

CDS General Chauhan interacts with senior military brass of 3 services

NEW DELHI, Dec 6 (PTI)

CHIEF of Defence Staff General Anil Chauhan on Wednesday held wide-ranging deliberations with senior military brass at a combined leadership conclave with a focus on geo-strategic issues and ways to effectively deal with any future national security challenge.

General Chauhan provided an insight into modern warfare and national security while presiding over the first session of the three-day conclave, the Defence Ministry said.

“Chief of Defence Staff General Anil Chauhan presided over the first session of Combined Leadership Conclave and interacted with the senior leadership of the armed forces in New Delhi,” it said.

The three-day conclave is focussing on geo-strategic issues, contemporary and emerging security challenges and ways to ensure integration and jointness among the three services.

Eminent personalities with in-depth experience in respective fields will also interact with participants enlightening them

about issues of national importance, the ministry said.

“The conclave aims to serve as a development programme for senior officers of the three services, focused on regional and national security issues with a view to enhance synergy, both at operational and strategic levels within the armed forces,” it said in a statement.

Chief of Integrated Defence Staff to the Chairman, Chiefs of Staff Committee (CISC) Lt Gen JP Mathew and other senior officers of Integrated Defence Staff were also present at the event.

India, Myanmar discuss situation along border

NEW DELHI, Dec 6 (PTI)

INDIA and Myanmar on Wednesday held wide-ranging discussions covering a host of issues including the situation along the border, trade and connectivity even as New Delhi reaffirmed its support for the neighbouring country's transition towards a federal democracy.

The two sides took stock of their overall cooperation at the 20th round of India-Myanmar Foreign Office Consultations

(FOC) that took place here.

The Indian delegation was led by Foreign Secretary Vinay Kwatra while the Myanmar team was headed by Deputy Foreign Minister U Lwin Oo.

Last month, India called for cessation of fighting between Myanmar's military and the anti-junta groups near Indo-Myanmar border that triggered an influx of Myanmar refugees to Mizoram. There were hostilities between Myanmar's anti-junta groups

and government forces in several key towns and regions near the border with India till a few weeks back fuelling concerns in the Indian military establishment about the possible spillover effect. "Both sides held discussions on a wide range of issues along the border and security, trade, commerce and connectivity, status of bilateral development projects in Myanmar and concerns related to transnational crimes," MEA said about the FOC.

Report: Italy drops out of BRI that failed to deliver

Rome: Italy has officially informed China that it is quitting the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), two government sources said on Wednesday, ending months of doubt over Rome's future in the ambitious project. Italy in 2019 became the first and so far only major Western nation to join the programme, dismissing concerns from the US that it would enable China to gain control of sensitive technologies and vital infrastructure.

However, when PM Giorgia Meloni took office last year, she said she wanted to withdraw from the deal modelled on the old Silk Road that linked China to the West, saying it had brought no significant gains to Italy.

The 2019 accord expires in March 2024 and would have been automatically renewed unless Rome gave at least three months' written warning that it was pulling out.



When Meloni took office as PM last year, she said she wanted to withdraw from BRI, saying it had brought no gains to Italy

A government source said Beijing had been given a letter "in recent days" informing the Chinese government that Italy would not be renewing the pact. "We have every intention of maintaining excellent relations with China even if we are no longer part of the Belt and Road Initiative," a second government source said. "Other G7 nations have closer relations with China than we do, despite the fact they were never in (the BRI)," he added.

Italy will assume the G7 presidency in 2024. REUTERS

UN climate body chief: COP28 draft is 'heavy on posturing'

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Dubai: A day after a starting text surfaced on negotiators' table putting all options on board at COP28, the UN climate body chief Simon Stiell on Wednesday termed it a "grab bag of wish lists and heavy on posturing" and appealed to countries to "sort the wheat from the chaff" and come out with their highest ambition outcomes if they want to save lives and keep the 1.5 degree celsius of warming limit within reach.

"At the end of next week, we need COP (conference of parties) to deliver a bullet train to speed up climate action. We currently have an old caboose chugging over rickety tracks. But the tools are all there on the table, the technologies and solutions exist. It's time for governments and negotiators to pick them up and put them to work," said Stiell, executive secretary, UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC).

His remark is significant in view of emerging differences over many options including a few on phasing out of fossil fuels (coal, oil and gas), even as there is no timeline in the text for this ambitious action.

India along with Brazil, South Africa and China will firm up a joint robust position on this issue under the BASIC group during the final leg of negotiation. Currently, only EU nations have been pitching for the 'phase out' clause and seeking for removal of vague language from the lengthy text.

India could successfully replace the 'phase out' with 'phase down' in case of unabated coal power during COP26 in Glasgow in 2021, signalling continued use of coal for its development needs even as the country has been fully on track to meet its clean energy target under the Paris Agreement.

'Comprehensive' promotion policy for 'select ranks' in Army kicks off on Jan 1

New Protocol To Address 'Cadre Aspirations' Of All Arms & Services

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New Delhi: The Army has finalised a new promotion policy for its senior officers, with much greater stress being placed on meritocracy, physical fitness and reducing disparity among various arms and services, to ensure the 12-lakh strong force can effectively meet present and future operational challenges.

The "comprehensive" promotion policy for the "select ranks" of Colonel, Brigadier, Major General and Lt-General will come into effect from January 1. "Though the existing promotion policy has stood the test of time, policies need to be dynamic to meet the ever-evolving operational requirements," a top Army source said on Wednesday.

"The new policy will help in aligning leadership requirements to the present and emerging operational challenges, both in internal & ex-



Chief of Army Staff General Manoj Pande at the 'Idea and Innovation Competition and Seminar' at Manekshaw Centre in Delhi on Tuesday

ternal dimensions," he added.

The Army has "combat arms" like infantry, armoured corps & mechanised infantry, "combat-support arms" like artillery, air defence, aviation, engineers and signals, and "services" like ASC (Army Service Corps), AOC (Army Ordnance Corps) and EME (Corps of Electronics and Mechanical Engineers), among other wings. There are around 80 Lt-Gen-

erals, 300 Major Generals, 1,200 Brigadiers and 5,600 Colonels in the 43,000-strong officer cadre of the force.

In view of long-standing grouses like infantry officers hogging the promotions in senior ranks, the new policy will address "cadre aspirations" of all arms and services. "It will provide almost equitable satisfaction in promotion boards as well as strengthen meritocracy," the source said.

The new policy will also ensure Major Generals of the "staff stream" are considered for promotion to Lt-Generals, though only for staff positions. At present, Major Generals from the "command and staff stream" are generally promoted to the next rank.

"Moreover, officers physically fit to serve in all terrains will get command appointments at the Colonel and Brigadier ranks. Battle casualties and those injured in operations, of course, will continue to get promotions like now," the source said.

The new promotion policy comes after the Army in August adopted a common uniform for Brigadiers, Major Generals, Lt-Generals and the chief, irrespective of their parent cadre and appointments, by discarding distinctive regimental hats, shoulder rank badges, gorget patches, belts, lanyards and shoes for them.

Russia signs declaration with Iran to override US curbs

MOSCOW, Dec 6 (AN)

RESPONDING to fresh US sanctions against Moscow, Iran and Russia signed a declaration to overcome the curbs, Russian news agency TASS reported quoting Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov on Tuesday.

“We have just signed a declaration on ways and means to counter, mitigate and offset the negative consequences of unilateral coercive measures.

Undoubtedly, this is an important step in increasing coordinated efforts by members of the global community to overcome illegal sanctions, which the US and its allies use as a substitute for diplomacy,” Lavrov said when opening talks with Iranian Foreign Minister Hossein Amir-Abdollahian.

He added that the talks will be used to exchange views on pressing bilateral and regional issues, TASS reported.