

Carbon dioxide emissions rise in most countries: WEC

LONDON, July 5: Carbon dioxide emissions blamed for global warming rose 12 per cent between 1990 and 1995, suggesting few countries will meet pledges to cut these emissions by 2000, the World Energy Council said on Thursday, reports Reuter.

Industrialised countries in 1995 signed a United Nations convention committing them to cut emissions from burning fossil fuel back to 1990 levels by 2000.

But emissions are rising in most countries, the independent London-based council said in a statement.

“Action is required, starting now,” the WEC said.

Measures which should be taken include improving energy efficiency, accelerating the development and use of appropriate and economic non-fossil fuels, and cleaner fossil fuel conversion and use.

The worst offenders were in the Middle East where car-

bou dioxide emissions were up 35 per cent in 1990-95, and the Asia-Pacific region excluding Japan, Australia and New Zealand, where there was a 30 per cent rise.

In the former Soviet Union, and Central and Eastern Europe however, emissions were down to between 70 and 75 per cent of 1990 levels as a result of economic decline, the WEC said.

The falling emissions in these former Communist countries were excluded from the WEC’s global figure. If they were included, the global rise would have been just three per cent instead of 12 per cent.

The WEC warned it expects carbon dioxide emissions to rise in developing countries as their populations grow and they become more industrialised.

The WEC expects developing countries to contribute 50 per cent of the carbon dioxide emissions by 2020.

BRIEFLY

Flood death toll now 260 in China:

Devastating floods hitting China have killed at least 260 people, affected more than 10 million people and cost 1.2 billion dollars in damage, officials said yesterday. AFP reports from Beijing.

The worst flooding in half a century has caused havoc in southern and eastern China since June 30 and has spread to other provinces in the centre. China’s longest river, the Yangtze, overflowed in Sichuan province, killing 27 people, a Red Cross official told AFP by telephone, adding that they were still waiting for casualty reports from dozens of stricken villages.

US honours Peres, King Hussein:

Former Israeli Prime Minister Shimon Peres and King Hussein of Jordan were honoured Philadelphia Thursday for their efforts for peace in the Middle-East during US Independence Day ceremonies, AFP reports from Philadelphia.

They received the Liberty Medal created in 1988 to commemorate the US declaration of independence delivered in this city 200 years earlier.

Imelda barred from visiting US:

A judge who sentenced Imelda Marcos to 24 years in prison on graft charges said Friday he won’t allow the former first lady to go abroad right away for treatment of an eye ailment, AP reports from Manila.

“She has to see court-appointed doctors first before I make a decision,” said Justice Francis Garchitorena, chief judge of the anti-graft court hearing Mrs. Marcos case. She is free pending an appeal. The widow of the late President Ferdinand Marcos told reporters outside Garchitorena’s office that “time is of the essence at this moment. My eyes are deteriorating.”

Jiang congratulates Yeltsin:

China’s President Jiang Zemin set a message of congratulation to Russia’s counterpart Boris Yeltsin on his election victory Thursday pointing out his role in improving once frost relations Xinhua said, AFP reports from Beijing.

“Sino-Russian relations have thrived in recent years and your excellency has given a direct and strong push to their healthy development, Jiang said in the message. Through the joint efforts of the two countries and peoples China and Russia will definitely realise the goal of everlasting neighbourly friendship, mutual respect and trust, equal and mutually beneficial cooperation and common development and prosperity.

Hun Sen to visit Seoul: Cambodian Second Premier Hun Sen will visit Seoul in mid-July on a four-day trip aimed at strengthening trade ties with South Korea and upgrading diplomatic relations, the Foreign Ministry said Friday, AP reports from Seoul.

Cambodia, a traditional ally of Seoul’s arch enemy, North Korea, has begun improving relations with Seoul in an attempt to draw South Korean investments.

2 killed in Bogota blast: Two people were killed and at least one other was seriously injured Thursday when a bomb exploded outside a building in the downtown Teusaquillo neighbourhood of Bogota, police said. AFP reports from Bogota.

Several universities are located nearby, as is the headquarters of the ruling Liberal Party and the residence of the Palacio. Witnesses told local radio they had spotted at least two people leaving a package on the sidewalk.

Suicide bomb attack toll rises to 37 in Lanka

COLOMBO, July 5: The death toll in the suicide bomb attack against a senior minister in Sri Lanka’s northern town of Jaffna rose to 37 with more wounded people dying in hospital, official sources said today, reports AFP.

A Tamil Tiger woman suicide bomber strapped with explosives carried out the attack against Housing Minister Nimal Siripala De Silva on Thursday but he narrowly escaped assassination, officials said.

Among the dead were Jaffna’s top military commander brigadier Ananda Hamangoda and 10 other officials and security personnel, 25 civilians and the woman suicide bomber.

More than 55 people were seriously wounded and admitted to the Jaffna hospital, officials said.

Meanwhile, a senior minis-

ter who escaped a Tamil woman suicide bomb in northern Sri Lanka on Thursday told state radio he was undeterred by the assassination bid and vowed to visit the embattled region again.

Housing Minister Nimal Siripala De Silva, who was wounded in the attack that killed 21 others said he would visit the northern town of Jaffna again to carry out rehabilitation work, the Sri Lanka Broadcasting Corporation (SLBC) said.

De Silva was interviewed in his hospital bed at a military complex in the Jaffna Peninsula 400 kilometres (250 miles) north of here.

He said the bomb went off just as he got into his vehicle. I will not be deterred by this attack he said. This has only strengthened my resolve to carry out the government’s programme of rehabilitation.

“There is no sense in talking of defeat because considering the conditions under which we campaigned, I believe we achieved a good result,” Zyuganov told a news conference, referring to a substantial pro-Yeltsin bias in the Russian news media.

“I think life in this country will get better now,” said Natasha Virtuozova of Moscow, a first-time voter.

In Washington, President Clinton called the election “a triumph for democracy.” Australian Foreign Minister Alexander Downer pronounced himself “absolutely delighted” and German Chancellor Helmut Kohl said, “It’s a great day.”

Under Yeltsin’s government, more liberal economic policies and greater personal freedoms have been a boon to some — but millions of others have seen their living standards plummet, and remember the certainties of the Soviet past with deep nostalgia.

“He needs a little rest,” his

International

Serbia summons Plavsic to discuss future of Karadzic

BELGRADE, July 5: Serbia summoned new Bosnian Serb leader Biljana Plavsic on Thursday to discuss the future of President Radovan Karadzic who is still wanted by the West for war crimes despite his release.

Plavsic, who met President Slobodan Milosevic in Belgrade for the first time since Karadzic surrendered presidential authority to him at the Hague war crimes tribunal in The Hague and are concerned that he remains at the head of the ruling Serb Democratic Party (SDS) in the Bosnian Serb Republic.

Karadzic’s decision not to stand in inter-ethnic Bosnian elections and to give executive power to Plavsic, one of his

vice presidents, has not convinced mediators that he has been sidelined.

“The issue is this,” said Michael Steiner, deputy to the international high representative in Bosnia. “Is Karadzic still in power and is he perceived to be still in power? The answer to both these questions is obviously yes.”

Mediators hope Milosevic, who threatened the Bosnian Serbs with reprisals unless they got rid of Karadzic, will persuade Plavsic to complete his removal. The top Bosnia mediator, Carl Bildt, met Milosevic on Wednesday to press his case.

Mediators do not doubt that Belgrade, on which the Bosnian Serb Republic depends for economic survival, could physically deliver Karadzic.

But Milosevic has argued that

arresting Bosnian Serb war leaders would land him in political difficulties and says that the elections would effectively neutralise Karadzic.

The problem with his argument for the west is that it would leave Karadzic and the SDS free to undermine the poll. Meanwhile US Defence Secretary William Perry said on Thursday that he hoped Bosnian Serbian leader Radovan Karadzic and other indicted war criminals would be brought before an international tribunal without resorting to military force.

We have by no means exhausted diplomatic means, Perry told reporters travelling with him from Bosnia where he confronted reporters who demanded at a Sarajevo news conference to know why US troops in Bosnia did not arrest Karadzic.

Mediators hope Milosevic,

BSF kills 6 Kashmiri militants

JAMMU, July 5: Six militants were killed and large quantity of arms and ammunition was recovered following an encounter between Border Security Force (BSF) troops and militants at Kiliar-Malhotra area of Baderwah Town in Doda district today, reports PTI.

A BSF spokesman here said troops launched operation on specific intelligence inputs last evening to nab the hiding militants in the area.

However, militants opened fire with their automatic weapons on search operation parties forcing them to return fire, he said adding heavy exchange of firing continued throughout the night.

The BSF troops recovered six dead bodies of militants including some suspected foreign mercenaries from the site of encounter.

Six rifles including four AK-47, one wireless set and large quantity of ammunition were also recovered from the slain militants.

Gowda prepares to expand cabinet

NEW DELHI, India, July 5: Prime Minister H D Deve Gowda of India prepared Friday to expand his 34-member Cabinet to give representation to all the states and mollify politicians who wanted more important jobs, news reports said, reports AP.

No names were announced, but newspapers speculated that Gowda would induct six more ministers, including a Muslim politician from the state of Jammu-Kashmir, where rebels are fighting for independence.

Gowda also could reshuffle his Cabinet following widespread attacks on one of his ministers who is accused of kidnapping women and beating up officials.

The prime minister has favoured a major change in his Cabinet only after his finance minister presents the annual budget to Parliament next week.

Kohl slams Dole for pushing NATO expansion in campaign

BONN, Germany, July 5: Mindful of Russian hardliners, Chancellor Helmut Kohl criticised Republican challenger Bob Dole on Thursday for pushing NATO expansion in his US presidential campaign, reports AP.

We should put on hold the debate over NATO’s eastward expansion until the November presidential elections in the United States, Kohl said.

In that country, one of the candidates is pushing this issue with special intensity to gain votes among Americans with Polish, Czech and Hungarian backgrounds, Kohl said.

I don’t think it is good to turn such a central question into a campaign issue.

He did not mention Dole by name, but the reference was obvious. Dole accused President Clinton of going “deliberately slow” on the expansion of NATO to former Soviet-bloc states in a foreign policy speech last month.

Dole set 1998 as a goal for admitting Poland, Hungary and the Czech Republic into the Western alliance.

Supporters, opponents of immigration clash in US

LOS ANGELES, June 5: Supporters and opponents of a state ballot measure that would restrict services for illegal immigrants clashed at a demonstration on Thursday, first taunting each other than striking out with fist, picket signs and filled soda cans, reports AP.

At least six people were injured and one person was hospitalised, authorities said.

About 150 police officers wielded batons separated the approximately 300 people on both sides of the debate over proposition 187, and the demonstration were allowed to proceed.

There are plenty of police to stop Americans but no one to stop these people from invading our country, complained demonstrator Glenn Spencer.

Over 80 people killed in Burundi tea factory attack

BUJUMBURA, Burundi, July 5: UN security sources said Thursday the number of people killed by armed gangs at a Burundi tea factory could be higher than the 80 previously reported by Burundi radio, reports AP.

A nearby hospital is overflowing with victims, said Christophe Bouton, head of UN security in Burundi. The number of people killed may be more than 100.

Armed Hutu militia reportedly attacked the tea factory in Teza, 23 kilometers (14.5 miles) northeast of the capital of Bujumbura. Victims included factory workers and residents of a nearby displaced persons camp.

The attackers reportedly caused considerable damage to the factory, burning all the stocks of tea, about 20 vehicles and the administration office.

Off the Record



The Princess of Wales arrives at the Dorchester Hotel late Tuesday for a party hosted by Mr and Mrs Imran Khan in aid of his hospital in Lahore. The Prince of Wales tonight offered the Princess terms for divorce, breaking ten weeks of deadlock which could now signal a quick end to the Royal marriage.

Birds, pets, even bugs blamed for fires

TOKYO: Birds, pets and even bugs are being blamed for more than two dozen fires in Tokyo over the past year, according to the Tokyo Fire Department, reports AP.

Rats were responsible for 15 of the fires, four were caused by pet dogs and cats, another four by birds and cockroaches and one by a spider, officials said Thursday.

In April, fire broke out at a night club after rats chewed through and electric cable above ceiling. Four pet cats playing near a kerosene stove knocked over cardboard boxes setting a warehouse ablaze last December.

Even a spider caused a fire by spinning its web inside a cooking stove. The we caused a gas leak that resulted in fire.

In a separate case, cockroach droppings ignited in a microwave oven.

Days lengthen as moon moves away

WASHINGTON: If your day seems to be getting longer, it is, reports AP.

Tidal forces from the gravitational pull of the moon have caused the rotation of the Earth to slow over millions of years, a change that gradually is making each day-and-night cycle a fractional second longer than the one before, according to a new study measuring changes in the motion of the planet.

The change can’t be measured by an ordinary clock, but over 100,000,000 years does make a difference, said Charles P. Sonett, co-author of the study being published in the journal Science. “About 900 million years ago, the Earth’s day was only 18 hours long.”

Sonett, regents professor of planetary sciences at the University of Arizona in Tucson, led a team that measured the historic changes in tides by microscopically examining sediments laid down over millions of years at sea beds in the United States and in Australia.

The sediments, called “tidalites,” were deposited in ancient channels and estuaries in patterns that reflected the tidal influence of the moon and the sun on the ocean.



US actor Tom Cruise (L) is accompanied by his wife Nicole Kidman as both arrive late Tuesday at the Empire Leicester Square in London for the premiere of his film Mission Impossible.