

India hopeful of G20 communiqué

DECLARATION WILL SHOW THE COUNTRY AS THE VOICE OF GLOBAL SOUTH, SAYS KANT



PHOTO: X VIA @PMOIndia

Prime Minister Narendra Modi welcomes US President Joe Biden at his residence, in New Delhi on Friday

RUCHIKA CHITRAVANSHI & SUBHAYAN CHAKRABORTY
New Delhi, 8 September

It was like a full dress rehearsal for the two-day G20 Leaders' Summit that starts on Saturday. The mega exercise was put to the test on Friday as delegates from around the world converged in New Delhi to be part of the summit under India's presidency. As the capital city virtually shut down to make things seamless for the foreign leaders and delegates, the action at the summit venue

presented a contrasting picture. Before the cameras and the action shifted to the late-evening bilateral between Prime Minister Narendra Modi and US President Joe Biden at the PM's residence — 7, Lok Kalyan Marg — the highlight of the day was a press briefing in a packed auditorium by the key men who have been at the centre of action for more than a year — G20 Sherpa Amitabh Kant, Foreign Affairs Secretary Vinay Mohan Kwatra, G20 chief coordinator Harsh Vardhan Shringla and Economic Affairs Secretary Ajay Seth. Listening in

were over 2,000 media persons. Whether there will be an official communiqué or not at the end of the summit remained an unanswered question, even as there was hope in the air. Indicating the success of the summit, Kant said that the New Delhi declaration under India's G20 presidency was almost ready and it would be seen as the voice of the Global South. During the press briefing, Kwatra said: "India's expectation is that all G20 members will move towards a consensus and we are hopeful of a consensus on the communiqué." Turn to Page 10 ▶

MODI-BIDEN BILATERAL 'Our friendship to play big role in global good'

SUBHAYAN CHAKRABORTY
New Delhi, 8 September

Prime Minister Narendra Modi and United States President Joe Biden on Friday expressed confidence that the G20 Leaders' Summit will advance the shared goals of building global consensus around fundamentally reshaping and scaling up multilateral development banks.

A joint statement, released after both leaders held a bilateral meeting late on Friday at the PM's official residence, said the G20 Summit would help accelerate sustainable development and bolster multilateral cooperation.

The statement further said PM Modi looks forward to welcoming Biden to the next Quad leaders' summit in India next year. Both sides also announced the settlement of the seventh and last outstanding dispute at the World Trade Organization (WTO), over poultry imports from the US. This comes after Modi's visit to the US in June, when both countries decided to close six of the seven outstanding disputes at the WTO.

"The bilateral meeting was 'very productive'. Friendship between India and the US will continue to play a great role in furthering global good," Modi told *PIT* after the meeting.



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G20 Sherpa Amritabh Kant (*second from left*) with Foreign Secretary Vinay Kwatra (*left*), Department of Economic Affairs Secretary Ajay Seth (*second from right*), and G20 Chief Coordinator Harsh Shringla during a raiser press conference, in New Delhi on Friday

PHOTO: PTI

Kwatra was responding to a question on the likelihood of the Ukraine conflict holding up an agreement on the New Delhi declaration.

Through the day, reference to last year's summit in Bali came up multiple times to assess the chances of an official communiqué in New Delhi and also to compare the readiness of the two G20 host cities.

Not taking the thunder away from the final discussions, Kant said the issue of war with Ukraine had been discussed at great length and leaders would take the discussion further. G20 is an economic forum which discusses the issues of growth and development, he said.

"Conflict and war have an impact on growth and development." He added that Prime Minister Narendra Modi's vision of India's G20 presidency being an inclusive one had been achieved.

In a teaser of sorts, Shringla spoke about artificial intelligence (AI) greetings with an

introduction on democracy that the world leaders would get to witness. At the much-awaited dinner to be hosted by President Droupadi Murmu on Saturday, the food menu as well as the musical ensemble would encompass "Indian-ness", he indicated.

The G20 sherpa listed out the top priorities of the ongoing G20 meet — strong and inclusive growth, accelerating the progress of sustainable development goals, focus on multilateral institutions along with climate action, digital public infrastructure and women-led development. And among the key takeaways, according to him, would be "the huge India narrative in the summary that's expected... India will leave a huge imprint".

While detailing the deliberations on strengthening multilateral development banks, supporting sustainability, debt

vulnerabilities and using technology for financial inclusion, Seth said: "These recommendations have been placed for consideration of the leaders

who will discuss it over the next two days."

As the summit is ready to roll with three sessions on the opening day — one earth, one family and one future — side events such as the leaders' Raj Ghat visit to pay tribute to Mahatma Gandhi, some bilateral meetings and spouses' engagements around the city are expected to add to the overall G20 narrative.

A long day awaits the participants, including those exhibiting handicraft from all over the country at the summit venue. They have to catch the official shuttle before 5 am to ensure the VVIPs have the roads to themselves during the morning hours. All for the success of G20 under India's presidency.

