

US delegation visiting India next week to meet Dalai Lama

NEW DELHI, June 14 (PTI)

CHAIR of US House Foreign Affairs Committee Michael McCaul and former House Speaker Nancy Pelosi are set to be part of a US congressional delegation that is set to visit Dharamsala next week to meet Tibetan spiritual leader the Dalai Lama.

The high-level US bipartisan delegation will be in Dharamsala on June 18 and 19. The visit is taking place ahead of the Dalai Lama's trip to the US for medical treatment.

India, France negotiating Rafale marine jet deal



NEW DELHI, June 14 (ANI)

INDIA and France are carrying out negotiations for the price and other related issues for the all-important 26 Rafale Marine fighter aircraft deal for the Indian Navy. The talks were earlier supposed to be held on May 30 but were postponed to June second week, apparently in view of the pending election process of the Lok Sabha polls.

"The French delegation is in New Delhi, including officials from their Directorate General of Armament which is looking after the sale of the Rafale jets to India," defence sources told ANI. The Indian side in these Government-to-Government talks is represented by the officials from the Directorate General of Acquisition

under the Ministry of Defence and other military officers from the user side, they said. The overall project is likely to be worth over Rs 50,000 crore and would help increase the number of these advanced aircraft in the Indian inventory to 62 with the existing 36 in the Air Force fleet.

The aircraft would be operated from the aircraft carriers of the Indian Navy including the INS Vikramaditya and the INS Vikrant. As per the plans, the Indian Navy will deploy these aircraft at the INS Degha in Vishakhapatnam in Andhra Pradesh as their home base.

France had submitted its response to India's tender for buying 26 Rafale Marine jets for the Indian Navy's aircraft carriers - INS Vikrant and INS Vikramaditya in December last year.

G7 Outreach session

Modi calls for ending monopoly in technology



BARI (Italy), June 14 (PTI)

PRIME Minister Narendra Modi on Friday called for ending the monopoly in technology and said, it must be made creative to lay the foundation of an inclusive society.

In an address at an Outreach session of the G7 summit in Italy's Apulia region, Modi said, the countries of the Global South are bearing the brunt of uncertainties and tensions around the world. India has considered it its responsibility to put the priorities and concerns of countries of the Global South on the world stage, he said. "In these efforts, we have given high priority to Africa. We are proud that the G-20, under the chairmanship of India, made the African Union a permanent member," he said.

"India has been contributing to the economic and social development, stability and security of all the countries of Africa, and will continue to do so in the future," Modi said.

The Prime Minister spoke extensively on the importance of ending monopoly in technology with a particular emphasis on artificial intelligence.

"We must make technology creative, not destructive. Only

then will we be able to lay the foundation of an inclusive society. India is striving for a better future through this human-centric approach," he said.

Modi said India is among the first few countries to formulate a national strategy on artificial intelligence. "Based on this strategy, we have launched the AI Mission this year. Its basic mantra is 'AI for All'. As a founding member and lead chair of the global partnership for AI, we are promoting cooperation among all countries," he said.

The Prime Minister said at the G-20 summit hosted by India last year, New Delhi stressed the importance of international governance in the field of AI.

"In the future too, we will continue to work together with all countries to make AI transparent, fair, secure, accessible and responsible," he said.

The Prime Minister said, India's approach in the field of energy is also based on four principles -- availability, accessibility, affordability and acceptability. "We are making every possible effort to fulfill our commitment to achieve the target of Net Zero by 2070. Together we should make efforts to make the coming time a green era," he said.

A peace summit for Ukraine opens in Switzerland, but Russia won't be taking part

■ **By Jamey Keaten**

GENEVA, June 14 (AP)

SWITZERLAND will host scores of world leaders this weekend to try to map out first steps toward peace in Ukraine even though Russia, which launched the ongoing war, won't take part.

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy's Government didn't want Russia

involved, and the Swiss — aware of Moscow's reservations about the talks — didn't invite Russia. The Swiss insist Russia must be involved at some point, and hope it will join the process one day. Ukrainians, too, are considering that possibility.

Swiss officials sent out some 160 invitations, about 90 delegations, including a handful of international organisations like United Nations, will attend.

Ramaphosa set for reelection

Key party says it will back him

CAPE TOWN, June 14 (AP)

THE leader of South Africa's second biggest party said Friday it will back Cyril Ramaphosa for President, almost guaranteeing he will be reelected in Parliament for a second term.

Democratic Alliance leader John Steenhuisen said his party had now formally signed a coalition agreement with Ramaphosa's African National Congress, and part of the agreement is Ramaphosa will be President.

Lawmakers are due to elect

a president later on Friday and the ANC and DA together have a majority of lawmakers that would see Ramaphosa return for a second term. If Ramaphosa is the only candidate nominated, he would be elected automatically without the need for a vote.

Steenhuisen said the DA was now preparing to co-govern Africa's most industrialised economy alongside the ANC and the coalition deal was in place. Ramaphosa's African National Congress party has been weakened after losing its long-held majority in an elec-



South African President Cyril Ramaphosa raises his hand as he is sworn in as a member of Parliament, in Cape Town, South Africa on Friday. At right is Pemmy Majodina, an ANC lawmaker. (AP/PTI)

tion last month, leaving him needing the support of other parties if he is to return as president. The DA—once the ANC's biggest political foe—will now support Ramaphosa and continue the ANC's three-decade hold on the presidency.

G7 SUMMIT

PM Modi meets world leaders

BARI (Italy), June 14 (PTI)

FURTHER strengthening India's might and partnership at global lev-

el Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Friday held wide ranging talks with world leaders including French President Macron, British counter-

part Rishi Sunak and Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy. PM Modi and top the leaders discussed ways to boost strategic part-

nership, bilateral relations and FTA issues on the sidelines of the 50th G7 Summit at the Italy's luxury resort of Borgo Egnazia in Apulia.

PM Modi, Macron discuss strategic ties...



PRIME Minister Narendra Modi on Friday said he had an excellent meeting with French President Emmanuel Macron, their fourth meeting in one year, and discussed ways to further strengthen the strategic partnership in areas like defence, nuclear and space.

The two leaders met on the sidelines of the G7 summit here in the southern resort town of Italy.

The meeting with Macron is Modi's first official bilateral meeting with an international leader since taking charge for his third term as Prime Minister earlier this month.

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Modi, Rishi Sunak review FTA negotiations...



PRIME Minister Modi met his British counterpart Rishi Sunak and re-affirmed his commitment to further strengthen the India-UK strategic partnership in the third term of the NDA Government and reviewed the progress made in the ongoing FTA negotiations. The two leaders greeted each other with a warm hug.

"It was a delight to meet PM @RishiSunak in Italy. I reiterated my commitment to further strengthen the India-UK Comprehensive Strategic Partnership in the third term of the NDA Government," Modi posted on X.

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PM tells Zelenskyy, talks only way to peace...



PRIME Minister Narendra Modi on Friday conveyed to Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy during a meeting that India would continue to do everything within its means to support a peaceful solution to the Ukraine conflict and that the way to peace is through "dialogue and diplomacy".

The upcoming Swiss peace conference for Ukraine also figured in the Modi-Zelenskyy talks held on the margins of the G7 summit in Italy's Apulia and the Ukrainian President thanked the Prime Minister for sending a high-level

(Contd on page 5)



Prime Minister Narendra Modi with Italy's Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni during the 50th G7 Summit at Borgo Egnazia, Italy on Friday. (PTI)

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