SV KRISHNA CHAITANYA @ Chennai



ITH the US absent and Lula's call for "a COP of truth," Belém may decide who truly leads the climate fight. To limit the overshoot to

0.3°C and return to 1.5°C by the end of the century, global emissions would need to fall 26% by 2030 and 46% by 2035 compared to 2019 levels — an unprecedented drop in less than a decade As world leaders, ministers, and negotiators descend on Belém for the 30th UN Climate Change Conference (COP30), expectations are tempered by urgency. The Amazonian capital — hosting the firstever Climate COP in the heart of a rainforest — has become the symbolic stage for a planet at a tipping point. A year after COP29 in Baku, dubbed the "finance COP," the world finds itself at a crossroads: promises made, trust frayed, and temperatures rising.

The UN Environment Programme's Emissions Gap Report 2025, released just days before the talks, lays bare the scale of the crisis. Even if all current national climate pledges are fully implemented, the world is still on track for 2.3°C–2.5°C of warming this century. Under current policies, the trajectory rises further to 2.8°C — far above the 1.5°C limit scientists say is essential to avoid catastrophic climate impacts. Only a third of the countries have submitted updated national climate plans and those that have fallen short of closing the gap. Global greenhouse gas emissions climbed to 57.7 gigatons of CO₂equivalent in 2024, a 2.3 per cent increase from the previous year main the cornerstone of global and the highest level ever record- cooperation. The country's posied. "The world is still off target,"

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COP30 TO OPEN IN BELÉM AMID FINANCE RIFT & LEADERSHIP VACUUM



UN Secretary-General António Guterres attends Thematic Session 1: Climate and Nature 1 UN CLIMATE CHANGE - KIARA WORTH

ger Andersen. "Each time countries revise their pledges, the trajectory improves slightly — but nowhere near fast enough. We are now in a race against time and politics." The report warns that the multi-decadal average of global temperature rise will exceed 1.5°C within the next decade, marking the beginning of a dangerous overshoot period. To limit the overshoot to 0.3°C and return to 1.5°C by the end of the century, global emissions would need to fall 26 pc by 2030 and 46 pc by 2035 compared to 2019 levels — an unprecedented drop in less than ten years.

For India and much of the Global South, this data underscores an uncomfortable truth — that they are being asked to do more with less, while the world's largest historic polluters remain unwilling to pay their fair share. India's negotiators have consistently argued that climate justice must retion, shaped by both principle and

carbon space and access to affordable finance are not optional addons but preconditions for meaningful climate action. If COP29 in Baku was about negotiating finance numbers, COP30 in Belém is about making them real. The New Collective Quantified Goal the NCQG — of \$300 billion per year by 2035, agreed last year, was meant to replace the long-unmet \$100 billion goal set in 2009. But it sparked frustration among developing nations, who called it inadequate in scale and unclear in composition. The outcome text, however, also called for an aspirational target of \$1.3 trillion annually by 2035, to be achieved through

a "Baku to Belém Roadmap." The long-awaited roadmap, released on November 5, sets out five "action fronts"—the so-called Five Rs: Replenishing (grants and concessional finance), Rechanneling (transformative private finance), Rebalancing (fiscal space and debt sustainability), Revamping (institutional capacity) and Reshaping (systems for equitable capital

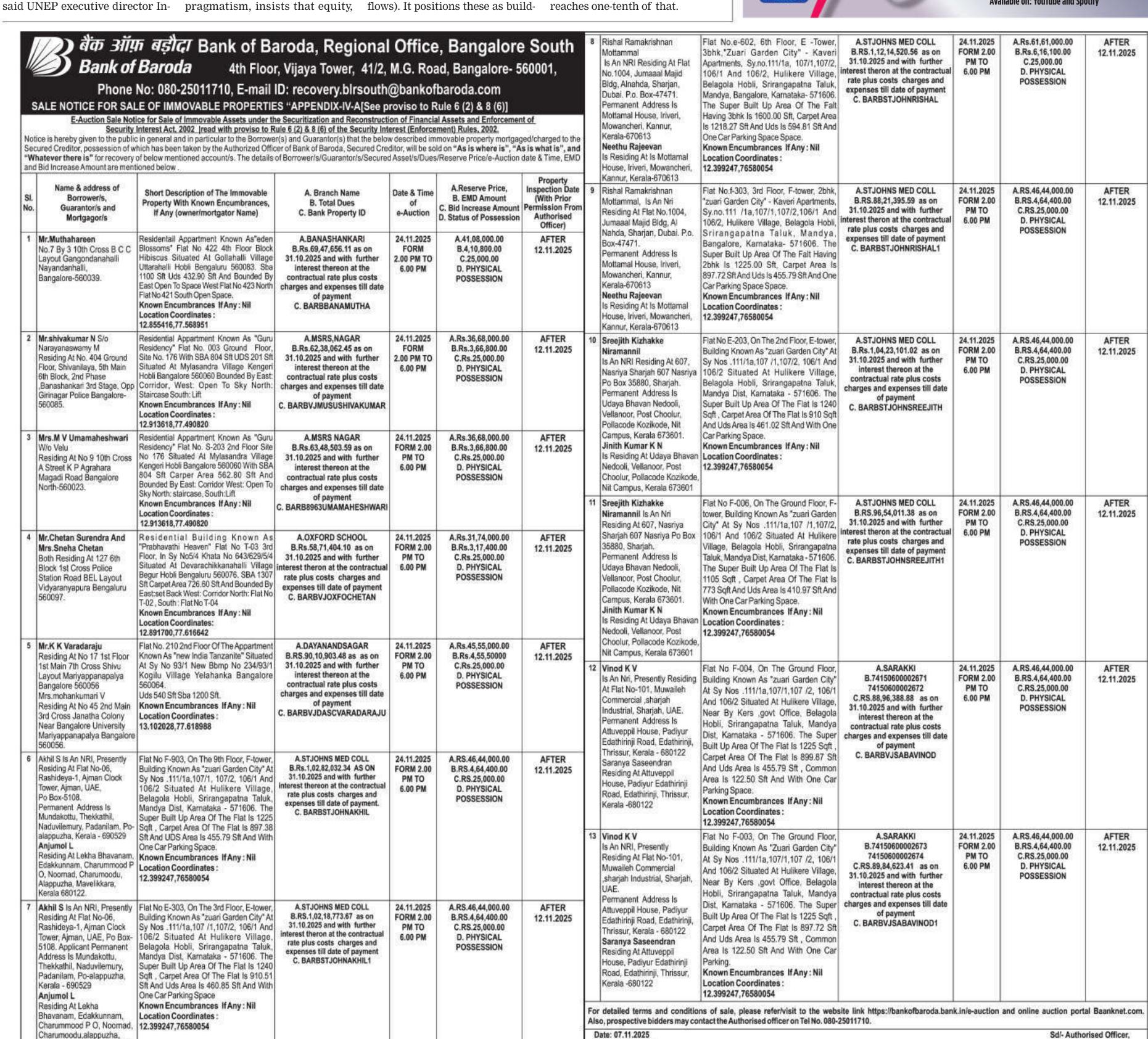
ing blocks to reach the \$1.3 trillion goal. But while the document consolidates ideas from previous summits, critics say it offers little new. "The roadmap correctly identifies the symptoms of our broken financial system," said Harjeet Singh, founding director of the Satat Sampada Climate Foundation. "However, it's like offering a band-aid for a mortal wound. It fails to prescribe the cure—real public finance from rich countries, not more loans or market schemes."

India's point view

India's view is more nuanced. New Delhi has welcomed the roadmap's recognition that finance must be predictable and equitable, but it remains deeply concerned that the document fails to clarify how much of the promised money will be concessional or grantbased. "Without that clarity," said one Indian official, "the risk is that the same loan-heavy structures will return, further burdening developing economies already facing rising debt." This is why India and other developing countries are expected to press for clear guardrails: the \$300 billion must be treated as a floor, not a ceiling, and future climate finance must focus on reducing the cost of capital across the developing world. The UNEP Adaptation Gap Report 2025 estimates that developing nations will need at least \$310–365 billion every year by 2035 to adapt to climate impacts — yet current adaptation finance barely reaches one-tenth of that.



Bank of Baroda



Place: Bengaluru

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