



Oil dependence bad for climate, economy

UN chief tells COP31

REUTERS, *Antalya*

United Nations Secretary-General Antonio Guterres took aim at oil companies making billions of dollars in profits while families, businesses and governments suffer, as he used the COP31 climate conference to criticise fossil fuel dependency.



Tayyip Erdogan, president of the talks' host nation Turkey, meanwhile welcomed an oil discovery in the Turkish mountains, and the country's climate negotiators pushed governments to sign a pledge to electrify their economies. The pledge does not specify whether the electricity involved would be renewable or from fossil fuels.

Taken together, the discourse yesterday, the second day of the two-week UN conference in Antalya, highlights a tension at the heart of the climate debate: fossil fuels underpin the global economy, but also hurt it through costly climate damage and often-volatile energy prices.

A UN report last month showed the world is poised to warm well beyond the 1.5 degrees Celsius (2.7 degrees Fahrenheit) threshold scientists say could unleash the worst consequences of climate change, as greenhouse gas emissions continue to grow.

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Prime Minister Tarique Rahman is greeted by Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan at the Maxx Royal Hotel in Antalya, Türkiye, yesterday. The two held a meeting that lasted around 30 minutes. PHOTO: **PID**

'Practically no real contact'

Sonia Gandhi writes about Modi, their ideological divide, political rivalry in her memoir

THE STATESMAN/ANN

India's Congress Parliamentary Party chairperson Sonia Gandhi has described her political differences with Prime Minister Narendra Modi as a clash between competing visions of India, while revealing that the two have had almost no meaningful personal interaction despite years of political rivalry.

In her memoir, 'Belonging: A Journey of Love', released yesterday, Gandhi attributes Modi's political outlook to his upbringing and the influence of the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS), contrasting it with her own belief in secularism, inclusiveness and social justice.

"We come from different ideological worlds; his idea of this country is vastly different from mine," she writes, describing the values she says she



inherited from the Nehru-Gandhi family.

Gandhi says PM Modi's political beliefs were shaped by RSS ideologues and a worldview that, in her assessment, places his religious and cultural identity above others.

"He was fighting for his vision

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Laws don't allow Hasina to have passport

Says ICT chief prosecutor



STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Extradition from India is deposed prime minister Sheikh Hasina's only legitimate route back to Bangladesh, and the government cannot issue her a passport following her death sentence for crimes against humanity, ICT Chief Prosecutor Md Aminul Islam said yesterday.

Meanwhile, briefing the media at the Secretariat, PM's Information and Broadcasting Adviser Zahed Ur Rahman said Hasina herself had not applied for a passport, while the government had already formally sought her return through the bilateral extradition treaty with India.

The International Crimes Tribunal chief prosecutor emphasised that Hasina has exhausted all legal remedies and can no longer challenge the tribunal's judgment.

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Dhaka seeks '$250m' ADB loan for Bangla AI, cybersecurity

REJAUL KARIM BYRON

Bangladesh has sought funds from the Asian Development Bank (ADB), with potential co-financing from South Korea, for an indicative $250 million programme to develop the country's first native Bangla-language artificial intelligence (AI) model, strengthen cybersecurity, and establish technology villages.

The Daily Star on Monday, "ADB and the government are discussing an indicative $250 million programme."

The programme covers AI, cybersecurity and technology villages, building on ongoing engagement and Khosru's recent visit to Korea, he said.

"The financing structure and implementation schedule are still being developed," Zhang said, adding that

Preparation of a cybersecurity project is already advancing, with the ADB targeting approval in 2027. Investments in AI and technology villages could follow in phases, subject to technical studies, project preparation and consultations with potential Korean partners.

Qingfeng Zhang, ADB country director for Bangladesh

A high-level delegation led by Finance Minister Amir Khosru Mahmud Chowdhury explored cooperation in Bangla-language AI, computing infrastructure, and practical applications at meetings with leading South Korean technology firms during his visit to Seoul earlier this month.

Asked about the matter, Qingfeng Zhang, ADB country director for Bangladesh, told

the government is expected to submit a consolidated funding request by mid-December.

Preparation of a cybersecurity project is already advancing, with the ADB targeting approval in 2027. Investments in AI and technology villages could follow in phases,

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PHOTO: **AFP**

People take part in a demonstration as part of a nationwide day of action called by high school students' unions, which have been demanding better learning conditions for days in protests punctuated by violent confrontations, in Marseille, France, yesterday.

NEWS IN FOCUS

Police stop planned Baul music event in Habiganj

Udichi protests

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Moulvibazar*

Police stopped a Baul music programme scheduled to be held on the premises of Purasunda Government Primary School in Shaistaganj upazila of Habiganj last night.

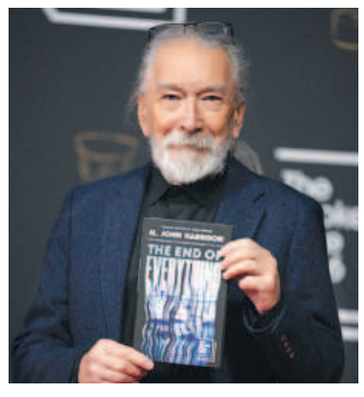
Speaking to The Daily Star, Shaistaganj Police Station Officer-in-Charge (OC) Abul Kalam said locals had lodged several complaints about such programmes, including excessive noise that disrupted their sleep and caused distress to people who were ill.

"There are also allegations of antisocial activities taking place at these events and money being collected from attendees," he said.

OC Abul Kalam said the issue was

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Harrison wins Booker Prize for 'The End of Everything'



REUTERS, *London*

British author John Harrison has won the 2026 Booker Prize for his novel, "The End of Everything," a dystopian satire that the prize says probes the limits of human understanding,

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