

보도시점

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배포 2025. 11. 18.(화)

Korea and UAE to Jointly Advance the UAE Stargate Project

- Agreement to cooperate on major projects, including a joint hyperscale AI data center project based on an energy mix
- Announcement of the bilateral “Strategic AI Cooperation Framework” and plans to establish working groups

The Ministry of Science and ICT (MSIT, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister Bae Kyunghoon), the Ministry of Climate, Energy and Environment (MCEE, Minister Kim Sungwhan), the Ministry of Oceans and Fisheries (MOF, Minister Chun Jae-Soo), the Ministry of Trade, Industry and Resources (MOTIR, Minister Kim Jung-Kwan), and the Presidential Council on National Artificial Intelligence Strategy announced that, in connection with President Lee Jae-myung’s state visit to the UAE, the two countries will significantly expand bilateral cooperation across all fronts, including participation in the UAE Stargate Project*, the world’s largest artificial intelligence (AI) infrastructure initiative.

* **UAE Stargate Project:** An AI data center (DC) cluster of up to 5 GW to be established in Abu Dhabi (with the first 200 MW-class AI cluster scheduled to begin operation in 2026).

The government has been strengthening the overall capabilities of the AI innovation ecosystem, spanning infrastructure, technology, and talent, through cooperation with BlackRock, OpenAI, and NVIDIA, in pursuit of becoming one of the “Global Top 3 in AI.” Aiming to become the “AI Capital of Asia,” Korea views strategic cooperation with key countries as essential to leading the fiercely competitive global market, and has therefore chosen to pursue AI and energy cooperation with the UAE as the first step. In other words, this cooperation with the UAE marks the first case

of expanding Korea's accumulated domestic capabilities into overseas markets and signifies that the Republic of Korea is now fully entering the global AI competition.

Regarding the Strategic AI Cooperation Framework

First, the two countries agreed to deepen comprehensive bilateral cooperation in the AI sector by signing the Strategic AI Cooperation Framework between Korea's Presidential Council on National Artificial Intelligence Strategy (National AI Strategy Council), the highest decision-making body for AI policy in Korea, and Abu Dhabi's Artificial Intelligence and Advanced Technology Council (AIATC). Priority areas of cooperation include AI investment and infrastructure development, expansion of AI supply chains, acceleration of AI and advanced technology adoption, and AI research and development. With the announcement of this framework, the two countries plan to cooperate extensively, from AI technology and application-service development to the construction of AI and energy infrastructure.

Beginning with this summit, the two countries agreed to jointly pursue large-scale projects aimed at mutual prosperity and development. As the first project, they decided to move quickly on the "Energy-Mix-Based Hyperscale AI Data Center Project." This initiative includes building a large-scale AI data center in the UAE, establishing a power grid that utilizes nuclear energy, gas, and renewable energy to ensure stable operation, and expanding cooperation into the semiconductor supply chain sector.

The UAE Stargate Project is expected to involve initial investments of more than KRW 30 trillion, offering major opportunities for Korean companies, not only in climate-tech sectors such as energy, batteries, and eco-friendly solutions, but also for domestic AI startups and firms with experience in AI data centers, to participate in the global market.

Second, the two countries will pursue a "physical AI-based port and logistics project." Leveraging Korea's experience operating fully automated terminals and its data-driven physical AI technologies, the two sides plan to cooperate in

building more efficient, automated, and intelligent ports. Korea and the UAE will carry out a joint project using Busan Port and Abu Dhabi's Khalifa Port as test-bed ports for demonstration and validation. Transitioning to physical AI-based smart ports is expected not only to create growth opportunities for physical AI technology companies, but also to serve as a catalyst for spreading AI-driven port and logistics systems to major ports around the world. Through this cooperation, Korea and the UAE aim to establish an important milestone in their rise as global leaders in smart ports and logistics.

MoU on Exchanges and Cooperation to Expand Collaboration in the AI Sector

In addition, the MSIT signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the UAE Minister of State for Artificial Intelligence to expand bilateral cooperation in the AI sector. The MoU supports exchanges among research institutes, companies, and experts; promotes private-sector collaboration; and facilitates AI investment. Through this MoU, the two sides plan to pursue cooperation that encourages Korean AI companies to participate in the UAE's AI data center development and AX projects. To ensure continued progress, the MSIT and the UAE Minister of State for Artificial Intelligence agreed to establish and operate a director-general-level AI Policy Consultative Body. This carries significance in strengthening cooperation channels for AI governance not only with Abu Dhabi but also with Dubai, reflecting the federal structure of the UAE government.

※ (Main points) To expand bilateral exchanges in the AI sector, the two countries will cooperate to: 1) conduct joint AI research, 2) facilitate exchanges between companies and experts, 3) share information related to AI regulatory sandboxes and certification, and 4) promote the participation of Korean companies in the establishment of the UAE's AI data centers and in industry-specific AX projects.

Future Plans

To quickly implement the Strategic AI Cooperation Framework and generate tangible outcomes, the Korean government, led by the National AI Strategy Council, together

with relevant ministries and agencies such as the MSIT, the MCEE, the MOF, and the MOTIR, as well as private-sector companies, will establish sector-specific working groups with the UAE side within the year. Through these working groups, the two countries will discuss concrete implementation measures and develop detailed cooperation plans.

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