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Virendra Saklani/Gulf News

■ Shaikh Hamdan Bin Mohammad Bin Rashid Al Maktoum leads thousands of runners through Shaikh Zayed Road and Downtown Dubai during the Dubai Run yesterday.

## Record turnout sees residents ramp up the fun in fitness run

Hamdan hails Dubai Run as a 'testament' to the power of community

DUBAI

BY ASHWANI KUMAR  
Chief Reporter

Shaikh Hamdan Bin Mohammad Bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Crown Prince of Dubai, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Defence of the UAE, and Chairman of Dubai Executive Council, led 278,000 community members in an awe-inspiring and record-breaking edition of the Dubai Run yesterday.

This landmark event, a cornerstone of the Dubai Fitness

Challenge, saw an impressive 23 per cent surge in participation, making it the world's largest fun run.

Shaikh Hamdan hailed the event as a "testament" to the power of community and the determination of the people of Dubai to lead healthier and more active lives.

Thousands of individuals from diverse nationalities, backgrounds, and abilities transformed Shaikh Zayed

Road and Downtown Dubai into giant running tracks of green.

Community members highlighted that the event inspired them to embrace a culture of health and well-being. "Being able to join and experience this event is a great motivation to continue healthy habits," said Michelle Ducusin, a participant.

Nabeel Chakkantakath, a resident and fitness freak, pointed out the city's commitment to fostering wellness.

"It's one of the best fitness challenges, where people from all nationalities participate, showcasing that the UAE and Dubai are globally competitive in promoting a fun and healthier lifestyle."

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278,000  
community  
members took part  
in the Dubai Run

## 2 more Salik toll gates activated in Dubai

New gates expected to ease traffic in several key areas

DUBAI

BY SHARMILA DHAL  
UAE Editor

Motorists must pay Salik at two more locations in Dubai, starting yesterday.

Salik Company had announced the November 24 activation of the toll gates at Business Bay Crossing and Al Safa South on Shaikh Zayed Road earlier, following the completion of Al Khail Road Development Project by the Roads and Transport Authority (RTA).

The two new toll gates have taken the total number of toll gates in Dubai from eight to 10.

As commuters plying on the routes confirmed being charged the toll, they said they needed to factor the additional amount. An Indian expat who passed through the Business

Bay Crossing in the morning said, "I must have been one of the first motorists to have paid Salik (Dh4) under the new Business Bay gate. It's a route I must take every day to work."

More public transport use

RTA has said that the introduction of more toll gates is aimed at encouraging greater public transport use, thus reducing the number of private vehicles on the roads and improving traffic flow.

Existing toll gates are said to have reduced total travel time in Dubai by six million hours annually, decreasing traffic on Al Maktoum and Al Garhoud Bridges by 26 per cent, reducing travel time on Shaikh Zayed and Al Itihad Roads by 24 per cent, and increasing public transport ridership by around nine million passengers per year. The location of the two new gates is also expected to divert traffic to alternative routes, easing traffic in several key areas.

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# World reaches \$300b climate finance deal

INDIA'S DELEGATE AT COP29 CONDEMNS PLEDGE AS AN 'OPTICAL ILLUSION'

DUBAI

BY STEPHEN N. R.  
Senior Associate Editor

After tense and at times contentious negotiations, nearly 200 countries reached an agreement to triple the financial resources available to help developing nations combat the devastating effects of climate change.

However, the \$300 billion annual pledge from wealthier nations — those historically responsible for the majority of global emissions — was met with sharp criticism, particularly from countries already bearing the brunt of extreme weather events.

'Paltry sum'

India's delegate, Chandni Raina, called the deal "a paltry sum," condemning it as little more than an "optical illusion" that fails to address the magnitude of the crisis. Even supporters of the agreement, reached at the close of the two-week COP29 summit in Azerbaijan, acknowledge that while it represents a step forward, it falls short of what is needed.

The pledge for at least \$300

billion annually by 2035, to be sourced from a combination of public funds and private financing, is far below what many climate advocates believe is necessary to help vulnerable countries cope with the escalating climate crisis. In addition to the \$300 billion target, the agreement sets an aspirational goal of mobilising \$1.3 trillion annually, with the lion's share expected to come from private financing.

"It was hard fought," said Avinash Persaud, climate adviser to the President of the Inter-American Development Bank.

Under a compromise to get a deal over the line, rich nations eventually agreed to commit \$50 billion more than what a draft agreement on Friday called for. They had also made an agreement contingent on reaffirming last year's COP28 outcome in Dubai that included a vow to transition away from fossil fuels.

In addition to the \$300 billion target, the agreement sets an aspirational goal of mobilising \$1.3 trillion annually.



ENTERTAINMENT

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