

India-China direct flights, Kailash yatra to resume

Beijing Seeks Key Steps To Restore Trust

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New Delhi: After resumption of bilateral visits, India and China on Monday took significant “people-centric” measures to normalise ties as they agreed to resume the Kailash Mansarovar pilgrimage in 2025 and also consented, in principle, to restart direct flights between the two countries. While India wanted the pilgrimage, which has remained suspended since 2020, to resume, resumption of air services had been a long-standing Chinese demand.

The announcement by India followed foreign secretary

'BOOST PEOPLE-TO-PEOPLE EXCHANGES'

AP/PTI

- India, China agree to **resume existing dialogue mechanisms step-by-step**, addressing each other's concerns and priorities
- They also agree to take **'appropriate measures'** to further **promote and facilitate** people-to-people exchanges
- Decide to hold early meet of India-China expert-level mechanism to **discuss resumption of provision of hydrological data** and other cooperation pertaining to **trans-border rivers**
- While Vikram Misri



Foreign secretary Vikram Misri with Chinese foreign minister Wang Yi in Beijing on Monday

commits India's **full support for China's SCO rotating presidency**, Wang Yi calls for more substantive measures to promote mutual trust

Vikram Misri's visit to Beijing during which he also called on foreign minister Wang Yi, kick-starting what promises to be a series of substantive bilateral engagements that could culminate potentially in a visit to

China by PM Modi for the SCO summit. The two agreed to resume dialogue mechanisms step-by-step, addressing each other's concerns & priorities.

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Now, India will move to 'one nation, one time', thanks to desi sat network

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New Delhi: The country may be on Indian Standard Time (IST), but the exact time is determined by GPS satellites, down to the millisecond, and is linked to Coordinated Universal Time (UTC).

In the next few months this is set to change with Navigation with Indian Constellation (NavIC) being the link to National Physical Laboratory to provide the reference time. A lab in Faridabad will receive the time from NavIC which will be shared through an optic fibre link with four other centres — Ahmedabad, Bengaluru, Bhubaneswar and Guwahati — with each having an atomic clock.

The deployment of atomic clocks will ensure the time shown on digital watches, smartphones and laptops is based on the atomic clocks instead of service providers accessing data from multiple sources linked to GPS. Soon, the regional centres will dis-



Stock

It will reduce dependence on foreign systems, consumer affairs ex-secy Rohit Kumar Singh said

seminate the time to all end users — resulting in "one nation, one time".

Is it ready to go live?

The satellite system was conceived soon after the Kargil war when India could not get the exact location of targets from foreign satellites. Govt realised that strategic importance and finally got moving on the project around seven years ago.

Consumer affairs secretary Nidhi Khare said most of the work for the Times Dis-

semination Project has been completed with atomic clocks installed in Faridabad, Ahmedabad, Bengaluru and Bhubaneswar. A few months ago, the NavIC link with NPL Faridabad was tested. The department, which is working with NPL and Isro to disseminate IST with millisecond to microsecond accuracy, will have to align the clocks in four centres with Faridabad to adjust for the time taken for sharing the data through the optic fibre cable.

What is an Atomic Clock?

An atomic clock is a clock known for its exceptional accuracy, and functions by utilising specific resonance frequencies of atoms. The extreme precision levels of the atomic clocks can be interpreted by the fact that they will lose one second every 100 million years or so.

What are the benefits of the project?

Former consumer affairs sec-

retary Rohit Kumar Singh said it will establish India's own precise and reliable time distribution network, reducing dependence on foreign systems and enhancing national security. "It will benefit critical sectors like power grids, telecommunications, banking, defence, and transportation by ensuring synchronised operations, efficiency, and resilience against cyber threats," he said.

How will the transition happen?

While technical work is underway, the consumer affairs department has notified the draft rules, mandating the use of IST as the sole time reference for legal, administrative, commercial, and official documents across the country.

Exceptions will be allowed for specialised fields such as astronomy, navigation, and scientific research, subject to prior govt approval with violations attracting penalty.

PM calls 'dear friend' Trump; both pledge strong India-US ties

1st Conversation Since Donald Took Charge

New Delhi: PM Modi spoke to US President Donald Trump Monday, pledging to work for global peace and security. Amid concerns about Trump's threat to hike tariffs on Indian imports, as also possible friction over illegal immigration, Modi posted on X that both sides are committed to a mutually beneficial and trusted partnership, reports Sachin Parashar.

► **EDIT: Trump Can Make America Hurt Again**

This was Modi's first conversation with "dear friend" Trump since the latter's inauguration on Jan 20. While agreeing to meet soon, the two discussed advancing US-



Modi and Trump

Colombia bends to Don's tariff threat

Trump announced 25% tariffs on Colombia before abruptly retracting after reaching a deal on return of deported migrants. Colombian Prez Gustavo Petro earlier refused to allow two planes carrying deportees to land. **P 20**

India ties, particularly in technology, trade, investment, energy and defence, the Indian government said.

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U'khand implements UCC

■ Portal launched for mandatory online registration of marriages, divorce, live-in relationships

DEHRADUN, Jan 27 (PTI)

BJP-RULED Uttarakhand on Monday became the first State in independent India to implement the Uniform Civil Code, which promotes equal laws for

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CONSTITUTIONAL!
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every citizen across all religions and standardises personal laws on marriage, divorce and property.

With the implementation of the UCC which applies to all



Uttarakhand Chief Minister Pushkar Singh Dhami during an event to announce implementation of the Uniform Civil Code, in Dehradun, Uttarakhand. (PTI)

people of Uttarakhand except those belonging to the Scheduled Tribe community, the BJP has fulfilled a major commitment made to people of the State ahead of the 2022

Assembly polls which saw the party storming to power for a second consecutive term.

Chief Minister Pushkar Singh Dhami announced UCC's implementation at a pro-

gramme at his official residence here, saying, with this the constitutional and civil rights of people across all religions have become uniform.

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Haryana decision at right time: CM

CHANDIGARH, Jan 27 (IANS)

HARYANA Chief Minister Nayab Singh Saini on Monday said people wanted the Universal Civil Code (UCC) to be implemented across the country and a decision on its rollout in the State will be taken at the right time.

Responding to a media query on the UCC implementation in the neighbouring and BJP-ruled Uttarakhand, BJP leader and second-time Chief Minister said, "The whole country is serious about UCC. People want it to be implemented across the country."

'Israel, Lebanon extend deadline for withdrawal of troops to 18th'

MAYS AL-JABAL, Jan 27 (AP)

THE White House said on Sunday that Israel and Lebanon have agreed to extend the deadline for Israeli troops to depart southern Lebanon until February 18, after Israel requested more time to withdraw beyond the 60-day deadline stipulated in a ceasefire agreement that halted the Israel-Hezbollah war in late November.

Israel has said that it needs to stay longer because the Lebanese army has not deployed to all areas of southern Lebanon to ensure that Hezbollah does not re-establish its presence in the area. The Lebanese army has said it cannot deploy until Israeli forces withdraw.

The White House said in a statement that "the arrangement

between Lebanon and Israel, monitored by the United States, will continue to be in effect until February 18, 2025." It added that the respective governments "will also begin negotiations for the return of Lebanese prisoners captured after October 7, 2023." There was no immediate comment from the Israeli or Lebanese Governments. The Lebanese President's office had put out a statement earlier Sunday denying that there was an extension.

Israeli forces in southern Lebanon on Sunday opened fire on protesters demanding their withdrawal in line with a ceasefire agreement, killing at least 22 and injuring 124, Lebanese health officials reported.

The dead included six women and a Lebanese army soldier, the Health Ministry said in a state-

ment. People were reported wounded in nearly 20 villages in the border area.

Demonstrators, some of them carrying Hezbollah flags, attempted to enter several villages to protest Israel's failure to withdraw from southern Lebanon by the 60-day deadline stipulated in a ceasefire agreement that halted the Israel-Hezbollah war in late November.

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The Israeli army blamed Hezbollah for stirring up Sunday's protests.



FLYING TO A CENTURY: ISRO's GSLV-F15 all set to launch the NVS-02 satellite on January 29, from Satish Dhawan Space Centre in Sriharikota, Andhra Pradesh. This will mark ISRO's 100th launch from the space centre. (PTI)

GSLV-F15 integration over Ready for launch

BENGALURU, Jan 27 (PTI)

ISRO on Sunday said integration of its rocket GSLV-F15 with satellite NVS-02 is complete.

The GSLV-F15 rocket with Indigenous cryogenic stage is ready to be launched on January 29, with the satellite NVS-02 on board, the space agency said. This will be the 100th mission from Satish Dhawan Space Centre in Sriharikota,

"GSLV-F15 integration complete! Take a sneak peek at the incredible teamwork behind this mission: Countdown: Less than 3 days to launch! Join us as we unlock new frontiers," the agency said in a post on social media 'X'.

GSLV-F15 will place the NVS-02 satellite into a Geosynchronous Transfer Orbit and the launch will take place from the Second Launch Pad of Satish Dhawan Space Centre, said ISRO. NVS-01, the first of the second-generation satellites, was launched on board GSLV-F12 on May 29, 2023.

NVS-02, the second satellite in the NVS series, is configured with navigation payload in L1,

L5 and S bands in addition to ranging payload in C-band like its predecessor-NVS-01, ISRO said.

Navigation with Indian Constellation (NavIC) is India's independent regional navigation satellite system designed to provide accurate Position, Velocity and Timing (PVT) service to users in India as well as the region extending about 1,500 km beyond the Indian landmass, which is its primary service area.

NVS-01/02/03/04/05 are envisaged to augment the NavIC base layer constellation with enhanced features for ensuring continuity of services, added ISRO. The space agency said NVS-02 uses a combination of indigenous and procured atomic clocks for precise time estimation.

NVS-02 satellite was designed, developed and integrated at the UR Satellite Centre (URSC) with the support of other satellite-based work centres, it added.

GSLV-F15 is the 17th flight of India's Geosynchronous Satellite Launch Vehicle (GSLV) and the 11th flight with the Indigenous Cryo stage, said ISRO.