

# Rajnath praises Indian Navy after Karwar naval base visit

■ By Kunal Dutt

KARWAR, Apr 6 (PTI)

DEFENCE Minister Rajnath Singh lauded the Indian Navy for its exceptional commitment to ensuring maritime security and engaging with Indian Ocean Region (IOR) nations on Sunday, a day after he flagged off IOS SAGAR from the strategically located Karwar base in Karnataka.

In a post on X, Singh shared a video encapsulating the critical engagements, including the first phase of the Naval Commanders' Conference 2025, he took part in, during his visit to the naval base for few hours on Saturday.

"A Day at Karwar Naval Base! On the occasion of the National Maritime Day, on 05 Apr 25, I had the privilege of witnessing a truly remarkable milestone for India, the #IndianNavy, and the



Indian Ocean Region (IOR)," he said X.

Singh flagged off the Indian Ocean Ship SAGAR (Security And Growth for All in the Region), or IOS SAGAR, and inaugurated several infrastructure projects worth nearly Rs 2,000 crore at the key naval base, developed as part of the Indian Navy's Project 'Seabird'.

In his address, the Defence Minister termed the launch a reflection of India's commitment

to peace, prosperity, and collective maritime security.

"Along with other stakeholders, Indian Navy is ensuring peace and prosperity in the region," Singh said, and asserted that India's effort is to make the Indian Ocean region "more peaceful and prosperous."

He said India's growing presence in IOR does not only bolster its national interests, but also enhances the security of friendly nations.

# ENGINEERING MARVEL

# PM Modi inaugurates PAMBAN BRIDGE in TN

RAMESWARAM, Apr 6 (PTI)

**PRIME** Minister Narendra Modi on Sunday inaugurated the Pamban bridge, India's first vertical lift sea bridge and flagged off train service linking Rameswaram island to the rest of the country. Tamil Nadu Chief Minister M K Stalin skipped the event.

Modi flagged off a Coast Guard ship that sailed under the bridge and also laid foundation stone for and dedicated to the nation various rail and road projects totally worth over Rs 8,300 crore.

delimitation issue saying Modi should allay the fears of the people on the proposed exercise.

The PM, without naming anyone, hit back by picking the Tamil pithi. He batted for imparting medical education in Tamil medium to help the poor and said the State got 11 new medical colleges in recent years.

Modi said efforts were on to take Tamil language, heritage to all corners of the world. Earlier, the Prime Minister prayed at the Ramanathaswamy temple here.

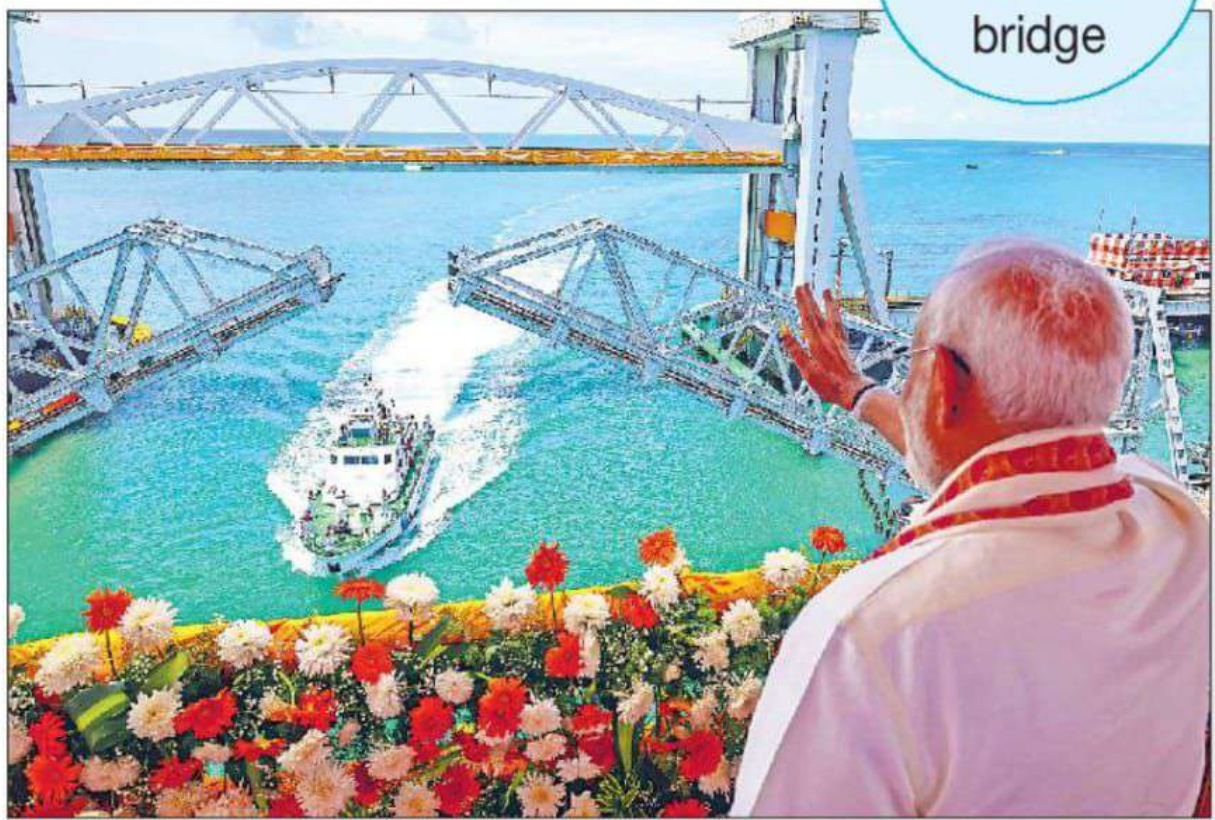
Lauding the hard work of Tamil Nadu's fisheries community, he

weed parks, fishing harbors, and landing centres.

Referring to several projects he said work is progressing rapidly as regards the country's first bullet train, while modern trains like Vande Bharat, Amrit Bharat, and Namo Bharat are making the rail network more advanced.

Against the background of

India's first vertical lift sea bridge



In his address, Modi said the day marked the auspicious occasion of Ram Navami and that Lord Ram's good governance is the foundation for nation building. He also outlined the connect Tamil Nadu had to Lord Ram by quoting Sangam era literature. On the fishermen issue vis-a-vis Sri Lanka, he said over the past decade, more than 3,700 fishermen have been brought back from Sri Lanka, including over 600 in the past year alone.

While Tamil Nadu Chief Minister M K Stalin skipped the event and upped the ante on the

said that over the past five years, Tamil Nadu has received substantial funds under the PM Matsya Sampada Yojana, stressing the Government's efforts to provide modern facilities for fishermen, including investments worth hundreds of crores in sea-

DMK regime crying foul over fund allocation to the State, Modi said over the past decade, the Central Government has allocated three times more funds for Tamil Nadu's development compared to the period before 2014.

(Contd on page 5)

Regularly receive letters from TN leaders but none of them is signed in Tamil: PM

CHENNAI, Apr 6 (IANS)



# Govt unlikely to ease checks on investments from China

## Won't Accede To Pvt Sector's Calls For Relaxations

Sidhartha@timesofindia.com

**New Delhi:** Govt is unlikely to ease investment checks on Chinese firms amid calls to review FDI norms as it remains wary of flows from across the border. Trump's tariffs have made it even more alert to threat of Chinese exports, some of

▶ **EDIT PG: Trade isn't why Trump tariffed China, P 12**  
▶ **RBI likely to cut rates by 25bps: Economists, P 11**

which may be diverted to India and other Asian markets.

Private sector has been pushing Modi govt to review its investment regime, tightened after Covid in 2020, while



'Hands off' protests against Trump across US cities | **INSIDE JACKET**

## Steel to Jaguars, Tatas assess US tariff hit

Tata Group is assessing costs across businesses post US tariffs. While JLR has halted shipments to the US, Tata Steel UK is negotiating new arrangements. Chairman N Chandrasekaran pointed to these challenges at Tata Group CEOs' Dubai conclave. **P11**

the Chinese hostility in Ladakh led to a ban on several apps and govt procurement curbs. The clamour for easing norms has increased in the last few days with many com-

mentators arguing that an alliance with China, especially for tech, will help India weather the crisis better.

▶ **Continued on P 11**

## Apple, Samsung to up dispatch of India-made stuff

Global smartphone giants Apple and Samsung, looking to recalibrate worldwide production to blunt the impact of Trump's higher tariffs on China and Vietnam, are likely to increasingly ship made-in-India products to the US. The companies are urgently add-

▶ **EDIT: Who'll Grab Apple Pie**

ressing the modalities to ensure that supplies to the US remain competitive, even though it's a logistical challenge with major customs and other regulatory efforts required. Apple has started to use production in India to ship iPhones to the US, with plans to cut down exports from China. **P11**

# President Murmu embarks for 4-day state visit to Portugal, Slovakia

NEW DELHI, Apr 6 (ANI)

PRESIDENT Droupadi Murmu on Sunday emplaned for a 4-day state visit to Portugal and Slovakia from April 7-10.

She is visiting Portugal at the invitation of President of Portugal, Marcelo Rebelo de Sousa. The visit is taking place after a gap of 27 years, as the last State Visit took place in 1998 when President K R Narayanan visited Portugal.

While from 9-10 April, President Droupadi Murmu will visit the Slovakia at the invitation of the Slovakia President Peter Pellegrini. It will be the first visit by the President of India to Slovakia in 29 years.

Shatring the post on X, Ministry



President Droupadi Murmu waves as she emplanes for a state visit to Portugal and the Slovak Republic, in New Delhi. (PTI)

of External Affairs spokesperson wrote, "President Droupadi Murmu @rashtrapatibhvn emplanes on State visits to Portugal and the Slovak Republic.

These are the first State visits to either country by the President of India in more than 25 years."

"The visits will further expand India's multifaceted engagement

with two important EU partners," the post added. Speaking to media during the special briefing, Tanmay Lal Secretary (West) MEA, called the visits "two important landmark visits."

Sharing the details of the visit to Portugal, Secretary Lal said that the visit becomes historic as it comes when India and Portugal are marking 50 years of the diplomatic relations and this visit will "take forward the friendship and partnership."

"It is also 27 years since the last visit by a President from India to Portugal. So it's a very symbolic and landmark visit. The President will be traveling to Portugal at the invitation of President Marcelo Rebelo de Sousa of Portugal", he said.

# 50+ countries in touch to start trade talks, says Trump adviser

**Washington:** More than 50 countries have reached out to the White House to begin trade talks, a top economic adviser to President Trump said Sunday as US officials sought to defend sweeping new tariffs that have unleashed global turmoil.

During an interview on ABC News' 'This Week,' US national economic council director Kevin Hassett denied that the tariffs were part of a strategy by Trump to crash financial markets to pressure the US Federal Reserve to cut interest rates. He said there were would be no "political coercion" of the central bank.

In a Truth Social post on Friday, Trump shared a video that suggested his tariffs aimed to hammer the stock market on purpose in a bid to force lower interest rates.

In a separate interview on NBC News' Meet the Press, US treasury secretary Scott Bessent downplayed the stock market drop and said there was "no reason" to anticipate a recession based on the tariffs.

Trump jolted economies around the world after he announced broad tariffs on US



## WHY PENGUINS WERE TARIFFED

Commerce secy Howard Lutnick on Sunday said that some islands inhabited by penguins were included on the tariff list so that countries could not use them as a loophole. 'What happens is, if you leave anything off the list, the countries that try to basically arbitrage America, go through those countries to us,' he said

imports on Wednesday, triggering retaliatory levies from China and sparking fears of a globe trade war and recession.

On Sunday morning talk shows, top Trump officials sought to portray the tariffs as a savvy repositioning of the US in the global trade order and the economic disruptions as a short-term fallout. Hassett told ABC News' 'This Week' that Trump's tariffs had so far driven "more than 50" countries to contact the White House to begin trade talks.

Taiwan's President Lai Ching-te on Sunday offered zero tariffs as the basis for talks with the US, pledging to remove trade barriers rather than imposing reciprocal measures and saying Taiwanese companies will raise their US investments. Vietnam has requested a delay of "at least 45 days" to a tariff of 46% due to be imposed by the US on April 9, according to a copy of a signed letter seen by AFP on Sunday. Zimbabwe's president said Saturday he would suspend all tariffs on goods imported from the US, days after US levied 18% tariffs against the southern African nation.

Unlike other economists, Hassett said he did not expect a big hit to consumers because exporters were likely to lower prices. Bessent told NBC News he did not anticipate a recession based on the tariffs, citing stronger-than-anticipated US jobs growth. "We could see from the jobs number on Friday, that was well above expectations, that we are moving forward, so I see no reason that we have to price in a recession," Bessent said. REUTERS

# US lack of response to Putin's truce rejection irks Ukraine

Kyiv: Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky on Sunday lamented the lack of a US response to Russia's refusal to sign "a full, unconditional ceasefire" as two people were killed in Moscow's latest aerial bombardment.

Russia mounted a "massive" missile and drone attack on Ukraine overnight that also wounded seven people, Zelensky said, adding Moscow was stepping up aerial barrage of his country. Ukraine has agreed to an unconditional truce in the more than three-year-long war proposed by the US but Russian President Putin has refused to do so. "We are waiting for the US to respond — so far there has been no response," said Zelensky.

Russia claimed the capture of a village in Ukraine's Sumy region in a rare cross-border

advance. Earlier, Russia "launched a massive nationwide attack on Ukraine using ballistic missiles, cruise missiles and drones", said Ukraine's first deputy PM Yulia Svyrydenko. Zelensky said "the number of Russian air attacks is increasing", adding it proved that "the pressure on Russia is still insufficient".



In capital Kyiv, explosions were heard overnight and a dark plume of smoke rose up from the city early on Sunday morning.

"Preliminarily, one person was killed, and three were wounded," the head of the city's military administration said.

French President Emmanuel Macron said: "A ceasefire is needed as soon as possible. And strong action if Russia continues to try to buy time and refuse peace." AFP