

PM Modi meets Maldives President on sidelines of SCO Summit

TIANJIN, Aug 31 (IANS)

PRIME Minister Narendra Modi met Maldives President Mohamed Muizzu on the sidelines of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) Summit in China's Tianjin on Sunday, stating India's developmental cooperation with the Indian Ocean island country is beneficial for the people of both nations.

"Interacted with President Muizzu of Maldives on the sidelines of the SCO Summit in Tianjin. India's developmental cooperation with Maldives is greatly beneficial for our people," PM Modi posted on X.

PM Modi also met his Nepal counterpart KP Sharma Oli on the sidelines of the summit and called the two countries' ties "deep-rooted and very special." In a post shared on X, PM Modi stated, "Delighted to meet Nepal PM Mr. KP Oli in Tianjin. India's relations with Nepal are deep-rooted and very special."

PM MODI MEETS COUNTERPARTS FROM VIETNAM, ARMENIA, EGYPT: Prime Minister Narendra Modi met his Armenian counterpart



Prime Minister Narendra Modi meets Maldivian President Mohamed Muizzu, on the sidelines of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) Summit, in Tianjin, China. (PTI)

Nikol Pashinyan and noted that the two nations share warm and growing ties. PM Modi held talks with his Vietnamese counterpart Pham Minh Chinh in Tianjin and expressed India's willingness to further deepen ties in various fields.

PM Modi also met his Egyptian

counterpart, Mostafa Madbouly, on the sidelines of the summit. "Met PM Mostafa Madbouly of Egypt at the SCO Summit. Fondly recalled my Egypt visit a few years ago. India-Egypt friendship is scaling newer heights of progress!" PM Modi posted on X.

PM Modi holds bilateral meeting with Myanmar acting President

TIANJIN, Aug 31 (ANI)

PRIME Minister Narendra Modi held a bilateral meeting with the acting President and military chief of Myanmar, Senior General Min Aung Hlaing.

The two leaders held discussions as they met ahead of the SCO Summit scheduled to begin later today.

The two leaders had last met this April on the sidelines of the BIM-STEAC Summit in Bangkok. Myanmar's military Government has announced that long-promised elections will begin on December 28, the first polls in the war-torn country in nearly five years. A 2021 coup unseated an elected civilian Government led by Nobel laureate Aung San Suu Kyi.

Indian Army conducts exercise 'Yudh Kaushal' 3.0 in Arunachal

ITANAGAR, Aug 31 (IANS)

THE Army successfully conducted exercise 'Yudh Kaushal' 3.0 in the formidable terrain and extreme weather conditions of the eastern Himalayas in Arunachal Pradesh's Kameng region, officials said on Sunday.

Defence spokesman Lt Col Mahendra Rawat said that the Army effectively conducted exercise 'Yudh Kaushal' 3.0 in the formidable terrain and extreme weather conditions of the eastern Himalayas in the Kameng region of Arunachal Pradesh.

The exercise, witnessed by the General Officer Commanding (GOC), Gajraj Corps, Lt Gen Gambhir Singh, displayed a remarkable synergy of advanced technology, operational innovation, and professional excellence by the troops, he said.

According to the spokesman, the large-scale manoeuvres underscored the Army's ability to operate in multi-domain environments, with demonstrations of drone surveillance, real-time

target acquisition, precision strikes, air-littoral dominance, and synchronised battlefield manoeuvres.

A major highlight was the operational debut of the newly raised ASHNI platoons, who showcased how next-generation technolo-



gy, seamlessly fused with battle-hardened tactics, can deliver a decisive edge in contemporary and future conflicts.

The spokesman said that a distinctive aspect of exercise 'Yudh Kaushal' 3.0 was the active integration of the Indian Civil Defence Industry, symbolising India's ongoing 'Decade of Transformation'. This collaboration demonstrated how indige-

nous defence innovation is rapidly translating into battlefield advantage, strengthening national security and enhancing self-reliance under the vision of 'Atmanirbhar Bharat'.

The exercise not only validated the Army's combat readiness in high-altitude, harsh climatic conditions but also reaffirmed its commitment to embracing emerging technologies such as unmanned systems, precision weaponry, and multi-domain operational concepts.

The successful conduct of exercise 'Yudh Kaushal' 3.0 epitomises the Army's pursuit of excellence, adaptability, and technological advancement, standing as a testimony to its unwavering resolve to remain future-ready for next-generation warfare, the spokesman added.

Meanwhile, the Infantry troops of the Army's Spear Corps, in coordination with the Indo-Tibetan Border Police (ITBP), undertook a four-day exercise 'Achook Prahar' in Arunachal Pradesh last week.

India looks at sealing 2 mega submarine deals

NEW DELHI, Aug 31 (PTI)

INDIA is likely to seal two mega submarine deals worth over Rs one lakh crore by the middle of next year to crank up its under-sea warfare capabilities against the backdrop of China's increasing naval prowess, authoritative sources said on Sunday.

The first project that is being negotiated is for the procurement of three Scorpene submarines, which will be jointly constructed by State-run Mazagon Dock Limited (MDL) and French defence major Naval Group. Though the Defence Ministry cleared the nearly Rs 36,000 crore deal over two years back, there have been delays in negotiations to firm up various technical and commercial aspects of the project, the sources said. The second project that the Defence Ministry is eyeing to seal is for the acquisition of six diesel-electric stealth submarines at a cost of around Rs 65,000 crore. The procurement was initially cleared by the Ministry in 2021.

"We are expecting both con-



tracts will be firmed up by the middle of next year," a source said.

Leading German shipbuilder ThyssenKrupp Marine Systems (TKMS) has partnered with Mazagon Dock Shipbuilders Ltd for the project, billed as one of the biggest 'Make in India' initiatives in recent years.

The source said the cost negotiations for the deal will start soon and the entire process may take six to nine months before a

contract is concluded.

While the proposed acquisition of six stealth submarines under Project 75 India (P75-I) is a completely new programme, the plan for the three Scorpene submarines will be a follow-on order of a previous acquisition.

Under the Indian Navy's Project 75, six Scorpene submarines have already been constructed by Mazagon Dock Limited (MDL) in collaboration

with the Naval Group.

The Navy wants both deals to be firmed up soon as it is looking at bolstering its underwater capabilities, said an official aware of the matter.

The sources cited above said finalising the cost negotiations process for the diesel-engine programme will take time. The commercial negotiations for Scorpene-class submarines have almost been completed, they added. If everything goes as per plan, then the Scorpene project will be finalised early next year as it has already suffered significant delays, the sources said.

The delivery of boats under both projects will start around six years after the signing of the contracts, they said.

Asked if the MDL will have the capabilities to implement both the projects simultaneously, the sources said it was for the shipbuilder to augment its infrastructure. "There have already been inordinate delays in the Scorpene submarine project and we hope it will be concluded soon," said one of the sources.

HAL likely to deliver 2 Tejas Mark-1A jets next month: Defence Secretary



NEW DELHI, Aug 31 (PTI)

TWO Tejas Mark-1A fighter jets are likely to be delivered next month by the State-run aerospace major Hindustan Aeronautics Ltd (HAL), Defence Secretary R K Singh has said.

Singh said on Saturday that the Government is likely to ink a fresh contract with HAL for

procuring an additional batch of 97 Tejas jets after the delivery of the two aircraft.

The Indian Air Force (IAF) had flagged concerns over delays in the delivery of the Tejas Mark 1A jets under a previous contract.

“Hopefully, the first two of those will be delivered with weapons integration by the end of September,” Singh said at the

NDTV Defence Summit.

The Defence Secretary said about 38 Tejas jets are already in service and another 80-odd are being manufactured.

In February 2021, the defence ministry sealed a Rs 48,000 crore deal with HAL for the procurement of 83 Tejas Mk-1A jets for the IAF. The delivery of the jets is facing delays primarily due to the US defence major GE Aerospace missing several deadlines for the supply of its aero engines to power the jets.

Last week, the Government approved an additional batch of 97 Tejas fighters at a cost of around Rs 67,000 crore.

“I have made it clear to HAL that we will sign this contract only after HAL delivers two Tejas featuring a complete package,” Singh said on the additional procurement.

India's first indigenous water-soluble fertiliser technology to cut imports

NEW DELHI, Aug 31 (PTI)

INDIA has successfully developed its first indigenous water-soluble fertiliser technology after seven years of research, marking a potential breakthrough that could transform the country from an import-dependent nation to an export-dominating force in specialty fertilisers.

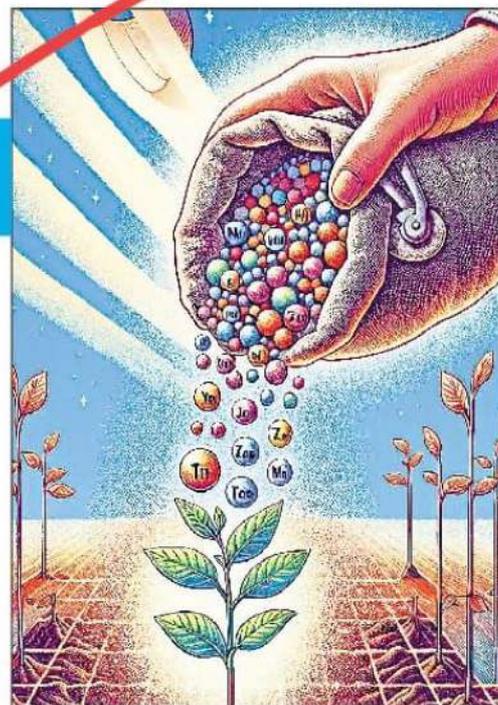
The technology, backed by the Ministry of Mines and developed using Indian raw materials and Indian-designed plants, represents a true "Make in India" proposition that could significantly reduce the country's heavy dependence on Chinese specialty fertiliser imports.

"My aim was to make India, especially for specialty fertilizer, an export-dominating country,

not an import-dependent country," Rajib Chakraborty, President of the Soluble Fertilizer Industry Association (SFIA), who spearheaded the research initiative, said.

India's overwhelming reliance on Chinese specialty fertiliser imports provided the impetus for developing indigenous technology. The country currently imports 80 per cent of its specialty fertilisers directly from China, while the remaining 20 per cent is indirectly traded through Chinese sources.

Barring 5 per cent of NPK formulations produced domestically, India is 95 per cent dependent on Chinese supplies for specialty fertilisers. This dependency has grown steadily since 2005, when European suppliers began



sourcing from China to serve Indian markets, gradually building capacity and technology to capture global market share.

The development process was arduous, with Chakraborty describing the typical challenges of research and development. "R&D means a failure game a thousand times. Have you only succeeded once after failing for a thousand times? So it's common to every R&D process," he said.

RIGHT CHOICE for India, China to be FRIENDS: Xi

“Should not let the border issue define the overall China-India relations”

TIANJIN, Aug 31 (PTI)

CHINESE President Xi Jinping told Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Sunday that it is the “right choice” for the two countries to be “friends” and they should not let the border dispute define their relations.

The talks between the two leaders took place on the margins of the annual summit of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) here.

Xi told Modi that the two Asian neighbours should work together to ensure peace and tranquility in their border regions, and should not let the border issue define the overall China-India relations.

India and China are cooperation partners, not rivals, and the two countries are each other's development opportunities rather than threats, Xi said.

As long as the two countries stick to this overarching direction, China-India relations can sustain steady and long-term growth, Xi said.

“It is the right choice for both to be friends who have good neighbourly and amicable ties, partners who enable each other's success, and to have the

dragon and the elephant dance together,” he said.

The meeting between the two leaders took place against the backdrop of Washington's tariff tussle that has impacted almost all leading economies across the world.

Noting that this year marks the 75th anniversary of the establishment of China-India diplomatic relations, Xi said the two countries need to view and handle bilateral ties from a strategic and long-term perspective to ensure their sustained, sound and steady development. Xi said China and India should become neighbours on good terms and partners helping each other succeed. A “cooperative pas de deux (dance) of the dragon and the elephant” should be the right choice for the two countries, he said.

He called on New Delhi and Beijing to strengthen strategic communication to deepen mutual trust, expand exchanges and win-win cooperation, heed each other's concerns to seek harmonious coexistence, and enhance multilateral collaboration to safeguard common interests.

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“This year marks the 75th anniversary of the establishment of China-India diplomatic ties. We both shoulder the historical responsibility of improving the well-being of our peoples, promoting the solidarity and rejuvenation of developing countries, and propelling the progress of human society,” Xi said.

Welfare of 2.8 billion people is linked to India-China ties: Modi

TIANJIN, Aug 31 (PTI)

INDIA is committed to taking forward its ties with China based on mutual trust, respect and sensitivity, Prime Minister Narendra Modi told Chinese President Xi Jinping as the two leaders held wide-ranging talks on Sunday to reset the bilateral relations.

In his televised opening remarks, Modi said the welfare of 2.8 billion people is linked to cooperation between India and China. In his remarks, Modi noted that there is peace and stability along the border following last year's disengagement process, adding that direct flights between the two countries are being resumed.

The Prime Minister also made a mention of the resumption of the Kailash Mansarovar Yatra.

There was consent between our Special Representatives on border management, he said.

India and China have a framework called the Special Representatives on the boundary question to address issues relating to the border. “We are committed to take forward our cooperation based on mutual trust, respect and sensitivity,” Modi said. The Prime Minister also congratulated Xi on China's successful presidency of the SCO.

Modi and Chinese President Xi Jinping on Sunday vowed to work towards a “fair, reasonable, and mutually acceptable” resolution of the festering boundary issue and pledged to work towards stabilising global trade.

In their wide-ranging talks on the margins of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) summit, Modi and Xi agreed that the two countries are development partners and not rivals, noting that differences between the two sides should not turn into disputes.

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