

NEWS IN
brief**Gas pipe explosion kills 12 in China**

A gas pipe explosion in a residential community in a central Chinese city killed 12 people and injured 138, state media CCTV reported yesterday. One hundred-fifty people were evacuated following the deadly accident in the city of Shiyan in Hubei province, it said, of which 37 are critically injured. The explosion caused a food market building to collapse at 6:30 am, local media reported. Footage from CCTV shows wreckage and shattered glass covering the first floor of the collapsed building, where people were having breakfast and buying groceries when explosion happened.

13 killed as artillery hits Syria hospital

At least 13 people were killed and several wounded in two separate artillery attacks on the northern Syrian town of Afrin on Saturday, local medical sources and Turkey's government said. The first attack struck a residential area, while the second hit a hospital shortly afterwards, civil defence sources said. Ankara condemned the missile attack it said was launched by the Syrian Kurdish YPG militia, though the Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF), the US-backed militia force spearheaded by the Kurdish YPG, said it was not responsible.

Iran nuke talks resume

Indirect talks between Tehran and Washington on reviving the 2015 Iran nuclear deal resumed in Vienna as the European Union said negotiations were "intense" and Germany called for rapid progress. The sixth round of talks began as usual with a meeting of remaining parties to the deal - Iran, Russia, China, France, Britain, Germany and the European Union - in the basement of a luxury hotel. The talks' chief coordinator, EU foreign policy official Enrique Mora, who is leading the shuttle diplomacy between Iran and the United States, has said he expects a deal in this round of talks. Other envoys, however, are more cautious, saying many difficult issues are yet to be resolved.

SOURCE: REUTERS, AFP

G7 unites to confront China

Demands answers on key issues; Beijing says 'small' groups don't rule the world

AGENCIES

Group of Seven leaders yesterday scolded China over human rights in Xinjiang, called for Hong Kong to keep a high degree of autonomy and demanded a full and thorough investigation of the origins of the novel coronavirus in China.

After discussing how to come up with a unified position on China, leaders issued a highly critical final communique that delved into what are for China some of the most sensitive issues, including also Taiwan.

The re-emergence of China as a leading global power is considered to be one of the most significant geopolitical events of recent times, alongside the 1991 fall of the Soviet Union that ended the Cold War.

China's rise has also unnerved the United States: President Joe Biden casts China as the main strategic competitor and has vowed to confront China's "economic abuses" and push back against human rights violations.

"We will promote our values, including by calling on China to respect human rights and fundamental freedoms, especially in relation to Xinjiang and those rights, freedoms and high degree of autonomy for Hong Kong enshrined in the Sino-British Joint Declaration," the G7 said.

"We also call for a timely, transparent, expert-led, and science-based WHO-convened Phase 2 Covid-19 Origins study including, as recommended by the experts' report, in China," the G7 said.

The G7 also said they underscored "the importance of peace and stability across the Taiwan Strait, and encourage the peaceful resolution of cross-strait issues."

"We remain seriously concerned about the situation in the East and South China Seas and strongly oppose any



Extinction Rebellion environmental activists with masks of G7 leaders protest on the beach in St Ives, Cornwall during the G7 summit, yesterday.

PHOTO: AFP

unilateral attempts to change the status quo and increase tensions," they said.

The G7 also said it was concerned about forced labour in global supply chains including in the agricultural, solar, and garment sectors.

China denies all accusations of forced labour or abuse.

Before the G7 criticism emerged, China pointedly cautioned G7 leaders that the days when "small" groups of countries decided the fate of the world was long gone.

"The days when global decisions were dictated by a small group of countries are long gone," a spokesman for the Chinese embassy in London said.

The G7 on Saturday offered developing nations an infrastructure scheme -- "Build Back Better World" (B3W) project -- that could rival China's Belt and Road initiative. President Xi Jinping launched the BRI in 2013 to significantly expand China's economic and political influence, with many of the infrastructure plans seen as helping deliver its goods globally.

G7 ON CHINA

Demands Covid origins investigation

Tells China to respect rights in Xinjiang

Urges China to allow Hong Kong freedoms; calls for peace in Taiwan Strait

Expresses concerns over situation in East and South China Seas

Expresses concerns about forced labour in global supply chains

G7 vows action on vaccines, climate change

AFP, Carbis Bay

G7 leaders yesterday vowed to start delivering one billion doses of Covid vaccines and to step up action on climate change.

In a final communique issued at their first physical summit in nearly two years, the leaders of the elite club largely hewed to US President Joe Biden's push to regain the West's cohesion after Donald Trump's tumultuous tenure.

"We will harness the power of democracy, freedom, equality, the rule of law and respect for human rights to answer the biggest questions and overcome the greatest challenges," Biden and his colleagues from Britain, Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan said.

But the pledge on vaccines for poorer nations fell far short of the 11 billion doses that campaigners say are needed to end a pandemic that has claimed nearly four million lives.

Likewise, the G7's pledges to deliver more aid for countries at the sharp end of climate change, and to phase out fossil fuel investments, were decried as too little, too late ahead of a UN summit in November.

India and South Africa, who took part as guests, had pressed for the gathering to waive intellectual property rights on Western vaccines. But Britain and Germany were notable holdouts.

Campaigners also complained the G7 had failed to flesh out how it will pay for a newly agreed "Nature Compact" -- aimed to protect 30 percent of the world's land and oceans from despoliation by 2030.

CYBERCRIMES AND CHEMICAL WEAPON USE

G7 demands action from Russia

REUTERS

The Group of Seven (G7) wealthy nations yesterday demanded Russia take action against those conducting cyber attacks and using ransomware from within its borders.

The rebuke came in a communique issued after a three-day summit of G7 leaders in Britain that also called on Moscow to "stop its destabilising behaviour and malign activities" and conduct an investigation into the use of chemical weapons on Russian soil.

The communique said Russia must "hold to account those within its borders who conduct ransomware attacks, abuse

virtual currency to launder ransoms, and other cybercrimes."

The issue is in the spotlight after a cyber attack on Colonial Pipeline, the largest fuel pipeline in the United States, and another that disrupted the North American and Australian operations of meatpacker JBS USA.

Britain has previously said Russia is a leading proponent of cyber attacks. The G7 statement called for wider action against ransomware attacks, describing the practice of encrypting victims' data and demanding payment for its return as an "escalating shared threat".



A young Rohingya refugee looks for his belongings amid the charred remains of his camp following a fire incident that broke out earlier yesterday in New Delhi, India. At least 57 shanties of Rohingyas staying for over two years, gutted in the fire that broke out at Kalindi Kunj area of southeast Delhi at midnight. No one was injured.

PHOTO: AFP

Trip to space with Bezos sells for \$28 million

AFP, Washington

A mystery bidder paid \$28 million at auction Saturday for a seat alongside Jeff Bezos on board the first crewed spaceflight of the billionaire's company Blue Origin next month.

The Amazon founder revealed this week that both he and his brother Mark would take seats on board the company's New Shepard launch vehicle on July 20, to fly to the edge of space and back.

The Bezos brothers will be joined by the winner of Saturday's charity auction, whose identity remains unknown, and by a fourth, as yet unnamed space tourist.

Saturday's successful bidder beat out some 20 rivals in an auction launched on May 19 and wrapped up with a 10-minute, livecast frenzy.

The proceeds -- aside from a six percent auctioneer's commission -- will go to Blue Origin's foundation, Club for the Future, which aims to inspire future generations to pursue careers in STEM -- science, technology, engineering and mathematics.

Taking off from a desert in western Texas, the New Shepard trip will last 10 minutes, four of which passengers will spend above the Karman line that marks the recognized boundary



between Earth's atmosphere and space.

After lift-off, the capsule separates from its booster, then spends four minutes at an altitude exceeding 100 kilometers, during which time those on board experience weightlessness and can observe the curvature of Earth.

The booster lands autonomously on a pad two miles from the launch site, and the capsule floats back to the surface with three large parachutes that slow it down to about a mile per hour when it lands.

Blue Origin's New Shepard has successfully carried out more than a dozen uncrewed test runs from its facility in Texas' Guadalupe Mountains.

The automated capsules with no pilot have six seats with horizontal backrests placed next to large portholes, in a futuristic cabin with swish lighting. Multiple cameras help immortalize the few minutes the space.

ASTRAZENECA JOB

Abandon it if alternatives are available

Says top EMA official

AFP, Rome

A top official in the European Medicines Agency said it might be worth abandoning AstraZeneca's coronavirus vaccine for all age groups where alternatives are available, in an interview published yesterday.

Marco Cavaleri, the EMA's head of vaccine strategy, also told Italy's La Stampa newspaper that the Johnson & Johnson job should be preferentially used for the over 60s.

Both so-called viral vector vaccines are authorised for everyone over 18 but have been dogged by reports of rare blood clots.

Asked if it would not be better to ban AstraZeneca including for the over 60s, Cavaleri said: "Yes, and it is an option that many countries are considering in the light of the increased availability of mRNA jabs."

Gruesome

FROM PAGE 1

Police Station, was arrested immediately after the incident.

Asma's family members said Shoumen had married Asma a few years ago, but police said they would share and confirm details after interrogating the accused.

Asked, Mostafizur Rahman, additional superintendent of police in Kushtia, said police were interrogating Shoumen and details would be known after the interrogation.

Khulna's Superintendent of Police (SP) Mohammad Mahbub Hasan said Shoumen already has a wife and child who live in Asba village of Magura's Sadar upazila, the ASI's village home.

Shoumen has been suspended, he said.

The SP said Shoumen left his work station to go to Kushtia without permission, and carried firearms without permission. So, two probe bodies, one under the Deputy Inspector General of Khulna range Mohid Uddin and the other under the Khulna SP, were formed to investigate the matter.

Witnesses said Asma had gone to the spot with her child around 10:30am yesterday. Shakil arrived soon afterwards and they were seen talking near a roadside shop.

Then Shoumen went there and started quarrelling with Asma and Shakil, shouting and brandishing a firearm.

At one stage, he shot Asma in the head, leaving her dead on the spot. Then, he shot Shakil.

Frightened, seven-year-old Robin fled to a nearby mosque. But Shoumen dragged him out and shot him too, leaving him dead on the spot, said multiple witnesses.

Shoumen tried to flee as the locals gathered. They chased him and the ASI took shelter in a nearby building. The crowd surrounded the building until police arrived, said police and locals.

Police went to the spot and arrested Shoumen, said OC Sabbirul Alam.

Shakil was declared dead after locals took him to a nearby hospital.

Talking to The Daily Star, Asma's family members said she married around eight years ago, but divorced her husband around four years ago. The couple had one child, Robin.

After the divorce, Asma lived with her son at her father's residence in Naturia village.

Family members said Asma married Shoumen a few years ago but added that they did not have any marriage document.

Eventually, Asma rented a home in

Kushtia town and started living there.

Her brother Hasan Ali said Shoumen used to pay the rent and alleged that Shoumen used to torture Asma.

The Daily Star correspondent talked to Asma's mother Hasina Banu at Kushtia General Hospital yesterday.

"In the morning, my daughter along with her son left the house, saying that Shoumen will take them to Khulna," said Hasina Banu.

India holds vaccination drive for people with disabilities

REUTERS, Ahmedabad

Authorities in an Indian city have organised a special drive-through vaccination camp for disabled people in a bid to address low vaccination rates, especially among more vulnerable members of society.

Organisers of the weekend campaign in Ahmedabad, the biggest city in Gujarat state, aim to vaccinate 500 disabled people, who often struggle to book slots and get access to vaccination centres.

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Employment Type: Full Time; Job Grade: FAVP-VP; Job Location: Dhaka

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- Maintain liaison with Bangladesh Bank and access the soft loan window for the clients.
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- Ensure organizational capacity by arranging training/capacity development session in terms of environmental & social issues
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- Formulate relevant policy/strategies, develop plans to mobilize resources to attain the organizational goal in terms of environmental and social risks.
- Assist the CSR team to support regulatory reporting and ensure proper implementation of regulatory directives.

KEY QUALIFICATIONS:

- Graduate from a well-recognized institution preferably in a relevant subject
- Minimum 5 years of supervisory experience in the relevant field is mandatory
- Ability to lead a dynamic team
- Expert in customer centricity, ownership & delivering results, integrity, collaboration and developing others

Associate Manager, Sustainable Finance Unit

Employment Type: Full Time; Job Grade: SO - PO; Job Location: Dhaka

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES:

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- Coordinate with different department of the bank to achieve the organizational goal for sustainability
- Meet the organizational deliverables for different multilateral stakeholders and donor agencies.
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- The rollout of sustainability mission/vision among the various departments of the bank.
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KEY QUALIFICATIONS:

- Graduate from a well-recognized institution preferably in a relevant subject
- Minimum 5 years of relevant working experience is required
- Ability to work in a team and capability to meet deadlines
- Proficient in customer centricity, ownership & delivering results, integrity, collaboration and developing others

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