

Office of Research Innovation and Commercialization

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# **Futuristic Outlook**

A Product of Office of Research Innovation and Commercialization (ORIC), University of Management and Technology, Lahore, Pakistan

### Message from Co-Founder, Director-General, and Head ORIC – UMT



We live in the Modern age, where we do all over work with the help of technology. We know technology by the name "technological know-how". Discover the latest science and technology news and videos on breakthroughs shaping tomorrow's world with Futurism. The innovation of science has a long history producing many important figures and many developments in the field. Moreover, it made communication easier for us. Humans have cleaned up and created some fantastic and sometimes orthodox inventions.

For a long time, organizations have been experiencing various kinds of problems, resulting in their management exploring various changes to introduce into their mode of operation. Innovation and technology cycles have benefited organizations as they have assisted many organizations in perceiving the changes. Innovation refers to the incorporation of new functionalities into existing products and processes. As a result, an organization settles down to attain productivity.

So, every researcher and faculty member should be up-to-date about innovation in their respective field; that's why ORIC-UMT introduce the Futuristic Outlook for the UMT family to commensalism with the Innovative world.

**Prof. Abid Hussain Khan Shirwani** Co-Founder, Director-General and Head ORIC University of Management and Technology, Lahore, Pakistan

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### <u>A - School of Engineering & School of System and</u> <u>Technology</u>

### 1: New AI Tells Children that Santa Isn't Real

OpenAI's powerful new chatbot is so deft at tone that it was able to pretend to be Santa Claus while explaining to someone's kid that Santa isn't, in fact, real. Heartwrenching!

As she kicked the tires on the new ChatGPT's capabilities, Shopify exec Cynthia Savard posted the generated text that she said made her "slightly emotional."

"I am writing to let you know that I am not a real person," the bot wrote as it posed as Santa, "but a character that your parents have told you stories about out of love."

As artificial intelligence enthusiasts have noted since OpenAI dropped ChatGPT this week, this latest offering from the Elon Musk-cofounded research firm is incredibly sophisticated.

"We're witnessing the death of the college essay in realtime," one Twitter user noted, posting screenshots of ChatGPT's "response to a prompt from one of my 200-level history classes at Amherst."

They added that the AI-written essay about theories of nationalism was "solid A [minus] work" that the bot spat out in just 10 seconds.

Indeed, as Savard's Santa-debunking letter continues, it's impressive how well the bot is able to concisely explicate a concept that many adult humans have trouble expressing to their children — although, to be fair, it does seem to crib a good deal of tone from the classic "Yes, Virginia" letter by Francis P. Church.

"Your parents have told you stories about me and my elves as a way to bring joy and magic into your childhood. They wanted you to believe in the spirit of giving and the magic of the holiday season," the bot wrote. "I want you to know that the love and care that your parents have for your is real. They have created special memories and traditions for you out of love and a desire to make your childhood special."

We're clearly entering a brave new world of AI text generation — and hopefully, it'll be used more for positive reasons than to get out of academic essay writing. $\$ 

# **2:** Disney Creates AI System to Automatically Change Age of Actors

Disney's obsession with de-aging technology is only ramping up, because it's now developed an AI tool that can automatically alter the age of actors, *Gizmodo* reports.

Well, "re-aging," as Disney calls it, would be more accurate. The tool, dubbed the Face Re-aging Network, or FRAN, is capable of making actors look younger as well as older, and promises to drastically speed up visual effects processes that take weeks to complete when undertaken manually (or, *ahem*, abusively).

Some of those manual processes require painstakingly painting each 2D frame of an actor's face, or replacing an actor with a digital puppet.

But by using FRAN, an AI does most of the legwork, and it crucially "complements traditional re-aging techniques that already work well in film production," wrote Disney researchers in an accompanying paper.

FRAN looks significantly more convincing than preceding AI models that struggled with motion. Too much movement or too odd an angle and artifacts would begin to creep in and jarringly disappear, while a face could lose its identity from becoming too generic.

The Disney designed AI tool works by overlaying alterations, like wrinkles, to specific parts of the face it detects should be older or younger, while leaving the remaining parts unaltered. It does this on separate layers, allowing artists to tweak and add to the results by hand. To that end, Disney claims FRAN is "production-ready."

But for FRAN to be this effective, researchers first had to create their own database of thousands of randomly generated faces, which they then altered using existing age modification tools. The sheer volume of generated and then altered faces that resulted gave plenty of material to train FRAN with.

Impressive as it is, FRAN isn't flawless. Aging, after all, isn't just accumulating wrinkles, and FRAN seems to struggle to capture the incredible nuance of the process. Likewise, FRAN seems to largely approach de-aging by simply making its subjects' skin smoother, which can easily end up in the realm of overkill.

But FRAN doesn't have to be perfect. It could give VFX artists a massive head start, saving weeks, if not months, of work and millions of dollars. And that on its own is potentially worthwhile.

### **3:** Professors Alarmed by New AI That Writes Essays About as Well as Dumb Undergrads

It's no secret that artificial intelligence algorithms have increasingly good at generating text that could *almost* pass as being written by an actual human being.

OpenAI's latest release, ChatGPT, is the most impressive yet. The algorithm is an offshot of the company's groundbreaking GPT-3 AI, but makes it so that pretty much anybody can use it to generate text on virtually any topic.

Its outputs can be seriously impressive, ranging from highbrow poetry to suggesting bug fixes for source code.

It can even write college essays and cook up with believable-ish answers to exam queries that could score students a decent mark — a development that's alarming university professors.

"I would have given this a good grade," Dan Gillmor, a journalism professor at Arizona State University, who asked ChatGPT to complete a common assignment he gives his students, told *The Guardian*. "Academia has some very serious issues to confront."

#### Machine Learning High

ChatGPT has been available to the public for several days now, and to its credit, it has yet to turn into a misinformation machine, spreading hate or conspiracy theories — which has been the fate of several AI chatbots preceding it.

Instead, OpenAI may have created something that could prove actually useful. Some are even saying that it could lead to valuable educational tools, instead of — or in addition to — creating a nightmare

"Um... I just had like a 20-minute conversation with ChatGPT about the history of modern physics," Peter Wang, CEO of machine learning company Anaconda, tweeted. "If I had this shit as a tutor during high school and college.... OMG."

"I think we can basically re-invent the concept of education at scale," he added. "College as we know it will cease to exist."

Tell Me Lies

Despite the seriously impressive texts ChatGPT can generate, it still has an Achilles heel: it can't really tell truth from fiction, and often makes up facts on the spot. (One could argue that this is another sense in which it's not dissimilar to the average undergrad.)

Then there's the fact that it could also be used to come up with far more nefarious information, like teaching you how to shoplift or steal a car.

In short, while ChatGPT won't be replacing your professor any time soon, it may well be poised to change the face of education — for better or worse.

# 4: Fusion Scientists Claim Net Energy Gain, in Potentially Huge Breakthrough

Researchers at the government-funded Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory in California claim to have made a massive breakthrough in the long-delayed pursuit of practical fusion energy.

People involved in the research told *The Financial Times* that the team was able to get more energy out of a fusion reaction that they had to put in — a first in the field and a huge victory, both symbolic and actual.

With a net energy gain — something that had yet to be realized until these latest claims emerged — fusion energy could one day provide many of the benefits of fission power, without the radioactive waste or the risk of a nuclear meltdown.

But the claims have yet to be vetted by outside experts — and even the data itself is still being analyzed — so the jury is still out on the significance of the research.

For one, it's far from the first time that fusion researchers have claimed to have achieved a massive fusion breakthrough. Despite decades of research, we have yet to come close to demonstrating a feasible method of generating a reliable source of surplus energy by fusing atoms together inside a fusion reactor at scale.

The researchers say the reaction at the Livermore laboratory, though, produced around 2.5 megajoules of energy, or around 120 percent of the 2.1 megajoules that were needed to start the reaction — a 20 percent net gain.

To put those numbers into perspective, that's enough power to boil about two to three kettles.

The US government's National Ignition Facility uses the "world's largest and highest energy laser system" to blast light at small capsules of deuterium-tritium fuel, hydrogen isotopes that have long been used in a variety of experimental fusion reactors.

As a result, the fuel source is turned into plasma, releasing heat that can be harvested and turned into electricity.

On the one hand, the claim is an extraordinary note of hope for the world of clean energy. On the other, plenty of questions remain surrounding the significance and validity of the experiment's results.

"Initial diagnostic data suggests another successful experiment at the National Ignition Facility," the lab wrote in a statement to *Financial Times*. "However, the exact yield is still being determined and we can't confirm that it is over the threshold at this time."

If it does indeed turn out that the researchers were able to achieve a net energy gain — is still a major "if" at this point — the experiment could represent a turning point.

"If this is true, we are witnessing a moment of history," plasma physicist Arthur Turrell tweeted, noting that researchers have been trying to achieve the same "since the 1950s."

"This experimental result will electrify efforts to eventually power the planet with nuclear fusion — at a time when we've never needed a plentiful source of carbon-free energy more!" he added.

# **5:** Physicists Say New Breakthrough Proves Fusion Power is Possible

Researchers at the Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory claim to have achieved the seemingly impossible: generate more energy with a fusion reaction than they put into it, potentially paving the way for a truly environmentally friendly and safe source of power.

Their experiment, which involved using the "world's largest and highest energy laser system" at Livermore's National Ignition Facility to blast light at small capsules of deuterium-tritium fuel, generated 20 percent more energy than the amount required to power the system.

Despite the modest energy output — the system generated enough power to boil around two to three kettles — the researchers are boldly predicting that it could represent a major turning point in the quest to turn fusion energy into a reality.

"The fact that we were able to get more energy out than we put in provides an existence proof that this is possible," Mark Herrmann, program director for weapons physics and design at Livermore, told *The New York Times*. "It can be built on and improved upon and made better and could potentially be a source of energy in the future."

A net energy gain represents a milestone that has long been seen as the "holy grail" in fusion energy over its many quixotic decades.

Engineers have tested many different fusion reactor designs over the years, but always needed more energy to kickstart the process than they were able to get out of it — until now, the Livermore scientists say.

But there's still plenty of work left to do before we can start replacing coal, gas, and nuclear power plants.

For one, we still don't know if the technology can be feasibly scaled up to power an entire grid, researchers caution.

"To go from there to actually energy on the grid is a very long and difficult path," Riccardo Betti, chief scientist of the Laboratory for Laser Energetics at the University of Rochester, who was not involved in the experiments, told the *NYT*.

The promises of fusion power are vast: not only is it emissions-free, but it doesn't run the risk of causing a nuclear meltdown, either.

Despite the long road ahead, experts are seeing the latest experiment as an important step forward and a reason to be optimistic about the future of fusion energy.

"It took not just one generation but generations of people pursuing this goal," White House science adviser Arati Prabhakar said in a statement. "It's a scientific milestone."

### **6: Scientists Now Plotting First Fusion Power Plant**

Following what is being hailed as a "major breakthrough" in the field of fusion energy, the US Department of Energy is attempting to drag the tech into a practical form by investing in the development of a pilot fusion plant.

Earlier this month, researchers at the government-backed Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory used the "world's largest and highest energy laser system" to blast light at small capsules of deuterium-tritium fuel — and were able to get more energy out of it than they had to put in, an apparent world first in the long-delayed road of fusion power.

That's something scientists have been trying to achieve since at least the 1950s. Experts say the experiment "provides an existence proof that this is possible," as Mark Herrmann, program director for weapons physics and design at Livermore, told *The New York Times*.

Pilot Plant

Those exciting results come the same week as the DOE deciding on which fusion developers to award a \$50 million grant to build a 50 megawatt fusion plant, E&E *News* reports.

The goal is "hopefully to enable a fusion pilot to operate in the early 2030s," a senior DOE official told the publication.

It's the first pilot of its kind and could push US companies to invest in developing technologies that could realize the dream of having fusion reactors powering the grid.

At least 15 companies are seeking the grant, but it's unclear how many of them will be awarded funds.

Funding Secured

Despite the most recent breakthrough, scientists still have a lot of work ahead of them. For one, they will have to figure out the feasibility and scalability of systems like the one being used at Livermore.

Then there's the fact that the funding is very modest, according to experts, especially in light of high expectations from lawmakers.

Republicans also are about to take control of the House could also make it a lot more difficult for DOE to make federal funding available. Republican lawmakers have historically voted against approvals for these kinds of energy projects. Livermore's breakthrough experiment has proven that there's still plenty of enthusiasm and optimism about the idea of powering the grid with fusion reactors.

But scientists are only starting to understand how feasible this idea really is.

### **7:** Professors Say Chatgpt is Writing Terrible Papers that Would Get Failing Grades

OpenAI's text-generating ChatGPT has made major waves since being made available to the public last month.

The AI has spat out everything from usable source code to vaguely believable short stories — and its prowess has even shocked some academics, who were taken by its essay-writing skills and fretted that they were already on par with human undergrads.

But not every lecturer out there is convinced that "we're witnessing the death of the college essay in real time," as one Twitter user argued.

In other words, it may be a terrible idea after all to use ChatGPT for your next college exam — in fact, you might be a shortcut to a terrible grade, even if you're not caught cheating.

"I'm not a huge fan of the gloom and doom," Pennsylvania State English professor Stuart Selber told *Insider*. "Every year or two, there's something that's ostensibly going to take down higher education as we know it. So far, that hasn't happened."

Alarmist AI

To Selber, it's just history repeating itself.

"You can go back a couple decades and find similar alarm over Word, Wikipedia, and the Internet in general," he told *Insider*.

Selber argues that ChatGPT is simply rehashing existing information and arguments, while failing to actually question the data or turn these arguments into one that hasn't already been made — something that makes a good essay in college.

College history professor Jacqueline Antonovich agreed, tweeting that the essay ChatGPT generated after she input a midterm essay prompt "would earn an F."

"Probably an F- if that's possible," she added.

Express Yourself

ChatGPT may not be very good at writing college essays, but that doesn't mean it's can't be a useful resource for students.

University of Leeds lecturer Leah Henrickson told *Insider* that she sees a future for this kind of technology in the classroom, for instance, allowing non-native English speakers to express themselves.

"Our students know that these tools exist," she said. "Our job is to help them use them critically."

### **B- Institute of Aviation Studies**

# 1: Airbus to Strap Hydrogen Fuel Cell Engine to Massive Superjumbo Jet

Airbus has announced that it's strapping an experimental hydrogen fuel cell engine to a modified A380 superjumbo jet, an exciting new foray into the concept of powering commercial passenger aircraft with hydrogen alone.

The company says it's planning to start test flights in 2026 and launch a fully operational first zero-emissions aircraft by 2035 — an ambitious timeline, considering that we're only starting to understand the potential of the idea.

But moving to hydrogen could dramatically cut the carbon footprint of air travel, which has historically been a massive contributor, representing 2.8 percent of global CO2 emissions. Of course, that's all if the company can actually pull it off.

#### ZEROe

As a first step, Airbus is planning to test its ZEROe Fuel Cell Engine, which it unveiled at its Airbus Summit on this week, attached to the wing of a modified A380 commercial jet.

"In terms of aerodynamics, the A380 is a very stable aircraft," said Mathias Andriamisaina, head of ZEROe demonstrators and tests at Airbus, in a statement. "So the pod attached to the rear fuselage via the stub doesn't pose much of an issue."

Airbus already showed off previous concepts of aircraft that could make use of both hydrogen fuel cells and traditional combustion engines. The company, however, believes aircraft could still achieve flight with hydrogen alone.

"At scale, and if the technology targets were achieved, fuel cell engines may be able to power a 100-passenger aircraft with a range of approximately 1,000 nautical miles," vice president of Zero-Emission Aircraft Glenn Llewellyn said in the statement.

#### Running on Gas

But realizing its vision could prove difficult. Hydrogen is far less energy dense compared to kerosene, making it a considerably less efficient fuel by weight.

Then there's the fact that the production of hydrogen has proven challenging, costly, and potentially environmentally harmful as well.

That hasn't stopped airlines and aircraft manufacturers from pursuing the idea, at least on a lip service level. In fact, there has been a groundswell in companies attempting to turn the idea into a reality.

Just earlier this week, Rolls-Royce and partner budget airline EasyJet announced they 'd pulled off the "world's first run of a modern aero engine on hydrogen."

While converting air travel to run on hydrogen could take many years, experts believe the industry could start the process with short-haul flights at first, which could still represent a sizeable cut in emissions.

### <u>C – School of Sciences</u>

### 1: Scientists Stumble Upon Huge Graveyard of Sharks, Deep Under Ocean

In a small patch of ocean floor over three miles beneath the surface, seaborne scientists voyaging to the Cocos (Keeling) Islands in the Indian Ocean have uncovered a dense "graveyard" of sharks.

The discovery was made while aboard the Investigator, a research vessel operated by the Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organization (CSIRO), Australia's national science agency.

In total, more than 750 shark teeth were found riddling the ocean floor. Since sharks' bodies are mostly made of cartilage, their teeth are usually their only remains that are preserved long term. So this trove of chompers is about as good as it gets.

In addition to the graveyard's vast quantities of teeth, the variety of sharks the teeth represent has impressed scientists, too.

"The teeth look to come from modern sharks, such as mako and white sharks, but also from ancient sharks including the immediate ancestor of the giant megalodon shark," said Glenn Moore, Curator of Fishes at the Western Australian Museum, in a statement.

"This shark evolved into the megalodon, which was the largest of all sharks but died out about 3.5 million years ago," he added.

The megalodon is an extinct species of gargantuan shark with an almost mythic reputation. And for all the speculation over its colossal proportions and monstrous ferocity as an apex predator, there's indeed a lot more to be learned about them.

**Special Species** 

But believe it or not, the graveyard and the teeth of a megalodon ancestor might not even be the most impressive finds during the Investigator's recent voyage. How does recovering a new species of shark sound?

"Early in the voyage, we collected a striking small, stripey hornshark," said shark specialist Will White from CSIRO's Australian National Fish Collection, in the statement.

"This species is unique to Australia, but it hasn't yet been described and named. The specimen we collected will be incredibly important to science because we'll use it to describe the species," White added. If White and his team keep at it, they might even get the chance to name the species themselves.

At any rate, the findings demonstrate the importance of voyages such as these in exploring and documenting the rich marine biodiversity of our oceans.

#### 2: Scientists Sequence DNA They Found from 2 Million Years Ago

An international team of scientists has recovered 2 million years old DNA from a variety of plants, fish, and even an ancient mastodon.

It's the oldest DNA we've ever been able to analyze, *MIT Technology Review* reports, with the previous record set last year when scientists recovered partial genomes from a one-million-year-old Siberian mammoth.

The genetic material was collected from ancient sediment in Greenland, an area of the world that once harbored a far warmer climate that allowed a rich ecosystem of flora and fauna to flourish.

Some of the samples were taken from a 300-feet-thick deposit of clay and sand back in 2006 and stored in a freezer in Copenhagen.

The findings could give us clues as to how the local Greenland ecosystem was able to adapt to warming climates over the last two million years — and how current plant species may be able to adjust to a climate that's now warming even more rapidly.

"It's a climate similar to what we expect to face on Earth due to global warming," the University of Copenhagen's Eske Willerslev, senior author of a new paper about the project published in the journal *Nature*, told *MIT Tech*, "and it gives us some idea how nature can respond to increasing temperatures."

The fragments paint a fascinating picture of what Greenland may have looked like millions of years ago.

"It feels almost magical to be able to infer such a complete picture of an ancient ecosystem from tiny fragments of preserved DNA," University of California, Santa Cruz paleogeneticist Beth Shapiro told the *New York Times*.

The recovered DNA includes fragments from flowering plants and trees, species that haven't been spotted in the area in a long time.

"This is an ecosystem with no modern analogue," Willerslev told *MIT Tech*. "It's a mixture between arctic species and temperate species."

The fact that DNA remains of a mastodon, an ancient and long extinct relative of the elephant, were found in the area surprised scientists.

"Not in a million years would you expect a mastodon up there," Love Dalén, a paleontologist at the Swedish Museum of Natural History, who was not involved in the study, told *Nature*.

Samples from reindeer also proved surprising.

"Reindeers, according to paleontologists, should not have survived; they shouldn't even exist at that time," Willerslev told *Nature*.

The samples were only recoverable thanks to freezing temperatures and the fact that they were bound to clay and quartz, slowing down DNA degradation significantly.

In short, it's a tremendous achievement of modern science, enabled by cuttingedge gene sequencing technologies and providing an exceedingly rare snapshot into our planet's distant past — and perhaps a glimpse of our future as well.

# **3: Satellite Images Show Progress on 100-Mile Long Skyscraper in Saudi Arabia**

Satellite images obtained by *MIT Technology Review* show marked progress on Saudi Arabia's 100-mile megacity called the "Line."

The images, courtesy of Australian satellite image aggregator Soar Earth, show a massive area of active construction sites, with some spots already dug out deep below the surface.

The goal is to construct a \$500 billion project zero-carbon skyscraper that can house up to nine million people in the middle of the desert, a utopian dream that has raised plenty of eyebrows.

Satellite Scan

According to *MIT Tech*, an estimated 26 million cubic meters, or almost a billion cubic feet, of earth and rock have already been dug out since construction kicked off this summer.

The images show 425 excavation vehicles working on the Line over a single stretch of the project. A nearby construction base covers two square miles and features several swimming pools, soccer fields, and even a solar farm, according to the report.

Until now, high-definition imagery of the site was "nonexistent publicly," as Amir Farhand, CEO and founder of Soar Earth, told *MIT Tech*. Some experts are intrigued by why the imagery isn't showing up on larger imagery providers like Maxar Technologies.

"If there's no Maxar images acquired over an area that is experiencing rapid economic investment, something fishy is going on," Jamon Van Den Hoek, a geography professor at Oregon State University, told the publication.

Big Swing

And that's especially relevant for the Line, a project which has been mired in controversy from the very start. Saudi Arabia reportedly forced local tribal community members from their homes to make space for project, which has already led to several death sentences.

Critics have also called out the mammoth skyscraper as an overly ambitious vanity project that likely won't make good on its lofty promises.

"At every part of this project, there's massive terraforming going on, and some of the stuff is going to indelibly change the environment forever,"

### 4: Residents Alarmed When Entire River Turns White

Something alarming happened in the south of England when an entire river mysteriously turned snow white, the *BBC* reports.

Officials from the UK's Environment Agency (EA) say they're closing in on the cause: a contaminant being discharged into the waterways, though they declined to elaborate on the source or nature of the pollution.

According to the EA, more than 12 miles of river have been affected, a shocking incident that could have very real ramifications for the local environment.

Digging into the history of the river, though, may provide clues as to the cause.

Milky White

Passers-by were taken aback to find that both the rivers Yealm and Piall in south Devon had turned chalk white earlier this month, as local news site *Devon Live* reports, and it's reportedly not even the first time this has happened in the area.

While EA officials declined to give further details, a previous incident involving the same river turning white back in November 2020 could give us clues as to what may have happened this time.

The 2020 incident was caused by "rainfall-related run-off at a quarry operation in the upper catchment," as an EA spokesperson revealed at the time — though, to be clear, we still don't know for sure if the same source is to blame for this month's incident.

**Environmental Impact** 

Officials are yet again jumping into action.

"We are supporting the work to stop the discharge and prevent further material from being washed down the river," the EA told the *BBC* in a statement. "We have officers at different locations on the river sampling and assessing the impact."

The direct environmental impact of the contaminant, needless to say, is still unknown.

"Fisheries specialists have been on site since early [on Tuesday] assessing the impact of the pollution on fish and fish habitat," the statement reads.

### 5: Physicist Says the Laws of Physics Don't Actually Exist

The majority of physicists live under the assumption of a strict and immutable set of laws that govern the universe — but not all.

"What we often call laws of physics are really just consistent mathematical theories that seem to match some parts of nature," theoretical physicist Sankar Das Sarma writes in the beginning of a must-read new column in *New Scientist* column. These laws of physics are meant to describe our shared reality, even if they "evolve as our empirical knowledge of the universe improves."

"Here's the thing," Sarma continues. "Despite many scientists viewing their role as uncovering these ultimate laws, I just don't believe they exist."

Prior to Albert Einstein's groundbreaking — and ultimately unfinished — attempts to create a theory of everything, and all the leaps in fields like quantum mechanics that followed, the physicist argues, such an assertion wouldn't have seemed outlandish.

Indeed, Sarma says he finds it "amazing" that humans "can make sense of some aspects of the universe through the laws of physics" at all.

"As we discover more about nature, we can hone our descriptions of it, but it is never-ending," he writes. "Like peeling an infinite onion, the more we peel, the more there is to peel."

#### Multiverse Madness

Pointing to the concept of the multiverse, or an infinite number of universes, Sarma ponders how humans could have such hubris as to imagine that the apparent rules that seem to govern our reality would apply in every universe.

Raising a theoretical argument, Sarma adds that even in the face of a theory as substantial as quantum mechanics, which he describes as being "more like a set of rules that we use to express our laws rather than being an ultimate law itself," there remain too many mysteries and variables to ever consider this so-called fundamental theory sacrosanct.

"It is difficult to imagine that a thousand years from now physicists will still use quantum mechanics as the fundamental description of nature," he continues. "Something else should replace quantum mechanics by that time just as quantum mechanics itself replaced Newtonian mechanics."

What that replacement may be, Sarma declines to speculate. But he nevertheless sees "no particular reason that our description of how the physical universe seems

to work should reach the pinnacle suddenly in the beginning of the 21st century and become stuck forever at quantum mechanics."

# 6: Flat Earthers Puzzled by Why People Don't Fall off "Bottom" of Globe

The Flat Earthers have struck again — and this time, they're confused as to why people and cities don't plummet into space when they're on the planet's "bottom."

In spite of, millennia of established science, national news outlets like *USA Today* are still forced to debunk these kinds of outlandish claims, often spread via misspelled Facebook memes like the viral one below, which suggests that it is "scientifically impossiball [sic]" for the island of Manhattan to be hanging "upside down" without falling into space.

Disc Jockeys

As the idiotic meme claims, Earth can't really be a globe because that would mean that some parts of the world are upside-down and at risk of falling off.

Of course, as *USA Today* emphasized as it sought to debunk this "wrongheaded" meme and the junk science behind it, there's no true "up" or "down" in space — and furthermore, we don't experience the sensation of being "upside down" because Earth's substantial gravity pulls everything towards the planet's center, creating the sensation of being upright on a flat surface that's actually just a very large sphere.

"Near Earth — or any other planet or star — 'true up' is always the direction opposite the gravitational force," North Carolina State University physics professor David Brown told the newspaper. "That is, 'true down' is always toward the center of Earth."

If the planet were indeed a flat surface the way Flat Earthers claim, there would still be a gravitational pull towards the center of said disk, the physicist pointed out — meaning anyone at the purported "edge" would fall sideways.

"This is," Brown continued with apparent exhaustion, "one of very many ways we know Earth is not flat."

Depressingly, though, given that they're willing to ignore the copious evidence that Earth is round, Flat Earthers are probably willing to overlook gravity anyway.

### 7: Gloomy Physicists Say Nuclear Fusion Breakthrough is Too Late to Save Us

Earlier this month, researchers at the Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory claimed to have achieved a world's first: generating more energy with a fusion reaction than they put into it.

The feat has long been called the "holy grail" of fusion power, and a potentially significant waypoint on the road to generating practical electricity in fusion power plants.

But as experts argue in a number of new letters published by *The Guardian*, the breakthrough may be too little, too late. Worse yet, the kind of technology developed by the Livermore lab could pave the way for the production of even deadlier nuclear weapons.

In simple terms, argued environmentalist and renewable energy specialist Mark Diesendorf from the University of New South Wales in Australia, we're too far out from feasible fusion power production, running the risk that the tech could be a superfluous red herring.

"To go from break-even, where energy output is greater than total energy input, to a commercial nuclear fusion reactor could take at least 25 years," he wrote. "By then, the whole world could be powered by safe and clean renewable energy, primarily solar and wind."

Chris Cragg, a freelance journalist who specializes in energy and environmental issues, agreed that the development of feasible fusion reactors could take a long time, writing in a separate letter that a "true fusion power station is unlikely to be running before my grandchildren turn 70."

"After all, it has taken 60-odd years and huge amounts of money to get this far," he added, referring to the fact that scientists have been trying to crack the code since the 1950s. (Officials from the US Department of Energy have a more optimistic timetable, suggesting the first fusion pilot plant could start operations "in the early 2030s," according to a recent report.)

Worse yet, as Diesendorf argues, laser fusion systems, like the one used by the researchers at the Livermore lab, could be used to "produce neutrons that can be used to produce the nuclear explosives plutonium-239, uranium-235 and uranium-233."

In other words, future fusion reactors could provide military powers with new ways of generating the raw materials for nuclear bombs.

It's not exactly a stretch either, considering the Livermore lab has a long history of working on nuclear weapons. The facility was founded in 1952 in response to the Soviet Union detonating an atomic bomb in 1949.

In any case, the clock is ticking. While scientists are still poring over the results from this month's experiment, the planet is facing a climate crisis of growing proportions.

Whether fusion will be part of the answer to our climate woes remains to be seen. Scientists certainly still have a lot left to prove, with or without breakthroughs.

### **<u>C</u>** - School of Governance and Society

### 1: Amazon Says It'll Pay You \$2 Per Month to Spy on Your Phone's Internet Traffic

Allow an overbearing tech conglomerate to see traffic coming out of your phone, and you can clinch yourself a cool \$2 a month.

That kind of minuscule moneymaking deal is what Amazon is offering customers as part of its invite-only Amazon Shopper Panel, *Insider* reports. Select customers can use an associated app to submit photos of receipts for ten bucks, complete surveys for cash — and most invasively of all, allow the app to spy on your phone's traffic.

By doing so, Amazon wants to monitor all the ads you see and when and where you see them, including its own ads. The data it gathers will "help brands offer better products and make ads from Amazon more relevant," according to the program's website.

It notes that receipts containing sensitive information such as prescriptions will be deleted, as per its privacy notice, and that the program can be opted out of at any time. The exact extent of the data gathering seems intentionally opaque, but involves reconfiguring the user's phone's Domain Name Systems and VPN settings.

An Amazon spokesperson confirmed to Insider that only invited customers are eligible for the \$2 reward, but declined to disclose how Amazon selected users for the program.

But hey, if you feel left out and want to sell your digital soul that badly, don't worry — there's a waitlist for the eager.

Teetering Trend

Notwithstanding the fact that letting a monopoly like Amazon peer into your internet traffic is an appalling affront to privacy, the \$2 it offers as compensation is insultingly low — not even enough to rent a movie on its Prime Video service, in most cases.

It's not a real shocker that the same company that pushed millions of Alexaequipped smart speakers into your home would be peddling another way to get its nose in your personal business, but here we are.

And as Insider notes, this is far from the first time a tech company has offered money for users' private data. Google, for example, did the same thing in 2012

with a browser extension, offering \$5 Amazon gift cards every three months in return. Or you could install a specialized router from Google that tracked virtually everything for an upfront payment of \$100, plus another \$20 per month.

Expect this to be the new normal. The value of tailored advertising means that companies, especially big tech ones, will be looking for any way to monetize your online habits — and your privacy.

### 2: Elon Musk Is Hiring Relatives at Twitter in Literal Nepotism

After obliterating Twitter's workforce, the company's new CEO Elon Musk is desperately trying to piece together a team that can keep the lights on — but that hasn't stopped him from hiring his own relatives, *Insider* reports.

Specifically, Musk has hired at least two of his cousins, James and Andrew Musk, who reportedly now work full time at the social media company.

Apart from the literal nepotism, *Insider* reports that Musk has also roped in about 150 people who used to work his other companies, including Tesla engineers and staff from The Boring Company who are being referred to as "Musk's goons" by existing employees.

Yes, Elon

Musk's indiscriminate mass layoffs, as well as the ensuing resignations, have cut the company's 7,500-employee workforce by roughly 70 percent.

Several core teams, including those tasked with running the company's moderation system, have all but disappeared, seemingly in Musk's apparent attempts to bring "free speech" to the platform.

Musk has also surrounded himself with a host of staffers who are reportedly tasked with "all kinds of things," from getting coffee to coordinating meetings, according to *Insider*'s sources.

Musk Army

Meanwhile, Musk has been sleeping at the company's headquarters in San Francisco, as well as providing employees with access to "sad hotel rooms" in the form of conference rooms that have been hastily transformed into lackluster bedrooms.

It's clear by this point that Musk is laser focused on remaking the social giant in his image — even if that includes hooking up members of his own family with cushy gigs.

Whether Musk's new Twitter army will be able to turn things around and stop the company's bleeding remains to be seen.

### **3:** Russian Spacecraft Docked to iss Sprays Fluid into Space, Seemingly Struck by Micrometeorite

As Russian cosmonauts on the International Space Station geared up for a scheduled spacewalk on Wednesday night, flight controllers told them to stand by as they noticed something was terribly wrong: a Roscosmos Soyuz spacecraft, docked to station, was leaking uncontrollably.

The event was captured on the NASA TV broadcast, with agency spokesperson Rob Navias describing the leak as "fairly significant." Videos show coolant — likely ammonia — continuously spraying out of the Soyuz and floating into space, a mesmerizing sight that could almost be described as cinematic if it weren't so real.

Fortunately, as of now, it's believed that neither the ISS nor the astronauts are in any danger as engineers and control try to diagnose the leakage, which is limited solely to the Soyuz. If the craft is too damaged to safely return to Earth, though, it would mean the station's crew is now missing an escape craft in the case of emergency.

#### A Way Home

According to Ars Technica senior space editor Eric Berger, the leakage was "never controlled" and only stopped once "all the coolant was gone," he wrote in a tweet. That does not sound good.

And as Berger observed in Ars Technica, the ISS may be safe with the astronauts sitting tight for now, but the Soyuz's potentially compromised condition does spell trouble for the three astronauts scheduled to fly back to Earth aboard it in the spring, including both Russian cosmonauts Sergey Prokopyev and Dmitry Petelin and NASA astronaut Frank Rubio.

Still, it's probably too early to come to any definitive conclusions. At the end of the NASA TV livestream, Navias stated that "no decisions have been made regarding the integrity of the Soyuz MS-22 or what the next course of action will be," as quoted by CNN.

As of Thursday morning, it still appears that no final decision has been made.

Small Rock, Big Impact

However, it does appear that the cause of leakage has been tentatively determined.

Sergei Krikalev, director of crewed space flight programs at Roscosmos said in a statement that the leakage was likely caused by a stray micrometeorite strike, the Associated Press reports.

Krikalev added that it could affect the Soyuz's coolant system performance but reiterated that it does not endanger the crew.

For now, initial assessments of the Soyuz by Russian specialists indicate that the Soyuz is flyable, Berger tweeted, and that NASA will be using the robotic arm Canadarm2 to further assess the damage.

# 4: Scientists Release Audio of Nasa Rover Getting Swallowed by a 387 Foot Dust Devil on Mars

As an imposing dust devil rattled NASA's Perseverance rover on Mars, its onboard SuperCam microphone was kept hot, producing the first ever sound recording of the fascinating yet little understood weather phenomenon on the Red Planet.

That's cool on its own, but the recording in conjunction with other measurements taken at the time — like of pressure and temperature, not to mention photos — are more than just neat collectibles, and afford scientists a wealth of unprecedented insights into the Martian atmosphere, which they've published as a new study in the journal Nature Communications.

"Within the team, we always knew that a microphone on Mars would be an important instrument for studying the Martian atmosphere and dust devils were one of the phenomena that we hoped to observe one day," study lead author Naomi Murdoch, a planetary scientist at the National Higher French Institute of Aeronautics and Space, told Vice. "However, to actually observe one is not simple; it requires careful planning and also good luck."

"There is only a 1 in 200 chance to detect such a dust devil with a single microphone recording in the mid-day period!" Murdoch added.

https://youtu.be/bheyhn5jGPQ

#### Weathering the Storm

Evidently, fortune has favored Murdoch's team. So fruitful were the measurements that the scientists say they were able to accurately count every particle of dust that struck the rover.

In addition, they were also able to calculate the dust devil's speed of 17 feet per second, as well as its towering dimensions: around 82 feet wide and at least 387 feet tall, according to the study, enough to rival small skyscrapers.

You'd think that might be risky for a rover — and it is, to some extent — but thanks to Mars' rarefied atmosphere, which isn't even one percent as dense as Earth's, the vortex didn't pack much of a punch either, leaving Percy undamaged.

#### Lift Off

All this, simply put, is a big deal. According to Murdoch, scientists still don't understand how dust devils are formed on Mars, or more specifically, how dust is lifted off the ground.

The findings here could change that, but they've proved just as illuminating as they are perplexing. The eye of the vortex should be calmer than its windy walls, but the scientists observed a surprising amount of impacts while the rover was in its center.

"This particular dust devil is unusual even for Mars," Murdoch told Space.com. "We aren't entirely sure why the dust has accumulated in the center, but it may be because the dust devil is still in its initial phase of formation."

Mysteries still linger, but at least one thing is crystal clear to Murdoch: don't underestimate the value of microphones and acoustic data when it comes to exploring planets.

# **5: James Cameron Says He Commissioned A Scientific Study on Whether Jack Could Have Survived in ''Titanic''**

Twenty five years since its first release, James Cameron's swooning epic "Titanic" is still the third highest grossing movie of all time. Besides its storied legacy, it's also spawned an endless debate among fans on its ending: whether Jack, played by Leonardo DiCaprio, could have survived the freezing ocean if he'd climbed onto the floating door with Rose, played by Kate Winslet.

And now, Cameron — renowned for his obsession with minute cinematic details — says he's finally put an end to the debate with an actual scientific study.

"We have done a scientific study to put this whole thing to rest and drive a stake through its heart once and for all," Cameron told *The Toronto Sun* while promoting his latest blockbuster sensation "Avatar: The Way of Water." "We have since done a thorough forensic analysis with a hypothermia expert who reproduced the raft from the movie and we're going to do a little special on it that comes out in February."

"We took two stunt people who were the same body mass of Kate and Leo," the acclaimed director explained, "and we put sensors all over them and inside them and we put them in ice water and we tested to see whether they could have survived through a variety of methods and the answer was, there was no way they both could have survived. Only one could survive."

#### No Alternative

For now, that's all the details we have on the study, but this isn't the first time Cameron has addressed the perennial, nagging question. In 2017, he debunked a theory posited on the TV show "Mythbusters" that Jack could have survived by tying Rose's life vest to the door for buoyancy.

"You're underwater tying this thing on in 28-degree water, and that's going to take you five to 10 minutes, so by the time you come back up you're already dead," Cameron told *The Daily Beast* at the time. "So that wouldn't work."

And science aside, Cameron thinks Jack's death was thematically integral to the story — so there's no point getting hooked up on something he's not going to change his mind on anyway.

"No, he needed to die," Cameron explained during the recent press tour. "It's like Romeo and Juliet. It's a movie about love and sacrifice and mortality. The love is measured by the sacrifice." We'll have to wait until the study and/or the special come out, but if there's anyone who'd do whatever it takes to get to the bottom of a thalassic mystery, it'd be Cameron.

### 6: Professor Predicts That This Whole Internet Thing Will Soon Blow Over

At a certain point, everyone's gonna get tired of being online — or so goes the argument of one Dutch professor who thinks that eventually, the bad is going to outweigh the good and we'll all finally get to log off.

In a paper titled "Extinction Internet" with accompanying illustrations that would be at home in an old copy of *Adbusters*, University of Amsterdam professor and media theorist Geert Lovink poses a question for our age: "Can today's internet culture withstand entropy and overcome infinite capture while facing its neverending ending?"

#### Disenchantment

As the baby boomer aged Geerts writes in the paper, which was published by the school's Institute of Network Cultures, his generation "found out early that the internet... is both toxic and curative." While his cohort marveled in fascination at that juxtaposition, subsequent generations have become increasingly disenchanted, he argues — and, perhaps more importantly, have become more and more convinced that the internet cannot be fixed.

"There may come a point when that's no longer possible, after which time the adverse consequences can no longer be controlled," Lovink said in the school's press release. "The internet is headed for a point of no return, and Big Tech is probably already aware of this, too."

"Mark Zuckerberg has moved away from his social media platforms and launched Meta," he added, "as if nothing's wrong and we can just start over again, but it's clearly already broken."

No Turning Back

Geerts holds that such a point of no return — a "peak internet" moment, if you will — is steadily approaching because, as the release notes, "even 'ordinary' users increasingly have to pay a price for our far-reaching dependence on the internet and addiction to social media and apps."

Ultimately, Lovink says that he believes "people will begin to shun technology" as these prices, which are primarily psychological," begin to cost too much for the average user.

It's a tempting theory, to say the least. In reality, though, it's tough to imagine any serious number of people ever unplugging themselves from something so addictive, no matter how harmful it gets.

### <u>D – Office of Research Innovation and</u> <u>Commercialization (ORIC)</u>

### **1: Events Organized and Facilitated by ORIC**

# 1.1 Arranged the Seminar on The Importance of Human Capital in the Digital Age

Department of Economics and Statistics - HSM, in Collaboration with ORIC, organized a seminar titled "The Importance of Human Capital in the Digital Age" on Tuesday, November 22, 2022, from 11:00 AM - 12:00 PM. In this seminar discussed Human Capital's importance in the digital age.



Department of Economics and Statistics | Organizer: Syed Mughees UI Hassan

#### 1.2 ORIC Organized a free Series of Workshops on "Graphic Designing"

Office of Research Innovation and Commercialization (ORIC), in collaboration with the Pakistan Training Development Institute (PTDI), organized a free Series of Workshops on "Graphic Designing" on Thursday, December 15, 2022 from 05:30 PM to 06:30 PM. (Guest Speaker: Hanzala Kaleem -Trainer).



# 1.3 Training Program on Web 3.0 and Metaverse on Sunday 04 December, 2022, at University of Management and Technology (UMT).

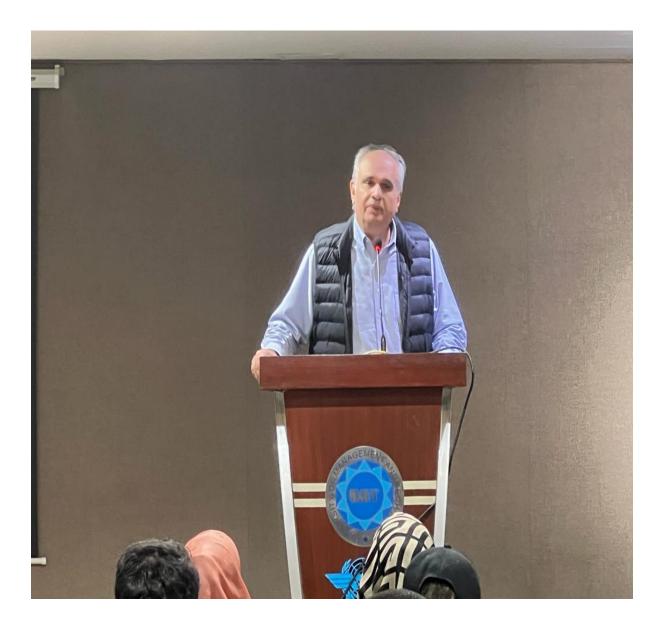
Office of Research Innovation and Commercialization (ORIC), University of Management and Technology (UMT), in collaboration with The Presidential Initiative for Artificial Intelligence and Computing (PIAIC) arranged a training Program on Web 3.0 and Metaverse at UMT on Sunday 04 December, 2022, at University of Management and Technology (UMT).





# 1.4 Training Program on Web 3.0 and Metaverse on Sunday 11 December, 2022, at University of Management and Technology (UMT).

Office of Research Innovation and Commercialization (ORIC), University of Management and Technology (UMT), in collaboration with The Presidential Initiative for Artificial Intelligence and Computing (PIAIC) arranged a training Program on Web 3.0 and Metaverse at UMT on Sunday 11 December, 2022, at University of Management and Technology (UMT).





# 1.5: Seminar on the Company Incorporation, Corporate Compliance/Amendments in Companies Act, 2017 and Ease of doing business in Pakistan

Office of Research and Innovation & Commercialization (ORIC) in Collaboration with School of Governance and Society (SGS) organized a seminar on the Company Incorporation, Corporate Compliance/Amendments in Companies Act, 2017 and Ease of doing business in Pakistan by Securities and Exchange Commission of Pakistan (SECP) on December 08, 2022.









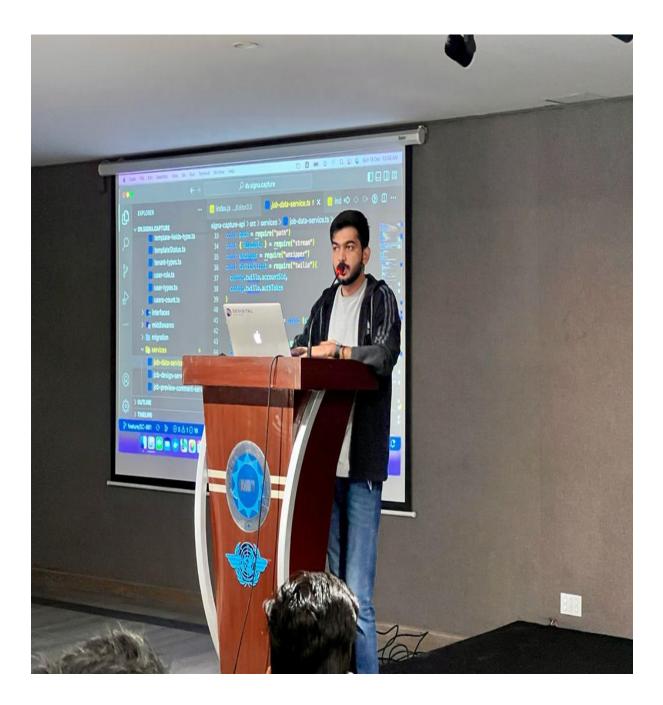
#### 1.6: ORIC Organized a free Series of Workshops on "Graphic Designing"

Office of Research Innovation and Commercialization (ORIC), in collaboration with the Pakistan Training Development Institute (PTDI), organized a free Series of Workshops on "Graphic Designing" on Thursday, December 15, 2022 from 05:30 PM to 06:30 PM. (Guest Speaker: Hanzala Kaleem -Trainer).



## 1.7 Training Program on Web 3.0 and Metaverse on Sunday 18 December, 2022, at University of Management and Technology (UMT).

Office of Research Innovation and Commercialization (ORIC), University of Management and Technology (UMT), in collaboration with The Presidential Initiative for Artificial Intelligence and Computing (PIAIC) arranged a training Program on Web 3.0 and Metaverse at UMT on Sunday 18 December, 2022, at University of Management and Technology (UMT).







#### 1.8: ORIC Organized a free Series of Workshops on "Graphic Designing"

Office of Research Innovation and Commercialization (ORIC), in collaboration with the Pakistan Training Development Institute (PTDI), organized a free Series of Workshops on "Graphic Designing" on Thursday, December 22, 2022 from 05:30 PM to 06:30 PM. (Guest Speaker: Hanzala Kaleem -Trainer).



# 1.9 Training Program on Web 3.0 and Metaverse on Sunday 25 December, 2022, at University of Management and Technology (UMT).

Office of Research Innovation and Commercialization (ORIC), University of Management and Technology (UMT), in collaboration with The Presidential Initiative for Artificial Intelligence and Computing (PIAIC) arranged a training Program on Web 3.0 and Metaverse at UMT on Sunday 25 December, 2022, at University of Management and Technology (UMT).





#### 1.10: ORIC Organized a free Series of Workshops on "Graphic Designing"

Office of Research Innovation and Commercialization (ORIC), in collaboration with the Pakistan Training Development Institute (PTDI), organized a free Series of Workshops on "Graphic Designing" on Thursday, December 29, 2022 from 05:30 PM to 06:30 PM. (Guest Speaker: Hanzala Kaleem - Trainer).



# 1.11: ORIC organized a Training Session on "Reexamining the 7Cs of Effective Communication".

Office of Research Innovation and Commercialization (ORIC) Organized a Training Session on "Reexamining the 7Cs of Effective Communication" on Thursday, December 22, 2022 at 11:00 AM to 01: 00 PM in the DG Board Room, 5th Floor, Admin Building, UMT.











# **2:** Number 1 in Pakistan with Eighteen Journals Recognized by HEC

It is a matter of immense pleasure that HEC has recognized eighteen UMT journals. We are number 1 in Pakistan followed by University of Punjab with seventeen journals.



### **3: UMT and Falcon Education and Consultancy Services (Pvt) Ltd.** Joint Collaboration

The Joint Collaborating Meeting with Falcon Education and Consultancy Services (Pvt) Ltd. was held on Tuesday, December 06, 2022, at 03:00 AM in the DG Board Room, 5th Floor, Admin Building, UMT. The meeting started with recitation of Holy Quran. The Respected Prof. Abid HK Shirwani (Co-Founder, Director-General and Head ORIC-UMT) headed the meeting and welcomed all the participants. Honorable Mr. Syed Abidi (Chief Executive, Falcon Education and Consultancy Services (Pvt) Ltd.) introduced himself and explained the brief history of Falcon Education and Consultancy Services (Pvt) Ltd.). The main objective of the meeting was Joint Collaboration on Internationalization.











### 4: UI GreenMetric Ranking 2022

UI GreenMetric has announced the result of UI GreenMetric Ranking 2022. UMT has performed outstandingly in this ranking and secured the 527th position globally.

Green Metric		About V Rankings V Media & Activities V Our Network V Useful Resources V Related Links V						
et <sup>525</sup>	University of Jordan	Jordan	5860	860	1250	675	550	1150
526	FURG - Universidade Federal do Rio Grande	Brazil	5860	990	635	1500	600	885
527 •	University of Management and Technology	Pakistan	5855	885	1260	750	400	985
€ <sup>528</sup>	University of Gdansk	Poland	5855	860	1185	1275	500	535
529 🕈	Università Degli Studi di Bergamo	Italy	5835	590	1575	1350	260	985
e <sup>530</sup>	Akdeniz University	Turkey	5835	1100	575	1275	310	1275

### **5:** Achievement of UMT in Wrestling

UMT Markhor Mr. Farhan Asif (Wrestling Player) F2019314081 studying BS-A&F has won the BRONZE Medal during "38<sup>th</sup> HEC Intervarsity Wrestling Men Championships" scheduled from 13-16 Dec 2022 organised by (UVAS) University of Veterinary & Animal Sciences, Lahore.



#### 6: A Memorandum of Understanding MoU Signing Ceremony Between UMT & Sundar Industrial Estate

A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) has been signed between the University of Management and Technology (UMT) and Sundar Industrial Estate, Lahore on Tuesday, December 27, 2022, at 11:00 AM in Sundar Industrial Estate.





