

# India elected to various subsidiary bodies at UN Economic, Social Council

■ By Yoshita Singh

UNITED NATIONS, Apr 9 (PTD)

INDIA has been elected to various subsidiary bodies at the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), one of the six main organs of the United Nations.

The Permanent Mission of India to the UN said on Wednesday that India has been elected by acclamation to the ECOSOC subsidiary bodies, including Commission on Science and Technology for Development (2027-2030).

Committee on Non-Governmental Organisations (2027-2030); and the Committee for Programme and Coordination (2027-2029).

Indian Ambassador Preeti Saran has been re-elected to the

Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (2027-2030).

The UN Commission on Science and Technology for Development (CSTD) holds an annual intergovernmental forum for discussion on issues affecting science, technology and development.

The Committee on Non-Governmental Organisations is a standing committee of the ECOSOC, and among its main tasks are the consideration of applications for consultative status and requests for reclassification submitted by NGOs.

The Committee for Programme and Coordination is the main subsidiary organ of the Economic and Social Council and the General Assembly for planning, programming and

coordination.

It reviews the programmes of the United Nations and assists the Economic and Social Council in the performance of its coordination functions within the United Nations system, according to its website.

The Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (CESCR) is a body of 18 independent experts that monitors the implementation of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights by its State parties.

The Covenant enshrines economic, social and cultural rights such as the rights to adequate food, adequate housing, education, health, social security, water and sanitation, and work, its website said.

# Taiwan detects 6 PLA aircraft sorties, 8 PLAN vessels, around its territory

TAIPEI [Taiwan], Apr 9 (ANI)

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TAIWAN'S Ministry of National Defence on Thursday detected the presence of 8 PLAN vessels, 6 PLA aircraft sorties, and 1 official ship operating around its territory.

Sharing the details on X, the MND noted that while 5 out of 6 sorties crossed the median line and entered Taiwan's northern and southwestern part ADIZ, it monitored the situation and responded.

"Six sorties of PLA aircraft, 8 PLAN vessels and 1 official ship operating around Taiwan detected up until 6 a.m. (UTC+8) today. 5 out of 6 sorties crossed the median line and entered Taiwan's northern and southwestern part ADIZ. #ROCArmedForces have monitored the situation and responded", MND said. On Wednesday, Taiwan's Ministry of National Defence detected the presence of two sorties of Chinese military aircraft, nine naval vessels, and an official ship operating around its territorial waters.

Earlier on Tuesday, a sortie of Chinese aircraft, eight naval vessels and an official ship was detected near Taiwan.

# Israel lauds India's stance on freedom of navigation

NEW DELHI, Apr 9 (IANS)

SPOTLIGHTING that India continues to pursue its national interests strongly amid the ongoing geopolitical conflicts, Reuven Azar, the Ambassador of Israel to India, on Thursday lauded New Delhi's stance on unimpeded freedom of navigation as efforts continue to resume the use of commercial maritime routes in the Strait of Hormuz.

"India is pursuing its interests. We are very pleased with our bilateral relations, especially after the visit of PM Narendra Modi to Israel, which resulted in many good results including agreements in defence, finance, infrastructure, technology, AI, education and many more. We are encouraged by India's support for free maritime navigation. It is important that countries work together to uphold international law and prevent coercion in global waterways," Azar told IANS in an exclusive interview.

On Wednesday, India welcomed the ceasefire reached between the United States and Iran, hoping that it will lead to a lasting peace in West Asia.

"As we have continuously advocated earlier, de-escalation, dialogue and diplomacy are essential to bring an early end to the ongoing conflict. The conflict has already caused immense

**Amid conflicts India pursuing its national interests strongly, says Reuven Azar, the Ambassador of Israel to India**

**'Lebanon not part of US-Iran truce deal'**

NEW DELHI, Apr 9 (IANS)

ASSERTING that Tehran is beaten and weaker than ever with its missile production machinery destroyed completely, Reuven Azar, the Ambassador of Israel to India, on Thursday reiterated Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's statement that Lebanon is not part of the ongoing two-week ceasefire between the US and Iran.

Hours after the temporary truce was announced, Israel claimed of giving Hezbollah one of the biggest blows by attacking "100 targets in 10 minutes".

suffering to people and disrupted global energy supply and trade networks. We expect that unimpeded freedom of navigation and global flow of commerce would prevail through the Strait of Hormuz," read a statement issued by the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA).

India has maintained that it has always been in favour of peace and welcomed all steps that lead to peace and stability while hoping that the latest development in West Asia will also encourage peace efforts in Ukraine.

The Israeli Ambassador emphasised that Iran's actions have brought many countries together lately.

"People now understand how aggressive this regime is and they also understand that if Iran would have been allowed to execute these terrible threats against us, then the situation would have been in much worse condition. There is now greater awareness of the threat posed by the regime," he told IANS.

He mentioned that, after the removal of "existential threats" - mainly Iran's military nuclear programme - Israel is hoping that the Iranian regime will start cooperating with the US on the broader plan for cessation of hostilities which have kept the entire world on edge for the past many weeks.

# Trump, Rutte discuss reopening Strait of Hormuz

■ By Michelle L. Price  
and Collin Binkley

WASHINGTON, Apr 9 (AP)

NATO Secretary-General Mark Rutte met behind closed doors with US President Donald Trump on Wednesday for discussions that were expected to focus on

reopening the Strait of Hormuz, a vital shipping waterway and on soothing Trump's anger with the military alliance over Iran war.

It wasn't immediately clear how things went in the private meeting, ahead of which Trump had suggested the US may consider leaving the trans-Atlantic alliance after NATO member countries ignored his call to help as Iran effectively shut the strait and sent gas prices soaring.

The Republican President has

had a warm relationship with Rutte in the past, and the meeting came after the US and Iran late Tuesday agreed to a two-week ceasefire that includes the reopening of the strait.

The nascent ceasefire was struck after Trump said he would strike Iran's power plants and bridges, threatening that "a whole civilisation will die tonight".

The White House did not immediately offer an update on the conversation. But earlier on

Wednesday, White House Press Secretary Karoline Leavitt acknowledged that Trump had discussed leaving NATO.

The Congress in 2023 passed a law that prevents any US president from pulling out of NATO without its approval. Trump has been a longtime critic of NATO and in his first term had suggested he had the authority on his own to leave the alliance, which was founded in 1949 to counter the Cold War threat

posed to European security by the Soviet Union.

The crux of the commitment its 32 member countries make is a mutual defence agreement in which an attack on one is considered an attack on them all.

The only time it has been activated was in 2001.

## Pak PM forms crisis team to deal with effects of West Asia conflict on economy

ISLAMABAD, Apr 9 (PTD)

PRIME Minister Shehbaz Sharif has set up a special body to deal with the effects of the West Asia conflict on the economy and security of the country.

The National Coordination and Management Council (NCMC) was constituted hours ahead of the two-week ceasefire achieved between the US and Iran.

The NCMC is jointly headed by Minister for Economic Affairs Ahad Khan Cheema and Lt General Zafar Iqbal, who are the co-chairmen of its executive committee, according to an official notification.

## Macron calls Sharif, expresses 'serious concern' over attacks on Lebanon

ISLAMABAD, Apr 9 (PTD)

PAKISTAN and France on Thursday expressed "serious concern" over the Israeli aggression against Lebanon.

During a "warm and cordial" telephone conversation between Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and French President Emmanuel Macron, the latter conveyed his good wishes to the Prime Minister for the success of the upcoming peace talks in Islamabad.

According to the PM Office, President Macron called Sharif and congratulated him for

Pakistan's mediation efforts that had resulted in the ceasefire between Iran and the US and brought both sides to the negotiating table.

"Both leaders expressed their serious concern over the ongoing aggression in Lebanon and stressed upon the urgent need to end the violence and killings, so that peace could be re-established in the entire region," according to the PMO statement.

While thanking President Macron for supporting Pakistan's diplomatic efforts, Sharif reaffirmed that Pakistan would con-

tinue to strive for peace and stability in the region.

The two leaders also agreed to remain in contact.

Pakistan is set to host the high-stakes in-person talks between the US and Iran on Friday, aiming to consolidate a fragile ceasefire and avert further escalation in West Asia.

The United States and Iran agreed to a two-week conditional ceasefire early Wednesday, followed by a face-to-face meeting in Islamabad to settle the differences and convert the ongoing truce into a lasting peace.

## Trump's Iran war widens rift with European nationalists

BUDAPEST, Apr 9 (AP)

WHEN President Donald Trump returned to the White House last year, he was eager to pick up where he left off by strengthening ties with Europe's right wing. But now many of those same factions are expressing open revulsion at the Iran war, rupturing relationships that were supposed to usher in a new international order.

Although Vice President JD Vance campaigned for Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orban this week, such a display has become the exception rather than the rule among conservatives and far-right leaders in Europe.

# Record polling

Assam records 85.64 pc, Keralam 78 pc, Puducherry 89.87 pc



People wait in queues in Assam. Himanta Biswa Sarma shows his ink-marked finger. A man operates a robot while polling is underway during the Puducherry Assembly elections. (PTI)

GUWAHATI, Apr 9 (Agencies)

**AN ESTIMATED** 85.64 per cent voter turnout was recorded as polling ended at 5 PM on Thursday in all 126 Assembly constituencies of Assam, surpassing the previous 82.04 per cent voting in the 2021 elections,

officials said. Keralam crossed the voter turnout of 78 per cent by 5 pm, as polling concluded in 140 Assembly constituencies whereas polling for the 30-member Puducherry

Assembly concluded amid tight security, with the Union Territory recording an impressive 89.87 per cent, highest since 1964.

The BJP-led NDA is seeking a third consecutive term in power in Assam, while the Congress is striving to reclaim a state it lost a decade ago.

Dalgaon recorded the highest voting at 94.57 per cent, while the lowest turnout was in Amri at 70.40 per cent, they said.

A total of 722 candidates are



in the fray in this single-phase  
(Contd on page 5)