

India to open **2** more consulates in Russia's **Kazan,** **Yekaterinburg**

MOSCOW, July 9 (PTI)

PRIME Minister Narendra Modi on Tuesday announced that India has decided to open two new consulates in Kazan and Yekaterinburg cities of Russia in a bid to further boost travel and trade with the country.

India currently has two consulates in Russia at St Petersburg and Vladivostok.

The Prime Minister made the announcement of the opening of new consulates at Kazan and Yekaterinburg while addressing the Indian diaspora here during his two-day visit to Russia.

"I want to share some good news with you all. We have decided to open new consulates in Kazan and Yekaterinburg. This will enhance travel and business trade," Modi said.

Yekaterinburg is Russia's fourth largest city which has emerged as an important economic centre. The city had hosted four FIFA World Cup matches in 2018 when the sporting event was held in Russia. Located on the confluence of the Volga and Kazanka rivers, Kazan is a cultural and educational hub and an emerging economic centre in Russia. Russia will also host the BRICS Summit in October in Kazan.

The Prime Minister, after concluding his engagements in Russia, will, on July 9, leave for Austria on the first visit by an Indian Prime Minister to that country in over 40 years.

Resolve Ukraine conflict while respecting its sovereignty: US to India

WASHINGTON, July 9 (PTI)

INDIA is a strategic partner with whom it engages in a full and frank dialogue, the United States has said as it urged New Delhi to make clear to Russia that any resolution to the conflict in Ukraine must respect the UN charter, Ukraine's territorial integrity and sovereignty.

State Department Spokesperson Matthew Miller said this on Monday when he was asked about Prime Minister Narendra Modi's ongoing visit to Russia and his meetings with Russian President Vladimir Putin.

"India is a strategic partner with whom we engage in a full

and frank dialogue. And that includes our concerns about their relationship with Russia," Miller said.

'NO SOLUTION ON BATTLEFIELD': INDIA has consistently maintained that dialogue and diplomacy is the way forward to resolve the Ukraine conflict as a solution can't be found on the battlefield, official sources said after the US flagged concerns over the situation in the eastern European country ahead of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's summit talks with President Vladimir Putin in Moscow. India has always called for respecting the UN Charter, including territorial integrity and sovereignty.

Govt extends ban on pro-Khalistan group Sikhs For Justice for 5 yrs

NEW DELHI, July 9 (PTI)

THE ban on pro-Khalistan group Sikhs For Justice (SFJ), founded by US-based lawyer Gurpatwant Singh Pannun, has been extended by the Centre for five years for its relentless anti-India activities.

In a notification issued on Tuesday, the Union Home Ministry said the SFJ was declared a banned organisation five years ago under the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act for its anti-national activities.

The notification said the Central Government is of the opinion that the SFJ continues to indulge in the activities which are prejudicial to the integrity and security of the

country and is involved in anti-national and subversive activities in Punjab and elsewhere, intended to disrupt the sovereignty and territorial integrity of India. It said that the SFJ is in close touch with the militant outfits and activists, and is supporting violent form of extremism and militancy in Punjab and elsewhere to carve out a sovereign Khalistan out of territory of India.

The pro-Khalistan separatist group is encouraging and aiding the activities for secession of a part of the Indian territory and supporting separatist groups fighting for this purpose in India and elsewhere by indulging in activities and articulations intended to disrupt the sovereignty and territorial

integrity of India.

The Home Ministry said the Government feels that if the unlawful activities of the SFJ are not curbed and controlled immediately, it is likely to escalate its subversive activities including attempts to carve out Khalistan nation out of the territory of India by destabilising the government established by law. The SFJ continues to advocate the secession of Punjab from India and formation of Khalistan, it continues to propagate anti-national and separatist sentiments prejudicial to the territorial integrity and security of the country and escalates secessionist movements, support militancy and incite violence in the country, the notification said.

Attack on Army convoy in Kathua deserves **FIRM COUNTER-MEASURES: Murmu**



NEW DELHI, July 9 (PTI)

PRESIDENT Droupadi Murmu on Tuesday termed the terrorist attack on an Army convoy in Jammu and Kashmir a "cowardly act" and said it deserved condemnation and firm counter-measures.

Five Army personnel were killed and as many injured on Monday when a group of heavily-armed terrorists ambushed
(Contd on page 5)



Army personnel during a counter-terror operation following terror attack on an Army convoy in Kathua district on Tuesday. (PTI)

Searches intensified as DGP reviews ongoing operation

KATHUA/JAMMU, July 9 (PTI)

A MASSIVE search operation was underway on Tuesday to track down the terrorists behind the deadly attack on an Army patrol party in J&K's Kathua district, as Director General of Police R R Swain flew to the
(Contd on page 5)

SUMMIT TALKS

Peace talks do not succeed amidst bombs, guns, bullets. Modi to Putin

Russia broadly agrees to release all Indians working as support staff to Russian military

MOSCOW, July 9 (PTI)

RUSSIA has broadly heeded to India's call to end the recruitment of Indians as support staff to the Russian military and ensure repatriation of those still working in the force, top sources said on Tuesday.

It is learnt that Moscow agreed to release the Indians after the issue was brought up by Prime Minister Narendra Modi during an informal meeting with Russian President Vladimir Putin on Monday night.

Last month, the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) said the issue of Indian nationals serving with the Russian Army remains a matter of "utmost concern" and demanded action from Moscow over it.

An announcement on Russia's decision to discharge all the Indians working as support staff to the Russian Army is expected to be made after summit talks between Modi and Putin on Tuesday, Russia has broadly agreed to our request on the issue, the sources said.

On June 11, India said two Indian nationals, who were recruited by the Russian Army, had been killed in the ongoing Russia-Ukraine conflict, which took the number of such deaths to four.

Following the deaths of two Indians, the MEA demanded a "verified stop" to further recruitment of Indian nationals by the Russian Army.

MOSCOW, July 9 (PTI)

DELIVERING an unambiguous message, Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Tuesday told Russian President Vladimir Putin that a solution to the Ukraine conflict is not possible on the battlefield and peace talks do not succeed amidst bombs, guns and bullets.

In his televised opening remarks at summit talks with Putin in the Kremlin, Modi, in an apparent reference to the bombing of a children's hospital in Ukraine, said the death of innocent children is heart-wrenching and very painful.

The Indian Prime Minister assured the world community that India is on the side of peace and the conflict must



Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Russian President Vladimir Putin during a meeting, at Kremlin in Moscow on Tuesday. (PTI)

be resolved through talks. "For a bright future of the new generation, peace is most essential. A solution is not possible

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on the battlefield. Peace talks do not succeed amidst bombs, guns and bullets," he said. "For restoration of peace, India is ready to cooperate in all possible ways," Modi said.

(Contd on page 5)

Russia is India's 'all-weather friend': Modi

MOSCOW, July 9 (PTI)

PRIME Minister Narendra Modi on Tuesday made a wholehearted endorsement of India's ties with Russia, describing the old ally as India's "all-weather friend" and lauding President Vladimir Putin for strengthening the bilateral relations over the past two decades of his leadership.

Addressing the Indian diaspora, he said the India-Russia relationship is built on the strong pillar of mutual trust and respect, asserting that their ties were tested time and again only to emerge stronger every time. Modi's high praise of Russia as an ally and Putin's leadership came amid ongoing efforts by the Western world to isolate the Russian leader over the war in Ukraine.

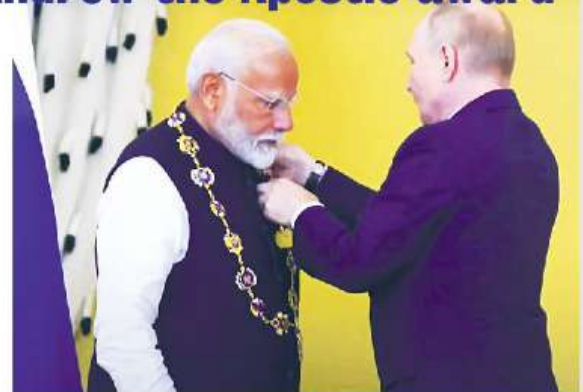
PM Modi conferred with Russia's Order of St Andrew the Apostle award

MOSCOW, July 9 (PTI)

PRIME Minister Narendra Modi was on Tuesday officially conferred the 'Order of St Andrew the Apostle' award by Russian President Vladimir Putin for exceptional services in promoting bilateral ties between the two countries. "Honoured to receive the Order of St. Andrew the Apostle. I dedicate it to the people of India," Modi said in a post on X after receiving the award at a ceremony here.

In a special ceremony in St. Andrew Hall in the Kremlin, President Putin conferred the award on Prime Minister Modi. The award was announced in 2019.

Prime Minister Modi is the first Indian leader to be conferred with this award, which was established in 1698 by Tsar Peter the Great in honour of Saint Andrew, the first apostle of Jesus and patron saint of Russia.



Prime Minister Narendra Modi being conferred the highest civilian award of Russian Federation, Order of St Andrew the Apostle, by Russian President Vladimir Putin, in Moscow, Russia on Tuesday. (PTI)

Taiwan to produce kamikaze drones to defend against Chinese invasion

TAIPEI, July 9 (ANI)

AMID daily Chinese provocations in Taiwan, Ministry of National Defence (MND) has decided to invest in the mass production of domestically designed loitering munitions, also known as “kamikaze drones.”

This move comes after the Ministry determined that the number of similar weapons purchased from the United States was insufficient to adequately defend against a potential invasion by China.

On June 18, the US State Department announced that it had approved the sale of 720 Switchblade 300 Anti-Personnel and Anti-Armor Loitering Missile Systems and 291 ALTIUS 600M-V Unmanned Aerial Vehicles to Taiwan. However, according to a military source, with the increasing Chinese military threat, an internal assessment concluded that the number of various attack drones provided by the US is still insufficient for Taiwan's defence needs, ‘Taiwan News’ reported. Therefore, Taiwan will also boost its military capabilities by launching mass production of domestically designed attack drones. The MND plans to include funding for the production of Type-1 and Type-2 kamikaze drones in its 2025 budget. The mass production of Chien Hsiang anti-radiation drones, aimed at enhancing sea and air combat capabilities, is expected to be completed next year.

The National Chung-Shan Institute of Science and Technology (NCSIST) is also reportedly working on performance improvements for the Chien Hsiang series.

The upgraded versions are expected to be produced in small batches and included in the regular annual budget.