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Iraqi police fire on protesters



BAGHDAD: Protesters gather next to a burning building amidst clashes with Iraqi riot police during a demonstration against state corruption and poor services yesterday. — AFP

BAGHDAD: One person was killed and more than 200 others were wounded yesterday, Iraq's health ministry said, in a mass protest in Baghdad that security forces dispersed with a volley of gunfire and tear gas. More than 1,000 protesters had descended on the capital in the first major demonstration since Iraq's fragile government took office nearly a year ago. Among those wounded, 160 were civilians and another 40 were security forces, the health ministry said. According to medical and police sources, most of them needed treatment for tear gas inhalation and some were injured by rubber bullets. With Iraqi flags

draped over their shoulders or wrapped around their foreheads, the demonstrators had gathered in the iconic Tahrir Square, with a wide range of grievances but apparently without a unified leadership. "Those thieves robbed us!" they cried out in condemnation of the political class in Iraq, considered the 12th most corrupt country in the world by Transparency International. Others were on the streets to protest at the lack of public services, including rampant power cuts, water shortages and unemployment, particularly among youth.

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450 Bangladeshis murdered in South Africa in 4 years

DHAKA: More than 400 Bangladeshis have been murdered in South Africa over the past four years because of business and personal disputes within the community, government officials said yesterday. A wave of deadly attacks on foreign workers in South

Africa in recent weeks has cast a spotlight on the country's record. The Bangladesh embassy in Pretoria said none of the South Asian country's nationals were involved in that violence.

Instead, the Bangladesh ambassador revealed most of the deaths were over business and money disputes, extra-marital affairs, and other personal arguments. The embassy said the bodies of 88 Bangladeshi migrants had already been repatriated this year, and 452 since Jan 2015. "Approximately 95 percent of those who died here were murdered, mostly shot dead in their shops," an embassy official said.

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Human emissions '100-times greater' than volcanoes

PARIS: Human activity churns out up to 100 times more planet-warming carbon each year as all the volcanoes on Earth, says a decade-long study released yesterday. The Deep Carbon Observatory (DCO), a 500-strong international team of scientists, released a series of papers outlining how carbon is stored, emitted and reabsorbed by natural and manmade processes. They found that manmade carbon dioxide emissions drastically outstrip the contribution of volcanoes - which belch out gas and are often fingered as a major climate change contributor - to current warming rates.

The findings, published in the journal Elements, showed just two-tenths of 1 percent of Earth's total carbon - around 43,500 gigatonnes - is above the surface in oceans, the land, and in our atmosphere. The rest - a staggering 1.85 billion gigatonnes - is stored in our planet's crust, mantle and core, providing scientists with clues as to how Earth formed billions of years ago. One gigatonne is equivalent to around 3 million Boeing 747s.

By measuring the prominence of certain carbon isotopes in rock samples around the world, the DCO were able to create a timeline stretching back 500 million years to map how carbon moved between land, sea and air. They found that in general the planet self-regulated atmospheric levels of carbon dioxide, a key greenhouse gas, over geological timeframes of hundreds of thousands of years. The exceptions to this came in the form of "catastrophic disturbances" to Earth's carbon cycle, such as immense volcanic eruptions or the meteor strike that killed



KOKOPO, Papua New Guinea: This handout picture taken yesterday shows an ash cloud erupting from Mount Ulawun volcano, forcing the evacuation of recently returned residents. — AFP

off the dinosaurs.

"In the past we see that these big carbon inputs to the atmosphere cause warming, cause huge changes in both the composition of the ocean and the availability of oxygen," said Marie Edmonds, Professor of Volcanology and Petrology and Ron Oxburgh Fellow in Earth Sciences at Queens' College, Cambridge. The team estimated that the Chicxulub impact 66 million years ago, which killed off three-quarters of all life on Earth, released between 425 and 1,400 gigatonnes of CO2.

Manmade emissions in 2018 alone topped 37 gigatonnes. "The amount of CO2 pumped into the atmosphere by anthropogenic (manmade) activity in the last 10-12 years (is equivalent) to the catastrophic change during

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By B Izzak

KUWAIT: Deputy Foreign Minister Khaled Al-Jarallah said yesterday that Kuwait pays a great attention to guaranteeing the rights of expatriate workers in the country and providing suitable conditions for them. Jarallah told reporters that expat workers play an important role in the national economy and different forms of development.

He said Kuwait has laws and legislation and a vast legacy in dealing with expatriate labor, adding that Kuwait is always ready to modify those laws with the aim to provide more justice to expat workers and preserve their rights. Kuwait is home to some 3.3 million expatriates, including some 700,000 domestic helpers, against only 1.4 million Kuwaiti citizens. There have been parliamentary calls to sharply reduce the number of foreigners in the country and to impose wide-ranging charges and taxes on them, including a tax on their remittances to their home countries.

Meanwhile, the National Assembly's committee for family and women affairs yesterday debated a draft law to combat domestic violence against all sections of the society, especially women. Head of the panel MP Safa Al-Hashem, the only female member in the 50-seat Assembly, said the discussion focused on resolving overlapping between different ministries and government agencies in dealing with domestic violence.

She said the panel members are inclined to give all



Khaled Al-Jarallah

powers in dealing with victims of domestic violence to the higher council for the family, which includes a fund to spend on the victims. Hashem added that under existing legislation, victims of domestic violence come under the ministries of interior, social affairs and justice, in addition to other departments.

Rapporteur of the panel MP Mohammad Al-Dallal said the draft law was the combination of several proposals and aims at protecting all sections of the society from domestic violence and providing the necessary shelters. Dallal said the bill will be ready before the start of the new Assembly term on Oct 29.



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