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Courtesy: Presidential Court

■ Shaikh Mohammad and other global leaders participate in the Brics summit hosted by Russia in Kazan yesterday.

Brics summit calls for peace in Middle East and Ukraine

MOHAMMAD: UAE SUPPORTS COLLECTIVE ACTION TO ADDRESS GLOBAL CHALLENGES

DUBAI

BY ALEX ABRAHAM
Senior Associate Editor

World leaders at the Brics summit in Russia yesterday called for peace in the Middle East and Ukraine, supporting 'dialogue and diplomacy, not war'.

The meeting of around 20 world leaders in the central city of Kazan is the largest diplomatic forum in Russia since the Ukraine attack in 2022.

President His Highness Shaikh Mohammad Bin Zayed Al Nahyan, said: "I was pleased to participate in the Brics Summit today [Wednesday] in Kazan, Russia. The UAE supports multilateral cooperation that fosters peace and development while strengthening collective action to address global challenges. Through its membership in Brics, the UAE works resolutely with member states to achieve a more stable and prosperous future for all."

Leaders of the Brics group called for Israel to stop targeting

UN staff after incidents of Israeli troops firing on UN peacekeepers stationed in Lebanon.

Territorial integrity of Lebanon must be preserved

"We strongly condemn the attacks on UN staff and threats to their security and call on Israel to immediately cease such actions," the group said in a joint statement.

The leaders also stressed that the "territorial integrity" of Lebanon be "preserved."

Iran's President Masoud Pezeshkian urged Brics members

to "use all their collective and individual capacities to end the war in Gaza and Lebanon".

Call for ceasefire

Chinese President Xi Jinping repeated his call for a ceasefire, saying: "We need to... stop the killing and work tirelessly for a comprehensive, just and lasting settlement of the Palestinian issue."

Brazilian President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva also called for escalation in both the Middle East and Ukraine to be avoided.

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Virendra Saklani/Gulf News

■ Shaikh Mohammad with the winners — (from left) Kadi Bint Musaffar Al Khathaami, Hatem Mohammad Jassim Al Tarkawi and Salsabil Hassan Sawalha.

3 crowned winners of Arab Reading Challenge

Competition sees record-breaking 28.2m participants

DUBAI

BY SAJILA SASEENDRAN
Chief Reporter

In a first, three participants were crowned winners at the 8th Arab Reading Challenge (ARC) in Dubai yesterday including Salsabil Hassan Sawalha, a 17-year-old girl from war-torn Palestine. Sawalha, who read 500 books, along with Hatem Mohammad Jassim Al Tarkawi, nine, from Syria, Kadi bint Musaffar Al Khathaami, 11, from Saudi Arabia, emerged victorious in a competition that saw a record-breaking 28.2 million students from 229,000 schools across 50 countries.

His Highness Shaikh Mohammad Bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice-President and Prime Minister of the UAE and Ruler of Dubai, honoured the

trio who will get Dh500,000 each. "Our investment in reading is an investment in the Arab mind, the Arab consciousness, and the future of Arab youth," he said on X.

Meanwhile, Sawalha told *Gulf News*: "I feel very proud to hold this trophy and represent my country."

Other winners

Other important awardees included Al Ibdar Model School (Cycle 1), Al Twar, Dubai, which won the Best School title, securing a Dh1 million prize and visually impaired Mohammad Ahmad Hassan Abdul Halim from Egypt who bagged Dh200,000 as the People of Determination Champion.

Mohammad Abdul Fattah Al Refaie from Sweden bagged Dh100,000 as the Community Champion from non-Arab countries while Rabie Ahmad from Syria was adjudged the best supervisor with a prize money of Dh300,000.

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NATION

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SPORT

DP World official confident LIV, PGA, DPWT deal soon | P12



Israel strikes Lebanon's Tyre as residents flee

Hezbollah confirms Israel killed Nasrallah's likely successor

TYRE

Israel carried out several strikes on Lebanon's Tyre on Wednesday after the army warned residents to evacuate swathes of the coastal city which boasts a Unesco world heritage site.

AFPTV footage showed plumes of thick black smoke rising from several neighbourhoods, with parts of the evacuation area just 500 metres from the city's ancient ruins.

"Four strikes targeted the city of Tyre after the enemy threatened to bomb it," the National News Agency (NNA) said, after earlier reporting that "an enemy drone targeted" a "street in Tyre".

Vibrant city now empty

"The situation is very bad, we're evacuating people," said Mortada Mhanna, who heads Tyre's disaster management unit.

Bilal Kashmar, the unit's

media officer, told AFP that many were fleeing the city and heading towards the suburbs.

"You could say that the entire city of Tyre is being evacuated," he said, adding that the once vibrant southern hub had already been emptied of most of its residents.

Civil defence teams helped transport elderly people and people with limited mobility "to safe areas", the NNA said.

Meanwhile, Hezbollah confirmed yesterday that Israel had killed Hashem Safiedine, the apparent successor of its slain leader Hassan Nasrallah, in a strike, without saying when or where it happened.

The announcement came a day after Israel said he was killed along with other Hezbollah leaders in an air strike in Beirut's southern suburbs three weeks ago.

— AFP

SEE ALSO P10

Civil defence teams helped transport elderly people and people with limited mobility "to safe areas".

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