

## UN Environment Assembly Opens Amid Calls to Inject Vitality into Sustainability Agenda

NAIROBI - The fourth session of the United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA) opened in Nairobi on Monday with a rallying call for adoption of technologies and innovations to boost green and inclusive growth. More than 4,700 delegates, including presidents, ministers, business leaders, scientists and innovators, will be attending the gathering that is expected to adopt resolutions that will help leapfrog societies to a more sustainable future.

"We know we can build more sustainable, prosperous and inclusive societies with sustainable consumption and production patterns that address our environmental challenges and leave no one behind," said Siim Kiisler, Estonia's minister for environment and president of the fourth



session of UNEA.

"But we will need to create the enabling conditions for this to happen," Kiisler said in his opening remarks. "We will need to do things differ-

ently."

The theme of this year's UNEA that runs through March 15 is "Innovative solutions for environmental challenges and sustainable con-

sumption and production."

French President Emmanuel Macron, his Kenyan counterpart Uhuru Kenyatta and other world leaders will on Thursday headline the One Planet Summit that focuses on innovative measures to promote climate resilience.

Other landmark events expected at the five-day assembly will be the launch of the sixth edition of Global Environment Outlook, which will shed light on the status of the planet's health. Keriako Tobiko, Kenya's cabinet secretary in the ministry of environment and forestry, said adoption of cutting-edge technologies and innovations is key to tackling pressing environmental challenges like plastic waste and degradation of habitats. ...*(More on P4)...(11)*

### China Grounds All Boeing 737 Max 8 Planes after Ethiopian Airlines Crash Kills Nearly 160 Passengers

BEIJING - China's civilian aviation authority has ordered all Chinese airlines to temporarily ground their Boeing 737 Max 8 planes after one flying for Ethiopian Airlines crashed after taking off from Ethiopia's capital on Sunday, killing 157 people on board. The passengers, who were from at least 35 countries, included three Austrian physicians, the co-founder of an international aid organization, a career ambassador, the wife and children of a Slovak leg-

islator, a Nigerian-born Canadian college professor, eight Chinese nationals, and at least eight Americans, according to the airline. The Civil Aviation Administration of China said the order to ground planes was issued at 9 a.m. Beijing time Monday and would last nine hours. It said the order was taken out of safety concerns because the Ethiopian crash was the second in similar circumstances since an Indonesian crash in October ...*(More on P4)...(14)*

WASHINGTON - U.S. President Donald Trump is open to a third summit with Kim Jong Un, top leader of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK), National Security Adviser John Bolton said on Sunday. In an interview with ABC on Sunday, Bolton said that President Trump had invested a lot of time in trying to develop a personal relationship with Kim, and Trump is confident in that relationship. "He said he's open to a

third summit, none has been scheduled, and some time they have to go by," Bolton added. When asked about some reports on imagery analysis of activities in the DPRK, Bolton said that he would not speculate on what that particular commercial satellite picture shows. Bolton also noted that Washington had not asked Pyongyang about the images of DPRK's rocket launch facility, while he revealed that he would speak with his South Korean counter-

### Trump Open to A Third Summit with DPRK: Bolton



part on this matter Monday morning. U.S. media widely reported that the DPRK appeared to have start-

ed "rapid rebuilding" of the long-range rocket site at Tongchang-ri Launch Facility, citing ...*(More on P4)...(12)*

### Russian Defense Ministry Boasts about Revived Military Power



MOSCOW - Russia's defense minister says the military has com-

missions during six years on the job, saying Monday in a speech to lawmakers that the armed forces have turned into a mobile force capable of projecting power abroad. Shoigu noted that the military received more than 1,000 warplanes and combat helicopters and over 3,700 tanks in 2012-2018. He added that the army has formed 10 brigades armed with state-of-the-art Iskander missiles. Shoigu said that the

### 'Lucky Day': Two Passengers Narrowly Escape Death after Missing Doomed Ethiopian Airlines Flight

ADDIS ABABA - At least two passengers believe they have been given a second chance at life after missing the fatal Ethiopian Airlines flight that killed everyone onboard after the Boeing 737 MAX 8 crashed shortly after takeoff. Just two minutes can make a difference to someone's fate, Antonis Mavropoulos discovered this weekend after arriving late at the gate, preventing him from boarding the doomed flight. "I could see peo-

ple boarding. I was very angry they didn't let me in," he told Greece's ALPHA TV, recalling how his fury disappeared after he was told that the brand new Boeing 737 MAX had crashed just six minutes after takeoff. After the initial shock of hearing the news, the Greek man came to realize that it was his "lucky day." "I'm grateful to live and that I have so many friends that made me feel their love," he said in a lengthy Facebook post. ...*(More on P4)...(15)*

### UK Prime Minister Fights to Save Brexit Deal

LONDON - British Prime Minister Theresa May refused to admit defeat for her European Union divorce deal Monday, despite deadlocked talks with the bloc a day before Parliament is scheduled to vote on the plan. The House of Commons is due to vote Tuesday on whether to approve a deal that it resoundingly rejected in January. There are few signs of any big shift in opinion, with British lawmakers still divided over whether to leave the EU, and if so on what terms. The EU, meanwhile, is frustrated at what it sees as the inability of Britain's government to lay out a clear vision for Brexit - and because it is seeking changes to an agreement that May herself helped negotiate. ...*(More on P4)...(16)*

### Malaysia Court Frees Woman in North Korea Murder Case

SHAH ALAM (Malaysia) - An Indonesian woman accused of assassinating the North Korean leader's half-brother was freed Monday after Malaysian prosecutors dropped a murder charge against her, in a shock decision that delighted her friends and family.

Siti Aisyah smiled as she was ushered into a car outside the court, where she had been on trial for a year and a half alongside a Vietnamese woman for the 2017 murder of Kim Jong Nam at Kuala Lumpur airport. "I feel happy. I did not know this will happen. I did not expect it," said the 27-year-old, who earlier hugged her tearful Vietnamese co-accused, Doan Thi Huong, in the dock when the news was announced. ...*(More on P4)...(17)*

### Germany to Keep Pressing Turkey on Permits for Reporters

BERLIN - The German government says it will continue to press Turkey to grant foreign reporters the necessary credentials to work in the country. Two German journalists who were denied media credentials to work in Turkey were forced to leave the country Sunday, prompting protests from German officials. Government spokesman Steffen Seibert said Monday that "for us the case of these two journalists who left doesn't end with their departure. We will continue to represent their interests." Seibert urged the Turkish government to "find



a swift solution for the German and European journalists who, as you know, are still waiting for news on whether their accreditation will be extended." Asked about the situation for Turkish reporters, Seibert said Germany is "very conscious of the difficult situation of free journalism in Turkey" (Fox News)

### Former Congolese Vice President Seeks Compensation from ICC

THE HAGUE, Netherlands - A former vice president of Congo who was acquitted on appeal at the International Criminal Court of crimes in Central African Republic is seeking millions of euros (dollars) in compensation. Lawyers for Jean-Pierre Bemba released a lengthy written application Monday in which they ask judges at the global court to award Bemba a total of nearly 69 million euros (\$77 million).

The sum includes compensation for a decade he spent in jail and also covers legal costs and losses to his assets, which were frozen by the court. Appeals judges last year overturned Bemba's 2016 convictions as a military commander on two counts of crimes against humanity and three counts of war crimes for a campaign of murder, rape and pillaging by his troops in Central African Republic from 2002-2003. (Fox News)

### Israeli Researchers Identify Wheat Genes with Higher Yields

JERUSALEM - Israeli researchers have developed a genetic basis for the cultivation of advanced wheat varieties with higher yields, said a report by the Hebrew University of Jerusalem on Monday. In the study, which was published in the scientific journal "PNAS" and conducted jointly with German and Japanese researchers, the team identified wild wheat genes that no longer exist in modern wheat. Wild wheat is one of the first plants to be domesticated about 10,000 years ago. Over the years, many essential traits in the wild species have disappeared from the modern ones. The study began with hybridization between wild and modern wheat, trying to get back vital alleles, which are important genetic variations that were "lost" during the modernizing process. By genetically mapping the traits of wild wheat affecting the crop components, the researchers identified a unique gene mutation, which causes the development of more grains of wheat in each oatmeal. It was also found that wild wheat has a gene that controls the number of seeds to develop, whereas during cultivation, the mutation was able to prevent its activity. The focus of the research is the need to develop wheat varieties that are more resistant to water shortage, with the wheat being less adapted to the environment than wild wheat. At the same time, ways are being explored to increase yields. ...*(More on P4)...(18)*

## Neighbor News

### China Will Not Pick Sides in India-Pakistan Disputes, Say Chinese State-Run Media

BEIJING - China will not pick sides if war breaks out between India and Pakistan, according to a string of articles carried by media houses linked to the ruling Communist Party of China (CPC). The outlining of Beijing's thinking is bound to come as a further constriction of Pakistan's options for escalation against India, which is upping the pressure on Islamabad's continuing support for terrorism. The op-ed in the Chinese state-run Global Times, which is widely considered to be a mouthpiece for the CPC, declared simply in its headline, "China will not pick sides in India-Pakistan disputes". This is latest op-ed or editorial across the gamut of state-owned Chinese newspapers that are gradually changing the tone of their commentary, especially after the Balakot airstrikes and the subsequent Pakistani attempt at retaliation. After the Pulwama terror attack, in which Jaish-e-Mohammad terrorists killed 40 Indian paramilitary personnel, Chinese government voices and the media repeatedly called for restraint. But after the airstrikes, the tone slowly changed into an emphatically stated position of neutrality. "Although China supported Pakistan in alleviating poverty and wiping out terrorism, Beijing is not an enemy of New Delhi... China will not pick sides in India-Pakistan disputes. (Agencies)

### Rouhani Sets Off on Historic Visit to Iraq in Major Blow to Trump

TEHRAN - Iranian President Hassan Rouhani is in Baghdad on a trip aimed at solidifying strategic ties despite US efforts to keep the two neighbors apart and curb Iran's influence in the region. He met with his Iraqi counterpart Barham Salih shortly after arrival on Monday for important talks which the Iranian president described as "very good." "Strengthening ties between Tehran and Baghdad works to the benefit of both countries and we won't let this positive path towards progress slow down to a halt," Rouhani said at a joint news conference. Salih described the trip as "very important" and said the two sides had agreed on new frameworks for cooperation which would be unveiled later in the day. "We need to get past trivial details in mutual relations and think about the bigger and broader space for cooperation and ties because this would best serve the interests of both countries," he added. The Iranian president also thanked Iraq for hosting millions of Iranians who pour into the neighboring country every year to mark the occasion of Arba'een, which is the 40th day after the martyrdom anniversary of Imam Hussein (AS). (Press TV)

### Turkmenistan Publishes Data on State Budget Execution

ASHGABAT - As per the results for January-February 2019, the revenue part of the state budget was executed at the level of 2.65 billion manats, and the expenditure part at 2.55 billion manats, Trend reports referring to the Turkmen government. The Turkmen Parliament of the 6th convocation adopted the draft law "On the state budget of Turkmenistan for 2019". In general, the revenues and expenditures of the state budget in 2019 are both in the amount of 8.3868.3 million manats. The official exchange rate of the Turkmenistan manat to \$1 from January 2015 remains at the level of 3.50 Turkmen manats. The revenue part of the budget is formed mainly by such major sectors of the production sphere as oil and gas, chemical, electric power industry, construction, with the agro-industrial complex, the sphere of transport and communications, and the textile and food industries also to receive further development. Turkmenistan holds one of the key positions in the region in terms of the supply of natural gas. China and Iran are importers of Turkmen gas. (Trend)

### Pakistan to Propose 30 Projects in Pak-Qatar Investment Conference: Dawood

ISLAMABAD - Abdul Razak Dawood, Advisor to the Prime Minister on Commerce, Industry and Investment said on Sunday that around 30 projects were being proposed to the Qatar government and investors, besides discussions to further explore the potential of trade and investment between the private sectors of both countries. Addressing a joint Pakistan-Qatar Trade and Investment Conference organized by Board of Investment Pakistan, in Doha, in collaboration with Qatar Finance Center and Embassy of Pakistan Doha, he appreciated the joint efforts of Pakistani and Qatari authorities for organizing the joint investment and business conference. The Pakistani delegation, comprising leading businessmen and investors from various sectors, is being led by, Abdul Razak Dawood, and Chairman Board of Investment (BoI), Haroon Sharif, said a message received here. The event was jointly chaired by Advisor to the Prime Minister Abdul Razak Dawood and Qatar's Minister of Commerce and Industry, Ali Bin Ahmed Al Kuwari, and attended by important businessmen and investors from Qatar, including Tourism and Hospitality, Fintech, Finance and Agriculture & Food businesses. (Monitoring Desk)