

Supplies delivered to families in Gaza Strip by Dubai Cares

Supplies were delivered to the Gaza Strip through a Dubai charity for the first time since the end of the Israeli assault. Dubai Cares and the United Nations Relief and Works Agency delivered 18,055 hygiene kits and 12,300 school kits of the 100,000 kits that will eventually be distrib-

uted in the region. Reem al Hashimy, chairwoman of Dubai Cares, said: "The children of the Gaza Strip have been particularly affected by the war and we intend making a positive contribution to their rehabilitation and continued personal and intellectual development."

Several shops burgled in Sharjah

Six shops were burgled behind Sharjah Municipality headquarters on Friday night, police said. Valuables, including money, were found by shop owners to be missing on Saturday morning. Sharjah Police would not say whether they were questioning workers in the shops.

Rain to fall across Emirates on Sunday

Weathermen are expecting light rain today following a brief shower in the capital yesterday. Light rain will fall tonight in Abu Dhabi, according to the National Centre of Seismology and Meteorology. The Dubai Meteorological Office is predicting isolated showers in that emirate.

Doctors return for tribute to parents

Hospital revolutionised maternity care

Almost 50 years after Pat and Marion Kennedy arrived in Al Ain to start a hospital, their children return to see it named in their honour

Essam Al Ghalib

AL AIN // When Pat and Marion Kennedy arrived in Al Ain in Nov 1960, the infant mortality rate in Al Ain was 50 per cent and maternal mortality was at 35 per cent. The Kennedys and their four children had left the comforts of life in the US at the invitation of Sheikh Zayed, the founder of the UAE, and his brother Sheikh Shakhbut, the then ruler of Abu Dhabi, to establish the Oasis Hospital, where they served for 15 years.

Since 1960, 90,000 babies have been delivered at the hospital they founded. Today the infant mortality rate stands below one per cent and maternal mortality is virtually unheard of.

Yesterday, three of their children, Kathleen, Scott and Nancy, returned to Al Ain for the dedication of the Oasis Hospital's maternity ward to their parents. It is now called the Kennedy Center for New Life.

Sheikh Hamed bin Zayed, Chief of the Abu Dhabi Crown Prince's Court, who was born at the Oasis Hospital, attended, as did the American ambassador, Richard Olson. Greeting Sheikh Hamed and the

Kennedys was the Oasis Hospital's president, David Printy. "We hold this ceremony on Mother's Day as this is a rebirth of Oasis Hospital with the dedication of the Kennedy Center for New Life," he said. "Drs Pat and Marion Kennedy in 1960 lived as the citizens did. They came with hearts full of love and not only dealt with the bodies of the people but also with their spirit. At the time the maternal mortality rate was at 35 per cent and the population was declining.

"By the grace of God they and their small team provided the first modern health care facility in the region bringing with them hope and renewal.

"Drs Pat and Marion Kennedy will always be remembered because of their love and compassion for the people of this land."

"It was not only the doctors that made sacrifices but also their four children, Kathleen, Nancy, Scott and Douglas."

The eldest of the siblings, Kathleen Kennedy Quadro, who now practises as an urgent care doctor in Sacramento, California, spoke on behalf of the family at the dedication ceremony. Dr Marion Kennedy died last year, aged 84, having out-

lived her husband by eight years. "This is a great honour for us. When we first came here in 1960 there was nothing but sand and to arrive to Al Ain we had to drive 15 hours over the sand dunes by Land Rover," she said.

"This was our home for a long time and the people here we felt were our people. Our parents were the only doctors here for many years."

To much applause from those present, Dr Quadro, who speaks Arabic, added: "At the time it was only the Sheikhs and my parents who had a Land Rover and my mother used to drive it. I like to think that my mother was one of the reasons women drive here."

Nancy Kennedy recalled growing up in Al Ain after arriving at the aged of two and remaining until she was 17.

"I am so blown away by how much Al Ain has changed yet I still recognise so much of it," she said.

Recalling her past, Nancy, who was accompanied by her daughter, Kara Casey, said: "I remember my siblings and I playing in the sand with Sheikh Mohammed, who was the first member of the Royal family to be born at Oasis Hospital, and his brothers when we were young as Sheikh Zayed was a frequent visitor to our home.

"Sheikh Zayed always wanted to understand more about everything. He craved knowledge."

Dr Scott Kennedy also has many memories of growing up in Al Ain.

"We had a television back in the day but could only watch it one night a week because the generator



From left, David Printy, the president of Oasis Hospital, with Richard Olson, the US ambassador, Sheikh Hamad bin Zayed, and Scott and Nancy Kennedy, Kathleen Kennedy Quadro, and Nancy's daughter Kara Casey. Ana Bianca Marin for The National

was always being used for the hospital," he said.

"We used to watch *The Saint* with Roger Moore and really looked forward to it, but if there was an emergency case at the hospital that needed to be attended to, like a caesarean section, then the generator would have to be used to power the hospital."

He retired from the US State Department in December, having served as a medical officer for 21 years. He now plans to return to live and work in the UAE.

"For every diabetic we know about in Abu Dhabi there is one we don't know about," he said. "So I hope to be returning to the UAE to work in rural areas administering health care to people who may not have easy access to medical care."

✉ ealghalib@thenational.ae



The new birthing centre of the Oasis Hospital. Ana Bianca Marin for The National

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Ras al Khaimah master plan calls for nature preserves

Wetlands sites will maintain habitat for fish and bird species

Anna Zacharias

RAS AL KHAIMAH // Mangroves, turtle nesting sites and woodlands are to be protected at four nature reserves to be set up under the Ras al Khaimah Master Plan, the Government announced.

The Dhaya and Mizahmi wetlands and two desert areas will be managed by the RAK Government in conjunction with the emirate's two major property companies, Rakeen and RAK Properties.

The mangroves and a fish nurs-

ery area below Dhaya's mountains will be the site for the first of the reserves, scheduled to open within a year.

The Dhaya reserve, which will be about 3 square kilometres, will have boardwalks and information for visitors on its fish and bird species.

The preservation of these coastal areas is vital for the UAE's fish population because many species of deep water fish, such as sheri and rabbitfish, need the mangroves as nursery areas.

The Dhaya reserve area is known for its deep channel, intertidal mudflats and beautiful sponges and shells.

In the south of the emirate, a 2.12-square-kilometre reserve at Mizahmi will include a turtle nest-

ing site and wetlands.

The coast is guarded by an outer sandbar where patches of sea grass shelter fish and create a nursing area. Mizahmi also has two distinct habitats: coastal birds are attracted to the mudflats of the sandbar while other bird species are drawn to its high protective sand dunes.

The Mizahmi development will be overseen by RAK Properties and the Environmental Protection and Development Authority of Ras al Khaimah.

RAK Properties was also allocated the beach next to its Mina al Arat residential project to develop as a nature reserve with strictly limited human activity.

✉ azacharias@thenational.ae

Abu Dhabi could face water crisis

Presented by the former BBC foreign correspondent Crispin Thorold, 'inside The National' takes an in-depth look at some of the top stories being prepared for the next day's edition of The National. Go beyond the headlines, share the insights of 300 of the most skilled journalists in the region and engage in the sharpest news forum on air, only on Abu Dhabi Al Emarat TV.

Sunday to Thursday
19:30 UAE



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مقدم من قبل الصحفي البريطاني السابق كريستين ثورولد، 'inside The National' يتناول بعض القصص البارزة التي ستظهر في نسخة الغد من الجريدة الوطنية. تجاوز العناوين، شارك رؤى 300 من أفضل الصحفيين في المنطقة وشارك في أعمق منتدى للأخبار على الهواء، فقط على أبوظبي إمارات التلفزيون.

الأحد إلى الخميس
19:30 الإمارات العربية المتحدة

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→ Water, continued from 1

It also recommends that excess desalinated water be used to recharge underground reservoirs for use in times of emergency.

The need to use drought-tolerant plants in landscaping is highlighted, while a new plumbing code, expected to be introduced in new buildings later this year, will emphasise the need for water-saving technologies.

The study also recommends a campaign to educate the public on the need to be prudent with water.

Prepared in collaboration with experts from government departments and from the Dubai-based, International Center for Biosaline Agriculture, the master plan calls for institutional reform...

"We developed this master plan to help us achieve sustainable utilisation of water resources in an economically and environmentally friendly way that would enhance the sustainable development of the emirate of Abu Dhabi and the UAE," Mr al Mansouri said.

Groundwater contributes 71.2 per cent of total water demand, yet

it is being over-exploited at a rapid rate.

Sheikh Hamdan said the emirate's groundwater supply had fallen by 18 per cent since 2003, while the consumption of water resources in the emirate exceeded their natural recharging capacity by 24 times.

Abu Dhabi's groundwater reserves stand at 641 million cubic metres. However, more than 97 per cent is brackish, containing high amounts of dissolved salts known to cause deterioration in the quality of soil when used for agricultural purposes.

While the country's overall brackish groundwater supplies can last no longer than 50 years, its reserves of sweet or moderately brackish water that can be easily tapped can last only 20 to 40 years, the study says.

Besides inefficiency in the agricultural sector, the report also focuses on residents' misuse. On average each Abu Dhabi resident uses 550 litres of water per day. While flat residents consume on average from 170 to 200 litres of water per day – a figure comparable to statistics in

developed countries – villa dwellers' water footprint is 270 to 1,760 litres per person per day.

Most of the potable water is provided through desalination, a process which removes the dissolved solids in seawater. Desalinated water accounts for 24 per cent of total demand and is costly: a cubic metre of desalinated water costs between Dh3 and Dh4 to produce, with consumers paying a fraction of the price.

Mr al Mansouri said the projected population of the emirate in 2030 is 3.5 million people. This growth is a major challenge in the next decade, he said. Previous studies by the Environment Agency – Abu Dhabi and Abu Dhabi Water and Electricity Authority have clearly shown a significant deficit in water supply in the coming years.

Last year, a survey of 2,363 people in the emirate showed that water conservation was the area of least concern. Only 42.8 per cent of respondents were aware that water scarcity should be a concern in the UAE.

vtodorova@thenational.ae