

Rajnath meets US NSA Jake Sullivan



Defence Minister Rajnath Singh meets US NSA Jake Sullivan, in Washington. (PTI)

WASHINGTON, Aug 24 (PTI)

DEFENCE Minister Rajnath Singh has met the US National

Security Advisor Jake Sullivan and shared perspectives on “key” strategic matters of mutual interest, a day after India and the US signed two key agreements to further boost their comprehensive global strategic partnership.

Singh arrived here on Thursday on a four-day official visit to further boost the comprehensive global strategic partnership between the US and India. “Delighted to meet the National Security Advisor of the United States @jakesullivan and share perspectives on key strategic matters of mutual interest,” Rajnath Singh said in a post on X after his meeting on Friday.

He also had a “fruitful” exchange with leading US defence companies and invited them to work with Indian partners to accelerate the Make in India programme.

“Had fruitful interaction with leading US defence companies at the Defence Industry – Roundtable organised by @USISPF (US India Strategic Partnership Forum). Invited them to work with Indian partners to accelerate our Make in India programme towards achieving Atmanirbharta in defence sector. Together, Indian and US companies will co-develop and co-produce for the world,” he said in another post.

Rajnath Singh, Lloyd Austin discuss deepening ties between US and India

WASHINGTON, Aug 24 (IANS)

DEFENCE Minister Rajnath Singh and his American counterpart Lloyd Austin on Friday discussed "ongoing efforts to deepen the Major Defense Partnership between the United States and India in support of a free and open Indo-Pacific region", according to a statement from the US Department of Defense.

Pentagon Press Secretary Maj. Gen. Pat Ryder said in a readout of the meeting on Friday that the two officials "celebrated progress across several bilateral defence initiatives, including efforts to increase supply chain security, enhance maritime security in the Indian Ocean Region,

Rajnath invites US defence companies to 'Make in India'

WASHINGTON, Aug 24 (IANS)

DEFENCE Minister Rajnath Singh on Saturday said that he has invited US defence companies to work with India and asserted that together they will co-develop and co-produce for the world. He said that the move will further give a push to the country's 'Make in India' programme towards achieving Atmanirbharta in the defence sector. In a post on social media platform X, the Defence Minister shared that he had a fruitful interaction with the leading US companies at the Defence Industry - Roundtable organised by the US-India Strategic Partnership Forum.

and leverage a new agreement to strengthen operational coordination through Indian liaison officers at US commands".

The phrase "free and open Indo-Pacific" was defined by

External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar in his 2022 speech as "one which is built on a rules-based international order, sustainable and transparent infrastructure investment, freedom



Defence Minister Rajnath Singh co-chairs a bilateral meeting with US Secretary of Defense Lloyd Austin, in Washington on Friday. (ANI)

of navigation and overflight, unimpeded lawful commerce, mutual respect for sovereignty, peaceful resolution of disputes, as well as equality of all nations". Earlier, in a post on

social media platform X, Defence Minister Singh described the meeting as "excellent" and hailed the signing of two defence agreements with the US during his ongo-

US approves sale of Anti-Submarine Warfare Sonobuoys to India

WASHINGTON DC, Aug 24 (ANI)

THE United States Secretary of State, Antony Blinken, has approved a possible foreign military sale of anti-submarine warfare Sonobuoys and related equipment to India at an estimated cost of USD 52.8 million.

The Defence Security Cooperation Agency delivered the required certification, notifying Congress of this possible sale today, the US Defence Security Cooperation Agency said in a release.

ing visit as "pathbreaking". "We reviewed the existing defence cooperation activities and discussed ways to deepen it further," he said in the post. "The signing of Security of Supply

Arrangements and the agreement for positioning of Indian officers at key US commands are path-breaking developments," the Defence Minister added.

IAF's Sarang team leaves for Egypt Airshow



The Sarang team of Indian Air Force on their way to the first edition of the Egypt International Airshow.

(PTI)

NEW DELHI, Aug 24 (IANS)

THE Indian Air Force (IAF) on Saturday dispatched its Sarang Helicopter Display Team to partic-

ipate in the first edition of the Egypt International Airshow, which will take place from September 3 to 5 at Al-Alamein International Airport, in Egypt's El Dabaa.

Sarang team, flying the indigenous 'Dhruv' ALH, represents the spirit of 'Atmanirbharta' and showcases India's aviation excellence," the post further read.

Al-Alamein International Airport is at a strategic geographical location along the Mediterranean and is a major hub for global air, commercial, and logistical transport.

"Lock, stock, and barrel...the Sarang team is on their way to the first edition of the Egypt International Airshow! The IAF contingent with its five Sarang helicopters (ALH Mk1) being airlifted by C-17s for the airshow at Al-Alamein Intl Airport from 3rd to 5th Sep 24,"

the IAF said in a post on X. "IAF

'Manipur visit aims to ensure trust, peace, tranquillity in State'



Manipur Chief Minister N Biren Singh felicitating Army Chief General Upendra Dwivedi during a meeting in Imphal. (ANI)

IMPHAL, Aug 24 (ANI)

INDIAN Army Chief General Upendra Dwivedi on Saturday said that the main aim of his ongoing visit to Manipur was to ensure that there is trust, peace and tranquillity in the State which has seen ethnic violence in recent times.

General Dwivedi told ANI that he had met Chief Minister N Biren Singh where the two discussed a lot of issues.

"My main aim to come here was to review the security situation as of today in Manipur and I was happy to see the great coordination between the security agencies. I had a detailed frank discussion and lot many kinds of lines of effort have come on how should we take this journey ahead and the main aim is to ensure that there is trust, peace and tranquillity in this State," General Dwivedi said.

"I was lucky to meet the Chief Minister since he was in the station and it was a very great meeting, very encouraging meeting where we could discuss a lot of issues and we were looking for the way forward where we can bring peace in the State and also how to get all the communities together so that there is an enhanced harmonious relationship amongst them," he said.

On his arrival in Manipur, the Army chief was briefed on operational preparedness by commanders on the ground. General Upendra Dwivedi also held a discussion with heads of various security agencies in the State in which he expressed his appreciation for the insights shared by them. General Dwivedi also interacted with troops and complimented the soldiers for their professionalism, operational readiness, and dedication to duty.

India launches its 1st reusable hybrid rocket 'RHUMI-1'

CHENNAI Aug 24 (ANI)

INDIA launched its first reusable hybrid rocket 'RHUMI-1', developed by the Tamil Nadu-based start-up Space Zone India with Martin Group, from Thiruvandhurai in Chennai on Saturday.

The rocket, carrying 3 Cube Satellites and 50 PICO Satellites, was launched into a suborbital trajectory using a mobile launcher. These satellites will be collecting data for research purposes on global warming and climate change. RHUMI is equipped with a generic-fuel-based hybrid motor and electrically triggered parachute deployer. RHUMI is 100% pyrotechnic-free and 0% TNT.

The mission RHUMI is led by Anand Megalingam, the founder of the Space Zone,



The RHUMI-1 rocket combines the advantages of both liquid and solid fuel propellant systems to improve efficiency and reduce operational costs. It launched 3 Cube Satellites and 50 PICO Satellites into a suborbital trajectory which will collect data on global warming, climate change

under the mentorship of Dr Myswamy Annadurai, Former Director of ISRO Satellite Centre (ISAC). The RHUMI-1 rocket combines the advantages of both liquid and solid fuel propellant systems to improve efficiency and reduce operational costs.

In 2023, through mission 'Dr. APJ Abdul Kalam Students Satellite Launch - In 2023' over 2,500 students from Government, tribal, and public schools across the country, contributed in designing and construction of a student satellite launch vehicle. The vehicle could carry a payload of 150 Pico satellite research experiment cubes.

"It is 3.5 metre tall rocket and was launched at about 7.25 am from the earlier 7am lift off schedule," Space Zone India

Founder-CEO Anand Megalingam said.

"It is more of a sounding rocket. It flew to an altitude of about 35kms and right now my team is there to collect it as per our plan (since it is a reusable rocket)," he told PTI.

"Compared to an 89 degree inclination, we had launched the rocket with 70 degree inclination due to heavy wind and gusts," he explained on the launch from the mobile launch pad near the coast.

Space Zone India is an aerotechnology company in Chennai that aims to provide low-cost, long-term solutions in the space industry. It provides hands-on training experience on Aerodynamic principles, Satellite Technology, Drone Technology and Rocket Technology.

'Humanitarian zone' for Palestinian evacuees shrinking



Displaced Palestinians gather for food distribution in Deir al Balah, central Gaza Strip on Friday. (AP/PTI)

DEIR AL-BALAH, Aug 24 (AP)

YOUNG girls screamed and elbowed each other in a crush of bodies in southern Gaza, trying desperately to reach the front of the food line. Men doled out rice and chicken as fast as they could, platefuls of the nourishment falling to the ground in the tumult.

Nearby, boys waited to fill plastic containers with water, standing for hours among tents packed so tightly they nearly touched.

Hunger and desperation were palpable on Friday in the tent camp along the Deir al-Balah beachfront, after a month of successive evacuation orders that have pressed thousands of Palestinians into the area that the Israeli military calls a "humanitarian zone."

The zone has long been crowded by Palestinians seek-

ing refuge from bombardment, but the situation grows more dire by the day, as waves of evacuees arrive and food and water grows scarce. Over the last month, the Israeli military has issued evacuation orders for southern Gaza at an unprecedented pace.

At least 84 per cent of Gaza now falls within the evacuation zone, according to the UN, which also estimates that 90 per cent of Gaza's 2.1 million residents have been displaced over the course of the war.

Thirteen evacuation orders have been issued since July 22, according to an Associated Press count, significantly reducing the size of the humanitarian zone declared by Israel at the start of the war while pushing more Palestinians into it than ever before. The increased crowding of evacuees can be seen in satellite photos.

Hope Modi's Ukraine visit will be helpful in ending conflict: US

WASHINGTON, Aug 24 (IANS)

THE US has welcomed Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit to Ukraine, saying it can be helpful if it facilitates ending the ongoing Russia-Ukraine

ends and how it ends — if that can be helpful to getting us to an end to the conflict that comports with President Zelensky's vision for a just peace, well, then we think that would be helpful," White House National



Security Communications Advisor John Kirby said on Friday when asked at a media briefing whether he sees PM Modi's visit potentially being productive or not.

"If there's another country out there that is willing to be helpful in terms of trying to end the war in Ukraine, we welcome that. But by being helpful, we mean it's got to include conversations with the Ukrainians, and it's got to start from an understanding of where President Zelensky is on this," he said.

Earlier during his talks with Zelensky on Friday, PM Modi reaffirmed India's

conflict.

"India is a strong partner for the United States, and the Prime Minister is as well. And, him going to Kyiv and having conversations with (Ukraine) President (Volodymyr) Zelensky about where this all

principled position and commitment to a peaceful settlement to the ongoing Russia-Ukraine conflict through dialogue and diplomacy. He also reiterated India's readiness to contribute in "all possible ways" to facilitate the speedy return of peace in the region.

50%

Assured pension for Govt staff

Union Cabinet's decision to benefit 23 lakh employees

NEW DELHI, Aug 24 (PTI)

IN a bonanza to 23 lakh Central Government employees, the Union Cabinet on Saturday approved an assured pension of 50 per cent of salary for those who joined the service after January 1, 2004, under the National Pension System (NPS).

Fulfilling long pending demands of Government employees ahead of Assembly elections in Haryana and Jammu and Kashmir, the Cabinet meeting, chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, approved the Unified Pension Scheme (UPS), which assures guaranteed pen-

Pension will be 50 pc of the average basic pay drawn over the last 12 months before the superannuation as pension

It would be proportionate for a lesser service period up to a minimum of 10 years of service

sion. Employees opting for UPS would be eligible for an assured pension of 50 per cent of the average basic pay drawn over the last 12 months before the superannuation for a minimum qualifying service of 25 years.

This pay is to be proportionate for a lesser service period up to a minimum of 10 years of service, Information and Broadcasting Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw said.

The new pension scheme also guarantees an assured minimum pension of Rs 10,000 per month on superannuation after a minimum of 10 years of service.

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