

Kim vows to back Russia's Ukraine war

SEOUL, Sept 13 (AP)

NORTH Korean leader Kim Jong Un vowed support for Russia's "just fight" during a summit with President Vladimir Putin on Wednesday that the US warned could lead to a deal to supply ammunition for Moscow's war in Ukraine.

After touring launch pads with Putin at a remote space base in Russia's Far East, Kim expressed "full and unconditional support" and said Pyongyang will always stand with Moscow on the "anti-imperialist" front.

The leaders met at the Vostochny Cosmodrome for a summit that underscores how their interests are aligning in the face of their countries' separate, intensifying confronta-



Russian President Vladimir Putin and North Korea's leader Kim Jong Un examine a launch pad during their meeting at the Vostochny cosmodrome in Russia on Wednesday. (AP/PTI)

tions with the United States. The talks lasted four to five hours, Russia's State news agency RIA

Novosti reported. Putin told Russian State TV that the North Korean will visit two more cities

in Russia's Far East after the summit. North Korea may have tens of millions of ageing artillery shells and rockets based on Soviet designs that could give a huge boost to the Russian army in Ukraine, analysts say. The United States has accused North Korea of providing Russia with arms, including selling artillery shells to the Russian mercenary group Wagner. Both Russian and North Korean officials have denied such claims.

That would be a striking reversal of roles: The Soviet Union provided ammunition, warplanes and pilots to support communist North Korea's invasion of the South during the 1950-53 Korean War, and the North relied on Soviet economic aid for decades afterward.

Assam-Meghalaya CMs hold border talks

SHILLONG, Sept 13 (PTI)

CHIEF Ministers of Assam and Meghalaya on Wednesday held informal talks on the border issue before conducting a joint visit to the area of difference next month. We want to sit in a formal meeting and then we will be able to take some confidence building measures, said Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma.

“Once confidence building measures are formalised, we will both go to the site and discuss with people of border villages. When we went to Langpih, there were lots of festivities. So, we want to go to

Karbi Anglong and Jaintia Hills also with the same kind of festivities,” he added. The Assam CM said he would like to have the formal meeting and visit to the border area in October.

“I like to do it in the month of October. If Meghalaya CM can come to Guwahati in the first week of October, we can do, otherwise in the second week.”

As part of the second phase of border talks, both Assam and Meghalaya Governments have constituted regional committees to come up with solutions for resolving the remaining six areas of differences shared by the two States.

US House Speaker orders impeachment probe against Biden

WASHINGTON, Sept 13 (AP)

SPEAKER Kevin McCarthy announced on Tuesday he is directing the US House to open an impeachment inquiry into President Joe Biden over his family's business dealings, launching historic proceedings ahead of the 2024 election.

McCarthy said that House investigations so far "paint a picture of a culture of corruption" around the Biden family as Republicans probe the business dealings of the President's son, Hunter Biden, from before the Democratic President took office. "These are allegations of abuse of power, obstruction and corruption, and they warrant further investigation by the House of Representatives,"

McCarthy, R-Calif, said at the Capitol, announcing that he was directing the House led by the Oversight Committee "to open a formal impeachment inquiry into President Joe Biden."

The White House shot back, calling the action in the midst of the presidential campaign "extreme politics at its worst."

"House Republicans have been investigating the President for nine months, and they've turned up no evidence of wrongdoing," said spokesman Ian Sams.

The White House and others pointed to McCarthy's past

statements when he insisted a Speaker could not unilaterally launch an impeachment inquiry or it would have no legitimacy. McCarthy "flipfopped because he doesn't have support," Sams said.

In fact, the Republican leader faces mounting pressure from his right flank to take action against Biden or risk being ousted from his leadership job - while he also is struggling to pass legislation needed to avoid a federal Government shutdown at the end of the month.

McCarthy is launching the inquiry on his own, without a

House vote, and it's unclear if he would even have enough support for approval from his slim GOP majority. Some Republicans have panned the effort as unwarranted, not seeing evidence that reaches the Constitution's bar of "high crimes and misdemeanours."

An inquiry is a step toward impeachment, and McCarthy essentially outlined the potential charges as he prepared to brief lawmakers behind closed doors this week. The inquiry will be led by Oversight Committee Chairman James Comer, in coordination with Judiciary Committee Chairman Jim Jordan and Ways and Means Chairman Jason Smith. They are heading across the Capitol on Wednesday to brief the

Senate. Senate Republican leader Mitch McConnell has warned House Republicans of the effort, but said on Tuesday: "I don't think Speaker McCarthy needs advice from the Senate."

Democratic Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer called the impeachment inquiry "absurd." The Republican Speaker is once again at a political crossroads - trying to keep his most conservative lawmakers satisfied and save his own job. It's a familiar political bind for McCarthy, who is juggling the impeachment inquiry and a Government shutdown threat with no clear end game. Government funding is to run out on September 30, which is the end of the federal fiscal year.



Kevin McCarthy

IAF gets first C-295 plane, may require more than 56 ordered



IAF chief Air Chief Marshal VR Chaudhari took delivery of the first C-295 at the Airbus Defence and Space production facility at Seville in Spain

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi: India will require more than the 56 C-295 tactical military airlift planes already ordered under the mega Rs 21,935 crore Tata-Airbus project, IAF chief Air Chief Marshal V R Chaudhari said on Wednesday.

"The IAF order was for 56 aircraft. There is also a requirement for maritime patrol aircraft by the Coast Guard, the home ministry, and in the future by the Indian Navy also. The numbers may go well beyond 56," ACM Chaudhari said, after taking the delivery of the first C-295 at the Airbus Defence and Space production facility at Seville in Spain.

Under the contract inked two years ago, the first 16 C-295s will be delivered in a flyaway condition by Airbus in the 2023-25 timeframe, while the remaining 40 will

subsequently be produced at the new Tata-Airbus facility at Vadodara in Gujarat.

The twin-turboprop C-295 transport aircraft, which can carry up to 9-tonne of payload or 71 soldiers with a "short take-off and land" capability from semi-prepared surfaces in hilly terrain, will boost IAF's tactical airlift capability along the border with China, as also other places like the Andaman Nicobar archipelago, as reported earlier by TOI.

"It is a major milestone not only for IAF but for the whole country. For the IAF, it improves our tactical airlift capabilities by leaps and bounds. For the nation, it marks the beginning of a new era of 'Atmanirbhar Bharat'... It's a big step for the Indian aviation industry where we will be manufacturing the first military transport aircraft in the country," ACM Chaudhari said.

Pak president 'advises' EC to hold general elections on Nov 6

Omer Farooq Khan | TNN

Islamabad: Pakistan President Arif Alvi on Wednesday proposed November 6 as the date for the country's upcoming elections in a letter addressed to the Chief Election Commissioner (CEC). The move added to the controversy surrounding the timing of the next polls in the backdrop of divided opinions among all stakeholders on the time frame for elections.

Alvi said the constitution empowers and mandates him to appoint a date for general elections that is not later than 90 days from the date of dissolution of the National Assembly. He wrote that the National Assembly was dissolved by him on the advice of the then PM, Shehbaz Sharif, on August 9, 2023. "Hence, in terms of Article 48(5) of the Constitution, the general election to the National Assembly should be held by the 89th day of the date of dissolution of the National Assembly, i.e. Monday, the 6th day of November 2023," the letter read.

The president wrote that he had invited the CEC for a meeting to devise the modalities to implement the constitutional intent and mandate for appointing a date, but the latter took a "contrary view," stating that it was the electoral body's domain under the constitution and framework of electoral laws.

Ukraine hits HQ of Russia's Black Sea fleet in Crimea

Kyiv: Ukraine said it struck Russian naval targets and port infrastructure early on Wednesday in the Crimean city of Sevastopol, in what appeared to be the biggest attack of the war on the headquarters of the Russian navy's Black Sea fleet. The strike on Crimea, which was seized and annexed by Russia in 2014, was confirmed by Moscow. It highlighted Kyiv's growing missile capabilities.

"We confirm a large landing vessel and submarine were hit. We do not comment on the means (used) for the strike," Ukrainian military intelligence official Andriy Yusov said in a rare acknowledgement, giving no further details. Russia's defence ministry said Ukraine had attacked a Black Sea shipyard with 10 cruise missiles and three uncrewed speedboats in the early hours, damaging two military vessels that had been undergoing repairs. It said it downed seven of the incoming missiles and that the attack boats had been destroyed

Reuters



Smoke rises from damaged ship after missile attack on Sevastopol

ed by a Russian patrol ship.

The city is used by the Black Sea Fleet which the Kremlin uses to project power into West Asia and Mediterranean and — during the war in Ukraine — to impose a de facto blockade on Ukraine's seaborne food exports via the Turkish straits.

It was not clear what kind of missile was used by Kyiv in the attack on Sevastopol, which lies about 300km from Ukraine's Black Sea port of Odesa. Ukraine may have used domestically made Neptune anti-ship missiles that had been modified to work against ground targets. British-supplied Storm Shadow cruise missiles were another possibility. REUTERS & NYT

Jaishankar may attend Quad, SCO meets in NY

Engagements Likely On Sidelines Of UNGA Meet

Sachin.Parashar
@timesgroup.com

New Delhi: Foreign minister S Jaishankar is likely to participate in both Quad and Russia and China-led SCO meetings on the margins of the 78th session of the UN General Assembly later this month, during what will be his first visit abroad after the G20 summit in Delhi.

Jaishankar was scheduled to travel to Cuba later this week for the G7 + China group summit but that plan was dropped after the announcement of the special session of Parliament from September 18. He will now travel to New York after the Parliament session and address the UNGA high-level meeting on September 26.

On the margins, the Quad and SCO countries are said to be finalising dates for foreign ministers' meetings. According to diplomatic sources, efforts are on also to schedule a meeting of Brics foreign ministers.

This will be the third time that the Quad foreign ministers will meet on the sidelines of the UNGA. SCO ministerial meetings have also been held in the past at



ANI

Jaishankar was scheduled to travel to Cuba later this week for the G7+ China group summit but that plan was dropped after the announcement of the special session of Parliament from Sept 18

the same venue. The government doesn't see any contradiction in its efforts to engage with Quad and SCO as it works to compartmentalise India's foreign policy in line with its belief in a multi-polar world.

While the Quad meeting will look to prepare the groundwork and finalise the date for the summit which India will host next year, the SCO meeting will be an op-

portunity for India to reinforce its commitment to working with the Eurasian bloc to deal with issues like terrorism and the need for peace and stability in Afghanistan. On SCO though, India has had a very fine line to tread, given the presence of Pakistan and China's all-pervasive economic clout. Unlike other SCO member-states, India has never endorsed China's BRI and at the SCO summit this year, which India only hosted virtually after having changed the original date, the government also stayed away from the SCO 2030 economic strategy because it seemed aligned more with Beijing's interests.

In Quad too, in keeping with its multi-alignment strategy and long-standing ties with Moscow, India remains the only country to not explicitly condemn Russia for the Ukraine war. This strategy has served the government well in these turbulent times in international relations and, according to Indian authorities, was also instrumental in bringing about an unexpected G20 consensus that cleared the way for the New Delhi Leaders' Declaration.

Army Col, Major & J&K DSP die fighting Pak-backed terrorists

Soldier, 5 Cops Injured; TRF Claims Attack

Saleem.Pandit@timesgroup.com

Anantnag: Col Manpreet Singh and Maj Aashish Dhonchak of 19 Rashtriya Rifles, and DSP Humayun Bhat of J&K Police lost their lives during a fierce gunfight with ter-

► **2nd Pakistani terrorist shot dead in Rajouri, P 9**

rorists in the forests surrounding Gadool village of Koker-nag in Anantnag district on the intervening night of Tuesday and Wednesday. The terrorists are suspected to be from The Resistance Front (TRF), a shadow group of the Pakistan-backed Lashkar-e-Taiba.



The officers – Col Manpreet Singh (from top), Maj Aashish Dhonchak and DSP Humayun Bhat – died at the military hospital in Batwara, Srinagar, where they were flown for treatment

A soldier and five policemen were wounded in the shootout, which is still ongoing. On August 10, two civilians and a soldier had suffered shrapnel wounds from a grenade explosion during an operation to flush out terrorists hiding in the woods in the

same village. Altogether 116 Army, CAPF and J&K Police personnel have been killed in terrorism-related attacks in the Kashmir zone, and 24 in the Jammu region, from August 5, 2019 to August 1 this year.

► **Continued on P 9**

Sniper kills tribal Manipur cop in the line of duty

An on-duty tribal police officer was fatally shot in the head by a sniper suspected to be from a militant outfit in Manipur's Churachandpur on Wednesday, a day after three tribal civilians were killed by unidentified assailants in the hill district of Kangpokpi. Two villagers were wounded in the sniper attack.

SI Onkhomang Haokip (40) leaves behind his wife and their four children. He was part of reinforcements deployed at Chingphei village after eight people died in gunfights and mortar shelling in nearby Khausabung and Khorentak on August 30 and 31. **P 9**