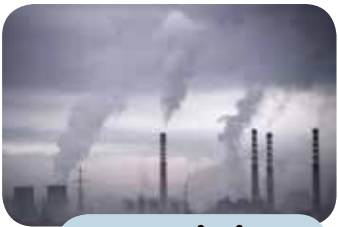


News in brief

◆ **Climate-changing CO2 emissions are set to surge by the second-biggest amount in history this year as the global economy recovers from the Covid-19 pandemic, the IEA warned yesterday, days before a major climate summit.** The International Energy Agency estimated in its annual Global Energy Review that CO2 emissions will increase by almost five percent this year to 33 billion tonnes, largely reversing the decline registered last year as the pandemic idled swathes of the global economy. "Global carbon emissions are set to jump by 1.5 billion tonnes this year -- driven by the resurgence of coal use in the power sector," the IEA's Executive Director, Fatih Birol, was quoted as saying in a statement.



CO2 emissions set to surge, IEA warn

◆ **Russia will soon have more than 120,000 troops on Ukraine's border, Ukrainian Foreign Minister Dmytro Kuleba said on Tuesday, calling for new Western economic sanctions on Moscow.**

Russia will soon have over 120,000 troops on Ukraine's borders, Kyiv says



Kyiv, Washington and NATO have been alarmed by the large build-up of Russian troops near Ukraine and in Crimea, the peninsula that Moscow annexed from Ukraine in 2014. Western officials say the concentration of forces is now larger than during that annexation.

◆ **The United States will press all nations to reduce reliance on coal, Secretary of State Antony Blinken said Monday, in an implicit challenge to China as he vowed greater US leadership.** Blinken kicked off a week of intense climate diplomacy by President Joe Biden, who has invited 40 world leaders to a virtual summit Thursday and Friday aimed at raising the world's ambitions on climate.

US vows to lead on climate, press world to reduce coal use



◆ **A bomb was found in British-ruled Northern Ireland near the home of a part-time police officer, in what the British government described on Tuesday as attempted murder.** The Police Service of Northern Ireland said the bomb had been found on Monday near the family home of the officer in Dungiven, a town near the city of Londonderry. A security alert remained in place in the area as police investigated the circumstances.

Bomb found near home of Northern Ireland police officer

Russia expels two Bulgarian diplomats in spy row

◆ **Russia declared two Bulgarian diplomats 'persona non grata' yesterday and ordered them to leave the country in response to Sofia's expulsion of two Russian diplomats last month for suspected espionage.** The action followed Russia's decision to kick out diplomats from the United States, Czech Republic and Poland in a flurry of expulsions within the past five days in retaliation for the barring of its own staff, reflecting a sharp deterioration in its relations with the West

US regulators probe potentially driverless Tesla crash

AFP News

Two US transportation regulators said Monday they will investigate a fatal car crash involving a Tesla that apparently had no one behind the wheel.

The vehicle was speeding when it hit a tree late Saturday night in Spring, Texas, near Houston. It caught fire, destroying the car entirely and killing two men, police said.

Harris County police official Mark Herman told local media the initial investigation found no one was in the driver's seat of the vehicle. One of the victims was discovered in the passenger chair, and the other in the back seat.

J&J Covid vaccine manufacturing halted at plant that ruined doses

AFP News

The US Food and Drug Administration requested that production of the Johnson & Johnson coronavirus vaccine be halted at a factory that previously reportedly ruined about 15 million doses of the shot.

The pharmaceutical giant told AFP at the end of March it had identified a batch of doses at a plant in Baltimore run by Emergent BioSolutions "that did not meet quality standards," but did not confirm the specific number affected.

The New York Times later reported the batch consisted of about 15 million doses.

IATA head Walsh hits out at expensive PCR tests for travel

Reuters | London

The head of global airline industry body IATA has hit out at the high cost of COVID-19 testing, accusing providers of profiteering from travel, and calling for the industry to challenge whether PCR tests are necessary.

European airlines are counting on a travel rebound this summer after months of COVID-19 restrictions left them struggling with minimal revenues and huge new debts taken on to survive the pandemic.

But any demand for PCR tests that can cost more than the short flights themselves threatens the recovery.

"We're clearly seeing evidence of profiteering by people who have jumped on the testing bandwagon," Willie Walsh, IATA's new director general, said at a virtual industry conference yesterday.

Chad President Idriss Deby on frontline, so

● **His death was announced the day after he was declared the winner of a presidential election**

● **Deby - who often joined soldiers on the battlefield in his military fatigues - visited troops on the frontline on Monday**

Reuters

Chad's President Idriss Deby, who ruled his country for more than 30 years and was an important Western ally in the fight against Islamist militants in Africa, has been killed on the frontline against rebels in the north.

Deby's son, Mahamat Kaka, was named interim president by a transitional council of military officers, spokesman Azem Bermendao Agouna said in a broadcast on state television.

Deby, 68, came to power in a rebellion in 1990 and was one of Africa's longest-ruling leaders, surviving numerous coup attempts and rebellions.

His death was announced the day after he was declared the winner of a presidential election that



Chad's President Idriss Deby attends a working session of the G5 Sahel summit in Nou



Deby had joined the army in the 1970s when Chad was going through a long-running civil war. He received military training in France and returned to Chad in 1978, throwing his support behind President Hissène Habré and eventually becoming commander in chief of the armed forces.



would have given him a sixth term in office. Most of the opposition, which had long complained of his repressive rule, boycotted the vote.

Deby - who often joined sol-

India to waive import duty on COVID-19 vaccines

● **The government has decided to open vaccinations for all adults from May 1.**

Reuters | New Delhi

India will waive its 10% customs duty on imported COVID-19 vaccines, a senior government official told Reuters yesterday, as it tries to boost supplies to counter a dramatic surge in coronavirus cases.

Imports of Russia's Sputnik V vaccine are due to arrive soon and the government has also urged Pfizer,

Moderna and Johnson and Johnson to sell their products to India.

The official, who declined to be named, also said the government was considering allowing private entities to import approved vaccines for sale on the open market without government intervention. They could also be given the freedom to set pricing, he added.

The Indian government currently regulates the sale and purchase of all COVID-19 shots in the country.

A finance ministry spokesman did not immediately respond to an email seeking comment outside business hours.

Other South Asian countries, including Nepal and Pakistan, as well as Latin American nations such as Argentina and Brazil levy vaccine

import tariffs ranging from 20% to 30%.

The government had earlier announced to open vaccination to all adults from May 1.

Accordingly, Everyone aged 18 and above will be eligible for COVID-19 vaccination.

Under the third phase of the vaccination drive commenced on Monday, vaccine manufacturers will supply 10 per cent of their monthly production to the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MHW) for distribution to the central government and state governments.

Manufacturers will also be allowed to supply an advance declaration of 50% supply that will be used by the state governments for their own market before May 1, the statement said.

Private Hospitals will be allowed to procure their supplies exclusively from the government for the marked for other channel. Private Hospitals will be allowed to set vaccination prices through this channel up to all adults, the age of 18.

Vaccination will be provided free of cost in Govt. centres, private centres, private hospitals, to the eligible population. Workers and Employees (including above 45 years of age) will be



COVID-19 Countries worst affected

	Country	Total cases	Total deaths	Global tally
1	USA	32,476,828	581,573	142,945,666
2	India	15,414,886	180,980	Deaths
3	Brazil	13,977,713	375,049	3,047,074
4	France	5,296,222	101,180	Recovered:
5	Russia	4,718,854	106,307	121,402,826
6	UK	4,390,783	127,274	New cases
7	Turkey	4,323,596	36,267	+253,061
8	Italy	3,878,994	117,243	New deaths
9	Spain	3,428,354	77,102	+4,128
10	Germany	3,171,524	80,946	
11	Argentina	2,714,475	59,476	
12	Poland	2,704,571	62,734	
13	Colombia	2,667,136	68,748	
14	Mexico	2,306,910	212,466	

Middle East

Figures as of closing

Country	Total cases	new cases	Total deaths	New Deaths	Total recovered	Active cases
Egypt	217,186		12,778		163,812	40,596
Saudi Arabia	407,010	+1,070	6,846	+12	390,538	9,626
UAE	500,860	+1,903	1,559	+3	483,180	16,121
Kuwait	258,497		1,456		241,696	15,345
Oman	182,693	+1,263	1,909	+19	162,656	18,128
Qatar	197,476		386		174,698	22,392