

Russian aerial attacks kill 9 in Ukraine as Zelenskyy warns Moscow getting more North Korea help

KYIV, AUG 11: *Russia bombed Ukrainian cities with missiles, drones and glide bombs, killing at least nine civilians, officials said Tuesday, as Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy warned that Moscow is receiving new military help for its more than 4-year-old invasion from North Korea.*

Zelenskyy said Russian forces used ballistic missiles supplied by North Korea in their overnight attack on the southeastern Ukraine city of Zaporizhzhia, where local officials said six people were killed and 19 wounded.

A further three people, including a 15-year-old boy, were killed by Russian drones and artillery in the central Dnipropetrovsk region, local authorities said.

Russia has received additional ballistic missiles from Pyongyang and is preparing to deploy more North Korean troops, Zelenskyy said late Monday.

Russian President Vladimir Putin and North Korean leader Kim Jong Un signed a strategic partnership agreement just over two years ago. It vows mutual aid if either country faces aggression.

Kim has sent thousands of troops and huge supplies of weapons to support Putin's invasion of Ukraine. Some experts say the engagement with Moscow is helping improve North Korea's military capabilities, and Zelenskyy warned that the battlefield experience would help Py-



ongyang menace other countries in its region.

Ukraine says Russia is scaling up its production of ballistic missiles, aiming to exploit Kyiv's critical shortage of Patriot air defense interceptors that can stop them, and claims Moscow is readying an increase in recruitment for a new push on the front line that stretches 1,250 km along eastern and southern Ukraine.

"Every step Russia takes - increasing ballistic missile production, bringing in North Korean equipment, preparing for mobilization - all of this shows that Moscow is preparing not for peace, but for escalation," Zelenskyy said on social media.

US-led diplomatic efforts to stop the war have fizzled as Washington grew frustrated with the lack of progress toward a settlement and its attention turned to the Iran war.

"The Kremlin will not enter serious negotiations or make meaningful compromises on its demands as long as Putin believes that he has a viable military path to achieving his full objectives,"

the Institute for the Study of War, a Washington-based think tank, said in an analysis late Monday.

"Ukraine's Patriot shortages offer Russia an opportunity to cause very serious damage to Ukraine over the coming winter and will therefore contribute to delaying meaningful negotiations and protracting the war," it said.

Russian forces also struck parts of the Ukrainian capital, Kyiv, overnight, according to officials. One strike hit the grounds of a children's hospital, leaving two craters and shattering windows, the State Emergency Service said. Children and medical workers were in bomb shelters and nobody was hurt, it added.

At another location in the capital, a Russian strike started a fire in a warehouse that spread across about 1,200 square metres, according to emergency officials.

The Russian Defence Ministry said its forces overnight struck "military industrial facilities and transport and logistics centres" in Kyiv and Zaporizhzhia with "ground-

based precision weapons".

It said in a statement Tuesday that it hit drone storage facilities in Kyiv and a metallurgical plant in the city of Zaporizhzhia.

Russia targeted Zaporizhzhia and Kyiv with Zircon anti-ship missiles and Iskander ballistic missiles, while launching 120 long-range strike drones of various types across the country, Ukraine's air force said.

Meanwhile, the Russian Defence Ministry said its air defences overnight intercepted almost 400 Ukrainian drones over 14 Russian regions and occupied Crimea.

Russia's biggest online retailer, Wildberries, said in a statement that its logistical facilities in the Voronezh region on the border with Ukraine came under attack and caught fire, but it said the fire has been extinguished. It said goods stored at the facilities were "largely undamaged".

Ukraine has repeatedly struck Wildberries warehouses and has also bombed Russian oil facilities in what it says is a strategy to compel Putin to negotiate an end to the invasion.

Russian independent online outlet Astra said an oil refinery in the city of Orsk, some 1,300 kilometers from the border with Ukraine, was hit and published images of smoke billowing over it. There was no official confirmation of an attack on the Orsk oil refinery, which has been targeted before. (AP)

Sonia Hails Manmohan As 'Most Consequential PM'; Says History Will Indeed Remember Him Kindly

NEW DELHI, AUG 11: History will remember Manmohan Singh as a quiet but the most consequential prime minister India has had, Congress leader Sonia Gandhi said in a signed article on Tuesday, adding that his record of integrity stands in stark contrast with the Modi government's.

She also said that Singh's prophetic prediction of January 2014 is becoming increasingly self-evident with every passing day, in an apparent reference to his then statement that it would be "disastrous for the country" to have Narendra Modi as the prime minister.

The Congress Parliamentary Party chairperson's remarks in the article published in The Hindu comes days after the Supreme Court gave former prime minister Singh a clean chit in the coal block allocation case.

In a swipe at Prime Minister Modi, Gandhi said since he is these days "forgiving" India's students for attacking him, perhaps he can take this opportunity to forgive himself for his undignified slander against Singh.

The Congress Parliamentary Party chairperson said the judgment brings to a conclusion one of the most tragic arcs of our public discourse - "the witch-hunt against Dr Singh, a man of the most remarkable probity and integrity."

"The lobby against him was coordinated and well-organised, with actors stretching from the bureaucracy to the media, the judiciary, civil society, and most certainly to the RSS and BJP. Today, their bogus crusade has come to its inevitable conclusion of nothingness. Dr Singh has been vindicated on every count," Gandhi said in her article.

"The date July 29, 2026, was an important but unacknowledged day in our recent political history as in a remarkable judgment, the Supreme Court upheld the CBI's clean chit to Dr Manmohan Singh in the alleged coal block allocation scam, Gandhi said. More importantly, it pulled up the trial court for rejecting the CBI's closure reports and making



adverse observations against the former prime minister for no "compelling reason", she pointed out.

"Its purpose has been to exert pressure on politicians. Leaders are either silenced through coercion or cynically folded into the BJP or, in some remarkable instances, rewarded with ministerial positions as well.

"When credible accusations of corruption emerge, the Modi government simply brushes them aside. Corrupt when you're in the Opposition, suddenly clean when you jump ship!" Gandhi said. It is not a coincidence that Modi was also among the most vocal proponents of the attack on Singh, she said.

"His snide and atrocious remarks in the Rajya Sabha on February 8, 2017, that only Dr Singh knew 'the art of bathing with a raincoat on', will go down as the lowest point of our parliamentary history," she said.

Since Modi is these days "forgiving" India's students for attacking him, perhaps he can take this opportunity to forgive himself for his "undignified slander" against Singh, she said.

"Introspection, like charity, must begin from home. Ultimately, the attack on Dr Singh was motivated by a desperate desire to shift the public conversation and narrative away from his outstanding governance record," she said.

Manmohan Singh's government heralded profound economic change with unprecedented rates of growth and a consumption and private investment boom that propelled India into the ranks of middle-income countries, Gandhi stressed.

In 2008, when the global

economy faced turbulence and collapse, India demonstrated its resilience, she said.

"Let us not forget that in spite of the reworking of how the growth of India's GDP is calculated, the 10 years of the UPA government saw higher economic growth than the past 12 years, resulting in millions being pulled out of poverty," Gandhi said.

The Manmohan Singh government delivered on the constitutional promise of a Right to Education and expanded social justice through the introduction of OBC reservation in centrally-funded higher education institutes like the IITs and IIMS, she said.

"The Forest Rights Act recognised the ancestral rights of our Adivasi and forest-dwelling communities, after a decades-long struggle. The MGNREGA, recently demolished by the Modi government, was the most powerful social security intervention set up anywhere," she said.

Another signature achievement of Singh's government was the National Food Security Act, 2013, which identified and guaranteed access to basic food rations for crores of families, she said.

"This is being sought to be amended. Soon after he demitted office, he had warned that the rights-based legislation would come under assault and his fears have, most sadly, come true," she said.

Singh heralded a new era of transparency in government through the landmark Right to Information Act, which enabled citizens to access the government's inner workings, she said.

"The RTI now stands totally emasculated. There was an explosion of independent media, which was characterised by a fearlessness that appears more remarkable when juxtaposed with its current enfeeblement," she said.

Civil society emerged as a force to be reckoned with, and our students had the freedom to protest against the government and even the prime minister, without being fired upon by metallic pellet guns or AK-47s, Gandhi said, taking a swipe at the Modi government.

The prime minister regularly made himself accountable to Parliament and to the media through 100-plus unscripted press conferences, she said.

"And of course, we cannot forget that the landmark path-breaking Indo-US nuclear deal, which overturned decades of nuclear discrimination against and denial towards India and marked our arrival on the global stage, was possible because of his political courage and sustained initiative," she said.

The "mischievous and indefensible" allegations against his integrity have been exposed as hollow, and his record as prime minister is increasingly being recognised for what it was -- a period of decisive economic, political, and social advancement in Indian history, she said.

"We all certainly regret that he is not here to see this day and to guide the nation with his wisdom. But it is a solace to us all that his prophetic prediction of January 2014 is becoming increasingly self-evident with every passing day.

"History will indeed remember him kindly as a quiet, gentle but a most consequential prime minister," Gandhi said.

Her remarks come after the apex court closed the criminal case against Singh by setting aside a summoning order passed against him.

The veteran Congress leader, who passed away on December 27, 2024, now stands formally acquitted in the high-profile criminal case. (Agencies)

Drone strike sparks massive blaze at Libya's Zawiya refinery

CAIRO, AUG 11: Firefighters in western Libya fought Tuesday to extinguish the remnants of a massive fire caused by a drone strike on a oil facility, and a car bomb killed a senior military officer in the country's east, in the latest attacks in the chaos-stricken North African nation.

The drone hit a gasoline tank at the Zawiya oil refinery in the Mediterranean town of Zawiya on Monday, about 47 kilometres west of capital Tripoli, the state-run National Oil Corporation said.

The attack ignited a massive blaze at gasoline-storage tank that burned through the night into Tuesday morning, according to the Civil Defense, a first responders' agency.

There were no reports of casualties, the health authorities said.

No group has claimed responsibility for a series of attacks on oil facilities in Zawiya, or the car car bomb in the eastern city of Benghazi on Monday.

Footage aired by local media showed massive flames and fireballs erupting from the tank, with black and orange smoke rising in the sky as firefighters spray what appears to be foam or water in efforts to quench the intense fire.

As they fought the flames, another drone hit close to a key oil tank nearby but did not cause casualties or dam-



age, the company said.

The company said the tank, which held 4.5 million litres of fuel when it was hit, collapsed, and declared a state of maximum emergency at the facility.

Monday's strikes were the latest in a series of drone attacks on oil infrastructure in Zawiya, which houses critical energy infrastructure including the country's largest oil refinery, an export terminal and a power plant. The drone strikes come as Turkish Foreign minister Hakan Fidan is set to arrive in Libya for a visit. He is due to visit both Tripoli and Benghazi.

Over the weekend, the oil company said drone strikes had hit a fuel tank and a desalination plant linked to the oil facilities in Zawiya. It said

the tank was damaged.

Separately, a senior military officer with the forces of powerful commander Khalifa Haftar was killed in a car bomb Monday evening in the eastern city of Benghazi, authorities said.

Major General Fawzy al-Mansouri, director of the military intelligence of Haftar's self-styled Libyan National Army, was killed when an explosive-laden vehicle exploded into his car in the Sayyida Aisha neighbourhood in Benghazi after, the LNA said.

The LNA is allied with one of Libya's two rival governments, which controls the country's eastern and southern parts. The attacks underscored the fragility of security in the oil-rich country. Libya,

a largely lawless Mediterranean country, has been plunged into chaos and division following the 2011 uprising-turned-civil war, which toppled and later killed longtime dictator Moammar Gadhafi.

Amid the chaos, militias grew in wealth and power, particularly in Tripoli and the western part of the country.

The county has been divided for years between rival administrations in the east and west, each backed by armed groups and foreign governments. Currently, it is governed by Prime Minister Abdul-Hamid Dbeibah's government in the west and by the administration of Prime Minister Ossama Hammad in the east. (AP)

ED Freezes 182 Bank Accounts, Seizes Rs 1 Cr Cash In Connection To Rs 2k Crore Chit-Fund Scam

BHUBANESWAR, AUG 11: The Enforcement Directorate (ED) has frozen 182 bank accounts and seized more than Rs 1 crore in cash and six high-end cars during a raid in connection with Rs 2,000 crore multi-state chit fund scam, officials said on Tuesday.

In a post on X, the ED said its Bhubaneswar Zonal Office has conducted search operations under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act, 2002 (PMLA) on August 5 at five premises linked with Welfare Buildings and Estates Pvt Ltd (WBEPL) and its directors at Visakhapatnam and Hyderabad in connection with the investigation in the chit fund scam.

The raids were conducted on the premises of ex-Andhra Pradesh MLA Malla Vilaya Prasad, Varaha Ramakrishna Satya Sinivasa



Rao Alla and others, it said.

During the raid, cash in Indian currency amounting to Rs 1.01 crore along with various movable and immovable properties, incriminating materials/documents (property documents, various digital devices) related to WBEPL, its directors and related entities were recovered and seized, the central agency said.

The ED has also issued freezing orders for 182 bank accounts along with seizure of six high-end luxury vehi-

cles of WBEPL and its Directors.

The ED's Bhubaneswar office initiated the investigation based on multiple FIRs and subsequent chargesheets filed by the Economic Offences Wing (EOW) of Odisha Police, CBI, and the Anti-Corruption Bureau (ACB), Jharkhand.<

During the investigation, the central agency found that the directors and managing director of WBEPL have collected substantial public

Amid disruptions, Birla asks Govt, opposition to arrive at common ground to let House function

NEW DELHI, AUG 11: Expressing anguish over repeated disruption of proceedings, Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla on Tuesday asked the Government and the opposition to arrive at a common ground so that the House can debate on key Bills that bring far-reaching changes in the country.

Making a statement in the House amid noisy opposition

protests, Birla said the Government has agreed to the opposition's demand on a response from Union Home Minister Amit Shah on the police action here against students protesting against the NEET paper leak on July 20. Newspaper Subscriptions

Birla said other issues raised by the opposition can also be discussed, provided the House functions without disruptions.

He said the Government has to run the House and the opposition and Treasury benches have to arrive at a common ground and engage in constructive discussion.

"I feel anguished when the House does not function," Birla said, and asked opposition members not to display placards inside the House as it is against parliamentary norms.

Since the Monsoon Session be-

gan on July 20, the Lok Sabha could not complete the Question Hour and several Bills were passed amid din without a debate.

He said that the Question Hour is very important as it helps members hold the Government accountable and also brings transparency in the functioning of the executive. The Speaker underlined that he has already issued

directions stating that only listed questions will be asked during the Question Hour. Question Hour is held between 11 am and 12 noon in the Lok Sabha.

"The people of the country also want to see discussions in Parliament," Birla said. History

Birla's fresh appeal to opposition came a day after the Government had said the opposition should not run away from debate

and listen to the home minister without disruptions.

But the opposition has insisted that the alleged embezzlement of donations at the Ram Temple in Ayodhya should also be discussed.

As the stalemate continued on Tuesday, Birla adjourned the proceedings till 2 pm.

Separately, NDA members staged a protest outside the main

entrance of Parliament against the police action on protestors in Jharkhand. They also questioned the 'silence' of Congress leader Rahul Gandhi on the police action in Jharkhand and accused him of changing goal post at a time when the government has agreed for a response of Home Minister Shah on the police action on protesting students at Jantar Mantar here. (PTI)