

WORLD
world**CO2 emissions to rise, says IEA**

Paris, France

Energy sector carbon emissions will rise in 2018 after hitting record levels the year before, dimming prospects for meeting Paris climate treaty goals, the head of the International Energy Agency (IEA) said Wednesday.

The energy sector accounts for 80 per cent of global CO2 emissions, with most of the rest caused by deforestation and agriculture, so its performance is key to efforts to rein in rising world temperatures.

"I'm sorry, I have very bad news for you," IEA Executive Director Fatih Birol told guests at a diplomatic function hosted by the Polish embassy in Paris.

"Emissions this year will increase once again, and we're going to have the COP meeting when global emissions reach a record high," he said, referring to the December UN climate summit in Katowice, Poland.

After remaining flat for three years, total global CO2 emissions in 2017 rose by 1.4 percent, dashing hopes that they had peaked.

The meeting in Katowice is tasked with finalising the "operating manual" for the 195-nation Paris Agreement, which enters into force in 2020 and calls for capping global warming at "well below" two degrees Celsius (3.6 degrees Fahrenheit), and at 1.5 C if possible.

Hardliners block temple to women

Nilackal, India

Hindu hardliners blocked intersections, threatened drivers, threw stones at buses and ordered a 12-hour strike yesterday as they stepped up their campaign to bar women from one of India's holiest temples.

The Lord Ayyappa temple at Sabarimala in the southern state of Kerala was meant to allow women from Wednesday following an order by India's highest court last month.

But hundreds of traditionalists, throwing stones at baton-wielding police, defied the order -- surrounding and shouting at any woman attempting to make it to the hilltop site.

Overnight local Hindu groups declared a 12-hour shutdown of local businesses, telling drivers that their vehicles would be attacked if they took anyone towards the temple.

State authorities have insisted that they will ensure access, imposing restrictions on public gatherings of more than five people that came into force from midnight, and laying on buses for devotees.

Military against immigrants

Trump threatens to send military against immigrant 'onslaught'

● **Trump has made security on the southern border one of the signature issues of his two-year presidency**

● **Message was part of a broad strategy to crack down on illegal immigrants**

● **Whether any military deployment to the border will take place is unclear**



Donald Trump



Honduran migrants aboard vehicles head in a caravan to the United States, in Guatemala City

AFP | Washington, United States

US President Donald Trump threatened yesterday to send the military to the Mexican border and to imperil a trade deal in an intensification of his anti-immigrant rhetoric ahead of congressional elections.

Trump has made security on the southern border one of the signature issues of his two-year presidency, calling for a "wall" and frequently railing against what he describes as a flood of

rapists, gangs and "bad hombres."

Even by those standards his Thursday morning tweet storm -- coming less than three weeks from midterm legislative elections where the Democrats may take the lower house from Trump's Republicans -- was especially fierce.

Referring to a so-called caravan of several thousand Hondurans that has departed in hopes of reaching the United States, Trump claimed Democrats were to blame for an "assault on our country by Guatemala, Honduras and El Salvador" with

a caravan "INCLUDING MANY CRIMINALS."

Trump tweeted that he would stop aid to the Central American states and said: "I must, in the strongest of terms, ask Mexico to stop this onslaught - and if unable to do so I will call up the US Military and CLOSE OUR SOUTHERN BORDER!"

Even the recently renegotiated North America Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) between Mexico, the United States and Canada, which is now known as USMCA, could be under threat, Trump said.

"The assault on our country at our Southern Border, including the Criminal elements and DRUGS pouring in, is far more important to me, as President, than Trade or the USMCA," he said.

Controversial 'caravan'

The president's message was part of a broad strategy to crack down on illegal immigrants and tighten rules for legal migrants.

Barely a week goes by without Trump warning about the danger posed by ultra-violent Central American gangs like MS-13, while chants of "build the

wall" are a staple element of his pre-midterms campaign rallies.

The latest focus is on more than 2,000 Hondurans who left last Saturday from the city of San Pedro Sula.

On Wednesday, an advance group of exhausted migrants reached Guatemala City where they took refuge in a church-sponsored shelter. Their objective now is to regroup and press on towards the border with Mexico.

The migrants say they organized for the long and difficult journey on social media, but Washington suspects the group has been organized as a deliberate provocation.

"This caravan did not appear organically," a senior Trump administration official told journalists.

"There's a political aspect and an organizational aspect which frankly seeks to sow chaos and dissent and that needs to be dealt with," he said, speaking on condition of anonymity.

The row comes as US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo prepares to embark on a tour of the region that will see him visit Mexico ahead of its December inauguration of President-elect Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador, as well as Panama.

British platform to track aid sector sex predators

AFP | London, United Kingdom

Britain will launch an online platform with Interpol to help prevent suspected sexual predators using the aid sector as a cover to harm vulnerable people, the government announced Thursday.

The Department for International Development (DFID) said it was teaming up with Interpol to stop suspects being able to move freely between NGOs.

The move, using existing Interpol systems, follows a series of high-profile abuse scandals.

"Our message to sexual predators using the sector as a cover for their crimes is 'your time is up'," International Development Secretary Penny Morrison said in a statement.

"We have to give the people that we are here to help the protection that they need," she added, ahead of a global safeguarding summit in London

Thursday, which her department is co-hosting.

The project, named Operation Soteria after the Greek goddess of safety, will operate from two regional hubs in Africa and Asia.

It will increase criminal record checks and information-sharing between all 192 Interpol members, including high-risk countries, to improve the police response in this area, said the DFID.

Students given cookies baked with grandfather's ashes: media

Los Angeles, United States

A teenage girl in California allegedly baked her grandfather's ashes into cookies and handed them out to her school friends.

The student is said to have given her baked goods to at least nine students, the Los Angeles Times said. Some ate the cookies without knowing about the macabre extra ingredient and were horrified.

In a bizarre twist, others among the Da Vinci Charter Academy students were fully aware and ate the cookies

anyway

Student Andy Knox told local television station KCRA he was on his way into class when the unidentified young baker offered him one of her treats saying they contained a "special ingredient."

"I thought that she put drugs in it or something. So I asked her if like, 'Is this a weed cookie or something?'" he was quoted as saying.

"And she said 'No.' She said it was her grandpa's ashes. And then she kind of laughed. And I was really, I was kind of horrified."

S. Korea's last polar bear dies ahead of retirement

Seoul, South Korea

The last polar bear kept in South Korea has died of old age only weeks before his planned departure to better living conditions in Britain, zoo officials said yesterday.

Tongki -- a 23-year-old male named after a Japanese cartoon character of the 1980s -- lived in a 330-square-metre (3,500-square-foot) concrete enclosure at the Everland theme park outside Seoul.

The zoo had planned to move him to the Yorkshire Wildlife Park next month to allow him to enjoy his final days in



South Korea's last captive polar bear, a 23-year-old male named Tongki (Courtesy of Phys.org)



Born in captivity at a zoo, Tongki was the only polar bear still living in S. Korea and had been alone since the last fellow resident of his species died three years ago

more appropriate surroundings -- the facility in northern England has a 40,000 square metre polar reserve -- and had thrown him a farewell party in June.

But Tongki was found dead on Wednesday night and autopsy results suggested that he appeared to have died of old age, the zoo said in a statement, adding it plans to conduct more tests to determine the exact reason for his death.

The average life span of polar bears is around 25 years and Tongki was the equivalent of around 80 in human terms.