

Delivery of climate finance will be the key to COP26



SALEEMUL HUQ

THE upcoming 26th Conference of Parties (COP26) of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) is to be held in

Glasgow, Scotland in November, with the United Kingdom as the host. The incoming COP26 President designate Alok Sharma has rightly said that the delivery of the "totemic 100 billion US Dollar" in climate finance from developed countries to developing ones to tackle climate change is going to be the key to whether COP26 succeeds or fails.

As with most things, the devil is always in the details. The first thing to note about the USD 100 billion figure is that it was first offered in COP16 in Copenhagen, Denmark back in 2010 by then US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton on behalf of all developed countries. It was again pledged at COP21 in Paris in 2015 and became enshrined as part of the Paris Agreement—a promise from the rich countries to provide USD 100 billion every year from 2020 onwards to help poorer countries tackle climate change, through both mitigation as well as adaptation activities.

However, the year 2020 has already come and gone but this amount was certainly not delivered. It is quite difficult

to know how much was really delivered, as no one has the responsibility for keeping count.

The nearest to an official account is from the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), comprised of Western donor countries, who collect and report data on Overseas Development Assistance (ODA). They have recently added two "Rio Markers" to their list of ODA related items for climate change, one for mitigation and one for adaptation. According to the OECD, the total amount of climate finance was nearly USD 80 billion, which is well short of USD 100 billion.

However, the figures reported by the OECD are based entirely on what each developed country tells them has been spent on climate change and there is no scrutiny of these figures by the OECD itself. An independent evaluation of the thousands of projects in their database by Oxfam found that only USD 20 billion out of the USD 80 billion could be reliably counted as climate finance, which is different from ODA. Hence, the majority of the USD 80 billion claimed to have been given for climate change was, in fact, double counted as development assistance as well as climate change finance. This was clearly contrary to the agreement that climate finance would be new and additional to development finance.

A second detail of this climate finance promise was the demand by the developing countries that at least 50 percent of it should go to the most vulnerable developing



PHOTO: COLLECTED

countries to support adaptation in the most vulnerable communities there. It has proven very difficult to even track this, as information on where the money went has been very non-transparent. Nevertheless, analysis of available figures by researchers at the International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED) traced these amounts and found that only 20 percent went for adaptation, while 80 percent went for mitigation.

An even worse finding was that, of the amount delivered for adaptation in the vulnerable developing countries, only 10 percent of that actually reached the most vulnerable communities in those countries. Hence, the developed countries have a very big hill to climb if they wish to regain any of their

lost credibility going into COP26 in November.

The main issue is not so much the amounts delivered, as even USD 100 billion is a trivial amount compared to actual needs. Rather, it is a question of whether developed countries can be deemed to be negotiating in good faith or bad. If it is the latter, then there is simply no point in going to Glasgow in November, only for the vulnerable developing countries to be given another round of empty promises. The onus is on the developed countries to actually deliver, not just promise again, the USD 100 billion that was due for 2020 and another USD 100 billion that is now also due for 2021.

In fact, the Climate Vulnerable Forum (CVF) countries at their recent Climate

Finance Summit demanded that the developed countries provide details of how they plan to deliver the USD 500 billion over the next five years that they had previously pledged.

An important point to clarify on this issue is that decisions on providing finance are not the domain of the environment ministers who will be attending the COP, but of finance ministers who control the purse-strings of nations and who meet at the annual G7 and G20 leaders' meetings every year. The G7 finance ministers met in the UK in June and failed to deliver enough, and the G20 finance ministers met in Italy in July and also failed to deliver. If the finance ministers of the developed countries fail to deliver the full USD 100 billion before COP26, then it would hardly be worth going to Glasgow for the vulnerable developing countries.

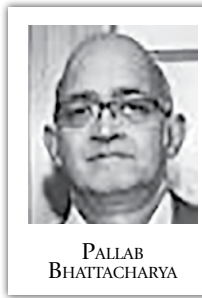
So even though the COP26 President designate Alok Sharma has admitted this is a make or break issue for the success of COP26, he needs the Chancellor of the Exchequer of the UK, Rishi Sunak, to deliver the money, which he has not done. In fact, the Chancellor has actually cut the development assistance budget of the UK instead.

So going into COP26, the UK government under Prime Minister Boris Johnson has a steep hill to climb if they are to keep their word. They have only a few months to deliver the money to regain any semblance of credibility.

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Pegasus spyware row and Indian democracy



PALLAB BHATTACHARYA

THE Pegasus spyware controversy has set off a political storm in India. Sustained anti-government protests by the opposition on the floor of the House paralysed

themselves: (1) the presence of a phone number in the leaked data does not reveal whether a device was infected with Pegasus or subject to an attempted hack, (2) without subjecting a phone to technical analysis, it is not possible to conclusively state whether it witnessed an attack attempt or was successfully compromised, (3) the report itself clarifies that presence of a number on the list does not amount to spying, and

attached to the IT ministry is enough to do the work.

Across the world, intelligence-gathering has over the centuries been a key component of statecraft under all political systems of government, ranging from dictators to the most open democratic societies. There is no disputing the fact that governments in all countries use intelligence organisations for foreign policy and national security

two policemen in plainclothes were apprehended for allegedly keeping vigil outside Rajiv Gandhi's house. In 2011, when the Congress under the then PM Manmohan Singh was in power, a confidential letter written by then Finance Minister Pranab Mukherjee to Manmohan, that he suspected a bugging device was planted in his office, was leaked. Two years down the line, audio tapes—recorded allegedly at the behest of Amit Shah (now India's Home Minister) of Gujarat—of purported conversations of a female architect, were leaked.

Then, there was the leak of the BlackBerry Messenger messages recovered by income tax officials from the laptop of meat exporter Moin Qureshi. The spying controversy also hit the business sector when conversations of industrialists Ratan Tata, Nusli Wadia and Keshub Mahindra came out. The then Prime Minister I K Gujral had ordered a CBI probe into the audio tape leaks but the inquiry was closed "for want of evidence", leaving the question of who or which agency ordered the telephone taps on the industrialists unanswered.

That is not all. In 2008, conversations of corporate lobbyist Niira Radia were leaked in what became infamous as the Radia tapes. The conversations pertained to allocation of 2G telecom spectrum for mobile phone services companies. There was, however, a major difference about the Radia tapes case—the tapping was authorised in connection with the 2G allocation scam that also hit several big names in Indian journalism who were in conversation over phone with the lobbyist.

The Pegasus issue has once again brought to the fore the demand for bringing intelligence agencies under legislative or judicial oversight, something no political executive, irrespective of affiliation, has done so far. At present, that job is done by the bureaucracy at the central and state levels under clearly-defined rules and three to four categories of persons whose phones can be tapped after due authorisation. According to former senior bureaucrats in the Home Ministry, those rules and categories allow phone-tapping only

against persons charged with terrorism and major economic offences, and certainly do not include anyone else.

It is impractical and futile to expect complete transparency in the covert operations of the intelligence agencies like the Research and Analysis Wing (RAW) or the Intelligence Bureau, particularly when it comes to national security because secrecy is the essence of their activities. But the suggestion that their oversight may be expanded from the bureaucracy to include a small legislative committee merits consideration. Such oversight mechanisms are in place in the US, Australia and Canada.

What makes the current Pegasus row stand out from earlier phone-tapping rows is the much bigger number of potential targets. Two unmistakable developments are to be noted in this context: the coming together of media houses and civil society and rights groups, and efforts, in which the opposition has joined in full strength, to show that media freedom and democracy have taken a big hit in India under the Narendra Modi dispensation and that an ambience of fear is all around. The Modi government has come out with its own counter-mobilisation.

But the Pegasus row has implications beyond the political sluffest. It raises important issues of citizens' privacy and liberty that need to be debated. The Indian constitution already subjects individuals rights and liberties to reasonable restrictions when it comes to external and internal emergencies. Then why are journalists, politicians and other citizens also being spied upon?

India should not get distracted by the noise emanating from Western countries about the country's "flawed" democracy. Many of these countries were once imperialist powers and some of them had, during the Cold War decades, collaborated with the most brutal regimes across the world that annihilated their own citizens and sought to crush national liberation movements. However, for its own sake, India needs to get to the bottom of the issues raised by the Pegasus episode in the country.

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Sustained anti-government protests by the opposition on the floor of the House paralysed almost the entire first week of the monsoon session of Parliament in India, pictured here.

PHOTO: REUTERS

(4) Pegasus services are openly available to anyone, anywhere and anytime and are commonly used by governmental agencies as well as by private companies worldwide.

Questions have been raised if Pegasus has been procured by the government and deployed against Indian citizens. If not, then who procured and used the spyware? Only a fair probe can bring out the facts. Views are divided as to how the whole Pegasus episode will be probed. Should it be a Supreme Court-monitored investigation (a public interest litigation is already at the top court)? Senior Congress leader P Chidambaram pitched for a joint parliamentary committee probe but his party colleague Shashi Tharoor said there was no need for that and the parliamentary committee

objectives.

Since the late 1980s, India has witnessed spying incidents from time to time that led to the resignation of Karnataka Chief Minister Ramakrishna Hegde and Prime Minister Chandra Shekhar. Hegde quit on "moral grounds" in 1988 after information came out of wire-taps on 50 individuals, including journalists and dissidents, within his ruling Janata Party. Subsequently, the fact that permission was given to the police for the phone-tapping was made public too, which made Hegde's continuance untenable.

In 1991, the then Prime Minister Chandra Shekhar's Samajwadi Janata Party government, backed by the Congress, had to go after Congress withdrew support when it emerged that

almost the entire first week of the monsoon session of Parliament from July 19. Trinamool Congress member of the Rajya Sabha Shantanu Sen was suspended for the rest of the month-long session for snatching papers from the hands of India's IT Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw, who wanted to articulate the government's stand on the row, and flinging them in the air.

A network of global media organisations, along with a consortium of global civil society organisations, came together to bring out a list of potential targets of Pegasus spyware—including Indian opposition politicians Rahul Gandhi, at least two serving federal ministers, a former Election Commissioner, journalists, business tycoons, and a Supreme Court judge—for surveillance worldwide last week. By most accounts, the list is only of potential targets as only a few devices have been subjected to forensic test and analysis, of which just some of them were found to be infected or hacked. No information is available about the source of the leaked list.

Indian IT Minister Vaishnaw, in a statement in Parliament on July 22, said that "In the past, similar claims were made regarding the use of Pegasus on WhatsApp. Those reports had no factual basis and were categorically denied by all parties, including in the Supreme Court." On press reports on the Pegasus issue on July 18, he said these "also appear to be an attempt to malign the Indian democracy and its well established institutions".

Countering the allegation that individuals linked to the Pegasus spyware row were being spied on, Vaishnaw pointed to four aspects contained in the press reports

QUOTABLE Quote



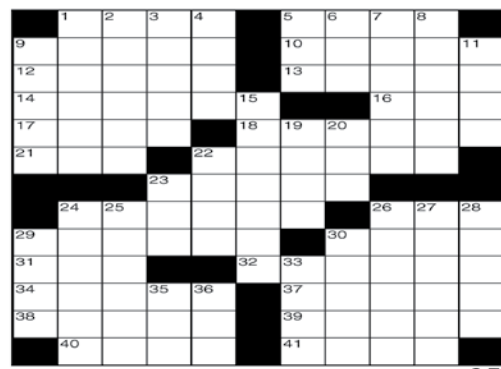
VIRGINIA WOOLF (1882-1941) English writer

The history of men's opposition to women's emancipation is more interesting perhaps than the story of that emancipation itself.

CROSSWORD BY THOMAS JOSEPH

- | | | |
|------------------------------|-----------------------|--------------------------------|
| ACROSS | 31 Fitting | 9 Fire starter |
| 1 Tug-of-war need | 32 Audition | 11 Great weights |
| 5 Way out | 34 Flies high | 15 Become less dense |
| 9 Scholarship basis | 37 Get up | 19 "— Around" (Beach Boys hit) |
| 10 Intolerant sort | 38 Cars | 20 Completely |
| 12 Deal maker | 39 Worker with a pick | 22 One of a bear trio |
| 13 Game with numbered cards | 40 Circus structure | 23 — de deux |
| 14 Catch stealing, say | 41 Hangs low | 24 Beat, as a rhythm |
| 16 Charged particle | DOWN | 25 Subject of a will setting |
| 17 Artery problem | 1 Entertain lavishly | 26 Fan disapproval |
| 18 Temporary break | 2 Mount Hood | 27 Entertains |
| 21 Egg layer | 3 Wine grape | 28 Hinder |
| 22 Friend of Winnie-the-Pooh | 4 Words from caesar | 29 "Apollo 13" org. |
| 23 Comic strip unit | 5 Flow out | 30 Mideast nation |
| 24 Brewing vessel | 6 Noon, on a clock | 33 Ewes' mates |
| 26 Naughty | 7 Set afire | 35 Director Howard |
| 29 Bahamas capital | 8 Dress | 36 Retired jet |
| 30 One or more | | |

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YESTERDAY'S ANSWERS

A R E S C H I R P
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T H I N E A M A Z E
O R G S P Y J O E
N A R N I A D A R N
H E I R L O O M S
T E E N S
A I R S T R E A M
J U N O T A S T E S
A R T D E M H A T
C O U P E P R E G O
O R I O N S I N E W
B A T T Y B A R E

BETLE BAILEY

BY MORT WALKER



BABY BLUES

BY KIRKMAN & SCOTT

