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President His Highness Shaikh Mohammad Bin Zayed Al Nahyan received at Al Mushrif Palace in Abu Dhabi His Highness Shaikh Mohammad Bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice-President and Prime Minister of the UAE and Ruler of Dubai, and Their Highnesses Supreme Council Members and Rulers of the Emirates, Dr Shaikh Sultan Bin Mohammad Al Qasimi of Sharjah, Shaikh Humaid Bin Rashid Al Nuaimi of Ajman, Shaikh Hamad Bin Mohammad Al Sharqi of Fujairah, Shaikh Saud Bin Rashid Al Mualla of Umm Al Quwain and Shaikh Saud Bin Saqr Al Qasimi of Ras Al Khaimah. **SEE ALSO P2-4,10**

EU adopts sweeping asylum overhaul

NEW POLICY WILL HARDEN BORDER PROCEDURES

BRUSSELS

he EU parliament yesterday adopted a contentious reform of Europe's asylum policies that will harden border procedures and force all the bloc's 27 nations to share responsibility.

The parliament's main political groups overcame opposition from far-right and far-left parties to pass the new migration and asylum pact - a sweeping reform nearly a decade in the making.

German Chancellor Olaf Scholz called the new rules a "historic, indispensable step" for the European Union.

EU home affairs commissioner Ylva Johansson said the bloc "will be able to better protect our external borders, the vulnerable and refugees, swiftly return those not eligible to stay' and introduce "mandatory solidarity" between member states.

10 legislations passed

Ten pieces of legislation in the overhaul were passed.

Outside the Brussels parliament building, dozens of demonstrators protested against the vote, echoing criticism from more than 160 migrant charities and non-governmental organisations who view it as a betrayal of European Union values.

In a sign of the fierce opposition, the start of voting was

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- Last year saw some **380,000 people** illegally crossing the EU's borders — the highest number since 2016.
- Under the proposed rules, the EU's 27 countries will be required to either take in thousands of migrants from "frontline" countries, such as Greece and Italy, or provide extra funding or resources instead.
- The agreement also aims to **deal with asylum requests with**in a maximum of 12 weeks. In case of rejection, asylum seekers would have to be returned forcibly to their home country within
- Migrants will be subject to a **toughened pre-entry screening** procedure within seven days, which would include identification and health and security checks.
- Biometric data for any migrant aged six or older will be collected and there will be a mechanism to respond to sudden increases in arrivals.

interrupted by protesters in the public gallery yelling "This pact kills — vote no!" until the chamber was brought to order. But the UNHCR refugee agency's chief has endorsed the reform, drawn up by the European Commission since massive inflows jolted the bloc in 2015.

SPORT

Why Paddy Upton is impressed with **Indian hockey** team | P12



Meet 2024's Eid Al Fitr babies born in the UAE

Double joy for parents on special day

DUBAI

BY ANJANA KUMAR Senior Reporter

t is a double celebration for these par-Lents who welcomed their bundle of joy into the world on Eid day.

Emirati father Sultan Amer Salem Al Shamsi and his wife Rahma Hellab welcomed baby Umair at exactly 12.01 am at Burjeel Hospital, Abu Dhabi. Meanwhile, a Filipino couple welcomed their Eid baby Quillian Santillan at 1.49 am. Indian parents Mohandas Balagurusamy and

his wife Selvi Gudelivered rusamy a healthy baby girl (yet to be named) at RAK Hospital.

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MIDDLE EAST

Gazans live on memories of Eid Al Fitr as war ruins special day | P8

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