

MORE NEWS

Khamenei urges reversal of Arab-Israeli normalisations

Arab nations that normalised ties with Israel last year have "sinned" and should reverse such moves, Iran's supreme leader Ali Khamenei said yesterday.

China fully vaccinates 76pc population against Covid

China has given complete doses of Covid-19 vaccines to about 75.6% of its population as of Oct. 23, National Health Commission spokesperson Mi Feng said yesterday.



Colombia's most-wanted drug lord 'Otoniel' captured

Colombia's most-wanted drug trafficker, Dairo Antonio Usuga, also known as "Otoniel," was arrested by the country's authorities, the government said Saturday.

SOURCE: AFP, REUTERS



School children walk as they return to their homes after attending school at Sperwan village in Panjwai district, Afghanistan yesterday.

PHOTO: AFP

OCCUPIED WEST BANK

Israel to build new 1,355 settler homes

AFP, Jerusalem

Israel plans to build more residences for Jewish settlers in the occupied West Bank, a government ministry said yesterday.

"Tenders for 1,355 homes in Judea and Samaria have been published," a ministry statement said, referencing the biblical names used for the West Bank.

About 475,000 Israeli Jews live in settlements in the West Bank, which are considered illegal under international law.

Israel has occupied the West Bank since the Six-Day War of 1967 and exercises full administrative control across much of the territory.

'World of conflict and chaos' UN's top climate official warns failure at COP26 will be catastrophic

THE GUARDIAN ONLINE

Global security and stability could break down, with migration crises and food shortages bringing conflict and chaos, if countries fail to tackle greenhouse gas emissions, the UN's top climate official has warned ahead of the Cop26 climate summit.

Patricia Espinosa, executive secretary of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change, said: "We're really talking about preserving the stability of countries, preserving the institutions that we have built over so many years, preserving the best goals that our countries have put together."

The impact would cascade, she said, adding: "It would mean less food, so probably a crisis in food security. It would leave a lot more people vulnerable to terrible situations, terrorist groups and violent groups. It would mean a lot of sources of instability."

She told the Observer in an interview:



"It doesn't only speak to the environmental side. It is also about the whole system we have built. We know what migration crises have provoked in the past. If we were to see that in even higher numbers - not only international migration, but also internal migration - [it would] provoke very serious problems."

The unusually strong warnings from the normally reserved Espinosa comes as world leaders make their final preparations for the Cop26 talks in Glasgow. The leaders of the G20 nations of the world's largest developed and developing economies will gather in Rome next weekend for two days of preliminary talks, then fly to Glasgow, to

join about 100 other heads of government for the Cop26 climate talks on 1 November.

Over two weeks, nearly 200 countries together will try to implement the goals of the landmark 2015 Paris climate agreement, by agreeing stiff cuts to greenhouse gas emissions in the next decade.

Some key leaders - including Xi Jinping, president of China, now the world's biggest emitter of carbon dioxide, and Russia's Vladimir Putin - are unlikely to attend. Yesterday, Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi confirmed his presence at the summit.

So far, the commitments countries have made to reduce emissions fall short of the 45% cut, based on 2010 levels, that scientists say is needed by 2030 to limit global heating to 1.5C above pre-industrial levels, the tougher and safer of the two goals in the Paris accord.

Espinosa also held out the possibility that if a shortfall remains at Glasgow, as is likely, between necessary and offered cuts, nations could be asked to revise their plans soon after - though that is likely to be unpopular with many.

Afghanistan hurtling towards collapse

Say Sweden and Pakistan

REUTERS, Dubai

Afghanistan will shortly collapse into chaos unless the international community acts rapidly, Swedish and Pakistani ministers have warned.

Afghanistan plunged into crisis after the hardline Islamist Taliban movement drove out the Western-backed government in August triggering the abrupt end of billions of dollars in assistance to its aid-dependent economy.

"The country is on the brink of collapse and that collapse is coming faster than we thought," Swedish development minister Per Olsson Fridh told Reuters in Dubai.

He said economic freefall could provide an environment for terrorist groups to thrive, but that Sweden would not channel money through the Taliban, instead boosting its humanitarian contributions through Afghan civil society groups.

Pakistani Information Minister Fawad Chaudhry later told Reuters that direct engagement with the Taliban was the only way to prevent a humanitarian catastrophe, and called for billions of dollars of Afghan assets frozen overseas to be released.

"Are we going to push Afghanistan into chaos or are we going to try and stabilise the country?" he said in Dubai. "The watch on this bomb is already clicking," he added.



A fighter loyal to Yemen's Saudi-backed government man a position at the el-Juba frontline facing Iran-backed Huthi rebels in the country's northeastern province of Marib, yesterday. The Saudi-led coalition fighting in Yemen yesterday said it had killed more than 260 Huthi rebels in the past three days near Marib.

PHOTO: AFP

Committed to Asean peace plan

Says Myanmar despite snub to junta

REUTERS

Myanmar's military rulers yesterday pledged to cooperate "as much as possible" with a peace plan agreed with Asean, despite a stern rebuke of the regional bloc for excluding the country's top commander from a summit this week.

In an announcement in state media, the junta said it upholds the principal of peaceful coexistence with other countries and would cooperate with the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (Asean) in following a five-point "consensus" agreed in April, a plan backed by the West and China.

ASEAN foreign ministers decided on Oct. 15 to sideline Min Aung Hlaing, leader of a Feb. 1 Myanmar coup, for his failure to implement that plan, which included ending hostilities, initiating dialogue, allowing humanitarian support and granting a special envoy full access in the country.

The junta struck back late on Friday, accusing Asean of departing from its principals on consensus and non-interference. It refused to agree to send a politically neutral Myanmar representative instead of Min Aung Hlaing.

Asean chair Brunei has not responded to Myanmar's rejection. A spokesman for Thailand's foreign ministry declined to comment on Saturday, citing the sensitivity of the matter, while Indonesia's foreign ministry spokesman, Teuku Faizasyah, said Asean's consensus on who would represent Myanmar at the summit was the "common guide for all Asean members".

The exclusion is an unprecedented snub from a bloc long criticised for being tardy and ineffective at dealing with member governments accused of atrocities.

Man asks cops to jail him to escape wife

AFP, Rome

For some people, going to prison can feel like escaping to freedom.

A man under house arrest in Italy showed up at a police barracks asking to be put behind bars because life with his wife at home was unbearable, police said yesterday.

The 30-year-old Albanian citizen living in Guidonia Montecelio, outside Rome, "was no longer able to cope with the forced cohabitation with his wife," Carabinieri police from nearby Tivoli said in a statement.

The man had been under house arrest for drug crimes for several months and had a few years left to serve, Captain Francesco Giacomo Ferrante of the Tivoli Carabinieri told AFP.

The man was promptly arrested for violating his house arrest and judicial authorities ordered his transfer to prison.



Man killed in J&K as Amit Shah visits

AFP, Srinagar

Indian paramilitaries shot dead a civilian in Kashmir on Sunday, residents said, as authorities tightened security across the disputed territory for a visit by a top Indian minister.

The victim, a milk seller in the southern Kashmir Valley, is the 12th civilian killed by militants or security forces this month as attacks increase in the Muslim-majority region.

New Delhi has about 500,000 troops and paramilitaries in Kashmir seeking to contain a rebel movement agitating for independence or the region's merger with Pakistan.

Police said the man was hit in "crossfire" during "militant action" near a police paramilitary camp in the village of Zainapora and that the incident was being investigated. Villagers told AFP the man had been fatally shot without provocation.

Amit Shah, India's home minister and effective deputy to Prime Minister Narendra Modi, has been in Kashmir since Saturday, adding to security concerns.

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