

GCC Showcases 45 Years of Progress

Forum in Riyadh focuses on Gulf achievements and future cooperation

Gulf Cooperation Council Secretary-General Jassim Mohammed Al Budaiwi said on Monday that a forum highlighting Gulf achievements aimed to showcase how regional integration has directly improved the quality of life of Gulf citizens and strengthened the bloc's international standing.

Speaking at the "Gulf Achievements Forum" in Riyadh, Al Budaiwi said the GCC's accomplishments resulted from decades of joint cooperation and political coordination among member states.

"The achievements are not merely temporary gains or economic indicators, but the outcome of an integrated Gulf system that transformed challenges into opportunities," he said during the event organised by the GCC General Secretariat in cooperation with the Gulf Radio and Television Organisation.

Senior media officials, specialists and Gulf students studying at universities in Saudi Arabia attended the forum.

Al Budaiwi said the gathering comes ahead of celebrations



marking the 45th anniversary of the GCC, founded on May 25, 1981.

He said recent regional and international developments had demonstrated that the strength of GCC countries lies in their unity and cohesion, describing joint Gulf action as "a strategic necessity" given security challenges and global economic transformations.

He said the GCC states built a balanced regional model that combines preserving identity and values with openness to the world and adaptation to economic and technological changes.

Al Budaiwi highlighted achievements in political coordination, military and security cooperation, economic integration, infrastructure, digital transformation, education, healthcare and food security.

He added that Gulf citizens remained central to development efforts, benefiting from freedoms related to movement, employment, investment, property ownership, education and healthcare across GCC member states.

The secretary-general also stressed the importance of building on current achievements to create sustainable gains capable of meeting future generations' aspirations.

He said the forum seeks to document Gulf achievements, strengthen awareness of their developmental impact and reinforce a shared Gulf identity.

Al Budaiwi described the GCC as no longer "just a regional bloc linked by geography and history", but a global strategic force capable of shaping opportunities, development and stability.

Qatar, Kuwait discuss regional de-escalation efforts

Qatari Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman bin Jassim Al Thani on Monday held a phone call with Kuwaiti Foreign Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, during which they discussed bilateral relations and regional developments, according to the Qatari foreign ministry.

The two sides reviewed cooperation between Qatar and Kuwait and explored ways to further strengthen ties across various fields.

They also exchanged views on the latest regional situation, including developments linked to the ceasefire between the United States and Iran, as well as ongoing efforts aimed at de-escalation and stabilising the region.

During the call, Sheikh Mohammed stressed the importance of all parties engaging constructively with mediation efforts. He said such initiatives should help address the crisis's root causes through dialogue and peaceful means, leading to a sustainable agreement that prevents renewed escalation.

Both officials underscored the importance of continued coordination to support security and stability in the region.



Oman boosts research and innovation drive

His Highness Sayyid Theyazin bin Haitham Al Said, Deputy Prime Minister for Economic Affairs, on Monday praised efforts to strengthen scientific research and innovation in Oman, saying they were key to building a knowledge-based economy.

Chairing the first board meeting of the Research Council for Scientific Research and Innovation for 2026, Sayyid Theyazin highlighted the council's role in turning research and knowledge into economic value and supporting innovation across key sectors.

He stressed that scientific advancement and innovation are essential pillars for economic diversification and sustainable development in the Sultanate of Oman.

The board reviewed the council's annual report for 2025, in-



cluding key indicators, achievements and initiatives aimed at enhancing the national research and innovation ecosystem.

Members also discussed upcoming programmes and strategic plans for the next phase, focusing on strengthening scientific output and institutional capacity.

The meeting further reviewed an initiative to launch a compe-

tion for the Sultan Haitham Research Chair in higher education institutions, designed to promote advanced academic research.

Oman's preparations to host the annual meeting of the Global Research Council (GRC) in 2028 were also presented, marking a significant step in the country's growing role in international scientific cooperation.

Strengthening Youth Ties Between Qatar and Egypt



Qatar and Egypt discussed ways to strengthen cooperation in youth and sports, during a meeting held in Egypt's New Administrative Capital, officials said.

Qatar's ambassador to Egypt and permanent representative to the Arab League, Sheikh Jassim bin Abdulrahman bin Mohammed Al Thani, met Egyptian Youth and Sports Minister Ashraf Sobhi at the ministry headquarters.

The two sides reviewed existing cooperation and explored opportunities to enhance bilateral ties, particularly in youth development and

sports programmes.

They also discussed expanding the exchange of expertise between institutions in both countries, focusing on initiatives aimed at supporting and empowering young people.

Both officials stressed the importance of strengthening joint efforts to develop the sports sector and broaden youth participation in programmes serving shared development goals.

The meeting comes amid continued efforts by both countries to deepen cooperation across cultural, educational, and sporting fields.

Pakistan, UN discuss regional stability



The United Nations Secretary-General's Personal Envoy for the Middle East conflict, Jean Arnault, met Pakistan's Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Mohammad Ishaq Dar on Monday to discuss regional developments and ongoing diplomatic efforts.

During the meeting, Arnault conveyed the UN chief's appreciation for Pakistan's role in supporting regional peace and stability, and reaffirmed the United Nations' continued engagement in that regard.

Dar briefed the envoy on the latest regional situation, highlighting Pakistan's sustained diplomatic outreach and ongoing consultations with relevant parties.

He also expressed gratitude to the UN Secretary-General for what he described as his "invaluable contributions" and consistent support for Pakistan over the years.

Korea, pledging support for measures to protect its vessels and maritime interests.

It said the attack constituted a "flagrant violation" of UN Security Council Resolution 2817, which prohibits targeting commercial vessels and obstructing international sea lanes.

The UAE further warned that using the Strait of Hormuz as a tool for "economic coercion or blackmail" amounted to acts of piracy, posing a direct threat to regional stability and global energy security.

Saudi military students visit counter-terror body



The Islamic Military Counter Terrorism Coalition (IMCTC) on Sunday received a delegation of trainees from Saudi Arabia's National Defence University, alongside peers from allied and friendly countries, at its headquarters in Riyadh.

The visit aimed to strengthen cooperation and enhance the exchange of expertise between academic and military institutions, according to the coalition.

The delegation was briefed on the coalition's strategic roles and key initiatives across its four main areas of focus: ideological, media, counter-terror financing, and military domains. Of-

icials said these programmes are designed to support member states' efforts in combating extremism and terrorism, while improving coordination among them.

Visitors were also introduced to training and qualification programmes implemented in cooperation with member states, as well as initiatives aimed at developing capabilities and unifying military concepts for joint operations.

These efforts, the coalition said, are intended to improve readiness and strengthen integration among relevant security and defence institutions.

During the visit, IMCTC Assistant Military Commander Major General Pilot Abdullah bin Hamid Al-Qurashi stressed the importance of cooperation with military education and defence training institutions. He said such exchanges help promote knowledge-sharing and reinforce concepts of collective action among member countries.

At the end of the visit, the delegation expressed appreciation for the coalition's counter-terrorism efforts, praising its initiatives and programmes that contribute to enhancing cooperation and developing capabilities across related fields.

UAE slams 'piracy' after ship fire near Hormuz

The United Arab Emirates strongly condemned a drone attack targeting a cargo ship operated by a South Korean company in the Strait of Hormuz, describing it as a serious threat to international maritime security.

The vessel caught fire following the attack, though no injuries were reported, according to the statement.

In a statement issued by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the UAE said the incident represented a "dangerous escalation"



aimed at undermining the stability of critical global shipping routes.

The ministry stressed that the attack posed a grave risk to freedom of navigation and international trade. It also expressed the country's solidarity with South

UAE, Ukraine deepen economic partnership talks

His Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, President of the United Arab Emirates and Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky discussed strengthening bilateral cooperation, particularly in economic and development fields, during a phone call on Sunday.

Both leaders reviewed ways to advance their comprehensive economic partnership and stressed the importance of deepening cooperation in a manner that serves mutual interests and supports prosperity for their peoples.



The two sides also exchanged views on developments in the Middle East, expressing concern over escalating tensions and their wider implications for regional and global security, including risks to international shipping routes, energy supplies, and the global economy.

During the call, President

Zelensky reiterated Ukraine's condemnation of what he described as Iranian attacks targeting civilians and civilian infrastructure in the United Arab Emirates, calling

them a violation of state sovereignty and international law.

He also expressed appreciation for the UAE's continued mediation efforts between Ukraine and Russia regarding prisoner exchanges, praising the humanitarian outcomes those initiatives achieved.