



**3** Prevalence of diabetes in Kuwait reached around 23% in 2019



**5** Delhi shuts schools as govt mulls 'pollution lockdown'



**13** Judge dissolves Britney Spears guardianship



**16** Australia, New Zealand seek history in T20 World Cup final



# COP26 nations urged to adopt 'balanced' deal

## Talks stumble on emission cuts, climate cash 'cliffhanger'

GLASGOW: Britain yesterday urged compromise among feuding COP26 delegates as it touted a "balanced" package to help avert the worst effects of climate change in what was meant to be the Glasgow summit's final hours. COP26 president Alok Sharma told delegates from nearly 200 countries that a draft summit text attempted to reconcile yawning gaps between rich emitters and developing nations that have hobbled the fortnight's discussions.

"Everyone has had a chance to have their say. I hope that colleagues will appreciate what is on the table," he said, presenting a third draft text. "While not every aspect will be welcomed by everyone, collectively, this is a package that really moves things forward for everyone," Sharma added. He added "it is my intention that we will close this COP this afternoon" - while allowing more time for haggling over technical issues.

After three nights of all-night negotiations that have blown COP26 past its scheduled finish of Friday, delegates are still trying to agree a deal to deliver greater emissions cuts and vital finance for vulnerable states. The new draft text released by Sharma's team urged nations to accelerate efforts to phase out unfiltered coal and "inefficient" fossil fuel subsidies.

Large emitters such as China, Saudi Arabia and Russia had tried to remove the mention of polluting fuels, according to delegates. But after resistance

from rich nations led by the United States and European Union, the draft text omitted any reference to a specific finance facility for "loss and damage" - the mounting cost of global warming so far - which has been a key demand of poorer nations.

The text noted "with deep regret" that wealthy nations had also failed to stump up a separate annual sum of \$100 billion they promised over a decade ago. It urged countries to pay up "urgently and through 2025". Greenpeace International chief Jennifer Morgan told AFP that the language on fossil fuels "is far from what is needed but sends a signal - I dare countries to take that out of the text right now".

"The US has to support the most vulnerable on the issue of loss and damage. They cannot avoid this issue any longer. Nor can the European Union," she added. "I would call on President (Joe) Biden to do what's right, and support the most vulnerable in helping them deal with their losses." There was no immediate comment from the US, but EU Commission vice president Frans Timmermans denied that the rich world had turned its back on the countries most at risk. "We have increased substantially our financial contribution, both in terms of the \$100 billion but also in terms of the adaptation fund," he told reporters. "But if there is more we can do, we will certainly try and help."

Continued on Page 2



GLASGOW: Performers from the Blue Rebels conduct a funeral ceremony at Glasgow Necropolis to symbolize the failure of the COP26 process at Glasgow Cathedral yesterday during the COP26 UN Climate Change Conference. — AFP

## Qatar to handle US interests in Afghanistan



WASHINGTON: US Secretary of State Antony Blinken and Qatar's Foreign Minister Sheikh Mohammed Al-Thani shake hands during a signing ceremony at the State Department on Friday. — AFP

WASHINGTON: The United States said Friday it would set up an interests section in Afghanistan under Qatar, creating a more direct way to assist US citizens and engage with the Taliban after the embassy in Kabul was shuttered. The step marks the latest diplomatic win for Qatar, the wealthy Gulf state that has increasingly positioned itself as the pivotal US ally on Afghanistan.

Blinken signed an agreement with his Qatari counterpart to establish Qatar as the US protecting power in Afghanistan, an arrangement in which a third nation handles a country's interests in the absence of diplomatic relations with the host country. The United States has voiced cautious optimism about dialogue with the Taliban but has made clear that reopening the embassy - which would imply recognition - is not on the cards.

Qatar, home to a major US military base, has played a significant role both in diplomacy and evacuations as the United States ended its 20-year war in Afghanistan. Around half of the 124,000 Westerners and Western-allied Afghans

Continued on Page 2

## 5 protesters killed in Sudan crackdown

KHARTOUM: Sudanese security forces killed at least five demonstrators yesterday in a crackdown on anti-coup protests, medics said, after the military tightened its grip by forming a new ruling council. "Two more people were killed including an 18-year-old... and one 35-year-old... by bullets of the putschist military council," the Central Committee of Sudanese Doctors said. Earlier, the committee had said that three other

protesters were killed during yesterday's rallies.

The pro-democracy protests come nearly three weeks after top general Abdel Fattah Al-Burhan ousted the government, detained the civilian leadership and declared a state of emergency. Gunshots were heard and tear gas fired as security forces sought to break up demonstrations in Khartoum and neighboring cities, witnesses and AFP correspondents said. "No, no to military rule", "Civilian (rule) is the people's choice", and "Down with the entire council", protesters in southern Khartoum shouted.

Tens of thousands rallied nationwide, with protests taking place in the cities of Atbara, Port Sudan and Wad

Continued on Page 2



KHARTOUM: People gesture and chant slogans as they protest against the military coup in Sudan yesterday. — AFP

## Sara Duterte to run for vice president

MANILA: Philippines "First Daughter" Sara Duterte yesterday entered the vice presidential race for the 2022 elections, in a surprise move that could boost the chances of presidential hopeful Ferdinand

Marcos Jr winning the country's highest office. Outgoing President Rodrigo Duterte, who is constitutionally barred from seeking a second term, also flagged plans to contest the vice presidency - triggering chaotic scenes at the Commission on Elections office handling last-minute changes to candidacies ahead of a Nov 15 cutoff.

The elder Duterte "will file his certificate of candidacy for the vice presidency on Monday, that's what he said," presidential communications chief Martin Andanar told local broadcaster ABS-CBN. But he added: "I would like to believe that that is the

plan for now. We don't know if this will be the same plan by tomorrow or by Monday."

Sara Duterte, 43, had been widely expected to seek the presidency in a bid to succeed her father, and potentially protect him from criminal charges in the Philippines and International Criminal Court investigators probing his deadly drug war. Her tilt for the country's second-highest office was immediately endorsed by the party of Marcos Jr, the son and namesake of the former dictator, to be his running mate in the poll.

Continued on Page 2

## Tunisia town revolts over trash crisis

AGAREB, Tunisia: As tear gas and protest cries filled the air in the Tunisian town of Agareb, Mabrouka Ben Ibrahim vowed to demonstrate for her daughter, whose death she blames on a nearby rubbish dump. Younsa, 21, died in 2019 after being bitten by a mosquito that came from the toxic trash site, Ben Ibrahim said. "I lost my daughter and I don't want other families to lose their children because of the filth in this landfill," the 59-year-old said.

Residents say rubbish dumped at the site, including dangerous industrial and medical refuse, has

caused a string of diseases from cancer to vision problems and infertility. Authorities decided to close the site in September after declaring it full but reversed course on Monday, prompting angry street demonstrations that degenerated into clashes with security forces.

In the early hours of Tuesday, a protester died of what relatives said was tear gas inhalation, although authorities have blamed his death on an unrelated health condition. The protests come amid a garbage crisis across Sfax province that has seen refuse piling up on pavements after the closure of the Agareb site, the province's main dump.

Residents say the site, around three kilometers from the town center and stretching over 35

Continued on Page 2



TUNIS: Maamoun Ajmi, a 29-year-old architect, displays a caricature during a sit in on Nov 11, 2021 to express solidarity with the town of Agareb over the reopening of a rubbish dump. — AFP