

Priti Patel outlaws dangerous tunnelling protests

Dangerous tunnelling by protesters will be banned under a new law announced by the Home Secretary today (Tuesday 7 June), as the government acts to end the serious disruption and risk to life this guerrilla protest tactic poses.

The digging of make-shift tunnels is one of the most dangerous and costly tactics deployed by groups such as Just Stop Oil and protesters against levelling up projects such as HS2. The removal operation alone following tunnelling by protesters at Small Dean in Buckinghamshire in 2021 added more than £4 million to the cost of HS2.

Filled with lethal levels of carbon monoxide and dioxide, these tunnels can become death traps, not just for those inside them and members of the public, but also for those who are required to undertake rescue operations.

An amendment to the Public Order Bill will make it a criminal offence to cause serious disruption by creating and occupying tunnels, while going equipped to create these tunnels will also be criminalised.

With a proposed new maximum sentence of three years' imprisonment and an unlimited fine, the gravity of the potential impact of tunnelling will be properly recognised for the first time.

Home Secretary, Priti Patel, said:

This country will not be held to ransom by so-called activists unconcerned about putting the lives of others in danger.

These death traps don't just put lives at risk, they divert precious police resources away from where they are needed most.

These measures will give our police the powers they need to crack down on this lawlessness and continue to make our streets safer.

The current offences available are not sufficient to recognise and deal with the scale of danger and disruption caused by tunnelling. This law will empower our police and courts to take action, from arrest through to conviction, against those intent on risking lives.

Another amendment to the Bill will extend the powers to manage public assemblies to the British Transport Police and Ministry of Defence Police.

The Public Order Bill complements the Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Act, recently passed into law, which has increased the penalty for wilfully obstructing a highway and will make public nuisance a statutory offence.

Smugglers responsible for hiding migrants in vans brought to justice

Two men who dangerously smuggled 31 illegal migrants into the UK, including seven children and a pregnant woman, have been sentenced to a combined 14 years in prison.

Akan Brayan, of Nottingham, and Dylan Shwani, of Lincoln, were found guilty of recruiting drivers to hide migrants in hired vans containing various goods before smuggling them into the UK.

The defendants, both aged 37, were sentenced at Nottingham Crown Court on 7 June, 2022, following a five-year investigation by the Home Office's Criminal and Financial Investigations (CFI) unit. They were each sentenced to seven years in prison.

Between 2016 and 2018, Brayan and Shwani, paid six drivers from the Nottinghamshire and Lincolnshire areas to bring 31 Iraqi migrants, on six separate occasions, into the country.

Although the majority of the migrants were men, children as young as one and a pregnant woman were also found in the vans.

People were crammed into the vehicles among stacks of tyres, second-hand furniture and household goods being transported to the UK. Photos show in one of the vans a woman cradling a small child, with other children sat around her in the tightly enclosed space.

CFI teams found boxes of goods deliberately placed to hide people as well as paprika on the floor of one of the vans in an attempt to confuse sniffer dogs from detecting the migrants' scents.

Minister for Justice and Tackling Illegal Migration, Tom Pursglove MP said:

These brazen attempts to smuggle illegal migrants, including very young children, into the UK in tiny, air-tight spaces with room to barely move, are despicable.

Our expertly trained officers continue to work round the clock to prevent this illegal activity, which puts lives in extreme danger.

The Nationality and Borders Act will make it easier to prosecute people smugglers and, by making it a criminal offence to arrive in the UK illegally, we can truly break the business models of these callous criminals.

Ben Thomas, Deputy Director for Immigration Enforcement's Criminal and Financial Investigations, said:

My team work tirelessly to bring to justice anyone attempting to smuggle people unlawfully into the country.

These two evil men endangered the lives of people, including children, to line their pockets without a care in the world for their safety. I hope these sentencings send a powerful message that breaking the law and putting individuals' lives at risk will not go unpunished.

[North Korea ballistic missile tests: FCDO statement](#)

Press release

A Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office spokesperson responds to the ballistic missile launches carried out by North Korea on 5 June.



A Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office spokesperson said:

The latest launch of eight ballistic missiles by North Korea on 5 June is a clear breach of UN Security Resolutions. The UK remains deeply concerned by repeated testing of ballistic missile technology and urge North Korea to immediately cease testing, and return to dialogue.

North Korea must take credible steps towards denuclearisation in a complete, verifiable and irreversible manner.

[The critical role of business in delivering the Glasgow Climate Pact and making progress ahead of COP27](#)

Thank you for your kind introduction.

And thank you to the CBI for organising this important event to discuss how business can lead the transition to net zero.

I have spoken at this Conference before when I was doing this role as COP President-Designate,

But at that point we had a virtual audience.

So, I think it is absolutely wonderful that we are in-person and able to have these conversations face to face.

And I want to give a huge thank you to all the corporates who supported COP26, particularly our principal sponsors and other supporters who are here today as well.

Now friends, it is just over six months since COP26, where, working with partners around the world and under the UK's stewardship, nearly 200 countries agreed the historic Glasgow Climate Pact.

And that Pact forged a path to a clean global future, and it kept alive the possibility of limiting the average rise in global temperatures to 1.5 degrees above pre-industrial levels.

I want to thank all of you who were there, and many of you I know in this room were there, alongside us on the banks of the Clyde,

And of course this was one of the first COPs where we had a huge amount of representation from the business community as well.

And I hope that's something that continues at future COPs.

I want to thank you for all of the commitments you have made as individual businesses and for all of the work you did to push us, as governments, to go further.

Now in recent months, the world has changed.

The clouds have darkened over the international landscape.

With Putin's illegal and brutal invasion of Ukraine, war has returned to Europe.

The tectonic plates within our geopolitics have shifted and continue to shift.

We also know that inflation is spiking around the world.

We see debt mounting.

We see energy prices are rising.

And globally, people are struggling to feed their families, all as we continue to deal with the effects of the pandemic.

So what I would say to you is that in short, and the framing of this conference recognises this point, we are meeting against the backdrop of global crisis and geopolitical turmoil.

And yet the current crises should increase, not diminish, our determination to deliver on the commitments that we collectively made in Glasgow.

And I would argue that the evidence for action is unequivocal.

Many of you will have seen the recent reports that have come out from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, the UN's intergovernmental body on climate change, and that has made clear that the window of time we have left to act is closing.

And frankly it is closing fast.

Inaction, or delayed action, will create immense additional risks and costs.

Now I know that everyone here avidly reads reports put out by the OBR, and you will have seen last year a risk report that they put which projected that unchecked climate change could lead to public debt reaching a staggering 289 percent of GDP by the end of the century.

Just think about that.

And as the science has become starker, the risks have become clearer, and the calls to action have grown louder, the opportunities presented by tackling climate change are increasingly evident.

And I think that the fact that you are all here suggests that you agree with this proposition.

Now I would argue that net zero is one of the clearest economic trends there has ever been.

It is frankly vast in scope, encompasses every country and – I think you are representative of this – it encompasses every sector.

And it does represent a big economic opportunity.

I see this in the conversations that I have.

It is being seized by companies, by countries, and financial institutions, of course in the United Kingdom and indeed around the world.

Each recognising that net zero is about delivering an economic as well as an environmental dividend.

Now some of you will recall our Ten Point Plan for a Green Industrial Revolution, which we put out at the end of 2020. We launched this when I was Business Secretary.

More recently of course we have had our Net Zero Strategy and our recent Energy Security Strategy,

And all of this together is aimed at mobilising tens of billions of pounds of private sector investment by 2030 into our economy, and of course supporting hundreds of thousands of green jobs.

So that is the domestic pitch.

But what you're also seeing around the world, the IEA, the International Energy Agency has estimated that about 30 million new workers are needed by 2030 to meet increased demand in the clean economy.

And the ILO, the International Labour Organisation has projected that some sectors could see four times more jobs created than are lost.

So, I am really pleased that the CBI has brought this group together today to discuss exactly how we can pick up the pace on the road to net zero.

And my core message to you is actually pretty simple.

If we are going to deliver the Glasgow Climate Pact,

if we are to seize the opportunities and avoid the costs I've mentioned, the role of business is going to be absolutely critical.

We need the innovation, the influence, and the energy of the private sector.

We need changes across the breadth of our economy.

We need action from companies, to keep up the pressure and encourage action from governments around the world.

And, frankly, the direction of travel is already clear.

So when the UK took on the mantle of organising COP26 Presidency, less than 30 percent of the global economy was covered by a net zero target.

By the time we got to COP26 it was over 90 percent.

And you will see this in terms of the commitments made by financial institutions to go to net zero.

Here in the UK 60 percent of UK FTSE100 companies are now committed to net zero as well.

And I hope you will agree me, we are transitioning to a clean, green future, with enormous opportunities for those on the front foot, and risks I am afraid for those who are not.

Now you all recognise this here, and many of you will have signed up to the UN Race to Zero campaign.

We had 5,000 international companies committing by COP26 to net zero by 2050 or earlier.

Since COP26 that momentum has continued, we have got another 2,000 companies.

This is about not committing to some vague aspiration at some distant point in the future, but to clear, science-based transition plans.

We can go further, we can push with the push with the purchasing and investment power that you have to can drive change – by switching to clean power, and swapping polluting vehicles for clean vehicles.

And of course you can work with your trade associations and your supply chains, in the UK and overseas, to make sustainability part and parcel of doing business.

What I would say to you is that we will collectively work together, governments and business on the road to COP27 in less than six months.

By the time we get there we are going to have to show that the commitments we made are leading to action.

Because the reality is that just as we hold ourselves to account.

Our populations will do the same.

And future generations will ask whether we indeed collectively rise to the challenge.

And I have to say to you friends.

We have to for the future of our planet.

Thank you.

Civil Service becomes largest

organisation to sign Menopause Workplace Pledge

- Senior ministers and civil servants endorse the Menopause Workplace Pledge at special event to highlight the government's ongoing commitment to support women in the workplace
- The Civil Service becomes the biggest organisation to sign the Pledge, joining more than 1000 organisations who have already done so
- First ever government-led Women's Health Strategy for England will be published shortly, with the appointment of a new Women's Health Ambassador to raise the profile of women's health issues

The Civil Service signed the Menopause Workplace pledge today (7 June), committing to recognise the impact of menopause and actively support women who are affected.

The pledge, organised by the Wellbeing of Women charity, calls on signatories to recognise the impact that menopause can have, create open environments to talk about the issue and provide active support for staff.

Ministers and senior civil servants endorsed the pledge at a special event to show the Civil Service's ongoing commitment to support women in the workplace. The Civil Service is now the largest organisation to signal its support.

262,670 women work in the Civil Service, making up more than half of the Civil Service (54%). 48% of the Senior Civil Service is made up of women, up from 35% in 2011. The median age of civil servants is 45 years and this often when women will be going through the perimenopause or menopause.

Becoming a signatory of the Wellbeing of Women 'Menopause Workplace Pledge' demonstrates the government's ongoing commitment to support women in the workplace, including by helping to generate more conversations between managers and employees, and creating a more inclusive workplace which enables women of all ages to thrive.

It builds on the Civil Service's existing support, including the Menopause in the Workplace Policy launched in December 2021, which identifies ways that departments can support employees such as by offering workplace adjustments.

Parliamentary Secretary in the Cabinet Office, Heather Wheeler said:

Women must feel able to talk about their health issues and know that they will be supported.

By recognising the impact that menopause can have, and creating an open culture free from embarrassment, we can ensure those women feel comfortable in the workplace and prevent the brightest from leaving the Civil Service.

Signing this pledge, alongside our ongoing commitment to supporting women in the workplace and the new Women's Health Strategy, takes us one step closer to that goal, meaning better government and better public services for everyone.

Health and Social Care Secretary, Sajid Javid, said:

For some women, the symptoms of the menopause can be extremely debilitating and it's absolutely crucial they feel confident asking for support at work.

This pledge will ensure women working across the civil service feel supported. I encourage other businesses to do the same – big companies, such as Asda and Thames Water, are already joining us with this pledge to make sure their workplaces have menopause strategies in place.

Women's health is a priority for this government and plans to level up women's health will be set out in the first ever government-led Women's Health Strategy for England shortly. The government will appoint a Women's Health Ambassador to raise the profile of women's health, increase awareness about taboo topics and support the government in implementing the strategy.

Underpinned by analysis from almost 100,000 responses to the call for evidence from women across the country, the strategy will reflect the government's ambition for a healthcare system that prioritises care on the basis of clinical need, not gender – of which menopause will form a central part.

The government has also set up a Menopause Taskforce, chaired by Minister for Women's Health, Maria Caulfield and Carolyn Harris MP, to consider the role that education and training, workplace policies and peer groups for menopausal women can play in supporting women through what can be a mentally and physically challenging time.

Cross Government Menopause Network Sponsor and Deputy Permanent Secretary at HMRC, Angela MacDonald said:

Women make up half the UK workplace and make extremely valuable contributions day in, day out.

I'm very proud of the work being done across the Civil Service to ensure that we enable colleagues to receive the support that they need to flourish. Our new workplace policies and the signing of this pledge signals our visible commitment as an employer.

Last year, the Minister for Employment, Mims Davies, commissioned an independent report into menopause in the workplace which produced a series of

recommendations, and a government response outlining its plan for increasing menopausal women's participation in the labour market will be issued in the coming months.

This builds on the work the Department for Work and Pensions has been doing to engage employers across the country to improve working conditions for women transitioning through the menopause, including amplifying examples of best practices, and providing advice through their nationwide 50 Plus Champions network in Jobcentres, so more businesses are able to recruit and retain women experiencing the menopause.

Minister for Employment, Mims Davies said:

We're absolutely committed to ensuring we have the support in place to recruit and retain women experiencing the menopause, including in the Civil Service, and last month we saw the number of women in the UK workforce rise by more than 58,000.

Menopause is still a leading cause for women leaving the workforce, which is why I'm working with employers, and across government to improve the support in place for women in the workplace.

Minister for Women's Health, Maria Caulfield said:

The menopause affects hundreds of thousands of women every year, but for some the symptoms of the menopause can seriously affect their daily lives, impacting them while at work.

Women are a vital part of the workforce and this pledge by the civil service shows what can be done by an employer to help women going through the menopause.

We're continuing to level up women's health and we have already launched a grant fund to support women in the workplace, set up the menopause taskforce and we will publish the first ever government-led Women's Health Strategy.

Chair of Wellbeing of Women, Professor Dame Lesley Regan said:

The Civil Service is sending a powerful message – that women both need and deserve our support in the workplace. Women are often at their most productive and successful at this stage in their lives. Many are the breadwinners for their family and make essential contributions. It makes complete sense to provide simple, practical support to help keep them in the workplace.

Notes to editors

In signing the Menopause Workplace Pledge, the Civil Service commits to:

- Recognising that the menopause can be an issue in the workplace and women need support
- Talking openly, positively and respectfully about the menopause
- Actively supporting and informing your employees affected by the menopause

About the Menopause Workplace Pledge

- The Menopause Workplace Pledge was launched in 2021 by Wellbeing of Women, in collaboration with Hello! Magazine and Bupa. The campaign is calling on every employer to take the Menopause Workplace Pledge and commit to providing menopause support.
- Over 1000 employers including the BBC, AstraZeneca, Royal Mail, Co-op, Tesco, John Lewis, and many hospitals, schools, universities, and other organisations have signed up, covering over 11 million workers across the country. Many organisations are introducing menopause policies, guidance, advice, training, workshops and peer-to-peer support groups.
- The Women's and inequalities Committee survey showed that 99% of 2,000 women polled experienced at least one menopausal symptom which also negatively affected them at work. Difficulty sleeping was the most reported (81%), followed by memory problems and/or concentration (75%) and hot flushes (72%). These led to a loss of ability to concentrate (72%), increased stress (70%) and a loss of confidence (67%).
- A report from the Chartered Institute of Personal Development (CIPD) refers to research from Bupa which estimates that nearly 1 million women in the UK have quit their jobs due to the menopause.