

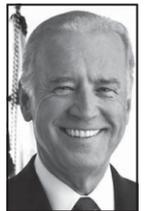
G7

1b vaccine doses to poor nations

Leaders agree on China and 'taxing' corporations

CARBIS BAY, England, June 13, (AP): The leaders of the world's richest countries have pledged more than 1 billion coronavirus vaccine doses to poorer nations, endorsed a global minimum tax on multinational corporations and agreed they will work together to challenge China's "non-market economic practices" and to call on Beijing to respect human rights in Xinjiang and Hong Kong.

Speaking at the end of a G-7 leaders' summit in southwest



Biden

England on Sunday, British Prime Minister Boris Johnson said the promised vaccine doses would come both directly and through the international COVAX program. The commitment falls far short of the 11 billion doses the World Health Organization said is needed to vaccinate at least 70% of the world's population and truly end the pandemic.

The decision to support a minimum corporate tax had been widely anticipated after finance ministers earlier this month embraced placing a global tax of at least 15% on large multinational companies to stop corporations from using tax havens to avoid taxes.

The minimum rate was championed by the United States and dovetails with the aim of President Joe Biden to focus the summit on ways the democracies can support a more fair global economy by working together.

Biden also wanted to persuade fellow democratic leaders to present a more unified front to compete economically with Beijing and strongly call out China's "nonmarket policies and human rights abuses."

In the group's communique published Sunday, the group said: "With regard to China, and competition in the global economy, we will continue to consult on collective approaches to challenging non-market policies and practices which undermine the fair and transparent operation of the global economy."

The leaders also said they will promote their values by calling on China to respect human rights and fundamental freedoms in Xinjiang, where Beijing is accused of committing serious human rights abuses against the Uyghur minority, and in the semi-autonomous city of Hong Kong.

Johnson, the summit's host, said there was a "fantastic degree of harmony" among the G-7 leaders to demonstrate the value of democracy and human rights to the rest of the world and help "the world's poorest countries to develop themselves in a way that is clean and green and sustainable."

The G-7 nations are Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, the United Kingdom and the United States.

Summit

The Group of Seven leaders aim to end their first summit in two years with a punchy set of promises Sunday, including vaccinating the world against coronavirus, making huge corporations pay their fair share of taxes and tackling climate change with a blend of technology and money.

They want to show that international cooperation is back after the upheavals caused by the pandemic and the unpredictability of former U.S. President Donald Trump. And they want to convey that the club of wealthy democracies - Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, the United Kingdom and the United States - is a better friend to poorer nations than authoritarian rivals such as China.

But it was uncertain how firm the group's commitments will be on coronavirus vaccines, the economy and the environment when the leaders issue their final communique. Also unclear was whether all of the leaders would back the United States' call to chastise China for repressing its Uyghur minority and other abuses.

U.K. Prime Minister Boris Johnson, the summit's host, wanted the three-day meeting to fly the flag for a "Global Britain," his government's push to give the mid-sized country outsized global influence.

Yet Brexit cast a shadow over that goal during the summit on the coast of southwest England. European Union leaders and U.S. President Joe Biden voiced concerns about problems with new U.K.-EU trade rules that have heightened tensions in Northern Ireland.

But overall, the mood has been positive: The leaders smiled for the cameras on the beach at cliff-fringed Carbis Bay, a village

and resort that became a traffic-clogged fortress for the meeting. The last G-7 summit was in France in 2019, with last year's event in the United States scuttled by the pandemic.

The leaders mingled with Queen Elizabeth II at a royal reception on their first evening and were served steak and lobster at a beach barbecue after watching an aeronautic display by the Royal Air Force Red Arrows on their second.

America's allies were visibly relieved to have the U.S. back as an engaged international player after the "America First" policy of the Trump administration.

"The United States is back, and democracies of the world are standing together," Biden said as he arrived in the U.K. on the first foreign trip of his 5-month-old presidency. After the G-7 summit, the president will have tea with the queen on Sunday, attend a NATO summit in Brussels on Monday and hold talks with Russian leader Vladimir Putin in Geneva on Wednesday.

At the G-7, Johnson described Biden as a "breath of fresh air." French President Emmanuel Macron, after speaking one-to-one with Biden, said, "It's great to have a U.S. president part of the club and very willing to cooperate."

The re-energized G-7 made ambitious declarations during their meetings about girls' education, preventing future pandemics and financing greener infrastructure globally. Above all, they vowed to share vaccine doses with less well-off nations that urgently need them. Johnson said the group would pledge at least 1 billion doses, with half of that coming from the United States and 100 million from Britain.

World Health Organization Director-General Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus and other public health officials commended the vaccine pledge but said it's not enough. To truly end the pandemic, he said, 11 billion doses are needed to vaccinate at least 70% of the world's population by mid-2022.

"We need more and we need them faster," Tedros said.

Climate

Climate change is a key focus of the leaders' final day of talks on Sunday, and the group is expected to announce new financing measures to help poorer countries reduce carbon emissions.

The "Build Back Better for the World" plan will promise to offer financing for infrastructure - "from railways in Africa to wind farms in Asia" - to help speed up the global shift to renewable energy. The plan is a response to China's "belt and road" initiative, which has increased Beijing's worldwide influence.

Climate activists and analysts say filling a \$100 billion annual fund to help poor countries tackle the effects of global warming should be at the top of the G-7's list.

All G-7 countries have pledged to reach net zero carbon emissions by 2050, but many environmentalists say that will be too little, too late.

Naturalist David Attenborough addressed the leaders by video Sunday, warning that humanity is "on the verge of destabilizing the entire planet."

"If that is so, then the decisions we make this decade - in particular the decisions made by the most economically advanced nations - are the most important in human history," the veteran documentary filmmaker said.

Max Lawson, head of inequality policy for Oxfam International, welcomed plans to boost investment to help poor countries reduce their carbon footprints but said "it doesn't help the poor people that are being hit by climate change right now."

"So, yes, it's probably a good thing but is it enough? Absolutely not," he said.

Large crowds of surfers and kayakers took to the sea in a mass protest Saturday to urge better protections for the world's oceans, while thousands beat drums as they marched outside the summit's media center in Falmouth.

"G-7 is all greenwashing," the protesters sang. "We're drowning in promises, now's the time to act."

White House officials also said Biden wants the G-7 leaders to speak in a single voice against the forced labor practices targeting China's Uyghur Muslims and other ethnic minorities. Biden hopes the denunciation will be part of a joint statement Sunday, but some European allies are reluctant to split so forcefully with Beijing.

Canada, Britain and France largely endorsed Biden's position on China, while Germany, Italy and the European Union showed more hesitancy, according to two senior Biden administration officials.



Britain's Prime Minister Boris Johnson speaks during a press conference on the final day of the G7 summit in Carbis Bay, Cornwall, England, June 13. (AP)

News in Brief

Shootings stir fears: Two people were killed and at least 30 others wounded in mass shootings overnight in three states, authorities said Saturday, stoking concerns that a spike in U.S. gun violence could continue into summer as coronavirus restrictions ease and more people are free to socialize.

The attacks took place late Friday or early Saturday in the Texas capital of Austin, Chicago and Savannah, Georgia.

In Austin, authorities said they arrested one of two male suspects and were searching for the other after a shooting early Saturday on a crowded pedestrian-only street packed with bars and restaurants. Fourteen people were wounded, including two critically, in the gunfire, which the city's interim police chief said is believed to have started as a dispute between two parties. (AP)

Greens endorse Baerbock: Germany's environmentalist Greens formally endorsed Annalena Baerbock as their candidate for chancellor Saturday, amid a slip in the party's poll ratings fueled in large part by its own mistakes.

Baerbock, 40, was officially nominated by a broad majority of the delegates at a party convention in Berlin. Due to the pandemic, the convention took place in a hybrid format, with several hundred party members attending in person while others participated online.

In a speech after her nomination, Baerbock said that Germany should not hesitate to tackle global warming even though it is a worldwide issue. (AP)

Swiss vote on taxes: Swiss voters are casting ballots in a referendum on a proposed "carbon dioxide law" that would hike fees and taxes on fuels that produce greenhouse gases, as their Alpine country experiences an outsized impact from the fallout of climate change.

The proposal would revise and strengthen an existing law that aims to reduce CO2 emissions by 2030. It's one of several measures facing voters nationwide on Sunday in the latest referendums in Swiss democracy, which gives the public a direct say in policymaking.

Many in Switzerland, home to melting glaciers and high-altitude towns, sense it needs to act fast. The country has faced a rise in temperatures that is twice as fast as the global average, the government says. Greenhouse gases - notably carbon-dioxide - are seen as the primary culprit. (AP)

Afghan IS claims attacks: The Islamic State group has claimed responsibility for bombing two minivans in a mostly Shiite neighborhood in the Afghan capital that killed seven people. Among the dead were two employees of Afghanistan's state-run film company, a colleague said Sunday.

In a statement issued late Saturday, Afghanistan's IS affiliate said its operatives blew up two minivans carrying "disbeliever Shiites" using sticky bombs. Sticky bombs slapped onto cars trapped in Kabul's chaotic traffic are the newest weapons terrorizing Afghans in the increasingly lawless nation. (AP)

French far-left chief floured: A French far-left leader got a face full of flour at the start of a Paris march Saturday against "the ideas of the far right," days after the French president was slapped while greeting a crowd.



Melenchon

Unions, associations and left-wing political parties in France called for demonstrations around France a week before local elections and ahead of next year's presidential election, which is widely expected to once again put far-right candidate Marine Le Pen in the final round.

Lawmaker Jean-Luc Melenchon, head of the far-left France Unbowed party, was taking part in the event in Paris when he got hit with a sack of flour. Melenchon has been at the center of recent controversy for statements against Le Pen's National Rally and notably raising the specter of violence. (AP)

Indian police kill 4: A heated gunbattle between militants and Indian police broke out Saturday in the disputed region of Kashmir, killing at least two police and two civilians, officials said.

Anti-India protests later erupted during the civilians' funerals in Sopore, the northwestern town where the fighting took place, after local residents alleged police had shot and killed one of the civilians after the militants fled the scene. (AP)

America

'Policing policy'

GOP ups misleading attack on Dems

DES MOINES, Iowa, June 13, (AP): When Minnesota Republican Tyler Kistner announced his candidacy for the U.S. House in April, he asked voters to ponder two questions: "What America will we leave for our children?" and "Will they be taught to hate their police?"

Across the Mississippi River in Wisconsin, Republicans in the 3rd Congressional District aired a digital ad this spring to demand that their Democratic congressman "stand up to attacks on law enforcement."

And in Iowa, a Republican governor who had promised additional checks on police conduct after George Floyd was killed by a Minneapolis police officer plans to sign a law making it harder for police to be sued on the job.

As rising murder rates gain attention in American cities, Republicans have ramped up a misleading campaign to cast Democrats as anti-police and lax on public safety. It's a message they believe helped them stave off greater Democratic gains in last year's elections and one with renewed potency as cities consider cuts to department budgets as part of an effort to revamp policing.

It's not at all clear that the GOP strategy, which stretches back to President Richard Nixon and was used by President Donald Trump, is a winning one. But it may be prominent as Republicans search for ways to gain ground in suburban areas critical to winning control of the U.S. House next year.

A recent special election in New Mexico wasn't a good sign for the strategy. GOP candidate Mark Moore used Albuquerque's rising crime and city officials' decision to

create an alternative public safety department to hit Democrat Melanie Stansbury. But Stansbury won easily, with a larger share of the district's votes than President Joe Biden garnered last year.

Stansbury's district is overwhelmingly Democratic, making it an imperfect test case. The National Republican Congressional Committee, the party's House campaign arm, believes the issue will have a larger impact in swing districts, where the party plans to tie moderate Democratic incumbents to their more liberal colleagues who have supported the "defund the police" movement. That term is used to describe diverting money from police budgets to other social services, such as mental health support and drug addiction mitigation.

Focus

The GOP focus is on places such as Wisconsin's 3rd Congressional District, where 13-term Democratic incumbent Ron Kind is being cast as insufficiently supportive of law enforcement, though he does not support defunding police departments.

It also includes Democratic Rep. Angie Craig of Minnesota, who beat Kistner in 2020 and represents the Minneapolis and St. Paul suburbs where rioting broke out last year after Floyd's death.

Since then, several cities have struggled with the police funding debate, while experiencing rising gun violence.

The NRCC chair, U.S. Rep. Tom Emmer of Minnesota, said he believes the message will resonate with voters because "crime is rising in America, yet Democrats still sup-

port the dangerous idea of defunding the police."

Neither statement is fully accurate.

It's true that violent crime has risen. The FBI's National Incident-Based Reporting System recorded 25% more homicides in 2020 than in 2019, and 12% more violent assaults.

But the increase in homicides is nationwide, including in some cities that increased police spending and in some cities led by Republicans.

Other crimes such as burglaries, drug offenses and other categories, however, have decreased.

It also is not accurate to describe Democrats as uniformly supportive of "defund the police" efforts.

The Democratic-controlled House passed a sweeping police overhaul bill in March that did not include a provision to allow diverting money away from police departments. Kind was one of only two Democrats to oppose the bill. He said it did not include sufficient protections for police. Craig voted for the measure.

The bill has stalled in the evenly divided Senate, where Republicans oppose it.

Like Emmer, U.S. House Minority Leader Kevin McCarthy, R-Calif., tried to preemptively blame Democrats - in this case, Biden - for what McCarthy claimed is widespread rising crime caused by cuts to police budgets.

"We are concerned about whether the Biden Administration is prepared to address the surge of violent crime in American cities," McCarthy wrote in a letter Friday to U.S. Attorney General Merrick Garland.

MS&RY Behbehani wins Isuzu Middle East Best Performance Dealer Award 2020



Mohammad Saleh & Reza Yousuf Behbehani Co. WLL (MSRYB), the authorized distributors of Isuzu Trucks and D-max Pick-ups for the State of Kuwait have won the Isuzu Middle East Best Performance Dealer Award 2020, at its Middle East Regional Conference (online meeting), held last month. In fact, this

is the second consecutive year that Behbehani gets this most prestigious Award from Isuzu.

Several factors were involved in evaluating the dealers for this prestigious award such as Sales growth, Showroom Branding, Communication Effectiveness, Test drives, Maintaining Inventory Level, Forecast and Order Accuracy, Sustaining Isuzu Dealer Standards Sales and After-sales, Customer Satisfaction, Meeting Isuzu Training Standards and Behbehani excelled in all fields and achieved this coveted number one position.

"We are really honored by receiving this significant accolade from Isuzu, our Ideal Partner" said Abdul Ghani Behbehani, Director. "It is a recognition for our dedicated team work in promoting Isuzu Business year on year and we are grateful to Isuzu for their continued support



in delivering the highest level of service that exceeds customer expectation", he added.

MSRYB has been the sole Distributor of Isuzu CV Trucks and D-max Pick-ups since 1973 and it has a full-fledged Sales and After-sales facility (All under one-roof) at Al-Rai, in order to provide the best services in town for its valued customers.