

N Korea' ready to mobilise' nuke weapons

AFP, Seoul

North Korean leader Kim Jong Un said his country was "ready to mobilise" its nuclear deterrent in any future military clash with the United States and South Korea, state media said yesterday.

Washington and Seoul have repeatedly warned that Pyongyang is preparing to carry out its seventh nuclear test -- a move that the United States has warned would provoke a "swift and forceful" response.

Speaking to war veterans on the 69th anniversary of the end of the 1950-53 Korean War, Kim emphasised the country's "thorough readiness" to "deal with any military clash with the United States".

His latest threats come as South Korea and the United States move to ramp up joint military exercises, which have always infuriated the North as Pyongyang considers them rehearsals for invasion.



A National Guard officer pushes a migrant with his shield during a brief protest outside the office of the National Institute of Migration, as they got tired of waiting for the documents to cross the country towards the US border, in Huixtla, Mexico on Wednesday.

PHOTO: REUTERS

Alarm as Earth hits 'Overshoot Day'

AFP, Paris

Mankind marked a milestone yesterday, the day by which humanity has consumed all earth can sustainably produce for this year, with NGOs warning the rest of 2022 will be lived in resource deficit.

The date -- dubbed "Earth Overshoot Day" -- marks a tipping point when people have used up "all that ecosystems can regenerate in one year", according to the Global Footprint Network and WWF.

"From January 1 to July 28, humanity has used as much from nature as the planet can renew in the entire year. That's why July 28 is Earth Overshoot Day," said Mathis Wackernagel, president of the Global Footprint Network.

He added: "The Earth has a lot of stock, so we can deplete Earth for some time but we cannot overuse it for ever. It's like with money; we can spend more than we earn for some time until we're broke."

It would take 1.75 Earths to provide for the world's population in a sustainable way, according to the measure, which was created by researchers in the early 1990s.

Global Footprint Network said Earth Overshoot Day has fallen ever sooner over the last 50 years.

In 2020, the date moved back three weeks due to the Covid-19 pandemic, before returning to pre-pandemic levels.

The burden is not evenly spread. If everyone lived like an American, the date would have fallen even earlier, on March 13, Wackernagel said.

The two NGOs point the finger at the food production system and its "considerable" ecological footprint.

"In total, more than half of the planet's biocapacity (55 percent) is used to feed humanity," the two NGOs said.

Based on scientific advice, they advocate reducing meat consumption in rich countries.

"If we could cut meat consumption by half, we could move the date of the overshoot by 17 days," said Laetitia Mailhes of the Global Footprint Network.

PELOSI'S POSSIBLE TAIWAN VISIT, TRADE DISPUTE

Biden, Xi hold talks as tensions soar

AFP, Washington

President Joe Biden and Chinese counterpart Xi Jinping spoke by phone yesterday on mounting tensions over Taiwan, a festering trade dispute and their bid to keep the superpower rivalry in check.

The White House said the phone call started at 8:33 am in Washington (1233 GMT). A statement would be issued after the call ended, a spokesman said.

While this was Biden's fifth talk with Xi since becoming president a year and a half ago, it's getting hard to mask deepening mistrust between the two countries.

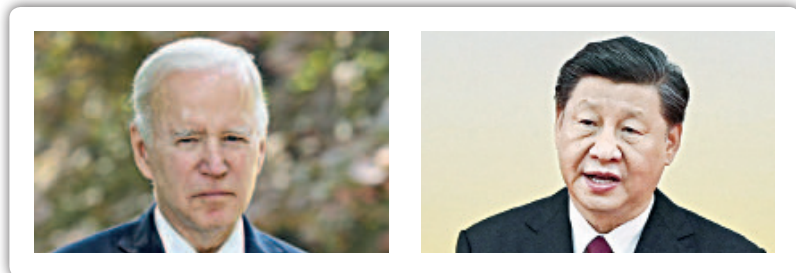
Already stuck in a trade war, Beijing and Washington increasingly risk open conflict over Taiwan, with little sign of resolution on either front.

"Tensions over China's aggressive, coercive behavior in the Indo-Pacific" will be high on the agenda, said White House National Security Council spokesman John Kirby.

The latest flashpoint is a possible trip by Biden ally and speaker of the House of Representatives, Nancy Pelosi, to the island, which Beijing claims is part of China but has its own distinct, democratic government.

Although US officials frequently visit Taiwan, separated by a narrow strip of water from the Chinese mainland, Beijing considers a Pelosi trip as a major provocation. She's second in line to the US presidency and given her position may travel with military transport.

Washington will "bear the



consequences" if the trip, which Pelosi has yet to confirm, goes ahead, China warned Wednesday.

General Mark Milley, chairman of the US joint chiefs of staff, told reporters that if Pelosi asks "for military support, we will do what is necessary to ensure a safe, safe conduct of their business."

And the dispute around Pelosi is the tip of an iceberg, with US officials fearing that Xi is mulling use of force to impose control over democratic Taiwan.

Once considered unlikely, an invasion, or lesser form of military action, is increasingly seen by China watchers as possible -- perhaps even timed to boost Xi's prestige when he moves later this year into a third term.

Biden's contradictory comments on whether the United States would defend Taiwan -- he said in May that it would, before the White House insisted there was no change in the hands-off "strategic ambiguity" policy -- have not helped the tension.

Biden prides himself on a close relationship with Xi going back years but -- in large part due to Covid

travel restrictions -- the two have yet to meet face-to-face since he took office.

According to the White House, Biden's chief goal is to establish "guardrails" for the two superpowers.

This is meant to ensure that while they sharply disagree on democracy, and are increasingly rivals on the geopolitical stage, they can avoid open conflict.

"He wants to make sure that the lines of communication with President Xi on all the issues, whether they're issues again that we agree on or issues where we have significant difficulty with -- that they can still pick up the phone and talk to one another candidly," Kirby said.

Where to place the guardrails, however, is challenging amid so many unresolved disputes, including a simmering trade war begun under Donald Trump's presidency.

Asked whether Biden could lift some of the 25 percent import duties placed on billions of dollars of Chinese products by Trump, Kirby said there was still no decision.

UNSC condemns Myanmar executions

AFP, Bangkok

The UN Security Council has condemned the Myanmar junta's execution of four prisoners, drawing praise yesterday from a shadow government of ousted Myanmar lawmakers. In a rare consensus on the post-coup crisis, the Security Council on Wednesday released a statement condemning the executions -- Myanmar's first in decades -- and calling for the immediate release of ousted leader Aung San Suu Kyi. The statement was endorsed by Russia and China -- the junta's two major allies that have previously shielded it at the UN -- as well as neighbouring India.

ALCOHOL POISONING

42 dead in India

AFP, Ahmedabad

At least 42 people have died and nearly 100 others have been hospitalised in western India after drinking toxic alcohol, police said yesterday, with authorities ordering a crackdown on bootleggers. Dozens of people became ill earlier this week after drinking methanol -- a poisonous form of alcohol sometimes used as an antifreeze -- sold in several villages across Gujarat state. 97 people had been admitted to hospital for treatment, with two in critical condition. Hundreds of people die every year in India from cheap alcohol made in backstreet distilleries. Of the estimated five billion litres of alcohol drunk every year in the country, around 40 percent is illegally produced, according to the International Spirits and Wine Association of India.

Climate scientist James Lovelock dies

AFP, London

Influential British scientist James Lovelock, famed for his Gaia hypothesis and pioneering work on climate change, has died at the age of 103, his family announced Wednesday. Responding to the news Mary Archer, chair of the Science Museum Group's board of trustees, described him as "arguably the most important independent scientist of the last century". In the 1970s, Lovelock came up with the Gaia hypothesis that Earth is a single, self-regulating super-organism made up of all its life forms, which humans are destroying. The notion was at first ridiculed by his peers but helped to redefine how science perceives the relationship between our inanimate planet and the life it hosts.

Will safeguard interests

India on Chinese vessel's planned visit to Sri Lanka

REUTERS, NEW DELHI/COLOMBO

India, which is trying to expand its influence in Sri Lanka amid the island's economic troubles and is worried that China is also making inroads, yesterday said it was aware of reports about the planned visit of a Chinese vessel to Sri Lanka's Hambantota port, which was built with money from Beijing. Shipping data from Refinitiv Eikon showed research and survey vessel Yuan Wang 5 was en route to the southern Sri Lankan port and was expected to get there on August 11. "The government carefully monitors any developments having a bearing on India's security and economic interests, and takes all necessary measures to safeguard them," India's foreign ministry spokesperson, Arindam Bagchi, told a weekly media briefing. "I think that should be a clear message."

Bullet or some other object

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The other members of the committee are Additional Superintendent of Police Mirza Tareq Ahmed Beg and District Election Officer Shafiqul Islam.

Thakurgaon Deputy Commissioner Mahbubur Rahman said the baby's mother Minara told him that she was near the polling centre at Bhangbari VF Junior High School, which is close to her house, after the result of the election to Bachor Union Parishad was announced Wednesday evening.

Locals said police started shooting after the supporters of a defeated

candidate threw bricks at the law enforcers and other officials.

The DC quoted Minara as saying that as the situation became chaotic and police started shooting, she saw that her baby had suffered a serious head injury.

The DC blamed "a group of unruly people" for creating anarchy at the polling centre.

Suraiya's father Badsha, who sells pulled rice in villages, said he and his wife took the baby along to cast their votes.

"We went there towards the end of polling and were waiting nearby to hear the results when I heard

gunshots and saw my baby's head injury," he said.

Several hundred villagers demonstrated in front Ranishankail Police Station demanding justice until late at night on Wednesday.

Toffazzol Hossain, assistant superintendent of police in Thakurgaon, said a case will be filed over the matter after the higher authorities give instructions.

Meanwhile, Home Minister Asaduzzaman Khan Kamal told an event in Habiganj that stern action would be taken if the baby was indeed found to have been shot by police.

West Bengal minister

FROM PAGE 1

jewellery were seized during a raid on Wednesday. The Enforcement Directorate (ED) conducted the raid in a flat owned by his 30-year-old close aide Arpita Mukherjee in Belghoria of North 24 Parganas district.

On Friday, the ED made the first seizure of Rs 20.21 crore in cash, Rs 89 lakh worth gold ornaments and foreign currency worth Rs 54 lakh from a flat of Arpita in Tollygunge of South

Kolkata.

Partha was in charge of several key ministries, including commerce, industry, parliamentary affairs, electronics and technology. He was also the TMC secretary general having joined the party in 1999.

The decision of dismissing him as a minister was made in a cabinet meeting while his removal from party posts

came after a meeting of the party's top leadership in Kolkata yesterday evening.

On Saturday, the ED arrested Partha and Arpita in connection with the multi-crore Rupees scam in schoolteacher recruitment.

"I have removed Partha Chatterjee as a minister. My party takes strict actions ...," Mamata told the media in Kolkata yesterday.

Partha and Arpita are now in ED custody.

GOVERNMENT OF THE PEOPLES REPUBLIC OF BANGLADESH OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER EDUCATION ENGINEERING DEPARTMENT (EED) SECTOR-1, UPASAHAR, RAJSHAHI. web site: www.eed.rajshahi.gov.bd					
e-TENDER NOTICE					
Tender Notice No: 02/e-GP/EED/Raj/7016/2022-23.			Date: 28.07.2022.		
e-Tender is invited in the National e-GP System Portal portal (www.eprocure.gov.bd) for the procurement of the following works.					
Tender ID	Lot/Package Location (Name of Institution)	Procurement Method	Document Last Selling Date & Time	Document Closing/Opening Date & Time	
720878	Construction of single storied Academic Building with 4- storied foundation to including sanitary water supply & electrification works at Arani F.N Girls High School, Bagha, Rajshahi. (FY-2017-18) (3rd Time Re-tender).	OTM (NCT)	10-Aug-2022 16:00	11-Aug-2022 15:00	
<p>This is an online tender, where only e-Tender will be accepted in the National e-GP portal and no offline/hard copies will be accepted. To submit e-Tender, registration in the National e-GP System portal (www.eprocure.gov.bd) is required. The fees for downloading the e-Tender Documents of following Package from the National e-GP System portal have to be deposited online through any registered Bank's Branches up to the Following Date & Time. The Provisions laid down in the "PPA & PPR -2008 including latest all amendment" and STD will be Followed. Further information and guidelines are available in the National e-GP System Portal and from e-GP help desk (helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd.)</p> <p style="text-align: right;">(Shahid Nasim Reza) Executive Engineer Office of the Executive Engineer Education Engineering Department, Rajshahi. e-mail: ee-raj@eedmoe.gov.bd</p>					

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