

WafiApps attracts new investors

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WafiApps, an eCommerce marketplace in Bahrain, announced closing Series A funding at an undisclosed seven-digit valuation. The round, the company said, was led by Angel Investors and veterans from the banking and payments industry.

Jacob Thomas, Founder and CEO of WafiApps, said, "We are delighted to welcome the new investors in WafiApps WLL and excited to explore new opportunities in a rapidly growing eCommerce business across the MEA region. The pandemic has fundamentally changed business models, and we are at the cusp of an eCommerce explosion."

"WafiApps is poised to enable large and small businesses to take advantage of the eCommerce opportunities to not only embrace digitisation and innovation but also increase business portfolio beyond the traditional brick and mortar stores. We have aggressive plans to grow eCommerce business across the region and provide a seamless, convenient and secure experience to our customers and merchant partners."

WafiApps said it plans to utilise the newly raised funds for



Jacob Thomas, Founder and CEO of WafiApps



technology expansion, launching new products, differentiating customer experiences, geographical expansion, acquiring skilled and experienced resources to lead the company in its next phase of evolution.

WafiApps provides home delivery services across Bahrain.

US House backs bill to provide \$1 billion for Israel Iron Dome

- The measure passed by 420 to 9
- Some of the most liberal House Democrats had objected to the provision
- Earlier removal led Republicans to label Democrats as anti-Israel

Reuters | Washington

The US House of Representatives voted overwhelmingly yesterday for legislation to provide \$1 billion to Israel to replenish its "Iron Dome" missile-defence system, just two days after the funding was removed from a broader spending bill.

The measure passed by 420 to 9, with two members voting present.

Some of the most liberal House Democrats had objected



Israel's Iron Dome anti-missile system intercepts a rocket launched from the Gaza Strip towards Israel, as seen from Ashkelon

to the provision and said they would vote against the broad spending bill if it was included. That threatened the bill's passage, with Democrats only narrowly controlling the House, because Republicans have opposed the plan to fund the federal government through Dec. 3 and raise the nation's borrowing limit.

The removal led Republicans

to label Democrats as anti-Israel, despite a long tradition in the US Congress of strong support from both parties for the Jewish state, to which Washington sends billions of dollars in aid every year.

Israel responded quickly. "Thanks to all members of the US House of Representatives, Democratic and Republican alike, for their sweeping support

for Israel and the commitment to its security. Those who try to challenge this support got a resounding response today," Israeli Prime Minister Naftali Bennett said in a statement.

Some liberal Democrats voiced concerns recently about US-Israel policy, citing human rights concerns like Palestinian civilian casualties as Israel responded to Hamas rocket attacks in May. Israel said most of the 4,350 rockets fired from Gaza during the conflict were blown out of the sky by Iron Dome interceptors.

"We should also be talking about the Palestinian need for protection against Israeli attack," Democratic Representative Rashida Tlaib, an opponent of the funding, said during debate.

The bill, which was introduced in the House on Wednesday, provides \$1 billion to replace missile interceptors used during the May conflict.

There was no immediate word on timing of a vote in the Senate.

Most Gulf bourses rise as oil prices gain on tight supply

- Saudi markets are closed for a public holiday

Reuters

Most stock markets in the Gulf rose yesterday as oil prices gained on growing fuel demand and a bigger-than-expected draw in U.S. crude inventories, although the Abu Dhabi index bucked the trend to trade lower.

The oil market was also supported by a return of appetite for risk assets as concerns eased over a potential default by property developer China Evergrande and its possible fallout on the world's second-largest economy.

Dubai's main share index added 0.2%, extending gains from the previous session, with blue-chip developer Emaar Properties rising 0.7% while DAMAC Properties advanced 2.4%.

The founder of DAMAC Properties is relaunching a partial offer to take the firm private

after the securities regulator of the United Arab Emirates granted approval, according to a statement on Thursday.

The offer came amid years of downturn in Dubai's property market, exacerbated by the economic fallout from the pandemic. The United Arab Emirates' Securities and Commodities Authority has signed an agreement with the Dubai World Trade Centre Authority (DWTCA) aimed at supporting the trading of crypto assets in DWTCA's free zone, state news agency reported on Wednesday.

In Abu Dhabi, the index eased 0.1% following a 0.7% drop in the country's largest lender First Abu Dhabi Bank.

Global investors have been on tenterhooks in recent weeks as debt payment obligations of China Evergrande, labouring under a \$305 billion mountain of debt, triggered fears its malaise could pose systemic risks to the world's second-largest economy.

Elsewhere, the Qatari index gained 0.4%, with petrochemical maker Industries Qatar rising over 1%.

Huawei Rotating Chairman reaffirms continuous innovation

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Huawei's annual flagship event for the global ICT industry - HUAWEI CONNECT 2021 - kicked off yesterday. Huawei Rotating Chairman Eric Xu opened the event with a keynote speech titled "Innovating Non-stop for Faster Digitalization".

This year's event, themed "Dive into Digital", explores how digital technology can better integrate with business scenarios and industry know-how to address critical business challenges, and how stakeholders can work together more effectively to foster an open industry ecosystem and drive shared success.

In his keynote, Xu spoke about how helping industries go digital is a critical aspect of Huawei's mission to bring digital to every person, home and organization for a fully connected, intelligent world. He said, "Digital development relies on digital technology. For digital technology to stay relevant, we must continue to innovate and create value. Cloud, AI, and networks are three critical digital technologies."

At the event, Xu launched



the industry's first distributed, cloud-native service called UCS - a ubiquitous cloud-native service available on HUAWEI CLOUD. With UCS, Huawei plans to provide enterprises with a consistent experience while using cloud-native applications that are not constrained by geographical, cross-cloud, or traffic limitations, thereby accelerating digital transformation in all industries.

HUAWEI CLOUD also announced two new regions, and ten new services including MacroVerse aPaaS, OptVerse AI Solver, HUAWEI CLOUD Stack 8.1, Pangu drug molecule model, and SparkRTC. It was also revealed that the first virtual human, Yunsheng, is set to join HUAWEI CLOUD.

Xu added that HUAWEI CLOUD, the company's cloud

service that was launched just four years ago, has already brought together more than 2.3 million developers, 14,000 consulting partners, and 6,000 technology partners, and also made more than 4,500 services available in the HUAWEI CLOUD Marketplace. It has become an important platform for Internet companies, enterprises, and governments alike to take their organizations digital. As of September 2021, HUAWEI CLOUD and partners operate 61 Availability Zones (AZs) in 27 geographic regions worldwide, covering more than 170 countries and regions.

Zhang Ping'an, CEO of HUAWEI CLOUD and President of Huawei Consumer Cloud Service, commented: "The key to successful digital transformation is to think cloud native

and act cloud native. HUAWEI CLOUD joins our customers and partners to dive into digital and explore the potential of Everything as a Service - Infrastructure as a Service for global accessibility, Technology as a Service for flexible innovation, and Expertise as a Service for shared excellence."

Huawei's full-stack, all-scenario AI portfolio released back in 2018 is also progressing as expected. Its MindSpore framework has become the mainstream AI computing framework in China. Meanwhile, the Atlas 900 cluster, as well as the cloud services based on it, currently serve more than 300 enterprises, supporting the training of many models, which include the HUAWEI CLOUD Pangu large models. HUAWEI CLOUD ModelArts has made AI application development incredibly simple with its full-pipeline, scenario-based services. The end goal of ModelArts is to enable each and every engineer to independently develop their own AI applications. Huawei hosts HUAWEI CONNECT 2021 online from September 23 to October 31. The theme of this year's event is Dive into Digital.

Nespresso's Ispirazione Italiana adds two new limited-edition coffees

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Two new limited-edition coffees have been added to Nespresso's Ispirazione Italiana collection for the Original system, inspired by the craftsmanship of Italian master roasters and the flavours they so deftly construct.

Coffee roasting styles have varied over the years, just as new aesthetic groups have emerged and grown. Despite the country's rich coffee tradition, Italy's speciality coffee market is thriving. With Ispirazione Novecento and Ispirazione Millennio,



Nespresso has captured the flavours and fragrances of both the traditional and modern, each one a true masterpiece of Italian roasting history.

Take a trip back in time with

Ispirazione Novecento

Newly released Limited Edition the classic Italian espressos of the 1940s inspired Ispirazione Novecento. It's a dark, smokey cup that recalls the country's

early stand-up coffee shops, when roasting was slower and often wood-fired, and blends were influenced by the beans available in wartime Europe. Ispirazione Novecento is a Brazilian espresso that is enhanced with heirloom Arabicas and West African Robustas to provide a deep, dark crema with raw spicy, nutty brown characteristics.

Step into the modern with Ispirazione Millennio

Meanwhile, Nespresso's Limited Edition Ispirazione Millennio derives its aromatic

cues from emerging artisanal roasting trends that are sweeping the country, as well as expanding consumer preferences for brighter, fruitier flavours. Lighter and shorter roasted Brazilian and Colombian Arabicas were mixed with beans from the Indian subcontinent to obtain this fresh, modern flavour. With spicy aromas, good acidity, and a hint of fruit, the result is a well-rounded and pleasantly robust coffee.

Art comes in many roasts

"Nespresso's Ispirazione Italiana is more than just a collec-

tion of Italian-inspired coffees; it's a masterfully created masterpiece that balances a wide range of scents, tastes, and geographical influences," said Yassir Max Corpataux, Middle East and Africa Nespresso Coffee Ambassador.

Inspiration for the budding coffee artist

To commemorate the occasion, Nespresso is offering a flowering rose-coloured version of its famous little Nomad travel mug, as well as fresh recipe inspiration to improve your coffee times.