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One million smiles

MOHAMMAD UNVEILS CAMPAIGN 'TO BREAK CYCLE OF POVERTY' | INITIATIVE TO FUND EDUCATION OF POOR CHILDREN WORLDWIDE | PRIVATE FIRMS AND INDIVIDUALS URGED TO CONTRIBUTE ACTIVELY

BY ZOI CONSTANTINE AND ABBAS AL LAWATI
Staff Reporters

Dubai One million children in poor countries worldwide will have the opportunity of an education through a multi-million dirham campaign, launched yesterday by His Highness Shaikh Mohammad Bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice-President and Prime Minister of the UAE and Ruler of Dubai.

The landmark initiative can "reshape the future" of underdeveloped countries, he said. "Today, I seize the opportunity presented by the Holy Month of Ramadan to announce the 'Dubai Cares' campaign, which focuses on supporting education for children in a number of the world's poorest countries," he said.

The initiative is aimed at raising funds from individuals and corporates to "break the cycle of poverty" in those countries by securing decent education for the young, Shaikh Mohammad said. "I expect you, Emiratis and expatriates, to compete in charity and to participate in every way you find suitable. And I expect from the private sector, including international corporations and their offices in the UAE, a substantial contribution," he added.

According to sources, the initial target of the drive is Dh200 million. The fund will be used to "build new schools and classrooms, provide books, food and medical care for underprivileged children". Shaikh Mohammad said 120 million school-age children worldwide do not have access to education. The campaign comes four months after the Vice-President launched his \$10 billion Mohammad Bin Rashid Al Maktoum Foundation for human development.

A UN official described the initiative as "an amazing opportunity."

"Through the initiative, the UN's Millennium Development



KARL JEFFS/Gulf News

For a brighter tomorrow

Shaikh Mohammad announces the Dubai Cares campaign yesterday. As part of the initiative, a raft of events and promotions will be organised over a six-week period to tap into the spirit of giving and the tradition of philanthropy deeply rooted in the UAE society and culture.

Goal to provide universal primary education might become more of a reality," Tarek Shayya, Chief of Fundraising and Partnerships, Gulf Region at Unicef, told *Gulf News*. "This will help children get an education without bias," Abdul Rahman Al Owais, Minister of Culture and Society Development, told *Gulf News*.
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“ Education is the most effective way to turn good intentions into concrete actions that change the lives of people immeasurably and for the better ”

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

“ It is an invitation for people to do something about education for children in poorer countries. Through this, the UN's Millennium Development Goal might become more of a reality ”

Tarek Shayya
Chief of Fundraising & Partnerships, Gulf Region, Unicef

Abu Dhabi set for dynamic growth with Dh600b plan

Emirate lays foundation for strategic development

BY SAMIR SALAMA
Bureau Chief
AND AHMED A. ELEWA
Staff Reporter

Abu Dhabi A Dh600 billion master development plan for Abu Dhabi for the next quarter of a century was announced by the emirate's Urban Development Council yesterday.

The Abu Dhabi 2030: Urban Structure Framework Plan sets out a strategic approach to develop the emirate's most dynamic economic sectors and envisages a growth of the UAE capital's population to over three million by that year.

General Shaikh Mohammad Bin Zayed Al Nahyan, Abu Dhabi Crown Prince and Deputy Supreme Commander of the UAE Armed Forces, said the plan provides a strong and comprehensive foundation for the development of Abu Dhabi, in a strategic and coordinated way.

"It will ensure that future generations will continue to enjoy and be inspired by ongoing access to the desert, sea and natural assets that are integral to our national identity, while building a global capital with its own rich cultural heritage," Shaikh Mohammad said following the release of the plan.

"The execution of the plan has begun already eight months ago, and it started with the detailed study aiming at developing Abu Dhabi as one of the best international cities," commented Falah Al Ahbabi, who has been appointed general manager

DECREES

Urban Planning Council set up

President His Highness Shaikh Khalifa Bin Zayed Al Nahyan has issued in his capacity as Ruler of Abu Dhabi, a new law setting up the Abu Dhabi Urban Planning Council (UPC). As per law No. 23 for 2007, the UPC shall be an independent corporate entity enjoying financial and administrative independence and full legal status to operate.

The council is to be chaired by General Shaikh Mohammad Bin Zayed Al Nahyan, Abu Dhabi Crown Prince and Deputy Supreme Commander of the UAE Armed Forces. Shaikh Khalifa also issued Decree No. 22 for 2007, setting up the Abu Dhabi Future Energy Company, a joint-stock company, and the Masdar Science and Technology Institute. The company's shares will be completely owned by Mubadala Development, WAM reported.

for Urban Planning Council. The plan projects a population of three million people residing in Abu Dhabi by 2030, and sets the framework of the necessary infrastructure — housing, recreation and business sectors — to cater for such population.

The plan includes inter-city train network and metro lines, specifies land uses, building heights and transportation plans for Abu Dhabi, said Al Ahbabi, who is also the director-general of the Abu Dhabi Urban Development Council.

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RAMADAN AND PRAYER TIMINGS

IFTAR 6.20pm
Fajr 4.47am Shuruq 6.07am
Dhuhr 12.19pm Asr 3.44pm
Maghrib 6.20pm Isha 7.50pm

IMSAK 4.38am (Tomorrow)
Add 4 minutes for Abu Dhabi, deduct 4 minutes for RAK and 6 minutes for Fujairah

On the web
For full Ramadan timings, log on to www.gulfnews.com/ramadan

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LEBANON

Car bomb kills ruling coalition MP

Ganem's death fits a pattern of other assassinations, say US and UN

Beirut (Reuters) A car bomb killed a prominent Lebanese lawmaker and at least eight other people in Beirut yesterday, less than a week before parliament was due to elect a new president, security sources said.

Antoine Ganem of the Christian Phalange party died in a Christian district of the Lebanese capital in

an attack his allies blamed on Damascus. "Nine people, including MP Antoine Ganem, were killed and dozens of others were wounded," a police spokesman said. Several cars were set ablaze and rescue workers carried bodies from the scene.

Ganem, 64, was a member of the governing coalition

which has been locked in a power struggle since November with factions backed by Damascus. The US, UN and Britain strongly condemned the killing and said it seemed to fit a pattern of other such killings. Ganem's death reduced the coalition to just 68 seats in the 128-seat parliament.

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RATE CUT

Central Bank step 'likely to fuel inflation'

BY BABU DAS AUGUSTINE
Banking Editor

Dubai The UAE Central Bank's decision to cut interest rates is expected to worsen the inflationary situation in the country, economists and currency market analysts told *Gulf News* yesterday.

The Central Bank yesterday announced 15 basis points cut on interest rates on Certificates of Deposit (CD). The bank's move follows the US Federal Reserve's decision to lower its benchmark interest rate from 5.25 per cent to 4.75 per cent.

"Although the main drivers of inflationary pressure have been rents and imported inflation, any cuts in interest rates will increase liquidity and credit growth," Monica Malek, an economist with EFG-Hermes, told *Gulf News*.

See also Page 37

Israel: Hamas-run Gaza an enemy entity

Fresh humanitarian crisis feared as Rice shares Tel Aviv's view

Occupied Jerusalem (AP) Israel declared the Gaza Strip an "enemy entity" yesterday and said it would cut back power and fuel supplies to the coastal territory, enraging the Palestinians as US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice embarked upon a peacemaking mission to the region.

Separately, Rice said the Hamas movement ruling the Gaza Strip was a "hos-

tile entity" for the United States. "Hamas is indeed a hostile entity. It is a hostile entity to the US as well," Rice said at a press conference with Israeli counterpart Tzipi Livni.

Hamas leaders and Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas condemned the Israeli move. But Rice pointedly did not, saying that the US would not "abandon the innocent Palestinians in

Gaza". The Israeli move paved the way for the government to cut the supplies of electricity and fuel into the territory in revenge for rocket attacks. Israel did not set a date for a cutback, sparking concerns over the humanitarian situation of Gaza's 1.5 million residents already reeling from an economic aid freeze.

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