

Army men locate new peaks, brave cloudburst while on mission Tricolour

GUWAHATI, Oct 17 (PTI)

FOR Colonel Ranveer Singh Jamwal and his team, it was meant to be a night of rest and relief on the foothills of the Himalayas in Sikkim after successfully undertaking a novel mission of hoisting the Tricolour on the highest peak of all States of the country.

But the night of October 3 turned into one of the most scariest as it was a 10-minute window which saved them from near-certain death as a cloudburst created havoc in Sikkim, from which it is still grappling to come back to normalcy.

"We had climbed the last peak of the mission on October 2, Mt Jongsong in Sikkim. The next day, we were staying overnight at an ITBP post in Janak. We had hardly sighed in relief of completing our mission when around 10 pm, the



first waters came gushing in," Col Jamwal told PTI here. "Our team managed to get out with our stuff in 10 minutes, and being mountaineers, our first instinct took us up the hills. And that window of 10 minutes and running up to the hills rather than down saved us, I think," he said.

Jamwal was leading a team of about 20, comprising mountaineers and other logistic support staff, from the National

Institute of Mountaineering and Adventure Sports (NIMAS) on a mission to hoist the National Flag on the highest peak of all 28 States of the country. 'Mission Har Shikhar Tiranga - Ek Muhim Matrabhumi Ke Lie' was launched from Arunachal Pradesh on October 16 last year, with the final summit scaled in Sikkim earlier this month. The expedition was carried out under the Ministry of Defence.

Putin in Beijing, visits 'dear friend' Xi in show of no-limits partnership

Duo To Hold Bilateral Talks Today

Beijing: Russian President Vladimir Putin arrived in Beijing on Tuesday to meet Chinese President Xi Jinping on a widely watched trip aimed at showcasing the trust and "no-limits" partnership between the countries even as the war in Ukraine raged on.

In only his second known trip abroad since the Hague-based International Criminal Court (ICC) issued an arrest warrant for him in March, Putin and his entourage flew into the Beijing Capital International Airport on Tuesday morning where he was greeted by the Chinese commerce minister Wang Wentao. It is also the Kremlin chief's first official trip outside of the former Soviet Union this year, after visiting Kyrgyzstan this month.

The ICC, which accused Putin of illegally deporting children from Ukraine, obliges the court's 123 member states to arrest Putin and transfer him to the Hague for trial if he sets foot on their territory. Neither Kyrgyzstan nor China are members of the ICC.

Xi last saw his "dear friend" in Moscow just days after the warrant was issued. At the time, Xi invited Putin to attend the third Belt and Road forum in Beijing. As Putin arrived at the Great Hall of the People for an evening banquet organised for global leaders and dignitaries attending the forum, Xi was all smiles as the two men shook hands.

On Wednesday at the forum, Putin will also speak after Xi gives his opening speech. The two will hold bilateral talks later that day. Beijing has rejected Western criticism of its partnership with Moscow insisting that their ties do not violate international norms, and China has the right to collaborate with whichever country it chooses.

Putin has praised the the Belt and Road Forum, saying it is a platform for internatio-



Putin & Xi meet on the sidelines of the Belt and Road Forum in Beijing

Zelensky: Kyiv fired long-range missiles for the first time

Ukraine's President Volodymyr Zelensky said on Tuesday Kyiv has used US-provided long-range Army Tactical Missile System (ATACMS) missiles. Kyiv has repeatedly asked the US administration for ATACMS, in the hope the missiles could strengthen Ukraine's ability to attack and disrupt supply lines, air bases and rail networks in Russian-occupied territory, that could not be reached by short-range equipment. "Today, special thanks to the US. Our agreements with President Biden are being implemented. Very accurately — ATACMS missiles proved themselves," he said in his nightly address. This marks the first officially confirmed usage of the ATACMS, that can fly up to 306km, in Ukraine. REUTERS

nal cooperation, where "no one imposes anything on others". The trip is not a "full-fledged bilateral" visit, but one made on the sidelines of an international conference, according to the Kremlin. REUTERS

Bench Unanimous That Marriage Not A Fundamental Right, Tweaking SMA Up To Parliament

SC rules 5-0 against same-sex marriage, 3-2 against adoption

WHAT DIVIDED, AND UNITED, THE BENCH OF 5 JUDGES

- > All 5 judges agree that same-sex couples have no right to marriage under current laws, transgender & intersex couples in heterosexual relationships do
- > Majority opinion (of Justices SR Bhat, Hima Kohli & PS Narasimha) maintains that same-sex couples have **no right to civil union** (a legally recognised union with rights similar to those of marriage), **cannot adopt children**
- > Minority opinion (of CJI DY Chandrachud & Justice SK Kaul) holds that same-sex couples have **right to civil union, and to adopt children**

CJI DY CHANDRACHUD
 Homosexuality or queerness is **not solely an urban concept**, nor is it restricted to the upper classes... To imagine queer as existing only in urban spaces would be like erasing them...
 The right to enter into a union cannot be restricted based on sexual orientation. Such a restriction will be **violative of Art 15** (forbids discrimination)
 Whether a change should be brought into the legislative

regime of the SMA is for **Parliament to determine...**
SK KAUL
 The capacity of non-heterosexual couples for love, commitment and responsibility is no less worthy of regard than heterosexual couples. **Let us preserve this autonomy... After all, it's my life**
SR BHAT & HIMA KOHLI
 ...No matter how much we empathise with the outcome sought, the **means to arrive at such a destination must also be**

legally sound, and keep intact the grand architecture of our constitutional scheme
PS NARASIMHA
 I am **not oblivious to the concerns of LGBTQ+ partners with respect to denial of access to certain benefits...** a review of the impact of legislative framework on the flow of such benefits requires a deliberative and consultative exercise, which...the **legislature and executive are constitutionally suited, and tasked, to undertake**

Govt Panel To Consider Benefits For LGBTQIA+

Dhananjay Mahapatra
 @timesgroup.com

New Delhi: The Supreme Court Tuesday rejected the plea to legalise same-sex marriages and extend the right of adoption to queer couples, in a setback to the push for equal treatment of those with alternative sexual orientation.

Despite asserting that queerness is neither urban nor elite, a bench of Chief Justice DY Chandrachud and Justices SK Kaul, SR Bhat, Hima Kohli and PS Narasimha disappointed the hopeful faces in the courtroom with a unanimous ruling that the right to marry was not a fundamental right and the legislature had the power to regulate it in accordance with societal conditions.

Unequivocally stating that the legislature alone could effect changes in marriage laws and other consequential legislations to allow same-sex couples the right to legally tie the knot, the bench said it was not for the court to read down or insert words into Section 4 of the Special Marriage Act (SMA), 1954, to erase the statu-

Transgender couples rue adoption bar

Transgender couples were disappointed with the SC verdict upholding the bar on adoption by queer couples. Faced with numerous such requests, the central adoption authority was learned to have referred the matter to the law ministry. **P17**

torily essential man-woman component of a marriage.

The bench also agreed that a high-powered committee to be set up by the government

Dutee: Verdict upset my wedding plans

Sprinter Dutee Chand, who came out as lesbian in 2019 and has been in a same-sex relationship for five years, said she was disappointed. "I plan to marry my partner... But the SC's decision has upset all plans. We hope Parliament passes a law," Dutee said. **P17**

should examine all factors relevant to the queer community and consider benefits for them.

But the unanimity ended there. While the CJI and Justices

RSS, VHP & Jamiat welcome verdict

RSS and its affiliate VHP welcomed the SC's decision, saying Parliament can hold a discussion and take "appropriate" decisions. The Jamiat Ulema-e-Hind said the order "reinforces the preservation of the traditional institution of marriage". **P17**

Justice Kaul opined that same-sex couples could adopt, the majority opinion was against it.

> Related report, **P18**

CJI & Justice Bhat rebut each other on adoption rights

Justice SR Bhat agreed with the CJI in rejecting marriage right to same-sex couples, but differed on grant of adoption right to them, reports Dhananjay Mahapatra. It is apparent that after the judgments had been written and exchanged among the judges prior to Tuesday's pronouncement, the CJI took exception to the open analysis of his reasoning by Bhat and gave vent to his anguish. Bhat then penned a postscript to respond to the CJI's remarks. **P18**

Big setback to a lifetime of work, says community

The judgement dashed the hopes of LGBTQIA+ community members who have now set their eyes on pushing the Centre to implement the points raised by the SC to empower the community, reports Ambika Pandit. Vivek Anand, CEO of Humsafar Trust, said, "It feels like a big setback to a lifetime of work put into the struggle by the community." **P17**

Army begins process to procure boats, LCAs

NEW DELHI, Oct 17 (PTI)

THE Army has rolled out a process to procure six fast patrol boats, eight landing craft assault (LCA) and 118 integrated surveillance and targeting systems for deployment in border areas as part of efforts to enhance its combat capabilities, officials said on Tuesday.

The fast patrol boats are being procured primarily for surveillance in large water bodies, including the Pangong lake in eastern Ladakh.

The Indian and Chinese

troops are locked in an over three-year confrontation in certain friction points along the Line of Actual Control in eastern Ladakh even as the two sides completed disengagement from several areas following extensive diplomatic and military talks.

The Army has already issued the request for information (RFI) or initial tenders for procurement of the fast patrol boats, LCAs and integrated surveillance and targeting systems, the officials said.

The RFI for fast patrol boats said the vessels should be

“rugged and versatile so as to facilitate seamless execution of small team insertion, surveillance, reconnaissance and patrolling” and that they should be capable of operating across a varying matrix of terrain and conditions.

It said the indigenously-developed boats should have a maximum speed of 29 knots (at sea state level 2) with eight people on board.

The initial tender for LCAs said they are planned to be deployed for search and rescue operations in Creek area and river basins.

Defence Ministry seals deal for construction of ship for CG

NEW DELHI, Oct 17 (PTI)

THE Defence Ministry on Tuesday said it signed a contract with Mazagon Dock Shipbuilders Ltd for construction of the first Indian Coast Guard training ship at a cost of Rs 310 crore.

It would be the first dedicated training platform with integral helicopter capabilities that will provide basic sea training to Coast Guard personnel and other international trainee officers, according to the Ministry.

“The Ministry of Defence signed a contract for the construction of one training ship for the Indian Coast Guard (ICG) with Mazagon Dock Shipbuilders Ltd, Mumbai at a cost of Rs 310 crore,” it said.

The ministry said the training ship with advanced and modern high-tech surveillance and monitoring systems will provide “profound insight and expertise” to the ICG cadets on the challenges at sea while ensuring the security of coastline and offshore assets.

Several mega-projects on way for IMEEC, says Modi

'Corridor Will Transform Picture Of New Global Trade'

Chittaranjan Tembhekar
& Dipak Dash | TNN

Mumbai/ New Delhi: Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Tuesday said like the Silk Route of the past that accelerated the global economy, the India-Middle East Europe Economic Corridor (IMEEC) will transform the picture of new global trade. The PM also said India will take up several projects such as the development of the next generation mega port, international container trans-shipment port, island development, inland waterways, and multi-modal hubs as a part of the cross-country economic corridor plan.

Addressing the Global Maritime India Summit virtually, Modi said, "The operation of this corridor will result in reduction in cost of business, improve logistical efficiency, cut environmental degradation



Addressing the Global Maritime India Summit virtually on Tuesday, PM Modi compared the IMEEC with the Silk Route of the past

and create jobs. This is a great opportunity for investors to become part of this campaign and join India."

Sources said the Centre has started mapping tasks for augmenting the capacity of ports on the western coast — JNPT, Kandla, Mumbai and Mundra — and also plans to start work for the development of Rs 65,500 crore greenfield port at Vadnavan in Maharashtra

in December. The government aims to make this largest port with a natural draft of about 20 metres close to the shore fully ready to meet the additional demand that would be generated due to the IMEEC.

The Prime Minister also laid the foundation stone for projects worth more than Rs 23,000 crore that are aligned with the Indian maritime blue economy and high-

lighted the government's focus on the ship-building and repair sector as he pointed out to the manufacturing of indigenous aircraft carrier INS Vikrant as the proof of India's capacity.

"India is going to become one of the top five ship-building nations in the coming decade. Our Mantra is 'Make in India — Make for the world,'" he added.

Modi said the government is putting efforts to make major ports in India carbon-neutral via a net-zero strategy for the sector. "We are moving towards a future where the Blue Economy will be the medium to create a Green Planet," he added.

Recalling how the entire world was marred by the uncertainties of the Covid-19 pandemic when the summit took place in 2021, Modi said now in the changing world order, the world is looking towards India with new aspirations.