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3/3/2024 11

Hamdan launches Dubai global growth fund

DUBAI

BY KHITAM AL AMIR
Chief News Editor

A Dh500 million fund to support small and medium-sized enterprises has been launched to further boost Dubai's vibrant business environment.

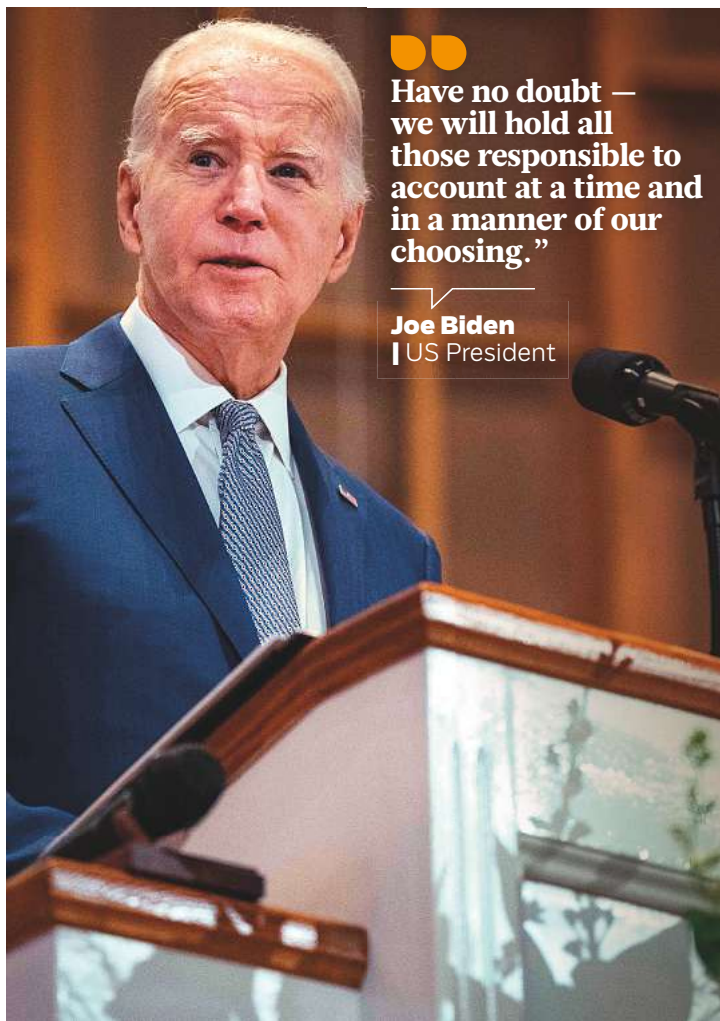
Shaikh Hamdan Bin Mohammed Bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Crown Prince of Dubai and Chairman of the Executive Council, yesterday launched the Dubai International Growth Fund for SMEs, an initiative developed through a partnership between the Dubai Government and Emirates NBD.

"With a value of Dh500 million, this initiative aims to support small and medium-sized enterprises and accelerate their progress and global expansion. To all entrepreneurs worldwide who have chosen Dubai as their launchpad, we extend our steadfast support locally and internationally. You are key contributors to Dubai's success, and your partnership is vital to achieving the goals of the Dubai Economic Agenda D33," Shaikh Hamdan said.

The initiative will focus on key strategic sectors of the emirate. Emirates NBD will announce further details on the financing programme in February.

3 US service members killed in drone strike on Jordan base

BIDEN BLAMES ATTACK THAT ALSO WOUNDED 32 ON IRAN-BACKED MILITANTS



Have no doubt — we will hold all those responsible to account at a time and in a manner of our choosing."

Joe Biden
| US President

Joe Biden delivers remarks at the St. John Baptist Church in Columbia, South Carolina, yesterday. He vowed to strike back after a drone attack killed three US troops in Jordan.

WASHINGTON

A drone attack on a base in Jordan killed three American troops and wounded dozens yesterday, with President Joe Biden blaming Iran-backed militants and vowing to hold the perpetrators to account.

It is the first time American military personnel have been killed by hostile fire in the Middle East since the start of the Israel-Hamas war, and the incident will further raise tensions in the region and feed fears of a broader conflict directly involving Iran.

At least 34 personnel were being evaluated for possible traumatic brain injury, a US official said.

"Three US service members were killed — and many wounded — during an unmanned aerial drone attack on our forces stationed in northeast Jordan near the Syria border," Biden said in a statement.

"While we are still gathering the facts of this attack, we know it was carried out by radical Iran-backed militant groups operating in Syria and Iraq," he said.

"We will carry on their commitment to fight terrorism. And have no doubt — we will hold all those responsible to account at a time and in a manner of our

US officials were still working to conclusively identify the precise group responsible for the attack, but have assessed that one of several Iranian-backed groups are responsible. Some 3,000 American troops typically are stationed in Jordan.

choosing," the president added.

US and allied forces in Iraq and Syria have been targeted in more than 150 attacks since mid-October, according to the Pentagon, and Washington has carried out retaliatory strikes in both countries.

Many of the attacks on US personnel have been claimed by the Islamic Resistance in Iraq, a loose alliance of Iran-linked armed groups that oppose US support for Israel in the Gaza conflict.

While the United States has thus far maintained an official line that Washington is not at war in the region, it has made strikes against targets of Yemen's Houthi groups that have been attacking commercial vessels in the Red Sea.

—Agencies

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cruise ship
embarks on
maiden voyage
from Miami | P11

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fraudsters
dealing in fake
passports,
visas, IDs | P3

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WORLD

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as key leader
resigns | P11

Battle rages as UN chief asks donors to maintain Gaza aid

US, Israel, Egypt,
Qatar officials hold
truce talks in Paris

GAZA STRIP

Heavy fighting raged in Gaza yesterday amid a fierce row over the United Nations agency for Palestinian refugees that has called its future into question.

UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres has called on donor states to guarantee the flow of vital aid to Gaza after several halted funding to the agency, UNRWA, over Israeli claims that some of its staff participated in the October 7 attacks.

The Israeli army said forces were engaging in "intensive battles" in Gaza's main southern city of Khan Yunis.



Reuters

Palestinians carry bags of flour they grabbed from an aid truck near an Israeli checkpoint in Gaza City yesterday.

Meanwhile, the head of the US Central Intelligence Agency as well as top Egyptian, Qatari and Israeli officials were in Paris yesterday working towards a ceasefire in Gaza, officials close to the participants

said. French authorities were also in touch with these four countries with the aim of negotiating a halt to hostilities, the sources said.

—AFP

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3/3/2024 11