

# Time running out for 2°C target

AFP, Copenhagen

Time is running out to limit global warming to two degrees Celsius (3.6 degrees Fahrenheit), the UN's climate experts said yesterday, saying current trends in carbon emissions heralded disaster.

Crowning a landmark review, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) said emissions of three key greenhouse gases were at their highest in more than 800,000 years.

Earth, it warned, is on a likely trajectory for at least 4°C warming by 2100 over pre-industrial times -- a recipe for worsening drought, flood, rising seas and species extinctions.

Many could face hunger, homelessness and conflict in the scramble for precious resources.

UN chief Ban Ki-moon, who in September hosted a special summit on climate change, threw his weight behind the report, completed at a key point in UN negotiations.

"Human influence on the climate system is clear, and clearly growing," Ban told a press conference. "Action on climate change can contribute to economic prosperity, better health and more liveable cities."



UN chief Ban Ki-moon and IPCC Chairman Rajendra Pachauri give a press conference to present the AR5 Synthesis Report in Copenhagen, yesterday.

PHOTO: AFP

US Secretary of State John Kerry said the report was a fresh warning -- "another canary in the coal mine".

"Those who choose to ignore or dispute the science clearly laid out in this report do so at great risk for all of us and for our kids and grandkids," he said from Washington.

IPCC chief Rajendra Pachauri said the scientific case for prioritising action on climate change "is clearer than ever".

"We have little time before the window of

opportunity to stay within 2°C of warming closes," he said.

"To keep a good chance of staying below 2°C, and at manageable costs, our emissions should drop by 40 to 70 percent globally between 2010 and 2050, falling to zero or below by 2100."

The report -- the first overview by the Nobel-winning organisation since 2007 -- comes ahead of UN talks in Lima next month to pave the way to a 2015 pact in

Paris to limit warming to a safer 2°C.

But the negotiations have been hung up for years over which countries should shoulder the cost for reducing carbon emissions, derived mainly from oil, gas and coal -- the backbone of the world's energy supply today.

The report said switching to cleaner sources, reducing energy efficiency and implementing other emission-mitigating measures would be far cheaper than the cost of climate damage.

"Ambitious" carbon curbs would shave just 0.06 percentage points annually from global consumption this century, targeted to grow by 1.6-3.0 percent annually, the IPCC said.

Under the lowest of four emissions scenarios, global average temperatures over this century are likely to rise by 0.3-1.7°C (0.5-3.1 degrees Fahrenheit), leading to between 26-55 cm in sea-level rise.

Under the highest scenario, warming would be 2.6-4.8°C, causing sea-level rise of 45-82 cm.

The report warned bleakly that on current trends, "warming is more likely than not to exceed 4°C" by 2100 over pre-industrial levels.

## IPCC CLIMATE REPORT MAIN POINTS

### SITUATION TODAY

Since Industrial Revolution in 1750, around 2,000 billion tonnes of carbon dioxide (CO2) have been emitted. Half of manmade emissions have occurred in the last 40 years. Levels of CO2, methane and nitrous oxide are the highest in at least 800,000 years.

From 1880-2012, the global average surface temperature rose by 0.85 degrees Celsius, while the global mean sea level rose by 19 centimetres from 1901-2010.

Each of the last three decades has been successively warmer than any preceding decade since 1850.

### THE FUTURE

The report uses four scenarios called Representative Concentration Pathways (RCP) based on greenhouse gas levels.

Under RCP 2.6, the lowest scenario, global average temperatures over this century are likely to rise by 0.3-1.7°C, leading to between 26-55 cm in sea-level rise. Under RCP 8.5, the highest scenario, warming would be 2.6-4.8°C, causing sea-level rise of 45-82 cm.

### RISKS INCLUDE

Worse food security, species extinction and damage to ecosystems

Mass migration caused by climate-related economic damage and loss of land from rising seas and storm surges

Greater water stress, especially in sub-tropical regions.

Risk of conflict over scarce resources

### THE 2°C TARGET: RECOMMENDATIONS

Cut annual greenhouse gas emissions by 40-70 percent by 2050 compared with 2010, and to near zero or even below by 2100.

Massive change in energy habits, led by a switch out of high-polluting fossil fuels.

By 2030, investment in low-carbon energy and energy efficiency in transport, industry and buildings will need to rise by several hundred billion dollars per year.

Countries can shore up defences by reducing water waste and encouraging recycling, preventing settlement in climate-prone areas and conserving wetlands and mangroves, which are shields against climate stress. Preventing deforestation and encouraging afforestation are also a carbon buffer.

Carbon capture to sequester CO2 from fossil-fuel power plants.

## NIZAMI'S SENTENCE

### Pakistan 'seriously concerned'

DAILY TIMES, ISLAMABAD

Pakistan has finally voiced "serious concern" over the award of death sentence to Jamaat-e-Islami Chief Motiur Rahman Nizami though it initially followed the policy of non-interference over what it termed was Dhaka's internal matter.

"Though what happens in Bangladesh is that country's internal matter, Pakistan cannot remain divorced from references to 1971 and its aftermath -- almost 45 years after those tragic chain of events, the Bangladeshi government still seems to be living in the past and totally ignoring the time-tested virtue of forgive and forget," a strong-worded statement of the Interior Ministry on Saturday quoted its minister Chaudhry Nisar Ali Khan as saying.

"One fails to understand why the Bangladeshi government is hell bent upon digging the graves of the past and reopening old wounds. It seems obvious to any independent observer that the recent events in Bangladesh are a manifestation of serious political violations, which are being inflicted on [Jamaat-e-Islami] Bangladesh for events before the separation of Bangladesh," he said.

Khan said he was "deeply saddened to receive this shocking news and believe that the government of Bangladesh has misused the process of law as a political tool against the [JI] leader".

Interestingly, the statement didn't come from Pakistan's diplomatic authorities and appeared in stark contradiction with the policy adopted by the Foreign Office.

On Thursday, FO spokesperson Tasnim Aslam told a weekly press briefing, "We are mindful of the developments in Bangladesh. While we do not comment on internal matters in other countries, we have noted the comments and reports of international community and human rights organisations about the trial processes."



Pakistani relatives gather around the bodies of blast victims after a suicide bomb attack near the Wagah border, yesterday. The blast killed at least 45 people at the main Pakistan-India border crossing. (Story on page 16)

PHOTO: AFP

## US MIDTERM ELECTIONS Republicans poised to seize Congress

AFP, Washington

The months-long, \$4 billion US midterm election battle comes to a head with tomorrow's vote, and President Barack Obama's bloodied Democrats face an uphill struggle to hold their ground in Congress.

Republicans have the momentum and are ideally positioned to snatch a Senate majority that would put Obama's rivals in charge of both chambers of Congress during his last two years in the White House.

Polls show most Americans feel the country is on the wrong track, emboldening Republican candidates, who must either deliver a win or see their own agenda stymied by Senate leaders still loyal to an unpopular president.

GoP heavyweights have been joined on the campaign trail by figureheads like Senator John McCain and 2012 presidential nominee Mitt Romney, who has crisscrossed the nation lending candidates his star power.

Democrats have tapped their political superstars as well, notably former president Bill Clinton, probable future White House candidate Hillary Clinton and popular First Lady Michelle Obama.

But the political landscape is tilting away from Democrats, with forecast models showing Republicans with good odds of winning the Senate. The Republicans have repeated their mantra -- "A vote for the Democrats is a vote for Barack Obama" -- as they have sought to make the midterm election a referendum on the president.

His policies -- including "Obamacare," cuts in carbon emissions and the legalisation of thousands of undocumented youths -- are unpopular with the voters who will decide the key races.

## Ukraine rebels hold vote

Kiev says Russia mobilising troops to separatist east

AFP, Donetsk

Separatists in eastern Ukraine yesterday voted in controversial, Russian-backed leadership elections that the West condemned amid reports of Russian troops being crossing into Ukraine rebel zone.

The elections in the self-declared Donetsk People's Republic and Lugansk People's Republic -- based around the two main rebel-held cities -- were billed as bringing a degree of legitimacy to the makeshift military regimes that already control them.

However, the polls deepened an international crisis over the conflict and further undercut an already teetering truce between Ukraine's government and the heavily armed pro-Russian separatists.

Ukrainian President Petro Poroshenko blasted the election as a violation of a September 5 truce deal, calling them "pseudo-elections that terrorists and bandits want to organise on occupied territory".

The Security Service of Ukraine said Sunday it was opening a criminal investigation into "the holding of so-called 'elections'", which it said contradicted the constitution and resembled "a power grab."

According to UN figures, more than 4,000 people have been killed in Ukraine's conflict in the last seven months. The crisis has triggered the biggest diplomatic dispute between the Kremlin and the West since the Soviet collapse.

Russia, which supports the rebels but denies sending troops to fight on their side, says it will recognise the results of the elections. That angered the United States and European capitals, which have imposed heavy economic sanctions on Russia, and back Kiev in condemning the polls as illegal.

Meanwhile, the Ukrainian military yesterday reported "intensive" movement of troops and equipment from Russia into the separatist controlled parts of eastern Ukraine.

"There is intensive deployment of military equipment and personnel of the enemy from the territory of the Russian Federation onto territory temporarily controlled by insurgents," Ukrainian military spokesman Andriy Lysenko told a briefing in Kiev.

In Donetsk, AFP reporters saw about 20 trucks, some carrying anti-aircraft guns, heading towards the government-held airport, although it was not clear whether these were new forces.

Several Western news outlets reported witnessing heavy movement of troops near Donetsk.

Among them, reporters for the news sites buzzfeed.com and mashable.com tweeted that they had seen a large military column.

Russia has repeatedly denied accusations from Kiev, Western governments and the Nato alliance that it is fighting on the side of pro-Russian separatists who have taken over a swathe of Ukraine's industrial south-east.

## NEWS IN brief

### Modi a 'great orator': Kejriwal

PTI, New Delhi

AAP chief Arvind Kejriwal, in an interview to the Press Trust of India, said that Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi is a "great orator" and has sent all the "right" messages. Kejriwal also suggested that Modi has brought some positivity in the country in the last five months, adding only time will tell whether the aspirations of the people will be fulfilled or not.

### Israel closes Gaza border crossings

AFP, Jerusalem

Israel has closed two border crossings with Gaza, the army said yesterday, after a rocket fired from the Palestinian enclave struck its territory. It was the first to strike Israeli territory since September 16, and the second since the end of the Jewish state's devastating 50-day war on Gaza militants that killed 2,140 Palestinian lives and 73 on the Israeli.

### Burkina Unrest: UN threatens sanctions

AFP, Ouagadougou

A UN envoy yesterday called for a civilian transition in Burkina Faso after the ouster of president Blaise Compaore, threatening sanctions if the military holds on to power in the west African country. Meanwhile, the army seized control of the national television headquarters and the capital's main square yesterday in defiance of calls by the international community and thousands of demonstrators to hand over power to civilian rule.

## ISIS executes 50 more Iraqi tribesmen

AGENCIES

The so-called Islamic State group extremists lined up and shot dead at least 50 Iraqi tribesmen, women and children yesterday, officials said, the latest mass slaying by militants who have killed some 150 members of the tribe in recent days.

The killings, all committed in public, target the Sunni Al Bu Nimr tribe that ISIS now apparently views as a threat, though previously some Sunnis backed the expansion of the group and other militants into the volatile province in December.

Meanwhile, separate attacks around Baghdad killed at least 19 people, authorities said.

The attack on the Sunni tribe took place in the village of Ras al-Maa, north of Ramadi, the provincial capital. There, the militant group killed at least 40 men, six women and four children, lining them up and publicly killing them one by one, Sheikh Naim al-Gaoud, a senior tribesman, told The Associated Press. The militants also kidnapped another 17 people, he said.

The attack against Al Bu Nimr tribe comes after militants killed another 50 members of its members late Friday and 48 on Thursday, according to various officials who have spoken to the AP.

Iraqi and US officials have repeatedly said that Iraqi tribes are key elements in the fight against the group since they are able to penetrate areas inaccessible to airstrikes and ground forces.

## Iranian woman jailed for watching men's volleyball

INDEPENDENT.CO.UK

A British-Iranian woman has been sentenced to one year in prison for attempting to go to a men's volleyball game, her lawyer has said.

25-year old Ghoncheh Ghavami was found guilty of "propagating against the ruling system, according to her lawyer Mahmoud Alizadeh Tabatabaei.

Tabatabaei claims he has seen the text of the verdict, but is still waiting for the official sentencing. He has not commented any further.

Ghavami, a budding lawyer with both Iranian and British citizenship, was detained in June at a Tehran's Freedom Stadium after trying to attend a men's volleyball match between Iran and Italy.

Women are banned from attending male-only matches in Iran and Ghavami tried to enter the match with around a dozen other women to protest the ban, according to



Amnesty International.

Ghavami was held for a few hours and then released but she was detained again a few days later and transferred to Tehran's notorious Evin jail, which is known for holding political prisoners and journalists.

She began a hunger strike earlier this month over her detention, Amnesty says.

Her brother, 28-year-old Iman Ghavami, said she rang her family in tears saying she had been put in solitary confinement for 41 days.

A Facebook campaign to free her has started, garnering almost 9,000 "likes" and lead to protests at other Iranian volleyball matches.

Iran's judiciary spokesman, Gholam Hossein Mohseni Ejechi, has criticized reports linking Ghavami's arrest to volleyball, saying last month: "Her case has nothing to do with sports."

## Where is Israeli peace initiative?: Peres

AFP, Tel Aviv

Israel's former president and Nobel peace laureate Shimon Peres on Saturday took a swipe at Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's government for failing to make peace with the Arabs.

"Those who have renounced making peace are... not patriots," Peres said at a ceremony in Tel Aviv marking the 19th anniversary of the assassination of premier Yitzhak Rabin, who had signed peace agreements with the Palestinians.

"It's a shame that the only peace initiative was an Arab initiative. Where is the Israeli peace initiative?" Peres asked, warning that "time is against us".

He was referring to the Arab Peace Initiative made in 2002 by Saudi Arabia, calling on Israel to withdraw from occupied Palestinian territory, in exchange for a normalisation of ties with Arab countries.

Rabin was gunned down at a peace rally in Israel's commercial capital on November 4, 1995, by a rightwing Jewish extremist opposed to Palestinian-Israeli peace talks. His murder came just two years after the signing of the Oslo Accords and Rabin's historic handshake with the late Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat on the White House lawn.

