

# PM Modi to lay foundation stones for 2 power projects in Arunachal visit



(Inset and photo) PM Modi conducts aerial survey of Dholera Special Investment Region in Gujarat.

(PTI)

ITANAGAR, Sept 20 (PTI)

PRIME Minister Narendra Modi is scheduled to lay the foundation stones for two hydroelectric power projects worth Rs 3,689 crore and 10 infrastructure projects to be built at a cost of Rs 1,291 crore during his visit to Arunachal Pradesh on September 22, officials said on Saturday. In a statement issued by the State Government, Modi will lay the foundation stones for the 186 MW Tato-I and 240 MW Heo hydroelectric projects and inaugurate the Integrated State of Art Convention

Centre in Tawang. Governor KT Parnaik, Chief Minister Pema Khandu, Union Minister Kiren Rijiju, Deputy Chief Minister Chowna Mein, Lok Sabha MP Tapir Gao and Rajya Sabha MP Nabam Rebia will attend the event.

The Tato-I hydroelectric project on Yarjep river in Shi Yomi district will be implement-

ed by the Arunachal Pradesh Government and the North Eastern Electric Power Corporation Limited (NEEPCO) at an estimated cost of Rs 1,750 crore. It is expected to produce 802 million units of electricity annually, officials said.

The Heo hydroelectric project, also on the same river, is being implemented by the State Government and NEEPCO at an estimated cost of Rs 1,939 crore. The project is estimated to produce 1,000 million units of energy annually.

The Integrated State of Art

Convention Centre in Tawang is a Government project under the Ministry of Development of North Eastern Region's (MDoNER) and PM-DevINE scheme. The project, worth Rs 145.37 crore was completed recently by the State's Public Works Department.

**PM MODI UNDERTAKES AERIAL SURVEY OF DHOLERA SPECIAL INVESTMENT REGION:** PRIME Minister Narendra Modi on Saturday undertook an aerial survey of Dholera Special Investment Region, a greenfield industrial hub near here. Envisioned as a greenfield industrial city built around sustainable industrialization, smart infrastructure and global investment, the Dholera Special Investment Region is around 100 kilometres south of Ahmedabad and 134 kilometres from State capital Gandhinagar.

**PM MODI REVIEWS PROGRESS OF NATIONAL MARITIME HERITAGE COMPLEX AT LOTHAL:** PRIME Minister Narendra Modi on Saturday reviewed the progress of the under-construction National Maritime Heritage Complex (NMHC) at Lothal in Ahmedabad district. A video released by the Prime Minister's Office showed Modi reviewing the progress of the NMHC which is being developed at a cost of Rs 4,500 crore.

# Rajnath on 2-day Morocco visit from today

NEW DELHI, Sept 20 (PTI)

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DEFENCE Minister Rajnath Singh will dedicate a manufacturing facility of Tata Advanced Systems to produce wheeled armoured personnel carriers in Morocco during his two-day visit to the North African nation beginning September 21, the Defence Ministry said on Saturday.

The facility at Berrechid is the first-ever Indian defence manufacturing plant in Africa. Singh's visit to Morocco will be the first-ever trip to that country by an Indian defence minister.

The facility is the first-ever Indian defence manufacturing plant in Africa, which marks an important milestone reflecting the growing global footprint of India's defence industry under the Aatmanirbhar Bharat (self-reliant India) initiative, the ministry said.

During the visit, Singh will hold a bilateral meeting with his Moroccan counterpart Abdeltif Loudiyi, it said.

# Nations ratify the world's first treaty to protect international waters

SEATTLE (US), Sept 20 (AP)

A MAJOR agreement to protect marine diversity in the high seas was struck on Friday when Morocco became the 60th nation to sign on, paving the way for the treaty to take effect next year.

The High Seas Treaty is the first legal framework aimed at protecting biodiversity in international waters, those that lie beyond the jurisdiction of any single country. International waters account for nearly two-thirds of the ocean and nearly half of Earth's surface and are vulnerable to threats including overfishing, climate change and deep-sea mining.

"The high seas are the world's largest crime scene — they're unmanaged, unenforced, and a regulatory legal structure is absolutely necessary," said Johan Bergenas, senior vice president of oceans at the World Wildlife Fund.

Still, the pact's strength is



uncertain as some of the world's biggest players — the US, China, Russia and Japan — have yet to ratify. The US and China have signed, signalling intent to align with the treaty's objectives without creating legal obligations, while Japan and Russia have been active in preparatory talks.

Ratification triggers a 120-day countdown for the treaty to take effect. But much more work remains to flesh out how it will be implemented, financed and enforced.

"You need bigger boats, more fuel, more training and a different regulatory system," Bergenas said. "The treaty is foundational — now begins the hard work."

The high seas are home to an array of marine life and are crucial in regulating Earth's climate — they absorb heat and carbon dioxide and generate half the oxygen we breathe. The treaty is also essential to achieving what's known as the "30x30" target — an international pledge to protect 30 per cent of the planet's

land and sea by 2030.

The treaty creates a legal process for countries to establish marine protected areas in those waters, including rules for potentially destructive activities like deep-sea mining and geo-engineering schemes. It also establishes a framework for technology-sharing, funding mechanisms and scientific collaboration among countries.

Crucially, decisions under the treaty will be made multilaterally through what are known as conferences of parties, rather than by individual countries acting alone.

Within one year of the treaty taking effect, countries will meet to make decisions about implementation, financing and oversight, and only countries that ratify before then will have voting rights.

Some experts warn the treaty's impact could be blunted if the most powerful players on the high seas remain outside it.

# 'Gen Z' group demands arrest of Nepal's ousted PM Oli over shootout

KATHMANDU, Sept 20 (PTI)

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THE 'Gen Z' group on Saturday demanded the arrest of deposed prime minister KP Sharma Oli and then home minister Ramesh Lekhak over their alleged role in a shootout that killed 19 people during the anti-Government protests on September 8.

Addressing a press conference at Sambad Dabali here, Dr Nicholas Bushal, one of the advisers to the 'Gen Z' group that spearheaded the protests, said Oli, Lekhak and Chief District Officer of Kathmandu Chhabi Rijal should be arrested immediately as they were directly responsible for the shootout at Naya Baneshwor in which 19 activists were killed.

Bhushal also demanded the formation of a high-level probe commission to investigate the wealth of all high-ranking leaders and government officials since 1990. Separately, the 'Gen Z' activists also organised a sit-in demanding Oli and Lekhak's arrest at Maitighar Mandala near Singhdurbar Secretariat in Kathmandu, from where they started their protest rally on September 8. At least 72 people, including three policemen, were among the dead during the violent protests against alleged corruption and a ban on social media on September 8 and 9.

# India, Canada agree to work towards 'new chapter' in ties

The NSAs of two sides discussed bilateral ties, including working closely to combat terrorism and transnational crimes

NEW DELHI, Sept 20 (PTI)

**INDIA** and Canada have agreed to adopt a collaborative approach towards a new chapter in bilateral ties, including working closely to combat terrorism and transnational crimes, the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) said on Saturday.

National Security Advisor (NSA) Ajit Doval and his Canadian counterpart Nathalie Drouin held wide-ranging talks in New Delhi on Thursday with a focus on repairing the bilateral relations that came

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NSA Ajit Doval meets his Canadian counterpart Nathalie G Drouin in New Delhi on Thursday. (PTI)

# Trump announces \$1,00,000 H1-B visa fee

By Yoshita Singh  
NEW YORK/WASHINGTON, Sept 20  
(PTI)

IN A development that could adversely affect Indian professionals in the US, President Donald Trump has signed a proclamation to raise the fee for H-1B visas to a staggering USD 1,00,000 annually, a move described by American lawmakers and community leaders as "reckless" and "unfortunate".

Trump on Friday signed the proclamation 'Restriction on entry of certain nonimmigrant workers', saying the abuse of the H-1B visa programme is a "national security threat".

Immigration attorneys and companies have asked the H-1B visa holders or their family members currently outside America for work or vacation to return within the next 24 hours or risk being stranded and denied entry into the US after the proclamation comes into effect from 12:01 am September 21.

Currently, the H-1B visa fee ranges from about USD 2000 to

Return to US immediately or risk getting stranded: Immigration attorneys, companies tell H-1B workers

USD 5000, depending on employer size and other costs. The visas are valid for three years and can be renewed for another three years. The move is going to significantly impact Indian technology workers who are hired by tech companies and others on H-1B visas.

Tata Consultancy Services (TCS) is the second-highest beneficiary with 5,305 approved H-1B visas in 2025, after Amazon (10,044 workers on H-1B visas), according to the US Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS). Other top beneficiaries include Microsoft (5,189), Meta

## Move could impact Indian workers in US

### 'Disruptions' would be addressed suitably by US: India

NEW DELHI, Sep 20 (PTI)

THE US raising the annual fee for H-1B visa to a whopping USD 1,00,000 is likely to have "humanitarian consequences", India said on Saturday and hoped that the "disruptions" would be addressed suitably by Washington.

US President Donald Trump signed a proclamation to increase the fee that is set to significantly impact Indian technology companies as well as skilled Indian professionals.

"This measure is likely to have humanitarian consequences by way of the disruption caused for families," External Affairs Ministry spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal said. "The Government hopes that these disruptions

can be addressed suitably by the US authorities," he said.

Trump's restrictions on the popular employment visa regime is seen as part of larger efforts to crack down on immigration. The H1B visa is valid for three years and can be renewed for three more years.

While the proclamation said that USD 100,000 will be levied as the application fee for H1B visas, Commerce Secretary Howard Lutnick told reporters that the total fee for three years will be USD 300,000.

Indians make up an estimated 71 per cent of all approved H-1B applications in recent years, according to US Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS).

In its reaction, New Delhi said

the full implications of the measure are being studied by all concerned.

"The full implications of the measure are being studied by all concerned, including by Indian industry, which has already put out an initial analysis clarifying some perceptions related to the H1B programme," Jaiswal said.

Industries in both India and the US has a stake in innovation and creativity and can be expected to consult on the best path forward, he said.

Jaiswal said skilled talent mobility and exchanges have contributed enormously to technology development, innovation, economic growth, competitiveness and wealth creation in the US and India.

(5,123), Apple (4,202), Google (4,181), Deloitte (2,353), Infosys (2,004), Wipro (1,523) and Tech Mahindra Americas (951).

In his proclamation, Trump said the H-1B visa programme was created to bring temporary workers into the US to perform additive, high-skilled functions, but it has been deliberately exploited to replace, rather than supplement, American workers with lower-paid, lower-skilled labour. "The abuse of the H-1B programme is also a national security threat. Domestic law enforcement agencies have identified and investigated H-1B-reliant outsourcing companies for engaging in visa fraud, conspiracy to launder money... and other illicit activities to encourage foreign workers to come to the US," he said. Trump said that it is necessary to impose higher costs on companies seeking to use the H-1B programme to address the abuse of that programme while still permitting companies to hire the best of the best temporary foreign workers.

(Contd on page 5)