

# Envoys of India, US meet in Beijing

BEIJING, Feb 11 (PTI)

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“The US-India relationship delivers real results through close cooperation on defence, energy, critical minerals, and through Quad engagement,” Perdue said in a post on X on Tuesday.

“Always great to see my friend Ambassador Rawat to discuss our shared interests,” he said.

This is their second meeting since December last and took place after the recent interim trade deal between India and the US. Rawat, Perdue and Japanese Ambassador to China Kenji Kanasugi met at the US Embassy in December last year.

**‘HANDLE DIFFERENCES’:** India and China should handle their ties from a strategic and long-term perspective, properly managing differences and expanding cooperation, the Chinese Foreign Ministry has said on Tuesday’s strategic dialogue between the two countries held in New Delhi.

# IAF looking forward to get more newer-gen aircraft: Vice chief

NEW DELHI, Feb 11 (PTI)

THE IAF is looking forward to inducting "a lot more" of the newer-generation aircraft into its inventory, Vice Chief of the Air Staff, Air Marshal Nagesh Kapoor, said on Wednesday.

Kapoor was addressing a press conference ahead of Exercise Vayu Shakti. On Rafale, he said, "Rafale definitely was a hero, among other heroes, during Operation Sindoor. Yes, Rafale is the buzzword; it is definitely a buzzword."

The VCAS added, "The IAF is looking forward to induct a lot more MRFA aircraft, whether that will be Rafale or any other aircraft, is presently under consideration. And, a concrete decision on it has not yet

been taken." MRFA refers to multi-role fighter aircraft. "The IAF is looking forward to induct a lot more of newer-generation aircraft in its inventory, and the sooner, the better," Kapoor said.

**RAFALE, SU-30, TEJAS TO BE PART OF 'VAYU SHAKTI':** Rafale, Su-30, MiG-29, Tejas, Jaguar, among other fighter aircraft, will be part of the upcoming Exercise Vayu Shakti, and will highlight the "successful role" of the Indian Air Force during Operation Sindoor, an IAF officer said. Exercise Vayu



**Air Marshal Kapoor**

Shakti is scheduled to take place on February 27 at the Pokharan field firing range. Vice Chief of the Air Staff, Air Marshal Nagesh Kapoor, said "long-distance targeting" will not be showcased in

this firepower demonstration at Pokharan in Rajasthan.

The biennial demonstration this time "assumes (a) different connotation" as this is taking place after last year's Operation Sindoor, he said.

More than 120 assets, including fighter jets, helicopters and transport aircraft, will be part of the exercise, the IAF officer quoted earlier said.

The officer in a presentation made at the press conference said fighter jets, such as Rafale, Su-30, MiG-29, Tejas, Jaguar, and Mirage-2000, will be part of the exercise, besides Apache, LCH Prachand, and ALH. Asked if the demonstration taking place not far from the western border will carry any strategic messaging to Pakistan, he said, "We will do our demonstration. What message will go out to anyone? It is up to you to decide."

# Massive flotilla headed toward Iran: Trump

WASHINGTON, Feb 11 (IANS)

US President Donald Trump said the United States has deployed a "massive flotilla" toward Iran and signalled that Tehran is seeking negotiations, even as he warned that further action remains possible.

In an interview with 'Fox Business' Larry Kudlow, Trump described heightened US military posture in the region.

"As you know, we have a massive floatilla right now going over to Iran. We'll see what happens," he said.

Trump suggested Iran is open to talks. "I think they wanna make a deal. I think they'd be foolish if they didn't," he said.

He added that any agreement



would have to address core US concerns. "It's gotta be a good deal. No nuclear weapons, no missiles, no this, no that, all the different things that you want," he said.

At the same time, Trump questioned whether a deal would hold. "A lot of people say no," he said, referring to doubts about the current Iranian regime's reliability.

## Iran-US talks to be in Oman

TEHRAN, Feb 11 (IANS)

IRAN'S Foreign Ministry rejected reports that indirect talks between Tehran and Washington would be held outside Oman, saying Muscat was always the agreed venue, according to the state-run 'IRNA' news agency.

Foreign Ministry spokesperson Esmaeil Baqaei told a news briefing that Iran welcomed diplomatic efforts by regional and neighbouring countries that had offered to help ease tensions and support dialogue, 'Xinhua' news agency reported.

He said Foreign Minister Seyed Abbas Araghchi had been in contact with counterparts in

regional countries as well as others concerned about regional peace and security. Those contacts, Baqaei said, took place "at the highest levels," including with Iran's President and Foreign Minister, and were aimed at reducing tensions and facilitating a diplomatic process. Baqaei stressed, however, that there had never been any plan to hold the talks anywhere other than Oman.

Separately, Ali Larijani, secretary of Iran's Supreme National Security Council, arrived in Muscat on Tuesday, where he met with Omani Foreign Minister Sayyid Badr bin Hamad bin Hamood Albusaidi, Oman's official news agency reported.

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# India, Bahrain discuss ties and naval cooperation

MANAMA, Feb 11 (IANS)

DEPUTY Chief of Naval Staff, Vice Admiral Tarun Sobti called on Bahrain Prime Minister and Deputy Supreme Commander of the Armed Forces Prince Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa at the Riffa Palace, discussing the strengthening bilateral ties and naval cooperation between India and Bahrain.

“VAdm Tarun Sobti, Deputy Chief of Naval Staff Indian Navy, called on HRH Prince Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa, Crown Prince, Deputy Supreme Commander of the Armed Forces and Prime Minister of Bahrain, at Riffa Palace on 10 Feb 26. Discussions were focussed on strengthening bilateral ties and naval cooperation in fields including Information Sharing, Joint Training, Capacity Building and Future Warfare,” the Indian Navy Spokesperson stated on Wednesday. Earlier this

month, External Affairs Minister (EAM) S Jaishankar met his counterpart from Bahrain, Abdullatif bin Rashid Al Zayani before the start of the 2026 Critical Minerals Ministerial convened by the US Secretary of State Marco Rubio.

In January, the Indian Embassy in Bahrain hosted a reception celebrating India's 77th Republic Day, where Abdullatif bin Rashid Al Zayani was the Chief Guest. According to the statement shared by Embassy on X, over 400 dignitaries, including MPs, senior Govt officials, and members of the Diplomatic Corps attended the reception. In another post on X, Indian Embassy in Bahrain wrote, “Leadership of the CME, prominent businessmen, Bahrain Chamber & Bahrain India Society representatives, three Pravasi Bharatiya Samman Awardees, and members of the Indian & Bahraini community also joined.”

# B'desh elections today



An official checks ballot boxes and voting papers before its distribution to various polling centers ahead of the national parliamentary election in Dhaka, Bangladesh on Wednesday. (AP/PTI)

DHAKA, Feb 11 (PTI)

**BANGLADESH** will hold crucial parliamentary elections on Thursday, 18 months after an interim government took charge following the collapse of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's 15-year regime in massive country-wide deadly protests.

The Election Commission has made elaborate security arrangements, deploying nearly one million security personnel - the largest-ever in the country's electoral history. The 13th Parliamentary elections are being  
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