INTERNATIONAL



Members of Red Rebel Brigade take part in a demonstration called by "Scientifiques en Rebellion" and "Extinction Rebellion" to reduce the use of pesticides by 60 percent by 2023 and 90 percent by 2050 and against the erosion of biodiversity at the Jardin des Plantes in Paris, France, yesterday. PHOTO: AFP

Rich nations using 'predatory' tactics

Says UN chief at LDC summit in Doha

AFP, Doha

UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres yesterday slammed the world's rich countries and energy giants for throttling poor nations with "predatory" interest rates and crippling fuel prices.

Speaking in the Qatari capital, Doha, Guterres told leaders of more than 40 of the most deprived states that wealthy nations should provide \$500 billion a year to help others "trapped in vicious cycles" that block efforts to boost economies and vital services.

The summit of Least Developed Countries (LDC) is normally held every 10 years but has twice been delayed since 2021 because of the coronavirus

No leader from any of the world's major economies attended. At a leaders' summit ahead of the start of the general LDC conference

today, Guterres hit out straight away at the way poor nations are treated by the more powerful.

"Economic development is challenging when countries are starved for resources, drowning in debt, and still struggling with the historic injustice of an unequal Covid-19 response," he said.

The LDCs have complained that they did not get a fair share of the Covid vaccines that went mainly to Europe and North America.

"Combatting climate catastrophe that you did nothing to cause is challenging when the cost of capital is sky-high" and the financial help

received "is a drop in the bucket", said Guterres.

"Fossil fuel giants are raking in huge profits, while millions in your countries cannot put food on the table.'

Guterres said the poorest nations were being left behind in the "digital revolution" and the Ukraine war had fuelled their food and fuel prices.

"Our global financial system was designed by wealthy countries, largely to their benefit," he said.

"Deprived of liquidity, many of you are locked out of capital markets by predatory interest rates," the UN leader said.

A host of presidents and ministers hit out at financing conditions for LDCs, whose debt has more than quadrupled in a decade to an estimated \$50 billion in 2021.

Wealthy nations had failed to keep a promise to give 0.15-0.20 percent of their Gross National Income to LDCs, the UN chief said. With poorer states trapped in a "perfect storm for perpetuating poverty and injustice", Guterres said LDCs required a "minimum" \$500 billion a year to overcome their problems, build up job creating industries and repay debts.

MEET ON SAVING OCEANS

Participants pledge \$19b

AFP, United Nations

UN member states were still working hard yesterday after a sleepless night spent trying to finalise a long-awaited agreement to protect the high seas, a fragile and vital treasure that covers nearly half the planet.

Delegates on Friday pledged \$19 billion, the host country Panama said. The total included a \$6 billion commitment from the United States, announced on Thursday by White House climate envoy John Kerry.

After more than 15 years of informal and formal talks, negotiators have reached the end of two new weeks of discussions -- the third "final" session in less than a year.

But as of early yesterday morning in New York, participants were still wrangling over the highly political issue of benefit-sharing for research derived from marine genetic resources collected on the high seas.

at Yong Peng, Joho. At least four people have died and nearly 41,000 evacuated in Malaysia

after floodwaters caused by "unusual"

several states, officials said.

torrential rains lasting days swept through

PHOTO: AFP

"We do still have a few issues to clear, but it is making progress and delegations are demonstrating flexibility," conference chair Rena Lee said around 1:30 am $(0630 \, \text{GMT}).$

Earlier on Friday night, Lee had said there was still "a window of opportunity to seal the deal, and we mustn't let this opportunity slip through our hands."

An updated draft text seen hours later by AFP did not contain the section on genetic resources, but appeared to be far from finished.

Even if compromises are found on all the remaining disputes, the treaty cannot be formally adopted at this session, Lee explained

Disputes include the procedure

creating marine protected areas, the model for environmental impact studies of planned activities on the high seas and the sharing of potential benefits of newly discovered marine

 $The high seas begin at the border of countries \\ \\$ exclusive economic zones, which extend up to 200 nautical miles (370 kilometers) from coastlines. They thus fall under the jurisdiction

While the high seas comprise more than 60 percent of the world's oceans and nearly half the planet's surface,

they have long drawn far less attention than coastal waters and a few iconic species.

> Only about one percent of the high seas are currently protected.

Ocean ecosystems create half the oxygen humans breathe and limit global warming by absorbing much of the carbon dioxide emitted by human activities.

But they are threatened by climate change, pollution and overfishing.

For many, any agreement hinges on equity between the rich global North and poorer global South.

Developing countries, without the means to afford costly research, say they fear being left aside while others make profits from the commercialization of potential substances discovered in the international waters.

Observers interviewed by AFP say that resolving these politically sensitive financial issues could help ease other sticking points.

If an agreement is reached, it remains to be seen whether the compromises made will result in a text robust enough to protect oceans

Palestinian town needs to be 'wiped out'

Israel minister's 'unfathomable' comment irks UN. US

AFP, Geneva

The UN human rights chief denounced the "unfathomable" call by an Israeli minister for a flashpoint Palestinian town to be "wiped out", urging an end to the violence.

Israeli Finance Minister Bezalel Smotrich made his comments on Wednesday, days after two settlers were shot dead in Huwara, killings, that led to Israeli settlers to attack the northern West

"I think the village of Huwara needs to be wiped out," Smotrich said. "I think the State of Israel

Later, he backtracked from his comment. But UN rights chief Volker Turk, speaking before

the United Nations Human Rights Council in Geneva on Friday, denounced Smotrich's original comments as "an unfathomable statement of incitement to violence and hostility".

Washington, a staunch ally of Israel, was even more blunt in its response to Smotrich's comments."They were irresponsible, they were repugnant, they were disgusting," US State Department spokesman Ned Price told reporters.

"Just as we condemn Palestinian incitement to violence, we condemn these provocative remarks that also amount to incitement to violence," he

Pakistan bans Women's Day march

AFP, Lahore

Authorities in Pakistan's eastern city of Lahore have refused permission for a rally to mark International Women's Day, which regularly meets a fierce backlash in the conservative, patriarchal country.

Lahore city authorities cited the "controversial cards and banners" commonly displayed by participants in the march and security concerns as reasons behind the decision, which were laid out in a notification to march organisers late Friday.

Counter-protests dubbed "Haya (modesty)" marches are commonly staged by religious groups to call for the preservation of Islamic values.

"It's a violation of our rights. This raises questions about the state's ability to manage the right to freedom of assembly for both groups,' Hiba Akbar, an organiser for Aurat (women's) March Lahore, told AFP.

Lahore authorities have allowed this year's Haya March to be held despite the ban on the Aurat March.

Organisers and participants of the Aurat March have been accused of promoting Western, liberal values and disrespecting religious and cultural sensitivities. In 2020, groups of hardline Islamist men

hurled stones at women participating in the

We are going to be paving the way for important agreements.

UN nuclear chief Rafael Grossi as Iran 'enriches uranium to near weapons-grade

গণপ্রজাতন্ত্রী বাংলাদেশ সরকার





Indonesia fuel depot fire kills 17

AFP, Jakarta

Residents yesterday searched through the remains of their charred homes after a fuel storage depot fire in Jakarta left at least 17 people dead, including two children.

Three people were still missing after Friday night's blaze at state energy firm Pertamina's Plumpang depot in north Jakarta, with Indonesian officials the next day calling for an audit of "all fuel facilities and infrastructures" in the country.

people injured, with many severely burned, while hundreds more living in residential areas near the depot had to be evacuated.

"It started with a very strong smell. It was so strong that we could hardly breathe," witness Swastono Aji told AFP.

"Then we were leaving this area when we suddenly heard a very loud

Vice President Ma'ruf Amin visited the scene and confirmed 17 people were killed and 60 more injured.

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| Tender ID No. | Package No. | Name of work/package description | Last selling date& time | Opening date & time | Remark |
| 796667 | e-GP/15/EE/SRD/ 2022-2023 | Strengthening by base Type-II & DBS-Wearing course work at Mostafapur-Madaripur-Shariatpur (Monohar Bazar)-Ibrahimpur; Horina-Chandpur (Bhatialpur) Road (R-860) from ch. 29+180 km to ch. 30+100 km under Shariatpur Road Division, during the year-2022-2023. | 16-03-2023 16:00am | 19-03-2023 14:00pm | Only online tender |
| 796773 | e-GP/16/EE/SRD/ 2022-2023 | DBS-Wearing course and Necessary Repair work at Mostafapur-Madaripur-Shariatpur (Monohar Bazar)-Ibrahimpur-Horina-Chandpur (Bhatialpur) Road (R-860) from ch. 33+100 km to ch. 34+600 km under Shariatpur Road Division, during the year-2022-2023. | 16-03-2023 16:00am | 19-03-2023 14:30pm | Only online tender |
| 796782 | e-GP/17/EE/SRD/ 2022-2023 | Repair with Carpeting and Seal Coat work at ch. 22+500 km to ch. 23+200 km of Mostafapur- Madaripur-Shariatpur (Monohar Bazar)-Ibrahimpur-Horina- Chandpur (Bhatialpur) Road (R- 860) under Shariatpur Road Division, during the year-2022- 2023. | 16-03-2023 16:00am | 19-03-2023 15:00pm | Only online tender |

Bhuiya Redwanur Rahman ID No. 602254 Executive Engineer (c.c.), RHD Road Division, Shariatpur