

MORE NEWS

US, Mexico agree to revamp fight against drug cartels

The United States and Mexico agreed Friday to overhaul their fight against drug trafficking to address the root causes and step up efforts to curb cross-border arms smuggling. Mexican President Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador wants Washington to invest in regional economic development instead of sending helicopter gunships and other weapons to take on powerful drug cartels. Both countries said it was time for a rethink after more than a decade during which the United States provided military firepower, technical support and security training under a program called the Merida Initiative. Secretary of State Antony Blinken, on his first visit to Mexico as the top US diplomat, said more needed to be done in areas including tackling arms trafficking, money laundering and drug addiction.

US will accept WHO-approved COVID vaccines for int'l visitors

The United States will accept the use by international visitors of Covid-19 vaccines authorized by US regulators or the World Health Organization, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention said late on Friday. On Sept. 20, the White House announced the United States in November would lift travel restrictions on air travelers from 33 countries including China, India, Brazil and most of Europe who are fully vaccinated against Covid-19. It did not specify then which vaccines would be accepted. A CDC spokeswoman told Reuters Friday, "Six vaccines that are FDA authorized/approved or listed for emergency use by WHO will meet the criteria for travel to the US." The United States will admit fully vaccinated air travelers from the 26 so-called Schengen countries in Europe as well as Britain, Ireland, China, India, South Africa, Iran and Brazil. The new Covid-19 vaccine requirements will now apply to nearly all foreign nationals flying to the United States - including those not subject to the prior restrictions.

Iran's first president Abolhasan Banisadr dies

Iran's first president after the 1979 Islamic revolution, Abolhasan Banisadr, died in a Paris hospital yesterday aged 88, the official news agency IRNA said. "After a long illness, Abolhasan Banisadr died on Saturday at the (Pitie)-Salpetriere hospital" in southeast Paris, IRNA reported, citing a source close to the former president. Banisadr was elected president in January 1980 hot on the heels of the previous year's Islamic revolution. But he was dismissed by the Iranian parliament in 1981 after he opposed late supreme leader Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini. Since then, he had been living in exile in France. From the start of his mandate, Banisadr faced immense difficulties: the US hostage affair, the Iran-Iraq war, an economic crisis and, above all, the opposition of fundamentalist clerics. As Iran's armed forces commander from February 1980 to June 1981, he reorganised the country's military and spent much of his time on the front lines of the war with Iraq.

SOURCE: AFP, REUTERS



PHOTO: REUTERS

Lava burns buildings following the eruption of the Cumbre Vieja volcano in Tacande, Spain, yesterday. Buildings near the volcano on the Spanish island of La Palma were engulfed by rivers of lava early yesterday, with the drama of the red-hot eruption intensified by the spectacle of flashes of lightning.

Quotes of the day



"Realising national reunification by peaceful means best serves the interests of the nation as a whole including our brethren in Taiwan. The complete reunification of our country will be and can be realized."

CHINA'S PRESIDENT XI JINPING

Healthy environment a fundamental human right

Declares UN Human Rights Council in a 'historic breakthrough'

REUTERS, Geneva

The UN Human Rights Council has recognised access to a clean and healthy environment as a fundamental right, formally adding its weight to the global fight against climate change and its devastating consequences.

The vote passed with overwhelming support, despite criticism in the lead-up from some countries, notably the United States and Britain.

The resolution, first discussed in the 1990s, is not legally binding but has the potential to shape global standards. Lawyers involved in climate litigation say it could help them build arguments in cases involving the environment and human rights.

"This has life-changing potential in a world where the global environmental crisis causes more than nine million

premature deaths every year," said David Boyd, UN special rapporteur on human rights and the environment, who called the decision a "historic breakthrough".

The text, proposed by Costa Rica, the Maldives, Morocco, Slovenia and Switzerland, was passed with 43 votes in favour and 4 abstentions from Russia, India, China and Japan, prompting a rare burst of applause in the Geneva forum.

Britain, which was among the critics of the proposal in recent intense negotiations, voted in favour in a surprise, last-minute move. Its ambassador to the UN in Geneva, Rita French, said the UK was voting 'yes' because it shared supporters' ambition to tackle climate change but added that states would not be bound to the resolution's terms.

The United States did not vote since it is not currently a member of the 47-member Council.

Costa Rica's ambassador, Catalina Devandas Aguilar, said the decision will "send a powerful message to communities around the world struggling with climate hardship that they are not alone".

Critics had raised various objections, saying the Council was not the appropriate forum and citing legal concerns.

Environmental defenders had said Britain's earlier critical stance was undermining its pledges ahead of the global climate conference it is hosting in Glasgow next month.

The WHOP estimates that some 13.7 million deaths a year, or around 24.3% of the global total, are due to environmental risks such as air pollution and chemical exposure.

Another proposal led by the Marshall Islands to create a new special rapporteur on climate change was also approved by the Council on Friday.

UN BIODIVERSITY SUMMIT

Protecting nature a 'priority': China

REUTERS, Shanghai

China will make the protection of nature a priority and crack down on damage to habitats, the government said in a policy paper days before it hosts talks aimed at drawing up a new global biodiversity treaty.

China has acknowledged that decades of industrial development and rapid urbanisation have devastated ecosystems, put dozens of species on the brink of extinction and raised the risk of spreading diseases like Covid-19.

A new biodiversity "white paper" published on Friday acknowledged China "has a long way to go" but said it had identified 2.763 million square kilometres of "priority conservation" areas - 28.8 percent of its total territory.

A UN biodiversity conference known as COP15 gets underway in Kunming, southwest China, tomorrow, with discussions taking place online as a result of Covid-19 restrictions. The second round will be in April.

Environmental groups hope the conference can introduce more ambitious biodiversity targets, even though goals set in Aichi, Japan, in 2010 were not achieved.

A major issue is persuading nations to commit to the protection of 30% of their territory by 2030.



OCTOBER 10

1911 - Chinese Nationalist leader Sun Yat-sen proclaimed a republic at Wuchang and began the revolution that overthrew the Manchu dynasty.

1954 - North Vietnamese Communist leader Ho Chi Minh entered Hanoi after French troops pulled out of the city following armistice terms.

2000 - Former Sri Lankan prime minister Sirimavo Bandaranaike, the world's first woman premier, died aged 84.

SOURCE: REUTERS

Probe launched against Chile president over Pandora Papers

AFP, Santiago

The Chilean public prosecutor's office on Friday opened an investigation into President Sebastian Pinera over the sale of a mining company through a firm owned by his children, which appeared in the Pandora Papers leaks.

Attorney General Jorge Abbott opened the probe after the Pandora Papers revealed the sale of the Dominga mining company by a firm "linked to the family of President Pinera," said Marta Herrera, head of the anti-corruption unit in the public prosecutor's office.

Pinera hit out at the move, claiming he had already been absolved of any guilt in a 2017 investigation.

The sale of the mine to one of Pinera's closest friends dates to 2010, during his previous term as president.

Herrera said the public prosecutor's office took the decision to investigate because of the possibility that the deal involved "bribery, eventual tax crimes, matters that will all ultimately be the subject of an investigation."

Herrera said bribery convictions carried a prison sentence of five years.

According to an investigation by two local

media, CIPER and LaBot that are part of the International Consortium of Investigative Journalists (ICIJ) that produced the so-called Pandora Papers, Dominga was sold to businessman Carlos Alberto Delano, a friend of Pinera's, for \$152 million in a deal carried out in the British Virgin Islands, a well-known tax haven.

The investigation found that the payment was due to be staggered over three instalments with a clause that stated the final instalment was dependent on "not establishing an area of environmental protection in the area of the mining company's operations, as environmentalists are demanding."

According to the investigation, the Pinera government did not create a protected area around the site of the mine in question.

On Monday, Pinera denied that there was any conflict of interest in the mine's sale.

He insisted that he knew nothing of the deal, because during his first presidency from 2010-14 he said he put the administration of his assets in blind trusts.

He said the information contained in the Pandora Papers was "not new" and has been public knowledge since 2017.



PHOTO: REUTERS

A Taliban fighter looks on as he visits Kabul for the first time as hundreds of Taliban fighters take a day off to visit the amusement park at Kabul's Qargha reservoir, at the outskirts of Kabul, Afghanistan. Picture taken on Friday.

TRAGEDY IN DR CONGO

100 dead or missing after vessels capsize

AFP, Kinshasa

Over 100 people are dead or missing after nine interlocked canoes sank this week in the Democratic Republic of Congo, officials said yesterday.

It was the latest in a series of maritime accidents in the sprawling country where people often travel on overloaded and unsafe vessels on the Congo, one of Africa's biggest rivers.

Sixty-one bodies had been recovered from the sinking during the night of Monday to Tuesday, and another 60 are believed to be missing, Nestor Magbado, a spokesman for the governor of the northwestern province of Mongala, told AFP.

He said there were 39 survivors.

With no manifest of the passengers on board, the number missing is an estimate based on the capacity of the boat, he said.

The vessel was actually nine traditional wooden canoes, known as pirogues, all tied together, Magbado said.

He added that the accident may have been caused by "overcrowding aggravated by bad weather" during the night.

Who represents Afghanistan?

ICC judges ask for UN help to settle the issue

REUTERS, The Hague

The International Criminal Court on Friday said it cannot rule on a prosecutor's request to resume a war crimes investigation of Afghanistan until it can decide who represents the country in international bodies.

The judges asked UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres and the ICC's governing body for help identifying which group officially rules Afghanistan from an international law standpoint. It asked for a response by Nov. 8.

Prosecutor Karim Khan had asked the ICC to proceed and said there was no need to decide who runs Afghanistan.

In response, the court wrote on Friday: "The request cannot be legally adjudicated without addressing the question of which entity actually constitutes the state authorities of Afghanistan since 15 August 2021."

The question of who represents



Afghanistan at the United Nations has yet to be settled amid competing claims.

The UN ambassador representing Afghanistan's ousted government, Ghulam Isacqai, last month asked to remain in his UN seat, setting up a showdown with the Taliban, who seized control of Afghanistan in August.

UN accreditation issues are dealt with by a nine-member committee that includes the United States, China and Russia. The committee is due to meet later this month or in November and Isacqai remains in the seat until they decide.

NO TIME TO DIE

QUIZ CONTEST

The Daily Star **STAR** QUIZ CONTEST

10 WINNERS EVERYDAY! 2 PREMIUM TICKETS FOR EACH WINNER

Email your answer to starquiz@outlook.com by 4.00 pm today with your name, DOB, mobile number and address. The winners of the quiz will be announced tomorrow in this newspaper and through email.

Winners are requested to follow the instructions given in email

QUIZ - 02 How many 007's are there in the movie "No Time To Die"?

WINNERS LIST OF QUIZ - 01

1. Jafaar Sadiq, Aga Masi Lane, Dhaka.
2. Md. Ziaul Islam, Motijheel.
3. Nafisa Bari, Mohammadpur.
4. Samir Arshad, Taj Mahal Road.
5. Md Ahsanul Kabir, Vatara.
6. Rajib Nandi, Gulshan Circle-2.
7. S. M. Shamim Ahsan, Mirpur 12.
8. Rizwan Ahmmed, Lake Circus.
9. Surja Kanta Paul, Gopibagh.
10. Asmaul Hasan, Basabo.