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RACE ON TO SEAL CLIMATE DEAL

COP28 heads into final stretch as countries enter crunch talks

DUBAI

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The COP28 went into overtime yesterday and countries continued crunch talks late into the night to resolve a deadlock over the highly-contended debate over the future of fossil fuels.

According to the COP Presidency, the talks were likely to continue till 3am today. "Overnight and throughout today, the COP28 President and his team have been engaging in extensive consultations with a wide representation of negotiating groups and Parties. This is to ensure everyone is heard, and all views are considered. He is determined to deliver a version of the text that has the support of all parties," said the statement quoting a COP28 spokesperson.

Earlier in the day, the UAE Presidency of COP28 had announced a second draft of the Global Stocktake after the first iteration of the document, issued late on Monday, caused 'deeply split views' among the Parties.

Consensus-based process

Ambassador Majid Al Suwaidi, Director-General of COP28, announced yesterday — the



Courtesy: COP28

United Nations Secretary-General Antonio Guterres during a meeting yesterday at the UN climate conference in Dubai. Talks were expected to continue till 3am today.

scheduled final day of the UN Climate Conference, "Lots of Parties felt it didn't fully address their concerns. We expected that. In fact, we wanted the text to spark conversations, and that's what's happened."

Al Suwaidi insisted this is

'entirely' normal for a consensus-based process. "When we released it, we knew opinions were polarised, but we didn't know where each country's like red lines were."

"The text (new) includes all the elements we need for a

comprehensive plan to 2030. It's all that mitigation adaptation means of implementation loss and damage. And we've been seeking the right balance between those elements," said Al Suwaidi.

However, at the time of go-



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Majid Al Suwaidi

| Director-General, COP28

ing to print the new draft was yet to be released. Sources said that countries were engaged in 'shuttle diplomacy' in pursuit of the new draft agreement.

Germany's Climate Envoy Jennifer Morgan said talks had entered a 'critical, critical phase. "There is a lot of shuttle diplomacy going on," she posted on X (formerly known as Twitter), referring to the fast-paced meetings between countries seeking compromise.

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Biden says Israel losing global support

WASHINGTON

US President Joe Biden said yesterday that Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu needs to change his hard-line government and that Israel cannot say no in the future to a Palestinian state, ramping up pressure on the Israelis.

Biden's remarks at a fundraising event for his 2024 re-election campaign was a further sign of growing US concern at Israel's bombing in Gaza in which thousands of Palestinian civilians have been killed. "They're starting to lose that support," Biden said, referring to the international community's alarm at the bombing.

'Most conservative government'

The comments came as Biden's national security adviser, Jake Sullivan, prepares to travel to Israel for talks with the Israeli war cabinet.

Biden mentioned Israel's far-right politician Itamar Ben-Gvir, who is Israel's national security minister, and said "this is the most conservative government in Israel's history." "He (Netanyahu) has to change this government. This government in Israel is making it very difficult," Biden said.

—Reuters

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