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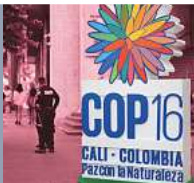
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AFP

95 KILLED AS FLASH FLOODS STRIKE SPAIN

Residents walk near piled up cars following flood in Picanya, near Valencia, eastern Spain, yesterday. Rescuers scrambled to save people trapped by surging tides of muddy water in floods that have killed at least 95 people in the country's east. Prime Minister Pedro Sanchez urged citizens to remain vigilant as the danger persisted and three days of mourning were declared after the disaster on a scale rarely seen in the European nation. **SEE ALSO P10**

Diplomacy in top gear to secure truce in region

Mediators push for
short-term ceasefire
in Lebanon and Gaza

DUBAI

BY STEPHEN N. R.

Senior Associate Editor

A day after 169 people were killed in Gaza and Lebanon, international mediators have stepped up diplomatic efforts to push hard for a ceasefire on both fronts to de-

escalate tensions in the region. US, Israeli, Qatari, and Egyptian officials have discussed proposing to the warring parties a "short-term" truce of "less than a month," an exchange of Israeli hostages for Palestinians held in Israeli prisons, and an increase in aid to Gaza.

A Hamas official said the group would discuss any proposals that include an Israeli withdrawal in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia is hosting the first meeting of a new

"international alliance," with nearly 90 states and international organisations participating to press for the establishment of a Palestinian state. On the Lebanese front, Israel is considering a US-led deal to end the conflict and move Hezbollah fighters away from the Israeli border.

The White House is sending two of President Joe Biden's most senior Middle East envoys, Brett McGurk and Amos Hochstein, to Is-

rael today as part of the talks. The plan, if agreed upon, would lead to a 60-day suspension of hostilities while mediators craft a lasting peace deal to remove Hezbollah from the border area and bolster the number of UN peacekeepers there. Meanwhile, Hezbollah's new leader, Naim Qassem, said the group would agree to a ceasefire with Israel under acceptable terms but added that a viable deal has yet to be presented.

SEE ALSO P9

Dh1m fine for UAE employers hiring illegals

RULE WILL COME INTO EFFECT FROM TOMORROW AS AMNESTY ENDS TODAY

DUBAI

BY ABDULLA RASHEED

Abu Dhabi Editor

SAJILA SASEENDRAN

Chief Reporter

From tomorrow, illegal residents and companies employing them without the required legal paperwork will face heavy fines as the two-month amnesty in UAE for violators of residency laws ends today.

Inspections will be stepped up against illegal employment and unregulated labour practices, with violating companies facing fines from Dh100,000 to Dh1 million. At the same time, illegal residents who declined to take advantage of the amnesty will see all their residency fines – such as those for overstaying without a valid visa – reinstated and "reactivated".

The warning came in a last-chance reminder from the Federal Authority for Identity, Citizenship, Customs, and Port Security (ICP), which is overseeing the amnesty.

Since September 1, residency law violators had the chance to regularise their status by securing a valid visa or leaving the

UAE without fines or other penalties, such as a ban from returning to the UAE in the future.

Dh730,000 fine waived

Among the thousands of amnesty seekers was a woman who finally flew home to India on Tuesday after staying without a visa in the UAE for 22 years. The 72-year-old former housemaid thanked the officials for waiving off more than Dh730,000 in residency fines that she had accumulated.

There are, however, cases who will not be granted amnesty, such as those who violated visa rules or reported as "absent from work" after September 1 and those who have been deported from the UAE or other GCC countries are also not eligible for amnesty.

SEE ALSO P2

Illegal residents who declined to take advantage of the amnesty will see all their residency fines reinstated and 'reactivated'.

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