

# ₹600cr FM boost for Deep Ocean Mission

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**New Delhi:** In a boost for India's Deep Ocean Mission, finance minister Nirmala Sitharaman has allocated Rs 600 crore for the Samudrayaan project under which scientists will be sent to the depths of the ocean in a specially designed submersible to explore the ocean floor, including the country's continental shelf and exclusive economic zones.

Earth sciences ministry has been allocated Rs 3,649.8 crore against Rs 3,064.8 crore in the ongoing fiscal year. India plans to send a manned-submersible, developed by Chennai-based National Institute of Ocean Technology, up to a depth of 500 metres in the ocean later this year, and gradually explore the seabed at a depth of 6,000 metres next year. The mission involves mapping of floors of deep oceans and development of technologies like a manned



**PROJECT SAMUDRAYAAN**

submersible, mining system for deep sea mining, sustainable utilisation of deep-sea bioresources, and developing engineering designs for off-shore thermal energy-driven desalination plants.

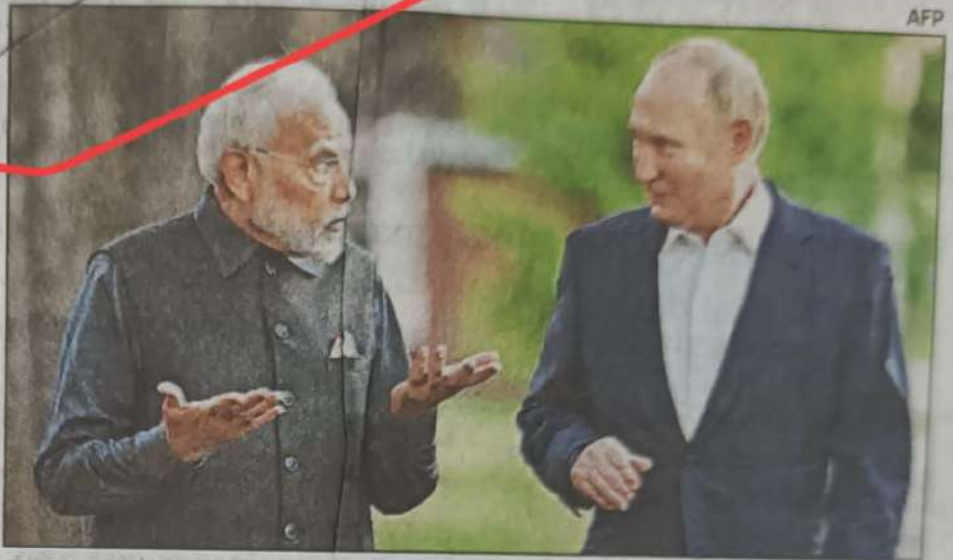
Human capacity will be developed in ocean biology and engineering through translation of research into industrial applications.

Govt also allocated Rs 1,329 crore for Mission Mausam, an initiative designed to enhance India's weather and climate forecasting capabilities across critical sectors, including agriculture, aviation, urban planning, defence, and sports.

# Putin aide's trip to help boost India-Russia ties

## Delhi Strategic Partner: Duma Chairman

TIMES NEWS NETWORK



AFP

**New Delhi:** India and Russia look to intensify inter-parliamentary dialogue and cooperation with a visit to India this week by state duma (lower house of Parliament) chairman Vyacheslav Volodin. In the annual summit meeting last year in Moscow, PM Narendra Modi and President Vladimir Putin had underlined the importance of regular meetings of Inter-Parliamentary Commission and Parliamentary Friendship Groups of both Houses as a valuable component of India-Russia relations.

Ahead of his departure, Volodin, a close aide of Putin, said he will have important meetings and negotiations during his visit to India.

His visit comes ahead of a likely visit by Putin to India for the annual summit later this year. Putin was expected to travel to India early this year but the two sides are yet

Modi and Putin had underlined the importance of regular meetings of parliamentary groups of the two countries. Duma chairman Volodin's visit comes ahead of a likely visit by Putin later this year

to finalise dates for what will be his first visit to India since the Russia-Ukraine conflict broke out in Feb 2022.

Even in the middle of a complex geopolitical situation, and its focus on ties with the US, India has continued to maintain strong ties with Moscow, especially in areas like defence, security and trade.

Modi will travel to France next week for an AI summit for which US President Donald Trump is also invited. India and the US are looking to finalise a visit by Modi to the US next week for a summit meeting with Trump, in case the president doesn't

travel to France for the AI meeting. While Modi will host Putin this year, he will also receive Quad leaders for a summit where Russia's actions in Ukraine will be a significant talking point.

"Attempts by Washington and Brussels to isolate Russia from the rest of the world have failed. India is a strategic partner. We have long-standing relations of trust and mutually beneficial cooperation with it," said Volodin, ahead of his visit to India. "For our part, we will try to intensify interaction within the parliamentary dimension," he added.

# Premium-train demand helps Rlys project 16% revenue jump

## But Freight Earnings Likely To Rise At Modest 4.4% in FY26

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**New Delhi:** On the back of growing demand for AC3 class and premium trains, including Vande Bharat, Indian Railways has projected an estimated 16% increase in passenger revenue for the 2025-26 financial year, reaching an estimated Rs 92,800 crore. In contrast, the earnings from its freight segment are expected to grow at a more modest rate of 4.4%.

Budget documents show the share of passenger earnings in the total revenue has increased from 26.4% in 2022-23 to 28.6% in the revised estimate (RE) of current financial year and is projected to rise to 30.6% in FY26. Though earnings from freight movement remain the railway's mainstay, rising share of passenger revenue will offer some elbow room to frame policies to attract more cargo from other modes of transport, particularly roads.

Data shows earnings from AC3 tickets could touch

### TRACK RECORD

#### Passenger revenue push: Railway earnings (in ₹Cr)

Category (Revenue)	FY24 (Actuals)	FY25 (BE)	FY25 (RE)	FY26 (BE)
Passenger	70,693	80,000	80,000	92,800
Freight 	1.68 lakh	1.8 lakh	1.8 lakh	1.88 lakh
Total	2.56 lakh	2.78 lakh	2.79 lakh	3 lakh

#### Increase in passenger revenue (in ₹Cr)

Category	FY24 (Actuals)	FY25 (BE)	FY25 (RE)	FY26 (BE)
AC3 	25,015	26,583	30,089	37,115
Executive Class	490	644	698	987
AC Chair Car	3,326	3,845	4,281	5,626
Sleeper (Mail/Express)	15,113	17,530	15,597	16,509
Second Class (Mail/Express)	15,213	19,180	16,041	17,511
Second Class (Ordinary)	821	624	1,517	1,626

Source: Budget document

Rs 30,089 crore by March, an increase of nearly 20% from the last financial year. Railways has estimated revenue from this segment to go up by 23% in FY26 and generate Rs 37,115 crore. Documents also show that earnings from executive class and AC chair car classes have increased significantly in two years and is projected to rise further.

Revenue from passengers travelling in executive class is projected to touch Rs 698 crore by March, a 42% rise over last financial year. It is estimated to increase to Rs 987 crore in FY26. Similarly, the revenue from AC Chair Car is projected at Rs 4,280 crore by March surpassing the Budget Estimate (BE) of 2024-25 and an increase of

28.6% over last year. As per estimate for FY26, the earnings would be around Rs 5,626 crore, a growth of 31%.

Officials said the increase in passenger revenue will be from across classes as the national transporter will operate a greater number of trains with more general coaches to meet the travel demand of poor and lower middle class. In fact, data show that revenue projected for FY25 from second class (ordinary) — general coaches in inter-city trains — is projected at Rs 1,517 crore, almost double of last financial year.

Railway minister Ashwini Vaishnaw has dismissed any chance of fare hike. "The increase in passenger revenue will be driven by growth in passenger volumes. Passenger numbers have been increasing each year, and this year, total passengers are expected to rise to 7.5 billion. Next year, this will be around 7.8-7.9 billion passengers. So, revenue growth will purely be on the passenger count."

# Canada slaps tit-for-tat tariffs on US; Mexico & China vow action

## Trump Justifies Trade War By Citing Illegal Immigration, Drug Crisis As Reasons

Washington: President Donald Trump on Saturday signed an order to impose stiff tariffs on imports from Mexico, Canada and China, drawing swift retaliation and an undeniable sense of betrayal from the country's North American neighbours as a trade war erupted among the longtime allies.

### A Big Gamble In 2nd Term

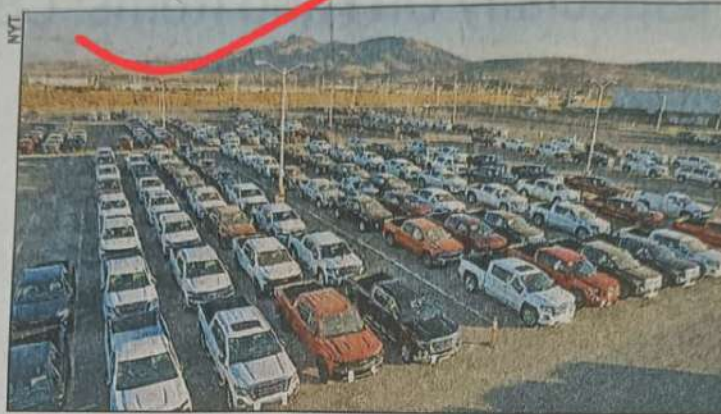
The US president posted on social media that the tariffs were necessary "to protect Americans", pressing the three nations to do more to curb the manufacture and export of illicit fentanyl and for Canada and Mexico to reduce illegal immigration into the US. The tariffs, if sustained, could cause inflation to significantly worsen, threatening the trust that many voters placed in Trump to lower the prices of groceries, gasoline, housing, autos and other goods as he promised. They also risked throwing global economy and Trump's political mandate into turmoil just two weeks into second term.

### Retaliation Clause To Up Rates

Trump declared an economic emergency in order to place duties of 10% on all imports from China and 25% on imports from Mexico and Canada. Energy imported from Canada, including oil, natural gas and electricity, would be taxed at a 10% rate. Trump's order includes a mechanism to escalate rates charged by the US against retaliation by the other nations.

### Emergency Law Invoked

The executive orders were issued under a decades-old law



Nearly half of US imports of car parts come from Canada & Mexico. General Motors, the largest US automaker, will likely be most hit

### Trump: Tariff 'pain' will be worth the price

President Donald Trump said Sunday that Americans may feel economic "pain" from his tariffs on key trading partners, but argued it would be "worth the price" to secure US interests. The trade penalties that Trump signed Saturday caused a mix of panic, anger and uncertainty. "Will there be some pain? Yes, maybe (and maybe not!)" Trump wrote Sunday morning in all-caps on his Truth Social media platform. "But we will Make America Great Again, and it will all be worth the price that must be paid." Despite Trump's claim that the US does not need Canada, one-quarter of the oil that the America consumes per day is from its ally to the north. Trump contended that without that surplus, "Canada ceases to exist as a viable Country. Harsh but true! Therefore, Canada should become our Cherished 51st State. Much lower taxes, and far better military protection for the people of Canada — AND NO TARIFFS!". AFP & AP

called the International Emergency Economic Powers Act, and they expand the scope of a national emergency that Trump declared with respect to "influx of illegal aliens and illicit drugs" on first day in office.

### Canada Feels 'Betrayal'

"The actions taken today by the White House split us apart instead of bringing us together," Canadian PM Justin Trudeau said as he announced that his country would put matchi-

ng 25% tariffs on up to \$155 billion in US imports, including alcohol and orange juice. He channelled the "betrayal" that many Canadians are feeling, reminding Americans that Canadian troops fought alongside them in Afghanistan and helped respond to myriad crises. He encouraged Canadians to buy Canadian products and vacation at home rather than in US.

### Mexico Accuses WH Of Slander

In her post, Mexico Presi-

dent Claudia Sheinbaum rejected as "slander" the White House's allegation that drug cartels have an alliance with the Mexican govt, a point Trump's administration used to justify the tariffs. She instructed her economy secretary to implement a response that includes retaliatory tariffs and other steps.

### China: Fentanyl A US Problem

China's ministry of foreign Affairs said the country's govt "firmly deplores and opposes this move and will take necessary countermeasures to defend its legitimate rights and interests." "Fentanyl is America's problem," it said. "The Chinese side has carried out extensive anti-narcotics cooperation with the US and achieved remarkable results." **The ministry of commerce said it would file a lawsuit with the WTO.**

### Tariffs Go Into Effect Tuesday

The tariffs will go into effect Tuesday. An analysis by the Budget Lab at Yale shows, if the tariffs were to continue, an average US household would lose roughly \$1,245 in income this year, in what would be the overall equivalent of a more than \$1.4 trillion tax increase over the next 10 years.

### Is European Union Next?

The president is preparing more import taxes. On Friday, he mentioned imported computer chips, steel, oil and natural gas, as well as copper, pharmaceutical drugs and imports from the EU — moves that could essentially pit the US against much of the world as Brussels said it will hit back. AP & NYT

# Iran test-fires a cruise missile with a range of 1000 km

**Tehran:** Iran test-fired an anti-warship cruise missile with a range of 1,000 km capable of reaching US navy ships in the Persian Gulf and Sea of Oman, state TV reported on Saturday.

"This is a Ghadr-380 mile type L. It has over 1,000-km range. It has anti-jamming capability," said Gen. Ali Reza Tangsiri, the head of the navy of the Revolutionary Guard, in a report that showed an underground missile facility on the southern coast of Iran. The report elaborated neither on warhead that the missile carried, nor the time of the test. The report said the new weapon was a "sophisticated missile," without elaborating. The missile was launched from central Iran into the Sea of Oman, it said. It said the missile can be made ready and launched by one member of personnel in less than five minutes. AFP

# Days after 100th launch, setback for Isro as satellite faces glitch

## Placement In Final Intended Orbit Stalled

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**Bengaluru:** In a setback for Isro's much-celebrated 100th mission, navigation satellite NVS-02, which was launched on Jan 29, has suffered a failure of a valve designed to supply oxidiser to liquid apogee motor (LAM) onboard the spacecraft, multiple sources have confirmed to TOI.

The space agency has been unable to operate LAM, which is critical for the spacecraft to change orbits and reach its final intended one for oper-



Isro has been unable to operate LAM, which is critical for the navigation satellite NVS-02 to change orbits and reach its final intended one for operations.

The satellite, as of Sunday, continues to remain in a geosynchronous transfer or-

bit (GTO), which is an elliptical orbit used to insert satellites in space after they are launched from the Earth before they are moved to their final intended orbit.

Navigation satellites need a near-circular orbit to operate optimally, and without the firing of LAM, that will be difficult for Isro to achieve. "The issue with the valve was detected after the launch put the satellite in GTO. Orbit-correction manoeuvres have not been carried out since launch," a source said.

Another source pointed out that the valve was "not opening" as it was intended to, "preventing LAM from getting the supply of the oxidiser, without which the motor cannot be fired". The source added that multiple at-

tempts to resolve the issue have not been able to get the "desired outcome".

TOI had contacted Isro chairman V Narayanan for comment early Sunday. By evening, Isro issued an official statement.

It said: "Subsequent to the launch, solar panels on board were successfully deployed and power generation is nominal. Communication with the ground station has been established. But the orbit-raising operations towards positioning the satellite to the designated orbital slot could not be carried out as the valves for admitting the oxidiser to fire the thrusters for orbit raising did not open." The satellite systems are healthy and it is currently in elliptical orbit.

# India experienced remarkable transformation in last decade: UNGA

■ By Yoshita Singh  
UNITED NATIONS, Feb 2 (PTI)

INDIA has experienced "remarkable transformation" in the last decade, UN General Assembly President Philemon Yang has said, underlining that his upcoming visit to the country will give him an opportunity to see how digital and technological innovation has "fuelled this change".

Yang will visit India from February 4 to 8, his first official visit to the country as President of the 79th session of the UN General Assembly.

"As the world's largest democracy, the fifth-largest economy and home to one-fifth of humanity, India is an important member of the United Nations," Yang told PTI in an exclusive interview ahead of his trip.

Responding to a question on the visit's focus, Yang said he



UN General Assembly President Philemon Yang.

looks forward to "understanding, more deeply, India's priorities and vision for the future of multilateralism."

During the visit, he will engage

with Indian leadership, including President Droupadi Murmu and External Affairs Minister Dr S Jaishankar.

Recalling that he had visited

India in 2013 as Prime Minister of Cameroon, Yang said that since then, India has experienced a "remarkable transformation" and he expects the visit to give him the "opportunity to see how digital and technological innovation has fuelled this change, all the way to the grassroots level."

"The visit will also serve to highlight the importance of information sharing and capacity building in advancing sustainable development in the Global South. India has in many respects led the way through its South-South cooperation," Yang said in the written interview.

Yang said his message "to the people of India, and particularly to the young people of India, is one of confidence and ambition. Confidence in the extraordinary work achieved and ambition in that there is always more

work to do, collectively, to make our world a better place.

"For that reason, I would like to encourage them to continue spearheading efforts in harnessing innovation while also celebrating their rich culture and heritage.

"As the world's largest population, the people of India have a huge stake in the work of the United Nations, in the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals and in ensuring that -indeed- no one is left behind. I therefore look forward to seeing India's continued engagement and leadership within the United Nations," Yang said.

Yang began his year-long tenure as President of the 193-member General Assembly in September last year at the commencement of the 79th UNGA session.