

82 die in Baghdad Covid hospital fire

REUTERS, Baghdad

A fire sparked by an oxygen tank explosion killed at least 82 people and injured 110 at a hospital in Baghdad that had been equipped to house Covid-19 patients, an Interior Ministry spokesman said yesterday.

"We urgently need to review safety measures at all hospitals to prevent such a painful incident from happening in future," spokesman Khalid al-Muhanna told state television, announcing the toll.

The fire erupted on Saturday at the Ibn Khatib hospital in the Diyala Bridge area.

Ali Bayati, a member of Iraq's semi-official High Commission for Human Rights, had said earlier a final death toll had not yet been officially announced but it could be between 30 to 45.

Patients' relatives scrambled during the blaze to save their loved ones.

A man who had been visiting his brother described people jumping out of windows to escape.

Patients were moved to other hospitals, medical sources said. But several families were still at the hospital hours after the fire had been extinguished, after failing to find them elsewhere.

Prime Minister Mustafa al-Kadhimi ordered an investigation.

"Such an incident is evidence of negligence and therefore I directed that an investigation be launched immediately and for the hospital's manager and the heads of security and maintenance to be detained along with all those concerned until we identify those negligent and hold them accountable," he said in a statement.

Iraq's healthcare system, ruined by decades of sanctions, war and neglect, has been stretched during the coronavirus crisis. The country has recorded a total of 102,5288 infections, including 15,217 deaths, the health ministry said on Saturday.

Security has improved in recent years but Iraq still suffers from political violence, including militia rocket attacks on foreign forces and a low-level Islamic State insurgency.



Armenians march from the Turkish Ambassador's Residence to the Turkish Embassy on the 106th anniversary of the 1915 Armenian Genocide during a protest in Washington, DC, on Saturday. Armenian Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan triggered an early election yesterday to try overcome criticism over his handling of last year's conflict in Nagorno-Karabakh. PHOTO: AFP

BILLION COVID-19 VACCINE DOSES ADMINISTERED GLOBALLY: AFP

More than one billion doses of coronavirus vaccines have been administered worldwide, less than five months after the first mass inoculation programmes began to be rolled out, according to an AFP tally.

At least 1,002,938,540 doses have been administered in 207 countries and territories, according to the tally compiled from official sources. More than half, or 58 percent, have been given in three countries: the United States with 225.6 million doses, China with 216.1 million doses and India with 138.4 million.

In the EU, 128 million doses have been administered to 21 percent of the population. While the majority of poor countries have also started to vaccinate, mainly thanks to the Covax programme, inoculation is still largely a privilege of high-income countries, as defined by the World Bank, which are home to 16 percent of the world's population but have administered 47 percent of vaccine doses.

Low-income countries account for just 0.2 percent of doses administered.

SOURCE: AFP

ASEAN BID TO END MYANMAR CRISIS

Protesters reject 'consensus'

Say it falls short of restoring democracy, vow to continue agitation

REUTERS

Myanmar's pro-democracy activists yesterday sharply criticised an agreement between the country's junta chief and Southeast Asian leaders to end the nation's violent post-coup crisis and vowed to continue their protest campaign.

Some scattered peaceful protests took place in Myanmar's big cities yesterday, a day after the meeting of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (Asean) with Senior General Min Aung Hlaing in Jakarta, Indonesia, reached a consensus to end the turmoil in the country, but gave no timeline.

"Whether it is Asean or the UN, they will only speak from outside saying don't fight but negotiate and solve the issues. But that doesn't reflect Myanmar's ground situation," said Khin Sandar from a protest group called the General Strikes Collaboration Committee.

"We will continue the protests. We have plans to do so," she told Reuters by phone.

Myanmar's parallel National Unity Government (NUG), comprised of pro-democracy figures, remnants of Suu Kyi's ousted administration and representatives of armed ethnic groups, said it welcomed the consensus reached but added the junta had to be held to its promises.

"We look forward to firm action by

Asean to follow up its decisions and to restore our democracy," said Dr. Sasa, spokesman for the NUG.

According to a statement from Asean chair Brunei, a consensus was reached in Jakarta on five points - ending violence, a constructive dialogue among all parties, a special Asean envoy to facilitate the dialogue, acceptance of aid and a visit by the envoy to Myanmar.



The five-point consensus did not mention political prisoners, although the chairman's statement said the meeting "heard calls" for their release.

Asean leaders had wanted a commitment from Min Aung Hlaing to restrain his security forces, which the Assistance Association for Political Prisoners (AAPP) says have killed 748 people since a mass civil disobedience movement erupted to challenge his Feb. 1 coup against the elected government of Aung San Suu Kyi.

AAPP, a Myanmar activist group, says over 3,300 are in detention.

Several people took to social media to criticise the deal.

"Asean's statement is a slap on the face of the people who have been abused, killed and terrorised by the military," said a Facebook user called Mawchi Tun. "We do not need your help with that mindset and approach."

Phil Robertson, deputy Asia director of Human Rights Watch, said it was unfortunate that only the junta chief represented Myanmar at the meeting.

"The lack of a clear timeline for action, and Asean's well known weakness in implementing the decisions and plans that it issues, are real concerns that no one should overlook," he added.

The Asean gathering was the first coordinated international effort to ease the crisis in Myanmar, an impoverished country that neighbours China, India and Thailand and has been in turmoil since the coup. Besides the protests, deaths and arrests, a nationwide strike has crippled economic activity.

Besides the junta chief, the leaders of Indonesia, Vietnam, Singapore, Malaysia, Cambodia and Brunei were at the meeting, along with the foreign ministers of Laos, Thailand and the Philippines. The NUG was not invited but spoke privately to some of the participating countries before the meeting.

YEMEN WAR Battle for Marib leave dozens dead

AFP, Dubai

Yemen's Huthi rebels have made important gains in the battle for the government's last northern stronghold, advancing close to the centre of Marib city despite heavy casualties, military sources said yesterday.

The rebels have taken full control of the northwest Kassara battlefield and made progress on western frontlines despite airstrikes by the Saudi-led coalition which backs Yemen's government, the loyalist military sources said.

Marib and its surrounding oil fields make up the last significant pocket of government-held territory in the north, the rest of which is under rebel control, including the capital Sanaa.

Fierce fighting has left at least 65 dead over the past two days alone, including some 26 loyalist personnel, among them four officers, the government sources told AFP. The Iran-backed Huthis rarely disclose their own losses.

A Sikh temple aids patients battling for breath

REUTERS, Ghaziabad

Indian coronavirus patient Vidhya Devi, 70, should have been in emergency care at a New Delhi hospital, but instead she lay on the backseat of a car outside a Sikh temple, battling for breath, as she was connected to an oxygen tank on the street.

A massive surge in Covid-19 cases in India, which set a new global record of the most number of infections in a day yesterday, has left many infected people struggling to find treatment, with hospitals overcrowded and many running out of oxygen.

Total infections stand at 16.96 million and deaths at 192,311, health ministry data showed.

At the Sikh gurudwara (temple) in Ghaziabad city on the outskirts of the capital Delhi, the humanitarian tragedy is visible on the street.

Sikh aid group Khalsa Help International has been buying small quantities of oxygen as and when it becomes available to help those in urgent need.

Cars, vans and rickshaws plying Covid-19 patients and their families choked the street outside the temple on Saturday, as volunteers holding black oxygen cylinders spread out to help.

"I came here because I didn't get help anywhere else," said Manoj Kumar, who sat next to his mother Devi in the car as a volunteer monitored the flow of oxygen from the tank to her masked mouth.

"I called the gurudwara and they asked me to reach here fast," said Kumar.

A middle-aged woman in a van appeared

to be palpating as her adult son, holding her arm tried to keep her conscious, calling out: "Mummy? Mummy?"

In another van, a man lay unconscious on a car seat, legs stretching out of the door, as one volunteer vigorously rubbed his feet, while another pumped his chest to try to revive him.

Rummy, who is president of the gurudwara and founder of Khalsa Help International, said he began helping



the service three days ago as cases started spiking in New Delhi.

"People are dying on the streets. That's why we started this," said Rummy.

Over 36 hours up to Saturday evening, Rummy estimates the Khalsa Help International group has saved around 700 patients, but some didn't survive. Reuters witnessed two deaths there that evening.

India yesterday saw record 349,691 infections in the past 24 hours, the fourth straight day of record peaks. Hospitals in Delhi and across the country are turning away patients after running out of medical oxygen and beds.

EARTH DAY CLIMATE SUMMIT: KEY TAKEAWAYS

Dozens of world leaders met online for a two-day virtual summit that started Thursday on reducing climate change hosted by US President Joe Biden. Amid rising tensions among global powers, the leaders, however, seemed to agree on curbing greenhouse gas emissions, raising hope that climate goals set by Paris climate accord might be within our reach. Here is what the main players said -- and the pledges they made or reiterated during the summit:

US TAKES LEAD
The United States met global expectations by pledging to halve its emissions by 2030 from 2005 levels -- nearly doubling the last pledge made under former President Barack Obama. Washington also intends to double its annual public climate finance to developing countries by 2024, compared with spending under Obama in 2013-2016.

RUSSIA PLEDGES ACTION
Russian President Vladimir Putin committed his country to fulfilling its obligations to combat climate change. Putin said the world's fourth largest greenhouse gas emitter had set out to "significantly limit" net emissions by 2050. He refrained from giving a specific target.

CHINA TO QUIT COAL
President Xi Jinping told the summit his country would begin phasing out coal use over 2026-2030 as part of its efforts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Last year, Xi had said China would aim to become carbon neutral by 2060. He said China's coal consumption will peak in 2025 and start to fall thereafter.

EUROPE SETS AMBITIOUS GOAL
One day before the summit, Europe effectively set in stone its commitment to make the continent climate neutral by 2050. EU said that there is agreement to reduce European greenhouse gas emissions by at least 55 percent by 2030.

JAPAN PLEDGES CUT UP TO 46PC
Japan raised its 2030 emissions reduction target from 26% to 46% below 2013 levels and pledged to continue to push for a 50% cut over the next decade.

INDIA REFRAINS FROM SETTING TARGET
Prime Minister Narendra Modi failed to announce new targets. But he promised a "partnership" with Biden to mobilize green investment. He also noted that India's per capita carbon footprint is 60 percent lower than the global average. He said India eyes to renewable energy target of 450 gigawatts by 2030.

BRAZIL CHANGES ITS TONE
Far-right President Jair Bolsonaro appeared to shift his position on environmental protection, pledging Brazil would reach climate neutrality by 2050 - 10 years earlier than previously pledged.

A DIRE GLOBAL WARNING
As world leaders sped through speeches at the summit, a new report warned that the global economy could lose nearly 18 percent of its economic output by 2050 if climate change continues unchecked and average temperatures rise 3.2 degrees Celsius beyond pre-industrial temperatures. Should targets under the Paris Agreement be met and temperatures rise less than 2C, the shrinkage can be limited to 4%, it found. "Economies in Asia would be hardest hit, with China at risk of losing nearly 24% of its GDP in a severe scenario, while the world's biggest economy, the US, stands to lose close to 10%, and Europe almost 11%," the Swiss Re Institute report found.

CLIMATE ACTIVIST GRETA THUNBERG
"The simple fact, and uncomfortable fact, is that if we are to live up to our promises and commitments in Paris, we have to end fossil fuel subsidies... now. I don't believe for a second that you will actually do this."

INDIAN PRIME MINISTER NARENDRA MODI
"And, this event (Covid-19 pandemic) is a timely reminder that the grave threat posed by Climate Change has not disappeared."

CHINA PRESIDENT XI JINPING
"We must treat nature as our root. Respect it, protect it and follow its laws."

RUSSIAN PRESIDENT VLADIMIR PUTIN
"Despite Russia's size, its geography, climate and the structure of its economy, I am sure this task is achievable."

EUROPEAN COMMISSION PRESIDENT URSULA VON DER LEYEN
"This will be the make-or-break decade for our climate. ... Science tells us it's not too late yet, but we must hurry up."

BRAZIL PRESIDENT JAIR BOLSONARO
"With this spirit of collective responsibility and common destiny, I invite you once again to support us in this mission."

US PRESIDENT JOE BIDEN
"This is the decade we must make decisions that will avoid the worst consequences of the climate crisis."

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Dhaka Power Distribution Co. Ltd.

ঢাকা পাওয়ার ডিস্ট্রিবিউশন কোম্পানি লিমিটেড (ডিপিডি)

(An Enterprise of the Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh)

বিদ্যুৎ ভবন (৩য় তলা), ১ আব্দুল গণি রোড, ঢাকা-১০০০।

Web site : www.dpdco.gov.bd

Time Extension and Amendment Notice of International Tender

Invitation Ref. No.	87.106.315.00.00.397.2021.1248; dated: 08/03/2021					
Tender Name	Procurement of 33kV Single Core 800 sq.mm. XLPE Underground Copper Cable.					

Time Extension and Amendment of the above International Tender is as below:

Reference in Tender Notice	Original			Amended		
	Last Selling Date and Time	Closing Date and Time	Opening Date and Time	Last Selling Date and Time	Closing Date and Time	Opening Date and Time
12. Important Date and Time of Tender	25/04/2021 03:30 pm	26/04/2021 12:00 noon	26/04/2021 02:00 pm	16/05/2021 05:00 pm	17/05/2021 12:00 noon	17/05/2021 02:00 pm
15. Eligibility of Tenderer	2. The Tenderer or the manufacturer of goods shall have experience in supply of minimum of 70 km 33 kV 1x800 sq. mm XLPE Cu Cable or higher voltage higher size XLPE Underground cable under maximum 07 (seven) contracts within last 07(seven) years.			2. The Tenderer or the manufacturer of goods shall have experience in supply of 33 kV or higher voltage XLPE Underground Cu cable within last 10(ten) years to be evidenced by certificate from end user.		
	3. The Tenderer shall have experience for satisfactory completion of supply of electrical goods for value not less than taka 55,00,00,000 (Fifty Five crore) under maximum 05(five) contracts within last 07 (seven) years.			3. The Tenderer shall have experience for satisfactory completion of supply of electrical goods for value not less than taka 55,00,00,000 (Fifty Five crore) under maximum 05(five) contracts within last 10 (ten) years.		

Complete amendment is available in DPDC Website (www.dpdco.gov.bd). All other terms and conditions of the tender will remain unchanged.

(Salek Mahmud)
 Superintending Engineer
 Contract and Procurement Circle
 Dhaka Power Distribution Company Ltd.
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