

'Want to slash trade deficit with Japan'

WASHINGTON, Feb 8 (AP)

PRESIDENT Donald Trump said on Friday he wants to slash the US trade deficit with Japan as he welcomed Japanese Prime Minister Shigeru Ishiba to the White House for their first face-to-face meeting.

Trump added that he isn't taking the possibility of levying tariffs against Japan off the table, but believes that the issue can be resolved without taking punitive action. The United States has a \$68 billion trade deficit with Japan. "I think it will be very easy for Japan," Trump said at start of his Oval Office meeting with Ishiba. "We have a fantastic relationship. I don't think we'll have any problem. They want fairness also." Trump announced that Japan's Nippon Steel's was dropping its \$14.1 billion acquisition of the Pittsburgh-headquartered US Steel and would instead be making an "investment, rather than a purchase." Trump said he would "mediate and arbitrate" as the companies negotiate the investment. The US President mistakenly referred to Nippon Steel as "Nissan," the Japanese automaker.

President Joe Biden before leaving office last month blocked the purchase, citing national security concerns. Trump in December said he was "totally against the once great and powerful US Steel being bought by a foreign company." He told reporters on Friday that he remains opposed to the sale. Nippon and US Steel had filed a lawsuit aimed at restoring the deal. And Nippon has stepped up its public push, arguing the "transaction is in line with President Trump's focus" on manufacturing and "contributes to Trump's goals promoting US Investment, creating US Jobs, and strengthening US manufacturing."

Trump's talk of making Canada a US state is 'a real thing': Trudeau



VANCOUVER, British Columbia, Feb 8 (AP)

PRIME Minister Justin Trudeau on Friday said President Donald Trump's talk of making Canada the 51st US State is "a real thing" and is linked to the country's rich natural resources, local media reported. Trudeau's comments to business and labour leaders in a closed-door session were mistakenly carried by a loudspeaker, Canada's public broadcaster 'CBC' reported.

"Mr. Trump has it in mind that the easiest way to do it is absorbing our country and it is a real thing. In my conversations with him on..." Trudeau said

of making Canada a US State before the microphone cut out, according to CBC.

"They're very aware of our resources, of what we have and they very much want to be able to benefit from those," Trudeau reportedly said.

Trudeau's office did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

In a post on social platform X, Gil McGowan, president of the Alberta Federation of Labour, confirmed what Trudeau said.

"Yes, I can confirm that Trudeau said his assessment is that what Trump really wants is not action on fentanyl or immigration or even the trade deficit, what he really wants is to either dominate Canada or take it outright," McGowan wrote.

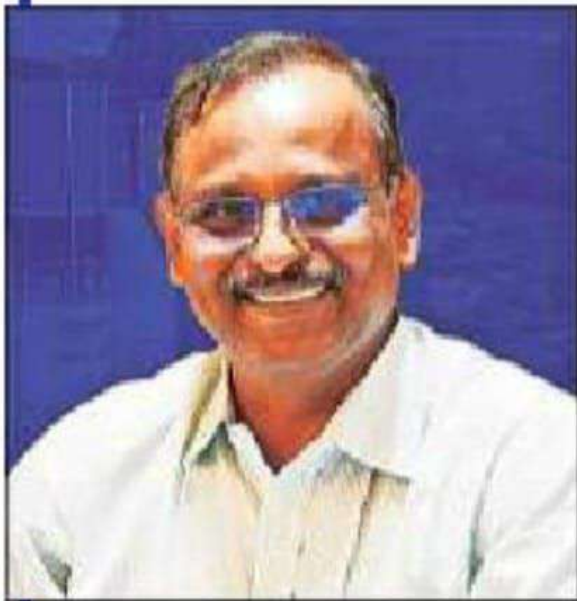
Trump has repeatedly suggested Canada would be better off if it agreed to become the 51st US State.

In public comments Friday, Trudeau said Canada must think "tactically and strategically" on how to deal with Trump's threats to impose hefty tariffs on all Canadian imports.

ISRO successfully carries out vacuum ignition trial of cryogenic engine

BENGALURU, Feb 8 (PTI)

ISRO on Saturday said that it



has successfully carried out the ignition trial of the indigenous CE20 cryogenic engine powering the upper stage of LVM3, with a Multi-element igniter under vacuum conditions, which simulates the engine ignition in the vacuum condition of space.

This test was carried out on Friday in the High Altitude Test Facility at ISRO Propulsion Complex, Mahendragiri, Tamil Nadu, ISRO said in a statement.

This engine is crucial for the Gaganyaan mission, India's ambitious crewed space mission. During this test, the ignition of the engine Thrust

Chamber was carried out with a multi-element igniter in a vacuum, under the tank pressure conditions that are expected to prevail at the time of restarting the cryogenic engine in flight. The performance of the engine and the facility during the test was normal and as expected.

NO GLITCHES IN SPADEX, WE ARE GOING STEP BY STEP: ISRO CHIEF: ISRO Chairman V Narayanan said there were no glitches in the space agency's maiden space docking mission, Spadex, as reported in a section of media and that it was going step by step.

Meanwhile, a day after ISRO successfully carried out the ignition trial of the indigenous CE20 cryogenic engine, its Chairman and Secretary of Department of Space V Narayanan on Saturday said that the test would be advantageous to missions.

"We want to restart the cryogenic stage in the flight for mission advantages. So, we recently carried out a test towards that," Narayanan told PTI on the sidelines of the 15th Biennial Edition of Aero India International Seminar 2025, held in Bengaluru.

BJP RETURNS TO POWER in Delhi after 26 years

Sweeps away AAP: Historic, says PM Modi



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METAPHOR**
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BJP supporters celebrate the party's win in the Delhi Assembly polls in New Delhi on Saturday. (PTI)

NEW DELHI, Feb 8 (PTI)

THE BJP on Saturday returned to power in Delhi after more than 26 years to sweep away the Arvind Kejriwal-led Aam Aadmi Party with a two-thirds majority on the back of a hyper localised campaign and Prime Minister Narendra Modi's 'AAP-da' (disaster) blitzkrieg.

Adding to the ignominy of the AAP that was battling 10 years of anti-incumbency was the shocking defeat of former Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal himself and other top leaders including his close aide and former Deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia, Somnath Bharti and Saurabh Bhardwaj.

Chief Minister Atishi, an academic and unlikely politician, weathered the storm to retain Kalkaji seat.

The BJP won 48 of the 70 seats at stake and the AAP was way behind with 22, according to the Election Commission website. The elections were largely seen as a bipolar contest between the AAP, which made a determined bid for a fourth term, and the BJP. While the AAP had 62 members in the outgoing house, the saffron party had just eight legislators.

The Congress, which had ruled for 15 consecutive years under Sheila Dikshit from 1998, came a cropper in the Assembly elections failing to get
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DELHI TOTAL SEATS 70

PARTY	SEATS
BJP+	48
AAP	22
CONG	0

Panama becomes 1st Latin American country to exit Belt, Road Initiative

WASHINGTON, DC, February 8 (ANI)

PANAMA has become the first Latin American nation to exit Beijing's Belt and Road Initiative, marking a significant shift in its foreign policy and relationship with China's global infrastructure ambitions, as reported by Al Jazeera.

In this response, China has accused Washington of the "Cold War mentality" in Latin America. According to Al Jazeera, a spokesperson for China's Ministry of Foreign Affairs criticised the United States on Friday for attempting to undermine the global infrastructure initiative.

Lin Jian, the Chinese spokesperson, stated that Beijing "strongly opposes the US using pressure and coercion to discredit and sabotage Belt and Road cooperation." He further accused the US of exposing its "hegemonic nature" through such attacks, Al Jazeera reported. Commenting on Marco Rubio's recent visit to the region, Lin argued that the US Secretary of State's remarks unjustly blamed China, aimed to create divisions between China and Latin American nations, interfered in China's internal matters, and attacked its legitimate rights and interests.

Al Jazeera reported that in 2017, Panama became the first country in Latin America to officially join China's vast infrastructure initiative, which is a key part of President Xi Jinping's strategy to enhance China's global influence. However, on Thursday, Panama's President Jose Raul Mulino announced that the country has formally notified China of its decision to withdraw from the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI). This move came after a visit by US Secretary of State Marco Rubio, who also toured the Panama Canal, Al Jazeera reported. Former President Donald Trump had frequently accused Panama of surrendering control of the crucial waterway to China, although both countries denied these claims. Mulino clarified that Panama's decision to leave the BRI was not influenced by US pressure, as reported by Al Jazeera.