

News story: Foreign Office statement on demonstrations in Belarus

We have closely followed events in Belarus leading up to, and during, the Freedom Day demonstrations. We are concerned over the actions of the law enforcement agencies in Minsk. A large number of citizens, activists and journalists appear to have been arbitrarily and indiscriminately detained.

There is no justification for the use of force or intimidation against those exercising their right to peaceful protest. We urge the Government of Belarus to respect and uphold the right to freedom of association, assembly and expression. We further call on the government of Belarus to release all those peaceful protesters still detained.

Text of PM's 'Mann ki Baat' programme on All India Radio on 26.03.2017

Text of PM's 'Mann ki Baat' programme on All India Radio on 26.03.2017

Landslide buries five in Guizhou

At least five people were buried in a building hit by a landslide at Sunday dawn in southwest China's Guizhou Province, local government said.

The landslide occurred at the village of Baga in Panxian County at 1:20 a.m. More than 300 police, fire fighters and medical workers have been mobilized for a rescue operation.

The cause of the landslide is being investigated.

China court overturns iPhone sale ban

A Chinese court has ruled in favor of Apple Inc. in design patent disputes between it and a domestic phone-maker, overturning a ban on selling iPhone 6 and iPhone 6 Plus phones in China.

Last May, a Beijing patent regulator ordered Apple's Chinese subsidiary and a local retailer Zoomflight to stop selling the said phones after Shenzhen Baili Marketing services Co. (Shenzhen Baili) lodged a complaint to it, claiming that the patent for the design of its mobile phone 100c was being infringed upon by the iPhone sales.

Apple and Zoomflight took the Beijing Intellectual Property Office's banning order to court.

The Beijing Intellectual Property Court on Friday revoked the ban, saying Apple and Zoomflight did not violate Shenzhen Baili's design patent for 100c phones.

The court ruled that the regulator did not follow due procedures in ordering the ban while there is no sufficient proof to claim the designs constitute violation of intellectual property rights.

Representatives of Beijing Intellectual Property Office and Shenzhen Baili said they would take time to decide whether to appeal the ruling.

In another related ruling, the same court denied a request by Apple to demand stripping Shenzhen Baili of its design patent for 100c phones. Apple first filed the request to the Patent Reexamination Board of State Intellectual Property Office. The board rejected the request, but Apple lodged a lawsuit against the rejection to court.

The Beijing Intellectual Property Court on Friday ruled to maintain the board's decision. It remains not immediately clear if Apple will appeal.

Apple phones are popular among China's urban young people, but the sale faces stiff competition from domestic phone makers, which produce a wider range of affordable and quality smart phones.

Last year, three domestic brands – OPPO, Huawei and Vivo – outperformed Apple as China's top selling phone brands, according to a report by the International Data Corporation.

OPPO sold 78.4 million handsets in China last year, tailed by Huawei with 76.6 million units.

Earth Hour 2017: UN joins iconic landmarks 'going dark' to support protecting the planet

25 March 2017 – The United Nations this evening dimmed the lights at its iconic Headquarters complex in New York and other facilities around the world in observance of the tenth annual 'Earth Hour,' global event to put the spotlight on the issues facing the planet and to inspire millions across the world to live more sustainably.

In a video message, UN Secretary-General António Guterres, said: "Climate change continues to imperil lives and livelihoods around the world. Last year was again the hottest on record. The landmark Paris Agreement gives us an unprecedented opportunity to limit global temperature rise, promote clean energy for all and create a sustainable future."

Governments and businesses must step up. So must individuals. Building a sustainable tomorrow depends today on everyone, said the UN chief, asking the world to join him in turning off their lights on today at 8:30 p.m. local time.

"From the darkness, we can create a sustainable and inclusive world for all," he said.

Organized by the World Wildlife Fund (WWF), Earth Hour encourages individuals, companies, organizations and Governments to switch off their lights for one hour at 8:30 p.m., local time worldwide, to focus attention on people-driven solutions to protecting the planet and building a bright, sustainable future.

First launched in 2007 in Australia, Earth Hour has become an annual event, mobilizing hundreds of millions of individuals to participate and growing to become the world's largest grassroots movement for the environment.

According to the WWF, the UN family will join the thousands of homes, offices, skylines and monuments that will go dark on Earth Hour's tenth anniversary to put the spotlight on the issues facing the planet, and to inspire millions across the world to live more sustainably.

Hundreds of landmarks from New York to Uganda and Sweden to Malaysia are confirmed and will be turning off on the night of Earth Hour, including iconic sites such as the Eiffel Tower, Taipei 101, the Empire State Building and the Acropolis.

To inspire more people to act, this year the Earth Hour movement is also inviting supporters to show their commitment to the cause on their Facebook timelines, in parallel to the lights out rolling across skylines.

People around the world can log onto earthhour.org/climateaction to donate five Facebook posts to Earth Hour and encourage their friends to be a part of local climate efforts. They can also use a new Facebook profile picture frame available on www.facebook.com/earthhour to celebrate Earth Hour on their own personal landmark – their Facebook page.