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Inside C2

Southern DAILY

Make Today Different

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Greenhouse gas levels hit record; world struggles to curb damage

GENEVA/GLASGOW, Oct 25 (Reuters) - Greenhouse gas concentrations hit a record last year and the world is "way off track" in capping rising temperatures, the United Nations said on Monday in a stark illustration of the tasks facing UN climate talks in Scotland.

A report by the U.N. World Meteorological Organization (WMO) showed carbon dioxide levels surged to 413.2 parts per million in 2020, rising more than the average rate over the last decade despite a temporary dip in emissions during COVID-19 lockdowns.

WMO Secretary-General Petteri Taalas said the current rate of increase in heat-trapping gases would result in temperature rises "far in excess" of the 2015 Paris Agreement target of 1.5 degrees Celsius above the pre-industrial average this century. "We are way off track," he said. "We need to revisit our industrial, energy and transport systems and whole way of life," he added, calling for a "dramatic increase" in commitments at the COP26 conference beginning on Sunday.

The city of Glasgow was putting on the final touches before hosting the climate talks, which may be the world's best remaining chance to cap global warming at the 1.5-2 degrees Celsius upper limit set out in the Paris Agreement.

Under countries' current pledges, global emissions would be 16% higher in 2030 than they were in 2010, according to a separate analysis by the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC).

That is far off the 45% reduction by 2030 that scientists say is needed to cap warming at 1.5 degrees and avoid its most devastating impacts.

"Overshooting the temperature goals will lead to a destabilised world and endless suffering, especially among those who have contributed the least to the (greenhouse gas) emissions in the atmosphere," said Patricia Espinosa, Executive Secretary of the UNFCCC.

"We are nowhere near where science says we should be," Espinosa said.

British Prime Minister Boris Johnson told



Smoke and steam billow from Belchatow Power Station, Europe's largest coal-fired power plant, near Belchatow, Poland. Picture taken November 28, 2018. REUTERS/Kacper Pempel/File Photo

a news conference with children the summit was going to be "very, very tough". read more

"I am very worried because it might go wrong and we might not get the agreements that we need and it is touch and go, it is very, very difficult, but I think it can be done," he said.

The German government announced Chancellor Angela Merkel will travel to Glasgow to take part. read more Russian President Vladimir Putin will not attend in person. He and Chinese President Xi Jinping are expected to make video appearances instead.

Britain is seeking support from major powers for a more radical plan to tackle global warming. Johnson urged Putin, for instance, to bring forward by 10 years Russia's target for achieving net zero carbon emissions, from 2060 to 2050, Johnson's office said on Monday. The Kremlin said Putin promised that Russia's delegation to Glasgow "will contribute to a successful work of such an important international forum".

'SOURCE OF DEEP FRUSTRATION'

The stakes for the planet are huge - among

them the very survival of low-lying countries, the impact on economic livelihoods the world over and the future stability of the global financial system. Alok Sharma, the president of COP26, said developed nations are set to be three years late meeting a pledge to commit a total of \$500 billion to help poorer countries tackle climate change.

Rich nations vowed in 2009 to deliver \$100 billion a year for five years, starting in 2020. But a plan on how to do so, prepared by Canada and Germany ahead of the summit, said the annual target would now not be met until 2023. read more

"Understandably, this has been a source of deep frustration for developing countries," Sharma told a televised news conference.

U.S. President Joe Biden's climate envoy John Kerry, attending an event in Saudi Arabia, said the private sector must step in to help governments achieve emission targets. read more

Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman said on Saturday that the world's top oil exporter aims to reach "net zero" emissions of greenhouse

Former Facebook employee and whistleblower Frances Haugen testifies during a Senate Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation hearing entitled 'Protecting Kids Online: Testimony from a Facebook Whistleblower' on Capitol Hill, in Washington, U.S., October 5,

gases by 2060 - 10 years later than the United States. He also said it would double the emissions cuts it plans to achieve by 2030.

A Reuters poll of economists found that hitting the Paris goal of net-zero carbon emissions will require investments in a green transition worth 2%-3% of world output each year until 2050, far less than the economic cost of inaction.

By contrast, governments since January 2020 have spent a total of \$10.8 trillion - or 10.2% of global output - in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. A "business-as-usual" trajectory leading to temperature rises of 1.6C, 2.4C and 4.4C by 2030, 2050 and 2100 respectively would result in 2.4% lost output by 2030, 10% by 2050 and 18% by 2100, according to the median replies to the survey.

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WEA LEE'S GLOBAL NOTES

CORONAVIRUS DIARY 10/25/2021



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Spirit Of Entrepreneurship Awards Dinner

When The Asian Chamber of Commerce celebrated their 30 years of service to our community, they sponsored a beautiful banquet at the Houston's Lone Star Flight Museum.

More than 700 guests enjoyed the evening with the keynote speaker former U.S. Secretary of Transportation Elaine Chao and many officials from many cities and countries.

As Chairman Bin Yu and incoming Chairman Kenneth Li said in their remarks, "The Asian Chamber of Commerce serves a community of diverse and successful business members representing different industries and stands as a strong advocate for the Asian business community in Houston, Texas."

Keynote speaker Secretary Chao congratulated the Asian Chamber for 30 years of service to the Asian Pacific American Community in Texas and to our nation's economy.

She also pointed out the entrepreneurial spirit of the Asian Pacific American Community which has created so many

jobs as well as so much opportunity and prosperity for all. It was in her tenure that the Department of Labor's Bureau of Statistics began to break out into a new distinct category to include the employment data of Asians and Asian Americans in America. Today there are 2.5 million Asian American-owned firms in the United States and they contribute \$815 billion to our country's economy.

In her speech, Secretary Chao looked back on when she first arrived in America as a young immigrant girl at the age of 8.

She was not able to speak English and was very unfamiliar with American culture at that time. She said that she never could have imagined that she would be where she is today.

The beautiful dinner tonight was not just to point out that the Asian American business community is a vital part of our nation's economy. This strong message lets all the people understand that we are an important part of this great nation.



Southern DAILY Make Today Different

Editor's Choice



Cast members stand on the stage after performing on the re-opening night of "Phantom of the Opera" at the Majestic Theater in New York City. REUTERS/Caitlin Ochs



Participant Norbert Dopf from Austria arrives for the German Moustache and Beard Championships 2021 at Pullman City Western Theme Park in Eging am See, Germany. REUTERS/Lukas Barth



A man rides a rickshaw in Kabul, Afghanistan. REUTERS/Jorge Silva



A vehicle drives through a flooded area as a powerful storm drenched northern California in Fairfield, California. REUTERS/Carlos Barria



People watch a flock of sheep during the annual parade on the streets of Madrid, as shepherds demand to exercise their right to use traditional migration routes for their livestock from northern Spain to winter grazing pasture land in southern Spain. REUTERS/Javier Barbancho



Cars drive on a road that leads from the Israeli town of Mitzpe Ramon into the Ramon crater in the Negev desert, southern Israel. REUTERS/ Ilan Rosenberg

BUSINESS

WMO Chief Prof Petteri Taalas: "We Are Way Off Track."

World Greenhouse Gas Levels Hit Record; Countries Struggle To Curb Damage



The concentration of carbon dioxide, the most important greenhouse gas, is now 50% higher than before the Industrial Revolution. (Photo: sturti/Getty Images)

KEY POINTS

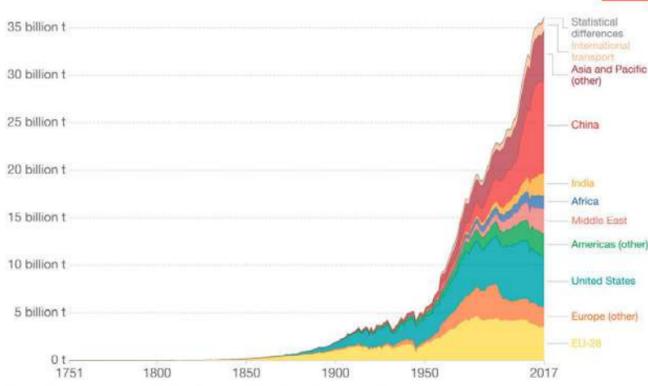
UN seeks 'dramatic increase' in climate commitments Summit will seek to avert menacing levels of warming UK's Johnson says COP26 outcome is 'touch and go'

Compiled And Edited By John T. Robbins, Southern Daily Editor

GENEVA/GLASGOW, Oct 25 (Reuters) - Greenhouse gas concentrations hit a record last year and the world is "way off track" on capping rising temperatures, the United Nations said on Monday, showing the task facing climate talks in Glasgow aimed at averting dangerous levels of warming. A report by the U.N. World Meteorological Organization (WMO) showed carbon dioxide levels surged to 413.2 parts per million in 2020, rising more than the average rate over the last decade despite a temporary dip in emissions during COVID-19 lockdowns. WMO Secretary-General Petteri Taalas said the current rate of increase in heat-trapping gases would result in temperature rises "far in excess" of the 2015 Paris Agreement target of 1.5 degrees Celsius above the pre-industrial average this century. "We are way off track," he said. "We need to revisit our industrial, energy

and transport systems and whole way of life," he added, calling for a "dramatic increase" in commitments at the COP26 conference beginning on Sunday. The Scottish city of Glasgow was putting on the final touches before hosting the climate talks, which may be the world's last best chance to cap global warming at the 1.5-2 degrees Celsius upper limit set out in the Paris Agreement. "It is going to be very, very tough this summit," British Prime Minister Boris Johnson said during a news conference with children. "I am very worried because it might go wrong and we might not get the agreements that we need and it is touch and go, it is very, very difficult, but I think it can be done," he said. The German government announced Chancellor Angela Merkel will travel to Glasgow to take part.

Annual total CO2 emissions, by world region



Source: Carbon Dioxide Information Analysis Center (CDIAC); Global Carbon Project (GCP). Note: The difference between the global estimate and the sum of national totals is labeled "Statistical differences". OurWorldInData.org/co2-and-other-greenhouse-gas-emissions - CC BY

STAKES ARE HUGE

The stakes for the planet are huge - among them the impact on economic livelihoods the world over and the future stability of the global financial system. Saudi Arabia's crown prince said on Saturday that the world's top oil exporter aims to reach "net zero" emissions of greenhouse gases, mostly produced by burning fossil fuels, by 2060 - 10 years later than the United States. He also said it would double the emissions cuts it plans to achieve by 2030. An official plan unveiled in Ottawa showed developed nations were confident they can reach their goal of handing over \$100 billion a year to poorer countries to tackle climate change by 2023, three years late. The plan on how to reach the goal, prepared by Canada and Germany, said developed countries still needed to do more and complained private finance had not lived up to expectations. A Reuters poll of economists found that hitting the Paris goal of net-zero carbon emissions will require investments in a green transition worth 2%-3% of world output each year until 2050, far less than the economic cost of inaction. By contrast governments since January 2020 have spent a total of \$10.8 trillion - or 10.2% of global output - in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. "WE DON'T HAVE TIME" A "business-as-usual" trajectory leading to temperature rises of 1.6C, 2.4C and 4.4C by 2030, 2050 and 2100 respectively would result in 2.4% lost output by 2030, 10% by 2050 and 18%

by 2100, according to the median replies to the survey. Australia's cabinet was expected to formally adopt a target for net zero emissions by 2050 when it meets on Monday to review a deal reached between parties in Prime Minister Scott Morrison's coalition government, official sources told Reuters. The ruling coalition has been divided over how to tackle climate change, with the government maintaining that harder targets would damage the A\$2-trillion (\$1.5-trillion) economy.



Smoke and steam billow from Belchatow Power Station, Europe's largest coal-fired power plant, near Belchatow, Poland. Picture taken November 28, 2018. REUTERS/Kacper Pempel/File Photo In London, climate activists restarted their campaign of blockading major roads by disrupting traffic in the city's financial district, while in Madrid a few dozen people staged a sit-in protest, briefly blocking the Gran Via shopping street. "Greenhouse gas emissions are provoking climate catastrophes all over the planet. We don't have time. It's already late and if we don't join the

action against what's happening, we won't have time to save what is still left," said Alberto, 27, a sociologist who took part in the protest. (Courtesy https://www.reuters.com/)

Related Climate Crisis: Despite Lockdowns Greenhouse Gas Levels Hit New Record, Per UN Report

The data send a 'stark' message to the nations tasked with increasing action at the Cop26 climate summit, UN meteorology chief says Levels of climate-heating gases in the atmosphere hit record levels in 2020, despite coronavirus-related lockdowns, the UN's World Meteorological Organization has announced. The concentration of carbon dioxide, the most important greenhouse gas, is now 50% higher than before the Industrial Revolution sparked the mass burning of fossil fuels. Methane levels have more than doubled since 1750. All key greenhouse gases (GHG) rose faster in 2020 than the average for the previous decade and this trend has continued in 2021, the WMO report found. The data shows the climate crisis continues to worsen and send a "stark" message to the nations meeting at the Cop26 climate summit in Glasgow in a week's time, according to WMO chief Prof Petteri Taalas: "We are way off track."



The negotiators at the summit must deliver action to keep alive the goal of ending GHG emissions by 2050 and avoiding the worst climate impacts. Only stopping emissions will stabilise the levels of the gases and halt the temperature rises that drive the increasing damage from heatwaves, floods and droughts. "At the current rate of increase in GHG concentrations, we will see a temperature increase by the end of this century far in excess of the Paris Agreement targets of 1.5C to 2C," said Taalas. "[Rising levels of GHGs] have major negative repercussions for our daily lives and wellbeing, and for the future of our children and grandchildren." (Courtesy theguardian.com)

COMMUNITY

The Global Pandemic Has Made Mental Well-Being A Public Health Priority



US gymnast Simone Biles has put the spotlight on athletes' mental health at the Tokyo Olympics. (Photo: REUTERS/Lindsey Wass)

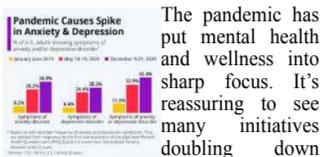
Key Points

With mental health symptoms surging during the pandemic, nurturing mental wellness has become a collective social responsibility. •Early diagnosis and self-care can help manage the progression of mental illnesses and reduce healthcare costs. •Great self-care means expanding the range of mental-health services available to the public.

Compiled And Edited By John T. Robbins, Southern Daily Editor

With the psychological impact of the pandemic likely to linger for years, self-care is not a luxury but a public health necessity. Focusing on mental wellness is a collective social responsibility. As third and fourth waves of COVID-19 surge in some parts of the world, highly vaccinated countries are cautiously reopening, breathing more freely, hopeful in early indications that inoculation will keep virus and variants under control. As we look ahead, we must also find solutions to supporting and improving mental health. During the pandemic, nearly half of US adults reported symptoms of anxiety or depression, a figure that has been largely consistent, up from one in 10 who reported these symptoms from January to June 2019. In France, cases of depression doubled. We can see similar mental health

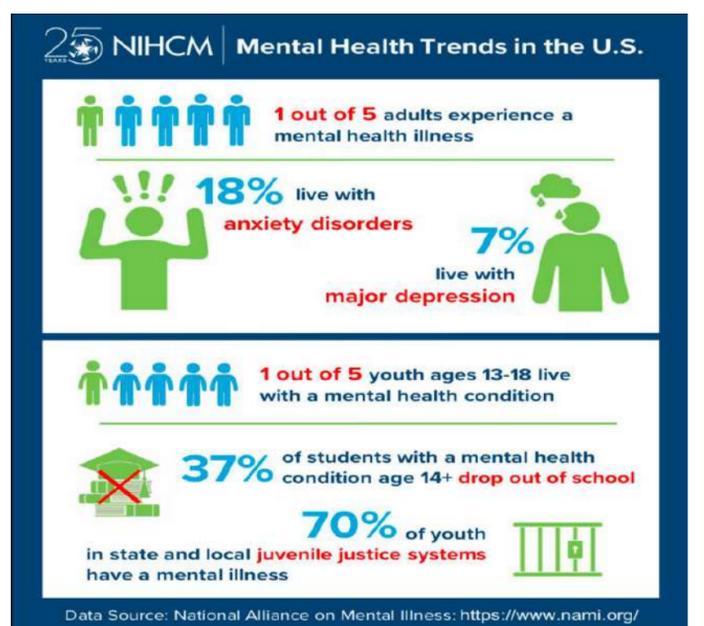
concerns growing worldwide. It's disproportionately affecting young adults, people of color and essential workers, even people without prior mental health disorders. Lockdowns have also limited access to mental health services, creating backlogs in care. Not to mention the remote working lifestyle we have been in for more than a year now, which often creates feeling of being disconnected from colleagues, even when connected technologically to them.



on mental-health awareness now: the World Health Organization (WHO), the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the UK's Royal Family and the Global Self-Care Federation are just a few among many others that have championed it as a priority and have undertaken large-scale public service campaigns to destigmatize symptoms and raise awareness of available solutions. Taking care of mental health is good for individuals and good for public health systems in the future, as early intervention and prevention helps keep many people out of more burdensome clinical settings. Insomnia is one example that comes to mind, a condition that has grown upwards of an estimated 20% since the pandemic. By working closely with healthcare communities, we can help raise awareness of insomnia's repercussions on overall mental and physical wellness. Over-the-counter medicines can help support people in their management of early sleep issues.



Non-medical solutions also exist: for example, Music Care, a research and digital program for patient care through music, has been clinically proven to naturally reduce both alertness and the need for sedation among hospital patients, promoting relaxation and sleep. There's much more we can do with the mental health community to support improved sleep as just one small part of the solution. The pandemic has spurred many people to pay better attention to their health with increased everyday physical activity for some, and for others, an improved diet with more home-cooked meals. Yet we know good habits are sometimes hard to keep up: According to one study, 70% of adults under 40 say they believe they are performing sufficient self-care, but just over half of their doctors and pharmacists say their patients aren't doing enough. We can close this gap with better preventive mental wellness efforts and more self-care, areas that had already begun to gain attention even before the pandemic.



Beyond raising awareness about mental health, it's about taking concrete action and correspondingly providing appropriate resourcing and building a supportive ecosystem. During the World Health Assembly in May, WHO officials called worsened mental health worldwide from COVID-19 a "mass trauma" and consequently adopted a decision endorsing an update to the WHO's Mental Health Action Plan: It will include forums on suicide prevention, workplace mental health, universal health coverage, mental health of children, mental health across the life course, and the involvement of people with lived experience of mental health conditions. More self-care is also about improved access to health services for the broader population. Due to the accelerated digital transformation hastened by the pandemic, internet platforms have become key levers for empowered self-care. There, people can find out more about their health conditions, including mental wellness-related ones, seek support, assess options and get solutions. Incredibly accessible, putting information literally at your fingertips, these new channels provide people with the opportunity to manage their health - to self-care - in a more effective way, without taking away resources from the frontline. The development of teleconsultation in medicine, the evolution of click and collect and home delivery by e-pharmacies is

putting the pharmacist at the centre of population health, more and more playing the role of health counsellor.



Today, there is a need to extend these services to people experiencing mental health problems, especially when pharmacists are likely to be their first point of contact. Pharmacists have a significant role to play if we make mental health for all a global reality. That said, not all mental wellness can be managed with self-care alone; but multiple studies have shown that screening and early professional intervention will prevent more severe conditions from setting in following major trauma. Individuals can be their own strongest advocates, with governments, industry and patient groups each playing a role in strengthening true consumer literacy in this field. Not only is it important to recognize mental health risks, but we also need to stay in tune to identifying symptoms, take courageous steps to self-care, and engage with the right solutions. Together, we can solve the mental health challenges we'll still face even after COVID-19 is under control. (Courtesy weforum.org)