

UN chief Guterres strongly condemns flydubai attack

■ By Yoshita Singh

UNITED NATIONS, Oct 2 (PTI)

UN SECRETARY-GENERAL Antonio Guterres has expressed deep concern over an incident aboard a flydubai flight in which an Indian pilot sustained serious injuries while foiling an alleged attempt by his co-pilot to crash the aircraft.

The Dubai to Tel Aviv flight, carrying 174 people, including 27 children, made an emergency landing at Tabuk in northwest Saudi Arabia on Wednesday following an altercation in the cockpit.

The co-pilot, identified by Israeli officials as an Omani national, stabbed Indian pilot Captain Smit Machchhar and sent the jet plunging nearly 14,000 feet in less than 30 seconds.

Guterres is deeply concerned by the serious incident involving a Tel Aviv-bound flydubai flight and is relieved that tragedy was averted, a statement issued by the Secretary-General's



Antonio Guterres

spokesman Stephane Dujarric said Wednesday.

Guterres strongly condemns any act that places at risk civilian lives and the safety of civil aviation, the statement said, adding that the UN chief is grateful to all the authorities concerned for ensuring the safety of all passengers and for conducting their investigation.

"We will continue to monitor all developments related to this incident," the statement said.

The UAE on Thursday said it has opened an investigation and is "closely following" the incident.

Modi has 'good ideas' for settlement of Ukraine conflict: Vladimir Putin

MOSCOW, Oct 2 (PTI)

PRIME Minister Narendra Modi has "very good ideas" on a mutual settlement of the Ukraine conflict and raises the issue at "every meeting", Russian President Vladimir Putin has said.

Putin made the remarks on Thursday at the annual meeting of the Valdai International Discussion Club, according to state-run TASS news agency.

"As for Prime Minister Modi's position on ending wars, I can say that he is one of those world leaders who, despite our very good, even friendly relations, including at the personal level, constantly raises the issue and asks questions about ending the conflict in Ukraine," Putin said.

The Russian leader said Modi "brings up these matters at every meeting we have and takes a keen interest in them".

"He has very good ideas aimed at finding mutually acceptable



solutions," Russian President Vladimir Putin added.

Ahead of the BRICS summit in New Delhi last month, Putin and Modi held talks, during which the Russian leader briefed Modi on the overall situation regarding the Ukraine war, which began in February 2022, and ongoing peace initiatives.

A few days before that, Kremlin spokesperson Dmitry Peskov said Russia would welcome any peace efforts by India to end the Ukraine conflict, noting that Moscow's strategy aligns close-

'Russia will use 'all weapons' in its arsenal if its territory is attacked'

MOSCOW, Oct 2 (AP)

PRESIDENT Vladimir Putin on Thursday reiterated Moscow's long-held position that Russia is not planning to attack European countries but will respond to aggression with "all weapons" in its arsenal. In remarks at a foreign policy forum, Putin accused the West and Europe of escalating tensions by talking about preparing for a war with Moscow in the coming years, conducting military drills in the Baltic Sea, and seizing Russian vessels.

His remarks followed Moscow's warning to NATO that it would not hesitate to use nuclear weapons to defend Kaliningrad should any members of the military alliance try to cut off the Baltic exclave from the rest of Russia.

Several Russian embassies in Europe this week issued statements that said Moscow has "information that NATO is preparing (an) air and naval blockade of Kaliningrad and (the) Kaliningrad region."

ly with New Delhi's position for a resolution through dialogue and diplomacy.

Putin, at the forum on Wednesday, also expressed

appreciation for India's cultural diversity and unity.

"India cannot fail to amaze with its scale and diversity," Putin said.

G7 nations agree to release 100 million barrels of oil to US

WASHINGTON, Oct 2 (AP)

THE Group of Seven industrial nations said they agreed to release 100 million barrels of oil, starting with “substantial” amounts of diesel after the fuel recently hit record high prices in the United States, where President Donald Trump said the diesel release would happen “immediately.”

Trump and his Republican Party face pressure to address surging prices ahead of November’s midterm elections. Trump announced the action Friday on social media, saying, “Europe has just agreed to release a massive amount of their heavily stocked Diesel Oil. The process will begin immediately.”

The President faces lagging approval ratings as the Iran war

Trump and his Republican Party face pressure to address surging prices ahead of November’s midterm elections

and his trade battles have increased US prices for oil.

Gas prices in the US and abroad have soared during the eight-month-long war, a cost Trump has repeatedly said is worth it for making sure Iran does not obtain nuclear weapons. Trump has insisted prices will come down after the war, though there’s no end in sight. The national average for a gallon of diesel in the US was USD 6.37 on Friday, according to AAA, after hitting a record USD 6.52.

Trump had a conversation overnight with French President Emmanuel Macron, the chair of the G7, about the need to address rising fuel prices and the availability of petroleum products, according to the French Embassy in the US. Macron on Friday then chaired a video conference of G7 leaders to discuss the issue.

France holds the rotating presidency of the G7 group and made the announcement.

The IEA will coordinate the effort to combat soaring fuel prices. “We will implement our commitments with a coordinated release through the IEA of 100 million barrels (MB) to begin immediately over 4 months, including a frontloaded substantial diesel release within the first 20 days by G7 members and partners,” the statement said.

Goyal meets trade ministers of France, Canada, Saudi Arabia, South Korea

WASHINGTON, Oct 2 (PTI)

COMMERCE Minister Piyush Goyal met his counterparts from France, Canada, Saudi Arabia and South Korea and discussed furthering bilateral trade relations with the respective countries.

Goyal held the meetings with the trade ministers of the four countries on Thursday on the sidelines of the G20 Trade Ministers' Meeting in Milwaukee. "Met Mr Nicolas Forissier, Minister Delegate for Foreign Trade and Economic Attractiveness of France, on the margins of the G20 Trade Ministers Meeting," Goyal said in a post on X. Goyal said he and

Forissier explored avenues to expand trade and investment ties, expediting the early signing of the India-EU FTA, and expanding collaboration across aerospace manufacturing in India, UPI integration, and joint innovation initiatives. "Look forward to welcoming him to India later this year to take our bilateral economic agenda forward," he said.

Goyal said he had a "productive meeting" with Canadian Trade Minister Maninder Sidhu

and reviewed the ongoing negotiations for the India-Canada Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA). The India-Canada CEPA was launched by Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Canadian Prime Minister Mark Carney in March to take bilateral trade to USD 50 billion by 2030.

"Building on our recent meeting in Mumbai, we reaffirmed our commitment to expediting negotiations and working towards an early conclusion of the agree-

ment," Goyal said.

The Commerce Minister said he was delighted to meet Majid bin Abdullah Al-Kassabi, Minister of Commerce of Saudi Arabia. "We discussed progress on the India-Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) FTA negotiations and explored opportunities to further strengthen trade and investment ties between our two nations," Goyal said. He also met the South Korean Trade Minister Park Jung-Sung and discussed upgrading India-Korea Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (IKCEPA), balanced trade growth, market access for Indian agricultural, pharmaceutical, and marine products, and



Lt General Akhilesh Kumar takes charge of 1 Corps



NEW DELHI, Oct 2 (PTI)

LIEUTENANT General Akhilesh Kumar, who has rare and invaluable experience in varied terrains and operational environments, including the Line of Control, has taken charge as the General Officer Commanding of 1 Corps at Mathura, the Army said on Friday.

The General Officer succeeds Lt Gen V Hariharan.

He took charge of 1 Corps on October 1.

Lt General Kumar, Sena Medal, is an alumnus of Sainik School, Tilaiya, and the National Defence Academy, Pune, and was commissioned into 4th Battalion, the Rajputana Rifles on June 13, 1992, according to an official statement.

The general officer holds an MSc from the Madras University and a master's in management studies from the Osmania University.

"The officer has rare and invaluable experience in varied terrains and operational environments, including the Line of Control, counter-insurgency and counter-terrorism operations in Jammu and Kashmir," the statement said.

In his illustrious career spanning over 34 years, besides commanding his parent unit, 4th Battalion, the Rajputana Rifles, he has been the commander of a Rashtriya Rifles Sector in Jammu and Kashmir, and a general officer commanding of an Infantry Division under a Strike Corps.

US moving 9,000 troops aboard ships to W Asia

Move Comes As Trump Weighs New Hits On Iran

Washington: The US military is dispatching roughly 9,000 troops aboard a group of ships to West Asia, a US official said Thursday. The bolstering of the American military presence comes as President Donald Trump warned anew that new strikes against Iran could be on the horizon.

He also said early indications suggest that Iran is linked to the co-pilot who stabbed his captain and tried to crash an Israel-bound flight Wednesday. In an exchange with reporters at the White House, Trump raised the connection when asked by a reporter if there were any links between the pilot behind the attack and Tehran. "I would say the answer, based on what I'm hearing, is yes," but we're working on it right now," Trump said, without offering details. Trump also warned that if the link is established to Iran, the US would retaliate. "Oh they'll be hit, very hard, don't worry," Trump said. "You just ask them. They know what happened. They'll be hit very hard."

Meanwhile, the group of ships now en route to West Asia together carry over 7,000 sailors and 2,000 Marines. It includes the USS Theodore Roosevelt carrier strike group, which recently deployed with the cruiser USS Chosin, and the USS Makin Island amphibious readiness group, which includes the USS John P. Murtha and USS Anchorage amphibious landing ships. It could mean that three carriers are in the region as early as the end of Oct, according to the US official who spoke to AP on condition of anonymity to discuss sensitive military operations.

Given the personnel already in place in West Asia, the move would bring the US na-



The USS aircraft carrier Dwight D. Eisenhower. US ships now en route to West Asia together carry over 7,000 sailors and 2,000 Marines

Under US pressure, G7 agrees to release 100m barrels of oil

Washington: The G7 nations said Friday that they plan to release 100 million barrels of oil in the coming weeks, starting with "substantial" amounts of diesel after the fuel recently hit record high prices in the US, where President Trump said the diesel release would happen "immediately."

Trump and his Republican Party face pressure to address surging prices ahead of the Nov 3 midterm elections, and Trump announced the action Friday on social media. The president's approval ratings on the economy hit a new low according to an AP-NORC poll as the Iran war and his trade battles have increased US prices for oil and other goods.

France holds the rotating presidency of the G7 group and made the announcement in a statement released after videoconference talks that Macron presided over. The In-

ternational Energy Agency will coordinate the effort to combat soaring fuel prices. Some Republicans in the US had called for Trump to ban US exports of diesel to try to bring domestic prices down. But the G7 statement said the group, which includes the US, also agreed not to limit energy exports to each other.

Trump had a conversation overnight with French President Macron, the chair of the G7, about the need to address rising fuel prices and the availability of petroleum products, according to the French Embassy in the US. Macron Friday then chaired the videoconference of G7 leaders to discuss the issue. Besides his call with Macron, Trump on Friday called in to the meeting with the G7 leaders to negotiate the release of the European diesel stockpiles, according to a White House official. AP

val presence to an unusually high number of more than 20,000 sailors and Marines and hundreds of aircraft.

Trump, in a Time magazine interview published Thursday, also raised the pro-

spects of new strikes, saying it is "possible" that he will ramp up bombing in Iran after the Nov 3 elections in the US. When pressed, Trump said he could not go further in detailing his strategy. AP

Pour gold! India equals its best day at any Asiad with haul of 6

Wins In Boxing, Archery, Hockey And Wrestling

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

India's trickle of gold medals at the 2026 Asian Games turned into a flood on Friday as the contingent bagged six golds — equalling India's best-ever showing on a single day at any Asiad. India had also won six golds on Oct 7, 2023 at Hangzhou.

When Lalremsiami Hmarzote slammed the ball past the goalie into the top of the net in

FULL COVERAGE: P 16-17

the 10th minute of the women's hockey final against holders China, she had the commentators gasping. The flamboyant goal, the only one in the match, helped India win a women's hockey gold after 44 long years.

It was apt that the final flourish came from women, because they contributed four of the



Photo: PTI/AP
Birthday girl Lovlina Borgohain defeated China's Ziyi Bao 5-0, winning a boxing gold 12 years after MC Mary Kom's record first. In women's hockey, it was the end of a 44-year wait when India defeated defending champions China 1-0 in the final to win gold as well as direct qualification to the 2028 Los Angeles Olympics



FROM POTENTIAL TO PODIUM
IT ALL STARTS WITH A CHANCE



six golds won on Friday, lifting India from tenth to fifth on the medal table and boosting the golden hoard from 10 to 16. The day also yielded two silvers and three bronze medals.

Earlier, Lovlina Borgohain upgraded her 2023 silver to gold, the first by a female Indian boxer since Mary Kom in 2014. Soon, Parveen Hooda joi-

ned the party, winning a split-decision verdict over Paris Olympics bronze-medallist Chen Nien-chin of Chinese Taipei. The women's recurve archery team shocked 10-time Olympic champions South Korea to secure a maiden gold.

The men chipped in too. Ankush Panghal in boxing and Sujeet Kalkal in wrestling did

their bit, the former establishing that his Commonwealth gold was no flash in the pan.

With just a day of competitive sports to go in the Games, India is certain to fall well short of its tally of 28 golds and 106 medals from three years back, but the sting in the tail would surely have provided a much-needed morale booster.