



Pakistan court adjourns again on PM confidence saga

Sudan militia chief 'rampaged' across Darfur, court told



CHIBAYISH, Iraq: Veterinarian Karrar Ibrahim Hindi (left) sits in an ambulance boat as he heads to treat sick buffalos, in the marshes of Iraq's southern district of Chibayish in Dhi Qar province. The boat is used by veterinarians as an animal ambulance to bring critical healthcare for livestock, and especially the water buffalo iconic to the marshlands, facing an ever-growing threat from the impacts of rampant pollution and climate change. —AFP

How you can take climate action

Avoiding airplanes, eat less meat?

PARIS: Individuals along with economy-wide efficiencies can make a major difference in the drive to avert the worst of global warming. UN climate experts say, estimating that sharp cuts to demand for energy-guzzling services could slash emissions up to 70 percent by 2050. Avoiding airplanes, eating less meat, insulating your home could all make a dent, particularly when broad swathes of societies embrace change, says the United Nations Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change.

While research often focuses on cutting emissions in the supply of goods and services-energy generation, transport, agriculture, construction-the IPCC has for the first time dedicated a whole chapter of its climate solutions report to the demand that drives these industries. "Having the right policies, infrastructure and technology in place to enable changes to our lifestyles and behaviors can result in a 40-70 percent reduction in greenhouse gas emissions by 2050," said Priyadarshi Shukla co-chair of IPCC working group that produced the 3,000 page report. But where can "this untapped potential", as Shukla calls it, be found?

Day-to-day choices

"Avoid, shift, improve"- these are the key ways to curb demand, the report says. You can avoid energy-intensive behavior, switch to low-carbon technologies and improve the efficiency of existing tech. In general, there are plenty of opportunities for improvement in the ways people travel from point A to point B. You can change an internal combustion engine car to an electric one ("improve"), or even "shift" your daily commute to cycling or walking.

The biggest potential for avoidance is reducing long-haul flights. If people took fewer long distance flights and took the train where possible, overall aviation emissions could be reduced by 10 to 40 percent by 2040. Meanwhile, increasing energy efficiency in homes and other buildings takes first place in the "improve" category.

And the most important "shift" you can make is to adopt a plant-based diet. But becoming a vegetarian or even vegan would have less of an emissions impact than cutting out one long-haul flight a year. The report also highlights the need to reduce all types of waste, from



'Avoid, shift, and improve'

energy or food for example. "Choosing low-carbon options, such as car-free living, plant-based diets without or very little animal products, low-carbon sources of electricity and heating at home as well as local holiday plans," can reduce an individual's carbon footprint by up to nine tons of CO2 equivalent, says the IPCC.

We have most of the means

There are a range of low-carbon technologies to produce electricity and these are becoming cheaper, better and more widely used. These include solar photovoltaics (PV), onshore and offshore wind, and batteries. "In many contexts solar PV and onshore wind power are now competitive with fossil-based generation," the report said. Since 2010 emissions from coal have grown, but more slowly, as the US and Europe retired some old plants, while China added fewer new ones. A large number of planned coal plants around the world were either scrapped or converted so that they could also burn biomass.

But we struggle to kick the dirty fuel habit - All of the world's electricity will have to come from low-carbon generation by 2050 to meet the Paris Agreement global warming targets. This is "challenged" by growing electricity demand. Currently, solar PV and wind generation technologies account for less than 10 percent of the market. Despite coal's hefty CO2 emissions, some countries and even international development banks continue to fund and develop new coal capacity.

We can transform

Electrification is a "feasible, scalable and affordable" option to decarbonise mass transportation. Electric vehicles (EVs) are the fastest-growing part of the automobile industry and if these cars and trucks are charged with low-carbon electricity they can significantly reduce emissions. It is possible to make existing and new buildings in all parts of the world either nearly zero-energy or low-energy. Most industrial processes in general can be decarbonised through a combination of technology using electricity and hydrogen, carbon capture and innovation in the circular use of materials (i.e. recycling and reusing).

But change is slow

Transport emissions grew at an average of two

Unequal

Most people in the world never take long-haul flights in the first place and do not have access to nutritious food. Billions of people have a carbon footprint far below nine tons of CO2 equivalent. For example, the average carbon footprint per inhabitant in Afghanistan is less than one ton, according to the report, while in most western developed nations it is well over 10 tons. And within countries there can also be an enormous split between the lavish energy consumption of the rich and the meagre carbon footprint of poorer people.

In fact, about half of the world's emissions can be attributed to the consumption of the richest 10 percent of the global population, the report said. At the bottom of the wealth pyramid, the poorest half of the world contributes around 10 percent of consumption emissions. "Wealthy individuals contribute disproportionately to higher emissions and have a high potential for emissions reductions while maintaining decent living standards and well-being," the report said.

Beyond behavior

The responsibility for transforming the world's energy use and economic system to deal with climate change cannot be borne on the shoulders of individuals alone, the report stresses. While people can make a difference with their lifestyle choices, the IPCC says transformative change involves more than just individuals' consumption choices. There also need to be shifts in culture and social norms, business investment, political drivers from institutions, and changes in infrastructure. —AFP

percent a year per between 2010 and 2019, due to continued "high travel demand, heavier vehicles, low efficiencies and car-centric development". Beyond charging EVs with zero-emissions electricity, car manufacturing, shipping and aviation also need to be decarbonised, as do supply chains in general.

As for construction, the low ambition of government policies is a particular concern, for both existing buildings in developed countries and new buildings in developing ones. The strong global demand for basic materials means industrial emissions continue to grow. This demand must be sharply reduced, alongside the rapid scale up of low-carbon innovations, otherwise there is a risk of locking in emissions "for decades to come".

A crescendo of climate action

An increasing number of countries say they plan to achieve "net-zero" CO2, or greenhouse gas, emissions by mid-century. Mandatory policies like pricing and regulation have expanded, while many businesses have promised to curb emissions. Climate activism is growing, labor unions are starting to engage with the issues, while media coverage of climate change is increasing and becoming better at accurately reflecting the science.

But action needs to happen faster

Current national pledges under the Paris Agreement will not limit global warming to the target of 1.5 degrees Celsius. Many net-zero targets are "ambiguously defined" and the policies to achieve them are not yet in place. Low-carbon alternatives need much more investment, while "status quo interests" are acting to block progress. People are also subjected to misinformation on online and in traditional media that has "undermined significantly" understanding of the science. —AFP

Climate scorecard: The good news and bad news

PARIS: The task is clear-stop burning fossil fuels, radically reduce energy demand and slash all planet-warming emissions in order to keep the planet cool enough so humans, animals and plants can survive and thrive. So how do the actions of the world so far match up to the challenge? Here is a rundown from the UN Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change's handbook on how to halt global warming:

Emissions growth is slowing

While we are continuing to spew more carbon dioxide (CO2) into the atmosphere, the rate of that increase has slowed in recent years. Emissions actually fell in 2020 - by an estimated 5.8 percent compared to 2019 - as governments around the world imposed unprecedented lockdowns to try to halt the spread of Covid-19.

Demand for energy shrank in almost all areas-except residential buildings. International aviation emissions were down some 45 percent. Meanwhile, at least 24 countries in the world have managed to cut greenhouse gas emissions and consumption-based CO2 pollution for a decade or more. Almost all are in Europe, although the list also includes the United States and Jamaica.

But they need to fall, and fast

Emissions have already rebounded from the pandemic. Developing nations that have come from a low base per capita are seeing sharp increases. And carbon footprints per person in rich countries remain stubbornly high, particularly in Australia, Canada.



SANAA: Yemeni volunteers prepare food to be distributed for free for the fast-breaking 'iftar' meal in the capital Sanaa during the Muslim holy month of Ramadan. —AFP

Yemenis between hope and despair after ceasefire

SANAA: A fragile two-month truce brokered by the United Nations in war-torn Yemen has given people just a glimmer of hope as they continue to struggle for survival. Many fear the latest ceasefire in the seven-year-old conflict, coinciding with the start of the Muslim holy month of Ramadan, will only silence the guns temporarily. "With the truce, the situation might get better," said Maha Hmeid, 44, a teacher in the western port city of Hodeida.

"But it will be slow, and if it fails then our last hope is over," she added, calling the humanitarian situation "frightening and disastrous". Mujahid Salah, 43, who lives in the rebel-held capital Sanaa, was more sombre, telling AFP that "I think this truce, like the ones before it, will fail, and the first ones to lose in this case will be the Yemeni citizens".

Yemen, long the poorest country in the Arab world, has also been battered by what the UN calls the world's worst humanitarian crisis, with 80 percent of the country's 30 million people now dependent on aid. The war between the government, supported by a Saudi-led military coalition, and the Iran-backed Houthi rebels has killed hundreds of thousands, displaced millions and pushed Yemen to the brink of famine.

Many people have been disappointed over and over again, with numerous previous ceasefires failing to hold for long and civilians almost always caught in the crossfire. The latest UN-brokered truce went into effect Saturday, with the possibility for an extension beyond the two months-but three days later the warring parties had already traded accusations of ceasefire violations. Salah argued that if the most pressing needs of the long-suffering people-such as payment of wages amid soaring inflation-are not met, then "what is the point?" —AFP

Land For Sale

At Duqum

(Sultanate of Oman) - Industrial land
Area: 30000m2
Location: Duqum, Industrial Area, Wilayat of Duqum, Sultanate of Oman

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