

Humanity hits 8 billion mark

Experts say growth poses more challenges for the planet



CNN ONLINE

The world's population reached 8 billion people yesterday, representing a "milestone in human development" before birth rates start to slow, according to a projection from the United Nations.

In a statement, the UN said the figure meant 1 billion people had been added to the global population in just 12 years.

"This unprecedented growth is due to the gradual increase in human lifespan owing to improvements in public health, nutrition, personal hygiene and medicine. It is also the result of high and persistent levels of fertility in some countries," the UN statement read.

Middle-income countries, mostly in Asia, accounted for most of the growth over the past decade, gaining some 700 million people since 2011. India added about 180 million people, and is set to surpass China as the world's

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PHOTO: SHEIKH NASIR

Backyards of houses in Bolaura village in Sylhet Sadar Upazila are abuzz with activities as farming families process the new Aman. People today are celebrating the Nabanna, a festival of making traditional pitha made of rice, on the first day of the Bangla month of Agrahayan.

G7 'GLOBAL SHIELD' Bangladesh among first to receive climate funding

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh, Pakistan, and Ghana will be among the first recipients of funding from a G7 initiative to help countries affected by climate change, according to a programme announced Monday at the COP27 summit in Egypt.

The "Global Shield" initiative, coordinated by G7 president Germany, aims to provide rapid access to insurance and disaster relief funding for climate-vulnerable countries following floods and droughts.

It is being developed in collaboration with the "V20" group of 58 climate-vulnerable economies, reports Reuters.

The first recipients of Global Shield packages – called "Pathfinder Countries", include Bangladesh, Costa Rica, Fiji, Ghana, Pakistan, the Philippines and Senegal, read a statement issued by Germany.

Backed by 170 million euros in funding from Germany and 40 million euros from other donors, including Denmark and Ireland, those packages would be developed in the coming months, Germany said.

Some countries and campaigners were cautious, however, concerned it risked damaging efforts to secure a substantive deal on financial help for so-called "loss and damage" – the UN jargon for irreparable damage wrought by global warming.

German development minister Svenja Schulze said the Global Shield aimed to complement, not replace, progress on loss and damage.

"It is not a kind of tactic to avoid formal negotiation on loss and damage funding arrangements here," Schulze said. "Global Shield isn't the one and only solution for loss and damage. Certainly not. We need a broad range of solutions."

Some research suggests that by 2030, vulnerable

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COP27 CLIMATE DEAL Big sticking points slow crunch talks

REUTERS, Sharm El Sheikh

Government ministers and negotiators from nearly 200 countries yesterday began the hard slog of finding common ground for a deal at the annual UN climate summit, as host country Egypt assured that the slow-moving talks were still on track.

Some delegates began, however, to discuss the possibility that the summit would go overtime into the weekend, with countries still snagged on key issues including crucial funding for developing countries to combat and adapt to climate change.

Egypt's Environment Minister Yasmine Fouad acknowledged that big sticking points remain unresolved, including a call for doubling in finance to adapt for future climate disruptions and demands by developing nations for additional funds toward loss and damage.

But "most of the progress would come when the ministers are involved" this week, Fouad told Reuters.

The Egyptian COP27 Presidency on Monday night released a two-page sketch of what could become a deal, featuring bullet points outlining many

of the issues countries have asked be included – including contentious points that have nations deeply divided.

The document mentioned the urgent need for action to keep within reach the goal of preventing global temperatures from rising more than 1.5C beyond preindustrial levels, to avoid the worst impacts of climate change. The world has already seen more than 1.1C of warming.

"We cannot lose 1.5 at this COP," said Alok Sharma, president of last year's UN climate summit, COP26, in Glasgow, Scotland.

But with little mention in the paper of burning fossil fuels – the main cause of global warming – the result of COP27 may focus on new commitments to get poorer nations cash to slow their emissions.

Delegates also have one eye firmly on Bali, where world leaders are meeting for the G20 summit, including China's President Xi Jinping and his US counterpart Joe Biden. On Monday, the two leaders of the world's top two most polluting nations agreed to resume cooperation on climate change.

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If diplomats cross the line, steps will be taken

Says Shahriar Alam

UNB, Dhaka

The government would take appropriate steps if any foreign diplomat crosses the line, said State Minister for Foreign Affairs Md Shahriar Alam yesterday.

He described Japanese Ambassador to Bangladesh Ito Naoki's recent comments on Bangladesh's election "unexpected" and said Bangladesh would convey its message to Japan regarding the matter.

On Monday, Ambassador Naoki said he heard about the example of "ballot box stuffing" and some police officers stuffed the ballot box the previous night which is something he had never heard in any other country.

He said the Japanese side never raised such an issue over the last four years in any bilateral meeting or any level of discussion.

Even it was not mentioned in the statement issued by the Japanese embassy after the 2018 elections, Alam said.

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Honour for Armeen, Nashid Album featuring their song gets Grammy nomination



Armeen Musa Nashid Kamal

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Berklee Indian Ensemble's "Shuruaat", which contains incredible mother-daughter duo of Nashid Kamal and Armeen Musa's song "Jaago Piya", has been nominated for the 65th Annual Grammy Awards in the category of Best Global Music Album.

They are the first Bangladeshis to have this honour at the world's biggest musical award.

"Jaago Piya" was written by Nashid Kamal and voiced by her daughter Armeen.

The album also features works of legendary Asian artistes like Shankar Mahadevan, and Ustad Zakir Hussain.

Armeen told The Daily Star about the news and the official Grammy website also put up a list of the nominees.

"This is an absolute honour to be in consideration ... ," said the artiste. "I am still waiting for the news to sink in."

Other nominees in this category include

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600-yr-old English coin found in Newfoundland



CNN ONLINE

The discovery of a rare gold coin on the south coast of Newfoundland, Canada, may challenge traditional historical narratives about the timing of European contact in the region, as it predates explorer John Cabot's arrival on the island by at least 70 years.

In a press release last week, the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador said that the English coin was found during the summer of 2022 by Edward Hynes, a local amateur historian, who reported it to officials as required

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Seized motorcycles, rotting in the impound lot of Mohammadpur Police Station in the capital, give the appearance of a scrapyard. These vehicles collect rust left abandoned for extended periods of time due to difficulties in legal settlements. The photo was taken yesterday.

PHOTO: RASHED SHUMON

PDB makes fresh bid for tariff hike

UNB, Dhaka

State-owned Bangladesh Power Development Board (BPDB) has filed a review appeal to the Bangladesh Energy Regulatory Commission (BERC) to raise the bulk power tariff.

The appeal, which was filed on Monday, was approved by Nasrul Hamid, the state minister for power, energy and mineral resources, a top BPDB official told UNB on the condition of anonymity.

Earlier on October 13, the BERC rejected a proposal of the BPDB to raise bulk power tariff and gave 30 working days to appeal against the decision.

The review appeal was submitted in that frame, the BPDB official said.

A top official of the BERC confirmed receiving received the BPDB's appeal application.

The application is now being evaluated at the BERC top level.

"It is not clear whether BERC will hold a fresh public hearing on the review or will arbitrarily accept the proposal and announce its decision without hearing," the BERC official said preferring anonymity because of the sensitivity of the matter.

When rejecting the BPDB proposal on October 13, BERC Chairman Abdul Jalil said that some of the private power plants that buy power from BPDB have not submitted their transaction data.

"There was data ambiguity. That's why we did not analyse the impact of any rise in bulk tariff on the

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