

Europe must step up efforts to protect environment Says EEA

AFP, Copenhagen

Europe is a world leader in the fight against climate change but must do more to improve its resilience against global warming, the European Union's environment agency warned on Monday.

While "significant progress" has been made to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and air pollution, the general state of Europe's environment was "not good", the European Environment Agency (EEA) said after compiling data from 38 countries.

Its director, Leena Yla-Mononen, told reporters in Brussels that biodiversity was on the decline "due to persistent pressures driven by unsustainable production and consumption patterns".

Water resources, likewise, were under "severe pressure", with one-third of the European population being affected by water stress, she said.

The climate assessment, conducted every five years, comes after EU member states at a UN climate summit last week were unable to present a 2035 plan to further slash greenhouse gases, due to disagreements within the 27-nation bloc.

The EU is also unable to agree on an ambitious proposal from the European Commission to reduce emissions by 90 percent by 2040 from 1990 levels.

EU greenhouse gas emissions have dropped 37 percent since 1990, outpacing reductions by other major polluters like China and the United States, due to reduced fossil-fuel use and a doubling of renewable energy capacity since 2005.

But the EEA said EU countries must go further in implementation of policies aiming for better sustainability already agreed under a European Green Deal.

Nature on the continent "continues to face degradation, overexploitation and biodiversity loss," the EEA said.

Water in particular is an increasingly scarce resource, and land is over exploited.

Some 81 percent of protected habitats are in poor or bad condition, 60 to 70 percent of soils are degraded, and 62 percent of water bodies are not in good ecological condition, the report said.

Even though climate change ramps up water scarcity, the EEA said there was scope to save up to 40 percent of water in agriculture, water supply and energy production through better governance, technological innovation, water reuse and public awareness.



Chief Adviser Muhammad Yunus and UN Secretary General António Guterres shake hands before their meeting at the UN Headquarters in New York yesterday.

PHOTO: CA'S PRESS WING

Trophy row turns Asia Cup final into political showdown

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

India and Pakistan produced the best Asia Cup final in recent memory on Sunday in Dubai, a match that went down to the last over with India coming out on top by five wickets.

But the game itself got overshadowed by the chaotic presentation ceremony that followed and by the trading of barbs that continued throughout the next day, all centring around politics, not cricket.

The first shot was taken by the Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi, who likened the team's win to Operation Sindoora, a military operation undertaken by its armed forces in May in response to the terror attacks in Pahalgam of India's Jammu and Kashmir on April 22, for which it blames Pakistan.

"#OperationSindoora on the games field. Outcome is the same - India wins! Congrats to our cricketers," Modi wrote on X right after the game ended.

Mohsin Naqvi, the chairman of the Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) and the country's federal interior minister, retorted on X, saying, "If war was your measure of pride, history already records your humiliating defeats at Pakistan's hands. No cricket match can rewrite that truth. Dragging war into sport only exposes desperation and disgraces the very spirit of the game."

He was one of the central figures of what had transpired after the game at the Dubai International Cricket Stadium.

As the president of the Asian Cricket

Council (ACC), Naqvi was supposed to hand over the trophy to the captain of the winning team, Suryakumar Yadav.

The problems began when the Indian team refused to collect the trophy from Naqvi and wanted some other dignitary to do the honours.

But Naqvi refused.



After several false starts, the presentation ceremony finally began almost an hour after the match ended. Naqvi stood at the podium as all the individual prizes were handed over by other dignitaries.

But when it was time to call upon the Indian captain, the dignitaries walked off the stage, the trophy was taken inside, and then announcer Simon Doull said, "I have been informed by the Asian Cricket Council (ACC) that the Indian cricket team will not be collecting their awards tonight."

The Indian team then celebrated without the trophy -- a bizarre and never-before-seen occurrence in international cricket.

"This is one thing which I have never seen since I started playing cricket that the champion team is denied the trophy... We took the call on the ground about not taking the trophy," Suryakumar said at the post-match press conference.

He also praised the Indian prime minister for his reaction after the game, saying, "It feels good when the country's leader himself bats on the front foot," according to Indian news agency ANI.

However, his Pakistani counterpart, Salman Ali Agha, wasn't amused by all that happened, saying it was "bad for cricket".

"If they think they disrespected us by not shaking hands, then I say they disrespected cricket... What they did today [Sunday], a good team doesn't do that. Good teams do what we have done. We waited for our medals and took them."

"It's been seen for the first time. I do not know where it will stop. What has happened in this tournament is bad for cricket."

Tensions were high heading into the final owing to the Indian team's refusal to shake hands with their Pakistani counterparts in their earlier two meetings in the tournament to show solidarity with their armed forces and the Pahalgam attack victims. The handshake was snubbed in the final as well.

As per several Indian outlets, the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) is planning to lodge a formal complaint with the ICC against Naqvi for refusing to give the trophy. All signs indicate that the fallout from the Asia Cup final is far from over.

Eerie calm in scarred Ramesu

FROM PAGE 1
Tayiching Marma, 20, Athipuru Marma, 21, and Akhrau Marma, 22, were all residents of Guimara, said Chattogram Range's Deputy Inspector General (DIG) Ahsan Habib Palash.

The police are yet to confirm whether they belonged to any group.

"Their bodies will be handed over to their families after autopsy. A murder case has been filed. Local administration is working to determine the extent of damage in the area," the DIG told The Daily Star.

Eleven injured in the violence belong to Chakma, Marma, and Tripura communities, said Khagrachhari Civil Surgeon Saber Ahmed.

According to police, journalists and other sources, residents of Ramesu Bazar, fearing further violence, have been leaving their homes in search of safe shelters. Several residents said their houses were looted during the violence.

Speaking to journalists yesterday, Priyanka Pal, a local, said, "During the violence, I, along with my children, left home. Shops and other establishments were torched. The sound of repeated gunfire spread panic in the area. I spent the night elsewhere. In the morning, I returned to collect my belongings."

"I'm leaving again," said the woman whose husband works in Khagrachhari Sadar.

Chaypru Marma, a nursing student, said, "We ran away from our house when they started attacking the bazar and setting it on fire on Sunday. We had left all our belongings. Our home was torched. I'm staying in a relative's house in a neighbouring area."

Speaking to journalists, Lincoln Marma, a teacher of Guimara Government High School, said a group of Bangladeshi people attacked his home in Bangalipara during Sunday's violence when he was with his wife and two sons.

Protesting the rape of the schoolgirl, Jumma Chhatra Janata, a platform of the indigenous community, enforced a road blockade in the three hill districts yesterday. Section 144 has been in force in Khagrachhari's Sadar and Guimara upazilas.

However, the Khagrachhari-Chattogram and Khagrachhari-Dhaka routes have been excluded from the blockade.

In a Facebook post yesterday, Jumma Chhatra Janata said the blockade was relaxed on the two routes from 12:00pm

to facilitate funeral arrangements for those killed in violence and for the treatment of those injured.

DIG Ahsan Habib Palash told The Daily Star, "Local SP and DC held a meeting over the issue today [Monday]. The extent of the damage will be assessed, and compensation is expected to be provided to the victims. Both indigenous and Bengali communities have suffered losses in the violence, which are being taken into consideration. We are in discussions with all parties to find a solution. The

and administration, but this in no way means we will go home empty-handed," read the statement.

The platform reiterated that Jumma Chhatra Janata is neither a political party nor a separatist group. "Our spontaneous movement cannot be suppressed by labelling us UPDF or by any other tags," it said.

They demanded that the ISPR statement that tagged them as UPDF must be withdrawn immediately.

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