

# COP28

## Equity, justice must be basis for global climate action: India

■ By Uzmi Athar and Gaurav Saini

DUBAI, Dec 9 (PTI)

**INDIA** firmly believes that equity and climate justice must be the basis of climate action and this can be ensured only when the developed countries take the lead in combating climate change, Environment Minister Bhupendra Yadav said here at the COP28 on Saturday.

Delivering the country's national statement here at the high-level segment at the annual climate conference, Yadav also highlighted India's contribution,



**Bhupendra Yadav**

noting that New Delhi reduced its GDP emission intensity by 33 per cent between 2005 and 2019, achieving the target 11 years in advance. Calling the ongoing climate negotiations as a 'COP28 of action', the Minister said it was evident on the first day with the operationalisation of the Loss and Damage Fund.

### **OBSERVERS SEE OPEC 'PANICKING' AS COP28 CLIMATE TALKS FOCUS ON POSSIBLE FOSSIL FUEL PHASE-OUT:**

The oil industry is starting to sweat as United Nations climate talks heat up and threaten to plug fossil fuel-belching wells for good, veteran negotiation observers say. A reported letter from OPEC's leader pleading with the oil cartel's member countries to block any language in an agreement at climate talks that would phase out or phase down fossil fuels hit negotiations like a thunderclap. Host and fellow petrostate UAE is trying to tamp down its reverberations in a process where one or two key nations can block everything.

# PM Rishi Sunak's officials in Delhi to discuss India-UK FTA: Report

LONDON, Dec 9 (PTI)

SENIOR officials from British Prime Minister Rishi Sunak's team are in New Delhi this week to add momentum behind the ongoing round of negotiations for an India-UK free trade agreement (FTA), according to a UK media report on Saturday.

'The Guardian' newspaper reports that while there is no official comment from either side on such a visit, Prime Minister Narendra Modi-led Government is keen to finalise the FTA by the end of February before Sunak sets off on an expected general election campaign trail.

Both countries are heading into an election year in 2024 and signing off on a trade agreement with India will bolster Sunak's elec-



toral pitch to voters showing signs of anti-incumbency towards his governing Conservatives.

"The deal is still very much on and we think it is possible before both countries have their elections. Both sides are keen to get this done," an official close to the talks told the newspaper.

There have been 13 rounds of negotiations since then, with the Sunak-led Tory Government wary of setting any firm new timelines to clinch a deal that is expected

to significantly enhance the GBP 36-billion bilateral trading partnership.

"The UK and India continue to work towards an ambitious trade deal that works for both countries. We have always been clear we will only sign a deal that is fair, balanced, and ultimately in the best interests of the British people and the economy," said a spokesperson for the Department for Business and Trade (DBT), reiterating official UK Government line. Most recently, External Affairs Minister (EAM) S Jaishankar confirmed that the FTA was among the many topics on the agenda during his visit to the UK last month and expressed confidence that both sides would find a "landing point that works for both of us".

# US vetoes UNSC resolution calling for humanitarian ceasefire in Gaza

UNITED NATIONS, Dec 9 (PTI)

THE US has vetoed a draft resolution on the raging Israel-Hamas conflict in the UN Security Council that would have demanded an immediate humanitarian ceasefire in war-ravaged Gaza and the immediate and unconditional release of all hostages taken by the Hamas militant group.

The 15-nation Council met on Friday to vote on the resolution tabled by the United Arab Emirates and backed by over 90 member States. The resolution got the backing of 13 Council members who voted in its favour while the United Kingdom abstained.

The voting on the resolution came after UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres, in a rare move, had invoked Article 99 of the UN Charter to appeal to the Security Council for a humanitarian ceasefire in the Israel-Hamas conflict and to avert a "humanitarian catastrophe," which he said has potentially irreversible implications for Palestinians and peace and security in the region. Ahead of the vote, Guterres urged the Council to "spare no effort" to push for an immediate humanitarian ceasefire, for the protection of civilians, and for the urgent delivery of lifesaving aid.

In the Explanation of Vote, US

## Aid operation is in tatters, warns UN

DEIR AL-BALAH, Dec 9 (AP)

ISRAEL said on Friday that the military was rounding up Palestinian men in northern Gaza for interrogation, searching for Hamas militants, while desperate Palestinians in the south crowded into an ever-shrinking area, and the UN warned that its aid operation is "in tatters."

The detentions pointed to Israeli efforts to secure the military's hold on northern Gaza as the war entered its third month.

Ambassador Robert Wood, Alternative Representative for Special Political Affairs, said it is incomprehensible why the resolution's authors have "declined to include language condemning Hamas' horrific terrorist attack" on Israel on October 7. He said that despite a "rushed process" and "lack of appropriate consultation" by the resolution's authors, the United States engaged in "good faith" on the draft resolution.

"We proposed language with an eye toward a constructive resolution that would have reinforced the life-saving diplomacy we have

Furious urban fighting has continued in the north, underscoring Hamas' heavy resistance, and tens of thousands of residents are believed to remain in the area six weeks after troops and tanks rolled in.

The first images of mass detentions emerged Thursday from the northern town of Beit Lahiya, showing dozens of men kneeling or sitting in the streets, stripped down to their underwear, their hands bound behind their backs. Some had their heads bowed.

undertaken since October 7; increased opportunities for humanitarian aid to enter Gaza; encouraged the release of hostages and the resumption of humanitarian pauses; and laid a foundation for a durable peace," he said.

Wood said, "unfortunately, nearly all of our recommendations were ignored. And the result of this rushed process was an imbalanced resolution that was divorced from reality, that would not move the needle forward, on the ground, in any concrete way. And so, we regretfully could not support it."

# Resumption of hostilities: Russia launches barrage of cruise missiles on Ukraine

KYIV, Dec 9 (ANI)

IN THE resumption of hostilities, Russia fired a barrage of cruise missiles at Ukrainian targets early on Friday morning, marking the end of an almost 80-day pause, CNN reported, citing Ukrainian officials. The air raid in Kyiv lasted for nearly two hours, but air defences successfully intercepted all missiles heading towards the capital, said Serhii Popko, head of the Kyiv city military administration. Although some homes in Kyiv suffered damage from "downed enemy targets," the Ukrainian Interior Ministry said.

A missile striking Pavlohrad in Ukraine's central Dnipropetrovsk region resulted in one fatality and four injuries, as announced by Interior Minister Ihor Klymenko, accord-

ing to CNN.

Meanwhile, in the eastern Kharkiv region, overnight strikes claimed one life and left several others injured. Damage was reported in Kupiansk district and Kharkiv city, including a damaged residential building and numerous affected apartments and cars. According to Oleh Syniehubov, head of the Kharkiv region's military administration, Russia targeted Kharkiv with six S-300 missiles, prompting an investigation by the Ukrainian Prosecutor General's office. The missile barrage, consisting of 19 missiles across Ukraine, marked the first such attack in over two months.

Western intelligence assessments had warned of a potential escalation in Russia's bombardment of civilian infrastructure during the winter.

Of the 19 missiles launched,

14 were reportedly destroyed in the Kyiv and Dnipropetrovsk regions, according to Yurii Ihnat, spokesman for the Ukrainian Air Force Command, as reported by CNN. "After a long pause of 79 days, the enemy resumed attacks with cruise missiles launched by Tu-95MS strategic aircraft. Preliminarily, approximately 10 bomber missile carriers fired cruise missiles of the Kh-101/555/55 type from the Engels city area, Saratov region," stated Popko on Telegram.

The last significant cruise missile attack on Ukraine occurred on September 21, with 43 missiles launched and 36 intercepted, as per Air Force Command's official Telegram account. In November, Russia launched a major drone attack with 75 Iranian-made Shahed drones, followed by another 48 Shaheds on Wednesday.

# 372 gentlemen cadets pass out of IMA as Army officers

DEHRADUN, Dec 9 (PTI)

A TOTAL of 372 gentlemen cadets, including 29 from 12 friendly countries, passed out of the Indian Military Academy here on Saturday to be commissioned as officers into the armies of their respective countries.

Addressing the passing out parade as the reviewing officer, Chief of Defence Staff of Sri Lanka General Shavendra Silva congratulated them on the successful completion of their rigorous training and wished them the best of luck for all their future endeavours.

General Silva said the immaculate parade reflected their high level of training and he was confident that the passing out gentlemen cadets will serve their motherlands with commitment, loyalty and valour.

The coveted Sword of Honour and the Gold medal went to Battalion Under Officer Gaurav Rawat, the silver medal to Battalion Under Officer Saurabh Badhani and the bronze to battalion under officer Alok Singh.

With Saturday's POP, the Indian Army has got 343 new officers.

# India to be \$5 tn economy by end of 2025: Shah

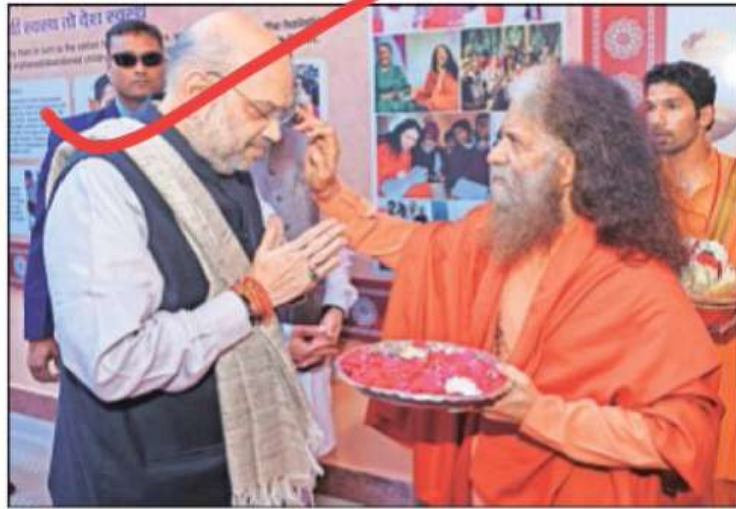
DEHRADUN, Dec 9 (PTI)

UNION Home Minister Amit Shah on Saturday said India will become a USD 5 trillion economy by the end of 2025.

Addressing the valedictory session of the Uttarakhand Global Investors Summit at the Forest Research Institute here, Shah said India has grown exponentially on every front over the past one decade due to the farsighted and visionary leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

"The world is looking to India with hope today. Between 2014 and 2023, India has risen from its position as the 11th to the fifth economy in the world. Never before did the country make so big a leap during 75 years of Independence," he said, and attributed all this to Modi's visionary leadership and his capacity to translate his vision into a reality.

Modi is leading the move-



Home Minister Amit Shah with Swami Chidanand Saraswatiji, at Parmarth Niketan Ashram in Rishikesh on Saturday. (PTI)

ment for climate change, and he is trying to impart pace to the world's slowing GDP through the Make in India programme, besides leading the campaign for a terror-free world, Shah said.

On G-20, he said the Delhi

Declaration was India's big achievement on the diplomatic front, which the world will remember for decades to come.

The country's per capita income has doubled in the last ten years, Shah said, adding that 13 and a half crore people

have come out of poverty across the country during the period.

"The IMF described India as a bright spot in a dark zone. Morgan Stanley said by 2027, India will emerge as the third-largest economy in the world, forging ahead of Japan and Germany. These are good signs. India's time has arrived," he noted. About the Uttarakhand Global Investors Summit, he said when Chief Minister Pushkar Singh Dhami told him that he had set a target of getting investments worth Rs 2 lakh crore for the summit, he thought it was impossible.

"But I congratulate him for already signing investment MoUs worth Rs 3 lakh crore with different companies. The two-day summit marks the beginning of many new things for Uttarakhand. After two decades of Uttarakhand's creation, I can say with confidence that Atal ji created it and Modi ji is building it," Shah said.

# Anti-collision system Kavach deployed on 1465 kms

NEW DELHI, Dec 9 (ANI)

THE ambitious automatic train protection (ATP) system, Kavach, has so far been deployed on 1465 route km and 139 locomotives (including Electric Multiple Unit rakes) on South Central Railway sections, as per a Government release.

The sections include Lingamapalli - Vikarabad - Wadi and Vikarabad - Bidar section (265 Rkm), Manmad-Mudkhed-Dhone-Guntkal section (959Rkm) and Bidar-Parbhani section (241Rkm).

As per the release, presently Kavach tenders have been awarded for the Delhi - Mumbai and Delhi - Howrah corridors (approximately 3000



Route km) and work is in progress on these routes.

Indian Railways has also taken up preparatory works, including a survey, Detailed Project Report (DPR) and preparation of detailed estimate on another 6000 Rkm, the release mentioned. Presently, three Indian OEMs are approved for

Kavach. Efforts are being made to develop more OEMs to enhance the capacity and scale up the implementation of Kavach. Kavach is an indigenously developed Automatic Train Protection (ATP) system. It is a highly technology-intensive system, which requires safety certification of the highest order.

# Army organises exercise for women officers from ASEAN

NEW DELHI, Dec 9 (PTI)

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THE Indian Army has conducted a table-top exercise for women officers from ASEAN countries with an aim to promote gender inclusivity and enhance capabilities of women military personnel in peace-keeping operations.

The exercise is a part of ongoing efforts of the Centre for United Nations Peacekeeping (CUNPK) to strengthen international cooperation and capacity-building in peace-keeping missions, with specific focus on empowering women.



# Amrit Kaal NEC formulating Vision 2047



The diversity of N-E has beauty but also poses some challenges because of agendas, beliefs, languages, customs etc. But, once the diversity was 'balanced well', development gets a boost. In the past 10 years, this process has gained quite a momentum, said K Moses Chalai, Secretary, NEC

■ By Kartik Lokhande  
SHILLONG

THE North-Eastern Council (NEC) has been successfully giving a push to development in the North-Eastern Region. It is already working on a massive plan for the period from 2022-23 to 2025-26. But it is not content at that. Aligning with the 'Amrit Kaal' (from 75th year to the centenary of Indian Independence), the NEC also is formulating the 'Vision 2047' for the development of the North-Eastern Region.

For the ongoing plan for the period 2022-23 to 2025-26, budget of Rs 3,202.70 crore has been

allocated for new projects as well as to meet the committed liabilities. This particular plan is fully funded by Central Government. But, some kind of fiscal prudence also is being exercised. No fund is being released for projects that are more than three years old and for projects identified as 'stalled or not likely to be completed in foreseeable future'.

However, this does not mean that such projects will be abandoned. Rather, the respective States in the North-Eastern Region may complete such projects from their own resources.

While setting the expenditure priorities, it has been decided

that the total amount sanctioned from 2022-23 to 2025-26 'shall not be' more than approved outlay, minus the committed liabilities for old projects. Also, there shall be front-loading of the sanctioned expenditure under the scheme. And, one norm is being strictly followed – no new projects to be sanctioned in 2025-26 – that is, the last year of the ongoing plan. For, the NEC wishes to focus its attention on completion of already sanctioned projects. This does not mean that there is no work going on for development of the North-Eastern Region after 2025-26.

"We are already working on



K Moses Chalai, Secretary, NEC

preparing 'Vision 2047' for the North-East. In fact, the draft of our vision document will be ready by February 2024," K Moses Chalai, Secretary, NEC, told 'The Hitavada' during an interaction at NEC Secretariat at Shillong.

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