

India bans imports of more goods from Bangladesh

NEW DELHI, Aug 12 (IANS)

INDIA has expanded the list of imports from Bangladesh that are banned from entry through any land port on the border by including more jute products amid deteriorating relations with the neighbouring country.

These additional goods, which have been banned with immediate effect, include bleached and unbleached woven fabrics made of jute or other textile bast fibres; twine, cordage, and rope made of jute; as well as sacks and bags made of jute.

These items will not be allowed through any Land Customs Stations or Integrated Check Posts in Assam, Meghalaya, Tripura and Mizoram, as well as LCS Changrabandha and Fulbari in



West Bengal.

According to the notification issued by the Director General of Foreign Trade, the import of these goods is allowed only via Navi Mumbai's Nhava Sheva Seaport.

The notification further said these restrictions wouldn't apply to Bangladesh exports to Nepal or Bhutan, while noting, "Re-

export of the aforesaid Bangladesh goods to India from Nepal or Bhutan shall not be allowed."

Earlier, in a notification dated June 27, the department listed several goods from Bangladesh that would be subject to regulation. These include flax tow and waste (including yarn waste and garnetted stock);

jute and other textile bast fibres, raw or retted; jute (excluding flax, true hemp, and ramie); single flax yarn; single yarn of jute or other textile bast fibres; multiple folded yarn; woven fabrics of flax; and unbleached woven fabrics of jute or other textile bast fibres.

Besides, on May 17, India banned the import of goods, like readymade garments and processed food items, from Bangladesh to India through cross-border trade points with the neighbouring country. This decision is expected to hit goods worth \$770 million (Rs 6,600 crore) that flow in from Bangladesh. Readymade garments, valued at \$618 million (Rs 5,290 crore), now face strict routing through only two Indian seaports. This severely limits Bangladesh's most valuable export channel to India.

The other goods that have been barred from entry into India through the land customs stations on the border include fruit-flavoured carbonated drinks, processed foods, cotton and cotton yarn waste, plastic and PVC finished goods, and wooden furniture. The total value of these items is pegged at around \$153 million (Rs 1,310 crore).

According to the directive, "Import of all kinds of Ready-Made Garments from Bangladesh shall not be allowed from any land port; however, it is allowed only through Nhava Sheva and Kolkata seaports."

The Indian move came after the Bangladesh government in April banned the import of yarns from India to the country via land ports through a notification from the National Board of Revenue.

US and China extend trade truce for another 90 days



WASHINGTON, Aug 12 (AP)

PRESIDENT Donald Trump extended a trade truce with China for another 90 days on Monday, at least delaying once again a dangerous showdown between the world's two biggest economies. Trump posted on his Truth Social platform that he signed the executive order for the extension, and that "all other elements of the Agreement will remain the same." Beijing at the same time also announced the extension of the tariff pause, according to the Ministry of Commerce.

The previous deadline was set to expire

at 12:01 am Tuesday. Had that happened the US could have ratcheted up taxes on Chinese imports from an already high 30 per cent, and Beijing could have responded by raising retaliatory levies on US exports to China.

The pause buys time for the two countries to work out some of their differences, perhaps clearing the way for a summit later this year

The pause buys time for the two countries to work out some of their differences easing tension between world's largest economies

between Trump and Chinese President Xi Jinping, and it has been welcomed by the US companies doing business with China.

Sean Stein, President of the U S - C h i n a Business Council, said the extension is "critical" to give the two governments time to negotiate a trade agreement that US businesses hope would improve their market access in China and provide the certainty needed for companies to make medium- and long-term plans.

(Contd on page 5)

BLA designation as FTO reflects converging US-Pak interests in Balochistan

Omer Farooq Khan | TNN

Islamabad: Pakistan on Tuesday hailed the US decision to designate the Balochistan Liberation Army (BLA) and its suicide wing, the Majeed Brigade, as Foreign Terrorist Organisations (FTOs), a move seen as reinforcing Islamabad's own counterterrorism efforts and signalling renewed security alignment between the two countries.

The US state department had announced the designation on Monday, adding the Majeed Brigade as an alias of the BLA and expanding sanctions, travel bans, and legal penalties for supporters.

The decision imposes sweeping sanctions and is seen as underscoring a rare moment of US-Pakistan security alignment, arriving just as army chief Field Marshal **Asim Munir** engages in high-level



talks in Washington. Pakistan's foreign office said it outlawed the BLA in 2006 and banned the Majeed Brigade on July 18, 2024. Security analysts say the designation reflects converging US-Pakistan interests in Balochistan, a province rich in minerals and

home to the strategic Gwadar port.

The BLA and Majeed Brigade have repeatedly targeted Chinese nationals, infrastructure, and projects.

Pakistan has intensified military operations in Balochistan in recent months, killing more than 50 suspected militants linked to BLA splinter groups. Officials believe Washington's backing will help choke off funding, disrupt safe havens, and counter online propaganda. For Islamabad, it is a strategic opportunity to align international action with domestic priorities as it battles insurgency.

Army inducts DRDO-designed Mechanical Minefield Marking Equipment Mk-II



NEW DELHI, Aug 12 (PTI)

THE Indian Army on Monday said it has inducted a DRDO-designed mechanical minefield marking equipment aiming to enhance its operational effectiveness.

It shared the details in a post on X along with some photos.

“Strengthening combat readiness through indigenous inno-

vation in a step towards enhancing operational effectiveness, the Indian Army has inducted the Mechanical Minefield Marking Equipment Mk-II,” it said.

“Designed by DRDO and manufactured by BEM Ltd, the system embodies the spirit of Atmanirbharta and significantly strengthening the combat capabilities of the Corps of Engineers,” the Army wrote in its post.

PIXXEL-LED CONSORTIUM TO BUILD INDIA'S 1st commercial EO satellite constellation

NEW DELHI, Aug 12 (PTI)

A CONSORTIUM led by Bengaluru-based PixxelSpace has won the bid to build and operate India's first fully-indigenous commercial Earth Observation (EO) satellite constellation, the Indian National Space Promotion and Authorisation Centre (IN-SPACe) said on Tuesday.

The PixxelSpace-led consortium, comprising Piersight Space, Satsure Analytics India and Dhruva Space, will launch a constellation of 12 EO satellites equipped with panchromatic, multispectral, hyperspectral and microwave SAR sensors over the next five years. The consortium will invest more than Rs 1,200 crore over the next five years.

The Pixxel-led team edged out consortia led by Astra Microwave Products

Limited and GalaxEye Space to win the bid to build the constellation under the Earth Observation satellite Public-Private Partnership (EO-PPP) model.

The constellation will feature a mix of sub-metre very-high-resolution, wide-swath multispectral, Synthetic Aperture Radar (SAR) and hyperspectral satellites, enabling applications such as precision agriculture, water-quality monitoring, land-use mapping, environmental compliance, disaster assessment and infrastructure development. "This initiative signals the coming of age of India's private space industry in the space sector. It demonstrates the capability and confidence of Indian companies to lead large-scale, technologically-advanced and commercially-viable space missions," Pawan Goenka, Chairman, IN-SPACe, said.

Zelensky: Putin wants rest of Donetsk as part of deal

Ukraine Prez Says US Officials Conveyed To Him Necessity Of Territorial Concessions And He Categorically Rejects It

Kyiv: Ukrainian President Zelensky said Tuesday that Russian President Putin wants Ukraine to withdraw from the remaining 30% of the Donetsk region that it controls as part of a ceasefire deal, a proposal he categorically rejected. Zelensky reiterated that Ukraine would not withdraw from territories it controls, saying that would be unconstitutional.

He said diplomatic discussions led by the US focusing on ending the war have not touched on security guarantees for Ukraine to prevent future Russian aggression and that meeting formats currently being discussed do not include Europe's participation, both key demands of Kyiv.

Meanwhile, Russian forces on the ground have been closing in on a key territorial grab around the city of Pokrovsk.

Zelensky said the necessity of territorial concessions was conveyed to him by US officials



Friday's Alaska summit between Trump and Putin 'is a listening exercise for the president,' the White House said on Tuesday, tempering expectations for a quick Russia-Ukraine ceasefire deal

ahead of a summit Friday between US President Trump and Putin, and in further meetings at the level of national security officials. Ukraine and the European Union have been sidelined from the meeting, and they appealed to Trump on Tuesday to protect their interests.

Zelensky said Putin wants the remaining 9,000 sqkm of Donetsk under Kyiv's control, where the war's toughest battles are grinding on, as part of a

ceasefire plan, in a press briefing on Tuesday in Kyiv. **Doing so would hand Russia almost the entirety of the Donbas, a region comprising Ukraine's eastern industrial heartland that Putin has long coveted.**

Zelensky learned of Russia's position after holding a call with Trump and special envoy Steve Witkoff, after the latter's bilateral meeting with Putin. Witkoff told Zelensky that Russia was ready to end the war and that there should be territorial concessions from both sides. Some European partners were also part of the call.

"We will not leave Donbas. We cannot do this. Everyone forgets the first part — our territories are illegally occupied," Zelensky told reporters at a briefing. "Donbas for the Russians is a springboard for a future new offensive." Zelensky said this is what occurred in 2014 when Russia illegally annexed Crimean Peninsula. AP

Israel bombards Gaza; Hamas chief due in Cairo to revive truce talks

Cairo: Israeli planes and tanks kept bombarding eastern areas of Gaza City overnight, killing at least 11 people, witnesses and medics said on Tuesday, with Hamas chief Khalil Al-Hayya due in Cairo for talks to revive a US-backed ceasefire plan.

The latest round of indirect talks in Qatar ended in deadlock in late July with Israel and Palestinian militant group Hamas trading blame over the lack of progress on a US proposal for a 60-day truce and hostage release deal.

Israel has since said it will launch a new offensive and seize control of Gaza City. Israeli PM Netanyahu's plan to expand military control over Gaza, expected to be launched in Oct, has increased a global outcry over devastation, displacement and hunger afflicting Gaza's 2.2m people. Foreign ministers of 24 countries including Britain, Canada, Australia, France and Japan, said Tuesday the humanitarian crisis in Gaza had reached "unimaginable levels" and urged Israel to allow unrestricted aid into the enclave.

A Palestinian official with knowledge of the ceasefire talks said. "Hamas believes negotiation is the only way to end the war and is open to discuss any ideas that would secure an end to the war." REUTERS

India rejects jurisdiction of int'l court on water treaty

Pak Claims Ruling Backs Its Stand

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi: Pakistan has welcomed an international court's ruling interpreting design criteria for new run-of-river hydropower projects on the Western Rivers (Chenab, Jhelum and Indus), to be built by India, saying it vindicates its position on the Indus Waters Treaty (IWT), which India put in abeyance after the Pahalgam attack.

India, however, has never recognised the Permanent Court of Arbitration, which reportedly ruled that India must "let flow" the waters of the Western Rivers for Pakistan's unrestricted use. India

Pakistan will not allow India to snatch 'even one drop' of its water: PM Sharif

Islamabad: PM Shehbaz Sharif on Tuesday said India would not be allowed to snatch "even one drop" of water belonging to Pakistan, amid tensions between the two neighbours.

A day after the Pahalgam attack on April 22, India put the Indus Waters Treaty of 1960 in "abeyance". Pakistan has repeatedly warned that any interference to stop the water would be treated as an act of war. "I want to tell the enemy today that if you threaten to hold our water, then keep this in mind that you cannot snatch even one drop of Pakistan," PM Sharif said while addressing an event Tuesday. PTI



has instead focused on the neutral expert mechanism.

"The specified exceptions for generation of hydro-electric plants must conform strictly to the requirements laid down in the treaty, rather than to what India might consider an 'ideal' or 'best prac-

tices' approach," Pakistan's foreign office said Monday.

While India's official response is expected Wednesday, sources recalled it had earlier notified modification of IWT amid prolonged disputes over Kishanganga and Ratle projects in J&K. India

never accepted World Bank's decision to simultaneously activate both neutral expert mechanism and, at Pakistan's insistence, Court of Arbitration on the same issues — the reason it sought reconsideration of the treaty's dispute resolution process.

In Oct 2022, World Bank appointed both a neutral expert and a Court of Arbitration despite acknowledging India's concerns that concurrent proceedings posed practical and legal challenges.

Following Monday's ruling, Pakistan reiterated its commitment to implementing IWT and urged India to resume functioning of the same. India maintains IWT will remain in abeyance until Pakistan takes action against cross-border terrorism.