

Harmful waste generation set to jump Warns UN

REUTERS, Nairobi

Waste produced by the public will surge by 2050, causing hundreds of billions of dollars of damage through biodiversity loss, climate change and deadly pollution, the United Nations Environment Programme (Unep) said in a report yesterday.

The report said unless urgent measures were taken global waste generation would soar, driven largely by fast-growing economies, including in Asia and sub-Saharan Africa where many countries are already struggling to manage current production levels.

Unep projected the cost at USD640 billion annually by the middle of the century, representing a more than 75 percent increase compared to 2020, when the world produced an estimated 2.1 billion tonnes of municipal solid waste, which excludes industrial waste.

Of the total, USD443 billion would be externalities, including biodiversity loss, climate-altering gases produced by the breakdown of organic waste and pollution that contributes to between 400,000 and one million deaths per year, the report said.

The report, released during this week's UN Environment Assembly in Kenya, warned humanity has "moved backwards" over the past decade, "generating more waste, more pollution and more greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions."

Waste prevention measures and improved waste management could reduce those costs.



Palestinian children burn tires in protest against the rising prices of food and supplies due to shortages yesterday in the Rafah refugee camp in the southern Gaza Strip.

PHOTO: AFP

SWEDEN'S NATO ACCESSION

Moscow to take military-technical steps

EU chief for using frozen Russian profits to arm Ukraine

REUTERS, Moscow

Russia said yesterday it would adopt unspecified military-technical and other counter measures to protect itself against Sweden joining Nato, a move it cast as aggressive and as a mistake.

Sweden cleared a last hurdle towards Nato accession on Monday after Hungary's parliament approved membership of the traditionally neutral country.

Meanwhile, European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen yesterday said that the European Union should consider using profits from frozen Russian assets to buy military supplies for Kyiv.

"It is time to start a conversation about using the windfall profits of frozen Russian assets to jointly

purchase military equipment for Ukraine," she told the European Parliament in a speech urging the EU to do more on defence policy.

"We will closely monitor what Sweden will do in the aggressive military bloc, how it will realise its membership in practice ... based on this, we will build our response with retaliatory steps of a military-technical and other nature," Maria Zakharova, a spokesperson for the Russian Foreign Ministry, said.

"Sweden's accession to Nato is accompanied by the ongoing fuelling of anti-Russian hysteria in the country, which, unfortunately, is encouraged by the Swedish political and military leadership, but its main source is abroad. It is not the Swedes themselves who are making the choice; this choice has been made for the Swedes."

Sweden's move to join Nato was fuelling tensions and militarisation, she added. Russia's embassy in Stockholm had also spoken of unspecified military and technical counter measures on its Telegram account on Tuesday depending on the extent of Nato troops and materiel deployments inside Sweden.

Swedish PM Ulf Kristersson said Russia's comments were not surprising and indicated his country was unfazed.

"That's what they said when Finland joined Nato," as well," news agency TT reported Kristersson as saying during a trip to the town of Trollhatten in southern Sweden. "It is well known that Russia doesn't like the fact of either Sweden or Finland being Nato members, but we make our own decisions."

THREATS OVER GAZA UK boosts lawmakers' security

AFP, London

The UK government announced a multi-million-pound package yesterday to boost the security of elected lawmakers who say they face increasing threats.

The £31 million (\$39 million, 36 million euros) in extra funding over the next year comes as some British MPs have been targeted over their stance on the Israel-Hamas war.

It also comes with the country due to head to the polls in a general election expected later this year.

Under the new provisions, lawmakers will have access to a dedicated police contact to discuss security while those most at risk could seek bodyguards, the interior ministry said.

"None of us should have to accept that enduring hate crimes, harassment, or threats is part of the job," interior minister James Cleverly said in a statement.

British MPs have expressed growing concerns about their safety amid a surge in anti-Semitic and Islamophobic incidents since the conflict in Gaza broke out on October 7.

Prime Minister Rishi Sunak said MPs had been "verbally threatened and physically, violently targeted", with "legitimate protests hijacked by extremists".

Conservative MP Mike Freer, who represents a large Jewish area, revealed last month that he would not seek re-election because of a spate of threats and an arson attack on his office.

South Korea, Japan birth rates fall to all-time low

AFP, Seoul

South Korea's birth rate fell to a record low last year, the government said yesterday, despite having poured billions of dollars into efforts to encourage women to have more children and maintain population stability. The country has one of the world's longest life expectancies and lowest birth rates, a combination that presents a looming demographic challenge. Neighbouring Japan is grappling with the same issue, and on Tuesday the fast-ageing nation announced that the number of births there had also dropped to a new low in 2023. South Korea's fertility rate — the number of children a woman is expected to have in her lifetime — dropped to 0.72 in 2023, down nearly eight percent from 2022, according to preliminary data from Statistics Korea. This is far below the 2.1 children needed to maintain the current population of 51 million, which at these rates will nearly halve by the year 2100, experts estimate. The government has spent vast amounts on trying to encourage more babies, offering cash subsidies, babysitting services and support for infertility treatment. But the birth rate has continued its chronic decline.

'ABUSE OF POWER'

Malaysia reinstates charges against ex-PM Muhyiddin

REUTERS, Kuala Lumpur

A Malaysian appeal court yesterday reinstated charges of abuse of power against opposition leader and former Prime Minister Muhyiddin Yassin, state news agency Bernama reported. A Kuala Lumpur high court had thrown out the four charges and acquitted Muhyiddin in August, ruling those had not detailed his alleged offences. Muhyiddin, who led Malaysia for 17 months between 2020 and 2021, had pleaded not guilty and had called the charges politically motivated. However, a three-member Court of Appeal bench yesterday unanimously ruled that the case against Muhyiddin be returned to a sessions court for further action, Bernama reported. The court found the charges were unambiguous and there was no necessity to give further details on the alleged offences. Muhyiddin's office did not immediately respond to a request for comment on the decision.

Gaza death toll

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hammering out details.

A senior source close to the talks said Israeli troops would pull out of populated areas under the agreement. But it did not appear to meet Hamas's demand for a permanent end to the war and Israeli withdrawal, or resolve the fate of fighting-age Israeli men among those being held by Hamas.

Palestinian Foreign Minister Riyad al-Maliki said yesterday he did not expect "miracles" at talks in Moscow to discuss the formation of a unified Palestinian government and the rebuilding of Gaza.

The talks between representatives of Hamas and the Fatah political faction, scheduled to take place in the Russian capital on Thursday, come days after Palestinian Prime Minister Mohammad

Shtayyeh resigned.

The shake-up, Maliki said, was designed to build support for an expanded role for the Palestinian Authority following Israel's war against the Islamist group Hamas in Gaza.

"We hope that there we might be good results in terms of mutual understanding between all factions about the need to support such a technocratic government that will emerge," Maliki said of the talks.

"Of course, we don't expect miracles to happen in just a simple meeting in Moscow, but I believe that the meeting in Moscow should be followed by other meetings in the region soon."

Meanwhile, Gaza health ministry said that 29,954 people have been killed in the Palestinian territory during the war between militants and Israel.

Police push for host of benefits

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Headquarters, said, "We have placed some issues before the cabinet secretary at the meeting. He assured us of considering the demands that are logical."

Officials said deputy secretaries and government officers above the rank get interest-free car loans. Major or equivalent armed forces officers also get such loans subject to fund allocation and 13 years in service.

Enamul added that superintendents of police and officers above the rank cannot avail the benefit. So, they are planning to seek interest-free car loans during the Police Week.

Many of the demands were previously placed by the police high-ups on different occasions.

Cabinet


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Besides, there are no ministers in the Ministry of Commerce, the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, and the Ministry of Posts, Telecommunications and Information Technology. These ministries only have state ministers.


On the other hand, the post of state minister remains vacant at the law ministry, home ministry, education ministry, planning ministry, land ministry, local government, rural development and co-operatives ministry, and foreign ministry.

Talking to journalists yesterday afternoon, Cabinet Secretary Md Mahub Hossain, however, said he did not have any information about changes in the cabinet.

The cabinet was formed with the prime minister, 25 ministers, and 11 state ministers on January 11.



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e-Tender is invited in the e-GP system Portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) for the procurement of the following goods. Details are given below:

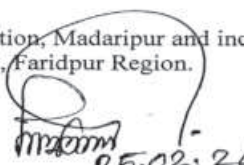
Sl No	Package no.	Tender ID & Ref No	Description of goods	Tender Documents Last selling (Date & Time)	Tender Closing date & Time	Tender Opening date & Time
1.	PN: GD-02	955213 & IRN : 27	Field Equipment (03 Items)	06.03.2024 16:00	07.03.2024 12:00	07.03.2024 12:00

The interested persons/firm may visit the website www.eprocure.gov.bd to get the details of the tender.

This is an online tender, where only e-Tender will be accepted in the national e-GP portal and no offline/hard copy will be accepted. To submit e-Tender, Registration in the National e-GP system portal is required.

Further information and guidelines are available in the National e-GP system portal and e-GP Help Desk (helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd).

Project Name: Strengthening Regional Pulses Research Station, Madaripur and increase production of pulse crops at greater Barishal, Faridpur Region.


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