

Five Centres of Excellence in classical languages approved



NEW DELHI, Oct 3 (PTI)

THE Ministry of Education has approved setting up of five Centres of Excellence for studies in classical Assamese, Bengali, Pali, Marathi and Prakrit, according to an official memorandum.

The five centres will be set up to strengthen academic research, digitisation, preservation and dissemination of heritage of these classical languages.

The universities where the Centres of Excellence will be set up are Tezpur University (Assamese), Visva Bharati University (Bengali), Central University of Odisha (Pali), Central University of Gujarat (Prakrit), Deccan College Post Graduate and Research Institute in Pune (Marathi).

“A proud moment for Odisha and a significant step towards preserving India’s rich linguistic heritage.

The Ministry of Education’s approval of a Centre of Excellence for Classical Pali at the Central University of Odisha will strengthen the study, preservation and promotion of Pali, a language deeply connected with India’s intellectual, spiritual and cultural traditions,” Odisha Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi said in a post on X.

“This Centre will further strengthen Odisha’s contribution to preserving India’s civilisational knowledge and linguistic heritage. My congratulations to the Central University of Odisha and everyone associated with this important initiative,” he added.

'US-CHINA DIFFERENCES PERSIST DESPITE Trump-Xi summit displaying rare warmth'

BEIJING, Oct 3 (PTI)

SERIOUS differences persist between the US and China despite the recent summit between Chinese President Xi Jinping and his US counterpart Donald Trump in Washington, which was marked by rare bonhomie, a close Trump aide said.

Both sides still have issues that predated Xi's visit last week and would continue working on them, Republican Senator Steve Daines, a close Trump aide and key interlocutor between Washington and Beijing, told the Hong Kong-based South China Morning Post. "So that's again why it's really important to keep the dialogue going between two

Both sides admit that they have some serious differences. But the answer is not to retreat. The answer is to stay engaged, it's really important to keep the dialogue going, said Republican Senator Steve Daines, a close Trump aide and key interlocutor between Washington and Beijing

countries because both sides admit we've got some serious differences. But the answer is not to retreat. The answer is to stay

engaged," Daines said.

Daines, who played a key backchannel role ahead of Xi's visit, was responding to US Ambassador to China David Perdue's accusation that Beijing was "weaponising" its dominant position in critical minerals.

In an interview with Fox News Sunday on September 27, Perdue made these remarks. Rare earths, essential for products ranging from smartphones to fighter jets, remain a major source of contention between the world's two largest economies. A White House fact sheet on last week's summit said both sides would continue working on US concerns over supply chain shortages involving rare earths.

MDR on UPI unlikely to trigger 'large-scale' increase in fees: World Bank's Mishra

NEW DELHI, Oct 3 (IANS)

ALLOWING Merchant Discount Rate (MDR) on Unified Payments Interface (UPI) transactions would serve as an enabling provision and is unlikely to lead to a significant increase in charges because of intense competition in the payments ecosystem, said Neelkanth Mishra, Executive Director at the World Bank Group, on Saturday.

In a conversation with IANS, on the sidelines of the 5th Kautilya Economic Conclave here, Mishra said that concerns over MDR leading to widespread fee hikes may be overstated in a free and competitive market.

"It is an enabling provision. Look, this is a free market. Unless someone is afraid that financial firms, banks or payment aggregators will start colluding and raising charges at the same time, there are different ways to handle that," he said.

"I don't see this leading to a large-scale increase in fees because it is a free and competitive market. There were firms that remained viable and survived even when they could not charge MDR," Mishra added. On the global economic outlook, the

I would say that the biggest risk for global markets is the rapidly rising interest rates because financial markets are all about the cost of capital, said Neelkanth Mishra, Executive Director at the World Bank Group

World Bank executive identified sharply rising interest rates as the single biggest risk facing global financial markets.

"I would say that the biggest risk for global markets is the rapidly rising interest rates because financial markets are all about the cost of capital," he said.

According to Mishra, higher risk-free rates tend to depress asset values and can expose vulnerabilities in leveraged positions and collateral-backed lending structures.

"If your yields, the risk-free rate, are going to rise, asset values will come down, and that

means that many forms of collateralised loans and many types of leverage that were taken then become unviable or have to be unwound," he noted.

On India's vulnerability to global market stress amid elevated oil prices, higher bond yields and geopolitical uncertainties, Mishra acknowledged that the risks are significant but said India remains relatively better positioned than several heavily indebted economies.

"These are very significant macroeconomic risks. I think these are also market risks, so financial markets are starting to get a bit jittery," he told IANS.

He added that stability would depend either on bond yields easing or risks emerging on the growth front that force a reassessment by markets.

"The only way that this can settle is for either yields to fall or for some risks to emerge on the growth side. There are also countries with very high levels of debt-to-GDP that are far more vulnerable than perhaps India is," Mishra said.

"So, we have to be on the lookout for external shocks," he added.

Late gold rush powers India to 4th spot

INDIA SECURE 21 GOLD, 27 SILVER AND 37 BRONZE MEDALS

THE star-studded cricket and hockey teams predictably defended their crowns, but it was 17-year-old archer Kumkum Mohod and golfer Pranavi Urs, who scripted unexpected history, adding to the late gold rush that powered India to a creditable fourth place in the Asian Games here on Saturday. The country could not repeat or better the 106 medals claimed in the previous edition, but the haul of 85 is a decent enough performance although better was expected, especially from shooters and badminton players. In the end, India secure 21 gold, 27 silver and 37 bronze medals.

India defend men's hockey gold

KAKAMIGAHARA, Oct 3 (PTI)

REIGNING Olympic bronze medallist India hammered Malaysia 5-1 to defend their men's hockey gold in the Asian Games here on Saturday, and the triumph also secured them a direct qualification for the 2028 Los Angeles Olympics.

While writing a new chapter in the history of Indian hockey, the eight-time Olympic champions also clinched their fifth Asian Games gold, and the second in a row for the first time.



Gold medallist India's hockey players during the medal ceremony after the men's final match, at the Asian Games.

The Indians made an attacking start as the play was mostly in the Malaysian half in the first quarter. India converted three penalty corners through skipper Harmanpreet Singh (11th, 57th minutes)

and Jugraj Singh (23rd), while vice-captain Hardik Singh scored from a penalty stroke in the 42nd minute and Shilanand Lakra completed the formalities with a field goal in the 54th minute.

India beat Pak to clinch men's cricket gold

NISSHIN, Oct 3 (IANS)

LONE warrior Hasan Nawaz kept Pakistan alive with his unbeaten 96 off 51 deliveries but it wasn't enough as India clinched a dominant 19 runs victory to defend their gold medal in the Asian Games men's cricket final match at Korogi Sports Park on Saturday.

Spin duo of Washington Sundar and Axar Patel clinched two wickets each as Shivam Dube in the later part of the run chase clinched two dominant wicket too to help India beat Pakistan.

Abhishek reached his fifty in just 20 deliveries, bettering his own 24-ball effort against Pakistan in Dubai in 2025, while Tilak followed with a 21-ball fifty as the duo took India through



Indian cricketers pose with their gold medals during the medal ceremony after winning the T20I final against Pakistan, at the 20th Asian Games, in Nisshin, Japan. (PTI)

contrasting phases of the innings.

Abhishek eventually made 61 off 28 balls, with three fours and seven sixes.

(Detailed report on Page 11)

Pranavi **FIRST** Indian woman to win individual golf gold, adds team silver



AICHI-NAGOYA, Oct 3 (ANI)

INDIAN golfer Pranavi Urs scripted history at the Asian Games on Saturday, becoming the first Indian woman to win an individual golf gold medal at the continental showpiece, while also helping India secure silver in the women's team event.

The 23-year-old from Mysuru held (Contd on page 5)

Kumkum wins gold in nery shoot-off

OKAZAKI, Oct 3 (IANS)



SEVENTEEN-YEAR-OLD Kumkum Mohod became the first Indian woman to win an Asian Games medal of any sort in the individual recurve event after beating South Korea's Yejin Oh in a shoot-off to claim the gold medal on Saturday.

The Indian teenager prevailed 6-5 after the final was tied at 5-5 following five sets. With the gold medal decided by a single arrow, Oh shot an 8 before (Contd on page 5)

Aman secures gold, Antim settles for silver, Deepak grabs bronze



NAGOYA, Oct 3 (PTI)

AMAN SEHRAWAT upgraded his Asian Games bronze to gold while Antim Panghal's bid to become only the second Indian woman wrestler to win the continental title ended in disappointment after being outclassed by Japan's Mei Miyooka here on Saturday. India signed off (Contd on page 5)

Climate experts explain global 'carbon debt' ahead of COP31

■ By Aparna Bose

NEW DELHI, Oct 3 (PTI)

WITH nearly a month to go for the United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP31), the global stage is set for negotiations that often look like standard diplomatic friction between nations, but fundamentally dictate how heavily the common man on the ground is impacted.

When a farmer faces drought and crop failure, an economically vulnerable citizen's home is washed away in floods, a coastal resident struggles for fresh drinking water due to salt-water intrusion, or an urban outdoor labourer suffers acute heat-stroke and lost wages during extreme heatwaves, they face the fallout of what they can only identify as increasingly unpredictable weather patterns.

This reality prompts climate experts to emphasise the concept of 'climate justice,' relentlessly questioning why those who contributed the least to global warming must suffer the most, an imbalance they attribute to 'carbon debt' or historical emissions.

Even though this debate resurfaces at every UN Climate Change Conference, it is now underscored by the recent BRICS New Delhi declaration, where developing nations reasserted that fossil fuels must remain part of their energy mix, while also recognising the need to promote "just, orderly, equitable and inclusive energy transitions."

The 31st UN Climate Change Conference (COP 31) is slated to be held in Antalya, Türkiye from November 9 to 20, with Australia taking on the role of President of Negotiations.

Speaking to PTI Videos, Pallavi Das, a programme lead at the Council on Energy, Environment and Water (CEEW), explained, "Before carbon-intensive lifestyles, societies were largely agrarian, with minimal fossil fuel use and carbon dioxide emis-



Pallavi Das, a programme lead at the Council on Energy, Environment and Water, pointed out that from 1890 to 2019, the United States emitted about 400 gigatons of carbon dioxide, the European Union around 348 gigatons, and China 220 gigatons, while India emitted only 53 gigatons. By 2019, India's total historical carbon dioxide emissions were only around 11 per cent of what US had generated.

sions. With the Industrial Revolution, people began using coal, oil, and gas extensively in factories, power plants, and other industries."

"This led the developed world to emit far more carbon historically, relative to their population at the time, and they accumulated a large historical share of global emissions," she added.

To quantify the gap, Das pointed out that from 1890 to 2019, the United States emitted about 400 gigatons of carbon dioxide, the European Union around 348 gigatons, and China 220 gigatons, while India emitted only 53 gigatons. By 2019, India's total historical carbon dioxide emissions were only around 11 per cent of what the US had generated.

Further simplifying the concept of 'carbon debt,' Sanjay Vashist, Director at Climate Action Network in South Asia (CANSA) said that the developed countries used more than their fair share of atmospheric space

by burning fossil fuels beyond their survival limits, at the expense of developing countries.

"Since the Industrial Revolution, developed nations burned coal and other fossil fuels and accumulated enormous wealth. Now that it has become a problem, they are asking developing countries, especially major emerging economies like

BRICS nations, to cut back on emissions and growth," Vashist said.

According to CK Mishra, former Secretary at the Environment Ministry, only developing countries are sticking to the Paris Agreement, whereas developed nations have found a "convenient way out of the process."

"The agreement was based on developed countries contributing financially and technology-wise to help developing countries get out of this situation. That hasn't happened, and doesn't seem to be happening soon. I feel that the Paris Agreement is becoming a one-sided agreement, where the

developing nations are carrying the entire burden. Since they do not have the resources, the results become a little doubtful," Mishra, who previously led Indian negotiations at United Nations Climate Change Conferences as secretary, told PTI.

When asked about BRICS' New Delhi declaration acknowledging that "fossil fuels will still play an important role in the world's energy mix," CEEW's Pallavi Das noted that while developed nations can easily transition to clean energy due to their stable demand, a sudden shift is unrealistic for developing countries where energy demand continues to surge. Highlighting the need for a balanced approach, Shailly Kedia, Director at The Energy and Resources Institute, said, "The question isn't whether developing countries, including BRICS nations, should transition away from fossil fuels, a transition does need to happen. But carbon debt should not be used as a license for unlimited fossil fuel use either."

Kedia highlighted that it is important to recognise that while all countries under the Paris Agreement and the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) have agreed to a common goal of climate stabilisation, they are starting from different points.

"This is what climate justice is about, recognising these different starting points and national circumstances. At COP31, the principle of CBDR-RC and national circumstances will remain central, whether in discussions on climate finance, the global goal on adaptation, or broader negotiations," she said.

The CBDR-RC principle stresses that each country is responsible for addressing climate change and that developed countries should bear primary responsibility, as they account for most of the historical and current GHG emissions.

The 31st UN Climate Change Conference (COP 31) is slated to be held in Antalya, Türkiye from Nov 9 to 20

Flydubai incident was **TERROR ATTACK**: UAE

'Co-pilot used cockpit crash axe to hit Captain Smit'

ABU DHABI, Oct 3 (IANS)

HAMAM Al Hamami, the co-pilot of the Dubai-Tel Aviv flydubai flight, attacked Indian pilot Captain Smit Machchhar with a crash axe during the flight in what United Arab Emirates prosecutors have confirmed as a "terrorist attack", according to reports on Saturday.

The UAE prosecutors said Al Hamami attempted to take control of the aircraft after attacking Captain Machchhar inside the cockpit.

According to news agency WAM, Al Shamsi said the "co-pilot began executing his plan during the flight, attacking the captain inside the flight deck using a crash axe and attempting to take control of the aircraft." Al Hamami had worked for flydubai for only about eight months, CNN reported. A now-

deleted LinkedIn profile bearing the name Hamam Al Hamami reportedly stated that he had worked with Oman Air for seven years and left the airline in February 2025.

He subsequently joined Royal

Moroc in June 2025 and left the airline in January this year before taking up employment with flydubai, according to reports.

The deleted profile reportedly made two posts within around

nine hours of the flydubai incident, both of which were terror-related. One of the posts reportedly contained a series of clips filmed inside the cockpits of a Boeing 737 Max aircraft, with the person recording the footage zooming in on an aircraft belonging to Israeli airline El Al.

The video reportedly ended with an image of Ayman al-Zawahiri, the al-Qaeda leader who succeeded Osama Bin Laden, along with a photograph of Humam Khalil Abu-Mulal al-Balawi, who killed nine people in a 2009 suicide bombing targeting US personnel.

Another post reportedly featured an AI-generated image depicting Islam's three holiest sites in Mecca, Medina and Jerusalem. According to CNN, a poem in the background referred to rejecting humiliation, not fearing death and defending one's dignity. Al Hamami's now-deleted X account portrayed him as deeply religious.

Co-pilot Hamam Al was flagged over extremism concerns by Omani airlines

CAIRO, Oct 3 (AP)

THE co-pilot accused of attacking the captain on an Israel-bound flight with an axe and trying to seize the controls was an Omani national who'd been barred from flying on his country's airline because of concerns about extremist views, officials said Saturday.

The co-pilot has been identified as Hamam al-Hammami, according to three people with knowledge of the situation, including a Gulf and Western diplomat, who spoke on condition of anonymity because they were not authorised to speak to the media. The United Arab Emirates, which is leading the investigation, said the co-pilot attacked with the cockpit's crash axe and tried to take control of the sharply

(Contd on page 5)



Hamam Al Hamami

EAM chairs consultative committee meeting



NEW DELHI, Oct 3 (ANI)

EXTERNAL Affairs Minister S Jaishankar on Saturday chaired a consultative committee meeting focusing on India-Russia relations, where discussions highlighted diverse facets of bilateral cooperation.

In a post on X, External Affairs

Minister S Jaishankar stated, "Chaired a consultative committee meeting on India-Russia relations. Highlighted various aspects of our multifaceted engagement, including in trade, investments, energy, connectivity, culture and P2P domains. As well as our active support to dialogue & diplomacy to end the Ukraine conflict."

A shared ambition to expand bilateral trade in a balanced manner, including through greater Indian exports to Russia in seven areas - auto, pharma, food, marine products, engineering goods, chemicals and textiles. Both sides discussed an India-Eurasian Economic Union Free Trade Agreement.

Ukraine ready to consider India's ceasefire proposal: FM Sybiha

KYIV, Oct 3 (PTI)

UKRAINE has described India's proposal for a possible ceasefire with Russia as the "broadest" among four offers received by Kyiv, with Ukrainian Foreign Minister Andrii Sybiha saying it is ready to consider a truce covering energy infrastructure and the Black Sea.

"We have four proposals. The broadest one is India's proposal. We are ready for an energy and Black Sea ceasefire, but only in this combination," Sybiha told

reporters in Kyiv on Friday, according to the European Pravda newspaper.

The Russia-Ukraine war, now in its fifth year, has killed thousands of civilians, displaced millions and caused widespread destruction of homes and critical infrastructure.

The comments came a day after Russian President Vladimir Putin said Prime Minister Narendra Modi has "very good ideas" for finding a mutually acceptable settlement to the Ukraine conflict.

LARGEST-EVER DEFENCE ACQUISITION PUSH

India to finalise MRFA deal by Mar '27: IAF chief

■ India in Feb cleared a long-pending proposal to procure 114 Rafale fighter jets from France



Rafale fighter jet

NEW DELHI, Oct 3 (PTI)

INDIA is looking at finalising the much-awaited multi-role fighter aircraft (MRFA) deal by this financial year provided things go as per plan, Chief of Air Staff, Air Chief Marshal A P Singh, said on Saturday.

In its largest-ever defence acquisition push, India in February cleared a long-pending proposal to procure 114 Rafale fighter jets under a government-to-government framework with France, nearly two decades after the plan was originally rolled out to boost IAF's combat prowess. Price negotiations and other critical issues relating to the project
(Contd on page 5)

Exceptionally great physical and mental resolve: IAF Chief on Machchhar

NEW DELHI, Oct 3 (ANI)

IAF Chief AP Singh lauded Captain Smit Machchhar for his exceptional bravery during the recent mid-air terror attack aboard a Dubai-Tel Aviv flight. "What he has done is exceptionally brave. He showed great physical and mental resolve. It is a lesson for us, while addressing his annual press conference.