

Biden unveils plan to cut methane emissions

EU, U.S. vow to slash emissions by a third

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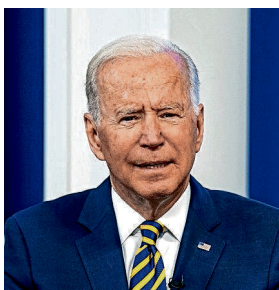
With about a month and a half to go before the 26th Conference of the Parties (COP26), the UN climate conference in Glasgow, U.S. President Joe Biden announced the Global Methane Pledge, a U.S.-EU led effort to cut methane emissions by a third by the end of this decade. Mr. Biden made the announcement at the Major Economies Forum on Energy and Climate (MEF), hosted virtually by the White House on Friday, in which leaders from several countries and the EU, as well as UN Secretary General António Guterres and (India's) Environment Minister Bhupender Yadav, participated.

"This will not only rapidly reduce the rate of global warming, but it will also produce a very valuable side benefit, like improving public health and agricultural output," Mr. Biden said about the initiative.

"We're mobilising support to help developing countries that join and pledge to do something significant – pledge and seize this virtual [vital] opportunity," he said.

Methane, a greenhouse gas, is 80 times more potent than carbon dioxide in terms of its global warming capacity. Approximately 40% of methane emitted is from natural sources and about 60% comes from human-influenced sources, including livestock farming, rice agriculture, biomass burning and so forth.

"We are rapidly running out of time," Mr. Guterres said on Friday at the MEF. "The world is on a catastrophic pathway to 2.7 degrees Celsius heating. There



Joe Biden

is a high risk of failure of COP26." Countries will meet in Glasgow in November to review progress since the Paris Agreement (2015) on climate, with some countries making commitments to achieve net zero emissions by 2050. The Paris deal seeks to maintain temperature rises to under 2 degrees Celsius (and pursuing the goal of limiting rises to below 1.5 degrees Celsius) above pre-industrial levels by getting countries to commit to emission cuts.

Kerry's India visit

U.S. Climate Envoy John Kerry, who also spoke at the MEF, was asked by Mr. Biden to chair a ministerial session with India, China, Russia and Germany, as per the White House. Mr. Kerry has just returned from a visit to New Delhi where he tried, unsuccessfully, to get a commitment from the government on getting to 'net zero' by 2050, according to reporting in *The Hindu*.

India has announced a renewable energy capacity goal of 450 GW by 2030 and Indian Railways has committed to achieving 'net zero' emissions by that year, but India as a whole has not committed to a time frame for reaching that target. Some 130 countries are considering a net zero emissions target by 2050.