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POPE GETS A TASTE OF AZTEC CULTURE

Pope Francis meets with a group of Mexicans dressed as Aztecs (Tonatiuh) during a weekly general audience yesterday at Paul-VI hall in The Vatican. Francis resumed his regular appointments yesterday after a month-long summer pause.

Dubai tests four-day work week, seven hours a day

Initiative to run
from August 12 to
September 30 at
15 federal entities

DUBAI

BY ASHFAQ AHMED

Senior Assistant Editor

A new pilot project has been launched by the Dubai Government Human Resources Department (DGHR) aiming to reduce working hours at some government entities in the emirate.

The initiative titled 'Our Flexible Summer' initiative, aims to reduce the working time to seven hours a day and

four days a week of participating government entities during the summer. There will be no work on Fridays during the pilot project. It underscores DGHR's unwavering commitment to fulfilling the requirements of various government entities, enhancing the performance of employees as well as their quality of life while nurturing a flexible work environment.

Work-life balance

At least 15 government entities are participating in the pilot stage of the initiative, with an aim to enhance workplace flexibility. The initiative will be implemented from August 12 to September 30, seeking to elevate employee wellbeing by

enhancing their social life and workplace safety during summer period for better work-life balance.

Abdullah Ali Bin Zayed Al Falasi, Director General of DGHR Department, said: "We are thrilled to announce that DGHR will be launching the 'Our Flexible Summer' initiative, in line with our long-standing efforts to nurture a flexible work environment that promotes the work-life balance of government employees, in accordance with best international practices. The launch will also further our vision to empower human resources by developing smart solutions and innovative policies to uplift Dubai's competitiveness."

'I was fated to witness my brother's death'

Newly-wed expat
Injured in Wayanad
recounts losing 5
family members

DUBAI

BY SAJILA SASEENDRAN

Chief Reporter

An Indian expat, who had left the UAE for his brother's wedding, is among the 413 people declared dead after the devastating landslides in the south Indian state of Kerala's Wayanad district on July 30, *Gulf News* can reveal.

Sinan Abdul Nasar, 25, perished with his father, both grandfathers, and a cousin. Suhail Abdul Nasar, Sinan's newly-wed brother, shared this with *Gulf News*, eight days after the disaster, which also left the family homeless.

Suhail, who also worked

in the UAE, recounted the horrific events. He, his wife Shahla, and others narrowly escaped the collapsed house by finding a gap in the debris. However, his younger brothers and other relatives on the ground floor were trapped.

Desperate attempts

Sinan was caught between a concrete beam and a window. Suhail's desperate attempts to rescue him went in vain. "I was fated to witness his death before my eyes," the heartbroken brother said while breaking down in tears in between.

Suhail's mother is hospitalised with severe head injuries. While his grandfathers' bodies were eventually recovered, they haven't identified his father's body yet. Suhail is receiving treatment for a fractured ankle, while his brother Ishaq, is struggling emotionally.

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Dubai aims for 100m visitors a year by 2027

DXB REPORTS RECORD 44.9 MILLION PASSENGERS FOR 2024 FIRST HALF

DUBAI

BY DHANUSHA GOKULAN

Chief Reporter

Dubai Airports' CEO Paul Griffiths is bullish about reaching 100 million passengers at the emirate's main hub by 2027, despite the current aircraft supply chain and regional geopolitical challenges. "I think the growth over the next couple of years is going to be fairly steady because of the difficulties in delivering the additional aircraft capacity," he said.

The aviation industry faced significant disruptions due to the pandemic, with many airlines grounding jets in their fleets. This, coupled with supply chain issues at OEMs Airbus and Boeing, has impacted delivery schedules. Griffiths anticipates these challenges to be resolved by late 2026 or early 2027, paving the way for the anticipated milestone of 100 million passengers.

Record traffic

Dubai International Airport (DXB) reported a record 44.9 million passengers for H1-2024, including 21.8 million in Q2, marking an 8 per cent year-on-



We have a very optimistic outlook for the remainder of the year, and we are on track to break records with 91.8 million annual passengers forecasted for 2024."

Paul Griffiths

CEO, Dubai Airports

year increase. The forecast for 2024 is 91.8 million passengers, surpassing the previous record of 89.1 million in 2018. Griffiths said DXB reached these record passenger numbers due to a surge in demand from Chinese markets, which hit 1 million during H1-2024.

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NATION

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