

# Russia launches massive **DRONE** attack on Ukraine

KYIV (Ukraine), Nov 25 (AP)

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RUSSIA on Saturday morning launched its most intense drone attack on Ukraine since the beginning of its full-scale invasion in 2022, targeting the Ukrainian capital, military officials said.

“Kyiv was the main target,” Ukrainian Air Force Commander Mykola Oleshchuk wrote on his Telegram channel.

In total, Russia launched 75 Iranian-made Shahed drones against Ukraine, of which 74 were destroyed by air defenses, Ukraine’s air force said.

The attack was “the most massive air attack by drones on Kyiv,” said Serhii Popko, head of the Kyiv city administration. Ukrainian air force spokesman Yuriy Ihnat confirmed later that the air defenses shot down 66 air targets over the capital and surrounding region throughout the morning.

At least five civilians were wounded in the hours long assault, which saw several buildings damaged by falling debris from downed drones, including a kindergarten. The wounded included an 11-year-old child, according to Kyiv mayor Vitali Klitschko.

In the city’s Solomiansky district, debris left a crater in the courtyard of a residential area, and the windows of a nearby building were blown out. Residents, most of them elderly, received medical attention at the scene. Others took shelter in a nearby subway station.

As people were clearing up debris and broken glass in the neighbourhood, the hum of a fresh wave of drones could be heard nearby.

The assault on Kyiv began at 4 a.m., continuing in waves for over six hours, and caused power outages in 77 residential buildings and 120 institutions, according to Popko.

# Order worth ~~RS 36,468 CRORE~~ for 83 Tejas aircraft placed with HAL

NEW DELHI, Nov 26 (PTI)

UNDER the Narendra Modi Government, an order of Rs 36,468 crore for the delivery of 83 LCA Mk 1A Tejas aircraft has been placed with Hindustan Aeronautics Limited, official sources said on Saturday, as the Prime Minister visited the defence PSU and took a sortie in the fighter jet.

The delivery of these Tejas aircraft is scheduled to begin by February 2024, they said, asserting that the Government has taken giant steps



for increasing India's defence preparedness and indigenisation, which includes Tejas fighter aircraft. The first version of the aircraft was inducted into the Indian Air Force

in 2016. Currently, two IAF squadrons are fully operational with LCA Tejas, they said.

More than Rs 9,000 crore has been sanctioned for the development of LCA Mk 2, an updated and more lethal version of LCA Tejas, they said.

To further promote indigenisation, including of the aircraft engine, the transfer of technology for manufacturing of the GE engine in India was negotiated with the US firm during Prime Minister Modi's visit to the country in June 2023, they added.



# Army, Assam police undertake trust-building initiative with ULFA

GUWAHATI, Nov 25 (ANI)

THE Indian Army and the Assam Police have undertaken a trust-building initiative with the family members of United Liberation Front of Asom (ULFA) cadres to bring them into the mainstream and ensure peace.

Assam DGP GP Singh said that under this initiative, families of ULFA cadres were invited to Army, CAPF camps, Police Stations for trust-building and to help them bring their children into the mainstream.

"The initiative of inviting families of ULFA cadres for

trust-building activities holds immense potential to promote peace and reconciliation in the region," the Assam DGP wrote on X (formerly known as Twitter). The Assam DGP said that the main objectives of the initiative were as follows-- "Building Trust and Understanding: The initiative aims to bridge the gap between the security forces and the families of ULFA cadres, creating a foundation of mutual respect and understanding."

"Encouraging Rehabilitation and Reintegration: By engaging with the families, the initiative seeks to encourage the

rehabilitation and reintegration of ULFA cadres into mainstream society; Promoting Peace and Reconciliation: The overall objective is to foster a sense of peace and reconciliation in the region, paving the way for a more harmonious and peaceful future," GP Singh said. He also said that this initiative has been taken by the Indian army, Assam Police and Assam Government.

Earlier, the Assam DGP said that no civilian or security personnel casualties were witnessed in 2023, and the State is now progressing at a fast pace.

# Aditya L1 spacecraft nearing its final phase

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM, Nov 25 (PTI)

ADITYA L1 spacecraft, India's first space-based mission to study the Sun, is nearing its final phase, and maneuvers to enter the L1 point are expected to be completed by January 7, 2024, according to ISRO Chairman S Somanath.

"Aditya is on the way. I think it has reached almost its final phase," the ISRO chief told PTI on the sidelines of an event organised at VSSC to commemorate the 60th year of the First Sounding Rocket Launch.

He said that the last prepa-

rations for the spacecraft's entry into the L1 point are currently underway incrementally.

"Possibly by January 7th, the final maneuvers will be done for entering into the L1 point," Somanath added.

Meanwhile, Union Minister Jitendra Singh on Saturday inaugurated the 60th-anniversary celebrations of ISRO's rocket launch and lauded the Vikram Sarabhai Space Centre (VSSC) for its pivotal role in turning India's space aspirations into reality.

Addressing the programme here, Union Minister of State for Science and Technology &

Atomic Energy and Space (Independent Charge) noted that the success of the Chandrayaan mission aligns with the 60th year of ISRO's inaugural rocket launch.

In his address, Minister of State for External Affairs and Parliamentary Affairs V Muraleedharan commended ISRO's global contributions, citing the praise received from dignitaries during official foreign visits.

He emphasised that India's achievements, not just in space but also in science and technology, are a source of pride for many heads of state.

# Cold conditions in Kashmir, Srinagar records -1 deg C

SRINAGAR, Nov 25 (PTI)

A DAY after slight respite from cold, the minimum temperature has dropped below the freezing point at most places in Kashmir, officials said on Saturday.

Barring Kokernag, in south Kashmir's Anantnag district, all other weather stations in the valley experienced sub-zero night temperatures, the MeT officials said. The officials said Srinagar, the summer capital of Jammu and Kashmir, recorded a minimum temperature of minus 1 degree Celsius on Friday night – down from 0.9 degree Celsius the previous night.

The minimum temperature on Friday night was one degree below the normal for this part of the season, they added.



Shikaras anchored on the banks of Dal lake, in Srinagar on Saturday.

(ANI)

The officials said the tourist destination of Pahalgam in south Kashmir Anantnag district was the coldest recorded place in the valley at minus 3.4 degrees Celsius. Gulmarg, another popular tourist spot, in north Kashmir recorded a low

of minus 1 degree Celsius. The mercury in Kupwara town in north Kashmir settled at a low of minus 0.5 degree Celsius, while Qazigund, the gateway town to the valley in south Kashmir, recorded a minimum of minus 0.8 degree Celsius.

## Heavy rains lash Chennai, parts of TN

CHENNAI, Nov 25 (PTI)

HEAVY rains lashed Chennai, Chengalpattu, Kanchipuram districts and other parts of Tamil Nadu and the Regional Meteorological Centre warned of more rainfall in at least 12 districts on Saturday.

The overnight rain caused a sudden inundation in several parts. Rumbling sounds of thunder and a flash of lightning early in the morning greeted the people at a resplendent day break.



# Govt convenes all party meet on Dec 2 ahead of Winter session

NEW DELHI, Nov 25 (PTI)

THE Government has convened an all-party meeting on December 2 ahead of the Winter session of Parliament, sources said on Saturday. The session will begin on

December 4 and conclude on December 22.

Though the all-party meet is convened a day before the session begins, this time it has been advanced by a day apparently due to counting of votes for five states on December 3

where polls are underway.

The results of the Assembly elections will have a major bearing on the session during which the government is keen to pass key bills.

The report of the Ethics Committee on the "cash-for-

query" allegations against TMC MP Mahua Moitra will be tabled in Lok Sabha during the session.

The House will have to adopt the report before the expulsion recommended by the panel comes into effect.

Three key bills which seek to replace the IPC, CrPC and the Evidence Act are likely to be taken up for consideration during the session as the standing committee on Home has already adopted the three reports recently.

# Auger machine broken

## Rescuers mull ~~vertical, manual drilling~~ options



A vertical drilling machine seen near the Silkyara tunnel during the rescue operation on Saturday. (PTI)

UTTARKASHI, Nov 25 (PTI)

**INTERNATIONAL** tunnelling expert Arnold Dix on Saturday said that the auger machine engaged for drilling through the rubble at the Silkyara tunnel has busted with rescuers consider-

ing other options, including vertical and manual drilling, to bring out the 41 trapped workers. "Augering is finished... The auger is broken, destroyed," Dix told reporters in Silkyara.

The auger machine faced repeated obstructions over the past few days while drilling through the rubble to prepare an escape passage for the trapped men. When asked about other options such as vertical or manual drilling, Dix said all options are being explored.

"Every door we are trying to open has its advantages and disadvantages. We are going to deal with the mountain and we don't know which of the doors it is going to let us open. We are trying to adjust," he said.

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# INCREDIBLY ENRICHING PM undertakes sortie on Tejas



Prime Minister Narendra Modi during taking a sortie on the Tejas in Bengaluru on Saturday. (PTI)

BENGALURU, Nov 25 (PTI)

**PRIME** Minister Narendra Modi on Saturday undertook a sortie on the Tejas aircraft and said, the experience has bolstered his confidence in the country's indigenous capabilities. Clad in the uniform of an Air Force pilot, delightful Modi seemed to enjoy the moments as he waved multiple times.

Taking to social media platform 'X', the Prime Minister said, "Successfully completed a sortie on the Tejas." "The experience was incredibly enriching, significantly bolstering my confidence in our country's indigenous capabilities, and leaving me with a renewed sense of pride and optimism about our national potential," he said.

In the videos and pictures, the Prime Minister can be seen flashing thumbs-up gestures with a broad smile, after boarding the aircraft and on landing. He also posed standing next to the aircraft, pointing at 'Tejas' writing on it. "Flying in Tejas today, I can say with immense pride that due to our hard work and dedication, we are no less than anyone in the world in the field of self-reliance. Heartiest congratulations to the Indian Air Force, DRDO and HAL as well as all Indians," he added.

Modi earlier walked towards the waiting pilot and had a short chat with him, before boarding the twin-seater aircraft and positioning himself properly with the help of Air Force staff.

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