

US House passes Bill to sanction ICC over Netanyahu, Gallant arrest warrants

WASHINGTON DC, Jan 10 (ANI)

THE US House of Representatives on Thursday passed a Bill to impose sanctions on the International Criminal Court (ICC) in response to arrest warrants issued for Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and former Defence Minister Yoav Gallant, 'Al Jazeera' reported.

The Bill, titled the "Illegitimate Court Counteraction Act," passed with a vote of 243 to 140, signalling strong support for Israel.

According to 'Al Jazeera,' 45 Democrats joined 198 Republicans in backing the Bill, with no Republican opposition. The Bill will now be considered by the Senate, which is under Republican control.

"America is passing this law

because a kangaroo court is seeking to arrest the Prime Minister of our great ally, Israel," said Representative Brian Mast, the Republican Chairman of the House Foreign Affairs Committee, as quoted by 'Al Jazeera.'

The proposed sanctions target any individual or entity that aids the ICC in its efforts to investigate, arrest, or prosecute US citizens or citizens of allied nations that do not recognise the court's authority, 'Al Jazeera' reported.

Sanctions would include freezing assets and denying visas to those who contribute to the ICC's actions. The ICC's arrest warrants were issued in May 2023, accusing Netanyahu and Gallant of war crimes related to the ongoing conflict in Gaza, which has led to significant casualties. In response,

the US legislators have called for action against the ICC, with the legislation now moving toward Senate approval.

The move has been criticised by human rights organisations, who argue that the Bill undermines an independent judicial institution and could harm global efforts for justice. Despite this, the Senate is expected to act quickly, allowing President-elect Donald Trump to sign the Bill into law once he takes office. In 2020, during his first term as President, Trump imposed sanctions on senior ICC officials due to the court's investigations into US actions in Afghanistan and Israeli activities in Palestinian territories. President Biden later removed these sanctions.

The ICC, located in The Hague, Netherlands, is a permanent tri-

bunal with the authority to prosecute individuals for war crimes, crimes against humanity, genocide, and crimes of aggression.

Palestine has been a member of the ICC since 2015, and the court began investigating crimes committed by both Israeli and Hamas officials in 2019.

Although Israel is not a member of the ICC, the court has jurisdiction over crimes committed in the territory of any member state, regardless of the nationality of the perpetrator.

The US has occasionally supported the ICC, such as when the court's prosecutor sought an arrest warrant for Russian President Vladimir Putin over alleged war crimes in Ukraine. Like Israel and the US, Russia is also not a member of the ICC.

India's economy projected to grow **6.6%** in 2025: UN



■ **By Yoshita Singh**

UNITED NATIONS, Jan 10 (PTI)

THE Indian economy is projected to expand by 6.6 per cent in 2025, primarily supported by robust private consumption and investment, according to a

United Nations report.

The report titled 'the UN World Economic Situation and Prospects 2025' was released here on Wednesday.

It also said that the near-term outlook for South Asia is expected to remain robust, with growth projected at 5.7 per cent in 2025 and 6.0 per cent in 2026, "driven by strong performance in India as well as economic recovery in a few other economies", including Bhutan, Nepal and Sri Lanka.

(Contd on page 3)

SpaDeX docking

Spacecrafts are at distance of 1.5 km, to come closer on Jan 11

BENGALURU, Jan 10 (PTI)

THE two Space Docking Experiment (SpaDeX) satellites that ISRO is hoping to unite are at a distance of 1.5 km and will be brought much closer on January 11, the space agency said on Friday. The SpaDeX space docking experiment has so far missed two publicly announced schedules, on January 7 and January 9.

"Spacecrafts are at a distance of 1.5 km and on hold mode. Further drift to 500 m is planned to be achieved by tomorrow morning," ISRO said in a post on 'X'.

This announcement came a day after the space agency shared that the drift between satellites that had caused the postponement of the docking experiment for the second time had been arrested and they were put in a slow drift course to move closer to each other.

ISRO successfully launched the Space Docking Experiment (SpaDeX) mission on December 30, 2024.

The PSLV C60 rocket carrying two small satellites, SDX01 (Chaser) and SDX02 (Target), along with 24 payloads, had lifted off from the first launchpad of the Satish Dhawan Space Centre in Sriharikota, and about 15 minutes after liftoff, the two small spacecraft weighing about 220 kg each were launched into a 475-km circular orbit as intended.

After the launch, ISRO has been preparing for the docking, which requires multiple steps/stages.

Docking in space is a complex process, which so far has been mastered by only three other countries - the US, Russia and China. On January 6, a day before the first docking attempt was scheduled, ISRO announced its postponement to January 9, stating that the docking process requires further validation through ground simulations based on an abort scenario identified.

A day ahead of the docking planned on January 9, the space agency had initiated the drift on Spacecraft A (chaser) to move closer from 500 m to 225 m. But shortly after that it announced another postponement of docking, saying that -- while making a maneuver to reach 225 m between satellites, the drift was found to be more than expected, post non-visibility period.

President confers Pravasi Bharatiya Samman on 27

BHUBANESWAR, Jan 10 (PTI)

TRINIDAD & Tobago President Christine Carla Kangaloo and 26 others were conferred the prestigious Pravasi Bharatiya Samman award by President Droupadi Murmu on the last day of the 18th Pravasi Bharatiya Divas (PBD) convention here.

Murmu congratulated all the awardees and appreciated them for working for the society in different fields. She said that their success stories are not just a matter of pride for India, but they also inspire millions across the world to strive for excellence.

Murmu said Kangaloo's outstanding contributions in leading her nation, with a special focus on women and the Indian diaspora, have set a high benchmark on the world stage.

The Pravasi Bharatiya Samman Award is the highest honour conferred on overseas Indians. It is an important platform to connect with the Indian diaspora.

The awardees represent the excellence achieved by the Indian



President Droupadi Murmu presents the Pravasi Bharatiya Samman Award at the 18th Pravasi Bharatiya Divas convention in Bhubaneswar on Friday. (PTI)

diaspora in various fields.

The Trinidad & Tobago President got the award in the public affairs category.

Other awardees included Ajay Rane (Australia, community service), Marialena Joan Fernandes (Austria, education), Swami

Sanyuktanand (Fiji, community service), Saraswati Vidya Niketan (Guyana, community service), Lekh Raj Juneja (Japan, science and technology), Prem Kumar (Kyrgyz Republic, medical science) and Soukthavy Chowdhury (Laos, business).

18th PBD highly successful, says EAM Jaishankar

BHUBANESWAR, Jan 10 (PTI)

EXTERNAL affairs minister S Jaishankar on Friday described the three-day 18th Pravasi Bharatiya Divas being held here as highly successful.

(Contd on page 3)

Govt clears proposals for strategic infra in Ladakh

NEW DELHI, Jan 10 (PTI)

THE Centre's wildlife panel has cleared several proposals to build infrastructure for troops, ammunition storage and communication networks in eastern Ladakh near the Line of Actual Control (LAC) with China, official records show. The new infrastructure, set to be developed in the Changthang High Altitude Cold Desert Wildlife Sanctuary and the Karakorum Nubra Shyok Wildlife Sanctuary, aims to speed up ammunition access and ensure quicker operational deployment, according to the Ministry of Defence.

India and China were engaged in a 54-month-long military stand-off in eastern Ladakh, which began after their troops clashed in the Galwan Valley in May 2020. This standoff ended in October last year.

The proposals for this strategic infrastructure were discussed during a meeting of the Standing Committee of the National Board for Wildlife, chaired by Union Environment Minister Bhupender Yadav on December 21.

Both sanctuaries are home to rare wildlife such as the Tibetan antelope, Tibetan wild ass, snow leopard, Tibetan wolf and numer-

ous bird species. The Karakorum Nubra Shyok Wildlife Sanctuary also supports species like the Tibetan gazelle, Siberian ibex, bharal (blue sheep) and Bactrian camel. The areas earmarked for defence infrastructure are treeless but fall within Protected Areas, making them subject to Section 29 of the Wildlife Protection Act, 1972.

So far, the Standing Committee has approved 107 proposals, covering 2,967.63 hectares in the Changthang High Altitude Cold Desert Wildlife Sanctuary, and 64 proposals, covering 24,625.52 hectares in the Karakorum Nubra Shyok Wildlife Sanctuary.