

Environmental fallout from the Ukraine war

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ARMIN ROSENCRANZ

On 24 February, Russian president Vladimir Putin launched an all-out invasion of Ukraine. Since the end of World War II in 1945, this is the first time one nation has tried to redraw borders in Europe. Russian preparation for the war consisted of the wrapping up of the 2021 United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP26) in November 2022. And this time, COP26 came out with environmentally significant commitments. Nations affirmed the Paris agreement targets of limiting rise of global temperature to not more than 2 degrees C from the pre-industrial period. As many as 127 nations committed to take steps to reverse forest land degradation by 2030, and 103 nations pledged to reduce methane emissions by 30 per cent of 2020 emission levels by 2030. One of the major hindrances in achieving these lofty environmental targets is the world's dependence on hydrocarbons.

The war has been going on for more than three months. It has changed geopolitics and alliances across the globe. Environment and climate are becoming policy issues impacted by it significantly. The United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA 5.2) got under way in the Kenyan city of Nairobi with environmental concerns as one of the key points of discussion. It is not only the biodiversity and wildlife of Ukraine that has been the target of the war. Russia remained oblivious to these concerns. Amidst an ongoing war, environmental protection is not a major issue for Russia.

Russia is an energy giant with \$167 billion worth of energy exports in 2020. Energy exports contribute to about 40 per cent of the Russian economy. In 2020, the carbon footprint of Russia amounted to 1.48 billion metric tonnes of CO2.

With sanctions restricting Russia's access to gas supplies in the west, the EU needs to hastily look for alternative sources. Energy imports add 40 per cent of its gas and 25 per cent of its oil from Russia. Annaelina Charlotte



Alma Baerbeck, foreign minister of Germany, mentioned during the early days of the war that Germany would stop its Russian oil imports by the end of 2022, followed by its gas supplies. Ukraine's president Volodymyr Zelenskiy is urging all EU states to stop energy trading with Russia as this "blood money" is funding the Russian war machine. Sale of Russian oil and gas accounts for \$1 billion per day, according to estimates. Economists have warned Berlin that immediate stoppage of oil and gas supplies from Russia could initiate an economic recession in the country.

Italy is the next largest buyer of Russian energy imports, as of now. Russia is looking at alternative energy sources to limit their dependency on Russian energy imports. As now, Russian gas reaches the EU through

Ukraine. The Yamal-Euro pipeline crosses Belarus and Poland to Germany, and the Nord Stream 1 pipeline passes below the Baltics. Germany can import from the UK, Norway and Netherlands to augment its energy demands, while eastern and southern European nations can import Azerbaijan gas via the Trans Adriatic Pipeline and the Trans-Anatolian Gas Pipeline (TANAP) through Turkey.

The US has also committed to deliver 5 billion cubic metres of liquefied natural gas (LNG) through North-Atlantic routes. The Trans-European Energy Networks (TEN-E) is working to build new pipelines to allow more extraction from the vast Groningen gas field, which is

already prone to land subsidence. According to reports, 85 per cent of EU citizens favour moves to reduce dependence on Russian gas. But replacing Russian gas with other supplies is not a sustainable solution. European Green Deal legislation focuses on consumer behavioural changes to reduce energy use. This would cut the energy demands by 5 per cent. It would also speed up renewable energy development in the EU.

The EU solar strategy can double its energy generation through photovoltaic cells. The same strategy would bring another 600GW new solar infrastructure by 2030. Member nations would have to identify geographical locations to install renewable energy infrastructure with the least environmental impacts. The plan targets 10 million tonnes of domestic renewable hydrogen pro-

duction and 10 million tonnes of imports by 2030 to phase out natural gas. To improve hydrogen-linked technologies, 200 billion litres will be set aside to fund research.

To unshackle the Russian energy chains, Europe must develop green alternatives. The war highlights the need for a sustainable energy infrastructure, to safeguard the global economy from energy giants such as Russia. The EU is taking positive steps to build its renewable infrastructure which can be a positive model for other nations to follow. This would make our world a peaceful place and build a green, sustainable, zero-emission future.

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100 YEARS ADO OCCASIONAL NOTE

It is a long time since the Russian rouble was quoted in the financial columns of the London Press. In Austria, the rouble rate is bobbing down the steep slope to bankruptcy, but far short of achieving the same wretched obscurity. If the currency were in Lombard Street the rouble is easily bought for 100 shillings at a considerable interval; the Polish mark, the Hungarian krai and the German mark, six weeks ago the latter stood at 1,000 to the rouble. In a small week it had fallen to 42,000, and, as the latest cables show, it has dropped at a bound to 100,000, from which figure a partial recovery has been made. Those who remember Vienna as, perhaps, the most beautiful capital in Europe, and the Viennese as the most attractive and artistic people, cannot dispute the merits of the war, but feel a pang at the plight of the inhabitants. The present position is not an economic one. It is an anachronism, consisting of Vienna and some surrounding country not adequate for the purpose of maintaining a large city.

The criteria are fed on little but roubles, and when these lack the form that the Allied Economic Commission, after mature deliberation, was unable to do anything for them their collapse was complete.

NEWS ITEMS

GUNNERS CHARGED WITH MURDER

LONDON, June 21
The case against Gunners Stephens and Eaton, of the 13th Light Artillery, who were charged with the murder of a schoolmaster named Metha, in a tailor's shop in the barracks, was heard today by Judge Mr. A. Walker at the court-martial. In a small week it had fallen to 42,000, and, as the latest cables show, it has dropped at a bound to 100,000, from which figure a partial recovery has been made. Those who remember Vienna as, perhaps, the most beautiful capital in Europe, and the Viennese as the most attractive and artistic people, cannot dispute the merits of the war, but feel a pang at the plight of the inhabitants. The present position is not an economic one. It is an anachronism, consisting of Vienna and some surrounding country not adequate for the purpose of maintaining a large city.

DEATH OF MR. F.F. WHYTE OF THE I.R.

The death of a notable young member of the Presidency General Hospital, Calcutta, of Mr. F.F. Whyte, assistant traffic superintendent of the railway, was announced by his railway duties, had acted for the past eight months as assistant coal transport controller, and was being met by the East Indian Railway Engineer. Joining the Eastern Railway some twelve years ago, he had been one of the Company's most valuable and trusted servants, and his death, at the early age of 37, was a great loss to his colleagues and a wide circle of friends. The funeral will be held at the Calcutta Club on Monday afternoon. Among those present were the mother, widow and child of the deceased gentleman. The final rites were many.

ALLEGED THEFT OF MILK

BANGALORE, June 15
A recent murder has a climax this morning in the North Milk case in which Mr. Hragh Rajgure, general manager of the Milk Producers' Co-operative in the city of 200 cases of milk. Mr. D. Chambliss, for the defence, in a final address to the jury, concentrated on what he called the unreliability of the evidence, saying that, according to the witnesses' own evidence, they were not such a trustworthy source of information as they appeared to be. He said that the evidence should not be believed. Counsel severely criticised police action in discussing their records of statements and substantiating typewritten statements, which had been extended. After they are minute consideration the jury returned a unanimous verdict of "not guilty."

AMERICAN COAL MINERS STRIKE

The miners' demand for an increase of wages on the coal fields of the United States is mainly responsible for the coal strike which has been in progress since the 1st of May. The miners and a large number of non-union men are involved. The duration of the stoppage of coal has been a serious problem since supplies are not so plentiful as they were before the strike is approaching. The Government anticipates that non-union men will produce 50 per cent of the coal in the United States. The coal owners, who are especially averse to co-exist with the workers.

BUILDINGS DAMAGED BY MOPLABS

The Public Works Department has started progress with the repair and renovation of the buildings damaged by the Moplahs (M) aged during the Moplah rebellion. The buildings include the Taluk Office at Malappuram, the District Court at Malappuram, the Sub-regulatory offices in several places, police stations, and the District Court at Malappuram. The repairs are now being completed, while others are already completed. As soon as the buildings are ready, the work will be undertaken for the repair of the damaged buildings.

Are Pakistan-Israeli ties inevitable?

MAHR ALI

In a comment titled 'Pakistan's recognition of Israel is now inevitable', published last week in the liberal Israeli daily Haaretz, Karam Khazim Shalish suggests that the pressure from "the godfathers of normalisation with Israel, namely Saudi Arabia and the United States" is becoming harder to

resist. That may well be the case. There's nothing new about the US pressure, and there have been occasions over the decades where Islamabad toyed with the idea of succumbing to it. Ziaul Haq, if memory serves, was the first head honcho to publicly state the affinities between Pakistan and Israel. And then, in 1980, the then Foreign Minister under Pervez Musharraf, enjoyed a six-day sit-out with the Israeli Prime Minister, Yitzhak Rabin. The initiatives didn't go anywhere, and at those junctures Saudi Arabia is unlikely to have officially been supportive. It's hard to tell, but the Saudi-Israeli ties seem to have been solidified, at least at the level of the military, some time ago.

That was always something of a farce, given the military role over the disputed Palestinian issue in 1967 in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. But then, the supposed sympathy for



the so-called Pakistan case in the Arab and broader Muslim worlds never amounted to much beyond occasional lip service.

Perhaps it is no coincidence that Israel's formal recognition with the two-state solution was never really an option for the Zionists, and Benjamin Netanyahu deserves credit for making this publicly obvious. It is as if he does for persuading the likes of Saudi Arabia and the UAE, in collusion with the Trump administration, to discard their respective masks.

As for Pakistan, its unacknowledged compatibility with Israel stretches back to their mutual ori-

gins, within a year or one another, as confessed card by colonial powers on an international basis. What's more, despite the diplomatic overtures from the Soviet Union, both of the new nations decided at their inception to attack themselves in Trade-Sans, simultaneously ignoring the post-colonial commonwealth non-alignment during the Cold War.

Despite the parallels, there are obviously significant differences in the circumstances of birth — not least that fact that Israel had a far more extended gestation period, given it was effectively conceived with the Balfour Declaration of 1917, back when Pakistan's founder was still an Indian nationalist. And, three decades later, both Mahatma Gandhi and Mohammed Ali Jinnah were hostile to the idea of a Euro-Jewish state being implanted in the Middle Eastern soil — not out of hostility to European Jews but in response to the wishes of the region's inhabitants.

All the same, the creation of both Pakistan and Israel involved a vast degree of displacement, frequently accompanied by violence. And both have been faced with diasporan tendencies in the intervening decades. Israel has been a Palestinian, he would have insisted lived in the same man-

sting from the air the post-partition refugee encampments in Punjab, is said to have buried his head in his hands and expressed his despair. His Israeli equivalent, David Ben-Gurion, privately acknowledged that had he been a Palestinian, he would have insisted lived in the same man-

All that is in the now distant past, of course, but that does not mean it can be ignored. In terms of the steadily deteriorating state of the Palestinians in both land proper and the occupied territories, recognition by Pakistan will make no difference whatsoever — regardless of whether it is endorsed by the pretty meaningless Palestinian Authority.

It could be argued that Pakistan is the saviour of the Arab cause, that the fondness for Israel among the Arab world is a path back to the days in the wake of the Zionist state's drift to the far right, with no illusions about a path back to the days when the illusion of an ideological left was kept alive.

It could be argued that Pakistan is at a similar stage of discarding the illusion of a military-civilian divide. Embracing a facsimile-inclined nation would neither be a surprise nor a travesty. Many would say just do it.

Dover Malik

CROSSWORD

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NOTE: Figures in parentheses denote the number of letters in the words required (by arrangement with The Independent, London)

