

# India helped control global inflation by buying Russian oil: EAM in UK

**London:** External affairs minister S Jaishankar has defended India's purchasing of Russian oil despite Western sanctions, saying it had helped control global inflation and he "was waiting for the thank you", reports Naomi Canton.

In conversation with former FT editor Lionel Barber at the Royal Overseas League Wednesday, he also fought back against accusations by another journalist that India "had become illiberal", saying it did not need to "curry favour before a global audience" and India was simply "more Indian".

On the murder of Hardeep Singh Nijjar, a designated terrorist, Jaishankar said he had not seen any evidence that points to direct or indirect involvement of the Indian government in the killing.

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## FOCUS ON SECURITY

► Jaishankar raises **delayed extradition of Indian fugitives Nirav Modi and Vijay Mallya with UK govt** during his 5-day visit. Also discusses **Khalistan extremism** and the safety of the Indian mission

► After reports of **Khalistan supporters trying to disrupt consular camp in Vancouver**, India tells Canada it must follow Vienna norms, **P 24**

## India for freedom of navigation: Rajnath

India is fully committed to freedom of navigation, overflight and unimpeded lawful commerce in international waters in accordance with global norms, defence minister Rajnath Singh said at the ADMM-Plus in Jakarta, **P 9**

# Army's anti-infiltration operation in Uri

## Key terror launch commander killed

SRINAGAR, Nov 16 (PTI)

**I**N a major blow to terrorist infrastructure and terror sympathisers in the Pakistan-occupied Kashmir, security forces have eliminated key launch commander Bashir Ahmad Malik in an anti-infiltration operation in the Uri sector, the Army said on Thursday.

Malik and another terrorist were killed on Wednesday in a joint operation, codenamed Op Kali, by the army and Jammu and Kashmir Police along the Line of Control.

"The salient aspect of this operation is the neutralisation of Bashir Ahmed Malik, one of the two terrorists killed. He was an important cog in the Pakistan-enabled cross-border terrorism in Jammu and Kashmir.



Security personnel stand guard during an encounter with militants, in Kulgam, on Thursday.

(PTI)

He was an important terrorist launch commander for terror tanzems (organisations) from Leepa in the North to the areas in PoJ&K, opposite Rajouri in the South," an Army official said. The official said Malik,

who was active for the past 30 years, had enabled infiltration of a number of terrorists who caused the death of many Indian citizens, both security forces personnel as well as civilians.

# MITRA SHAKTI IN PUNE: India-Sri Lanka joint military exercise underway

NEW DELHI, Nov 16 (PTI)

THE ninth edition of a joint military exercise between India and Sri Lanka commenced on Thursday in Pune, which will focus on achieving an enhanced level of interoperability among the troops, officials said.

The 'Exercise MITRA SHAKTI-2023' is being conducted from November 16-29 at Aundh.

The Indian contingent of 120 personnel is being represented mainly by troops from the Maratha Light Infantry Regiment, the Defence Ministry said in a statement.

The Sri Lankan side is being represented by personnel from the 53 Infantry Division. Fifteen personnel from the Indian Air



Indian contingent of 120 personnel from the Maratha Light Infantry Regiment during 'Exercise MITRA SHAKTI-2023' from November 16-29 at Aundh, Pune.

Force and five personnel from Sri Lankan Air Force are also

participating in the exercise," it said.

The aim of the exercise is to jointly rehearse conduct of sub-

conventional operations under Chapter VII of United Nations Charter.

"The scope of the exercise includes synergising joint responses during counter-terrorist operations. Both sides will practice tactical actions such as raid, search and destroy missions, heliborne operations, etc. In addition, Army Martial Arts Routine (AMAR), combat reflex shooting and yoga will also form part of the exercise curriculum," it added.

'Exercise MITRA SHAKTI-2023' will also involve employment of drones and counter unmanned aerial systems, besides helicopters. Drills to secure helipads and undertake casualty evacuation during counter-terrorist operations will also be rehearsed jointly

by both sides, the statement said. Collective efforts will focus on achieving an enhanced level of interoperability amongst the troops and reduce the risk of life and property while keeping the interests and agenda of the UN at the forefront during peace keeping operations, officials said.

"Both sides will exchange views and practices of joint drills on a wide spectrum of combat skills that will facilitate the participants to mutually learn from each other. Sharing of best practices will further enhance the level of defence cooperation between Indian Army and the Sri Lankan Army.

The exercise will also foster strong bilateral relations between the two neighbouring nations," it added.

# Pedro Sanchez reelected as Spain's PM

MADRID, Nov 16 (AP)

SPAIN'S acting Socialist Prime Minister, Pedro Sanchez, was reelected by a majority of legislators in a parliamentary vote Thursday, allowing him to form a new minority leftist coalition Government.

Sanchez was backed by 179 lawmakers in the 350-seat lower house of parliament. Only right-wing opposition deputies voted against him.

The vote came after nearly two days of debate among party leaders that centred almost entirely on a highly controver-



sial amnesty deal for Catalonia's separatists that Sanchez agreed to in return for vital support to get elected Prime Minister again. Sanchez won the vote after clinching the support of six smaller parties — including two Catalan separatist parties — in recent weeks, allowing him to achieve the majority of lawmakers needed to be reelected and form another minority coalition government with the left-wing Sumar (Joining Forces) party.

Spain's inconclusive national elections on July 23 left a highly-fractured Parliament. The centre-right Popular Party received the most votes in the elections but failed to get enough support to form a Government because of its alliances with the far-right Vox party, which finished third.

# 'Planet big enough for both superpowers,' Xi tells Biden at meet

## Talks Between Duo Lead To Little But A Promise To Keep Communicating

President Biden said on Wednesday that four hours of discussion with President Xi Jinping of China had brought about two significant agreements, on curbing fentanyl production and on military-to-military communications. But both American and Chinese accounts of their first encounter in a year indicated little progress on the issues that have pushed the two nations to the edge of conflict.

Emerging from the talks, and a brief walk with Xi on the grounds of a mansion south of San Francisco, Biden told reporters that the conversation had been the "most constructive and productive" between the two men since Biden had come to office. The agreements they announced were modest, however, and their most important commitments were to keep talking and to pick up the phone in times of crisis. On one of the critical issues, barring the use of artificial intelligence in the command and control systems of their nuclear arsenals, no formal set of discussions was established. Instead, Biden's aides said that Jake Sullivan, the NSA, would keep talking with Wang Yi, China's chief foreign affairs official.

Biden went out of his way to show respect for Xi, greeting him at the entrance to Filoli, a century-old mansion with gardens that was chosen as a private locale for the leaders of the world's two most critical military, technological and economic superpowers to talk. Xi also sounded accommodating when he arrived, telling Biden, "Planet Earth is big enough" for both superpowers. He told Biden that their countries were very different but should be "fully capable of rising above differences."

By both American and



Biden & Xi at Woodside in California

Chinese accounts, the leaders repeated old talking points about Taiwan, even as Xi voiced worries that the coming election on the island could lead to talk of independence — one of the "red lines" that Chinese officials have said could force them to take military action. The leaders agreed to resume military-to-military communications, which China had cut off after Nancy Pelosi visited Taiwan last year, when she was speaker of the House. Such commitments to communicate — for transparency, and to avert collisions and crises — have been made before, and Biden made the case that military channels had to remain open to prevent potential clashes. It is unclear how Xi responded.

They also took up the issue of fentanyl, a potent drug that has killed hundreds of thousands of Americans. Biden later described the outline of an agreement that would commit Beijing to regulating components of fentanyl. But China has made similar commitments before. The two men also spoke about the technology race between their countries, which sits at the core of their increasingly bitter competition. Xi complained about escalating American export restrictions on advanced computer chips, which are fundamental to China's technological ambitions. NYT

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# UGC syncs PG, UG courses to give students flexibility

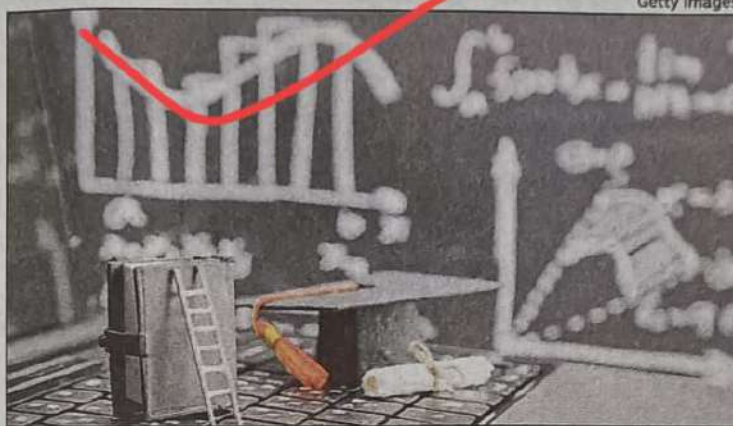
## Learners Can Now Switch Disciplines, Choose Courses Of Interest

Manash.Gohain  
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**New Delhi:** New post graduate programmes will come in three-formats—one-year, two-year and five-year integrated—with flexibility to move from one discipline of study to another and for students who qualify undergraduate (UG) with a double major to opt for any of the two subjects they have majored in.

In conformity with the restructured undergraduate programmes, the University Grants Commission approved the new “Curriculum and Credit Framework for Postgraduate Programmes” in its November 3 meeting and it would be notified on Saturday.

As per the National Education Policy 2020, the UG degree was restructured to either three or four-year duration with appropriate certifications—UG certificate after one year in a discipline or field including vocational and professional areas, or a UG diploma after two years of study, or a bachelor’s degree after a three-year course. The four-year bachelor’s programme, however, is the preferred op-



Getty Images

### RESTRUCTURING HIGHER EDUCATION

tion as it allows a whole range of multidisciplinary education in addition to a focus on the chosen major and minors.

Syncing the PG programme with the restructured UG, apart from the flexibility to shift from one discipline to another, as per the new curriculum, also gives an opportunity to learners to choose the courses of their interest and to switch to alternative modes of learning (offline, ODL, online learning, and hybrid modes).

The new credit framework has also specified the minimum credit to be earned at the UG level as eligibility for different format of PG degrees. Under the National

Higher Education Qualifications Framework (NHEQF), higher education qualifications are classified along a continuum of levels from level 4.5 to level 8. For example, for a 1-year/2-semester master’s programme the requirement is a bachelor’s degree with honours/ honours with research with a minimum of 160 credits at level 6.5 on the NHEQF, and for a two-year/ four-semester master’s programme the requirement is a minimum of 120 credits at level 6.5 on the NHEQF.

Moreover, irrespective of the major or minor disciplines chosen by a student in a UG programme, a student is eligible for admission in any

discipline of master’s programmes if the student qualifies the national level or university level entrance examination in the discipline of the master’s programme.

The document also speaks about universities offering master’s programmes in core areas such as Machine Learning as well as multidisciplinary fields “AI + X” and professional areas like health care, agriculture, and law. It stated that the PG framework should be in sync with National Credit Framework (NCrF) for the creditization of all learning and assignment, accumulation, storage, transfer and redemption of credits, subject to assessment.

And finally, the framework also states that the new structure provides students with facility to pursue two academic programmes simultaneously—two full-time academic programmes in the physical mode provided that there is no overlap of class timings between the two programmes or two academic programmes; one in full-time physical mode and another in ODL/ Online mode; or up to two ODL/ Online programmes simultaneously.