

INTERNATIONAL

ICJ paves way for climate reparations

AFP, The Hague

The world's highest court yesterday declared that states are obligated under international law to tackle climate change and warned that failing to do so could open the door to reparations.

In a historic ruling, the International Court of Justice (ICJ) said climate change was an "urgent and existential threat" and states had a legal duty to prevent harm from their planet warming pollution.

Countries breaching their climate obligations were committing a "wrongful act," the court said in its advisory opinion, which is not legally binding but carries significant moral, political and legal weight.

"The legal consequences resulting from the commission of an internationally wrongful act may include... full reparations to injured states in the form of restitution, compensation and satisfaction," said ICJ President Yuji Iwasawa on behalf of the 15 judge panel.

This would be on a case-by-case basis where a "sufficient direct and certain causal nexus" had been shown "between the wrongful act and the injury", the court added.



Campaigners and countries on the climate frontlines hailed a milestone moment in the fight for accountability from big polluters most responsible for global warming.

Ralph Regenvanu, the climate change minister for Vanuatu, the small Pacific island nation which spearheaded the case at the Hague, was jubilant.

Speaking to AFP outside the court, Regenvanu said it was "a very strong opinion at the end" and better than hoped.

"We can use these arguments when we talk with our partners, some of the high-emitting states. We can say you have a legal obligation to help us," he said.

"This helps us in our arguments. It's going to give us a lot more leverage... in all negotiations."

This was the biggest case in ICJ history, and seen as the most consequential in a recent string of landmark climate rulings.



Palestinians gather in Gaza City yesterday to receive food from a charity kitchen amid a worsening hunger crisis. France's foreign ministry said malnutrition and the 'risk of famine' in Gaza was the result of the blockade imposed by Israel on the Palestinian territory.

PHOTO: REUTERS

'Mass starvation' spreading in Gaza

Over 100 aid, rights groups warn as 15 died in a single day; 17 killed in Israeli strikes

AGENCIES

More than 100 aid organisations and human rights groups warned yesterday that "mass starvation" was spreading in Gaza, as the United States said its top envoy was heading to Europe for talks on a possible ceasefire and aid corridor.

Israel is facing mounting international pressure over the catastrophic humanitarian situation in Gaza, where more than two million people are facing severe shortages of food and other essentials after 21 months of conflict.

But it denied blocking supplies, announcing that 950 trucks' worth of aid were in Gaza and waiting for international agencies to collect and distribute it. "We have not identified starvation at this current point in time but we understand that action is required



to stabilise the humanitarian situation," an unnamed senior Israeli security official was quoted as saying.

On the ground, the Israeli military said it was operating in Gaza City and the north, and had hit dozens of "terror targets" across the Palestinian territory. Gaza's civil defence agency told AFP that Israeli strikes killed 17 people overnight.

The UN said on Tuesday that Israeli forces had killed more than 1,000 Palestinians trying to get food since the US- and Israel-backed GHF started operations in late May -- effectively sidelining the longstanding UN-led system.

A statement with 111 signatories, including Doctors Without Borders (MSF), Save the Children and Oxfam, warned that "our colleagues and those we serve are wasting away".

Iran navy confronts US destroyer in the Gulf of Oman

AGENCIES

Iranian forces confronted a US destroyer in the Gulf of Oman yesterday, warning it to stay out of waters claimed by Tehran, state television reported.

The latest reported confrontation between the two rivals comes a month after the United States struck the Islamic republic on June 22, hitting key Iranian nuclear sites during a 12-day war with Israel.

State TV said that an Iranian army helicopter flew over the USS Fitzgerald at about 10:00 am

(0630 GMT) yesterday after the vessel "attempted to approach the waters under the supervision" of Iran.

The destroyer issued threats of its own, the broadcaster said, but "the Iranian pilot... reiterated the warning to stay away from Iranian waters", forcing the US vessel to "give in" and alter its course.

There was no immediate comment from the US Navy, reports AFP.

Meanwhile, Iran's President Masoud Pezeshkian has said his country is prepared for any war Israel might wage against it, adding

he was not optimistic about the ceasefire between the countries, while confirming Tehran is committed to continuing its nuclear programme for peaceful purposes.

Pezeshkian made the comments in an exclusive interview with Al Jazeera aired yesterday, one of his first since the end of the 12-day conflict with Israel last month, in which the United States intervened on Israel's behalf, launching strikes again "if necessary".

The comments come as Western nations say they are seeking a solution to Iran's ongoing nuclear ambitions in the wake of the conflict.

that Iran has no plans to abandon its nuclear programme including uranium enrichment despite the "severe" damage caused by US strikes to its facilities, ahead of renewed talks with European powers.

US President Donald Trump responded to the comments on his platform Truth Social, saying Washington would carry out strikes again "if necessary".

The comments come as Western nations say they are seeking a solution to Iran's ongoing nuclear ambitions in the wake of the conflict.

Govt's biggest problem is inexperience

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situation following the jet crash.

The BNP leader said the interim government's goodwill should be given more importance than its weaknesses, saying, "As a political party, we will always want polls to be held without delay so that a political government can be established. If there is no political government, these problems increase."

Expressing hope that the chief adviser would fulfil his promise by holding the polls in mid-February, Fakhrul said, "The election process should be accelerated. We believe they should take immediate steps in this regard. A clear announcement should be made on this matter. There should be no ambiguity or a lack of clarity."

He also blamed "administrative failures and law and order issues" for chaos and protests after the jet crash at Milestone School & College. The Gopalganj incident "definitely involves politics", and there is a conspiracy to sabotage the

polls, Fakhrul said.

"Allies of the fascist Awami League created a reign of terror. The fascist Awami force was defeated but it felt like a sign of their resurgence."

The BNP leader said, "Whatever the media says about disagreements among political parties, that's part of politics. These debates are normal. But our unity remains firm."

He believes that discussions between the chief adviser and political parties would be more effective if such engagement and exchange of views were held frequently.

If the talks had been done earlier, the chaotic situation over the jet crash might have been avoided, he said.

Regarding the consensus commission's proposal that the head of a government and a party chief should not be the same person, Fakhrul said, "That is their proposal. Political parties are expressing their opinions both in favour and against. All voices must be heard -- that's the essence of democracy."

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