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■ Sheikh Mohammad Bin Rashid Al Maktoum with Sheikh Ahmad Bin Saeed Al Maktoum and other senior officials of the Emirates Group at the Union House in Dubai yesterday.

Mohammad: Dubai is the meeting point of humanity

Vice-President recalls how Emirates airline took off from a mere dream

DUBAI

BY KHITAM AL AMIR
Chief News Editor

Dubai is now the world's hub and a convergence point for humanity. His Highness Sheikh Mohammad Bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice-President and Prime Minister of the UAE and Ruler of Dubai, said as he met with senior officials from the Emirates Group yesterday.

He added Dubai has evolved into a pivotal link between the continents and civilisations of the world.

Reflecting on the origins of

establishing an airline in Dubai over four decades ago, Shaikh Mohammad recalled how it began as a mere dream challenged by sceptics and faced with numerous distractions.

"Against the odds, this dream has flourished into a major success, now employing

over 112,000 individuals, connecting 277 cities, and transporting more than 50 million passengers annually, generating revenues surpassing Dh137 billion each year," Shaikh Mohammad tweeted.

Global hub

He underlined that Dubai's ambitions are far from being realised. The city is currently in the process of expanding its business operations, with plans to open a larger international airport. This ambitious project is aimed at connecting every city across all five continents, further solidifying Dubai's position as a global hub.

"Today, Dubai is the airport of the world, the meeting place of humanity, and a vital link between continents and civilisations," he shared on his X account.

Against the odds, this dream has flourished into a major success, now employing over 112,000 individuals, connecting 277 cities, and transporting more than 50 million passengers annually."

Shaikh Mohammad Bin Rashid Al Maktoum

Meet Dubai's teen violin virtuoso

Alexandra, 16, has been playing the instrument since she was two

DUBAI

BY SHARMILA DHAL
UAE Editor

A Dubai-based teenager has become the talk of the town for her violin performances, a passion she has been pursuing since she was two years old.

A Lebanese expat of Armenian origin, Alexandra Derkaloustian, 16, is a known name in international circuits with many awards to her credit. She secured the Concertmaster chair of the UAE's National Youth Orchestra through blind auditions last year, and more recently,



■ Alexandra Derkaloustian

wowed audiences at a solo show, on winning the Concerto Competition at Dubai Opera.

Gifted as she is, her mother Shoghik Derkaloustian told *Gulf News* that her daughter puts in immense effort to hone her skills.

Alexandra, a student of GEMS World Academy, said it has taken a lot of juggling to keep up with her commitments in the realms of music and academics. And as Shoghik added, her teachers understood her aspirations and were her championing unit, for which Alexandra was extremely thankful.

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Air pollution kills 2,000 children a day

OVER 90% OF DEATHS LINKED TO TINY AIRBORNE POLLUTANTS CALLED PM2.5

PARIS

Nearly 2,000 children die every day from health problems linked to air pollution, which is now the second biggest risk factor for early death worldwide, a report said yesterday.

Exposure to air pollution contributed to the deaths of 8.1 million people — around 12 per cent of all fatalities — in 2021, according to the report from the US-based Health Effects Institute.

This means air pollution has overtaken tobacco use and poor diet to become the second leading risk factor for early death, behind only high blood pressure, it said.

Little kids are particularly vulnerable to air pollution, and the institute partnered with the UN Children's Fund Unicef for its annual State of Global Air report.

Air pollution contributed to the deaths of more than 700,000 children under the age of five, the report found.

More than 500,000 of those deaths were attributed to cooking indoors using dirty fuels such as coal, wood or dung, mostly

in Africa and Asia. "These are problems we know that we can solve," Pallavi Pant, the Health Effects Institute's head of global health, told AFP.

Effects on next generation

Nearly every person in the world breathes unhealthy levels of air pollution every day, the report found.

Over 90 per cent of the deaths were linked to tiny airborne pollutants called PM2.5, which measure 2.5 micrometres or less, it said.

Inhaling PM2.5 has been found to increase the risk of lung cancer, heart disease, stroke, diabetes and a range of other health problems.

The report aimed to link the rates of such diseases with air pollution levels. —AFP

Air pollution has overtaken tobacco use and poor diet to become the second leading risk factor for early death, behind only high blood pressure.

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