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## HISTORIC NIGHT FOR TAYLOR SWIFT AT THE GRAMMYS

TUESDAY FEBRUARY 6, 2024  
RAJAB 25, 1445

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## More UAE free zones enforce WPS rules

DUBAI  
BY MANOJ NAIR  
Business Editor

More free zones are pushing towards getting all the companies registered with them to sync with wage guarantee rules that apply to mainland companies in the UAE. Introduced in 2009, the UAE Wage Protection System (WPS) ensures employees at licensed companies receive their salary and other dues from their employers on time each month. DMCC, which implemented the WPS in 2023, had to mandatorily be on the WPS platform in January, and has listed a significant portion of 24,000-plus companies currently on its database. Currently the Jebel Ali Free Zone too authorises all licensed entities to follow the WPS regulations. UAE-based HR consultants evaluate how with the present push for widening the WPS regime to free zones, there is less room for labour disputes when salary payments go through regulated processes. But the scope of such norms don't end there. If firms find themselves unable to meet their employee commitments, there are processes such as bankruptcy laws to ease the path.

SEE ALSO P6

# UAE, Jordan stress need to intensify Gaza truce efforts

BLINKEN STARTS MIDEAST TOUR TO PRESS FOR CEASEFIRE, HOSTAGE RELEASE

AMMAN/RIYADH

The UAE and Jordan yesterday emphasised the need to intensify efforts to achieve a ceasefire in Gaza and provide full protection for civilians in accordance with international law. The call came as President His Highness Shaikh Mohammad Bin Zayed Al Nahyan met with King Abdullah II of Jordan in Amman yesterday. The two leaders reiterated the importance of urgently addressing the worsening humanitarian situation in Gaza and supporting the role played by international humanitarian organisations. The leaders highlighted the importance of establishing a clear political path towards a just and comprehensive peace, rooted in the two-state solution. They also stressed the need for diplomacy and dialogue to prevent the spread of conflict in the wider region. The two leaders also stated their ongoing commitment to bolstering collective Arab efforts towards regional stability.

**Blinken in Riyadh**

US Secretary of State Antony Blinken arrived in Saudi Arabia yesterday for another Middle East crisis tour, hoping to secure a new truce in the Israel-



WAM

■ Shaikh Mohammad Bin Zayed arrived in Amman yesterday on a fraternal visit to Jordan. Upon arrival at the airport, he and the accompanying delegation were received by King Abdullah II.

Hamas war as Gaza saw no let-up in fighting. On his fifth trip to the region since the war began on October 7, Blinken landed in Riyadh and was later expected to visit Israel, Egypt and Qatar. Blinken was expected to discuss a proposed truce thrashed

out in a Paris meeting in January of top US, Israeli, Egyptian and Qatari officials.

**Diplomatic push**

The diplomatic push has become more urgent with a surge in attacks across the region by Iran-backed groups in solidarity

with Hamas, triggering counter-attacks by the United States. The proposed truce would pause fighting for an initial six weeks as Hamas frees hostages in exchange for Palestinian prisoners held by Israel, according to a Hamas source.

—AFP

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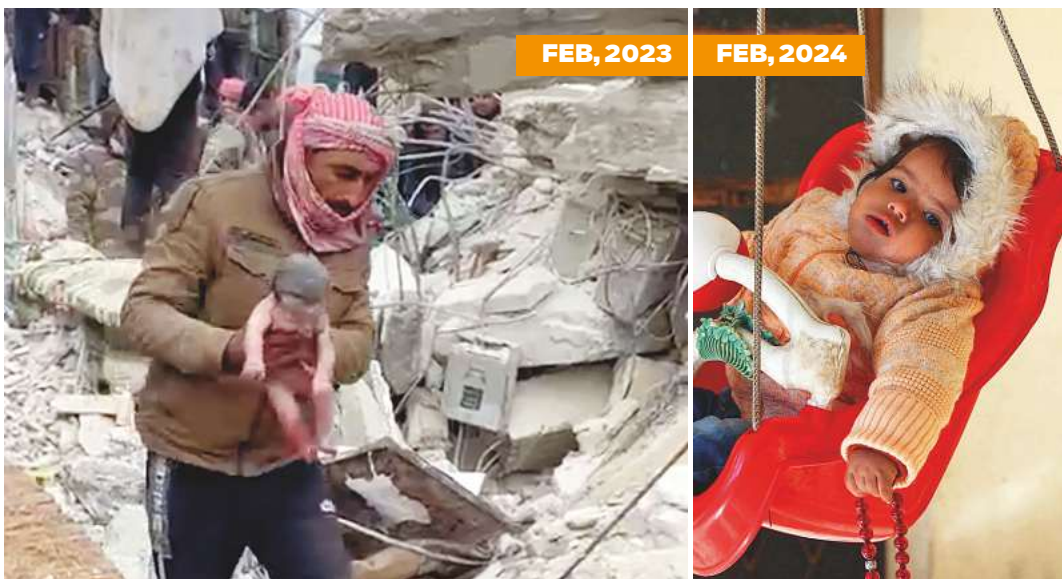
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AFP

## SYRIA'S 'MIRACLE' BABY TURNS ONE

Pulled from the rubble with the umbilical cord attached to her dead mother after an earthquake in Syria last year, Afraa Al Sawadi turns one under the loving care of her uncle who named her after her mother who had died just after giving birth | P10

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