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GLOBAL UP-TO-DATE

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The world around us is changing rapidly. Wars, new turn in global politics, human rights issues are occurring every day, posing new challenges and concerns. Global Up-to-Date is an initiative by Centre for Governance Studies (CGS) which will work as a hub for explaining the contemporary global issues.

The regular briefs will focus and explain the issues related to International Politics, Economy, Security, Human Rights, and Development. There will be a monthly printed version newsletter containing briefs of all the contemporary global important issues. The online version contains regular updates of the pressing issues along with the PDF version of the newsletter.



Summit of The Sanctioned Leaders: Kim Jong Un's Visit to Russia

Marzana Mahnaz



North Korea has been a lone wolf for a long time as it lacked true allies and faced sanctions from multiple countries. Although North Korea had China as its economic partner, China emerging as a superpower in the current world may have sparked insecurity in North Korea. Like their neighbor China, North Korea now feels the urgency to make a powerful ally and be part of the global superpower league. And of that urgency, Kim Jong Un, the reclusive leader of North Korea, made his first trip to Russia since before the COVID-19 pandemic.

Kim Jong Un traveled to Russia by his bulletproof train and reached far east of Russia on Tuesday, September 12th, a day ahead of time for his meeting with Vladimir Putin. The next day, Putin welcomed Kim for their meeting at VostochnyCosmodrome in the far eastern Amur region, Russia. On his trip to Russia, Kim Jong Un was accompanied by North Korean military officials, including those in charge of weapons production and space technology with the notable presence of Munitions Industry Department Director Jo Chun Ryong.

North Korea has always been a secluded country. As for Russia, after the war with Ukraine, has fallen under sanctions and has been isolated from the world as well. Both leaders held their meeting as the nature of their state, secluded, no Western journalists were invited to the summit. That said, most of the content of the meeting is likely to remain secret. However, the Russian media shed little light on the contents of the meeting.

The leaders went on a tour of the cosmodrome's assembly and launch facilities, and Kim received a technical briefing on Russian spacecraft before the meeting. Meeting at the Vostochny Cosmodrome, the most significant launch facility on Russian soil, and Putin giving a tour and brief instruction on rocket launching shows Kim is looking to Russia for assistance in creating military reconnaissance satellites. Kim and Putin discussed “all issues” at hand at the moment which can be from boosting military ties, possibly including joint drills, to Russian humanitarian aid to the North.

With the Ukraine-Russia war in the backdrop, the sudden Summit between the two isolated leaders has raised a common concern in the West, possible arms deal between the two allies. Previously this year, Russian Defense Minister Sergei Shoigu visited Pyongyang to attend the 70th anniversary of the victory in the Korean War. On that visit, Kim gave a personal tour of an arms exhibition to Shoigu. So, it is very obvious that the meeting between these two leaders can only mean making a munition deal however no public agreement was made. Russia has lost a grave amount of artillery and munition in the war that needs to be replenished, and it is believed that North Korea has a substantial inventory of rockets and artillery rounds compatible with Soviet-era weaponry, as well as a history of manufacturing such ammunition that could meet the necessity of Russia’s war plan. North Korea declared long ago that they would be by Russia’s side to fight the imperialism of the West through “just fight”.

13 years ago, Russia joined the sanctions against North Korea by the UN Security Council on 30 March 2010. President Dmitry Medvedev signed a decree implementing intensified UN Security Council sanctions against Pyongyang's nuclear programs. The presidential decree banned the purchase of weapons and relevant materials from the DPRK by government offices, enterprises, banks, organizations, and individuals currently under Russia's jurisdiction. It also prohibited the transit of weapons and relevant materials via Russian territory.

A decade has passed and Russia is also facing sanctions by the US for invading Ukraine in 2022 to start a war. At present time, Russia is in dire need of weapons to win the war. In this necessary time, the Russian leader has turned to the country on which he had imposed sanctions for the weaponry that he desperately needed at the present time. Although Kim Jong Un has his motive to shake hands with Putin, acquiring advanced satellite and submarine technology.

Behind The Libya Floods Tragedy: A Culprit Known to All but Acknowledged by Few

Kazi Israt Jahan



Just when the world was already weeping in the devastation of the Morocco earthquake tragedy, another tragedy struck in one of their neighboring countries, Libya. It has become like a race of rising death toll in both countries, a race of devastation. On September 11th,thousands of lives washed away to the sea in a 7-meter-high wave of gushing down water in the city of Derna. Breaking down of two dams in the outskirts of the city Derna has caused this apocalyptic flash flood causing over ten thousand deaths according to the estimation of Libyan Red Crescent as the missing peoples list cross another ten thousand but the chances of finding them alive are thin.

It all started with the torrential rainfall caused from the Mediterranean storm Daniel. A storm of the strength of a hurricane hit the Mediterranean countries pouring down a heavy rainfall equivalent of the annual rainfall of the countries in one day. Libya, a country typically of desert weather, had too little experience of such heavy rain, was caught off guard in the face of the storm. Two dams of Wadi Derna, a seasonal river that typically stays dry for most of the year, were unable to withhold such high water accumulated from the rainfall and collapsed. Seven-meter-high Violent wave of water came down and wiped out the port city Derna in the moment's notice. Bodies of people swept away to the sea, buildings and structures destroyed leaving 25 percent of the city in ruins.

So, what caused so much loss of lives in Libya? One of the obvious causes are the poor infrastructures of the city. Libya, a country with a weak economy, where a lot of people were already in need of support from the international community before the flood. Why would an oil rich country have such a poor economy, is a talk of another tale. Storm Daniel, that also down poured in parts of Turkey, Bulgaria and Greece, caused so much destruction in Libya because of the poor state of the dams and a weak governance who failed to warn and guide people despite having the warning of the Libya's National Meteorological Center. Water swelled up behind the dams and yet they didn't issue any notice to evacuate, even the curfew was lifted on September 11th.

But was that reason all behind the tragic incident? People are now asking questions about how was it normal to have such in intense storm emerge and cause rainfall in typically dry countries. The answers all point toward the one direction, Climate Change. Yes, as obvious as it seems, a time is approaching when no problem of the world will not be caused by that.

Experts say storms like Daniel are the rare ones that will be a thing called new normal in our generation. Mediterranean storms of the caliber of hurricanes, generally known as Medicanes happens only once to three times annually, and mostly in the north and west Mediterranean region like Greece. But the Medicanes are most likely to get stronger and fiercer in the gradually warming waters of the Mediterranean Sea and also affect the eastern and southern Mediterranean shores of the African continent, according to the United Nations' IPCC's Sixth Assessment Report. And the prediction is already realized in front our eyes by the storm Daniel.

Daniel caused flooding in Greece, Turkey and Bulgaria and killed more than 20 people. This storm causing flood in Greece is a one in 250-year event according to the researchers who also say that, this is going to be 10 times more likely to occur and 40 percent more intense by the fast-changing climate.

Extending heat waves and weakening jet streams are causing the atmosphere to become unbalanced. Warmer seas only help the cyclones to take up more moisture and warmer air can hold more moisture, ultimately causing more intense cyclone downpours. Lands already dried up by the warming naturally gets less able to absorb water, finally gets tremendous amount of water pouring down and the floods get worsened. Researchers are getting to the bottom of this matter by studying exactly how climate change influenced Daniel. As it is not too hard to see how it affected the storm because of the record-breaking temperature warming the Mediterranean region reaching a record 28.7 degrees Celsius, 2-3 degrees warmer than usual only three months prior the floods.

The harms caused by the same storm are so disproportionate in the countries Greece and Libya shows that, only the weak and unprepared falls victim to the climate change which is actually happening by the carbon emissions mostly done by the countries now called "Global North". Of course, they share their burdens with providing the "Climate Funds" to the global south but the lives already lost remains beyond compensation. But how much further can the global south rely on their climate funds for the adaptation and mitigation of climate change? According to the experts, the time is already approaching when they will need to divert the climate funds to themselves as they will also face the losses due to climate change and the fund is always limited.

Trump Indictment in Georgia – All Publicity is Good Publicity?

Mohammad Nihad Nowsher



The first Republican Presidential debate on August 23rd was most likely one of the Party's few televised discussions where the leading candidate was not present on stage. In this case, it was President Trump, who was engaged with case proceedings taking place in Atlanta, Georgia. According to Nielsen estimates, the corresponding Republican primary in 2015 (the debate debut of President Trump) had attracted considerably more viewers than the event on August 23rd. President Trump's presence, and political clout, was acknowledged during the debate when the majority of candidates answered in the affirmative regarding support for the former in case he was found guilty in the Georgia case.

With cases at the federal and state levels already providing publicity to President Trump's 2024 presidential run, the Georgia case happens to add to his troubles and consolidate his place in the limelight. Two criminal trials are in the mix and are scheduled to begin in 2024 with speculations about a prospective presidential pardon, if President Trump does enter the White House for a second term, doing the rounds. However, experts have noted that due to the state laws of Georgia, a legitimate pardon would be difficult, and possibly time-consuming, to obtain. WinRed (a fundraising platform endorsed by the Party) and CNN have reported that indictments in 2023 have been followed by spikes in funding to Trump's campaign. This occurred after President Trump's March 30th indictment and following charges brought against him at the federal level in June. In addition, three days after being booked and arrested in the racketeering and fraud case in Georgia, President Trump's spokesman Steven Cheung claimed that more than $7 million had been raised for the campaign. Undoubtedly, President Trump's legal troubles have taken center stage before the 2024 elections and as is apparent promise to bring to the fore unexpected twists and turns.

Minutes before the first Republican debate (which President Trump did not attend) was aired by Fox, far-right and conservative television personality Tucker Carlson posted, on social media, an interview with President Trump. In the space of four days, the post accumulated more than 260 million views, surpassing the viewership of the debate. President Trump's stronghold within Republican politics may be appreciated by the fact that he has maintained his lead following the first Republican debate and, as things stand, looks set to be the winning GOP candidate. Over the next year, President Trump's cases in Miami, Washington and Manhattan will surely receive widespread publicity, while the case in Georgia, according to state laws, may well be televised. If the Georgia case does indeed reach television viewers, the possibilities are endless for President Trump's campaign.