

UAE President and Iraqi PM discuss bilateral relations

ABU DHABI: UAE President Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al-Nahyan and Iraqi Prime Minister Mohammed Shia' Al-Sudani discussed bilateral relations and ways to expand them in a phone call on Saturday, the Emirates News Agency reported.

The two leaders reviewed existing areas of cooperation between the UAE and Iraq as well as opportunities for further collaboration.

They also exchanged views on a number of regional and international developments and reaffirmed their mutual interest in promoting stability in the region.

How 'a monumental catastrophe' was averted with UN's Safer offloading operation near Yemen's Red Sea coast

DUBAI: The news that the threat of a massive oil spill in the Red Sea has receded with the transfer of more than a million barrels of oil from the FSO Safer, a dilapidated storage vessel lying off the coast of Yemen, has come as a huge relief for nearby countries, UN officials and environmentalists.

After months of on-site preparatory work, the \$143 million operation got underway at the end of July, with the goal of defusing what UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres had described as "the world's largest ticking time bomb."

Lebanon army arrests 134 Europe-bound migrants

BEIRUT: The Lebanese army arrested 134 migrants near the northern border with Syria on Saturday after foiling their attempt to take a boat to Europe, it said in a statement.

The group of would-be migrants – made up of 130 Syrians and four Lebanese nationals – were taken into custody in the coastal town of Sheikh Zennad, in Akkar province, the army statement said.

The army said it also detained “the mastermind behind the operation” who was a Lebanese national.

Iran says unblocked S.Korea funds to be used for ‘non-sanctioned goods’

LONDON: Iran’s central bank chief said on Saturday that all of Iran’s frozen funds in South Korea had been unblocked and would be used for “non-sanctioned goods.”

Mohammad Reza Farzin’s post on social media appeared to confirm comments a day earlier by Washington, which said there would be restrictions on what Iran could do with any funds unfrozen under an emerging deal that has led to the release of five Americans from prison to house arrest in Tehran.

Shippers warned to stay away from Iranian waters over seizure threat as US-Iran tensions high

DUBAI: Western-backed maritime forces in the Middle East on Saturday warned shippers traveling through the strategic Strait of Hormuz to stay as far away from Iranian territorial waters as possible to avoid being seized, a stark advisory amid heightened tensions between Iran and the US

A similar warning went out to shippers earlier this year ahead of Iran seizing two tankers traveling near the strait, the narrow mouth of the Arabian Gulf through which 20 percent of the world’s oil passes.