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Mideast crisis top agenda at first EU-Gulf summit

BRUSSELS

Gulf leaders met with European heads of state and government in Brussels yesterday for summit talks the EU hopes could help defuse an “extremely dangerous escalation” in the Middle East.

The 27-nation European Union is seeking to work more closely with the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) in addressing conflicts in both the Middle East and Ukraine.

Maktoum leads UAE delegation

Shaikh Maktoum Bin Mohammad Bin Rashid Al Maktoum, First Deputy Ruler of Dubai, Deputy Prime Minister, and Minister of Finance of the UAE, is leading the UAE delegation to the summit.

Trade, energy and climate change were all on the table at the first-ever gathering of its kind, but Israel's conflicts in Gaza and Lebanon were set to dominate the agenda.

“We need a settlement for these conflicts,” said Qatar's Emir, Shaikh Tamim Bin Hamad Al Thani.

“We hope that this first summit will be the first step to consolidate our historic ties between the GCC and the EU.”

—AFP

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Mayor among 16 killed as Israel expands strikes on Lebanon

BEIRUT, NABATIYEH AND QANA HIT AS ‘POINT-BLANK RANGE’ BATTLES RAGE

DUBAI

BY STEPHEN N. R.
Senior Associate Editor

Israel expanded its airstrikes in Lebanon on yesterday killing a city mayor, toppling buildings and causing widespread destruction in several southern areas.

Dozens of strikes on Hezbollah targeted Nabatiyeh and Qana, a village that suffered heavy civilian casualties in past conflicts.

Sixteen people, including Nabatiyeh mayor, were killed and 52 injured when airstrikes hit two municipal buildings.

Prime Minister Najib Mikati condemned the attack, stating that Israel “deliberately targeted a meeting of the municipal council discussing the city's services and relief efforts.” Rescue operations were also underway in Qana, where Israeli strikes on Tuesday resulted in three deaths and 54 injuries.

Capital struck again

Israeli jets also resumed strikes on Beirut for the first time in nearly a week, despite Lebanon's prime minister receiving assurances from the US that attacks on the capital would ease. Hezbollah said its fighters were locked in clashes at “point-blank range” near the southern village of Al Qawzah.

Mohammad Ebrahim, a rescuer with the Risala Scouts, re-

52
injured as
air strikes hit two
municipal buildings
in Nabatiyeh city



■ Smoke billows during Israeli air strikes in the southern Lebanese city of Nabatiyeh yesterday. A Lebanese official said Israel carried out 11 air strikes on Nabatiyeh and surrounding areas.

ported that more than 15 buildings were completely destroyed in Qana, and rescuers pulled two bodies from the rubble. This escalation echoes past tragedies in Qana, where Israeli strikes in 1996 and 2006 resulted in significant civilian casualties.

Yesterday, 16 European Union defence ministers called “for maximum political and diplomatic pressure on Israel” to prevent further incidents against peacekeepers in Lebanon.

The mounting campaign comes after the US linked its

military support to Israel to the provision of humanitarian aid in Gaza, warning Israel that a law may require limiting military support if they don't allow more aid to reach Gaza within 30 days.

SEE ALSO P10

Your face is your passport at DXB, AUH

DUBAI

BY HUDA TABREZ
Living in UAE Editor
AGHADDIR ALI
Senior Reporter

Your face will serve as your passport at airports in Dubai and Abu Dhabi.

Special cameras will recognise travellers and officially register their immigration entry and exit.

Dubai is planning to soon remove physical passport control – even smart gates – to enable travellers to simply walk past immigration without stopping to show any documents or get scanned.

A similar project is already in place at Abu Dhabi's Zayed International Airport. From checking in your baggage, to clearing immigration and very soon at duty free as well, facial recognition technology is transforming passengers' experience.

At the ongoing Gitex Global 2024, the Federal Authority for Identity, Citizenship, Customs and Ports Security (ICP) has displayed the technology being used at the Abu Dhabi airport. Walking through it, it takes no more than three to four seconds for visitors to get a virtual experience of the technology.

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