

Ukrainian President names new head for peace talks with US, Russia

KYIV, Nov 30 (IANS)

UKRAINIAN President Volodymyr Zelenskyy appointed Rustem Umerov as the new head of the Ukrainian delegation to peace talks with the United States, other Ukrainian partners and Russia, local media reported.



Umerov, Ukraine's Secretary of National Security and Defence Council, replaces Andriy Yermak in the post, Xinhua news agency reported.

In a statement on social media platform X, Zelenskyy said the Ukrainian team led by Umerov has departed for the United States to discuss ways to end the Russia-Ukraine conflict.

"Rustem delivered a report today, and the task is clear: to swiftly and substantively work out the steps needed to end the war," Zelenskyy said. On Friday, Yermak resigned after anti-corruption authorities searched his home as part of an investigation. The previous talks between Ukrainian and US delegations were held in Geneva, Switzerland, on November 23.

Earlier, US President Donald Trump said that his peace plan has been "fine-tuned" with inputs from the two countries, and he is sending envoys to the leaders of Russia and Ukraine to finalise a deal. "There are only a few remaining points of disagreement" over the 28-point plan drafted by the US after it was fine-tuned, Trump said on Truth Social on Tuesday.



Navy personnel during a joint yoga session as part of INS Sahyadri's port call at Manila, Philippines.

(PTI)

'Proposal for new design of Indo-Desh border fencing under consideration

AGARTALA, Nov 30 (PTI)

BORDER Security Force (BSF) Tripura Frontier Inspector General (IG) Alope Kumar Chakraborty on Sunday said the proposal for a new design of barbed wire fencing along the India-Bangladesh border is under the consideration of the Centre.

India shares a 4,096 km international border with Bangladesh, out of which Tripura has 856 km border with the neighbouring country. "Barbed wire fencing in most of the places along the India-Bangladesh Border (IBB) has outlived its life. In Tripura, weather conditions (heavy rainfall) have also affected the fencing along the international border. We are in the process of replacing the old fencing," he told PTI. Chakraborty said the



BSF IG Alope Kumar Chakraborty

proposal for the erection of new and improved fencing is under active consideration of the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA).

"We are hopeful that the erection of a new design of fencing

will start very shortly to enhance the border management," he said. He claimed that the situation along the India-Bangladesh border is "normal".

The BSF IG said the relationship between the Indian border guards and the Bangladesh Border Guard (BGB) is very cordial and cooperative.

"Being the first line of the defence, the BSF is always alert to thwart any attempt of peace along the international border," he said, adding there has been no change in the relationship between the border guards of the two sides.

"Scheduled joint patrolling is being conducted at regular intervals. Special patrolling, border contact and casualty contact are being done between the two sides even as a higher-level meeting is awaited," he said.



Indigenous stealth frigate delivered to Navy

NEW DELHI, Nov 30 (PTI)

INDIGENOUS advanced stealth frigate 'Taragiri', endowed with state-of-the-art combat capabilities, has been delivered to the Navy, officials said on Saturday.

The fourth ship of Nilgiri-class (Project 17A) and the third one built by Mazagon Dock Shipbuilding Ltd (MDL), 'Taragiri' (Yard 12653), was delivered to the Navy on November 28 at MDL, Mumbai, marking a major milestone in achieving self-reliance in warship design and construction.

This state-of-the-art frigate reflects a "quantum leap" in naval design, stealth, firepower, automation and survivability, and is a symbol of 'Aatmanirbharta' in warship building, the Navy said.

Project 17A frigates are versa-

tile multi-mission platforms, designed to address current and future challenges in the maritime domain.

The potent weapon and sensors suite comprises BrahMos missile, MFSTAR (radar) and MRSAM (medium-range surface-to-air missile) complex, and a combination of 30 mm and 12.7 mm close-in weapon systems, along with rockets and torpedoes for anti-submarine warfare, the Navy said.

'Taragiri' is the fourth P17A ship to be delivered to the Indian Navy in the last 11 months.

The experience gained from the construction of the first two P17A ships has enabled the build-period of 'Taragiri' to be "compressed to 81 months, in comparison to 93 months taken for the first of the class ('Nilgiri')," a spokesperson of the Navy said.

All A320 aircraft in India get software fix for solar radiation risk: DGCA



NEW DELHI, Nov 30 (IANS)

THE Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) on Sunday announced that all Indian airlines have completed the mandatory software upgrade on their operational Airbus A320 family aircraft.

The move addresses a potential issue where strong solar radiation could affect flight-control data.

According to the regulator, a total of 323 A320-family planes operated by IndiGo, Air India, and Air India Express have now been upgraded.

This includes all 200 IndiGo aircraft, 100 out of 113 Air India planes, and 23 out of 25 Air India Express aircraft.

DGCA officials said that four Air India planes are currently undergoing base maintenance and will be upgraded there, while nine others do not require the modification.

Two Air India Express aircraft are under maintenance and will be returned to their lessors.

The action follows an alert from Airbus on Friday. The manufacturer said that during periods of intense solar activity, such as solar flares, the aircraft's Elevator and Aileron Computer (ELAC) could briefly malfunction. This computer controls the aircraft's movement up and down and its ability to turn. If affect-

ed, the data it sends to the plane's control surfaces could momentarily get corrupted.

Although rare, such an occurrence could impact how the aircraft climbs, descends or turns.

After Airbus issued its alert, the European Union Aviation Safety Agency (EASA) released an Emergency Airworthiness Directive.

The DGCA followed on Saturday with a similar directive, asking Indian carriers to carry out the software upgrade without delay.

Air India Express said in a statement on X that it completed the precautionary checks on its A320 fleet within the required timelines. The airline added that close coordination between its engineering, operations and flight-safety teams, along with support from Airbus and regulators, helped ensure that flight operations continued with minimal disruption.

India-UK defence ties strengthen as **AJEYA WARRIOR-25** wraps up

NEW DELHI, Nov 30 (IANS)

THE eighth edition of the India-UK Joint Military Exercise AJEYA WARRIOR-25 concluded on Sunday at the Mahajan Field Firing Ranges in Rajasthan, after a fortnight of intensive training focused on counter-terrorism operations in semi-urban terrain under the UN mandate.

A total of 240 personnel from both armies participated in this bilateral military exercise, which commenced on November 17.

According to officials, troops of the Indian Army's Sikh Regiment and the UK Army's Royal Gurkha Rifles underwent joint tactical drills, combat conditioning, heliborne operations, room-intervention and cordon-and-search exercises, alongside operational discussions and planning sessions.

The validation phase showcased high levels of interoperability, precision and jointmanship achieved by both contingents.



Eighth edition of India-UK Joint Military Exercise Ajeya Warrior concludes at the Mahajan Field Firing Ranges, Rajasthan, on Sunday. (@adgpi X/ANI)

The closing ceremony included cultural showcases and the felicitation of outstanding soldiers, reflecting the camaraderie built during the exercise.

"An equipment display, featuring indigenous weapon systems under Aatma Nirbhar Bharat, formed part of the concluding events," an official said.

Earlier, British High

Commission's Defence Adviser, Commodore Chris Saunders, said on X that "soldiers from the British Army Royal Gurkha Rifles and Indian Army Sikh Regiment will deepen professional bonds and share best practices in simulated combat scenarios as the 8th edition of Exercise Ajeya Warrior begins, strengthening defence cooperation".

US negotiators discuss peace plan with Ukrainian officials

Kyiv Backs Efforts As Rubio Says Aim Is To Ensure Ukraine Remains Sovereign

Hallandale Beach: Top Trump administration officials met with Ukrainian negotiators in Florida on Sunday, pushing to broker an end to Russia's war in Ukraine and setting the stage for key talks planned this week in Moscow with Russian leader Vladimir Putin.

Secretary of state Marco Rubio, special envoy Steve Witkoff and Jared Kushner, the son-in-law of President Donald Trump, held talks with a Ukrainian delegation to further hash out the details of a proposed peace framework. The negotiations come at a sensitive moment for Ukraine as it continues to push back against Russian forces that invaded in 2022.

"The end goal, obviously, is not just the end of the war," Rubio said at the start of the meeting. "But it's also about securing an end to the war that leaves Ukraine sovereign and independent and with an opportunity at real prosperity."

"This is not just about peace deals," the top American diplomat said as the teams sat down at the Shell Bay Club, a golf and racket club developed by Witkoff in Hallandale Beach.

Rustem Umerov, head of Ukraine's security council, responded to Rubio by expressing his country's appreciation for US efforts. "US is hearing us," Umerov said. "US is supporting us. US is working beside us."

On Friday, Ukrainian Presi-



US secy of state Marco Rubio (L) with the Ukrainian delegation in Florida

Nato is preparing to confront Russia

A French Cayman helicopter flies low over a lush Transylvanian valley, dropping three soldiers onto the grass. The hills erupt with the boom of Caesar cannons and Leclerc battle tanks under Nato command. The wargame in Nov offered a glimpse of the alliance's likely future as President Trump reduces US deployments in Europe. In the defensive line of the Carpathian mountains, a full-brigade level deployment of European soldiers under French command was defending the continent largely without the US.

It's by no means clear the Europeans would succeed. Romanian and other European officials at the exercise in Cincu, about 260 kilometers north of Bucharest by road, voiced

concerns that it would take weeks for Nato allies to make it to the combat front.

As their troops bid farewell, US officials have been eager to praise their European allies. "This is a perfect example of the Europeans handling things on their own," said US ambassador to Nato Matthew Whitaker approvingly after observing the live fire demonstration in Transylvania.

But there's a catch. The wargame at Cincu focused on land combat, in which Nato's European members are self-sufficient. Even here, the US offered the airspace control. When it comes to so-called "strategic enablers" — air and missile defence, and intelligence — Europe still depends on the US. BLOOMBERG

dent Volodymyr Zelensky announced the resignation of his powerful chief of staff, Andrii Yermak, who up until that point had been the country's lead negotiator in talks with the US. The announcement came after Yermak's home was searched by anti-corruption investigators. Zelensky's govt has been roiled by fallout from a scandal over \$100 million embezzled from the energy sector through kickbacks paid by contractors, causing newfound domestic pressures for Zelenskyy.

It was only a week ago that Rubio had met with Yermak in Geneva, with each side saying the talks had been positive in putting together a revised peace plan. Among the other members of the Ukrainian delegation were Andrii Hnatov, the head of Ukraine's armed forces, and presidential adviser Oleksandr Bevez.

Diplomats have been focused on revisions to Trump's proposed 28-point peace plan developed in negotiations between Washington and Moscow. That plan was criticised as being too weighted toward Russian demands. It had initially envisioned Ukraine ceding the entire eastern region of the Donbas to Russia — a sticking point for Kyiv. In a post on Telegram Sunday, Zelensky said Russia had attacked Ukraine with 122 strike drones and ballistic missiles. AP