflections in the waters of Sharjah's creek.

But the creek will soon vanish as the inexorable work of giant machinery scoops a new port from the silt of centuries.

The old town and outdated ways will be left behind as Sharjah emerges as a modern nation.



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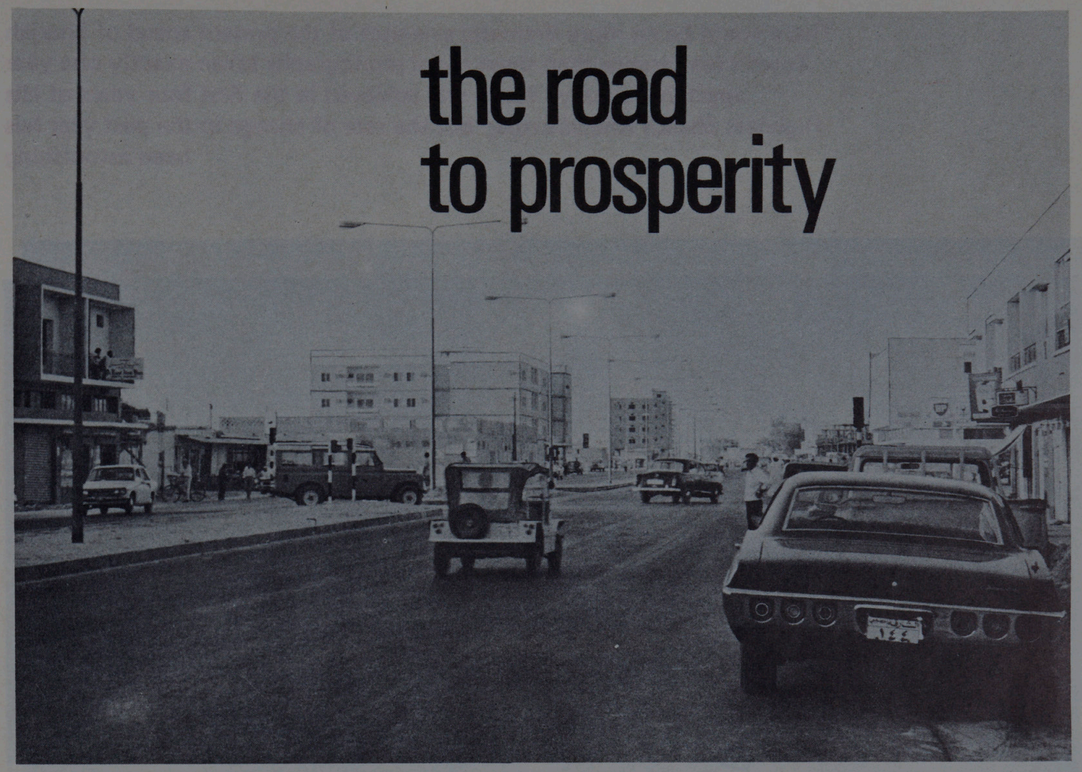
the road to prosperity



Sharjah Town's main street has been designed with the future in mind.

In five years Sharjah Town has been transformed from an almost-idle seaport into a bustling urban community. This metamorphosis has been so rapid – especially over the last 18 months – that the most cynical of observers could not fail to recognise that something out of the ordinary is taking place in this little-known corner of the Arabian Gulf.

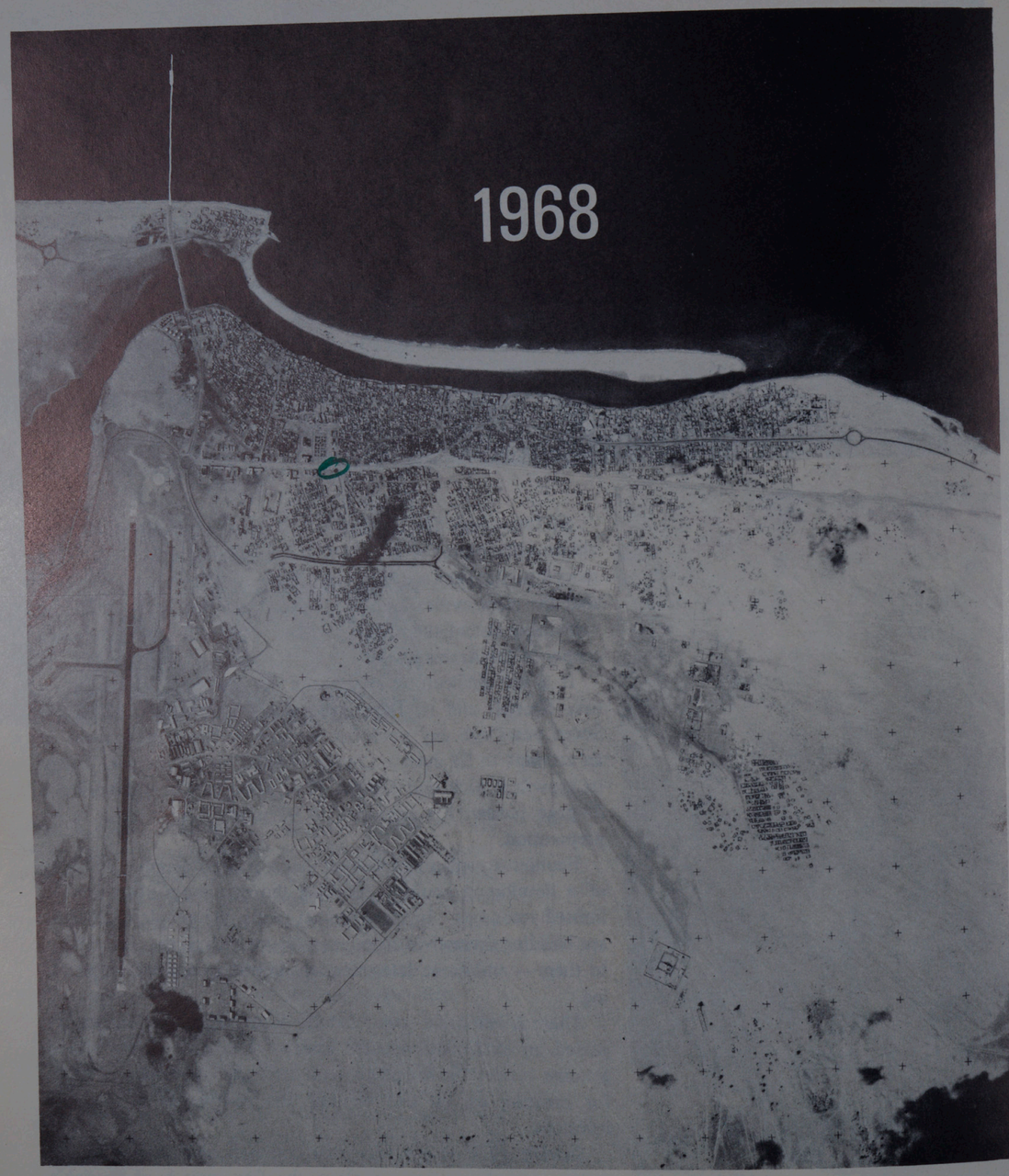
It is not difficult to understand why the world's gaze passed over Sharjah and its Dependencies before this recent upsurge. Seven years ago any publisher would have been embarrassed in an attempt to fill even a 12-page booklet on the emirate. Today its growth is such that *Sharjah 1970*, conceived in mid-April as a 24-page review, has expanded to 92 pages in the course of its preparation.

Economists will say of Sharjah that it is an outstanding example of a developing country effecting the maximum utilisation of limited resources. In more human terms, the people of Sharjah are building themselves an exciting future with all that is available to them – ambition, determination, ingenuity and careful planning.

There is one other major factor; leadership. In 1965 Sharjah gained an extremely valuable asset – a diligent Ruler with a genuine interest in his people and an acute commercial instinct for creating capital and winning the confidence of overseas investors.

Sharjah 1970 is the very first comprehensive review of the emirate, another milestone along the first stretch of Sharjah's sure road to prosperity.

There could be no more dramatic evidence of the present speed of Sharjah Town's renaissance than these aerial photographs taken exactly one year apart, in January. Much was achieved in the first four years of His Highness Shaikh Khalid's rule; but the rate of change in the past year has been astonishing



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history

Abu Musa June 1970

Sharjah stands by the entrance to one of the oldest sea routes in the world, the Arabian Gulf, which has been of vital commercial and strategic importance throughout history. Little is recorded of the earliest settlements, but archaeological finds in the region date back to 3,000 B.C. and it is known that many of the great civilisations of the past – including Ur, Babylon, Assyria, Persia, Greece, Phoenicia, Rome and even China – have sought to dominate the area. Islam came to the region during the first Muslim expansion across the Arabian Peninsula after the death of the prophet Mohammed in 632 A.D.

The Arabian Gulf first came within the orbit of modern Europe in the early 16th Century, when the Portuguese, on the advice of Vasco de Gama, established trading posts on both sides of the waterway. As Portuguese influence increased, the Arab settlers on the coasts withdrew to the less accessible interior. With the decline of Portuguese power in the mid-17th Century, they re-established their coastal settlements, which depended for their livelihood on the sea. It is from this time that known Qasimi history dates. The Qawasim are a federation of Arab tribes governed by the Qasimi family to which the present Ruler of Sharjah belongs.

Since the early 18th Century, the Qawasim have been a major commercial and political force in the Arabian Gulf. Their capital has been in Sharjah Town since 1820, and they have provided political leadership for all the Trucial Coast, except Dubai and Abu Dhabi, at one time or another.

In the early 1700s, the Qawasim's dominance of the entrance to the Gulf was threatened only by competition from rival indigenous Arab groups centred in Muscat and led by the Bu Said family. Towards the end of the Century this commercial rivalry almost reached the point of open warfare. At this juncture European influence was revived in the area, with traders from Holland, France and Britain seeking to control the Gulf entrance. The Qasimi rulers, operating from their major seaports of Sharjah and Ras al-Khaimah, sought to prevent the extension of this influence.

For some time the Qawasim were successful: with land settlements on both sides of the Straits of Hormuz, it seemed that they were becoming the predominant maritime power of the area. However, the British East India Company, ever watchful of its routes to the East, came into direct conflict with Qasimi interests. When the Qawasim tried to exact tolls on foreign shipping for passing through the Straits of Hormuz, incidents occurred which the East India Company considered to be acts of piracy and which the Qasimi Arabs considered to be exercise of their legitimate rights within their territorial waters.

H.H. Shaikh Khalid bin Mohammad al-Qasimi talking to H.H. Shaikh Zayid bin Sultan, Ruler of Abu Dhabi.

Not only did the Company refuse to pay dues for rights of passage, but it persuaded the British Government of India to ally itself with the Rulers of Muscat in an effort to crush this threat to Imperial communications. The British launched military expeditions against the Qasimi Arabs in 1805, 1809 and 1819, and by 1820 they had succeeded in all but destroying their once formidable navy.

Thereafter the British dominated the Gulf and succeeded in binding the inhabitants, principally the Qawasim, to a series of maritime treaties, culminating in the 'Perpetual Maritime Truce' of 1853, which is still in effect. From this time on, the area in which Sharjah is located became known as the Trucial Coast (or Trucial Oman) and the Arab emirates of the region as the Trucial States.

Leading directly from the 'Perpetual Maritime Truce', a treaty was signed in 1892 between Sharjah and Britain whereby the former became a quasi-protectorate of the latter. Sharjah retained its independence and its internal sovereignty, but it surrendered to Britain external sovereignty, so that the British became responsible for the state's foreign relations and defence, a responsibility which still exists. It was arranged for the affairs of Sharjah to be dealt with by the British Government of India.

From 1892 until India achieved independence in 1947, Britain's hold over the Gulf was at its strongest. During this period the fortunes of Sharjah waxed and waned according to the power and policies of Britain and those of her three most influential neighbours – Saudi Arabia, Muscat and Iran. Sharjah nevertheless succeeded in maintaining its position as the commercial centre of the Trucial States and was, for a time, the second most important port in the Gulf after Kuwait. It also became the seat of the British Government's representative in the Trucial States.

Misfortune came in the late 1930s when the pearling industry went into decline. Worse was to come: the creek, on which Sharjah's economy was based, began to silt up.

Then, slowly, in the mid-1950s, Sharjah's fortunes began to rise as a result of the discovery of petroleum in huge quantities in the Gulf. Kuwait began to extend aid for health and education. The British Government, too, provided aid through the Trucial States Council in the form of grants for improving

basic services. The United Nations made Sharjah the headquarters for its desert locust survey in the Gulf and the Royal Air Force established a major base, thereby boosting the economy.

The emirate's growth remained limited by a lack of imaginative leadership, however, and it was not until 1965, when Shaikh Khalid bin Mohammad Al-Qasimi became Ruler, that Sharjah's economic recovery began to gain its present impetus.

Since January 1968, when Britain announced its decision to withdraw its military presence from the Gulf by the end of 1971, political developments have centred on the formation of a federation of Gulf states. The federation is still embryonic, but when it becomes fully effective Sharjah's enthusiasm for the concept and its geographical location at the centre of the group – it shares borders with all the other Trucial States – will ensure that it plays a leading part.

Sharjah has also played an important political role as the home of the Trucial Oman Scouts (TOS). This force, set up by Britain as the 'Trucial Oman Levies' in 1951, was originally intended to provide security for travellers and residents in the area for whom the British Government was responsible. As its strength has grown (from 60 soldiers in 1951 to nearly 2,000 of all ranks today), so its role has gradually broadened: the TOS are now chiefly concerned with maintaining internal tribal peace, although they also have a degree of responsibility for the states' external security.

The formidable 19th Century cannon and columns (left) in Sharjah Town's Majlis Square, are a constant reminder of the days when Sharjah was the centre of the Musandam Peninsula and when the Seaface Hotel (below) was the Political Agency.

sharjah at a glance

The 200-year-old Rola Tree, traditionally the centre of Sharjah Town, still dominates the capital's main street.

POLITICAL GEOGRAPHY

The Emirate of Sharjah and its Dependencies covers some 2,600 square kilometres and is the third largest of the seven Trucial States of the Arabian Gulf. The main body of the country is situated in the western half of the Musandam Peninsula (See map on pages 40/41). This part of Sharjah encircles Ajman on the west coast and extends some forty miles inland. Sharjah also has three dependencies on the east coast by the Gulf of Oman – Dibba, Khor Fakkan and Kalba – and two islands off the western coast in the Arabian Gulf – Abu Musa, and Sir Abu Nuair. Sharjah is the only Trucial State which shares borders with all the others. It also borders on Muscat and Oman. Sharjah Town lies 25° 20' N, 55° 21' E.

ADMINISTRATION

Sharjah's system of government is basically paternalistic. The Ruler's authority is absolute, but he is constantly accessible to any subject who wishes to see him with a petition, a complaint or a personal problem.

This traditionalism has been modified by the Ruler's gradual spreading of responsibility, a step which he regards as necessary to the smooth running of a modern economy. Five years ago there were only four Government departments – the Sharjah Municipality, Passport, Customs and the Post Office. Since then the Ruler has introduced twelve new departments and totally reorganised the original four; all chairmen and directors of these departments report directly to him. There is one other important Government body, the Land Ownership Committee.

GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS

Finance Department
H.H. The Ruler, Chairman
Khalid Al-Alami, Director

Passports Department
Shaikh Saqr bin Mohammad Al-Qasimi, Chairman

Sharjah Municipality
Shaikh Saud bin Sultan Al-Qasimi, Chairman
Mukhtar El-Tom, Director

Oil and Mineral Affairs Department
Shaikh Mohammad bin Sultan Al-Qasimi, Chairman
Abdulaziz Hassan Al-Midfa, Director

Ports Department
Shaikh Khalid bin Sultan Al-Qasimi, Chairman
Rashid Sultan Al-Makhawi, Director

Religious Courts
Shaikh Hamad bin Majid Al-Qasimi, Chairman
Shaikh Mohammad Al-Mahdi, Judge

Civil Courts Department
Yusri Al-Duwaik, Chief Judge and Legal Adviser to the Ruler

Awqaf (Religious Foundations Department)
Shaikh Hassan Al-Radwan, Director

Trade, Aviation and Marine Department
Mustafa Zain, Director General

Education Department
Abdulla Umran Tariem, Director

Labour and Social Affairs Department
Tariem Umran Tariem, Director

Posts Department
Salim Ali Al-Mahmoud, Director

Police Department
J.I. Burns, Commandant

Electricity and Water Department
John Bannister, Director

Lands and Survey Department
Ibrahim Al-Kurdi, Director

Customs Department
Essa Al-Midfa, Director

Ruler's Secretariat
Ibrahim Mohammad Al-Midfa
Jasim bin Saif Al-Midfa

The Imam conducts the midday prayer at the Jumma Mosque.

MUNICIPALITY

The Municipality deserves special mention, as it has a degree of autonomy, with its own sources of revenue and its own budget. It is responsible for the day-to-day running of the capital, but decisions on major projects are taken by the Ruler and payment is arranged through the Finance Department. A similar organisation has existed for 45 years, but the present form of the Municipality dates back only to 1965. Its growing efficiency and importance can be gauged from the fact that its revenue rose from QDR 308,700 in 1966 to QDR 1,942,000 last year, even though car licence fees and Land Department revenue were subtracted from the Municipality's income during that period.

All the departments of government in Sharjah Town have branch offices in Khor Fakkan (the administrative capital of the three east coast dependencies). They also have offices in the other two east coast towns. The Ruler's personal representative there is also his brother, Shaikh Saqr bin Mohammad Al-Qasimi, who is in general charge of their administration and coordination, but several of the department branches (including the Police, the Courts and the Municipality) are directly responsible to their main offices in Sharjah Town. The headmen of Kalba and Dibba are directly responsible to Shaikh Saqr.

PHYSICAL STRUCTURE

Sharjah consists mainly of a western coastal sand plain extending inland to a gravel plain which stretches to the foot of the Eastern Hajar Mountains. The eastern dependencies are spaced along a semi-fertile coastal plain which immediately adjoins these mountains.

CLIMATE

From June to September it is extremely hot: temperatures as high as 124° Fahrenheit have been recorded. Humidity in the coastal areas is also very high during this period, but inland the air is drier and the nights are cooler. The winter months are mild. Most of Sharjah is arid: total annual rainfall rarely exceeds five inches and often amounts to only one inch. Brief torrential storms occasionally occur, however, causing minor flooding.

POPULATION

The Trucial States Council's 1968 census put Sharjah's population at 31,480. But this is disputed with some justice by the Government, which claims that a minimum of some 5,000 nomadic Bedou who traditionally roam Sharjah's interior, were not included.

Moreover, Sharjah's growing economic strength has had a startling impact on the state's population since the census. The birth rate has steadily mounted as increased medical facilities and improved housing conditions begin to take effect; it is now estimated to be contributing 5-6 per cent of the overall rate of increase.

But the real boom has been caused by the steadily-mounting numbers of expatriate nationals and others who, in the last two years, have been drawn to Sharjah's economic renaissance with - as yet - no sign that their numbers are falling off.

In short, the population numbered some 36,500 in 1968. By mid-1970 the Government firmly estimated that it had rocketed to some 55,000.

The majority of the indigenous inhabitants are Muslim Arabs, most of whom live in the towns and villages, although a small proportion remain nomadic. The census showed that there are 27 Arab tribes represented in Sharjah, the largest of which is the Ruler's Qawasim Tribe. Three others number more than 1,000 each – the Naqbiyan, the Bani Qitab and the Bani Yas. Except for the Bani Yas, they are all stronger in Sharjah than in the other northern Trucial States.

Sharjah's population also includes substantial numbers of Iranians, Indians, Pakistanis, Africans, northern Arabs and Europeans. Many of the Asians arrived as immigrants within the last few years. The official language is Arabic, but English is also widely used.

Two-thirds of the population live in Sharjah Town, the administrative and commercial capital.

ECONOMIC LIFE

Traditionally the people of Sharjah have depended mainly on fishing and agriculture for a livelihood. This is particularly true of the east coast dependencies, which are centred on the three fishing towns (Dibba, Khor Fakkan and Kalba) from which they take their names. Fishing villages on the west coast include Khan, Layyah, Haira and Hamriyah. Sharjah Town itself has a long tradition as a maritime trading centre. The main inland agricultural settlement is at the oasis of Dhaid. Of Sharjah's islands only Abu Musa is populated: its rich red oxide deposits have been mined for many years by a British company, but this activity was suspended last year.

CURRENCY

The official currency is the Qatar-Dubai Riyal (QDR), which is divided into 100 dirhams (£1 = QDR 11.4, $ 1 = QDR 4.77). The Bahrain Dinar (BD1 = QDR 10) is also legal tender. The Qatar-Dubai Riyal replaced the Gulf Rupee in 1966 after India had devalued its currency and it was made clear that this move applied equally to the Gulf Rupee, although the latter had previously been regarded as external currency. Sharjah is in the sterling area but permanent British residents can gain exemption from foreign currency transfer restrictions.

BUSINESS HINTS

Government offices open from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. Business offices are open the same period and again from 3 p.m. to 6 p.m. Friday is the weekly holiday.

Visitors must have a valid visa for the Trucial States. These are issued with the prior approval of the British Political Agency in Dubai by passport offices in Britain and by UK Consulates abroad. An up-to-date smallpox vaccination certificate is also required.

There is no income tax in Sharjah and import duty on all goods is 2½ per cent. Imports have risen sharply in recent years; no official statistics are available, but transhipments from Dubai alone amounted to some QDR 16 million last year compared with QDR 10.8 million in 1968.

SHARJAH TOWN: CLIMATIC TABLE

	Temperatures † Average maximum °C	°F	Average minimum °C	°F	Relative Humidity average at 16.00 hours (%)	Rainfall average per month mms.	ins.
January	29	84	9	48	62	24	0.9
February	31	88	10	50	64	18	0.7
March	35	95	11	52	60	9	0.4
April	38	100	14	57	59	10	0.4
May	41	106	18	64	60	4	0.2
June	43	109	21	70	62	–	–
July	45	113	24	75	61	1	–
August	44	111	24	75	62	–	–
September	43	109	22	72	63	1	–
October	38	100	18	64	59	1	–
November	33	91	13	55	56	11	0.4
December	29	84	9	48	59	27	1.1
ANNUAL AVERAGE	45 **	113	8 ‡	46	61	106*	4.2

† *Based on 17 years of observation, 1949-66.* * *Average total based on 30 years of observation, 1936-66.*
– *nil or negligible.* ** *Mean of highest each year.* ‡ *Mean of lowest each year.*

Source: Meteorological Office, London

foreign investment

Attracting foreign investment is the overriding aim of Sharjah's economic policy. What the state lacks most is capital, and rather than attempting to set up its own industrial schemes it is building a basic framework of services, which will be indispensable to domestic industries of the future but which will act primarily as an immediate magnet for international concerns. It is for this reason that communications, power and water supplies take the lion's share of Government spending.

But Sharjah has other more specific attractions for the prospective investor. There are remarkably few taxes or restrictive regulations of any kind affecting business operations. There is no income tax, and although Sharjah is in the sterling area residents may be exempted from foreign currency transfer restrictions. A Municipality tax of 10 per cent on the annual rent of land and 5 per cent on rented living accommodation is charged, however, and a fee of QDR 0.25 a square foot is payable on new buildings. Electricity and water rates are minimal. Customs duty on imports is only 2½ per cent *ad valorem*, and capital goods are exempt from this. The 2½ per cent rate also applies to products marketed in the other Trucial States, but no duty is charged on sales to other areas. Moreover, a free transit zone has been established.

The Ruler assists developers personally by, for instance, reducing the customary rent for the chosen area or by extending the usual 15-year lease. A general principle already established is that the price of land varies in inverse proportion to the size of the proposed industrial development: land for large-scale schemes is granted at a purely nominal fee.

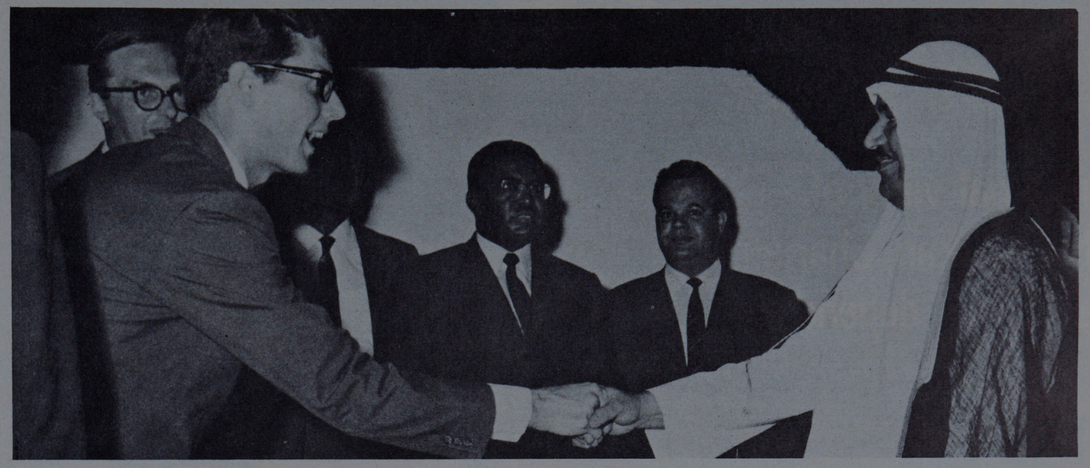
Sharjah's liberal policies are undoubtedly producing results: about a dozen major international contractors have established themselves in the state, and there are at least another 70 medium-sized and small foreign companies.

Interest in Sharjah's investment potential continues to accelerate. Among subjects discussed recently were a gas-bottling project put forward by the US oil firm Caltex, a proposal from a Hong Kong businessman to set up a vacuum flask factory and a Scandinavian scheme, submitted through the Gulf Agency Company, to manufacture and store equipment and supplies for merchant shipping in the Gulf.

Sharjah is successfully attracting modern light industry. An example of this recent expansion was the establishment in mid-1970 of an expanded-polystyrene manufacturing company which plans by September to be in full production and will direct sales in the Gulf-wide market.

These examples show clearly the wide range of industrial activity being considered for Sharjah. Manufacturers of building materials will obviously be attracted to the state, and several are already established; but there is also a strong likelihood of extensive light industrial development and the introduction of factories producing consumer durables for export.

The Habib Bank will soon have its modern offices next to the imposing Arab Bank building on the main street.



The Ruler greets B.J. Butter, National and Grindlays branch manager, at the inauguration ceremonies in June.

banking and insurance

There is no clearer indication of the growing international confidence in Sharjah's economy than the rate at which banks are establishing branches in the emirate. Less than a year ago there were only four banks operating: there are now eight, and by September 1970 there will be ten.

The first to recognise the country's potential was the British Bank of the Middle East (BBME), which set up a branch in the heart of Sharjah Town *souk* as long ago as March 1953, extending its activities to Khor Fakkan in 1967 and adding a once-weekly service at Kalba last year. The Eastern Bank opened in Sharjah in 1958, the Habib Bank of Pakistan soon followed and the Arab Bank was in operation by 1963.

Since then National and Grindlays, the Commercial Bank of Dubai, the United Bank of Pakistan and Bank Saderat Iran have moved in. They will shortly be joined by Bank Melli Iran and, in September, by the world's second biggest bank, First National City of New York.

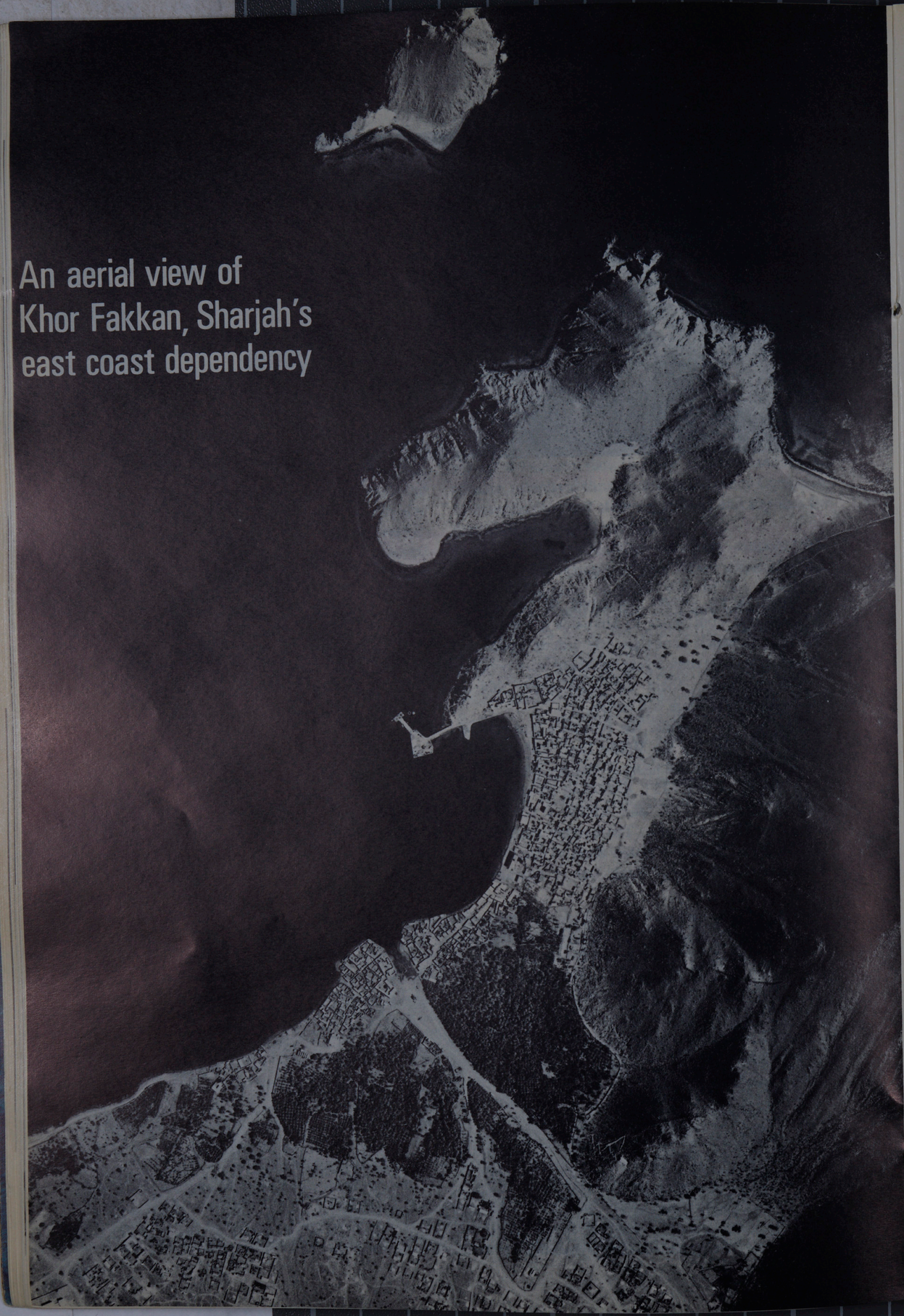
Branches are established through direct application to the Ruler, who actively encourages such approaches by offering low rents and providing extensive services. The freedom from monetary restrictions also makes Sharjah an attractive prospect, and the strength of the Qatar-Dubai Riyal and the Bahrain Dinar was proved when neither currency devalued with sterling in 1967.

Much banking growth is motivated by expectations of oil wealth, but it is apparent that the profitability of branches in Sharjah would continue to grow rapidly in any case. Recent months have seen a sharp increase in money in circulation, and the near future may see greater attention paid to the east coast dependencies, particularly Khor Fakkan: the development of fisheries and agriculture is making steady progress in the area, and BBME is the only bank represented there at present. Several other international banks are also understood to be interested in the East Coast.

As with banking, insurance activity has been permitted unrestricted growth in Sharjah in the past, and the considerable number of recently-established agencies indicates that premium income has been substantial. The services provided in this way were adequate while business remained on a simple level; but the present rate of development is creating more sophisticated kinds of insurance risk. For this reason, and because no organisation was willing to commit itself fully to the needs of the country by establishing a local company, the Sharjah Insurance Company was incorporated in March 1970, with the Ruler as Chairman, at the instigation of the Government's Trade, Aviation and Marine Department.

The company has an authorised share capital of QDR 2½ million, divided into 25,000 shares of QDR 100. Half are held by the Sharjah Government, 2,500 are for preferred subscribers and the remaining 10,000 have been offered for public subscription through Unigulf Investments.

The company was set up along the lines of the state insurance companies of Kuwait and Qatar and, as in their case, London brokers J.H. Minet will act as managers.



An aerial view of Khor Fakkan, Sharjah's east coast dependency

development guidelines

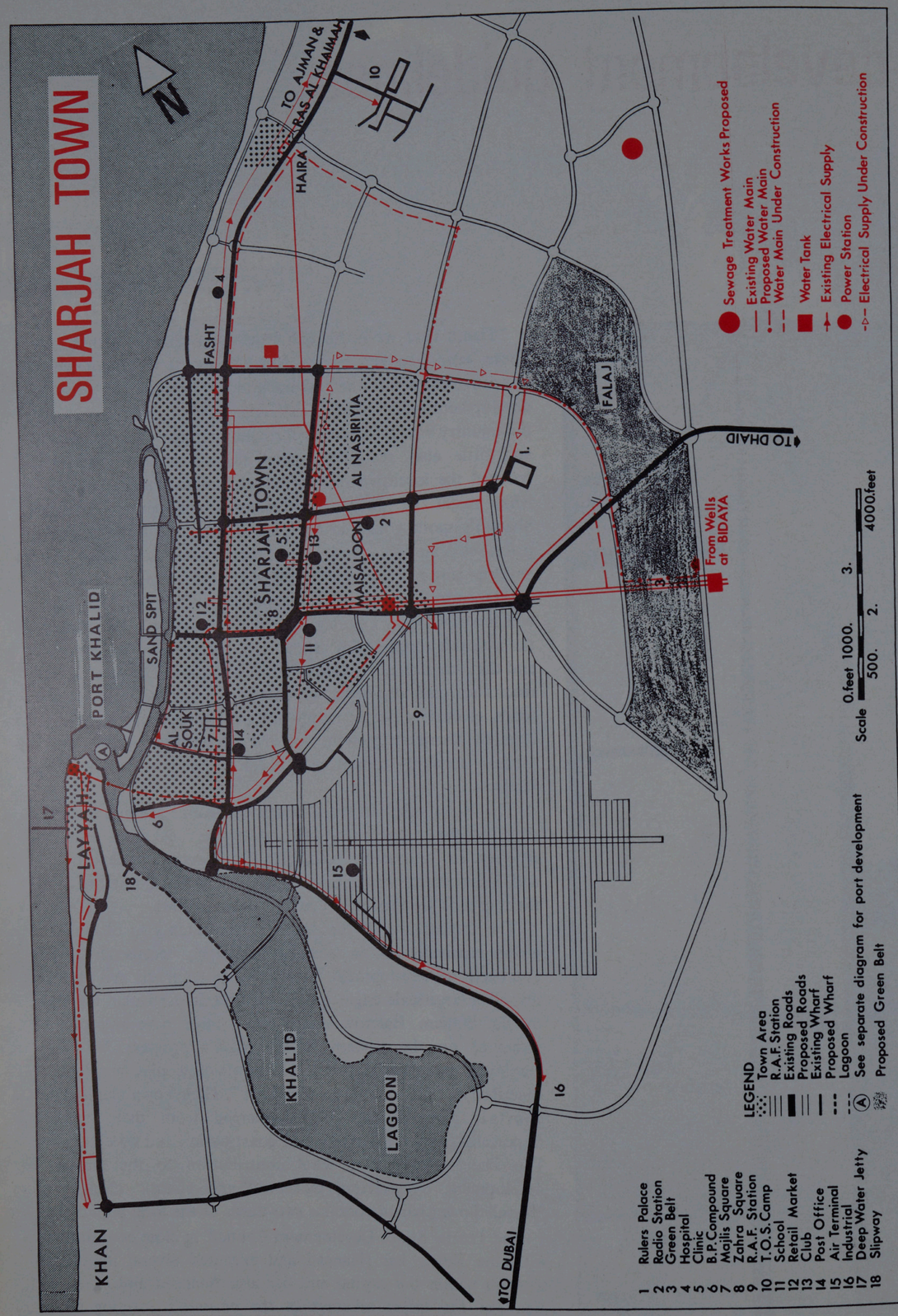
"Thank God we in Sharjah have come this far without oil." These words, spoken by the Ruler, pinpoint three noteworthy characteristics of the administrators behind the emirate's development achievements: a strong sense of pride in launching the country's transformation through ingenuity, determination – and little else; recognition that massive wealth would have reduced the incentive to plan ahead; and an acute awareness of what might be done if unlimited funds became available. Sharjah's modest income has obliged the state to work out its priorities carefully, and as a result when oil does come development will continue to follow established guidelines.

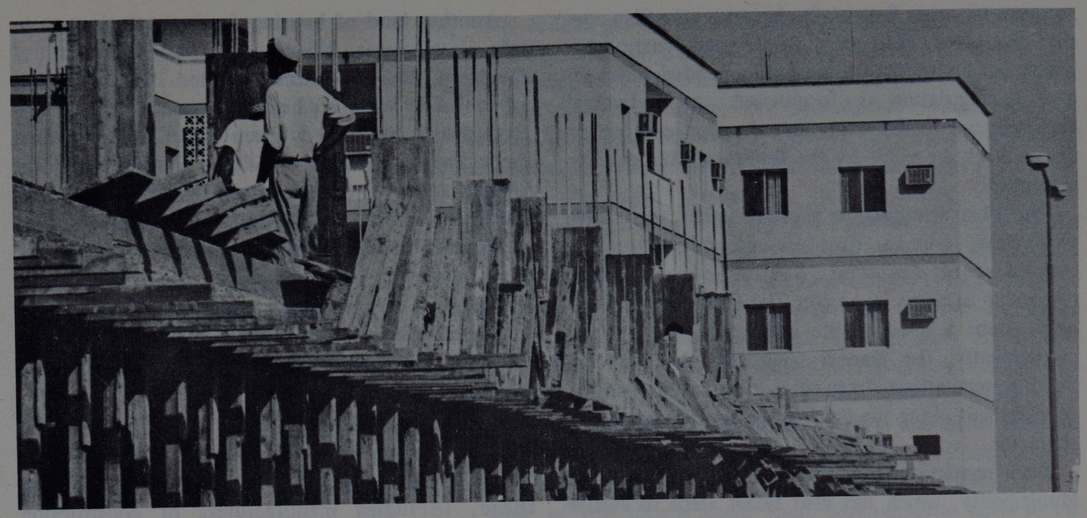
The emirate's programme encompasses all three major areas in which a developing country must make headway – expansion of the available resources of production, extension of social services and the provision of an adequate infrastructure. The most striking results are certainly being achieved in the infrastructural sphere: roads, electricity, water supply and port improvements are at the root of Sharjah's growth, for the Government knows that a modern economy cannot even begin to function without these facilities.

The Ruler takes all the ultimate decisions regarding Sharjah's development programme and establishes his own order of priority. He is, however, advised by the Government departments and international consultants, and the responsibilities of both these groups are broadening as the state expands.

The importance of the work of consultants in Sharjah has grown especially fast in recent years, largely because the state's approach to development places heavy emphasis on projects involving large-scale engineering contracts. In particular, the ideas of Sir William Halcrow and Partners now have a profound influence on the pattern of the state's progress. Originally employed on specific briefs, Halcrow's now play a role best described as "consultants to the Ruler". Their Town Plan for the capital, prepared in 1969, emerged from their existing responsibilities for the port, road construction and water supply. The Plan will make a vital contribution to the emirate's development by averting piecemeal and chaotic changes in Sharjah Town, which contains two-thirds of the total population.

The Trucial States Development Council, in close consultation with the Ruler, has financed and executed several important schemes within the capital and has also financed and executed many of the major schemes in the emirate's outlying areas.





Sharjah is one of the fastest-growing towns in the Trucial States.

planning urban growth

The busy construction activity in Sharjah Town bears witness to the speed of the state's development. Modern shops, houses, commercial buildings, blocks of flats and administrative centres are springing up throughout the town, many of them on land which was open desert two or three years ago.

Land prices have risen steeply. The cost of a plot in the town centre now averages some QDR 150 a square foot, compared with QDR 100 at the end of 1968. Demand continues to rise, moreover: Government leases on office blocks in the capital are taken up long before the buildings are completed.

In this 'boom' atmosphere the Government of Sharjah could be forgiven for letting the town's growth find its own course; but it is aware that careful long-term planning has enormous advantages, in terms of, for example, the rational distribution of services.

Indeed, a major reason for the recent boom is that the Ruler showed sufficient foresight five years ago to ensure that the capital expanded in accordance with the basic zoning principles and road layout, integrated with essential services, which Halcrow's recommended in 1963. In this way, and by granting land to large-scale developers at a nominal fee, the Government is attracting foreign companies by the dozen, thereby rapidly increasing the amount of capital formation in the country and steadily raising the level of economic activity.

The 1969 Town Plan assumes a population of 60,000 by 1980, an estimate based on the 30 per cent growth recorded over the previous six years. It envisages that growth will be concentrated towards the east and north-east, as development towards Dubai is somewhat restricted by the location of the lagoon and the RAF base. Taking into account the existing character of the town, areas have been mapped out for various densities of residential development, an industrial zone, the commercial centre,the administrative centre, a green belt to the north-east and a nearby

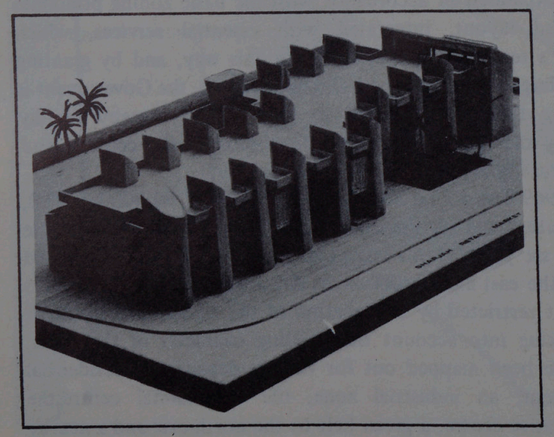
recreational zone. Essentially, however, the Plan consists of a master diagram of future road construction which can be borne in mind (and amended if necessary) as legislation is formulated and individual decisions and recommendations on proposed construction work are made by the Ruler and Municipality respectively.

The Plan attempts to prevent rather than solve problems, but a number of difficulties are immediately apparent. The structure of land ownership is a key example. The Government owns only about a third of the land in the town area; consequently, the planners suggested the need for building regulations designed to guide private-sector development along the lines of the capital's approved character.

Such regulations have now been drawn up by the Municipality, which has also taken steps to ensure that a comprehensive record of private ownership is kept, that all approved exchanges and allocations of land are centralised on a master plan and that the quality of new buildings is of a high standard. Indeed, the Municipality has been given wide-ranging powers. These innovations will prevent work being done that might have to be undone a few years later.

Housing development will continue to follow the traditional pattern whereby the Ruler gives his subjects land on which to build. This is usually granted in parcels of 50 or 100 feet square, and it is on the basis of this system that the town planners have projected population densities in the various areas. The Ruler also builds houses for individual Sharjah nationals at his own cost if they are seen to merit such help, but lack only the necessary finance.

Architect's model of the projected retail market.



Another kind of housing development is soon to take place between Khan and Layyah to the south of the town. This Government-owned strip of land is scheduled to become a high-class residential area. The groundwork has already been done: a superb dual carriageway links the two villages – the first road in Sharjah to have modern street lighting, which was installed in 1968. The first phase of the new sewage system will include a self-contained section for this area with its own temporary treatment plant. Developers from many countries have already submitted designs for villas along the beach there, and contracts are expected to be awarded in September 1970.

Industrial development will be concentrated to the south-east of the town near the port and the airport. Several international firms are already established there, including manufacturers of construction materials, building contractors and vehicle maintenance companies. The number of applications from abroad for establishing a business in the industrial area is steadily increasing. Interested companies include manufacturers of cast-iron pipes and fittings and aluminium goods. An assembly plant for refrigerators and air-conditioners is also under consideration, and Caltex, the American oil giant, has proposed setting up a gas-bottling plant, which would initially use natural gas imported from other parts of the Gulf. Caltex plans to market Sharjah-bottled gas throughout the region.

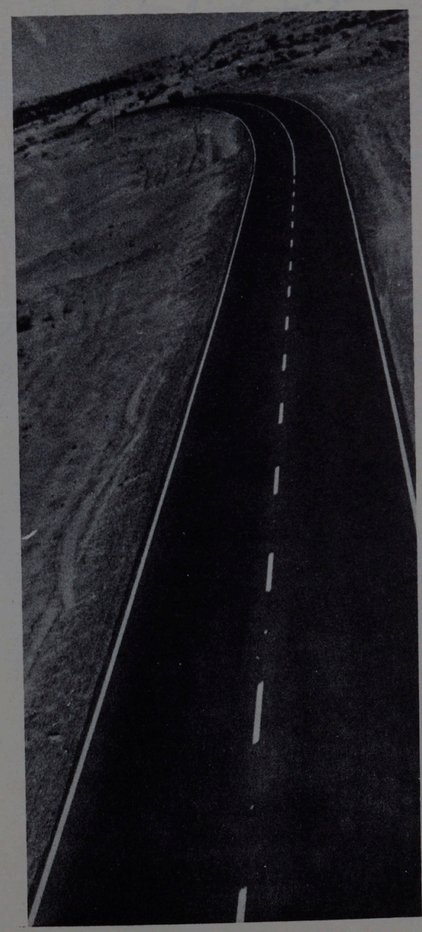
The growing foreign business interest is reflected in the major construction work now under way in Sharjah Town. This includes a ten-storey block of shops and flats near the power station, a 1,500-seat air-conditioned cinema, the Sheba Hotel to the south of the town and a rash of commercial buildings on the main street, where a minimum height of three storeys is stipulated.

By this autumn international tenders will be called for construction of a new retail market in the town centre. The market will be a '20th-Century *souk*' with 30 shop units on two floors. The present traditional, creek-side *souk* will therefore gradually become obsolete and the area it occupies will be redeveloped as the new market and other modern shopping centres are established.

The style of the market will be contemporary but it will retain a distinct Arab character. The same principle of design has governed Halcrow's plans for the development of Majlis Square, Zahra Square, the Police Headquarters and a new Royal Palace. Indeed, the Ruler is determined not only to make Sharjah a thriving commercial centre but also one of the most attractive cities on the Gulf.

roads

The Sharjah-Dhaid road.



The sudden growth of a modern road network is perhaps the most impressive and is certainly the most valuable of all Sharjah's development achievements. But the true value of Sharjah's modern road system is not always immediately apparent to the visitor. There are, however, a number of benefits which the state and population are deriving from the expanding road network.

First, the rapid progress in main highway and street construction in and around Sharjah Town is the basis of the Town Plan, providing a firm direction and pattern to the capital's future growth. Secondly, the main routes from Sharjah Town to the neighbouring states have cleared a way for the emirate to make lively and efficient economic contact with the outside world. Thirdly, the land routes across the peninsula and along its coasts enable Sharjah's dependencies to participate fully in a unified national development. Finally, these and other planned roads will open up agricultural and fishing areas and facilitate the marketing of produce in other Trucial States and beyond.

Most of the state's major road developments have so far centred on Sharjah Town, which is rapidly becoming a focal point of communications in the northern Trucial States. Construction in recent years has generally followed the recommendations made in Halcrow's initial 1963 proposals for a Town Plan, according to which the capital's main road was to be built as the central section of the proposed 116-kilometre arterial link between Dubai to the south and Ras al-Khaimah to the north.

Originally it was thought that this major highway would be paid for by the Trucial States Council (TSC) Development Fund. In the event, the Fund paid for only the 13.5 kilometre Dubai-Sharjah section, built in 1966 by the Contracting and Trading Company (CAT) of Lebanon. The total cost of this first-class single-carriageway link was nearly QDR 4 million.

The Fund also financed the initial town road development within the capital in 1966-67. This involved the construction of 2.7 kilometres of single and dual carriageway by Khansaheb Civil Engineering Contractors at a cost of some QDR 530,000.

The broad dual carriageway through the centre of the town now continues on to Ras al-Khaimah but narrows to a single carriageway 2.5 kilometres outside town. This entire Sharjah-Ras al-Khaimah route was financed by Saudi Arabia and built by Bin Ladin with Sauti as consultants at a cost of approximately QDR 35 million. It was completed last year. A QDR 800,000 slip road, through Sharjah Town to the Ruler's palace, has been built as a joint project with the Sharjah Government.

Quite apart from the major connections with other states, new roads have been spreading at a remarkable rate all over the town area. The Development Fund financed a branch from the Dubai road to Khan Village, just south of the capital, and the Government of Sharjah then provided its own finance for a QDR 1.2 million dual carriageway covering the two kilometres from Khan to Layyah, a suburb near the port area. A service road running north from the old town centre parallel to the Ras al-Khaimah road is being extended and the overall town network is being developed northward and eastward along the lines proposed in the Town Plan.

SHARJAH
and Trucial Oman
IRAN
Arabian Gulf
Gulf of Oman
MUSCAT
SAUDI ARABIA
KEY:
0 5 10 15 20 Mls
0 5 10 15 20 25 30 Km
SHARJAH AND DEPENDENCIES
FRONTIERS, DEFINED
FRONTIERS, PRESUMPTIVE
TRUCIAL STATES FRONTIER CLAIM
MUSCAT FRONTIER CLAIM
ROAD, PAVED
ROAD FORMED, NOT YET PAVED
ROAD, BUILDING OR PROJECTED
OTHER MAIN TRACKS
WATER PIPELINE
WADI
MOUNTAINS
STRAITS OF HORMUZ
N
ARABIAN GULF
GULF OF OMAN
Muscat and Oman
Ras al-Khaimah
Ras al-Khaimah
Umm al-Qaiwain
Umm al-Qaiwain
Hamriyah
Ajman
Ajman
SHARJAH
Khan
Moweilah
Deira
Dubai
Bidaya
Dhaid
Foreland
Jiri Plain
Central Desert
Central Gravel Plain
Dibba
Fuj.
Masafi
Aj.
R. al-K.
Khor Fakkan
Coastal Plain
Fujairah
Fujairah
Kalba
Khor Kalba
East
S-F
Fuj.
Fuj.
Tawi Hamdah
Mileiha
Jebel Fayya
Dubai
Madam Plain
Aj.
Dub.
AM
Shinas
Muscat and Oman
54°E
55°E
SHARJAH'S ISLANDS
Abu Musa
Sharjah
Sir Abu Nuair
25°N

A total of 16.5 kilometres of dual carriageway and 10.7 kilometres of single carriageway has been built inside the capital to date. The cost of this development has already amounted to some QDR 8.5 million, and the rate of expansion shows no signs of slackening.

Modern, well-designed fluorescent street lighting is installed as fast as the roads are built under a contract awarded to Philips with Drake and Scull handling the installation sub-contract. The first section was connected in late 1968 on the Khan-Layyah road; today there are street lights in most parts of the town.

The west coast highway, north of the capital, awaits the town's accelerating growth.

This apparent extravagance is a vital part of the Ruler's personal long-term dual strategy of making the emirate as attractive as possible to foreign industrial and commercial developers, and of simultaneously effecting a rise in the value of privately-owned land in order to create greater capital resources within the state. Similar considerations dictate the policy of building dual (rather than single) carriageways whenever possible.

Sharjah Town's key position in the Trucial States road network is dictated by two factors: its central location on the west coast artery and the fact that it is now the starting-point for the transpeninsular road.

An east-west road across the Musandam Peninsula was one of the earliest objectives of the TSC Development Office, which employed Halcrow's to prepare a feasibility study on the project in 1965-67. The consultants recommended a route from Sharjah to Fujairah via Dhaid, and a road along the east coast linking Dibba in the north to Kalba in the south via Khor Fakkan. The total cost of a paved road over the whole route was estimated at QDR 47 million.

This important project is now well under way. The Government of Abu Dhabi financed the Sharjah Town-Dhaid section, and this was completed in July 1969 by Khansaheb, with Arabicon acting as consultants, at a cost of some QDR 13 million.

East of Dhaid the work remains in the hands of the Development Office. Basic improvements to the existing tracks along the Wadis Siji and Ham began in 1967. The work there presents considerable difficulties because of the rugged mountainous terrain. Engineers from the British military base have been assisting, particularly on those stretches which require a large amount of demolition work.

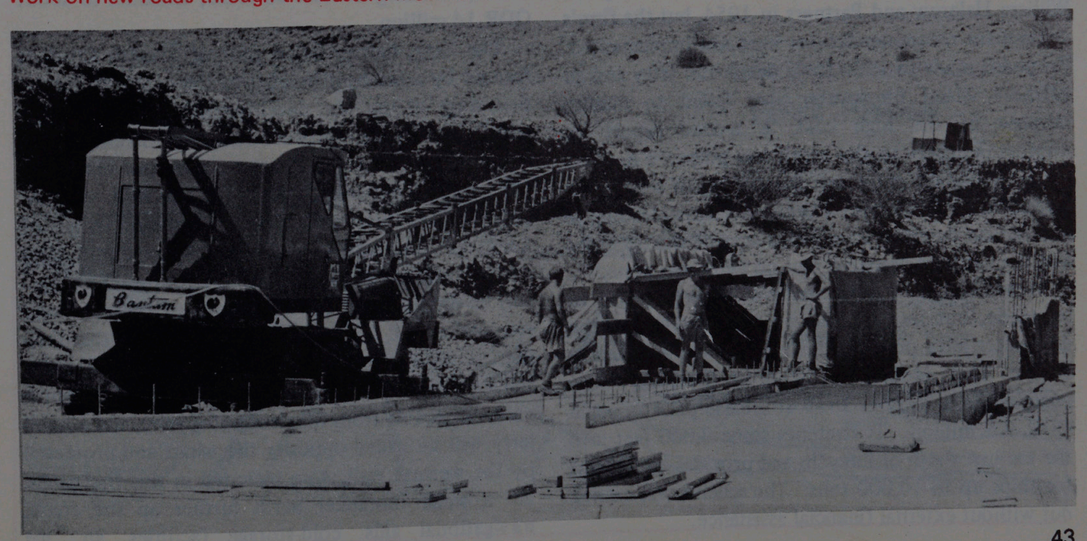
A preliminary motor track through the mountains was opened in 1968 and the eastern half of the road has been formed, although it has not yet been paved. The remainder is now also under construction.

Progress has also been made on the Kalba-Dibba road. The stretch between Fujairah and Khor Fakkan is formed but not paved, as is part of the route from Khor Fakkan to Dibba.

The major road project for the future is the TSC's proposed trunk route running down the centre of the peninsula from Ras al-Khaimah to Buraimi, much of which would be in Sharjah territory. The idea is that this should be built as a multi-purpose road, vital to the agricultural prospects of the area. Not only would it open up markets for some of the region's major agricultural producers, it would also directly help to make full use of the water and soil resources in two main ways. First, it would become a barrier against flash floods from the eastern mountains; it would thus prevent a sudden rush of water dispersing wastefully across the upper layers of the soil. Secondly, the valuable silts washed down from the mountain area would be caught on the east side of the road whence they could be redistributed on the cultivated land on the other side.

A very experienced consultant working locally commented that he had never before seen a project "that would give so much benefit for so little cost". This highly original scheme could double or even treble the water resources of the northern Trucial States. Unfortunately the finance necessary to launch it immediately on a full scale is not yet forthcoming, although Bonifica of Italy have shown some interest. The Development Fund's 1970 budget includes an allocation of QDR 1 million for the first stage, which is to be built across some eight kilometres of Sharjah's territory, providing agricultural protection and marketing links for the area most urgently in need of them.

Work on new roads through the Eastern Mountains.



port development

For centuries Sharjah was the most prominent seaport of the Trucial Coast, and the present ambitious port development scheme aims to reassert this former prominence. The project is vital not only in terms of the obvious need for communication and transport, but also because trade itself is a traditional occupation and its re-establishment on a major scale would immediately boost the economy.

Sharjah's decline as a commercial power began in the early 1950s when the creek began to silt up. The first survey of the situation was carried out by Sir William Halcrow and Partners in 1954, but the firm's subsequent recommendations were not implemented. Proposals made in 1959 for a deepwater jetty and an offshore island breakwater also failed to mature because of the high cost. A second report on improving access to the creek was prepared in 1961 when Halcrow's proposed the cutting of a new and protected entrance with a dredged channel leading to a wharf on the inner creek. This scheme was accepted and the contract prepared, but no work was done.

It was not until 1965 that real progress began to be made, but interest had by then shifted to the deepwater jetty project. The contract was awarded to Beton and Monierbau of West Germany who completed the jetty in 1969 at a basic price of some QDR 9.5 million. It stretches some 2,000 feet into the sea just south of Layyah, and provides two berths for ships up to 10,000 tons. The scheme was carried out without external financial assistance.

It was recognised by the Ruler that the jetty alone was not enough to re-establish Sharjah as a major entrepot. A sheltered harbour, initially to serve local dhow traffic, was seen as the next crucial step and such a project began to be seriously considered in 1968. Revised specifications were prepared in early 1969, and a £1 million sterling civil engineering contract for the first phase was awarded to Tarmac Construction of Britain who started work in October. The state has itself raised the necessary finance which, including interest on loans, amounts to about QDR 14 million.

The long, narrow outer part of Sharjah Creek is formed by a sandspit parallel to the coast. Under the first stage of the port development scheme this spit will be cut at the westward end, thus making a new entrance from the sea direct to the inner creek and the lagoon beyond. This new opening will be protected by two walls with a combined length of 1,800 feet. The western wall will have rock armouring and will also act as a breakwater. An entrance channel will be dredged to a low-tide depth of eight feet and revetments will be built on either side. A thousand feet of wharfage has already been constructed along the west side of the inner creek, in a position that is easily accessible from the deepwater jetty, and a small jetty will be added opposite the wharf and protected by the western wall. Also included in this first phase are a small oil-tanker berth further up the creek, navigational aids, cold-storage facilities, an ice factory, warehouses, lighting and a number of other port buildings, costing some QDR 6 million.

The work involves dredging the inner harbour area to a maximum depth of 15 feet so that 1,000-ton ships can be handled. A 104-ton British-built suction cutter dredger is now engaged on this task. It is removing nearly 400,000 cubic yards of sand, soft sandstone and coral fragments which will be used in land reclamation and the formation of flood-protective embankments around the lagoon.

One of the main areas scheduled for reclamation is the outer creek. This will be blocked at the end nearest the new harbour and the remainder allowed to silt up, although dredged material will be added if necessary. The land to be reclaimed is already being offered for sale.

Another important feature of the port's development will be a repair slipway for fishing vessels up to 200 feet and 1,200 tons lightweight. Designs are at a preliminary stage, but it is expected that up to four vessels could be repaired simultaneously. A workshop, stores and a two-storey office block are also proposed in connection with this project. The site will be some 600 feet from the new wharf.

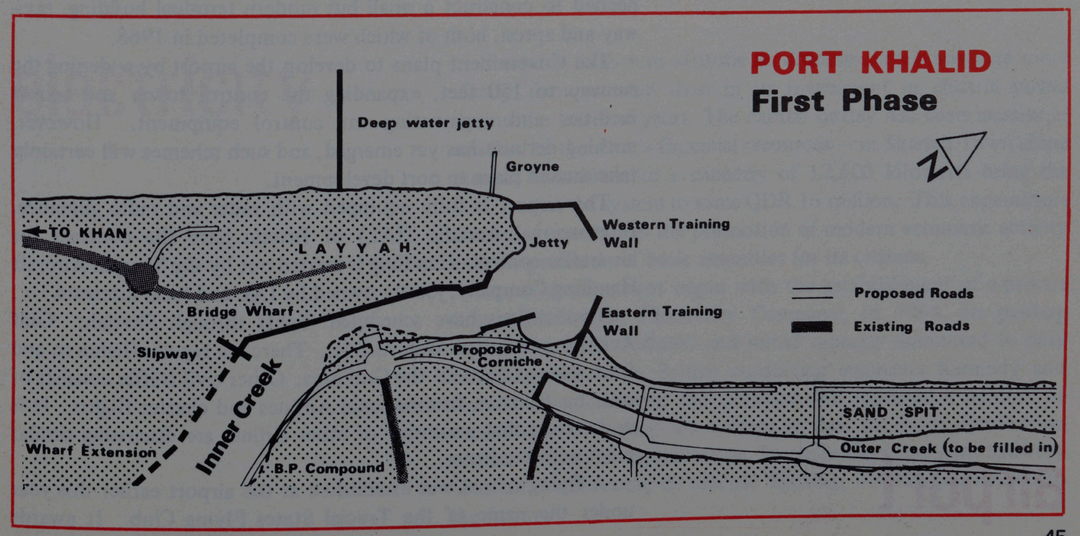
In the long term, the port scheme may require a total expenditure of about QDR 60 million. In the second phase high priority will be given to the construction of a corniche road along the new town coastline and around the lagoon, because the first phase involves the removal of the existing causeway from Sharjah Town to Layyah. It is tentatively planned to build a swing bridge across the harbour at a later stage.

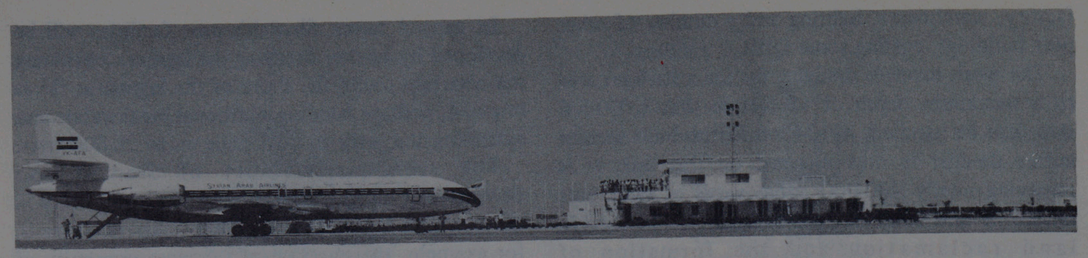
In general terms, Sharjah's port facilities will be developed by further dredging the lagoon, continuing the wharfage round the shore of the lagoon as far as required, perhaps building additional breakwaters and extending the jetty to take ships up to 20,000 tons.

The economic viability of Sharjah's port development scheme and its contribution to unity in the area have been debated in some quarters. There is, for example, the question of the close proximity of Dubai's own new port. It is convincingly argued in Sharjah that the accelerating rate of economic growth in the Gulf area clearly indicates that two entrepots will flourish comfortably as neighbours.

The Government is convinced that many ships will be attracted to Sharjah by the speedy unloading and customs clearance which is planned. Other attractions are the free transit zone, which is already in operation, and the low customs duty (2½ per cent). Moreover, negotiations are under way with shipping lines in several countries (including Britain, India and Iraq) for them to establish direct and regular services to Sharjah.

Other port facilities are being developed in Sharjah's dependencies. Khor Fakkan provides the only good natural harbour on the Gulf of Oman: the water there is deep enough to take ships up to 30,000 tons. Consequently, the Public Works Department of the TSC Development Office built a jetty there in 1967-68. The cost was kept to a remarkably low £80,000 by using direct labour. The jetty is capable of extension and is invaluable as a basic facility for the area's projected fishing development. A small jetty has been proposed for Dibba and the Development Fund's 1970 budget includes an allocation for it.





The new terminal building is one of many modern facilities provided by Sharjah International airport.

airport

There has been an international airport in Sharjah for many years, but only recently has the state begun to develop the facilities on its own initiative.

Sharjah's convenient location on the main air routes from Europe to India and the Far East made it an early choice as a staging post. The original landing strip was built as long ago as 1932 to serve as a link for both the British Royal Air Force and Imperial Airways (now BOAC). Passengers in transit were, in those days, forced to make an overnight stop and the British, fearing for their safety, constructed 'the Fort', a building which is today used as an air traffic control centre and was for many years the Trucial States' only 'hotel'.

Sharjah's strategic value became very apparent to the British as European hostilities raged further afield in the early 1940s. The present RAF base was established in 1942 and for many years the airport was developed and operated almost entirely to the military requirements of the British.

Today the basic facilities serve a dual military and civil purpose and are amicably shared between the RAF and the Sharjah Government. When the British forces leave in late 1971 the airport is expected to be handed over to Sharjah with much of the essential equipment.

The Government of Sharjah is now taking a keen interest in developing its own civil facilities. It provided the QDR 1.5 million needed to construct a small but modern terminal building, taxi-way and apron, both of which were completed in 1968.

The Government plans to develop the airport by widening the runway to 150 feet, expanding the control tower and transit facilities and augmenting the control equipment. However, nothing definite has yet emerged, and such schemes will certainly take second place to port development.

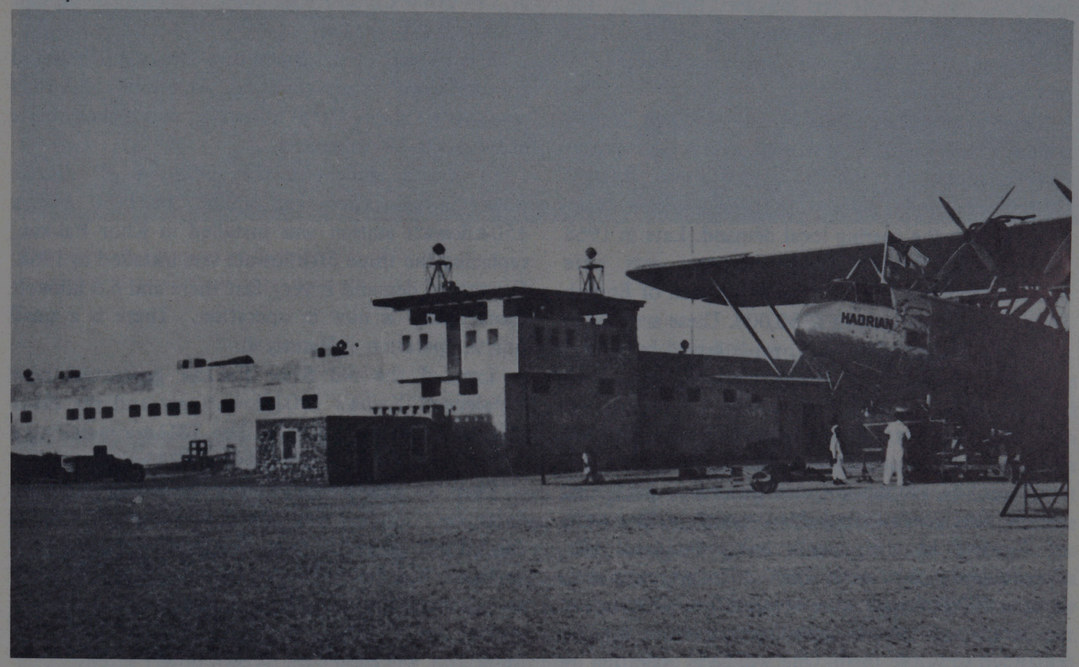
The airport is fully equipped with radar and radio guidance. International Aeradio (IAL) of Britain have the contract for air traffic control. Handling is carried out by the Sharjah Aircraft Handling Company, jointly owned by IAL and local interests.

Two airlines have scheduled flights through Sharjah: Gulf Aviation and Syrian Arab Airlines. There are regular flights to and from various parts of the Gulf area. Other civil traffic consists of calls by Pakistan International Airlines and charter flights. It is understood that a number of other airlines are discussing similar plans with the Ruler.

A flying school was established at the airport earlier this year under the name of the Trucial States Flying Club. It awards diplomas approved by the British Board of Trade and already has 200 students on its books.

A commercial 'air taxi' service to the less accessible parts of the northern Trucial States, such as the east coast, will be opened soon by local interests.

As the capital develops, problems are likely to be produced by the airport's proximity to the central built-up area – the town will be forced to grow in two separate directions around the airport. The long-term solution, although costly, would be to resite it completely.



An airliner of Imperial Airways at Sharjah Airport's old 'Fort' in the 1930s.

electricity

Sharjah's long-term attitude to development is nowhere more clearly demonstrated than in its investment in electric power during the last five years. The capital outlay has been massive in relation to the state's financial resources – in Sharjah Town alone present extensions to a capacity of 12,500 kilowatts bring the total cost of the system to some QDR 16 million. This expenditure is seen as essential to the promotion of modern economic activity and the provision of basic amenities for its citizens.

Power development began with the establishment of a private firm, the Sharjah Electricity Company, in 1964. Its paid-up capital was QDR 750,000 and initial capacity amounted to only 500 kilowatts. The British consulting engineers Kennedy and Donkin then surveyed the situation and reported a number of weaknesses, including the voltage in use, the basic distribution system and under-capitalisation. In those days the town had very little air-conditioning or electric lighting; but Sharjah looked to the future.

The faults were corrected, partly by nationalising the company in 1966 and partly through the contribution of the TSC Development Fund, which allocated QDR 1,870,000 to the town's power supply between 1966 and 1968. Three 500-kilowatt generators, ordered from MAN of West Germany at £20,000 each, formed the heart of the new system. Also involved were the construction of a new power station, the reinsulation of the 3.3 kilovolt transmission to 6.6 kilovolts, the erection of two miles of 6.6 kilovolt transmission lines and the installation of twelve transformer stations and main switchgear. The work was finally completed by mid-1968.

Having helped to initiate an adequate supply system, the Fund left further west-coast power development in the hands of the Sharjah Government, which quickly approved ambitious plans to cope with the soaring local demand. Late in 1968 four 1,000 kilowatt diesel alternator sets were ordered from the Ruston Engine Division of English Electric at a total cost of £180,000. These are now in operation, so that Sharjah Town is served by a total generating capacity of 5,500 kilowatts, the 1964 installation having been dismantled.

The consultants, Kennedy and Donkin, and the Government's Electricity and Water Department now work on the assumption that this year's peak load will be next year's average load – such is the growth of demand as the town's living standards rise. Consequently two new 3,500 kilowatt generators costing £70,000 each were ordered from Ruston and are now on site at the power station, which is being extended to house them. One will be in operation by August this year, the other early next year. The town's generating capacity in 1971 will therefore be 12,500 kilowatts – more than twice its present level and 25 times the 1964 capacity.

Apart from increasing capacity Sharjah is also improving the capital's power distribution network at a cost of £50,000 for materials alone in 1970. In 1971 nine new substations will be added to the existing 18 as part of a £130,000 expansion programme. By early 1972 a new distribution system at 33 kV/6.6 kV/380 V will have replaced the present 6.6 kV/380 V system.

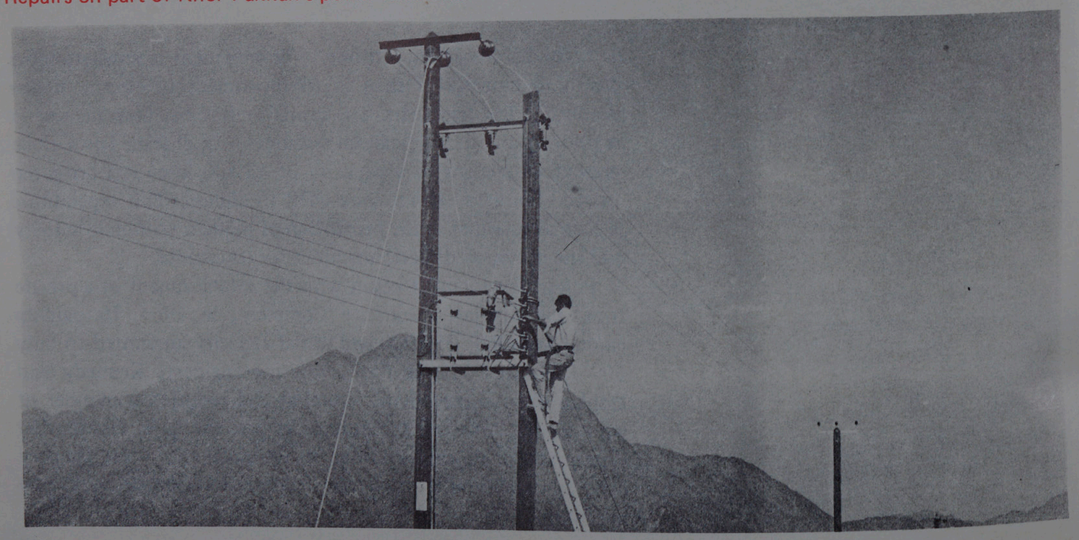
A large part of the generating capacity is required for the town's street lighting. At present this load amounts to about 1,000 kilowatts, and more circuits are about to be connected.

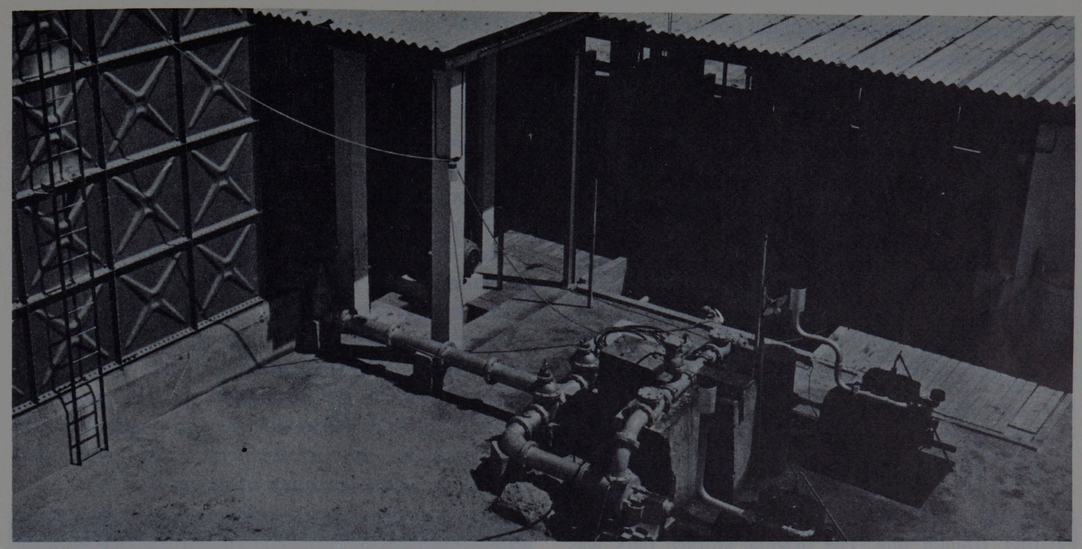
In the dependencies the provision of electric power is also advancing rapidly. In 1969 a 3 x 150-kilowatt station was installed in Khor Fakkan, replacing the three 50-kilowatt sets installed in 1968. Growth of demand is very fast there and 6.6 kilovolt transmission is now in operation. There is a small unit in operation at Hamriyah.

Two of the old Khor Fakkan generators now supplement Kalba's 150-kilowatt set and the other will probably go to Dhaid. The TSC are installing a power supply on a similar scale at Dibba.

Plans for future expansion in the dependencies are extensive. A great deal of the development is being carried out by re-locating generators that have been replaced, but there will also be a need very soon for an improved transmisssion system at Kalba and a new station serving villages near Khor Fakkan town. Abu Musa, too, will soon have its own power supply.

Repairs on part of Khor Fakkan's power network.





The pumping station at Bidaya – main source of Sharjah Town's water supply.

water supplies

In a country as arid as Sharjah, water is particularly precious. The state has fully recognised that a modern water supply system is a fundamental economic need – for agricultural and industrial purposes in the future as well as for domestic use now. Less than six years ago the only water widely available in Sharjah Town was sold from four-gallon cans slung across the backs of donkeys; it was often saline and unpalatable. Today sweet water is available to all citizens, pumped either direct to their homes or to easily-accessible standpipes. As with electricity, a small rate is charged to cover recurring costs, but the poorer inhabitants are exempt from this. In the short time since it was started the water supply has been connected to at least 90 per cent of the houses of permanent residents.

There is virtually no surface water in the state of Sharjah. In the early days supplies were drawn from hand-dug wells a few miles inland from the coastal towns, but as the population of Sharjah Town rapidly increased these sources became inadequate and the well water was in any case quickly growing too saline as a result of over-pumping. The first water resources survey and proposals for a supply system for the town were prepared by Sir William Halcrow and Partners in 1963. Attempts were made to locate an aquifer in the immediate vicinity of the capital, but the underground source at Bidaya, 12 miles inland, was found to offer the best results. In 1965 three boreholes at Bidaya, a 10-inch main supply pipeline, distribution lines, pumps and a 275,000-gallon storage tank were commissioned. The cost of the scheme was QDR 2,670,000, to which the TSC Development Fund contributed QDR 1,600,000. The distribution network was extended in 1966 to include outlying districts of the town.

The system was designed to provide 750,000 gallons a day (g.p.d.). As the town's daily consumption amounted to only 60,000 g.p.d. in 1965, this seemed more than adequate for some

time. However, the system supplies not only the town itself but also the Trucial Oman Scouts' camp, the British forces' base and Ajman; and, moreover, the capital itself continues to expand extremely rapidly. Extensions have therefore already been made and more will be required.

The need for an increased capacity became strikingly apparent during 1967 when output was touching 900,000 g.p.d. with less than half of this going to Sharjah Town. Halcrow investigated the situation and issued a report on it in July 1968. The result was that a QDR 6 million scheme to increase output to 1.4 million g.p.d. was promptly undertaken and is now nearing completion. Daily output capacity at present is some 1.25 million gallons.

The expansion involved adding four new boreholes at Bidaya and installing an 18-inch main from Moweilah, some six miles inland, to replace the existing 10-inch line. The original storage tank was superseded by two new elevated tanks: the larger, to the east of the town, has a capacity of 400,000 gallons and the smaller, 200,000-gallon tank is at Layyah, near the port development area. The main contractors are Mothercat with George E. Taylor doing much of the electrical work. Dawson Keith Electric of Britain won a £45,000 contract, as part of this phase, to install a highly-advanced self-contained power station and water-pumping control system.

Even as this second phase is being completed an interim expansion to 1.9 million g.p.d. is being implemented – a remarkable illustration of the pressure of rising demand. A further expansion to a capacity of 4 million g.p.d. will, according to the Director of the Electricity and Water Department, be "under active consideration by the end of this year". This sharp jump in capacity will, it is hoped, give a reasonable surplus. Nevertheless, even now a survey has been commenced to increase capacity to 10 million g.p.d. capacity. The need for such a large-scale and long-term programme is one reason for the public ownership of the water supply, whose administration has been completely amalgamated with that of the electricity scheme since last November.

Proposals for the near future include a third elevated storage tank, a trunk main to the Layyah tank, additional ground-level reservoirs to bring reserve capacity up to at least half of daily production capacity and the provision of a supply for fire-fighting. The storage capacity of 1.8 million gallons at the military base may also be integrated into the town system when the British forces leave.

Equally notable progress has been made in other urban areas. Khor Fakkan is supplied by a scheme effectively completed in 1968 at a cost of QDR 310,000; one well supplies a 50,000-gallon tank. In Kalba a similar system with two tanks was completed early in 1969 at a cost of QDR 250,000. Both these projects were financed by the TSC Development Fund, whose 1970 capital budget allocates a further QDR 140,000 to their improvement, in addition to a provision of QDR 150,000 for a water supply scheme in Dibba.

The scale of the Sharjah Town expansion programme will put a considerable strain on the groundwater source now being used. If the population continues to grow at the present rate there is a strong possibility that desalination techniques would be introduced, perhaps using the brackish water at Moweilha. In such a case it would be more economical to desalt on a large scale with some of the water being fed to agriculture.

Fortunately, there is no shortage of underground water resources in Sharjah. In 1965 Halcrow were engaged by the TSC to carry out a hydrological survey of the whole area, and a well-boring and testing programme covering 90 wells was completed in 1968. These new wells together showed a sustained yield equivalent to 13 million g.p.d. – about six times the present water consumption of all the main towns in the region surveyed.

main drainage

Sir William Halcrow and Partners are now designing a modern sewage system for Sharjah Town, and the first £2 million phase is due to be operating by 1972. This stage will take 18 months to complete and tenders will soon be invited. Building is expected to start by the end of this year.

The first phase will be capable of serving a population of 60,000, but it is planned to enlarge this in time with the growth of the town – with planned expansion to cope with a population of 250,000.

All sewage will be pumped inland to a treatment plant north-east of the town. Nothing will be wasted: the effluent will be purified and used for irrigation and the sludge will be dried and used as fertiliser.

communications media

The expansion of Sharjah's post, telephone and telegraph services has kept pace with its economic development. Realising that the next few years will probably see even more rapid growth, plans have been drawn up for a new post office, a new telephone exchange and for bringing telecommunications under full Government control.

Sharjah's communications system has developed rapidly only during the 1960s. Postal services were originally provided for the Trucial States by the Government of India which handed over its responsibilities to the British Post Office in 1948. It was not until 1963 that Sharjah opened its own post office, became a member of the Arab Postal Union and issued its first definitive issue of postage stamps. The Post Office now has a staff of 20 handling an increasing volume of international mail: in 1968 incoming mail totalled 375,000 pieces and this leapt to 1½ million in 1969. There has been a corresponding growth in the number of P.O. boxes from 250 in 1965 to 1,000 in 1969. Plans have therefore been drawn up for a new post office building with an initial provision for 3,000 P.O. boxes.Daily air mail services are operated to all parts of the world and internal daily services cover Dhaid, Khor Fakkan, Kalba and Dibba.

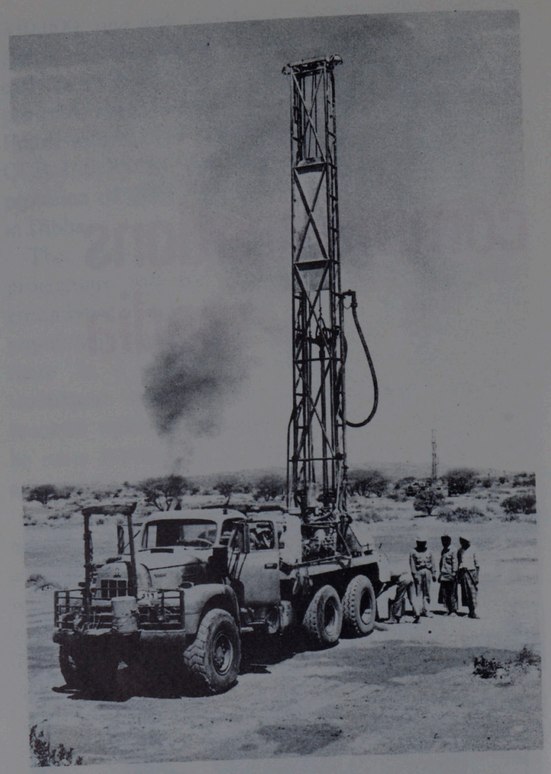
Telegraph services in the state date back to 1947, when International Aeradio (IAL) set up their first overseas branch in Sharjah. IAL are also part owners of the Dubai State Telephone Company through which the Sharjah telephone exchange has been routing its international calls up to now. However, increasing pressure on the Sharjah exchange has created a need for an independent company, and negotiations between the Sharjah Government and IAL are now under way for the formation of the Sharjah State Telecommunications Company (SSTC). The telegraph office was integrated into the service in 1969.

Dhaid, Khor Fakkan and Kalba have been included in Sharjah's telecommunications system for several years. A new telephone exchange will be completed by early 1971, with 2,000 lines, 350 of which will link Sharjah Town with the east coast dependencies. Philips have won the contract to install automatic equipment in the exchange.

Residents in Sharjah are also well provided with radio and television services. There are two radio stations in Sharjah, the only commercial stations in the Trucial States. Radio Sharjah, which broadcasts in English, started in 1964 as a voluntary welfare service run by service and civil personnel for the British base. It has now expanded into a commercially-viable station, using a 10-kilowatt transmitter with a 200-mile range. The station broadcasts from 6:00 am to 6:45 am and from 2:30 pm to 11:00 pm. The present format includes music of all sorts, quizzes, interviews of local interest and BBC World Service news programmes. Educational and children's programmes were recently added. The other radio station, Voice of the Coast, broadcasts for 11 hours a day in Arabic from three 10-kilowatt transmitters and its output is made up largely of news programmes. Television programmes in Arabic can be received in Sharjah from the Kuwait station in Dubai, the Saudi Arabian station in Dammam and the Iranian station in Bandar Abbas. English-language programmes can also be received from the Aramco station broadcasting from Dhahran in Saudi Arabia.

Sharjah is beginning to make headway in the field of publishing. At the end of May 1970 the first issue of a new Arabic-language magazine, *Al-Sharooq,* was published. The emirate is no newcomer to the industry: the first newspaper in the Gulf was launched in Sharjah in 1927 by the present secretary to the Ruler, Ibrahim Al-Midfa.

oil and minerals



Shell's seismic team at work in Sharjah where optimism rides high.

"We are confident that we will have producing wells in 1971." These were the words of Shaikh Mohammad bin Sultan Al-Qasimi, chairman of the Department of Oil and Minerals, which was formed in February 1969 in preparation for Sharjah's shortly-expected debut as an oil-producing nation. His assurance is solidly based on optimism of the companies now operating in the emirate – Shell, who have the onshore concession, Buttes Oil, who have the west coast offshore concession, and the Shell-Bomin group, who have the east coast concession, which is mainly offshore. These companies are firmly convinced that the apparent lack of success of earlier concessionaires gives no indication of the real potential, and that new exploration techniques have greatly increased the chances of realising this potential.

Sharjah's first exploratory well was drilled back in 1958 by Petroleum Development Trucial Coast (PDTC), an affiliate of the Iraq Petroleum Company. This concession was relinquished in 1961 and rights for exploration in all Sharjah's onshore and offshore territories were taken up in 1962 by the US independent company John W. Mecom in partnership with the Union/Pure group. This group, which also held the concessions in the neighbouring states of Ajman and Umm al-Qaiwain drilled six wells in the period up to September 1967, when the exploration rights expired.

After abortive negotiations with Japanese companies applications were invited for new concessions in May 1968, and in January 1969 Shell Hydrocarbons won the onshore concession giving them exclusive rights to 2,190 square kilometres of mainland territory west of the Eastern Hajar mountain range. At the same time Shell, this time in association with the West German firm Bochumer Mineral Gesellschaft (Bomin), won the concession for 286 square kilometres onshore and 1,199 square kilometres offshore on the Gulf of Oman side of the mountains. The shares in the latter venture are held 60 per cent by Shell and 40 per cent by Bomin, with Shell as the operating company, and both concessions run for 40 years. Shell is committed to spend $11,375,000 over eight years on the western onshore concession and Shell-Bomin $ 13,700,000 over eight years on the eastern offshore concession, with bonus, rental and royalty payments for both concessions.

In spite of the complex geology of the area and Mecom's lack of success, Shell decided to go ahead with further exploration because of recent developments in seismic technology. A few years ago it was impossible in most cases to distinquish the reflected seismic signal from scattered irrelevant "noise" in this area so that an accurate seismic map of the subsurface structure could not be drawn. However, with the recent development of what is known as the 'twelvefold stacking' technique it is possible to raise the energy of the signal above the energy of the "noise" so that the structure of the oil-bearing rock can be recognised. The development of this technique, coupled with the use of computers, has convinced Shell that by January 1971, the deadline for the start of drilling, they will be tapping the areas of richest potential.

The west coast offshore concession remained open until December 1969, when it was won by Buttes Gas and Oil Company of Oakland, California, USA, after fierce competition. This agreement gave Buttes exclusive rights to all Sharjah's western continental shelf, both islands and their territorial waters, and an obligation to spend $ 5.4 million on exploration and development during the first four years of the agreement. As with Shell, Buttes' optimism rests on the availability of new seismic techniques. Previous exploration around the island of Abu Musa had led to the conclusion that thick salt deposits were flank extensions of the Abu Musa salt dome itself, and operations were therefore terminated. However, Buttes' new survey has shown that a "very promising" structure off the island in fact underlies scattered salt pockets which are not continuous with the main salt dome.

Buttes' operations in Sharjah's concession area must unfortunately be seen against the background conflict with the neighbouring state of Umm al-Qaiwain, and its offshore oil concessionaire Occidental Petroleum Corporation, over the territorial waters of Abu Musa island. The Sharjah Government proclaimed a 12-mile territorial limit around Abu Musa in September 1969, but in May 1970 Occidental began to move a drilling rig within this limit into an area of assumed overlap with the Umm al-Qaiwain concession. In June 1970 the British Government, acting under its Treaty obligations, intervened in the situation to prevent Occidental proceeding with its test drill and to create stability so that arbitration could go ahead. It is now expected that a satisfactory resolution can be reached, and if Buttes is successful in finding oil, Abu Musa, which is surrounded by very deep water, will make an ideal tanker loading point.

The peaceful desert at Dhaid is shattered as modern oil-exploration techniques seek the secrets below.

Abu Musa's new-found importance as a centre of Sharjah's oil potential is not the only role the island plays in Sharjah's economy: for 25 years red oxide was the only mineral exploited commercially in Sharjah. Mining operations stopped last year, however, when conditions became too dangerous for traditional methods. Considerable deposits remain and could be exploited commercially with modern techniques. Tenders will be invited by the end of 1970 for a detailed survey of the deposits, after which, given favourable results, tenders for renewed exploitation will be invited.

Sharjah is now beginning to explore its other mineral potential. The first preliminary survey of minerals in the Trucial States was carried out in 1965/1966 by J.E.G.W. Greenwood of the Overseas Division of the Institute of Geological Sciences, London, and a second by Shell in 1967. These surveys showed that the Eastern Mountain range contained substantial deposits of chrome, asbestos, iron ore and limestone.

Workers in Shaikh Khalid's garden in Dhaid preparing soil for new trees.

agriculture and fishing

Farmers in Sharjah have never had an easy task earning a living from the parched soil, and food has always been one of the emirate's major imports. A radical transformation is now under way, however. New techniques are being introduced, water resources are being developed and vital road links are opening up the relatively fertile areas on the east coast.

Agriculture had for centuries been carried out at subsistence level in the state, with most of the produce consumed by the farmer and his family and only a small proportion being bartered or sold in the larger towns. Efforts are now being made to put this sector of the economy on a commercial footing. This will benefit not only the 13 per cent of Sharjah's labour force engaged in agriculture, but also their families and the many others who are indirectly dependent on it.

There are four main areas under cultivation in Sharjah. The East Coastal Plain accounts for 85 per cent of all holdings employing traditional methods of husbandry. The other three areas are in the Central Gravel Plain – Dhaid, Mileiha and the Madam Plain.

There is virtually no surface water in the emirate apart from the occasional wadi spates which follow mountain rain, and it has therefore been necessary to tap groundwater. For centuries this was done by driving *falajs* into the water-bearing strata, but more modern wells and pumps have, for some time, been gradually replacing this ancient system.

In the gardens grouped round and irrigated by these sources palms are grown to provide protection from the sun for fruit trees which, in turn, provide shade for ground crops. A wide variety of fruit and vegetables is produced, the most important tree crops being dates, limes and bananas; tomatoes and melons are the main ground crops.

One of the most important contributions to agricultural development in recent years has been the Water Resources Survey of the Trucial States, begun in 1965 by Halcrow s and taken over by the Public Works Department of the Trucial States Council (TSC) in 1969. Since the start of the survey, 83 boreholes and wells have been completed in Sharjah, the *falaj* system has been greatly improved and numerous pumps, engines, water tanks and pipelines have been installed.

Kalba and Dhaid are benefiting most from recent innovations. At Dhaid the completion of the road link to Sharjah and the introduction of improved machinery and techniques have had a very real effect on the gardens, and it is becoming increasingly easier to market the region's harvests in Sharjah Town and Dubai. At Kalba the TSC has set up an agricultural trials station to experiment with fertilisers, insecticides and new methods of overhead irrigation. Unfortunately, poor communications prevent Kalba from exporting its surplus to the west coast but this will be remedied when the transpeninsular road is completed.

Developments on the East Coast and the Madam Plain are essentially improvements on very old farming communities, but the experimental farm at Mileiha, on the Gharif Plain, embodies a completely new approach to agriculture in the Trucial States. The farm is run on a commercial basis on land which was previously uncultivated, and it is already proving economically viable. It was set up as a result of the Durham University Reconnaissance Survey of Soils and Agricultural Potential in the Trucial States, carried out in 1966-67. The Survey recommended the establishment of a 300-acre experimental farm in an area of projected development covering some 2,200 acres. Since 1968 wells have been drilled, irrigation channels prepared (including the installation of overhead sprinkler irrigation) and pumping equipment, staff housing and water tanks have been provided. So far the TSC has spent QDR 230,000 on the scheme and it is expected that the pilot area will be in full production by the end of 1970. Sales of produce in Sharjah and Dubai are already significant.

A crucial scheme for the future is the proposed trunk road from Ras al-Khaimah to Buraimi. As well as being a marketing link, the road would serve as a dam to make full use of the flood water and silt which occasionally descend from the Eastern Mountains.

At present there are less than three hectares of cultivated land for every 100 inhabitants of the Trucial States, which compares with a world average of 40 hectares. But these determined advances in Sharjah, and those of neighbouring states, are rapidly correcting this imbalance.

Fishermen of Khor Fakkan prepare for the next catch.

Fishing has traditionally been the chief economic activity of the people of Sharjah, but, like agriculture, it has been practised mainly at subsistence level. Firm steps towards development on a commercial basis are now being taken, however, and if current plans materialise, fisheries could assume a role of vital importance as a source of foreign exchange and employment opportunities.

The future of fishing in Sharjah lies principally in the deeper waters of the Gulf of Oman off the east coast dependencies. These areas are said to be part of one of the few remaining potentially rich but unexploited fishing areas of the world. A wide variety of pelagic species (such as sardines, tuna, mackerel and mullet) is found in abundance there, and it is thought that the emirate's annual catch could amount to hundreds of thousands of tons without overfishing. This compares with a present catch of some 3,000 tons a year for the whole of the Gulf of Oman.

The first attempts to modernise fishing were taken by the Trucial States Council (TSC) with the active support of the Sharjah Government. The TSC Fisheries Department was set up in 1967 and, in spite of initial financial restrictions, a considerable amount of groundwork has been done with the aim of attracting private investment from abroad. The most important advance was the purchase of a modern $100,000 purse-seiner, the MV *Majid*, in 1969. This vessel is based in Khor Fakkan and has already been used for a preliminary survey of the Gulf of Oman.

Khor Fakkan has become the centre of fisheries development throughout the Trucial States because of its natural deepwater harbour, the only one on the Batinah Coast. Facilities provided there in the last two years include a slipway, a jetty, a boatyard, marine workshops and laboratories.

These efforts have been successful in capturing the interest of major foreign companies. The New England Fish Company of Canada, in association with the International Proteins Company of the USA, has provided experts for recent survey work and is considering a six-month survey to decide whether a fish-meal plant at Khor Fakkan would be profitable.

This scheme would involve an initial investment of some $4 million in a pilot plant producing between 12,000 and 20,000 tons of fish-meal a year. The full establishment of the project would cost approximately $10 million, and the Governments of both Sharjah and Fujairah would participate financially. Fish-meal, which is used as fertiliser, is much in demand on world markets, and Sharjah's geographical location would put it in a strong position to export on a large scale to the valuable markets of the Far East, such as Japan. Another industrial possibility being considered is a cannery.

However, a number of problems have to be solved first – including the extremely high water temperatures of the Gulf of Oman, the need for extensive cold-storage and training local fishermen in the use of modern equipment and techniques.

The provision of training and equipment is a priority for the other main aspect of the fisheries programme, which aims to enable the fishermen to market fresh fish throughout the Gulf area and, eventually, in the Mediterranean basin. Current survey work involves collecting data which will be invaluable in this respect. The modernisation of existing fishing activity is particularly important because the proposed industrial schemes will otherwise use their own fleets, a development which would not be in the interests of the local fishermen and their dependents. Among the main objects of the programme are an increase in the size of boats and an improvement in catching, handling and storage methods. The completion of roads now being built in the east coast area will also be of great benefit.

The Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations will shortly make a major contribution to fisheries development in Sharjah: in 1971 it will begin a five-year marine survey of the Gulf of Oman and the Arabian Gulf, in which the emirate is certain to be at the centre of attention.

justice

An indication of Sharjah's rapidly-accelerating evolution into a modern state is the recent establishment of an efficient police force and a judicial system.

Until 1967, Sharjah was policed by the Trucial Oman Scouts as part of their numerous duties. The legal system was a dual one. Her Britannic Majesty's Court handling any case in which the defendant was a British Commonwealth, European or American citizen; the Religious Court (*'Sharia'* or Muslim law) handling all others.

During the latter part of 1966, after consultation between the Ruler and the British Government, it was agreed that Sharjah State should build up its own national Police Force. Accordingly, a senior adviser, Major J. I. Burns, with wide international experience in police work, was seconded to the State by the British Government. He was entrusted with the task of raising and training such a force. By the end of the year a body of 33 men was giving basic services to the town of Sharjah.

Keeping pace with Sharjah's swift growth, the Police Force has been increased, until at the time of writing the state has a body of 300 well-trained men covering Sharjah's 2,600 square kilometres.

Moreover, it is planned to increase the size of the force to 500 – of which 90 per cent will be local Arabs – by the spring of 1971.

Training facilities have been provided by several other states and, by the end of 1970, 11 of the 19 Arab officers will have received higher police training abroad. Local training is carried on in the new Police Training School under the supervision of the Deputy Commandant, Major D. Turner, a contract officer with long and varied experience both in the British Army and in police work.

H.H. the Ruler reviews Sharjah's modern police force, escorted by the Commandant, Major J.I. Burns (left) and the Deputy Commandant, Major D. Turner.

Police stations and posts have been established in all major areas of Sharjah and its Dependencies and the future expansion of the force will match the economic and population growth of the country.

In October 1968 the Ruler, recognising the state's responsibilities in taking over all legal powers, decided to create a modern judicial system. A Judge, Mr. Yusri Al-Duwaik, was seconded from the Jordanian Government to set up and preside over the Sharjah Law Court, and to assist and consult with the Ruler in the creation of a codified legal system. His assistant, Judge Ahmed Saleh Abdulhamid, is also from Jordan.

The Sharjah Law Court now has jurisdiction over all criminal, civil and commercial cases. The Religious Court, under Shaikh Hamad bin Majid Al-Qasimi (Chairman) and Shaikh Mohammad Al-Mahdi (Chief Judge), now handles only religious and personal cases. The Sharjah Law Court also makes judgements on all traffic cases, including those concerning nationalities previously the responsibility of Her Britannic Majesty's Court for the Trucial States. The only exceptions are British Government personnel.

A codified legal system is being prepared before assuming complete powers from Her Britannic Majesty's Court. A Penal Code and a Criminal Procedure Code have been completed already and are in operation. There is a draft Contract Law and there are plans for Commercial and Company Laws. Indeed, it is confidently expected that a complete, codified Legal System will be in force by mid-1971.

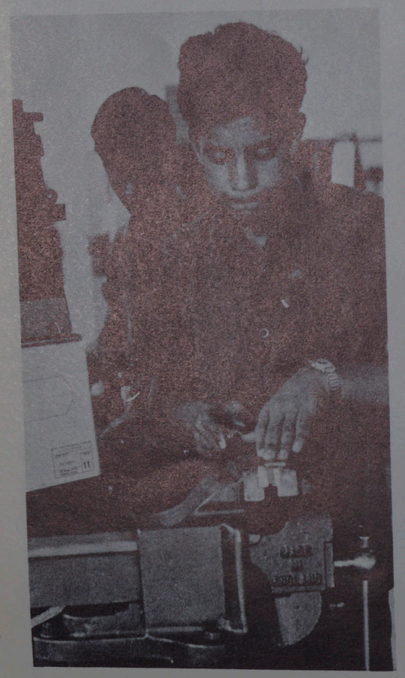
The system which the Ruler is now evolving is broadly based on British law. However, this is being adapted and modified to suit local needs and religious and social customs. Accordingly, Sharjah's legal code will include much of the pragmatism of Islam.

An Appeal Court is to be established and a Chamber of Commerce Ordinance has been promulgated. A system of legal aid is available.

To bring modern justice to the whole state, courts have been opened in Kalba and Khor Fakkan. A third is planned for Dhaid.

Nine qualified lawyers practice in the State of Sharjah. The presence and use of a comprehensive and up-to-date legal system will help to bring to the peoples of Sharjah the benefits for which the state now strives.

The value of an established legal system is clear to all those who have lived or worked under one. But for Sharjah there is an additional benefit: an efficiently-working legal code will become yet another attraction for foreign investors who are already showing great interest in the determination of the Ruler and Government of Sharjah to found a modern state. But no one denies the difficulties and complexity of the task. "Flexibility", stresses Judge Duwaik, "is our watchword when compiling these codes. Thus, we can modify the laws to suit changing or expanded circumstances and to benefit from our own experiences and those of others".



A young man receives a high level of practical training at Sharjah's Trade School.

Physical Training is an essential part of the curriculum at Zahra School — the first girls' school in the Trucial States.

education and health

Sharjah, of all the Trucial States, has always been the most education-minded, and a comprehensive modern school system is rapidly being evolved which already provides education through the secondary stage for both boys and girls in all parts of the country. To give an idea of the remarkable growth of education services in recent years, a few statistics will suffice: where there was one school in 1953, there will be 19 in 1971; and from a beginning of 120 students 17 years ago, there are 4,800 enrolled today.

The building of a modern education system in Sharjah began in 1953 when the Kuwait Government established the first school in the Trucial States to be run on 20th Century lines. Two years later, the first school for girls in the Trucial States, a considerable innovation at the time, was opened, also by Kuwait. Another first for Sharjah in the field of education came in 1958 with the establishment of the first trade school by the British Government.

An important recent development is the teachers' training school for girls which graduated its first class in 1970. There are also heavily attended evening classes for adults, both men and women, a significant part of Sharjah's efforts to eliminate illiteracy, and a domestic science centre for girls is in the planning stage.

The youth of Sharjah are also encouraged to continue their higher education at university level, and in the academic year 1969–70 some 125 men and women were studying at universities abroad, largely in Kuwait, Britain, the United Arab Republic, Jordan and the United States.

Until 1968, when the Education Department of the Sharjah Government was established, the schools were built, staffed and maintained by the Kuwait Educational Mission in the Trucial States. These efforts were generously augmented by teachers seconded from the United Arab Republic, Qatar and Bahrain. Other aid to education came from Abu Dhabi and the Trucial States Council. With the formation of the Department of Education, coordination and control of educational services were

centralised, and the department also became directly responsible for school transport, meals, the installation of cold water plants and other ancillary and maintenance services. Sharjah's total expenditure on education in 1969-70 amounted to QDR 1,500,000. The Government of Kuwait continues to provide the major portion of educational facilities in Sharjah and its services in this field are continuing to expand. For instance, in 1970-71, Kuwait is inaugurating four new schools in Sharjah: another secondary school for boys in the capital, a primary school for boys at the inland agricultural station of Mileiha, and two primary schools for girls in remote villages.

The Trucial States Council Development Fund still shares the burden of education in Sharjah and in 1970 it provided approximately QDR 850,000 for recurrent and minor capital expenditure in this field, in addition to a substantial contribution in its major capital programme.

Education in Sharjah is free but it is not compulsory. However, the youth of Sharjah receive maximum encouragement from the Government to complete their education because it knows well that educated citizens are vitally necessary to cope with the burgeoning economic activity anticipated for the 1970s and also to smooth the transition from traditional ways to an active modern economy and society. New kinds of skilled jobs are being created and the country's young people must be trained to fill them, thus lessening the dependence of the country on skilled hands from abroad.

This is especially true in the field of technical education. From the modest beginnings of 1958 with only 18 pupils in artisan training, 1971 will see the opening of the new Trucial States Council Trade School building with a student capacity of 300. Here the young men of Sharjah and neighbouring countries can be trained to intermediate and secondary standards in basic engineering, trade skills, technical drawing, mathematics and English. Graduates of this school will be able to take their place in local industry and businesses, helping to build Sharjah's future.

Equally high priority is given to health services. The Government of Sharjah, with vast and generous assistance from Kuwait and the Trucial States Council, is providing all residents of the State with free medical facilities. The first clinic in Sharjah, built with aid from Kuwait and staffed by Kuwaiti civil servants was opened in 1962. A clinic in Khor Fakkan soon followed. In rapid succession regional clinics, smaller health centres, and itinerant clinics for desert areas were instituted. Today six clinics are in daily operation throughout the emirate, and four more are under construction. The out-patient capacity of the present Trucial States Council clinic in Sharjah Town is being expanded and Sharjah's first hospital is under construction. The hospital, to be known as the Al-Qasimi Hospital, is scheduled for completion in 1971 and will have a 100-bed capacity. Apart from general in-patient treatment, it will have obstetric and surgical facilities and a unit for the treatment of eye, ear, nose and throat disorders. It will be equipped with QDR 3.4 million of the most modern facilities from Hospitalia of West Germany; of this, the Government is contributing QDR 3 million. The hospital will be run by a total staff of 206, including 16 doctors and specialists and 46 nurses. The out-patient department will have an initial capacity of 700 a day. Al-Qasimi Hospital is expected to be one of the most modern and best equipped medical centres in the Arabian Gulf area. Construction and operating costs will be shared jointly by the Ruler of Sharjah and the Trucial States Council.

The new Al-Qasimi Hospital will provide the most modern facilities.

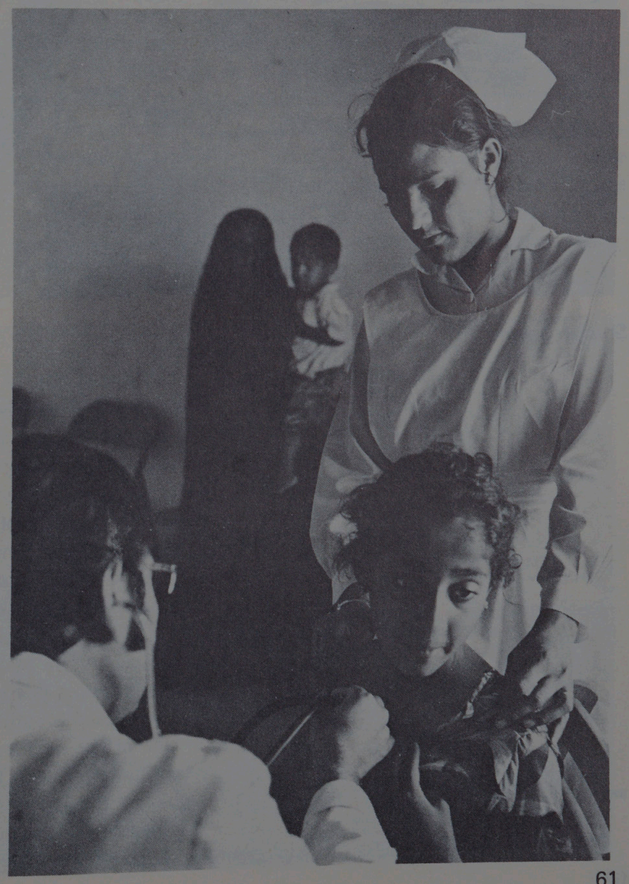
A specialist hospital for chest diseases is being built in Sharjah by Kuwait and it will be operative at the end of 1971.

Diseases endemic to the area are tuberculosis, trachoma and dental fluorosis. Malaria is common in the East Coast dependencies where in 1970, as a result of a survey conducted by the World Health Organisation (WHO), the Trucial States Council will establish a malaria control unit in Khor Fakkan – the first step in preventive medicine in the Trucial States. The unit was set up with technical advice from WHO and the active assistance of the Ruler of Sharjah, who donated the necessary land.

In addition to health services provided by the Government and other organisations, there are several physicians and dentists in in private practice in Sharjah.

Health education in the schools is the basis of Sharjah's preventive medicine campaign, and it is perhaps partly as a result of this instruction that the number of out-patients using the medical facilities dramatically increased by over 400 per cent in the period 1968–70.

Clearly, the Government's special emphasis on building a healthy and educated society is already having a profound impact.



International aid for the emirate's health programme: a Sharjah girl is treated by a Pakistani doctor at a Kuwaiti clinic.

Sharjah Town

Tourism

Tourism is one of the world's fastest-growing industries, and demand is particularly buoyant for original, secluded resorts with a warm climate and a romantic ambience. Sharjah is well placed to take full advantage of this situation. The Government hopes that by providing basic tourist facilities while preserving the dignity and beauty of the emirate's traditional Arab character it will create a major new sector of the economy.

In the months October to April, Sharjah's climate is among the most attractive in the world, with temperatures of about 80° F (45° C) and clear skies. Winter travellers from cooler northern climes are certain to welcome with enthusiasm the emirate's long, untouched sand beaches and warm sea, once these features have been sufficiently publicised.

One of the outstanding beaches is between Khan and Layyah near Sharjah Town. This strip of land is scheduled to become a high-class residential area, but a club and other beach facilities will also be built there.

On the other side of the peninsula, Khor Fakkan is destined to be the star attraction. A picturesque fishing village encircled by mountains and palm groves, it already offers not only deserted beaches but exceptional opportunities for deep-sea fishing and skin diving in translucent waters. A scheme is now under way to introduce a motel and a number of special facilities, such as glass-bottomed boats from which visitors will be able to see the brilliant colours of the coral reefs below.

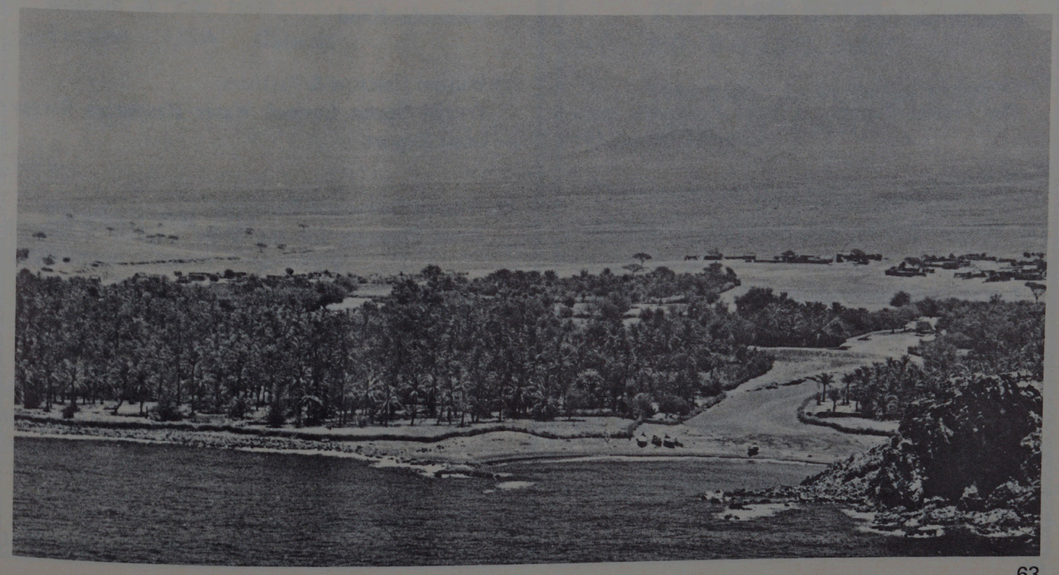
The unique appeal of the desert oases will also be made available to tourists. The gardens of Dhaid are only half an hour's drive along a first-class road from Sharjah Town, and the more adventurous can follow the wadi tracks from there to the ruggedly impressive mountains beyond, along a route which will soon be completely surfaced.

In Sharjah Town itself there are at present two hotels: the historic Seaface Hotel, formerly the British Political Agency, has a particularly relaxing atmosphere, and the Sindbad on the main street boasts a fine Lebanese restaurant. A new hotel, the Sheba, is under construction and proposals for a much larger, international hotel are now under serious consideration.

To provide a framework of reference for these developments, the Government has decided to commission a survey of the emirate's tourist potential. This will be carried out principally by an international travel agency. The next step will be to make special arrangements for the short-term accommodation of passengers in transit to the Far East. An air taxi service from Sharjah Town to the east coast dependencies will have been established by that time, which will be of great benefit to the scheme. Package tours will also be made available eventually.

Every attempt will be made to ensure that none of these innovations detracts from Sharjah's greatest tourist asset – the unequalled vigour with which ancient Arab culture survives in the state. The handicrafts of the *souk* will be encouraged, for example, and the chief attractions of the package tours, such as camel racing, will have a historical pedigree of countless centuries.

Khor Fakkan



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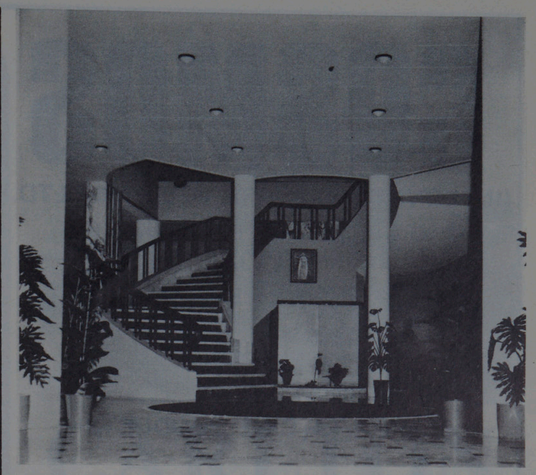

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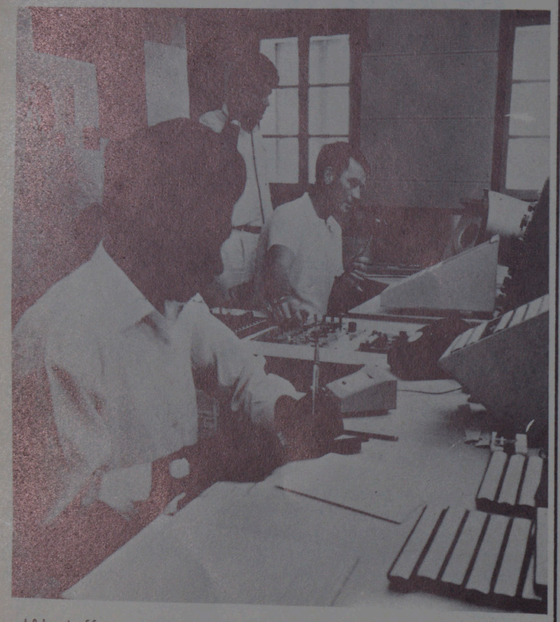

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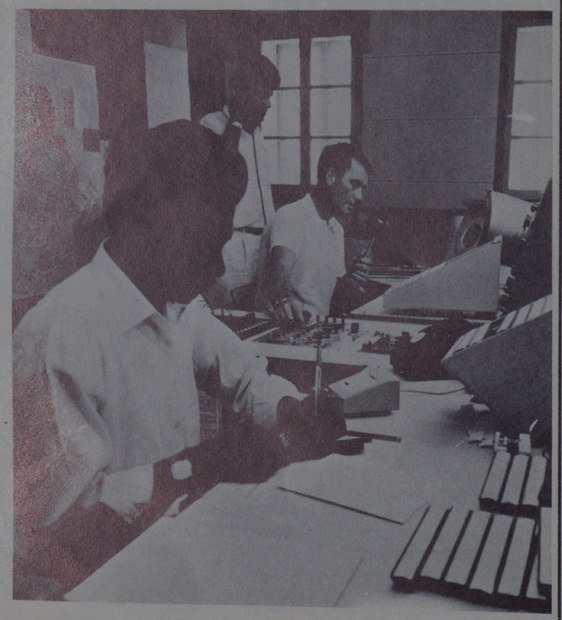

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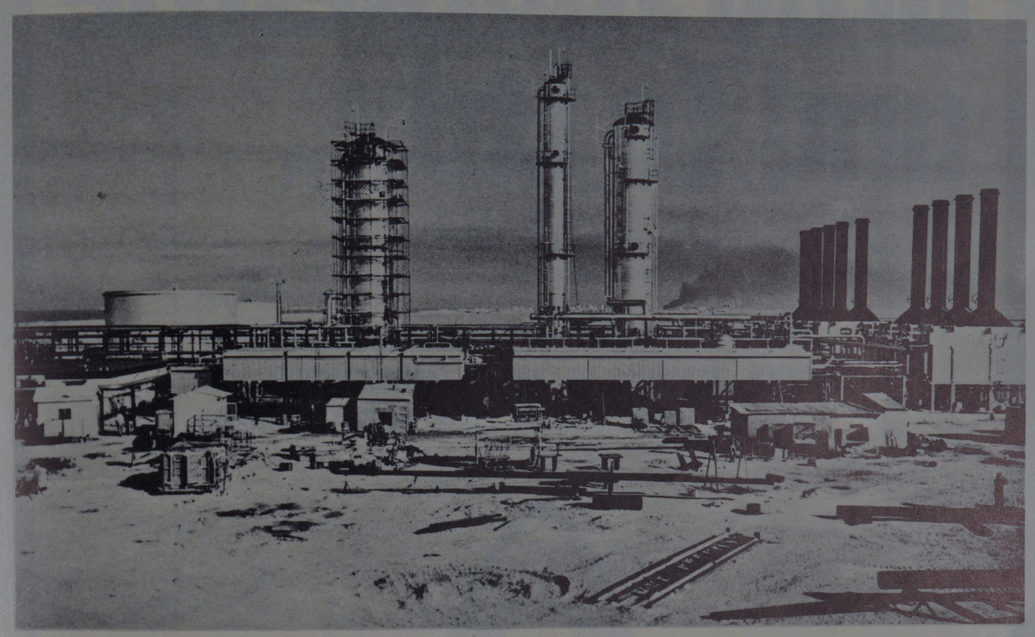

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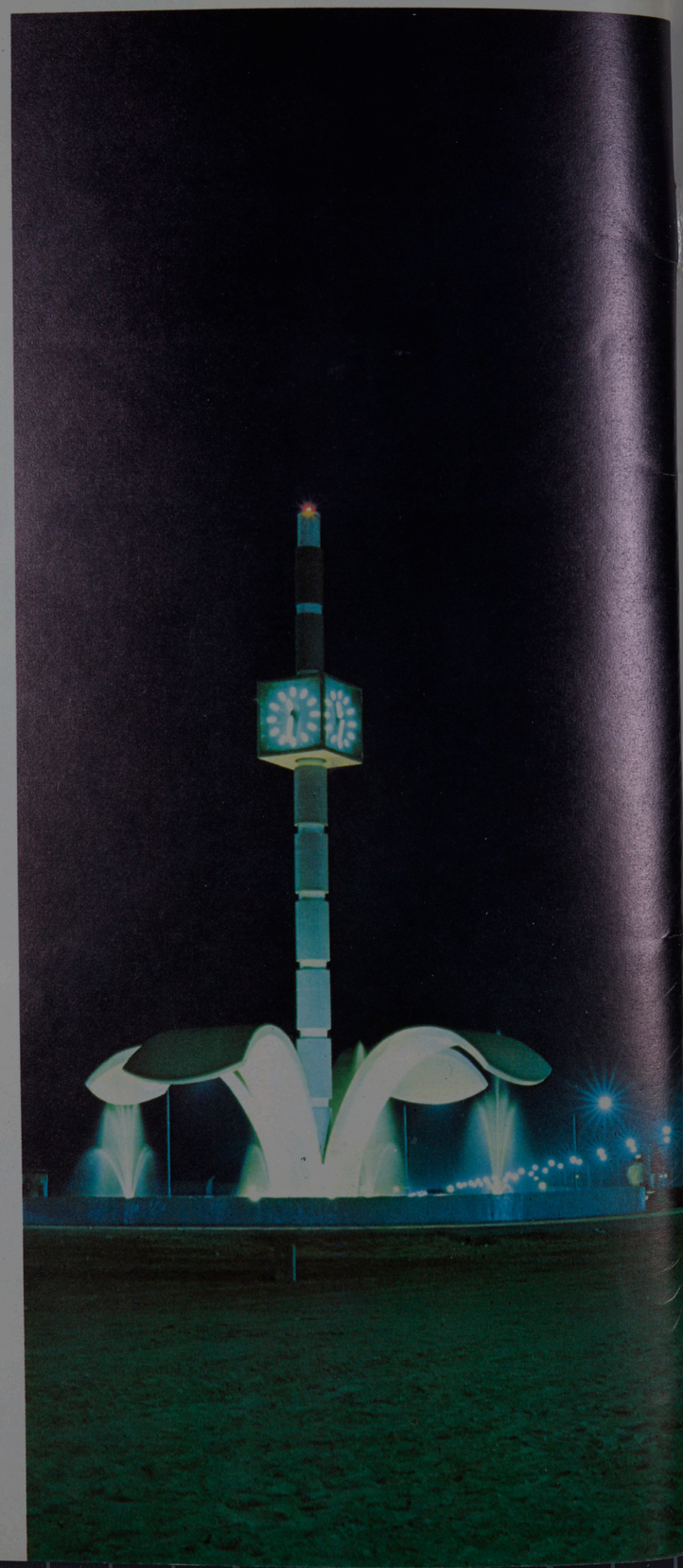
In 1969 Sharjah produced its first commemorative gold and silver coins. They are legal tender and are selling briskly to collectors throughout the world. The issue was limited to 5,000 numbered sets of nine different values. Subjects also include the centenary of Napoleon's birth and the 1970 World Cup football competition.

Sharjah's postage stamps, some of the most colourful in the world, have provided the country with a small but steady income since 1963. Other designs commemorate such major events as the first moon landing and the Olympic Games.

Sunset over Hamriyah beach (below) and Sharjah Creek. Hamriyah will remain a haven for lovers of traditional Sharjah; but the Sharjah Creek entrance will be lost in the tide of progress – it will soon be filled in as part of the port development and land reclamation programme.



Sharjah Town's new clock tower in Zahra Square is the centrepiece of this nocturnal panorama. Sharjah is fast becoming "the garden city of the Gulf": flower beds are becoming a common sight and fountains are being installed throughout the town; fluorescent street-lighting receives high priority in urban development.

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