

PM calls for virtual G20 in Nov

▶ MODI SYMBOLICALLY TRANSFERS G20 PRESIDENCY TO BRAZIL'S LULA AS LEADERS' SUMMIT ENDS

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New Delhi, 10 September

After the two most important announcements on Saturday – the inclusion of the African Union into the G20 club and a consensus on the New Delhi Declaration — the concluding day of the Leaders' Summit was meant for a few bilaterals and a trip to Rajghat to pay homage to Mahatma Gandhi. On a rainy Sunday morning, the last session of the Summit didn't have a full house at Bharat Mandapam—the scene of action for the Summit in the capital. US President Joe Biden had left for his next stop — Vietnam — soon after his Rajghat outing. At the end of the session, Prime Minister Narendra Modi announced the Summit closed, and proposed a virtual G20 session in November before the presidency officially goes to Brazil.



THE INDIA FOOTPRINT

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The ceremonial transfer was, however, marked by Modi handing over the gavel to Brazilian President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva, who praised India for bringing emerging economies to the centre stage at the two-day summit.

In a Twitter (X) message, Modi said that in the last session on "One Future", he emphasised the "need of the hour being to look beyond the idea of a global village and make the vision of global family a reality." He added that simply having a GDP-centric approach is outdated. "Time has come to adopt a human-centric vision of progress. India has been making several efforts in this regard, particularly in areas of data and technology."

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Prime Minister Narendra Modi with other G20 leaders, including US President Joe Biden, and invitee nation heads at Rajghat in New Delhi where they paid tributes to Mahatma Gandhi, on Sunday

PHOTO: PTI



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Chairman, Bharti Enterprises



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According to the PM, artificial intelligence should be used for socio-economic development. Elaborating on that theme, he said that the focus on sustainability and stability must not be lost as that alone will ensure the empowerment of the marginalised.

After the day-long bilateral and side meetings with many countries, including France, Canada, Brazil, Turkey, Germany, South Korea, the Netherlands, Nigeria, Comoros, and the European Commission and Council, as things started moving towards a finish, Modi decided to spring a surprise. A massive security drill, along with a sniffer dog squad at the International Media Centre, a little distance away from Bharat Mandapam, was rolled out early in the evening and went on for more than two hours. More than 1,000 media persons, both international and Indian, waited for Modi, hoping he would take questions. When the moment came, cameras and mobile

phones flashed from all sides and Modi, in his trademark white kurta-pyjama and dark jacket, walked across the large hall in sort of a victory lap. He waved at the media in the midst of the “Modi-Modi and Bharat Mata Ki Jai” chant. The moment was over in no time as the PM, who had gone to check out the Crafts Bazaar before the round of the media hall, walked out and journalists returned to their work tables. Late evening in a joint statement, France called for a quick conclusion of the Defence Industrial Roadmap. India and France are also working to establish a partnership on advanced nuclear technology. After another bilateral, Brazil and India have called for an urgent reform in the UN Security Council.

Touching a raw nerve, Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau said after his meeting with Modi that the issues of Khalistani extremism and “foreign interference” came up during the

talk. “It is important to remember that the actions of the few do not represent the entire community or Canada,” Trudeau said.

Earlier in the day, Modi told the world leaders: “India has the responsibility of G20 presidency till November 2023. In these two days, all of you gave a lot of suggestions and placed proposals. It is our duty that the suggestions we have received be reviewed once again so as to see how their progress can be sped up.”

While Biden flew to Vietnam, French President Emmanuel Macron’s next stop was Bangladesh. Before leaving on Sunday, Macron said that the G20 was meant to solve international economic issues and was not the place to expect diplomatic progress on the war in Ukraine. He was responding

to questions from the French media on the New Delhi Declaration not being strong against Russia’s invasion of Ukraine. He, however, expressed disappointment with the climate outcomes of the G20 Summit.

Biden, in a late evening press conference in Vietnam, said: “...One of the things that is going on now is China is beginning to change some of the rules of the game in terms of trade and other issues...I don’t want to contain China. I just want to make sure

we have a relationship with China that is on the up and up, squared away.” He explained: “And one of the ways you do that is you make sure that we are talking about the same things. And I think that one of the things we’ve done, is we have an opportunity to strengthen alliances around the world, to maintain stability. That’s what this trip

was all about, having India cooperate much more with the United States, be closer with the United States, Vietnam being closer with the United States. It’s not about containing China. It’s about having a stable base, a stable base in Indo-Pacific...”

According to Reuters, Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov, the head of the delegation, said the Summit was a success for India, as well as the Global South.

White House National Security Adviser Jake Sullivan said the Summit declaration did well in “standing up for the principle that states cannot use force to seek territorial acquisition or to violate the territorial integrity and sovereignty or political independence of other states”, according to reports. Others, such as the UK and Germany, also backed the declaration. However, Ukraine said there was nothing in it to be proud of. Earlier, Japan’s Prime Minister Fumio Kishida said: “Russia’s invasion of Ukraine is something that could shake the foundation of cooperation at the G20.”

With Chinese President Xi Jinping and Russian

President Vladimir Putin skipping the Summit and the Russia-Ukraine war splitting the world leaders in different directions, there was a question mark over a joint communiqué at the 18th G20 Leaders’ Summit. But a consensus was reached a day early on the first day of the Summit. On the economic front, finance ministry officials addressed the media to respond to questions on the status of crypto assets and other important issues. India is expected to hold wider consultation and discussions on the regulation around crypto assets, following the New Delhi Declaration welcoming the synthesis note by the International Monetary Fund and the Financial Stability Board on crypto assets, Department of Economic Affairs Secretary Ajay Seth said. On whether there would be a ban on crypto assets, officials indicated that India would follow the global consensus. While it has been decided to take the discussion on the crypto assets to a meeting scheduled in Marrakesh in October, officials said there was a consensus at the Leaders’ Summit on the synthesis paper.

