

G20 SUMMIT

US, China call it ‘success’

AGENCIES

Days after the conclusion of the G20 Summit in New Delhi, the United States on Monday affirmed that the global meet was a “success” despite the absence of the Chinese and Russian presidents and the joint declaration not explicitly condemning Russia’s role in the ongoing war in Ukraine.

China, meanwhile, reacting to the summit, refrained from commenting on the absence of its president from the meet.

A day earlier, China said that the declaration has sent a “positive signal” that the member countries are joining hands in tackling global challenges and economic recovery, reports The Indian Express.

Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson Mao Ning, addressing a media briefing, said, “The declaration released by the G20 summit shows that China’s proposition is a good signal.”

McCarthy calls for Biden impeachment inquiry

REUTERS, WASHINGTON

Republican US House of Representatives Speaker Kevin McCarthy yesterday called for an impeachment inquiry into Democratic President Joe Biden encouraged by his party’s right flank - a move certain to further divide lawmakers as they struggle to passing legislation to avoid a government shutdown.

“I am directing our House committees to open a formal impeachment inquiry into President Joe Biden,” McCarthy told reporters.

Many in McCarthy’s party were infuriated when the House, then controlled by Democrats, twice impeached Republican President Donald Trump - in 2019 and 2021 - though he was acquitted both times in the Senate.

Biden, who defeated Trump in the 2020 election, is seeking re-election next year. Republicans, who now narrowly control the House, have accused Biden of profiting while he served as vice president from 2009 to 2017 from his son Hunter Biden’s foreign business ventures, though they have not presented substantiation.



Rescue workers carry a body recovered from under the rubble in the aftermath of a deadly earthquake in Talat N'Yaaqoub, in Morocco yesterday.

PHOTO: REUTERS

MOROCCO EARTHQUAKE

Survivors struggle in shelters

Death toll rises to 2,901; Red Cross appeals for over \$100m to support victims

REUTERS, Amizmiz

Many survivors of Morocco’s most powerful earthquake in over a century were struggling in makeshift shelters yesterday after a fourth night outside, with rescuers yet to reach remote mountain villages which suffered some of the worst devastation.

The death toll from the 6.8 magnitude quake that struck in the High Atlas Mountains late on Friday stood at 2,901, with 5,530 people injured, but those figures looked likely to rise.

Rescuers from Spain, Britain and Qatar were helping Morocco’s search teams, while Italy, Belgium, France and Germany had all offered to send in specialists but said they had yet to receive the green light from the Moroccan government.

The International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) launched an emergency appeal to raise 100 million Swiss francs (\$112.3 million) to support victims of the earthquake in Morocco.

Hopes of finding survivors under the rubble were fading with the passage of time, not least because many of the traditional mud brick houses that are common in the mountain villages crumbled to earthen rubble



without leaving air pockets.

Along the Tizi n’Test road that passes through some of the most remote areas, survivors were critical of the rescue efforts by the government, which they accused of failing the most devastated hamlets.

“The problem is that the authorities are focusing on the bigger communities and not the remote villages that are worst affected,” said Hamid Ait Bouyali, 40, who had spent the night along the road on the outskirts of Rakte. Some villages had yet to receive

any help because roads were blocked by landfalls.

In Amizmiz, a large village at the foot of the mountains that has turned into an aid hub, some people made homeless by the quake had been provided with yellow tents by the authorities, but others were still sheltering under blankets.

“I am so scared. What will we do if it rains?” said Nouredine Bo lkerouane, a carpenter, who was camping with his wife, mother-in-law and two sons, one of whom is autistic, in an improvised tent fashioned from blankets.

Indian police arrest cow vigilante after riots

AFP, New Delhi

Indian police yesterday arrested the leader of a vigilante group devoted to protecting cows who had been accused of inciting deadly religious riots near New Delhi in July.

Monu Manesar leads a chapter of the radical Hindu right-wing group Bajrang Dal and is a suspect in the mob lynching in February of two Muslim men accused of cow smuggling.

Cows are considered sacred by Hindus and their slaughter is illegal in many Indian states.

Manesar remained free and continued to post inflammatory anti-Muslim content regularly on Facebook and Instagram for months after authorities linked him to the murders.

He announced in July plans to attend a Hindu procession in Nuh near the capital.

At least six people were killed and dozens more injured in the resulting unrest.

Nuh district police officer Shubhjeet Singh confirmed Manesar’s arrest on charges of spreading hateful content on social media.

N Korea’s Kim in Russia

US warns Pyongyang against selling arms to Moscow

REUTERS, Seoul/Moscow

North Korean leader Kim Jong Un has arrived in Russia, a source told Reuters yesterday, for what the Kremlin said would be a comprehensive discussion with President Vladimir Putin - amid warnings from Washington they should not trade weapons. Kim left Pyongyang for Russia on Sunday on his private train, the North’s state media reported yesterday morning, leaving his train to meet local officials in Khasan, the main rail gateway to Russia’s Far East, before continuing on. “It will be a fully fledged visit,” Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov said. “There will be negotiations between two delegations, and after that, if necessary, the leaders will continue their communication in a one-on-one format.” Discussions could also include humanitarian aid to North Korea and the UN Security Council resolutions imposed against Pyongyang, Russian officials said. US officials, who first said the visit was imminent, said arms talks between Russia and North Korea were actively advancing and Kim and Putin were likely to discuss providing Russia with weapons for the war in Ukraine.

Putin signals he expects long war in Ukraine

Chides West for arms supplies

REUTERS, Vladivostok

Russian President Vladimir Putin yesterday indicated he was bracing for a long war in Ukraine, saying that Kyiv could use any ceasefire to rearm and that Washington would continue to see Russia as an enemy no matter who won the 2024 US election. Speaking for several hours at an economic forum in Russia’s Pacific port city of Vladivostok, Putin said Ukraine’s counteroffensive against Russian forces had so far failed and the Ukrainian army had sustained heavy losses of 71,000 men in the attacks. Only when Ukraine was exhausted when it came to men, equipment and ammunition would it talk peace, he said in reply to questions from a Russian television presenter acting as a moderator. But he said Kyiv would use any cessation of hostilities “to replenish their resources and restore the combat capability of their armed forces.” Putin said many potential mediators had asked him if Russia was ready to stop fighting but said that Russia could hardly do so when it was facing a Ukrainian counteroffensive. For there to be any chance of talks, said Putin, Ukraine would first have to cancel its self-imposed legal ban on peace talks and explain what it wanted. “Then we shall see,” Putin said. He also said that 1,000 - 1,500 Russians were signing voluntary contracts to join the military every day. Russia controls about 18 percent of Ukrainian territory, including Crimea which it annexed in 2014, and a swathe of eastern and southern Ukraine which it seized after invading Ukraine on February 24 last year.



US takes on Google in landmark antitrust trial

AFP, Washington

A landmark case pitting the US government against Google over the dominance of the company’s world-dominating search engine began in a Washington courtroom yesterday.

“This case is about the future of the internet and whether Google will ever face meaningful competition in search,” said Justice Department lawyer Kenneth Dintzer as the United States government began making its case against the tech titan.

Over the course of 10 weeks of testimony involving more than 100 witnesses, Google will try to persuade Judge Amit P. Mehta that the landmark case brought by the Department of Justice is without merit.

Held in a Washington courtroom, the trial is the biggest US antitrust case against a big tech company since the same department took on Microsoft more than two decades ago over the dominance of its Windows operating system. “Even for Washington DC, I think we have the highest concentration of blue suits in any location here today,” Mehta joked, observing the dozens of lawyers assembled in his courtroom.

The Google case centers on the government’s contention that the tech titan unfairly forged its domination of online search by forging exclusivity contracts with device makers, mobile operators and other companies that left rivals no chance to compete.

Through these payments of billions of dollars every year to Apple and others, Google secured its search engine default status on phones and web browsers, allegedly burying upstarts before they had a chance to grow.

This created what the government calls a “feedback loop” in which Google’s dominance of search only grew bigger and more damaging to competition because of its monopoly access to users that rivals could never match.



US caver Mark Dickey, on a stretcher, is carried out of the Morca cave as his rescue operation comes to a successful end near Anamur in Mersin province, southern Turkey yesterday. Dickey, 40, was on an international exploration mission in the cave in Mersin province’s Taurus mountains, when he reportedly began suffering from gastrointestinal bleeding at a depth of 1,040 metres.

PHOTO: REUTERS

A third of population still without internet: UN

AFP, Geneva

A third of the world’s population is still without access to the internet, even though the number of people connected has never been so high, according to the latest UN statistics published yesterday.

Around 100 million more people are able to access the internet since last year’s census by the International Telecommunication Union (ITU), the UN agency for information and communication technologies. That means 67 percent of the world’s population, or 5.4 billion people, are now online.

However, the other 2.6 billion people are still without access.

“This improvement in connectivity is another step in the right direction,” said ITU Secretary-General Doreen Bogdan-Martin.

“We won’t rest until we live in a world where meaningful connectivity is a lived reality for everyone, everywhere,” she added.